



Top Stories

South American leaders end border dispute



An exchange of handshakes at a Latin American summit marked the end of the

bitter dispute that had taken place between Colombia, Ecuador, and Venezuela. The presidents of each country agreed to end the conflict, and said political ties would be reinstated.

Wikinews interviews Kevin Baugh, president of the Republic of Molossia

It's not often Wikinews has the opportunity to interview a Head of State. We spoke with President Kevin Baugh of the Republic of Molossia, one of the world's most well known micronations. He told us several things about his country, which has everything from a navy to its own currency.

University of North Carolina student body president murdered

Emotions are still raw at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where the popular student body president, Eve Carson, was gunned down earlier this week in a case that puzzles police investigators.



Spanish PM condemns killing of councillor

A politician from the ruling Socialist Party has been killed in Spain's northern Basque region, just two days before the general elections. The councillor was shot outside his house in front of his wife



and daughter and was taken to hospital, where he died of his wounds. After the shooting the main parties announced a halt to campaigning. According to the polls, the two parties are neck and neck in the race for the election.

Wikipedia Current Events

presidents in the Dominican Republic. The Rio Group later approves a declaration aimed at reducing tensions between, Ecuador, Venezuela and Colombia.

- Pakistan's Election Commission announces the completed results of parliamentary election.

University of North Carolina student body president murdered

Eve Marie Carson, the Student Body President of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, was found dead on a street about one mile from campus early Wednesday morning.

Wikipedia Current Events

Vaclav Klaus is sworn in for another term as the President of the Czech Republic.

- Eight people are killed in seperate attacks in central and western Kenya.
- Former Olympic gold medalist Marion Jones reports to a Texas jail to begin a six month sentence for perjury regarding past steroid use.
- Colombia confirms the killing of FARC leader Iván Ríos by his chief of security.
- A United States Department of Labor report shows that the United States economy lost 63,000 jobs in February.
- The President of Venezuela Hugo Chávez calls for a cooling of tensions with Colombia at a summit of the Rio Group

The Chapel Hill Police Department responded to a report of gunshots around 5 a.m. Wednesday morning, and found a young woman lying dead on the road. She had been shot several times, including a shot in the head. One of two 9-1-1 callers reported hearing a woman screaming.

She was quickly identified as Eve Marie Carson, the 22-year-old Student Body President at UNC. The Athens, Georgia resident was last seen alive around 1:30 a.m. that morning

A medical examiner says there was no evidence of sexual assault. Police currently believe it was a random act of violence, and may have involved the theft of her SUV. Her SUV was found about a mile away, and her keys and wallet are

missing.

Carson's death comes nearly a year after the death of Jason Ray, a male cheerleader who at the time performed as the school's mascot, Rameses. He was struck by a car in a hit-and-run in New Jersey on March 24, 2007, during the Regionals of the 2007 NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Tournament, and died two days later of his injuries. Two men were charged in his death on January 18 of this year.

Several memorials were held on Thursday for Carson, drawing over 10,000 people in total. The Student Government website is currently shut down in her memory. The website simply has a link for providing information on her murder and the following message: "We thank you for your concern and support during this time of great loss. We ask that you allow us time to grieve."

Spanish Prime Minister condemns killing of Spanish councillor

The Spanish Prime Minister, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, agreed with the leader of the Partido Popular, Mariano Rajoy, to cancel the closing events of the General Election campaign, and returned to Madrid from Málaga where he was told of the news during a political rally.

Zapatero spoke to members of the victims family ahead of making a statement from the Moncloa Palace in Madrid at 5pm this evening. He also spoke to the President of the Basque Parliament, Juan José Ibarretxe.

Zapatero told the press that the 'ETA is defeated by democracy', and that the Government wants to roundly manifest that those who

took part in the shooting will be arrested shortly, and to express its solidarity with the family and companions of Isaías, in both the PSE Basque Socialist Party and in the UGT trade union.

'Those who carried out this attack will be found guilty', he said, 'just as others had been for carrying out other attacks. The Government will put all its determination and resources to that. Today they have added one more victim to their list of disgrace'.

