



Top Stories

Plane makes emergency water landing in Darwin Harbour

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US job cuts last month highest since 1974, unemployment rate rises

As a result of the ongoing global financial crisis of 2008–2009, American employers have cut 598,000 jobs over the past month, the most in one month since December



1974. The unemployment rate also rose approximately 0.4 percent, bringing the rate up to 7.6 percent (11.6 million people), the highest since January 1992.

US swimmer Phelps suspended over 'pot pipe'

United States swimmer Michael Phelps has been banned from competition and his training stipend revoked for three months by USA



Top Stories

Swimming after a picture of Phelps smoking from a glass pipe was published last Sunday by British tabloid News of the World.

Wikipedia Current Events

The United States Food and Drug Administration approves the first drug made using genetically-engineered animals.

- The U.S. economy lost 598,000 jobs during January 2009 as unemployment rises to 7.6 percent.
- Canada's economy lost 129,000 jobs during January 2009, an all-time record, as unemployment rises to 7.2 percent.
- Bankruptcies in the United Kingdom rose during 2008 by 50 percent to an all-time high.
- United States regulators close down small banks in California and Georgia with the total number of US bank failures in 2009 to 8.
- A teething drug is withdrawn from circulation after killing 84 Nigerian children in three months.

- Pakistani nuclear scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan is released from house arrest in Islamabad.
- United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon visits Iraq to meet with Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki.
- Sri Lanka's government refuses to negotiate with the Tamil Tigers at what it calls "this crucial and

Wikipedia Current Events

final stage" of the ongoing civil war.

- North Korea fires short-range missiles at the Northern Limit Line.
- Russia's government will allow the U.S. Armed Forces to ship nonlethal equipment to Afghanistan through Russian territory.
- Somali pirates will release the MV Blue Star and her crew of 28 Egyptians upon receiving a ransom.
- The USS Port Royal runs aground off Hawaii.

Plane makes emergency water landing in Darwin Harbour

An Australian twin-engined Piper Chieftain carrying five passengers safely landed in the waters of Darwin's harbour today. The pilot of the aeroplane, Steve Bolle, experienced some engine trouble shortly after departing from Darwin International Airport. Darwin is the capital of Australia's Northern Territory, situated on the Timor Sea.

It is not yet known what caused the incident.

The aircraft's flight plan took it over water, giving the pilot few opportunities to land the plane on ground. Bolle decided to land in the water, as opposed to the beach, as the firmness of the ground on the latter was not known.

The plane ditched in shallow water in the harbour, and Bolle and his five passengers were able to safely wade to shore.

The Piper Chieftain was en route to Naningrida, located half a thousand kilometres east of Darwin, according to the aeroplane's owner, the Australian information technology company CSG.

"We would like to congratulate the pilot following all emergency landing and evacuation procedures and his very professional handling of the situation," CSG said in a statement.

A few weeks ago, the pilot of an Airbus passenger jet departing from La Guardia in New York City also successfully ditched in water after bird strikes disabled both of the aeroplane's engines.

Somali pirates agree to release Egyptian ship with fertiliser cargo and 28 crew

Pirates in Somalia have agreed to release the MV Blue Star, her crew of 28 and cargo of fertiliser after a ransom figure was agreed upon between the vessel's owner and the pirates.

The Blue Star was captured on January 1 near Bab al-Mandabm whilst transporting 6,000 tonnes of urea for use as fertiliser. The ship is Egyptian-owned with an Egyptian crew, and sails under the flag of Saint Kitts and Nevis.

Details of the release deal are unclear. The International Herald Tribune quotes owner Abdel Rahman Awwa as saying that he expected a release "within hours", while the Melbourne Herald Sun named him as Abderrahman el-Awwa and quoted him as saying

he did not expect the vessel to be freed "before four days." The Herald Tribune attributes their story to Reuters, while the Herald Sun cites the Agence France-Presse as the author of their article.

IHT also says that the ransom figure is unknown, but reports that sources within the company that owns the Blue Star as giving a figure over US\$3 million. The Herald Sun again disagrees, saying Awwa told reporters that "We have reached an agreement [with the pirates] for a million dollar ransom." The Sun cites Awwa as giving the reason for delays as waiting for the pirates to select a secure location to receive their money.

The Egyptian crew also expect to be released soon, according to contact with their families. Engineer Ibrahim Otman reported improved treatment received from his captors, including increased food and permission to walk on the ship's deck.

