



WIKINEWS PRINT EDITION

Top Stories



Shimon Peres discusses the future of Israel with Wikinews

Canupa Gluha Mani speaks about Lakota Oyate, Lakota freedom

Wikinews interviewed Canupa



Gluha Mani, a longtime activist and the central figure of the Lakota movement, about the movement and Lakota Oyate.

Featured story

recent financial, technical, and traffic history, outlines near-term forecasts for all three, and makes suggestions for slightly longer horizons as well. By itself the document led to several inter-connected news stories.

Wikipedia Current Events

The Supreme Court of the United States hears arguments on whether execution by lethal injection is a violation of the Constitution's ban on "cruel and unusual punishment."

- The war crimes trial of former Liberian President Charles Taylor resumes at The Hague, Netherlands.
- A warehouse fire in Icheon, South Korea, kills at least 40.
- Portions of Eastern Australia are affected by the worst floods in the last 20 years.
- Two United States Navy F/A-18 Super Hornets, a F/A-18E and two-seat F/A-18F, flying off the aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman, crash in the Persian Gulf. The aviators were safely recovered. There was no indication of hostile fire.
- Louisiana State University defeats Ohio State University to win the NCAA BCS National Championship Game.
- The government of Tanzania cannot account for Sh\$260 million (approx US\$200,000) in aid from the Global Fund initiative to fight AIDS and HIV.

Wikimedia leak: Will the Foundation "run on Sun"?

Julian Lemoine - known as speedblue - once wrote a search routine styled after the Google "suggest" tool; a design intended to give a result based, in part, on how many incoming links an article had. The routine might, he hoped, help the wiki software be used as a thinking tool, helping people follow their thoughts and inter-related topics through the rapidly developing English and French Wikipedia projects. He called it "Wikipedia suggest".

An internal Wikimedia communiqué was leaked over the weekend. Like many e-mails, the document is a chain of forwards, replies, and attachments. The attached Portable Document Format (PDF) file was from a PowerPoint presentation, entitled "Wikimedia Foundation: Past, Present, and Future". The presentation is watermarked confidential, do not distribute, and details the Foundation's recent financial, technical, and traffic history, outlines near-term forecasts for all three, and makes suggestions for slightly longer horizons as well. By itself the document led to several inter-connected news stories.

Wikimedia Foundation approaches donors

Sue Gardner was, in part, hired to find innovative routes to secure funding for the Foundation. What is interesting in this case is who she approached, and with whom.

Featured story

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This presentation was used during a meeting with Sun Microsystems. Sun has long been a supporter of Wikimedia, and has previously offered hardware and financial support. A loan of a Niagara machine allowed performance testing, which showed that hardware and software setup was not suitable for the Wikimedia environment which existed at the time, but both Wikimedia's environment and Sun's hardware and software have changed since those tests.

Ms Gardner's delegation included Roger McNamee, a technology financier with Elevation Partners among other connections to Silicon Valley's investors and visionaries.

The document does not explain the details of the meeting, but mentions donation proposals for short term and long term. "In general, I don't want to have a conversation with the media (even friendly media!) about meetings we have with other organizations, until and unless there is something worth talking about," Ms Gardner replied to an e-mail inquiry regarding the presentation.

Mediawiki technology

The software which underpins the Foundation's projects is constantly being developed, both from within and from third parties. Mediawiki is an open source software package, one with a significant share in its market; efforts to add functionality often have their own development projects and timelines. The presentation outlined some of these efforts and their respective timelines. Wiki-to-print is currently in testing, and is expected to deploy February to March, 2008. Flagged revisions is currently in testing, and is expected to deploy before June, 2008.

Collaborative video editing is currently in testing, and is expected to deploy initially perhaps in October 2008.

Other technologies were also shown in the presentation, but these specific examples show some of the types of projects and their ambitious initial completion dates.

Kaltura collaborative video

Some of these technologies are joint ventures with commercial entities, such as the "Kaltura widget" extension designed to support collaborative video on the Mediawiki platform. The code for this project is promised to be open sourced, and the main page of the Kaltura site has a link to sourceforge, but the <http://sourceforge.net/projects/kaltura/> cvs is currently empty though it is marked to be GPL. An inquiry into the current output of the extension finds it is embedding a flash object into the output. The special page allowing video editing was not operational after creating a user account (8 Jan 2008). The Wikimedia Foundation is expected to release an announcement regarding this project on January 14, however the current Kaltura extension, which requires proprietary flash and Kaltura's proprietary server, won't be used on Wikimedia sites.

