



The Month Gawne By

February 2019

* Half of all GM employees at the Oshawa plant are [fully pension eligible](#). These employees will have several options available to them when the plant is closed, a [copycat annuity](#) being one of them. If you or someone you know is affected by the GM plant closure and would like to learn more about the options available, please pass along our contact details.

What Happened?

Equity markets continued climbing through February. Positive developments in trade talks between the US and China along with [comments from the Federal Reserve Chair, Jerome Powell](#), indicating the contractionary actions of raising interest rates and reducing the Federal Reserve's balance sheet may be coming to an end likely had an impact.

France, Germany and Britain have set up a financial mechanism designed to [avoid US sanctions against Iran](#).

Donald Trump [declared a national emergency](#) to secure funding for a border wall and avoid another government shutdown. The house has since [passed a resolution to terminate the declaration of emergency](#), which the Senate will have 18 days to hold a vote. The President will be able to veto if the resolution passes congress.

Trade talks between the US and China are [progressing](#). So much so, that Donald Trump announced that he will be [delaying a tariff hike on Chinese imports](#) that were scheduled to take effect on March 1st.

British Prime Minister, Theresa May, is targeting another Parliament vote on a [Brexit deal by March 12th](#). If the deal fails, the Labour Party could put forward an amendment calling for a [second referendum](#). After the first referendum, "[what is the EU?](#)" was the second most searched phrase in the United Kingdom.

7 million Americans are [3 months behind on their car payments](#).

Markets (as of February 28th, 2019)

Stocks	Benchmark	February	YTD
Canada	S&P TSX Composite	2.95%	11.70%
United States	S&P 500	2.97%	11.08%
International	MSCI EAFE	2.33%	8.94%
Emerging Markets	MSCI Emerging Markets	0.10%	8.82%
World	MSCI ACWI	2.50%	10.49%

Bonds	Benchmark	February	YTD
Canada	FTSE TMX Canada Universe Bond	0.18%	1.52%
United States	Bloomberg Barclays US Aggregate	-0.06%	1.00%
World	Bloomberg Barclays Global Aggregate	-0.58%	0.94%

Currency	February	YTD
CAD / USD (Source: ThomsonOne)	0.76%	-2.94%

Articles of Interest

Artificial intelligence system taught to play Tetris [pauses the game](#) to prevent itself from losing.

[Deep fake](#) videos are making it difficult to tell the difference between what is real and what is fake. Machine learning can manipulate videos in a way you wouldn't think was possible. See Steve Buschemi and Jennifer Lawrence mashup in the link above.

Winners and losers of the [Auston Matthews signing](#).

China [banned 23 million people from travelling](#) last year due to their poor social credit scores.

Romance scams cost Americans [\\$143 million](#) in 2018. One person at a social media investigation service said





"she dealt with [1,300 catfishing cases in 2018](#), and that 95% of them were financial scams on women between the ages of 50 and 75, mainly from men based in Nigeria." There must be some real people behind online dating profiles though, in 2017 [39% of couples met online](#).

35 words you are probably [using wrong](#).

The rate of consumers in the US [cancelling their cable and satellite TV subscriptions](#) in the fourth quarter of 2018 hit all-time highs.

[Pablo Escobar's hippos](#) are creating problems in Colombia

Music

[February Playlist](#) – the 10 to 20 songs I listened to the most during the month. I've done my best to filter for objectionable content and language.

Books

["Defying Limits: Lessons From the Edge of the Universe"](#)
Dave Williams

The story of one of Canada's most decorated astronauts. Space is something that has always interested me. I enjoyed reading the first-hand account of someone who has spent quite a bit of time there. To imagine myself in his shoes during a spacewalk, where he was travelling at 27,600 km/h with only a tether keeping him from the infiniteness of space, was a fun exercise.

Food

The [sommeliers](#) of everything.

The LA Times fast food [french fry rankings](#).

[Fish-free tuna](#).



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