Zapatero continued, 'We know that ETA is defeated by democracy and repudiated by the Spanish people together and by Basque Society. Its members have no other future than jail'. He added that the terrorists had wanted to interfere in the pacific process of the citizens being called to the polling booths, and said that the Spanish democracy would not be challenged by those who fight against its basic principles.

In his first comment since the shooting, the PP leader, Mariano Rajoy, said 'Everybody knows what I am thinking. ETA must lose all hope of achieving their political objectives'. He said the only possibility for ETA is to disappear. He expressed his solidarity with the family.

Spanish Interior Minister, Alfredo Pérez Rubalcaba, has commented that ETA 'will never manage to crush Spanish society'.

2008 Tour de Taiwan, TaiSPO, and Taipei Cycle: 3-in-1 preview

Before the main race of 2008 Tour de Taiwan, the 2008 Taipei Cycle (Taipei International Cycle Show, located at TWTC Nangang) and TaiSPO (Taipei International Sporting Goods show, located at

Taipei World Trade Center Hall 1) will not only exhibit from next Tuesday to Sunday (Mar. 13 to 16) but also bring multiple opportunities for sporting good, athletic sports, bicycle, and MICE (meeting, incentive, convention, and exhibition) industries after the TWTC Nangang stage was firmly included into 2008 Tour de Taiwan and its race will be start next Saturday (Mar. 15).

2008 Tour de Taiwan: Not only for 2008 Summer Olympics, but also for basic sport.

Without cross-division races in this tournament, and the TWTC Nangang will be launched with the starting of 2008 Taipei Cycle, this race will enroll 2 stages for Taipei City after the joining of TWTC Nangang Stage.

Besides of the international competition, if the 3rd Taipei Citizen Elimination Road Race could expand its scale on local racing clubs' participation, this special event will be a best creation for promoting basic bicycle sports in Taiwan.

On the other hand, this international race, classified as 2.2 class race by UCI, will determine the qualifications of 2008 Summer Olympics especially long-distance road races at Pingtung County, Changhua County, Hsinchu City, and Taipei County stages.

Taipei Cycle & TaiSPO: A reunion with convergence effects for bicycle & sporting good industries

Since the Taipei Cycle was independent from TaiSPO in 1988, the TaiSPO and Taipei Cycle showcased significant differences from different industrial nature. Originally, Taiwan had a good notability on export market and was stable in bicycle industry since its industry was decayed in United

States, several OBMs like Merida and Giant were risen up, and the bicycle industry was transformed from OEM to OBM with high-extra values and "Taiwan Bicycle Three 'New' Movements: New materials, New functions, and New purposes", proposed by Giant in 2001.

On the other hand of TaiSPO, with several past incidents on exhibition hall moving, operational rights between organizations and associations, and construction of TWTC, this sporting good show witnessed some histories as what TAITRA underwent and became a senior and a key trade show in Asia with technology inventions, creative conceptions, market transformations.

Though the fitness and leisure industries was risen up with varied changes on modern people lifestyle in the sporting good industry, but after the reunion of TaiSPO and Taipei Cycle, those two shows will bring opportunities and convergences for bicycle, sporting good, and leisure sport industries.

TWTC Nangang: A key show venue with multiple opportunities

Since the TWTC Nangang, twice larger than the current TWTC and its upper hall has a feature with column-free, was constructed last November, several companies from varied industries including MICE focused on this venue.

To evaluate some conditions on international trade shows, the Taipei Cycle, Taipei PLAS, TAITRONICS, Food Taipei, and Foodtech Taipei were earlier scheduled by TAITRA into TWTC Nangang this year. Not only the extensions of w:COMPUTEX Taipei, but also some similar industry shows will be exhibited at the TWTC during the show hours of

Taipei Cycle and Taipei AMPA.

Even though the construction of Neihu Line of Taipei Metro is still in progress, but Chung-shing Bus Co., Ltd. and Kwang-hua Bus Co., Ltd. were approved to operate the "New Chung-hsiao Main Line" for solutions on current traffic condition. After the launch of TWTC Nangang, the "New Chung-hsiao Main Line" will temporarily improve traffic condition of TWTC Nangang.

