



Top Stories

UN aid plane crash kills 17 in Democratic Republic of the Congo

A United Nations (UN) aid plane in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has crashed, killing



A Beechcraft 1900

Image: Adrian Pingstone.

all seventeen passengers on board, according to a source from the UN.

According to the

spokesperson "The plane was found 15 kilometres (eight miles) northwest of Bukavu airport. There were 15 passengers and two crew on board."

DHS relies on Wikipedia for asylum information, appeals court rules against use

The 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled that the Department of Homeland Security



was wrong in using the online encyclopedia Wikipedia as a reference when

deciding whether to allow asylum seekers to stay in the United States.

Service held in Nova Scotia on tenth anniversary of Swissair crash that killed 229



Image: Outrigger CC-BY-SA-CA 2.0

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anniversary of the Swissair Flight 111 disaster. None of the 229 people on board survived the aircraft's impact with the sea on September 2, 1998.

Questions raised about McCain's choice of Palin, aides insist "thorough vetting" process

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Wikipedia Current Events

Hurricane Ike becomes the fifth hurricane of the 2008 Atlantic hurricane season later strengthening to Category 3.

- Flooding from Tropical Storm Hanna causes 26 deaths in Haiti.
- United States Army troops cross the Pakistan border and launch a raid in the Angoor Ada region of Waziristan.
- GMAC's Residential Capital

Wikipedia Current Events

mortgage provider announces plans to dramatically reduce the size of its business resulting in the loss of 5,000 jobs.

•Japan's Kyodo news agency reports that North Korea has started rebuilding the Yongbyon Nuclear Scientific Research Center in retaliation for the United States failing to remove it from a list of states that sponsor terrorism.

•At least 15 people die in an attack on the village of Musa Nikow in South Waziristan with witnesses claiming that United States military forces are involved. Pakistan later lodges an official complaint.

•The United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit finds "that a reliance on information in Wikipedia is insufficient grounds for a ruling" in an immigration case.

•Prime Minister of Pakistan Yousaf Raza Gilani survives an assassination attempt.

•The Independent Monitoring Commission reports that the Provisional IRA has effectively been disbanded as a terrorist organization, but the Provisional IRA Army Council still exists

Professional wrestler Walter "Killer" Kowalski dies at age 81

Former professional wrestler Killer Kowalski died in the early morning hours of August 30th at the age of 81. Kowalski suffered a major heart attack on August 8 and

remained in critical condition at a local hospital in Everett, Massachusetts until August 18 when his family took him off of life support.

During a career that spanned for 30 years, Kowalski wrestled for several organizations including the National Wrestling Alliance and the American Wrestling Association. In the 1960's and 70's Kowalski wrestled for the World Wide Wrestling Federation. In 1976 he won the WWWF World Tag Team Championship with Big John Studd.

In 1952 Kowalski was involved in an incident with wrestler Yukon Eric. During the match while performing his signature diving knee drop he ripped part of Eric's ear off. When Kowalski visited him in the hospital the pair laughed with each other, the following day the newspaper stated that Kowalski showed up at the hospital and laughed at his victim rather than with him, furthering Kowalski's image as a heel.

After retiring Kowalski opened up a wrestling school. During his time teaching he taught some superstars such as Triple H, Perry Saturn and Chyna. He has also trained Chris Nowinski, A-Train, Frankie Kazarian, Kenny Dykstra as well as others.

Kowalski was inducted into the WWE Hall of Fame and Wrestling Observer Newsletter Hall of Fame in 1996, the Professional Wrestling Hall of Fame in 2003 and the National Polish-American Hall of Fame in 2007.

Former student of Kowalski, Triple H said "It's a huge loss. Walter was one of the biggest name performers of his time. His legacy will live on forever."

DHS relies on Wikipedia for asylum information, appeals court rules against use

The 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled that the Department of Homeland Security was wrong in using the online encyclopedia Wikipedia as a reference when deciding whether to allow asylum seekers to stay in the United States.

The department used the Wikipedia article named *laissez-passer* to decide whether the document was a valid form of identification. This is despite the fact that the article had a large orange notice at the top of the article saying that "this article does not cite any references or sources."

The Board of Immigration Appeals has stated that it doesn't "encourage the use of resources such as Wikipedia.com in reaching pivotal decisions in immigration proceedings." They said that they allowed the decision to stand due to the fact that the information seemed accurate.

