

Letters 10

One Week 14

A year after the London bombings, Brits remember . . . and wonder about the future

Washington Whispers 18

Everybody wants the Wal-Mart vote. Bush wants to write a book . . . without writing a word! Hillary's political marriage

White House Week 26

Holy doughnut shops! Social Security déjà vu! A possible McCain tilt! Insurgents cut Iraq's power!

Cross Country 28

Terrorist plan or plot; setbacks for gay-marriage supporters; National Guard snafu

The World 30

Shockwaves from North Korea's dud; Mexico's messy democracy; Darfur deal in danger

Datebook 32

In the week ahead: a polar affair; Rembrandt, the musical; Bastille Day chagrin for Chirac; Olympics with a gay twist

Q&A: Carlos Gutierrez 36

A naturalized citizen who rose to commerce secretary is Bush's point man on immigration

NATION & WORLD

The Global Odd Couple 38

Once, he saw into Putin's soul. Now, Bush just wants to see if they can get along

Russia's Unreality Television 40

Putin has remade the media to suit his needs

Gaza's Glaring Rockets 43

Israel withdrew. Peace did not happen. A kidnapping and attacks did

Rage Against Voting Machines 45

They said no more hanging chads! So how come election tech is still a wreck?

The NRA Shot It Dead 47

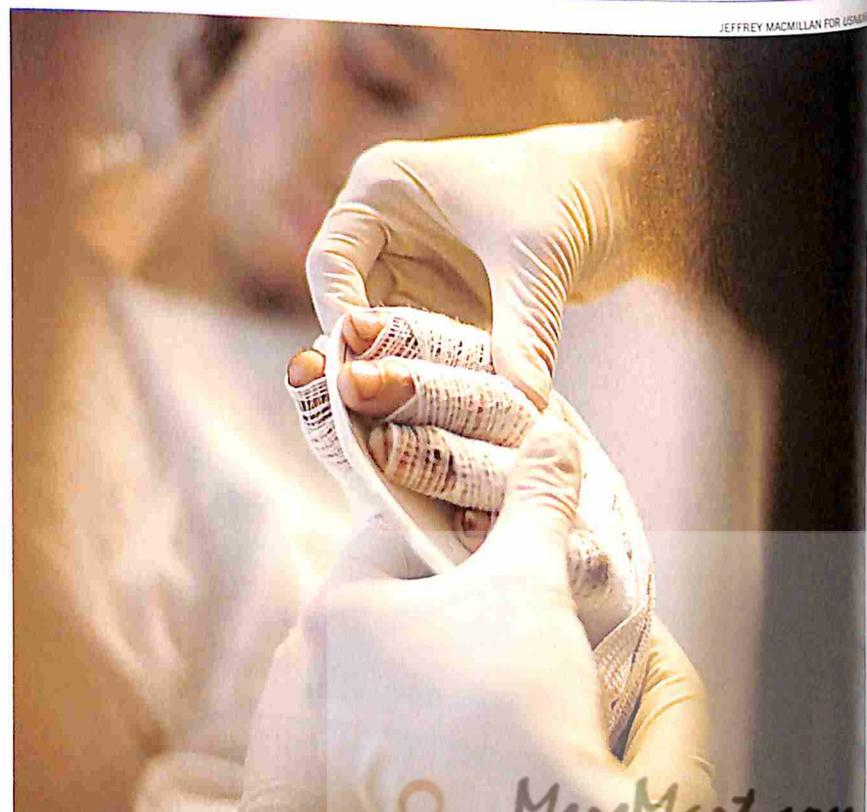
With the gun lobby riding high on the hill, gun control has become a political loser