US job cuts last month highest since 1974, unemployment rate rises

As a result of the ongoing global financial crisis of 2008–2009, American employers have cut 598,000 jobs over the past month, the most in one month since December 1974. The unemployment rate also rose approximately 0.4 percent, bringing the rate up to 7.6 percent (11.6 million people), the highest since January 1992. This is according to the United States Labor Department's monthly unemployment report released last week.

US President Barack Obama asked Congress today to support and quickly pass a \$900 billion

economic stimulus package that would, according to some, help create more jobs and decrease the unemployment rate. "All of us in Washington must remember that we're here to work for the American people. And if we drag our feet and fail to act, this crisis will turn into a catastrophe," said Obama in a statement this morning.

Obama warned that the rate could grow to double digits if Congress did not act fast and pass the bill allowing the package, and stated that the report was "very troubling."

"These numbers demand action. It is time for Congress to act," he also said, "That's 3.6 million Americans who need our help," he stated, referring to the number of American workers that had been laid off since the United States officially entered economic recession in December 2007.

Factories have been hit the hardest in the past month, laying off 207,000 workers, approximately 20 percent of the month's layoffs and the most by the industry since 1982. The next highest was the construction industry, which cut an estimated 110,000 workers last month. Other hard-hit industries include the financial industries, cutting 42,000 jobs, the retail industry, which cut 46,000, and leisure and hospitality, losing 28,000 workers.

"This is a horror show we're watching. By every measure available - loss of employment and hours, rise of unemployment, shrinkage of the employment to population rate - this recession is steeper than any recession of the last 40 years, including the harsh recession of the early 1980s," stated Lawrence Mishel, an

economist and president of the Economic Policy Institute, a US-based research organization focused on the economy. Economic forecasters reported that their predictions had actually been less severe than the report stated.

The United States Congress is currently debating a \$900 billion economic stimulus bill that will attempt to halt the recession, and will continue to do so until a measure has been reached.

US swimmer Phelps suspended over 'pot pipe'

United States swimmer Michael Phelps has been banned from competition and his training stipend revoked for three months by USA Swimming after Phelps was photographed smoking from a glass pipe, often used for smoking cannabis. The picture was published last Sunday by British tabloid News of the World.

USA Swimming, which is the governing body of swimming in the United States, however said that no "anti-doping" rules had been violated.

"This is not a situation where any anti-doping rule was violated, but we decided to send a strong message to Michael because he disappointed so many people, particularly the hundreds of thousands of USA Swimming member kids who look up to him as a role model and a hero," it stated. "Michael has voluntarily accepted this reprimand and has committed to earn back our trust."

The suspension will end in time for Phelps to train for the US Championships, which are to be held on the 7th of July.

Phelps has also lost sponsor Kellogg, who said that it would not

renew its deal with the swimmer next month.

Phelps won a record eight gold medals at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing last year, and has since become one of the world's most famous athletes.

Denny's Super Bowl free 'Grand Slam Breakfast' brings 2 million diners

Denny's 1,600 chain restaurants across North America, Puerto Rico and Canada, were slammed for eight hours Tuesday with hungry patrons standing on sidewalks for nearly two hours to take advantage of the \$5.99 "Grand Slam Breakfast" giveaway.

Denny's, a dining chain with annual revenue of about \$900 million, has advertised in a TV commercial Sunday during the Super Bowl XLIII that it would give away its signature breakfast from 6 a.m. until 2 p.m. local time Tuesday, at all its restaurants in the U.S., Canada and Puerto Rico, while supplies lasted.

Denny's Diner has promoted the iconic dish giveaway heavily, with a bold 30-second appeal ad that aired during the third quarter of the Super Bowl 43 on Sunday, plus another 15-second ad during the post-game show, offering a free breakfast to some 90 million viewers. In addition, it has placed a full-page ad in USA Today's Monday edition. The promotion was further announced on The Today Show and notices were also sent out to the chain's "Denny's Breakfast Club" members.

The NBC ad, which was bought to unveil a new promotion for customers squeezed by the recession, may have cost as much as \$3 million, said Nelson Marchioli, CEO of Denny's Corp.

Super Bowl XLIII's 30-second commercial time slot costs \$2.4 million—\$3 million for the airtime alone, excluding production and talent costs.

The game was televised live by the US NBC Sunday Night Football and Canada's CTV Television Network. BayTSP has reported that, "as of 10 a.m. Wednesday, commercials that initially aired during NBC's Super Bowl XLIII broadcast subsequently had been watched online more than 28 million times."