Spanish councillor shot and killed in the Basque Country

A politician from Spain's ruling Socialist Party has been killed in Spain's northern Basque region, in the town of Mondragon. The shooting came just two days before general elections in Spain.

Isaías Carrasco, 42, was shot outside his house in front of his wife and daughter and was taken to hospital, where he died of his wounds. No group has claimed the attack but Spanish sources said the attack was probably carried out by the Basque separatist group, considered as a terrorist group by European Union and United States, ETA.

Spain is in the final day of official campaigning ahead of Sunday's general election, in which the Socialist prime minister Rodriguez Zapatero is seeking a second term. The conservative opposition Partido Popular has focused his campaign in the terrorism and separatism, especially that of the Basque. After the shooting the main parties announced a halt to campaigning. According to the polls, the two parties are neck and neck in the race for the election.

Protester says Japanese whalers shot him

Paul Watson of the anti-whaling

group Sea Shepherd says that he was shot by Japanese sailors while protesting against their hunting practices in the Antarctic. Watson, captain of the Sea Shepherd ship the Steve Irwin, stated that his crew had been throwing stink bombs at the sailors, but that they responded with gunfire and flash grenades.

Watson said he was hit in the chest and found a bullet in the ballistic vest he was wearing. Watson told Australian radio: "It bruised my shoulder but it would have hit my heart if I didn't have the vest". He says one of his crew members received minor injuries after being hit by a flash grenade. News.com.au reported that Ralph Lowe, 33, had a bruised back from a flash grenade that exploded behind him, and that Ashley Dunn, 35, received a hip injury while trying to get away from an explosion. David Page, the ship's doctor, was filmed by the Sea Shepherd group prying a bullet from Watson's Kevlar vest, and said "You have been hit by a bullet".

Tokyo denied Watson's account, stating that "warning devices" were thrown after their ship had been attacked. Japan's foreign ministry said that their coastguard on the Nisshin Maru threw a baseball-sized device which exploded near the protesters' ship and emitted a loud sound, and was not designed to cause harm to anyone. Glenn Inwood, spokesman for the Japanese whalers, told ABC Radio: "Any claim from Paul Watson that he was fired at with a gun and has a bullet lodged in his bulletproof vest is absolutely false." Inwood stated there had been "retaliation" when the Japanese coast guards fired warning balls at the Steve Irwin.

Stephen Smith in 2008.
Image: U.S. Dept. Defense.

Australian Foreign Minister Stephen Smith released a statement regarding information he received from Japanese officials: "Japanese officials have now advised the Australian embassy in Tokyo that during the incident in the Southern Ocean this afternoon, three warning balls -- also known as flashbangs -- had been fired ... Japanese officials have advised that these devices are designed to make a loud noise but not to injure, and that no gunshots had been fired." Japan also told the Australian Embassy that one of the crew members of the Nisshin Maru had fired a warning shot in the air. Smith stated: "I absolutely condemn actions by crew members of any vessel that cause injury – or have the potential to cause injury – to anyone on the high seas ... The Australian Government once again calls on all parties in the Southern Ocean – including all protest and whaling vessels, and their respective crews – to exercise restraint."

Nobutaka Machimura in 2005.
Image: U.S. State Dept..

Watson explained to Australia's ABC News that the Japanese whalers had no reason to fire on the protesters: "We were doing what we usually do, which is putting stink bombs on deck ... We go out of our way to make sure we don't throw them near anybody, but they were throwing the flash grenades directly at us." If Watson's statements are proven to be true, the actions of the Japanese sailors represents a breach of international law.

Japan claimed that four crew members of the Nisshin Maru were

injured in the confrontation, but Watson denied this. Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Nobutaka Machimura criticized the Sea Shepherd group in a statement to reporters: "They have repeatedly resorted to such activities and it is truly unforgivable ... Is it all right to hurt humans in order to protect whales? I think whales are cute and important creatures, but even so, hurting humans is unforgivable."