"The Wikimedia Foundation is strongly committed to open source, open formats, sustainability, and privacy," said Brion Vibber|, Wikimedia Foundations Chief Technical Officer. "We're excited to see Kaltura working towards making their collaborative video editing system open source and more compatible with the open world, and look forward to further work in that area. The initial version of

Kaltura's extension for MediaWiki is an early demonstration, and will not be used on Wikimedia's web sites."

Flagged revisions

Other projects have been initiated from within the Wikimedia communities. The Flagged Revisions extension developed from the German Wikipedia community's desire to have an approved version of an article being the default view, with registered editors able to choose whether to see the default view or the most recent revision. The code is primarily developed and maintained by Aaron Schulz and Joerg Baach on Wikimedia's SVN server. [Quality.wikimedia.org](http://quality.wikimedia.org) and the external site wikixp.org/qa are involved in testing the extension and the concept implementation.

Flagged revisions allow the community to display versions of an article which have not been vandalised and do not contain misinformation. It is a part of several efforts to improve the quality of Wikipedia articles, spearheaded by the German Wikipedia. The German model is two-tiered, with a subset of users being able to select a "sighted version" or a "validated version". The former have been examined primarily for vandalism and simple accuracy, while the latter would involve an in-depth review of the article's content and quality.

The initial 1.0 release of the extension was in the first half of 2007, and it continues under active development as testing at the beta stages goes forward. Community models for its implementation have not yet been finalized, and they would be needed for every project and language.

Forecasts and financials

In addition to discussing technical forecasts, future expenditures were given general forecasts and a breakdown of salary growth were presented based on pre-audit details.

Costs between June 2007 and June 2008 were predicted to double, from US\$2,650,000 to US\$5,700,000 (normalized). The largest growth is expected in salaries as the Foundation undergoes re-organization and fills long-vacant positions, tripling the 2007 payroll.

Florence Nibart-Devouard, current Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Wikimedia Foundation, expressed pleasure at discovering the projections. "We have not [had] a complete financial picture for some time. It was requested of Carolyn while she was employed with us[, and] it was one of the priorities for Sue Gardner to give quarterly updates, but these did not happen yet because there is so much to do," she said during a phone interview on 7 Jan. "... The board did not request these projections, but I think it should be a good idea if they were informed of them. Especially when we prepare next year's budget, in April or May."

The Foundation's Chief Operations Officer, Carolyn Doran, resigned in July 2007. Although Ms Gardner was hired in July, Board member Michael Davis, former treasurer, provided financial information to the board through much of 2007.

Alaskan plane crash survivors: Cargo door swung open

Survivors of this weekend's airplane crash in Alaska, United States say they saw the the forward cargo door of their Piper Piper PA-31 Navajo Chieftain swing

open shortly after takeoff. The plane crashed into frigid waters a short distance from the runway, killing six of the ten on board, including the pilot, and leaving the other four hospitalized.

The US National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is investigating the accident, and NTSB investigator Clint Johnson said "There have been some incidents and accidents that did result from the door coming open. We don't know yet if there are similarities." He refused to speculate on accident cause, pointing out that a full investigation would take some time to complete.

The remains of the fuselage have been laid out in a maintenance hangar close to the Kodiak Island accident site and is scheduled for examination tomorrow pending arrival of an accident investigation representative from Piper, who will provide detailed technical assistance. The nine-passenger complement had chartered the Servant Air plane to fly to Homer, and represented maximum capacity for the twin-engined plane.

It appears that the survivors were seated at the rear of the plane. The deceased were identified as pilot Robin Starrett, 50, of Kodiak and five Homer residents - Stefan F. Basargin, 36, Pavel F. Basargin, 30, Zahary F. Martushev, 25, Iosif F. Martushev, 15, and Andrian Reutov, 22. The survivor's names have now also been released; they are Karnely Ivanov, 32, of Anchor Point, Feodot Basargin, 33, of Anchorage, Anton Rijkoff, 30, of Anchorage, and Andrean Basargin, 25, of Homer.

There have been two previous cases of Alaskan Piper Navajo

crashes confirmed to have been caused by open forward cargo hatches. In April 1990 a compartment opened during takeoff from Deadnight; this caused separation of an engine cover which proceeded to strike and damage the horizontal stabilizer. No-one was injured.

It was discovered that a vital spring designed to exert pressure and thus keep the door shut was missing; the operator had improvised its own device to shut the door without correctly locking it.

The second crash occurred in May 1996. A Cape Smythe Air Services owned-and-operated aircraft attempting takeoff at Point Hope had its forward door unexpectedly open as the nose lifted off. Cargo went through the left propeller, forcing an emergency crash landing on the ice severely injuring two people.

