



Top Stories

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breath and was taken to the hospital in a government car.

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Featured story

Interview with Frank Warren, founder of PostSecret



EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

An exclusive Wikinews interview with the founder of PostSecret.

PostSecret is a web site where people release their secrets by sending them in on homemade postcards.

Wikipedia Current Events

• Ukraine's parliament dismisses the Cabinet over its gas deal with Russia.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Iran's standoff from the UN and the west deepens as the UN seals on the Natanz nuclear processing plant are broken.
- British Prime Minister Tony Blair sets out his "respect agenda".
- A fifteenth case of H5N1 is reported in Turkey. However, the Turkish government declares that the virus is "under control".
- The Pakistani army announces that seven soldiers and fourteen suspected militants have been killed in fighting in the Waziristan area.

Story of mouse burning down house proven false

The story of a mouse causing the home of the person trying to kill it to be set on fire has been revealed as false. Luciano Mares, aged 81, of Fort Sumner, New Mexico, had caught the mouse in a trap in his house, having suffered from mice for some time, and was attempting to dispose of it by throwing it onto a bonfire that he had burning in his back yard.

The story says that the mouse caught fire, but it ran out of the bonfire back into the house, setting fire to a curtain. Mares indicates that this part is untrue. However, the bonfire did spread to the wooden house, which was completely destroyed as a result according to local fire officials.

Florida bank robbery suspects take hostages

Two suspected robbers in Kissimmee Florida released one hostage after negotiating with sheriffs' deputies. Other hostages remain inside, authorities say.

The Osceola County Sheriff's Office said the released hostage was in good condition, but did not say whether he was a bank customer or employee.

At least one more hostage remained inside, though sheriff's spokeswoman Twis Lizasuane declined to say whether there could be more.

Lizasuanne said at least one of the suspects was armed.

The robbery started at about 9:30am EST, snarling traffic as deputies surrounded the bank.

Deputies were equipped with robots that could be sent to film the bank, but it was unclear whether they will be used or not.

Live pictures show an armored vehicle parked outside the bank.

The same bank was robbed Nov. 16, and investigators are still looking for two suspects, Lizasuane said. However, Lizasuane said deputies don't believe the robberies are connected.

Reporter abducted in Baghdad Saturday morning

Freelance writer Jill Carroll, currently working for The Christian Science Monitor, was kidnapped in western Baghdad Saturday morning. During the abduction, her Iraqi interpreter was fatally wounded, although her Iraqi driver escaped and was unharmed.

Carroll was attempting to gather direct and accurate views of political leaders when she entered western Baghdad's Adil area on Saturday morning.

Christian Science Monitor's editor Richard Bergenheim said, "Jill's ability to help others understand the issues facing all groups in Iraq has been invaluable. We are urgently seeking information about Ms. Carroll and are pursuing every avenue to secure her release."

At present, no one has claimed responsibility for her capture.

Iran resumes nuclear research

Iran resumed full atomic fuel research today, the International Atomic Energy Agency announced, adding that "the research will involve small-scale enrichment of uranium, useable in power plants or weapons."

"There is a difference between research and producing nuclear fuel ... The production of nuclear fuel is still under suspension," said Mohammad Saeedi, deputy head of Iran's Atomic Energy Organisation.

The United States has said that any enrichment of uranium would be a "serious escalation." A White house spokesman also stated that Iran risks referral to the UN's Security Council, which could

impose sanctions, if it pursues its current nuclear course.

British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw said the conflict with Iran would need to be resolved through diplomatic means and that "military action is not on our agenda."

Mohamed ElBaradei, head of the IAEA, told the 35-nation governing board that "Iran intended to carry out limited uranium enrichment at its Natanz facility, where it broke U.N. seals as IAEA inspectors watched."

"Iran plans to install a small-scale gas ultracentrifuge cascade in its pilot fuel enrichment plant at Natanz," said a Western diplomat, reading from ElBaradei's report.

European diplomats have said that they will hold an emergency IAEA meeting to consider referring Tehran to the UN for further action and or sanctions. The United States said "this now looks inevitable."

Tehran denies wanting nuclear technology for anything but civilian energy programs to satisfy the countries "booming" demand for electricity.

Western powers disregard Iran's claim and say that "Iran is to refrain from any work that could help it develop atomic weapons." The EU said Iran's latest action was "eroding international confidence in the peaceful nature of its nuclear program".

In Berlin, German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier warned that by removing the seals of its atomic plants, Tehran had "crossed a line". Steinmeier said "that the Iranians knew they would face consequences as a

result of their action". He also added that he hopes Tehran would return to a "path of reason".