"The promotion has a total cost of \$5 million U.S., which includes \$3 million for the commercial on NBC," said a Denny's spokesman, noting also that the company received about \$50 million in news coverage, most of which was positive. According to a Denny's representative, two million people walked through the restaurant chains' doors Tuesday, and each Denny's restaurant served an average of 130 Grand Slams per hour.

With the "Denny's Feeds America" promotion, the company has reported 14 million hits on its Web site between Sunday night and Monday morning. Denny's shares rose 6 cents, or 3.1 percent, to \$1.98 in afternoon trading. The stock has traded in a range of \$1.18 to \$4.10 over the past 52 weeks.

"Denny's free Grand Slam" has ranked in the top 10 Google searches early Tuesday and fell to No. 18 by the end of the promotion, while "denny s locations" was #9 on Google Trends, which tracks fast-rising searches. It has also held spots No. 1 (Denny's) and 7 (Grand Slam) on Twitter's trending topics. It has generated much chat on Twitter, garnering 1,700 tweets on

Tuesday, compared with its average of 59. Doritos, winner of the USA TODAY survey for best Super Bowl spot ad, had 933 mentions after reaching a peak of almost 3,300.

The idea of the TV ad was to get people to come in and re-evaluate Denny's Diner. "A lot of people have forgotten what Denny's is, or they think they know, while we've come out with a whole lot of new products. We felt like we needed to jump start the brand," Denny's Chief Marketing and Innovation Officer Mark Chmiel said.

"We're celebrating the Grand Slam this year," Chmiel said. According to the company's financial data, on January 15 Denny's reported systemwide comparable-store sales for the fourth quarter were down 6.1 percent, compared to a 0.2 percent decline from the same period in 2007.

According to Robert Gonzalez, public relations company Hill & Knowlton spokesman, Denny's has expected at least 2 million people to eat a free Grand Slam by the end of the promotion. "Every restaurant is packed with people and lines," Gonzalez said. "Everything today is about fast. People are on the go, and they're eating fast food. It's cutting into sit-down dining," he added.

"Each of the more than 1,500 Denny's were planning to make about 100 Grand Slams an hour," Denny's spokeswoman Cori Rice said. It had predicted it will have served about 1,400 people per location, more than five times the normal volume. "Grand Slam Breakfast" is a four-item option on its menu, consisting of two pancakes, two eggs, two strips of bacon and two sausage links. It weighs in at 44 grams of fat, 56

carbohydrates and 770 calories.

Nationwide, Denny's expected to sell about 2 million Grand Slams — about 15 percent of the annual tally. According to Mark Chmiel, chief marketing operator and executive vice president, the diner chain has reported approximately 2 million meals worth more than \$12 million were given away nationwide and each Denny's restaurant served an average of 130 Grand Slams per hour. It estimated it has earned about \$50 million worth of public relations following the free Grand Slam campaign, Chmiel said.

The company is also experimenting with a Grand Slam Burrito and also has introduced for this year, a Grand Slamwich, which includes eggs, bacon, sausage and cheese between two slices of bread, with a teaspoon serving. "It already has shown strong consumer appeal," said Chmiel. The company has received flood of e-mails and letters proving the positive impact of the Grand Slam campaign and commercials on its customers.

Chmiel also announced he's planning a third major promotion in this year's third quarter, which happens to include another major sporting event, the World Series. "That's one we're definitely looking at," he said.

Jobless Paris Winslow of downtown San Francisco, California has joined the long line which stretched from the front door on Mission Street, between Fourth and Fifth streets, to the corner of Fourth and up the block. "The economy is getting kind of scary. This line looks like those pictures of soup kitchen lines during the 1929 Great Depression," Winslow said.

"I came all the way from San Francisco for a free \$6 meal, Isn't that pathetic? A year ago, I never would have done this. These days I'm willing to put my ego on the back burner," said Stephen Weller, a jobless contractor who waited with his dog, Emmett. California Denny's restaurant managers have issued rain checks (for free chilled meals, as security backed by actual bacon) to anyone who failed to get in by the 2 p.m. deadline.

