



### Top Stories

**'Guiding Light' to flicker out after 72 years on radio, TV**  
Guiding Light, the longest-running dramatic series in the world, is ending its run after seven decades on radio and television. The show is ending due to high financial costs, coupled with the unwanted distinction of being the lowest-rated soap opera on American television.

### G20 protester dies after collapsing

According to reports, a man protesting the G20 Summit in London, England has died after collapsing at a protester camp. Sky News says the man collapsed on the street inside a camp close to the Bank of England and when found he was still breathing, but efforts by paramedics to rescue him failed and he was pronounced dead at an area hospital.

### General Motors automobile sales plunge by 45%

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### Sixteen people feared dead after helicopter crash in North Sea

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underway after a helicopter with 16 people on board crashed off the northeastern coast of Scotland in the North Sea on Wednesday, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency stated.

### Wikipedia Current Events

### G20 protester dies after collapsing

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Sky News says the man collapsed on the street inside a camp close to the Bank of England and when found he was still breathing, but efforts by paramedics to rescue him failed and he was pronounced dead at an area hospital. The name of the person and cause of death are not yet known, but several people were injured earlier in the day. It is also reported by Sky News that people threw bottles at him and authorities when they were taking him to a waiting ambulance.

The London Ambulance Service reported that "we received a 999 call at 7:24 pm from a member of the public reporting that a man had fallen over and was unconscious, but was breathing. [They] made extensive efforts to resuscitate him both there and on the way to hospital."

Earlier in the day a minimum of 20 protesters broke into the bank and according to reports vandalized furniture, broke windows and cut the telephone lines to the building.

### 'Guiding Light' to flicker out after 72 years on radio, TV

The seemingly eternal flame of the American soap opera Guiding Light has been extinguished. CBS, the network which airs the serial drama in the United States, has announced its cancellation after 72 years.

Guiding Light, which entered the Guinness Book of World Records as the longest-running dramatic series in the world, started on radio in 1937 as a series of stories about faith, in which characters beset with troubles would talk to trusted Reverend Ruthledge, the keeper of "the guiding light" which he kept by his window. Over the years, the theme of "the guiding light" became more muted and the series shifted focus to a middle-class German immigrant family, the Bauers. The show has been produced on television and seen nearly every weekday since June 30, 1952.

Popular with television viewers in the 1950s and 1960s, Guiding Light fell on hard times, becoming the lowest-rated soap opera on American television in 2007. In an effort to save costs last year, Procter & Gamble Productions, the company formerly in charge of production, instituted cost-saving measures which included scrapping more expensive set

designs and getting rid of the industry standard three-camera taping technique, replacing them with portable cameras.

The cancellation comes in part due to the economic downturn and partly due to viewing habits among women. Many women in the target demographic Guiding Light hoped to court are now working during the afternoon, something that wasn't as prevalent even a generation ago. TeleNext Media, the current production company, while parting ways with CBS, are not ruling out a cost-effective way to keep the show afloat either as an online venture or on another television channel.

When contacted by Wikinews, Guiding Light publicist Meredith Tiger forwarded a statement prepared by Barbara Bloom, Senior Vice President of Daytime Programs at CBS. "No show in daytime or prime time, or anytime, has touched so many millions of viewers across so many years as Guiding Light," Bloom said. "We thank the cast, crew and producers – past and present – who delivered this entertainment institution, the beloved characters and the time-honored stories to our audience every day for seven decades. It's been a privilege to work with such an extraordinarily talented group of people."

The final episode of Guiding Light is expected to air on Friday, September 18.

### **Australia flash flooding traps thousands**

300 millimeters (11.8 inches) of rain fell in six hours resulting in flash flooding on the New South Wales mid-north coast in Australia trapping thousands.

"We're looking at a flood that is around the one in one hundred year flood level," said Phil Campbell, State Emergency Service spokesperson.

Ambulance crews spent the night rescuing stranded residents caught off guard by the sudden deluge. As many as 2,700 residents had been trapped by the floodwaters. 420 people sought refuge in evacuation centres over night, of these all but 70 have returned home. The Red Cross flood evacuation centre in Urunga was left without power but still harbours 300 who sought refuge there.

Inland floodwaters trapped more than 1,000 residents in Coffs Harbour, New South Wales over night.