Today, China also urged Tehran to continue talks with the E.U. trio, with foreign ministry spokesman Kong Quan saying "all parties should show restraint and make efforts to build mutual trust".

Iranian news network Khabar reported that the Iranian parliament backed the decision by President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to resume the research work, terming it a "source of national pride".

The White House said that if Iran continues on its current nuclear course, it will leave the international community no choice but to refer Tehran to the UN Security Council for possible actions.

FL professor & wife accused of spying for Cuba

A Florida college professor and his wife have been indicted on charges that they are illegal foreign agents and passed on non-classified information to Cuba.

Florida International University education professor Carlos Alvarez, 61, and his wife Elsa, 55, were ordered to be held without bond or bail Monday after U.S. Magistrate Judge Andrea Simonton, sided with federal prosecutors argument that the couple would leave their five children and flee to Cuba if granted bail.

Neither of the two entered pleas in Miami Federal Court to the charge that they failed to register themselves as agents from a foreign government.

The couple are reported to have lived "low-profile lives" in the academic community. Despite strong criticism from friends and colleagues, federal agents say that the Alvarazes have been "secretly spying for the Cuban government for decades, using all their academic background as covers."

Citing university policy, FIU put the Alvarazes on administrative leave, with pay Monday, the first day of school for spring semester. Supervisors were asked to relay all questions to FIU's media relations director, Mark Riordan.

The Alvarazes were, however, not charged with the more serious crime of espionage, but the indictment does state that they were trained and equipped by Cuba's Directorate of Intelligence and recruited "young people of Cuban heritage" in the U.S. to be spies.

The charge carries up to a 10-year prison term and fines up to \$250,000.

Annoying someone online becomes federal crime

President Bush signed legislation last Thursday that disallows the posting or e-mailing of messages intended to annoy people without having included your true identity. The law, Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005, contained this as a rider. The relevant portion of the law is as follows:

"Whoever...utilizes any device or software that can be used to originate telecommunications or other types of communications that are transmitted, in whole or in part, by the Internet... without disclosing his identity and with intent to annoy, abuse, threaten,

or harass any person...who receives the communications...shall be fined under title 18 or imprisoned not more than two years, or both."

Clinton Fein, owner of Annoy.com which allows people to send anonymous annoying messages, reported to CNET that "I'm certainly not going to close the site down. I would fight it on First Amendment grounds." Previous Supreme Court precedent does allow for anonymous, written annoyance.

"Shock jock" Howard Stern makes his satellite radio debut

The self-proclaimed "King of All Media", "shock jock" Howard Stern made his debut on Sirius Satellite Radio, being introduced by the new official announcer, actor George Takei. yesterday with liberal use of profanity. Stern made the deal last year to jump to Sirius after increasing pressure from the government, due to fallout after the Super Bowl XXXVIII halftime controversy.

Stern said, "I don't compete on terrestrial radio anymore." Satellite radio is not regulated by the United States government as it is a subscriber service.

In his deal with Sirius, Stern gets two channels, "Howard 100" and "Howard 101". The channels launched in October 2005 under the names "Douche 100" and "Douche 101," filled with mostly dead air. However, due to his contract to former employer, Infinity Broadcasting (now CBS Radio), at the time he could not broadcast on them, so he filled up the time with 24-hour marathons of Wack Pack members until his contract expired on New Year's Day. That day, Stern did a

commercial free segment on his two stations, playing clips from his days his days as a child, to working at WTBU (Boston University college radio), WCCC, W4, WWDC, WNBC, and WXRK. Then on January 3 and 5, Stern and his team did live test broadcasts, listeners did call in during the tests, Stern told them that these were test broadcasts and that debut show would be on January 9.

Stern began his career in his family's basement, making tapes of fictional radio programs. He then moved into real broadcasting when he began a show at WTBU, Boston University's college radio station. He then moved on to Hartford's WCCC, followed by WWWW (W4), before landing a job at DC-101, WWDC, there his morning show became a big hit but was fired for criticising the station. A notable incident happened the day after the crash of Air Florida Flight 90. He called Air Florida asking how much a one-way trip from the Washington National Airport to the 14th Street Bridge would cost. He then move to New York's WNBC-AM were he had an overnight program (since Don Imus had the morning show). WNBC management attempted to control Stern but not to much sucess he was eventually fired before WXRK "K-Rock" picked him up and where history was made from then on.