Show-Me State Showdown 48

Dems think they have a chance to capture the Senate seat in Missouri

Michael Barone: North American Voters Tilt to the Right 49

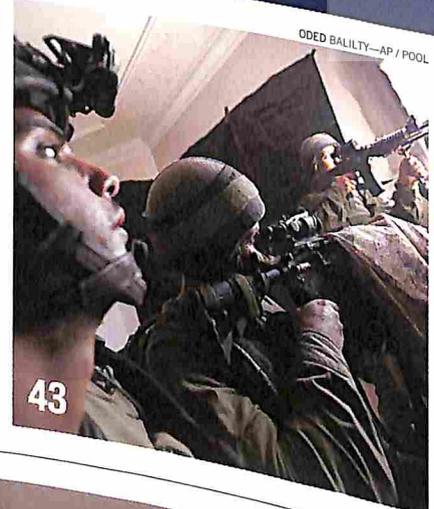
COVER: PHOTOGRAPH BY STEFAN MOKRZECKI—PHOTOLIBRARY/JUPITER IMAGES



JEFFREY MACMILLAN FOR US&WR

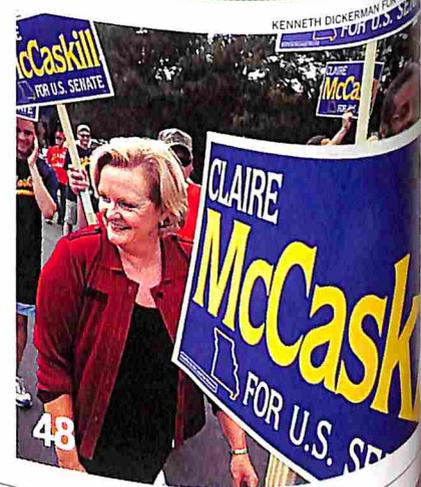
America's Best Hospitals

64 COVER STORY Where should you go for your care? Do you really need to pack your bags for a major medical center? Or will your hometown hospital be just as fine? We'll help you sort through the options—and find the right facility with our 2006 rankings. The honor roll is in the magazine; the full rankings are on our website.



ODED BALILTY—AP / POOL

43



KENNETH DICKERMAN FOR US&WR

48

MONEY & BUSINESS

Yay, It's the Profit Parade! 50

Interest rates are up. Energy costs are huge. Yet corporate America is raking it in

U Can't Touch This Plastic 52

Just wave a "contactless" credit card, and you're all paid up

An Automotive Squeeze Play 54

GM's billionaire investor Kirk Kerkorian urges a hookup with Nissan and Renault

SPECIAL REPORT

The Socialite and the Slave 57

Book Excerpt: In the late 19th century, an unlikely couple accumulated wealth, power, and prestige in the nation's capital

COVER STORY: AMERICA'S BEST HOSPITALS

THE HONOR ROLL 64

It's a pretty elite group that emerged from the nearly 5,200 hospitals we ranked

When You Need the Best 66

How do you know when it's worth seeking medical firepower at a big-name center?

Good Help, Close to Home 72

For many patients, a community hospital can be just as good as a major center. But how can you judge your local options?

In-and-Out Surgery 84

"Major" operations, from gastric bypass to hysterectomy, are now outpatient procedures

Stick to Your Tongue 88

With interpreters, signs, and cultural cues, hospitals reach out to non-English speakers

Photo Essay: Miracle Workers 94

Their injuries come from Iraqi Army missiles, truck crashes, and barbecue mishaps. And that is when the burn unit begins its work

Senior Candy Stripers 104

And we do mean senior: Retirees are the latest (and greatest) hospital volunteers

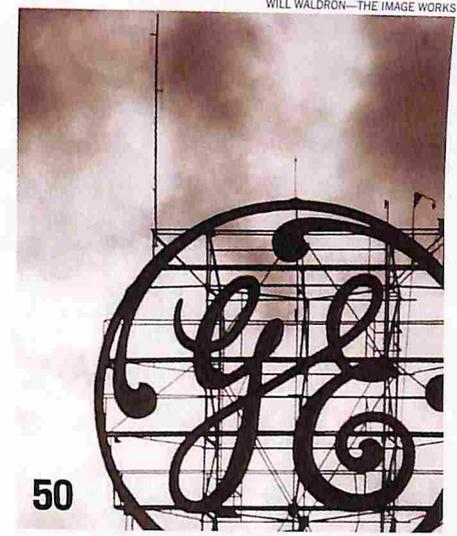
Bernadine Healy, M.D.: Hospital ERs Are Victims of Their Success 108

What It Means to Be Best 110

These institutions take on and excel at tough procedures and conditions and often pioneer new treatment guidelines

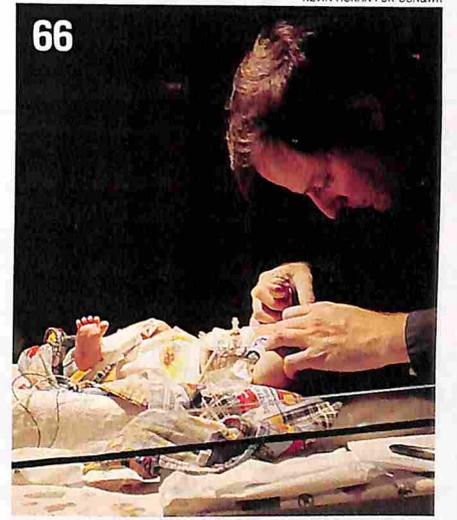
Mortimer B. Zuckerman: We Could Use a Dose of Good Leadership Today 146

WILL WALDRON—THE IMAGE WORKS



50

KEVIN HORAN FOR US&WR



66

NICHOLAS WILTON FOR US&WR



84