A big eater could also "Slam It Up" by adding any two additional items for 99 cents each to their meal. Customers on Tuesday were also handed "bounceback" coupon books that include offers for additional free menu items with purchases. Chicago Tribune reporter Kevin Pang has eaten five free Grand Slams on Tuesday at five different Denny's Diners in four hours. He claims to have consumed 4,100 calories at Harwood Heights, 5:36 a.m., at Schiller Park, 6:22 a.m., at Franklin Park, 7:08 a.m., at Melrose Park, 7:41 a.m. and at Grand Slam No. 5 Oak Park, 8:57 a.m.

"The Grand Slam has always been a Denny's favorite. This free offer is our way of reacquainting America with Denny's real breakfast and with the Denny's brand," Denny's CEO Nelson Marchioli said in a statement. In 1977s, the Grand Slam started as a baseball-related promotion in Atlanta, Georgia. Its normal price averages around \$5.99. Marchioli said the event was also a way to kick-off its "Year of the Grand Slam" promotion. Denny's claimed it has sold 12.5 million Grand Slams a year.

"The economy's tough and people are jumping all the way to fast

food to try to figure it out. We all use fast food, whether it's for time or convenience or for money. But you can go to Denny's and you don't have to give up a real breakfast and that was the whole focus of our commercial," Marchioli explained. McDonald's (MCD, Fortune 500) has done well during this economic meltdown since the global recession pushes people toward less expensive dining options.

McDonald's has announced plans Wednesday to open 175 new restaurants in China this year despite the global economic crisis, thereby increasing the number of outlets in China by 17 percent, from 1,050 currently. Last month, McDonald's 2008 net profit has risen 80 percent from 2007 to 4.3 billion dollars.

Marchioli has also introduced Denny's \$4 Weekday Express Slam, which is a streamlined version of the Grand Slam. "I want to take back share. For too long, we have allowed others to take share, whether it was Starbucks or McDonald's. They're fine competitors and I don't expect to take all their business from them, but I'd like a little bit back," Marchioli noted.

According to Rafi Mohammed, author of "The Art of Pricing," people love free. "It triggers a Pavlovian response in people," said Mohammed. If Pavlov's dogs salivate when a bell rings, Denny's free Grand Slam breakfast has attracted 2 million hungry customers. "I believe free maximizes trial and doesn't devalue a product as long as it is a rare event. Aside from the cost, the major downside is that it attracts customers who truly have no intention of coming back," he added.

According to University of Portland consumer psychology professor Deana Julka, people flock to free promotions amid just a few dollars saving because there's nothing in life for free. "So when there's something out there that costs nothing, it creates a psychological rush. Especially in these times when people feel overtaxed or overburden, there's an internal reward people feel by getting something for free," she said. "It's being thrifty and feeling like you beat the system. Free really hits the spot for a lot of people," Julka added.

"Free is an emotional hot button. When free is concerned, there is no downside - or, at least, we don't see the downside immediately. So we overvalue everything that is free. People love free stuff, particularly when money's tight," said Dan Ariely, a business professor at Duke University, author of "Predictably Irrational: The Hidden Forces That Shape Our Decisions."

Experts, however, explained these moves need to be done sparingly, since giveaways can teeter in the balance between desperation and a well designed marketing ploy. "Giving your product away for free is not worth it because it undermines your brand value," said branding expert Rob Frankel, saying people are attached to the idea of it being free, than the actual product itself.

Free giveaways are not anything new in the food industry. "It just feels good when you can get something for free and not have to worry about it coming out of your wallet," Frankel noted. Dunkin' Donuts and Panera Bread all have had free coffee and food promos last year. "In November,

Starbucks gave away free cup of coffee to anyone who came in on Election Day. Have you taken a look at how Starbucks is doing now?" Last week it has announced it would shut down 300 stores, in addition to the 600 it already planned to close.

On February 24, IHOP will be offering a free shortstack to every customer to encourage donations (in place of the cost) for Childrens Miracle Network. The International House of Pancakes (IHOP) is a United States-based restaurant chain that specializes in breakfast foods and is owned by DineEquity. The chain had more than 1950 restaurants in all 50 states, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Canada and Mexico. Since 2006, IHOP's National Pancake Day celebration has raised over \$1.85 million. In 2008, over 1.5 million pancakes (12 miles high if they were stacked) were given to customers for donations.

Denny's ("Denny's Diner") is a full-service diner/family restaurant chain in the United States. It operates over 2,500 restaurants in the United States (including Puerto Rico), Canada, Curaçao, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Jamaica, Japan, Mexico, and New Zealand). The resto chain is known for always being open, serving breakfast, lunch, dinner, and dessert around the clock.