With the departure of Stern, K-Rock and some other stations have switched to a franchised format know as Free FM. CBS Radio also replaced Stern with Van Halen guitarist David Lee Roth on the East Coast, comedic radio personality Adam Corrolla on the West Coast and a lesser-known DJ know as Rover.

Cyclone Clare batters Western Australia

The eye of Cyclone Clare, a category three storm hit the Western Australian coastline at 11PM AWST on Monday (3PM Monday UTC).

Cyclone Clare crossed the coast 100Km north of Karratha, battering the Pilbara region with winds up to 195 Km/h.

Initially it was predicted that the storm would hit the coast at around 9PM local time, but the storm slowed from 18 to 12 Km/h delaying its arrival for two hours.

A large storm surge had been predicted, but forecasters say it is unlikely to eventuate. The sea is predicted to swell by only two to three metres.

Reports from the area advise that electricity supply has failed, but there has been no major structural damage to buildings and no injuries. Crews are assessing damage in Karratha and Dampier following Clare. Work teams are in the process of restoring electricity and telephone services.

Earlier today residents of Karratha and Dampier were advised to stay indoors due to flying debris caused by strong winds and the possibility of power lines being down. This advisory has since been lifted. The Bureau of Meteorology has advised residents to "proceed with caution".

As the storm moves inland it continues to lose strength, being downgraded to a category two storm earlier today (10:00AM AWST) when it neared the town of Pannawonica. Winds were up to 140 Km/h. The storm has since been downgraded again, to a

category one storm.

The main concern now is for flooding due to heavy rain.

Lynne Nanini from Main Roads's Pilbara office said the rain that follows may be more troublesome than the cyclone itself.

"We're mainly concerned about any rainfall that may eventuate out of Tropical Cyclone Clare and as in the past, a few cyclones that we've had, most of our damage is actually caused by flooding." she said.

Murdoch's News Corp. ends automated censorship of MySpace upon threat of blogger boycott

As part of its Fox Interactive Media program, Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation (see Fox Broadcasting) purchased Intermix Media in July 2005. Intermix Media is best known for MySpace.com, which is the fastest growing social networking site.

News Corp recently began censoring mentions of rival video-swapping site YouTube, as well as links to content hosted by YouTube. This resulted in 600 complaints by users and a campaign to relocate to rival sites such as Friendster, LinkedIn (linkedin.com), Revver, and Facebook.

News Corp has now relented and restored the YouTube links. However, MySpace managers have now shut down the blog forum on which members had complained.

There had originally been concern among various groups of bloggers operating out of MySpace that News Corp would monitor or censor their activities, when News

Corp first purchased Intermix. Ellis Yu told the Blog Herald that "their CEO said nothing like that would happen. Well, now it has. MySpace was built on an open community and now they're trying to censor us, putting business interests above its members!"

Israeli PM, Ariel Sharon, woken from coma. moves limbs

Doctors are awakening Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon out of a drug induced coma to assess the damage to his brain from a major stroke. Doctors reported that he has started to move some limbs and is breathing spontaneously on his own, but say that he is still on a respirator and still in critical condition. "In a test of (his reaction) to pain, we noticed that Prime Minister Ariel Sharon slightly moved his right arm and right leg," said Dr. Shlomo Mor-Yosef, director of Jerusalem's Hadassah hospital. "The process of waking him out of the coma could take anywhere from several hours to several days" said Mor-Yosef.

Sharon's blood pressure rose slightly during stimulation which doctors call "a positive sign". Dr Felix Umansky, the chief neurosurgeon treating Sharon, said "Once he talks to us ... and there are no other infections I will be willing to say that he is completely out of danger."

Although he is moving and breathing spontaneously on his own, this does not give any indication as to his other physical or mental capacities.

Sharon was rushed to the hospital on Wednesday after "feeling unwell". Doctors later determined that he had a major stroke.

Confirmation hearings for Supreme Court Nominee Alito to start this week

President Bush's highly controversial nominee to fill the seat of retiring Supreme Court justice Sandra Day O'Connor will have a chance to respond to congressional questions this week, with hearings scheduled for him to appear before the senate Judiciary Committee.

The 55 year old Samuel Alito has served as a federal appeals court judge for 15 years, and previously served as a lawyer for the Reagan administration.

His lengthy track record of more than 700 judicial opinions includes several writings on abortion-rights, among other issues, including states' rights, first amendment rights, police rights, and the separation of church and state.