Earlier this week, Sea Shepherd protesters clashed with the Nisshin Maru, and threw stink bombs and "slippery" powder at the Japanese ship. Two Sea Shepherd protesters were taken hostage in January after they boarded a Japanese harpoon ship, the Yushin Maru No. 2, and Australia later brokered their release. Protesters have been following the Nisshin Maru since Japan began its annual hunt for whales in the Southern Ocean in December.

Both New Zealand and Australia have led international protests against the hunting of whales. Last month Australia released film of whale slaughter taken from its customs ship, the Oceanic Viking, and said the footage could be used in a potential international legal challenge to Japan's whaling activities. Due to a loophole in a 1986 global moratorium on whaling that allows "lethal research" on whales, Japan kills up to 1,000 of the mammals per year.

Wikinews interviews U.S. Green Party presidential candidate Cynthia McKinney

Wikinews held an exclusive interview with Cynthia McKinney, one of the candidates for the Green Party nomination for the 2008 U.S. presidential election.

McKinney is a former Democrat

Congresswoman from Georgia. She was first elected to the House of Representatives in 1992 and held her seat for ten years until being defeated by Denise Majette in 2002. She was the first ever African American woman from her state to be elected to Congress.

We asked her why she made the recent switch to the Green Party. She replied, "Due to the importance of environmental issues, Green issues are the issues of today. The Ten Key Values of the Green Party stress us getting along with each other in harmony with the planet that gives us life."

When asked about how she would handle Iraq she replied, "I would instruct the Joint Chiefs to draw up a plan for the orderly withdrawal of all U.S. troops from the country. I would dismantle our military bases in the area, and I would also demand that U.S. and other international corporations relinquish any claims to Iraqi oil or other resources and withdraw as well."

McKinney is running for president because, basically, she thinks that "it's time that the people win".

Interview

Wikinews: Why are you running for president?

Congresswoman McKinney: It is clear that the country needs an additional political party that is not beholden to special interests or corporate lobbyists. Just 5% of the electorate, voting for a third party candidate gets the nation just that. Therefore, for those who are tired of the ability of special interests and corporate interests to subvert the will of the people, their values, or change their policy makers, winning the 5% is the best way to infuse structural change into our political system.

A victory for the Green Party in this election is possible and necessary. The alternative we present will appeal to the large numbers of disfranchised voters who do not see the major party candidates addressing their issues. In order for a democratic government to work in the public interest, it has to be both transparent and accountable. If 5% vote Green, it will put a third chair at the table of American politics, and it will open the door to the people to see what is going on inside the two-party system that has become controlled by corporations and the expanding power of a military, industrial, and intelligence complex that President Eisenhower warned of in 1960. The Green Party will represent the voices of the majority of diverse and disfranchised voters and citizens and will directly and effectively address their issues. I spent my birthday last year protesting in front of the Pentagon. At that rally, I stated that upon winning a majority of the seats in the Congress, the Democratic representatives should have repealed the Bush tax cuts, repealed the Patriot Act, the Secret Evidence Act, and the Military Tribunals Act. And that the majority in Congress should have voted a livable wage for America's workers. And that someone should be trying to locate the \$2.3 trillion lost by the Pentagon to pay instead for jobs, health care, and education. I was saddened by the Democratic majority's failure to stop funding the war, and declared my own independence from a national leadership that gave us war crimes, torture, and crimes against humanity. Unfortunately, there is not a major party candidate in the race that has not voted to fund this war. And that vote to fund what is clearly an immoral and illegal war is a vote of

complicity in the torture and war crimes that are being committed as part of this war.

The deep economic morass which is facing our country today is not being adequately addressed. We are witnessing, through the sub-prime mortgage crisis, the greatest wealth transfer in our history from Black and Latino households. Yet, while they are being asked to tighten their belts, the CEOs of the banks that caused this crisis are reaping maximum pay. Even the solutions proposed by the major candidates focus on using taxpayers' funds to reimburse the banks instead of funding alternative refinancing in the poorest communities. It is clear that in this scenario, the banks always win.