"It does seem likely that we'll need to make a natural disaster emergency declaration and that's something which obviously then brings some resources in. The most immediate challenge of course is for the 3,000 or so people who are still isolated and over 300 who are in evacuation centres at the moment." said Steve Whan, NSW Emergency Services Minister.

Residents are being urged not to travel through the flooded areas.

Floodwaters are starting to recede, however the Bureau of Meteorology does not see an end to the heavy rains.

### **ADP says US economy lost 742,000 jobs in March**

According to the payroll services company ADP, United States private sector employers cut 742,000 jobs in in March. The figures were almost 80,000 more than the average analyst prediction of 663,000 losses. This

is the largest monthly payroll decline since January 2001, when the ADP began tracking job activity.

ADP also updated its job loss statistics for February, from 697,000 to 706,000.

"The sharp employment declines among medium- and small-size businesses indicate that the recession continues to spread aggressively beyond manufacturing and housing-related activities to almost every area of the economy," said Joel Prakken, the chairman of the company that conducts the ADP survey, Macroeconomic Advisors LLC.

"Despite some recent indications that stock prices, consumer spending, and housing activity may be bottoming out, employment, which usually trails overall economic activity, is likely to remain very weak for at least several more months," he added.

The US Labor Department's report for employment statistics for March is due to be out on Friday. Analysts predicted that the department will announce the employment rate increased to 8.5% with 660,000 jobs eliminated in March. However, the bad news from ADP has prompted some to think that the current forecasts are too optimistic.

### **Guinea-Bissau to hold elections this June**

The prime minister of the western African country of Guinea-Bissau has announced that the country will further postpone elections until June due to increasing violence. Elections are in order to replace the former president, who was assassinated last month. Francisco Jose Fadul, the nation's former prime minister, says that he has

been beaten by men that he claims were in uniform and working for Amnesty International.

"Men in uniform forced their way into my house around 1:00 am (0100 GMT). They hurled abuse at me and beat me repeatedly and dragged me across the floor," said Fadul as quoted by Agence France-Presse. Amnesty international admits to the beating, saying it was in retaliation for the arrest and torture of Pedro Infanda, a well known attorney who defended a suspect accused of trying to kill Fadul in 2008. Infanda was detained for four days, during which he was beaten.

On March 2, renegade soldiers assassinated president Joao Bernardo Vieira, in what is considered a revenge attack after an explosion killed the president's rival, the military chief General Batista Tagme Na Wai.

"The date of 28 June is set for holding presidential elections, and all the parties, the government, the interim president and political classes are agreed," said Carlos Gomes Jr. to journalists late Tuesday.

Under the country's constitution, National Assembly speaker Raimundo Pereria became Guinea-Bissau's interim president following Vieira's death. The constitution states that polls should be held within sixty days of the president's death, however, the government has delayed the date for another sixty days following Pereria's inauguration.

Guinea-Bissau is located on the western African coast, north of Guinea and south of Senegal. It has been plagued by frequent civil conflicts and coups. The nation has requested 2.5 billion CFA francs, or

US\$5.01 million, from the international community to fund for the elections.

### **Sixteen people feared dead after helicopter crash in North Sea**

A search-and-rescue mission was underway after a helicopter with 16 people on board crashed off the northeastern coast of Scotland in the North Sea on Wednesday, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency stated.

Police say they have recovered eight bodies, while the other eight persons aboard are still unaccounted for. The chopper was returning from an oil platform shortly before 2:00 p.m. local time when it crashed into the waters about 35 miles (56 km) from the coast of Aberdeen, Scotland.

The aircraft involved in the accident is believed to be a Eurocopter AF332 L2 Super Puma.

"A supply vessel called Normand Aurora, which was quite close by, has put their fast response boat into the water and is looking for survivors," said a spokesman for the agency. "Two helicopters from the RAF have been scrambled to the scene and a Nimrod marine patrol aircraft has been diverted to the area. Aberdeen coastguard have begun broadcasting a mayday signal into the area and RNLi lifeboats from Peterhead and Fraserburgh are heading for the scene now."

This February, another helicopter went down in fog in the North Sea. All eighteen people on board survived. In March, a Sikorsky S-92A helicopter carrying oil workers also crashed off the coast of Newfoundland, Canada, killing seventeen people.

### **General Motors automobile sales plunge by 45%**

General Motors Corporation (GM) announced on Wednesday that it saw a 45% drop in United States vehicle sales for its cars in March.

Executives from several auto firms, however, said that there was some hope for the auto industry to stabilise, as car sales rebounded in the last week of March.