The appeals court noted when making the decision that Wikipedia admits that articles will often go long periods of time. Below is the extract from the court documents that makes this point: "...The site acknowledges [that articles], "may become caught up in a heavily unbalanced viewpoint and can take some time – months perhaps – to regain a better-balanced consensus." Id. As a consequence, Wikipedia observes, the website's "radical openness means that any given article may be, at any given moment, in a bad state: for example, it could be in the middle of a large edit or it could have been recently vandalized."

—United States Court of Appeals

Cary Bass, the volunteer coordinator of the Wikimedia Foundation, gave Wikinews the following statement on this issue: "Wikipedia is a free encyclopedia -- almost every article can be edited by anyone at any time. The vast majority of the information is accurate and the editors strive to write from a neutral point of view, but the nature of the project is that at any moment, any article can contain erroneous information or pure inaccuracies.

Anyone using Wikipedia as an original source should be mindful of this fact; and anyone citing critical information such as a judge for use in a lawsuit is advised to use the sources provided via each article's references section, history and talk page to verify that the information they are reading is, in fact, accurate."—Cary Bass

Service held in Nova Scotia on tenth anniversary of Swissair crash that killed 229

A memorial service has been held in Nova Scotia, Canada to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Swissair Flight 111 disaster. None of the 229 people on board survived the aircraft's impact with the sea on September 2, 1998.

Hundreds of search and rescue personnel and local fishermen were mobilised after the crash in St. Margaret's Bay near Halifax to recover fragments of both the aircraft and the victims. The state of the human remains was such that identifying them resulted in what would remain the largest DNA identification operation up until the World Trade Centre collapsed.

At the ceremony, attended by around 100 people, 229 heart-shaped stones crafted from beach rocks and simply decorated with painted stars flowers and hearts were available for the mourners to take and place at the foot of the memorial at Bayswater, one for each of the 229 names upon the granite monument. Many flowers were also laid there.

The aircraft was a widebodied jet which had departed John F.Kennedy International Airport in New York at 8:18 p.m. 53 minutes after takeoff pilot Urs Zimmerman and co-pilot Stephan Loew smelt smoke in the cockpit and within three more minutes smoke was visible. The plane, by then in Canadian airspace, tried to reach Halifax Airport but never made it, hitting the water at around 9:31 p.m. at 350 mph (563 kph).

The cause of the disaster was determined to be highly flammable insulating foam, which caught light after an arcing electrical wire triggered a small fire. The fire was ferocious enough to destroy critical power cables, leaving the aircraft uncontrollable.

The investigation was one of aviation's costliest and most complicated, costing the Transportation Safety Bureau of Canada \$60 million. The TSB produced 23 recommendations to prevent a recurrence of the disaster, but only five have been implemented in the decade since the crash, including some flammable material restrictions and electrical safety improvements.

Several people at the hour-long multifaith ceremony complained at the perceived lack of action. "How come after 10 years we are hearing reports that only five of

some 20 recommendations for airplanes have been carried out? What has gone wrong with the bureaucracy - the inertia for that?" asked Rabbi David Ellis. John Butt, who headed the identification effort as Nova Scotia's chief medical examiner at the time, said it was 'disappointing' that action had not been taken and that it was "not very good to think about flying in an aircraft when you know recommendations have been made about the standards of safety and they haven't been adopted."

TSB member Jonathan Seymour was also critical of the lack of action, particularly on the US Federal Aviation Administration's part. "It's just that obviously after 10 years you would have hoped that things would have moved on quite significantly further than they have. It's frustrating that we're still that far away from where we might want to be after 10 years," he said.

UN aid plane crash kills 17 in Democratic Republic of the Congo

A United Nations (UN) aid plane in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has crashed, killing all seventeen passengers on board, according to a source from the UN. According to the spokesperson "The plane was found 15 kilometres (eight miles) northwest of Bukavu airport. There were 15 passengers and two crew on board."

Air Serv International, the operator of the aircraft, said that it did not believe there to be any survivors. They also said in the statement that "the staff of Air Serv International express their condolences and deepest sympathy to the families of the passengers and crew."

The UN has identified the victims as a Canadian member of the UN Development Programme (UNDP), an Indian who worked for the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Aid, two members of Medecins Sans Frontiers, one from France and one from the Republic of Congo.

The other thirteen were citizens of the DRC. Two were employees of Air Serv and were the crew. Four were with the UNDP and another four were civil servants, while the last three worked for Handicap International.

The UN spokesperson also said that "the helicopter landed far away [from the wreckage] and the search and rescue team headed to the site on foot."

The plane was on a journey from Kinshasa to Goma, with stops at Mbandaka, Kisangani and Bukavu.

Air crashes are common in the DRC and, as a result, Congolese airliners are banned from flying in the airspace of countries in the European Union.