Well, I think it's time that the people win. Our children shouldn't have to graduate from college one hundred thousand dollars in debt. That is a policy choice made by public policy makers. We don't have to have 48 million Americans without access to health insurance, and even more who are under-insured. Our Congress doesn't have to authorize an increase in national borrowing to nearly \$10 trillion shrouded in secrecy. This country should not have racial disparity gaps wider now than at the time of the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. But these are the facts about conditions that Americans are forced to live through every day. Sadly, our policy makers would rather have our country spend \$720 million a day on war. Just imagine what that amount could buy in a single payer health care system, education subsidies from Head Start to university, or green technology home conversions and sustainable, safe and non-polluting energy sources.

Politics can change things. I have seen that in my lifetime. But we

must have policy makers committed to the kind of public policy that reflects our values and those policy makers must be more than marionettes whose strings are pulled by forces not seen or understood by the voters. Those are some of the compelling reasons why I chose to leave the Democratic Party after many years and to run for President on the Green Party ticket.

WN: You were a Democrat until not too long ago. Why the switch to the Green Party?

Congresswoman McKinney: The Green Party is an international party that makes policy in other countries in the world. Due to the importance of environmental issues, Green issues are the issues of today. The Ten Key Values of the Green Party stress us getting along with each other in harmony with the planet that gives us life. We need to get along with each other, and we need to respect our environment.

The Green Party also is not constrained in its policy positions by considerations of large corporate donors because the Green Party is supported by individuals who share its values, not large donors intent on gaining concessions at the expense of the people and the U.S. national interest.

WN: If elected, how would you handle Iraq?

Congresswoman McKinney: I would instruct the Joint Chiefs to draw up a plan for the orderly withdrawal of all U.S. troops from the country. I would dismantle our military bases in the area, and I would also demand that U.S. and other international corporations relinquish any claims to Iraqi oil or other resources and withdraw as well. I would encourage the Iraqi people to select their own leaders

through the ballot box with assistance from the best minds in the universities region and in the world, in very much the same way that the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa was written. I would support the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to inaugurate a just peace and I would deploy a Peace Corps to the country that would work in concert with the reconstruction needs of the Iraqi people and their leadership.

I would go further than Iraq. I would deconstruct AFRICOM, the new continent-wide U.S. military command set up in Africa, to show the world that the United States has more to share with it than its military might, destabilizing covert operations, nukes, bombs, and missiles. I would work with the Congress to make sure that the face of U.S. engagement with the world is not a military one.

WN: How would you handle abortion?

Congresswoman McKinney: I would not change Roe v. Wade, I would protect and expand women's reproductive rights, and I would work with Congress to bolster family planning and protection against sexually transmitted diseases here and abroad. I would also support better sex education in our schools and community centers, as well as making safe and healthy preventive measures available through health care providers and community programs to reduce unwanted pregnancies and the spread of HIV/AIDS. Many factors come into any woman's decision to get pregnant or have an abortion. We are still missing effective policies to insure safe, affordable and effective birth control for both genders, programs that support education and employment for

single parents, courts that insure child support payments, and available health care through pregnancy and childbirth, and for children.

WN: There are thousands reading this right now. What could you say to convince them to give you their vote?

Congresswoman McKinney: People in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Haiti, India, Italy, Nicaragua, and Spain decided that even during their deepest national tragedies, they would vote their values, their dreams, and their aspirations. The governments that resulted were not just face-changes, but were governments reflective of the people's deep longing for real change. As a result, policies are being offered and implemented that reflect the truest values of the people--they want to enjoy peace and the right of self-determination.

I believe in the good that our government can do to respect civil liberties, the dignity of work, restorative justice (not just incarceration for profit), and peace. I believe that whoever wins the general election right now, Barak Obama, Hillary Clinton or John McCain, the people will still need a third party with standing to keep them accountable. But to achieve these goals, 5% of us are going to have to do something we've never done before in order to have something we've never had before. I am taking a stand for justice and for peace. I hope others willing to step outside of the two-party paradigm will join me in an effort to make the structural change in the political system that our country so urgently needs.

Letters regarding Times Square bombing sent to Congress

After the bombing of a military

recruiting station in New York City's Times Square, police in Washington, D.C. are investigating letters addressed to "members of Congress", which contain a picture of the recruiting station before the explosion and the message "Happy New Year, We Did It".