"The market is starting to show small signs of life which need to be nourished like seedlings," said the vice president and chairman of Chrysler LLC Jim Press. "It's too early to see a trend, but spring shows signs of hope."

Other automobile manufacturers also saw their car sales slip: Chrysler and the Japanese Toyota both reported a 39% loss, whilst Ford Motor Company sales fell 41%.

Annualised sales of vehicles in the car industry in the US are predicted to have dipped below nine million in March, compared to February's 9.12 million, which was the lowest number since 1981.

"Auto makers are pulling every lever in their effort to attract buyers, as evidenced by the new programs from Ford and GM. The typical incentive programs simply do not resonate in today's economy," Jesse Toprak, an analyst for Edmunds.

Ford shares gained 2.3% to a level of US\$2.69 in early trading at US stock markets on Wednesday, while stocks for Toyota's US depository increased 5.9% to \$67. GM shares slipped 1.6% down to \$1.92.

### **State trooper, firefighter save truck driver after New Jersey crash**

A New Jersey state trooper and off-duty firefighter saved the life of a trucker who crashed on the New Jersey Turnpike.

A tractor-trailer veered across eight traffic lanes and jackknifed into a guardrail Tuesday morning near a turnpike entrance ramp in Edison just off route 287. Robert Harrison, the 44-year-old driver, suffered an apparent heart attack following the crash.

Trooper Sean Fitzgerald applied a defibrillator and began CPR when he realized Harrington wasn't breathing. Firefighter Tom Brennan assisted with CPR until an ambulance arrived.

Harrington, of Fitchburg, Massachusetts, was taken to an area hospital and is listed in critical condition. No other vehicles were struck during the crash.

Authorities said others at the scene also assisted, including a turnpike employee and two motorists who carried Harrington out of the truck as police arrived. Fitzgerald said he had never used the defibrillator before Tuesday.

"As a trooper, you see more negative than positive out there," Fitzgerald said. "It feels good when you can help someone and it feels good knowing that all those people had stopped to help before I got there."

State Police Sergeant Stephen Jones said the crash was likely caused by a medical issue, but they are still investigating.

### **US Justice Department to withdraw Stevens charges**

The United States Department of

Justice has asked for corruption charges against former Alaska Senator Ted Stevens to be dropped because evidence was withheld from the defense team by the original prosecutors. The Justice Department has stated that they will not retry Stevens.

In a statement, US Attorney General Eric Holder said, "After careful review, I have concluded that certain information should have been provided to the defense for use at trial. In light of this conclusion, and in consideration of the totality of the circumstances of this particular case, I have determined that it is in the interest of justice to dismiss the indictment and not proceed with a new trial."

Stevens was convicted in October on seven felony counts of lying on senate disclosure forms about gifts, largely in the form of free renovations to his home, received from an oil service company; his conviction is thought to have been a large factor in his November electoral defeat to former Anchorage mayor Mark Begich, the current junior Senator from Alaska. Stevens immediately appealed his conviction and has maintained his innocence.

The prosecution case has met with a number of procedural difficulties, with US District Court judge Emmet G. Sullivan holding the prosecution in contempt in March for failing to turn over documents concerning an FBI whistleblower's reports of mishandling of the case. The Justice Department has since replaced the case's prosecutors, and the allegations of misconduct have held up sentencing from the original convictions.

The filed papers indicate that notes were never turned over from an interview that has the oil

contractor estimated the house renovation for far less than he specified at trial.

The original trial team was removed, but in the end Attorney General Eric Holder thought it would be best if the case was dropped. NPR's source indicate that Holder wish to forcefully transmit that prosecutorial misconduct will not be tolerated. The trying prosecutors are under investigation by the Justice Department for their conduct in the matter.

Stevens, now 85, served as Alaska's Senator from 1968 to 2009.

### **Man arrested after crashing motorized bar stool while drunk**

According to police, Kile Wygle, 28, from Newark, Ohio, was arrested for drunk driving after he crashed his motorized bar stool. The accident occurred on March 4.

While driving his bar stool, which is powered by a lawnmower engine, Wygle attempted to make a U-turn while going down his street and crashed. Police received a call from a local resident that Wygle had been injured in the crash. When police arrived, he was taken to a local hospital where police say he admitted to drinking 15 beers. After being treated for minor injuries, Wygle was arrested and charged with driving under the influence of alcohol.