The pilot had loaded the hold and then visually inspected the door. Under the false impression that it had been secured properly he proceeded to takeoff. He had originally attempted to turn the aircraft around and told the NTSB he had thought that the aircraft should have been able to fly despite the open door, although he appreciated aircraft documentation did not specifically mention such conditions.

Small, local-based Servant Air had been operating the 1979 aircraft since 2004 without any difficulties. As with many such carriers, the pilot is responsible for loading and checking the door. The door is approximately 3 1/2 feet wide and 2 1/2 feet high.

2008 Taipei Game Show preview

The 2008 Taipei Game Show, organized by Taipei Computer Association, supported by Bahamut Gamer Community, will begin on January 24 and then close on the 28 at the Taipei World Trade Center. This exhibition is sponsored by FamilyMart and titled the official motto with "Where You Are One of the Gamers" (in Chinese: 全家都是玩家) to invite the public to visit the show.

Not only the main show and the votes of the 2007 Taiwan Digital Contents Award, but world-class experts from the gaming industry like Yoshiyuki Tomino and David Gould will share experiences about gaming developments at the 2008 Taiwan Digital Content Forum.

According to the organizer, the award ceremony of the Taiwan Digital Contents Award was held before the main show in the past, but due to the schedule and arrangements of the Industrial Development Bureau of Ministry of Economic Affairs, the organizer decided to exhibit nominees from the 2007 Taiwan Digital Contents Award and postpone the award ceremony to February.

For the issues on noise and flow of people, the organizer will bring some security policy by the venue owner TAITRA into practice during the show hours to prevent disorders of the show. Minors under age 12 also will be allowed to visit

Abbas and Olmert meet before Bush visit

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas held a final meeting Tuesday before their separate talks with United States President Bush this week during his visit to Israel and the Palestinian territories.

Just hours before President Bush is due to touch down in Israel, Mr. Olmert and Mr. Abbas met in Jerusalem.

Neither man issued any public statements following the meeting, but they instructed their negotiators to form working groups to discuss core issues such as the status of Jerusalem, Israel's borders with a future Palestinian state and the issue of Palestinian refugees. The talks are supposed to lead to the formation of a Palestinian state by the end of this year. However, neither side said when the talks would start.

Talks between the two sides have been bogged down since last November's Annapolis, Maryland Mideast peace conference, with Palestinians angry over continued Israeli settlement expansion in East Jerusalem and the West Bank, and Israelis angry over continued Palestinian militant attacks.

Mahdi Abdel Hadi who heads the Palestinian research group PASSIA says both Mr. Olmert and Mr. Abbas are politically weakened, and it is unlikely either man can probably give the other what he wants.

"I think both leaders, Olmert and Abbas are weak, vis-à-vis their constituencies," he explained. "It is what they can deliver to their own societies. Olmert is facing challenges by other leaders to take over the prime ministership. Abbas is challenged by the partition between Gaza and the West Bank and there have been no improvements to the quality of life under occupation."

Since their last meeting with Mr. Bush at the Annapolis Mideast

peace conference, Mr. Abbas and Mr. Olmert have each accused the other of reneging on pledges to advance the peace process. Now it will be up to Mr. Bush to see if he can get Mr. Abbas and Mr. Olmert to bridge their differences and get the peace process that was revived at Annapolis back on track.

Bomb explodes in Sri Lanka near Ministry of Finance

A bomb exploded Tuesday night in Colombo, the capital of Sri Lanka. The bomb may have targeted a high-profile individual, traveling through the high-security zone in the Colombo Fort area.

Earlier in the day, a government minister was killed by a roadside bomb. This blast has been blamed on the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) by government officials.

The deputy director of the government teaching hospital in the town of Ragama, Lalini Gurusinghe, announced the death of the minister. The explosion took place in Ja-Ela, a town some 12 miles north of Colombo.

Jay Walsh named Wikimedia Foundation Head of Communications

Recently of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), where he worked in media and public relations, Mr. Jay Walsh was announced as the replacement for Sandy Ordonez as the communications officer for the Wikimedia Foundation on an internal mailing list on Tuesday, 8 January.

"I'm extremely grateful for [Sandy Ordonez's] hard work and excellent judgement," said Sue Gardner, Executive Director of Wikimedia Foundation, in her announcement. Ordonez managed

the WMF's public and media relations from January 2007, and will stay on in Florida until the end of the month when the Tampa office is closed.

"The goal is to give Jay a fairly long handover time. So until the end of January, please continue to work directly with Sandy, while she helps Jay get oriented," added Gardner.