The letters arrived at Capitol Hill Thursday in manila envelopes, according to an anonymous Democratic aide who is investigating the matter. The picture was accompanied by what seemed to be a 10 page manifesto against the Iraq War. Also included was a booklet, which the aide says he cannot identify.

Another aide who is part of the investigation says similar letters arrived in up to 10 offices. In an email sent by California senator Diane Feinstein, recipients were urged to leave the letters alone and call police.

A congressional staffer describes the person in the photo as a white man with red hair, apparently in his 30s.

In a statement, the Capitol Police said, "The U.S. Capitol Police and the FBI are working together to investigate letters received by various members of Congress. There is no established connection between these letters and the New York City Times Square incident this morning. The investigation is ongoing...more details as they become available."

No one was injured in the explosion, which occurred around 3:40 am Thursday. The small bomb caused only minor damage to the recruiting station, shattering a glass door and leaving a hole in a window.

New professional Open documentary project

Recently the professional filmmaker association Loin de l'Œil started to produce a set of three documentaries (90~120mn) about nonviolent movements in India. From the 70's, to the largest nonviolent struggle (after Gandhi's one) that happened in October 2007, and called Janadesh.

This content is dedicated to be liberated via a special website, experimenting for the first time the "funding and licensing" model to release under Creative Commons licenses:

"The idea is that the more people donate to the project, the more freedom the movies achieve, moving along a scale with the CC BY-NC-ND 3.0 and the CC BY-SA 3.0 licences at the two extremes. Look at this freedom gauge to track the progress of donations." Daniela Faris, iCommons, Webmaster.

The project name "then you win" comes from the famous quote: "First they ignore you, then they laugh at you, then they fight you, then you win.", Mahatma Gandhi.

The budget could be reduced about 30-40% by using exclusively free software, collaborative work, and bypassing numerous middlemen. Audience is still low because of the project's youth but getting more and more interest from the free culture community, the most significant support came from Lawrence Lessig who became the first online donor.

Gunman kills eight at Jerusalem school

On Thursday night, a Palestinian gunman entered the library at the Mercaz HaRav, an orthodox religious seminary, in Jerusalem, Israel. He opened fire with an

automatic weapon, killing eight people and wounding another ten.

This is the most lethal attack on Israeli civilians in two years and the first attack in Jerusalem in more than three years.

"A terrorist infiltrated the Mercaz HaRav seminary and opened fire. He was killed in an exchange of fire and apparently had an explosives belt," said police spokesperson Shmuel Ben Ruby.

Police chief Aharon Franco said the attack was carried out by a lone gunman who "hid the weapon in a cardboard box." He said the gunman was subsequently killed by an Israeli army officer who, living nearby, ran to the school after hearing gunfire.

Seminary student Yitzhak Dadon, however, claims that he shot the gunman. "He came out of the library spraying automatic fire. ... The terrorist came to the entrance and I shot him twice in the head," Dadon told reporters.

"It's very sad tonight in Jerusalem. Many people were killed in the heart of Jerusalem" —Mayor Uri Lupolianski

"I saw the gunman and he fired a long burst in the air. But then he disappeared. I saw him again when he approached the door of the library. I shot him twice in the head. He started to sway and then someone else with a rifle fired at him, and he died," Dadon said.

Hamas sent a text message to reporters, stating, "We bless the (Jerusalem) operation. It will not be the last," but it did not claim responsibility. Sami Abu Zuhri, a senior spokesperson for Hamas, said the group "blesses the heroic operation in Jerusalem, which was

a natural reaction to the Zionist massacre," referring to the recent Israeli offensive in the Gaza Strip which killed at least 58 Palestinian civilians.

"It's very sad tonight in Jerusalem. Many people were killed in the heart of Jerusalem," said Jerusalem mayor Uri Lupolianski.

A spokesperson for the Foreign Affairs Minister of Israel said, "terrorists are trying to destroy the chances of peace but we will certainly continue peace talks."