Wygle pleaded not guilty when appearing in court and denies that he was drunk, but that he did begin to consume alcohol following the crash. "I drank quite a bit after [the crash] because my head hurt so bad. I went in and drank a half a bottle of whiskey," stated Wygle to BBC News. He also requested a

jury be present during his trial.

Wygle says his vehicle can travel nearly 40 miles per hour. Police say that motorized bar stools have become popular, with residents building them and then racing them. Most are made from old lawnmower parts, a steering wheel and a bar stool.

### **Southern California auto maker announces fully-electric sedan**

While hybrid vehicles have found considerable popularity in the United States since their introduction, one difficulty associated with the rollout of a fully electric car has been the comparably high price and poor performance, compared to an internal combustion engine-driven car of similar size. Tesla Motors claims that their Model S, a sedan which runs solely on electricity, will be more affordable.

Tesla first entered the automobile market in 2006, with a prototype of an electric vehicle designed on the roadster style. While the car, whose exterior design was based on the Lotus Elise, accelerated well and had considerable range, its cost of US\$109,000 was prohibitive for many and to date only 300 have been sold, with a thousand more ordered.

Tesla says, however, that the Model S could sell for around \$56,400, with the actual price some \$7,500 lower after a Federal Government tax credit on electric vehicles.

Tesla claims the Model S has a range of up to 450 kilometers (280 miles) without recharging and can reach a top speed of 200 km/h (125 mph). It is powered by a 454 kg (1001 lb) battery pack.

Initial plans were to build the car

in New Mexico, but instead the Model S will be built near the company's headquarters in San Jose, California.

### **Honda demonstrates mind-reading robotic technology**

At its headquarters in Tokyo, Japan, Honda Motor Company demonstrated on Tuesday technology which links a person's thoughts with robots.

The operator wears a helmet which scans for electric currents stimulated by brain activity, but also uses infrared sensors to detect changes in blood flows in the head. The information is sent to a computer, which can then execute robotic movements such as opening the trunk of the vehicle or turning on the car's air conditioning. The commands usually take just seconds to reach the robot.

Honda also released a video where a humanoid robot named Asimo was operated by a person wearing the helmet. The employee was stated to be thinking about raising his right hand, after which Asimo moved its right arm.

Honda states that it could be quite some time before the technology is ready to go live due to difficulties such as the human brain's liability to become distracted, creating mixed thought patterns. A related problem is the amount of focus required by the operator.

"Practical uses are still way into the future." said Honda Research Institute Japan Co executive, Yasuhisa Arai. "I'm [just] talking about dreams today."

### **FDA warning on pistachios after salmonella contamination**

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued a

recall on Salmonella contaminated Pistachios for 31 states in the United States.

"Our advice to consumers is that they avoid eating pistachio products, that they hold onto those products, that at this stage they don't throw them out, they simply hold on to them as we're learning more about them to determine if they're part of the recall," said Dr. David Acheson, associated FDA commissioner for food. However, it is expected that the recalled list may grow as the investigation continues.

Kroger Co. is recalling shelled pistachios called Private Selection Shelled Pistachios in a 10-ounce container with UPC code 111073615 and the sell dates of December 13 or 14 on the packages. Setton Farms based in California, the pistachio supplier, is voluntarily recalling their pistachios.

Products containing pistachios have not yet been recalled, but are under investigation. The salmonella contamination was discovered by Kraft foods during routine testing last Tuesday, before any illness were reported. They notified the FDA and the FDA notified Setton Farms. So far the source of contamination has not been revealed.

The 31 states initially affected are: (in alphabetical order) : Alaska, Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Missouri, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia and Wyoming.

Signs of salmonella include fever, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain. Those most vulnerable are the young, the elderly or those with an already compromised health condition.

This recall follows the long list of recalled peanut related products, peanut butter and candy bars which caused a salmonella outbreak at the end of January.

### **UN agency condemns new Afghan "Shia family law"**

An act signed into law by Afghan President Hamid Karzai last month dramatically rolled back the rights of women in that country, according to human rights groups and a United Nations report on the bill by the United Nations Development Fund for Women.

The Afghan government has not provided a copy of the text of the Shia Family Law to the UN or to other outside groups requesting it, citing "technical problems", however, the UN and opposition politicians say that the bill contains numerous provisions restricting the rights of women, such as giving their husbands priority in court; requiring the husband's permission to leave the house, obtain education or employment, or to see a doctor; and reserving the custody of children to male relatives.