Walsh is fresh from a position as Manager, Public Relations at Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Previous communications positions include working for Indian and Northern Affairs, Government of Canada; Health Canada, Government of Canada; and Nova Scotia College of Art and Design University. His academics include Concordia and Mount Allison universities.

Walsh will be based out of the new offices in San Francisco, California when they open on the January 15.

A1GP New Zealand races Boeing 777

An Air New Zealand Boeing 777 and A1GP Team New Zealand's car held two races together at an operational airport today.

Auckland International Airport this morning (NZDT) offered the use of a runway for the national airline of New Zealand and the national A1GP team to race against each other.

The A1GP car nicknamed Black Beauty was driven by official race driver, Jonny Reid; and the commercial airliner codenamed NZ Alpha One (NZA1) piloted by Captain Dave Morgan.

Mr Reid said, "I've never been on a such a wide track before and it

was fantastic looking across and seeing the Boeing 777 alongside me - it was something else altogether."

Captain Morgan was able to win the first race against Mr Reid after it was given a head start due to it's slow start time. NZA1 left the tarmac traveling at around 270 km/h, whereas Black Beauty had just sped past at 300 km/h.

In the second race, Black Beauty managed to win despite having a slower start due to surface water on the runway. But water was not too much of a problem because the track was straight, Mr Reid says.

Black Beauty was not able to reach its top speed due to a speed limiter being required for A1GP races.

Prior to the commencement of the first race, Captain Morgan said that the biggest challenge he faces is trying to keep NZA1 on the ground due to less fuel than normally on a test flight, and no passengers.

Auckland International Airport managed to accommodate the race while just adjusting scheduled times and keeping the rest of the airport fully functional after being approached with the deal six-months ago. The airport has never closed since opening 42-years ago.

The stunt was used for promotion of the next race, to be held on January 20 at Taupo, New Zealand. Twenty-one nations will be arriving to take part in the sprint and feature race. Team New Zealand is currently ranked third in overall standings.

Sun begins Solar Cycle 24
The first sunspot marking a new

solar cycle has been identified, physicists at the NOAA announced on January 4. This sunspot is a precursor for the normal increase in activity which takes place during the 11-year solar cycle.

"This sunspot is like the first robin of spring. In this case, it's an early omen of solar storms that will gradually increase over the next few years," said solar physicist Douglas Biesecker of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Space Weather Prediction Center.

The new sunspot, identified as #10,981, is the latest visible spot to appear since NOAA began numbering them on January 5, 1972. Its high-latitude location at 27 degrees North, and its negative polarity leading to the right in the Northern Hemisphere are clear-cut signs of a new solar cycle, according to NOAA experts. The first active regions and sunspots of a new solar cycle can emerge at high latitudes while those from the previous cycle continue to form closer to the equator.

The sunspot has been reported by several observatories, confirming this is the first spot which developed into a visible sunspot group. SpaceWeather.com reported that it produced auroras on Jan. 5th. "It was a nice flowing display that persisted for an hour and a half," reports photographer Calvin Hall of Palmer, Alaska.

A sunspot is an area of highly organized magnetic activity on the surface of the sun. The new 11-year cycle is expected to build gradually, with the number of sunspots and solar storms reaching a maximum by 2011 or 2012, though devastating storms can occur at any time.

Today in History

1839 – The French Academy of Sciences announced the Daguerreotype photographic process, named after its inventor, French artist and chemist Louis Daguerre.

1861 – The civilian ship Star of the West was fired upon as it attempted to send supplies and reinforcements to Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor before the American Civil War.

1878 – Umberto I became King of Italy.

1916 – World War I: The last British troops evacuated from Gallipoli, as the Ottoman Empire prevailed over of a joint British and French operation to capture Istanbul at the Battle of Gallipoli.

1923 – The autogyro, a type of rotorcraft invented by civil engineer and pilot Juan de la Cierva, made its first successful flight at Cuatro Vientos Airfield in Madrid, Spain.

1972 – RMS Queen Elizabeth, an ocean liner which sailed the Atlantic Ocean for the Cunard White Star Line, was destroyed by fire in Victoria Harbour, Hong Kong.

2005 – Mahmoud Abbas was elected President of the Palestinian National Authority to replace Yasser Arafat, who died in 2004. January 09 is Martyrs' Day in Panama.

Quote of the Day

One's life has value so long as one attributes value to the life of others, by means of love, friendship, indignation and compassion.

~ Simone de Beauvoir

Word of the Day

asinine adj

1. Failing to exercise intelligence or judgment.
2. Of or relating to a donkey.

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http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portal:Current_events

Today in History

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page

Quote of the Day

http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Main_Page

Word of the Day

http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Main_Page

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