President of the Palestinian National Authority Mahmoud Abbas, who recently froze peace talks with Israel, condemned the attack in Jerusalem.

Brett Favre says goodbye to NFL at press conference

After playing 17 seasons in the United States' top professional football league, quarterback Brett Favre of the National Football League's Green Bay Packers bid a final farewell to the sport in an emotional press conference at Lambeau Field on Thursday, saying he is "not up to the challenge" of another season.

"I know I can play. But I don't think I want to, and that's what it really comes down to," the 38-year-old Favre said.

Favre, who officially retired on Tuesday, dressed for the hour-long event in an untucked button-down shirt, blue jeans, and days worth of stubble. "It is on my terms, which is a good way to go out," he said of his attire. He thanked the Green Bay Packers' organization, his family, and his fans for their support throughout his career, but reluctantly admitted it was time to move on.

"I've given everything I can possibly give to this organization and I don't think I've got anything left to give," he said, as tears welled up in his eyes. "What matters is it's been a great career for me. It's over. As hard as it is for me to say, it's over."

His retirement came as somewhat of a surprise to the Packers, who expected he would return for another year. Favre refuted the notion that the Packers did not do enough to get him to return, and assured the organization that nothing they could have done would have affected his decision.

"It's only gotten tougher and something told me 'You know it's gotten too hard for you.'" —Brett Favre

"I know there's been comments and issues in the press lately about why I'm leaving, whether or not the Packers did enough, whether or not Ted or (coach) Mike (McCarthy) convinced me to stay," Favre said. "None of those things have anything to do with me retiring, and that's from the heart."

He instead offered a simpler reason for his departure: the stress of the job was getting to be too much "I don't think it would get easier next year or the following year," he said. "It hasn't up until this point. It's only gotten tougher and something told me 'You know it's gotten too hard for you.'"

When asked about his future plans, he replied, "Nothing." This is a new phase in his life, he explained. "I am going to stick to that until I want to do something else." He and his wife, Deanna, said they will be putting all public events on hold for a year,

because, as Deanna said, "Honestly, we both are really tired." He says they will still be involved with charities in the future, but not as extensively as before.

Favre holds NFL records in most wins by a starting quarterback, most passing yards, most passing touchdowns and most consecutive games started. However, he says that "the statistics part wasn't that important. I was never really a statistics guy. I hope my legacy is a lot more than that."

In 2007, he led the Packers to a 13-3 season, but lost in the NFC championship game to the eventual champion New York Giants. The final pass of his career was an interception that resulted in the Giants' game-winning field goal. Still, Favre believes he is "going out on top", and he could "care less what other people think".

"One play, one game, one season, doesn't define me," he said. "It has been a wonderful career."

Wikinews interviews Kevin Baugh, president of the Republic of Molossia

Wikinews held an exclusive interview with Kevin Baugh, president of the Republic of Molossia. Molossia is a micronation or entity that resembles an independent nation but which is unrecognized by world governments or major international organisations.

Molossia is situated on several acres of land in western Nevada, within driving distance of Reno. Unlike most of today's micronations, Molossia allows visitors and has its own economy. It also has its own time zone and holidays as well as a few tourist

attractions.

President Baugh said of his country, "Molossia is unique among micronations in that we possess actual land, real terra firma upon which we stake our national claim. Most micronations only exist on the internet and don't have land. We are quite proud of our little country, and display all the trappings of a full-fledged nation, including our flag, boundary markers, signs, a couple of small tourist attractions and so forth, as well as our own money, stamps, national anthem, navy and even a space program.....Our goal is to exercise complete sovereignty over our country without annoying the United States."

The United States recognizes the territory claimed by Molossia as part of the United States and exercises the same dominion over it as it does over any other part of the country.

Interview

Wikinews: Tell us about your country. Why was it started? How long has it been in existence? Do you have a flag, national anthem or currency? Can one become a citizen?