Today, Denny's operates about 1,600 restaurants in all 50 U.S. states, Canada and Mexico. There are also about 578 Denny's restaurants in Japan operated under a license by a subsidiary of Seven & I Holdings, seven Denny's locations in New Zealand, and approximately 38 Denny's diners in the United States. Denny's headquarters is now located in Spartanburg, South Carolina,

headquarters of the parent company Trans World Corporation that acquired Denny's in 1987.

Denny's was historically notable for offering a free meal to anyone on their birthday. The offer included a limited number of meal options from a special birthday menu. The promotional ritual ceased in 1993, though occasionally individual franchises will continue the tradition.

In 2008, Denny's has ceased to be in the ranks among the top diner chains in the \$83 billion breakfast market, whose top five firms -- McDonald's, Starbucks, Dunkin' Donuts, Burger King and IHOP -- accounted for 22 percent of the volume. "A lot of consumers have written Denny's off their let's-go-there list," said Ron Paul, president of Technomic, a consulting firm.

Super Bowl XLIII was an American football game between the American Football Conference champion Pittsburgh Steelers (15–4) and the National Football Conference champion Arizona Cardinals (12–8) to decide the National Football League (NFL) champion for the 2008 NFL season. It was played on February 1, 2009, at Raymond James Stadium in Tampa, Florida. It has an attendance of 70,774 and 98.7 million viewers. Pittsburgh earned its sixth Super Bowl win, thus securing sole possession of the record for most Super Bowl wins.

Zimbabwean parliament passes unity government bill

The parliament of Zimbabwe has unanimously voted for a constitutional amendment allowing a coalition government to be formed between Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe and the opposition Movement for

Democratic Change (MDC) leader Morgan Tsvangirai.

Under the bill, Mugabe would remain president of the country, but Tsvangirai would take the office the prime minister. The latter is to be sworn into office on the 11th of February.

The bill, after being endorsed by the House of Assembly, was subsequently taken to the Senate, where it was passed without a single dissenting vote. Robert Mugabe is expected to sign the bill into law on Friday.

Tendai Biti, the secretary-general for the MDC, stated that the new coalition government should give hope to the country, saying that "we have no choice other than to give this experiment a try."

Other people, such as political commentator John Makumbe, however, are wary of the deal. "I think Mugabe's plan is to compromise them, and I think he is going to play his usual devious games in that new government as well, try to grab all the powers for himself," Makumbe said.

Tsvangirai won the presidential election in March of last year, but not by a large enough margin to avoid a run-off election, held in June. Tsvangirai withdrew from those elections, citing state-sponsored attacks against his supporters.

The southern African country has been crippled by several crises recently, not least of which are a cholera epidemic, which has killed 3,323 people, and rampant hyperinflation, which has officially been measured at 231,000,000% per annum. The United Nations has estimated Zimbabwe's unemployment rate at 94%.

British court 'threatened' by United States

Judges in England's High Court of Justice have said that the United States threatened to withdraw anti-terrorism intelligence cooperation if they revealed part of a Guantanamo Bay detainee's case.

However, UK Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs David Miliband denied the threat had occurred, telling the House of Commons that it was usual practice for intelligence material to remain controlled by the country that collected it. He reaffirmed that the British government did not want the material released because doing so would "cause real and significant damage to the national security and international relations of this country".

Binyam Mohamed, a British resident but not a citizen, was arrested by U.S. forces in Pakistan in 2002. From there, he claims, he was moved to other locations where he was tortured on behalf of U.S. operatives (a process known as "extraordinary rendition") with the knowledge of UK intelligence agencies before being sent to the detention centre at Guantanamo Bay. The U.S. said he had planned a "dirty bomb" terrorist attack, but, after holding him for 4 years under the threat of the death penalty, dropped the charges.

Mohamed says that any evidence against him was based on what he said under torture and asked the High Court to force the government to reveal any documentation they held that would prove this. The judges have agreed, but have not published the material. Following the Foreign Secretary's statement to parliament, Mohamed's lawyers have written to the court to ask

the judges to now publish. They say that, since Milliband has denied that the United States made the threat, the judges' decision to withhold it no longer applied.

Mohamed claims to have spent 550 days being tortured for information in Morocco. He says his genitals were repeatedly cut with a razor blade to make him confess. The court case in London is part of his bid to force the UK government to release evidence it holds that he claims shows the U.S. was directly involved in the torture. A British official was also present when he was tortured, he claims.