US Senator Joseph Lieberman speaks at Republican National Convention

United States Senator Joseph Lieberman (ID-CT) delivered an impassioned speech yesterday to Republicans at the 2008 Republican National Convention. His choice to do so angered numerous congressional Democrats, and may lead to sanctions by the party.

Lieberman spent 18 years as a Democrat, winning his first Senate race in 1988. After three terms, Lieberman narrowly lost the Democratic primary in the lead-up to the 2006 election. Running instead under the "Connecticut for

Lieberman" party banner, Lieberman beat his former democratic opponent Ned Lamont, Republican Alan Schlesinger and third-party candidates thereby retaining his seat. He promptly changed his official party affiliation to "Independent Democrat", which he continues to use.

Lieberman, who had previously endorsed John McCain for the presidency and was long considered as a possible running mate, spoke to the Republican party about choosing a maverick:

"But when they look to Washington, all too often they do not see their leaders coming together to tackle these problems. Instead they see Democrats and Republicans fighting each other, rather than fighting for the American people...It shouldn't take a natural disaster to teach us that the American people don't care much if you have an "R" or a "D" after your name."

Lieberman also took shots at his own party, and its candidate, Senator Barack Obama: "Senator Obama is a gifted and eloquent young man who can do great things for our country in the years ahead. But eloquence is no substitute for a record—not in these tough times. In the Senate he has not reached across party lines to get anything significant done, nor has he been willing to take on powerful interest groups in the Democratic Party. Contrast that to John McCain's record, or the record of the last Democratic President, Bill Clinton, who stood up to some of those same Democratic interest groups and worked with Republicans to get important things done like welfare reform, free trade agreements, and a balanced budget."

He also elicited booing when

mentioning Obama's stance on ground-troop funding: "When others wanted to retreat in defeat from the field of battle, when Barack Obama was voting to cut off funding for our troops on the ground, John McCain had the courage to stand against the tide of public opinion and support the surge, and because of that, today, our troops are at last beginning to come home, not in failure, but in honor."

Lieberman's decision to speak at the Convention sparked anger from many of his Democratic colleagues. A "Lieberman Must Go" petition, boasting over 50,000 signatures, was launched by filmmaker Robert Greenwald. Greenwald seeks to have Lieberman stripped of his chairmanship on the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. Pundits consider this likely if Democrats gain Senate seats in the upcoming election, guaranteeing a safe majority. (The current makeup of the Senate is 49 Republicans, 49 Democrats, and two independents, Lieberman and Bernie Sanders of Vermont.)

Lieberman's speech came on the first day of the convention, and followed that of Senator Fred Thompson and the televised appearance of U.S. President George W. Bush. The convention will conclude on Thursday, 4 September.

Questions raised about McCain's choice of Palin, aides insist "thorough vetting" process

Various questions have been raised about the choice of Alaska Governor Sarah Palin as Senator John McCain's choice for Republican vice presidential running mate. There have been

doubts over how thoroughly McCain had examined Palin's background before announcing that he had selected her to be his running mate on August 29. McCain's advisers insist that Palin was "thoroughly vetted," a process that would have included a review of all financial and legal records as well as a criminal background check.

Palin is the Republican Party's first female candidate for Vice President. In 1984, Geraldine Ferraro was Walter Mondale's running mate on the Democratic Party ticket.

Yesterday, Palin and her husband issued a statement saying that their 17-year-old unmarried daughter Bristol is five months pregnant and that she intends to marry the father of the baby. The statement came after media speculation and internet rumours that Palin's 4-month-old son, Trig, was in fact her grandson, and that the mother is Bristol.

Senator Barack Obama, McCain's opponent in the 2008 election, was asked to comment on Palin's family situation:

"Let me be as clear as possible... I think people's families are off-limits, and people's children are especially off-limits. This shouldn't be part of our politics. It has no relevance to Governor Palin's performance as governor or her potential performance as a vice president," said Obama.

Obama further told reporters to "back off these kinds of stories" and noted that he was born to an 18-year-old mother himself. Obama became annoyed when asked about a news report that quoted an unnamed senior McCain campaign aide saying that

Obama's name appears in liberal blogs speculating about Trig's parentage. "I am offended by that statement... There is no evidence at all that any of this involved us."

"We don't go after people's families; we don't get them involved in the politics. It's not appropriate, and it's not relevant," Obama added. "Our people were not involved in any way in this, and they will not be. And if I ever thought that there was somebody in my campaign that was involved in something like that, they'd be fired."

The McCain campaign said that Senator McCain was aware of Bristol Palin's pregnancy before he asked her mother to join him on the ticket. McCain reportedly did not see the pregnancy as a detriment to Governor Palin's selection as the vice presidential candidate.