Dow Jones Breaks 11,000

Lower oil and natural gas prices and a General Motors (GM) upgrade sent the Dow Jones Industrial above the 11,000 mark for the first time since before September 11, 2001. The last time the Dow was above eleven thousand was June 13, 2001 when it closed at 11,012.40 before retreating slightly. The Dow's alltime record was set back on January 14, 2000 when it closed at 11,722.98.

The impact of the Dow even getting to 11,000 is "psychological and hard to measure, but clearly you can't dismiss it," said Hugh Johnson, chairman of asset management company Johnson Illington Advisors. "If it wakes up investors then it is of some value."

GM (up \$1.09 to \$21.89) was the

Dow's biggest gainer, up five percent, after Goldman Sachs raised its rating on the automaker.

Sirius Radio also added to the Dow's gain, up nearly 2 percent (to \$6.65) as Howard Stern made his debut on the satellite waves.

Oil prices, although still high, fell \$1.21 to \$63.05 a barrel.

Dick Cheney released after health scare

Early Monday morning, U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney was taken to Washington hospital after he reported having shortness of breath.

Tests on the Vice President indicated that his symptoms weren't related to his extensive history of heart disease, a White House spokesperson said. Doctors eventually determined that he was "retaining fluid in his lungs," and was prescribed a diuretic. He was released from the hospital around 7:30am, and returned to work on Monday afternoon after resting at his home.

Doctors say that an anti-inflammatory prescribed to him for an operation on his foot may have played a role in the health scare. He was seen Friday using a cane while touring a Harley Davidson plant in Kansas City, MO, and told workers there that "Don Rumsfeld has been chewing on my ankles."

Cheney has had a history of heart-related issues for several years and recently had a pacemaker implanted.

Interview with Frank Warren, founder of PostSecret

PostSecret is a community art project where people release their

secrets by anonymously mailing them on a homemade postcard. Frank Warren started PostSecret in November, 2004 and has since recieved thousands of secrets from all over the world. The cards appeared in an All-American Rejects music video for the song Dirty Little Secret, and PostSecret's fee? a \$2,000 donation to The National Hopeline Network 1(800)SUCIDE, a suicide hotline. PostSecret has recently published a book of some of the postcards with some of the proceeds also going to the hotline.

Wikinews: What is PostSecret for you?

Frank Warren: PostSecret is a community art project where anyone can write a secret on a postcard and mail it in.

You originally sent out 3,000 postcards at the projects inception in November, 2004. Over a year later, approximately how many cards have you received? *20,000.*

Geographically, how far away have you received postcards?

The cards come from all over the world; Hong Kong, Afghanistan, Australia, Ireland, India...

You let the All-American Rejects use the postcards in their video for a donation to the National Hopeline Network, a suicide hotline. You also have a book out now with some of the proceeds going to National Hopeline. Is depression the most common theme in the secrets that you have recieved?

I do not know if depression is the most common theme, but I picked the charity because of my own experiences with suicide and because I have first-hand knowledge of the good work done by 1(800)SUCIDE.

What, in your opinion, is the motivation for people to send you their secrets?

I think some people are looking to share a funny story, others want to talk about a secret kindness they performed but most people, I believe, are looking to better understand their own secrets and perhaps use this project as a first step in taking action upon their secrets.

Have you ever gotten into any sort of trouble or controversy because of what you have posted on your site? If so, what has happened as a result?

I once received a postcard from a girl saying, "I worked really hard to get into [Ivy League School] but now I hate it here." She later contacted me and said her friends and family recognized her handwriting and the posting was causing her distress. She asked me to remove it and I did. But I asked her to let me know how things turned-out in the long-run. Maybe this event will cause her to change schools or find new ways to appreciate where she is now.

Finally, PostSecret has touched and aided the lives of many people. How can people help the project?

I hope people just continue to bravely share their secrets on the site and visitors continue to express their understanding and compassion.

Today in History

532 - Fans of chariot racing broke into a prison and set fire to parts of Constantinople, starting the Nika riots.

1787 - William Herschel discovered Titania and Oberon, two moons of the planet Uranus.
1879 - The Anglo-Zulu War broke out.

1922 - Insulin was first administered to a human patient with diabetes in Toronto, Canada.

1964 - In a landmark report, U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Luther Terry issued the warning that "smoking may be hazardous for one's health".

Quote of the Day

"The sacred rights of mankind are not to be rummaged for among old parchments or musty records.

They are written, as with a sunbeam, in the whole volume of human nature, by the hand of the divinity itself; and can never be erased or obscured by mortal power." ~ Alexander Hamilton

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