The court case and the British government's reaction to it comes at a time when British politicians are adjusting to a new relationship with their American counterparts. The UK was a solid supporter of former President George W. Bush's "war on terror", but the British government now faces building a relationship with the new U.S. administration which was elected with plans for a different approach to the subject. The British government has repeatedly denied that it was involved in "extraordinary rendition" and evidence otherwise would be politically damaging.

Obama expands Bush's faith-based initiatives

United States President Barack Obama announced on Thursday that he was renaming and expanding an office created by former President George W. Bush, the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

"No matter how much money we invest or how sensibly we design our policies, the change that

Americans are looking for will not come from government alone," Obama said, while announcing the new office at the National Prayer Breakfast. "There is a force for good greater than government."

"The goal of this office will not be to favor one religious group over another — or even religious groups over secular groups," Obama elaborated. "It will simply be to work on behalf of those organizations that want to work on behalf of our communities, and to do so without blurring the line that our founders wisely drew between church and state."

Joshua DuBois, the 26-year-old Pentecostal minister who led the Obama campaign's religious outreach program, will direct the new White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

In an interview, DuBois said, "The President is still very much committed to clear constitutionality and legality in this program. He's committed to nondiscrimination."

When asked if the office would work with religious groups like the Church of Scientology, DuBois said, "There's no picking or choosing or cherry-picking of groups. That was allowed before, but it will not be the practice moving forward."

"President Obama has put the cart before the horse," said the American Civil Liberties Union's senior legislative counsel, Christopher Anders. "He is expanding the Bush administration's faith-based initiative without putting the most important safeguards in place. The President has created a more powerful office with a greater

ability to shovel federal taxpayer dollars to religious groups, but civil-rights protections are being deferred for later study and decisions."

Clarkson calls British Prime Minister Gordon a 'one-eyed Scottish idiot'

British television presenter and newspaper columnist Jeremy Clarkson has told journalists in Sydney, Australia, that UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown is a "one-eyed Scottish idiot".

The remark caused outrage amongst Scottish Labour politicians with some calling for the BBC to sack him. Clarkson has since apologised.

U.S. gay spouses entitled to benefits, says judge

U.S. Court of Appeals Judge Stephen Reinhardt has ruled that same-sex marriages must be treated the same as straight marriages by authorities when it comes to healthcare and benefits rights. He also said that the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act was unconstitutional.

The judge was ruling in a specific administrative dispute process, so the judgment does not set a wider precedent.

Royal Bank of Scotland fires non-execs

The troubled Royal Bank of Scotland, now 68% controlled by the UK government, has fired seven non-executive directors from the pre-credit crunch era.

The bank is about to report losses of £28 billion and has been under fire for plans to pay bonuses to the trading staff who generated them.

Icelandic retailer Baugur in trouble

Baugur, the Icelandic retail giant, has failed to get bankruptcy protection from its creditors at home and has placed its British arm in administration.

The group, which owns or has stakes in a large number of British High Street famous names, is being pursued for the equivalent of £1 billion in Iceland by the recently nationalized Landsbanki.

Today in History

1301 – The title of Prince of Wales was granted for the first time to the English heir apparent, then Edward of Carnarvon.

1795 – The Eleventh Amendment to the United States Constitution, limiting the ability of U.S. citizens and foreign nationals to sue U.S. states in federal courts, was ratified in order to overrule the U.S. Supreme Court decision in Chisholm v. Georgia.

1863 – HMS Orpheus of the British Royal Navy sank off the coast of Auckland, New Zealand, killing 189 crew out of the ship's complement of 259.

1914 – The film Kid Auto Races at Venice, featuring the first appearance of comedy actor Charlie Chaplin's character "The Tramp", was released.

1984 – During NASA Space Shuttle Challenger mission STS-41-B, astronauts Bruce McCandless II and Robert L. Stewart performed the first and second untethered spacewalks, respectively, using Manned Maneuvering Units. February 07 is Independence Day in Grenada (1974)

Quote of the Day

It is the same with any life. Imagine one selected day struck out of it, and think how different its course would have been. Pause you who read this, and think for a moment of the long chain of iron or gold, of thorns or flowers, that

would never have bound you, but for the formation of the first link on one memorable day. ~ Charles Dickens

Word of the Day

desultory adj

1. Jumping, or passing, from one thing or subject to another, without order or rational connection; without logical sequence.
2. As a digression; not connected with the subject.

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