President Baugh: Molossia is a micronation, a self-declared and largely unrecognized country, one of dozens throughout the world. Molossia is unique among micronations in that we possess actual land, real terra firma upon which we stake our national claim. Most micronations only exist on the internet and don't have land. We are quite proud of our little country, and display all the trappings of a full-fledged nation, including our flag, boundary markers, signs, a couple of small tourist attractions and so forth, as well as our own money, stamps,

national anthem, navy and even a space program. Molossia was founded in 1977 as the Grand Republic of Vuldstein. The name has changed since then, but the idea is the same - to have our own small country. We were intrigued and inspired by the movie "The Mouse That Roared", about a tiny country in Europe that declares war against the United States and wins by accident. The humor of that situation was not lost on us, and it spawned the idea that we, too, could have our own tiny nation. Once we obtained land 10 years ago, the idea became more real, that we were now standing in a foreign country, deep inside the United States. Since then, the Molossian experience has only grown stronger and more rewarding and we look forward to a long and interesting future for our little nation.

And to answer the last part, no, not everyone can become a citizen. You have to be a physical resident of Molossia to be a citizen, and we are closed to new immigrants at this time - we just don't have the room!

WN: Today, there are hundreds of micronations that are little more than online chat groups. Is Molossia a serious micronation?

President Baugh: I would say yes, we are serious. That is to say, serious within limits. Molossia is not a secessionist project. We are not taking up arms to declare independence nor starting an insurrection. However, beyond that, we are quite serious about our country. Our goal is to exercise complete sovereignty over our country without annoying the United States Government too much, and to have a good time doing it.

WN: Molossia is surrounded by the United States. Do you consider

yourself a Molossian or an American? Do you pay U.S. taxes? President Baugh: I consider myself a dual citizen, both Molossian and American. Molossia is so small that we rely heavily on the US for support, goods, etc., so maintaining US citizenship is certainly desirable. In addition, it's often very difficult to explain that we have our own country out in the Nevada desert, so it's easier just to play both parts, American and Molossian. And yes, we do contribute to the coffers of the US Treasury annually, however, we call it "foreign aid". They need it, honestly.

WN: Can people visit Molossia? Is tourism a vital part of your nation's economy?

President Baugh: Yes, we welcome visitors to our country, although tourism is not a major source of income. In fact, we had 10 tourists visit last year. There are a few sights to see, but a visit usually only lasts about an hour. I escort all visitors around our nation and show them the sights, tell them about Molossia and even serve them cookie dough, our national treat. It's important, though, that visitors do not arrive uninvited. Please contact me first via e-mail and we will agree on a date and time.

WN: Legally, can Molossia be considered an independent nation?

President Baugh: Honestly, no. It takes a great deal of effort, time, money and especially legal wrangling to become fully independent, and we are nowhere near that point yet. No, we exist in a limbo state, at the good will of the US, and we are fine with that right now. After all, becoming independent can such a messy affair, and that would conflict with our relaxed lifestyle. We are happy to be the "country just down the

road, on the left"!

Today in History

1702 – Princess Anne became the Queen of England, Scotland and Ireland, succeeding William III.

1782 – American Revolutionary War: Almost 100 Native Americans in Gnadenhutten, Ohio died at the hands of Pennsylvanian militiamen in a mass murder known as the Gnadenhutten massacre.

1966 – Nelson's Pillar, a large granite pillar with a statue of Lord Nelson on top in Dublin, Ireland, was destroyed by a bomb.

1983 – The Cold War: During a speech to the National Association of Evangelicals in Orlando, Florida, U.S. President Ronald Reagan described the Soviet Union as an "evil empire".

1985 – A failed assassination attempt on Islamic cleric Sayyed Mohammad Hussein Fadlallah in a car-bombing in Beirut killed more than 80 people and injured almost 200 others.

March 08 is International Women's Day; Mother's Day in various European countries.

Quote of the Day

We do not ask for what useful purpose the birds do sing, for song is their pleasure since they were created for singing. Similarly, we ought not to ask why the human mind troubles to fathom the secrets of the heavens. The diversity of the phenomena of nature is so great and the treasures hidden in the heavens so rich precisely in order that the human mind shall never be lacking in fresh enrichment. ~ Johannes Kepler

Word of the Day

flagrant adj

1. Obvious and offensive, blatant, scandalous.
2. (archaic) On fire, flaming.

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