McCain told reporters that he was satisfied with his campaign's vetting process: "The vetting process was completely thorough and I'm grateful for the results."

Governor Palin has hired a private lawyer in a legislative ethics investigation in Alaska into whether she abused her power in dismissing the state's public safety commissioner, Walter Monegan. The investigation is checking into whether Palin dismissed Monegan for his reluctance to fire Palin's former brother-in-law, Mike Wooten.

There is no sign that Palin's formal nomination this week at the Republican National Convention was in jeopardy. The controversy adds anxiety to Republicans who are worried that Democrats would use the selection of Palin to question McCain's judgment.

Republicans were quick to note that Palin has "more experience" in elected office than does Obama.

McCain's choice of Palin came as a shock to some, after it was expected that McCain would choose Joe Lieberman, Tim Pawlenty, or Tom Ridge for the vice presidential nomination. McCain had reportedly met Palin only twice before her selection, and had his first face-to-face interview with her on August 28. McCain offered Palin the vice presidential spot just moments after their meeting concluded. The two appeared at a campaign rally event the following morning in Ohio.

Great White offers US\$1 million settlement over Station nightclub fire

United States hard rock band Great White has filed a settlement offer of US\$1 million to families of victims of the Station nightclub fire. 100 people died including band guitarist Ty Longley and over 200 were injured in the February 2003 disaster in Rhode Island.

The fire started when band manager Daniel Bichele ignited pyrotechnics towards the beginning of a concert by Great White at the club. Cheap packing foam had been used as soundproofing material to surround the stage, and this ignited. Great White were never charged, but Bichele was given a 15-year sentence with 11 of those suspended in 2006 for 100 counts of involuntary manslaughter, to which he pleaded guilty. He was paroled in March this year.

The settlement offer would need approved by each of the over 300 plaintiffs, as well as the federal judge. It would add to \$175 million already offered by dozens of defendants in the case. No money

has been handed out to any of the claimants as yet, and a law professor from Duke University has been hired to develop a formula that will determine how much each party is entitled to.

The fire was the fourth-deadliest nightclub fire in US history.

US hands over security for Anbar province to Iraq

The United States military has handed Anbar province, once the centre of Iraq's Sunni insurgency, to Iraqi control at a ceremony in the provincial capital. For Iraqi politics, the Anbar handover is especially meaningful because the Shiite-dominated Iraq military will now provide security in a largely Sunni province. Anbar is the eleventh of 18 provinces that the coalition has returned to Iraqi control, but it is the first Sunni province. President George W. Bush said that "Today, Anbar is no longer lost to al-Qaeda, it is al-Qaeda that lost Anbar."

Stanford builds helicopters that teach themselves acrobatics

Stanford University has developed an artificial intelligence software that allows their model helicopters to learn complex aerial acrobatics simply by "watching" a human. The human controlled helicopter is monitored by a variety of sensors which funnel all the data into the AI software. Once the acrobatic trick has been repeated a few times, the computer analyzes the data. It is then capable of repeating, with greater accuracy than the human controller, the acrobatics. This system allows the helicopters to preform aerial maneuvers far more complicated than previously possible.

Malaysian man uses nut to extend penis, gets stuck

A Malaysian man, who was about to be engaged, attempted to use a nut to weigh down and elongate his penis. Once he got an erection, the nut became stuck and he was unable to remove it. He sought treatment at a local hospital where they were able to remove it. He is expected to be released from the hospital shortly.

Today in History

476 – Germanic leader Odoacer captured Ravenna and deposed Romulus Augustus, Emperor of the Western Roman Empire.

1260 – Wars of the Guelphs and Ghibellines: The Siena Ghibellines defeated the Florence Guelphs at the Battle of Montaperti outside of Siena, present-day Italy.

1886 – After over 25 years of fighting against the United States Army and the armed forces of Mexico, Geronimo of the

Chiricahua Apache surrendered at Skeleton Canyon in Arizona.

1888 – American inventor George Eastman registered the trademark "Kodak" after receiving a patent for his roll film camera.

1957 – Defying the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education*, Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus deployed the

Arkansas National Guard to prevent African American students from attending Little Rock's Central High School.

September 04 is Immigrant's Day in Argentina

Quote of the Day

An original writer is not one who imitates nobody, but one whom nobody can imitate. ~ François-René de Chateaubriand

Word of the Day

wane v

1. To progressively loses its splendor, ardor, power, etc.
2. (of light) To dim or diminish in strength.

3. (of the Moon) To decrease in visible surface during its phases.

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