In its most controversial provision, though, the law's Article 132 requires wives to submit to their husbands' sexual demands, and says that a husband can expect sex with his wife once in every four days except in the event of illness. The United Nations argues that this is equivalent to spousal rape. Spousal rape is specifically prohibited in 45 countries worldwide and may be prosecutable by existing rape

statutes in others.

The circumstances of the bill's passage have raised questions as well, with Senator Humeira Namati saying that the bill was not read out or debated in the House of Elders, the Afghan National Assembly's upper house and Shinkai Zahine Karokhail of the House of the People stating the bill received only limited debate in the lower chamber. "They wanted to pass it almost like a secret negotiation," Karokhail told the Guardian. "There were lots of things that we wanted to change, but they didn't want to discuss it because Karzai wants to please the Shia before the election." Namati calls the new law "worse than the Taliban".

According to Karokhail and others, the law received Karzai's support in order to boost his popularity among Afghanistan's Shi'a population, which comprises an estimated ten per cent of the country, ahead of an upcoming election in August. A Monday ruling by the Afghan Supreme Court has allowed Karzai to remain in power in the interval between the expiration of his term on May 21 and the upcoming Afghan presidential election in August. It is unclear whether the law would apply only to Shi'a persons or to all Afghans.

Nonetheless some changes were made to the bill; the proposed minimum age of marriage for girls was raised to 16 from aged 9 and temporary marriage is not provided for. MP Shukria Barakzai says that "before this was passed family issues were decided by customary law" and that the new law, while not perfect, is an "improvement". MP Senator Humaira Namati defended the bill as well, saying it protects women's

rights: "Men are stronger and women are a little bit weaker; even in the west you do not see women working as firefighters."

A spokesman for Mr. Karzai gave reporters no comment.

### **US government files lawsuit against BP Exploration in Alaska**

The United States government has filed a civil lawsuit against BP Exploration (Alaska) Inc. (BPXA) alleging that the company "violated federal clean air and water laws" by "illegally discharging" more than 200,000 gallons crude oil during two oil spills in 2006 on Alaska's North Slope in Prudhoe Bay.

BPXA previously pleaded guilty to one count of criminal negligence in illegally discharging the oil and paid US\$20 million in damages. As a result of the plea, the lawsuit was filed saying that they "failed" to prepare for such a disaster by implementing "certain [sic] spill prevention measures" as the law requires.

The lawsuit, filed on behalf of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the [DOT]-Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), alleges that BPXA "illegally discharged more than 200,000 gallons of crude oil from its pipelines" and "violated the Clean Air Act by improperly removing asbestos-containing materials from its pipelines" It also says that they "failed to comply in a timely manner with a corrective action order that the [DOT]-Pipeline and PHMSA issued to BPXA pursuant to federal pipeline safety laws."

According to the Associated Press (AP), BPXA spokespeople state that the company has taken

certain measures, making sure daily operations are safe.

"We have taken significant steps to ensure that our operations are safe and reliable, and protect the environment. Those include building a new \$500 million system of oil transit lines at Prudhoe Bay," said spokesman Steve Rinehart to the AP.

The spills were discovered on March 2, 2006 and covered nearly two acres. It was initially estimated that nearly 270,000 gallons had spilled. The official loss was put at 212,252 gallons.

BPXA, a subsidiary of BP America, specializes in exploring and finding locations to drill for oil, as well as drilling for it.

### Today in History

1792 – By the Coinage Act, the United States Mint was founded and the U.S. currency was decimalized.

1801 – War of the Second Coalition: British forces led by Vice Admiral Horatio Nelson defeated the Dano-Norwegian fleet at the Battle of Copenhagen off the coast of Copenhagen.

1982 – Argentine special forces invaded the Falkland Islands, sparking the Falklands War.

1992 – John Gotti, the crime boss of the Gambino crime family, was convicted of racketeering, murder, conspiracy to commit murder, loansharking, obstruction of justice, illegal gambling and tax evasion.

2002 – Operation Defensive Shield: Approximately 200 Palestinians fled advancing Israeli forces into the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, starting a month-long standoff.

April 02 is Malvinas Day in Argentina

### Quote of the Day

Truth is on the march, and nothing will stop it.  
~ Émile Zola ~

### Word of the Day

haricot n

1. A stew of lamb and vegetables.
2. A kidney bean.

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