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Credit: Roquai - GFDL

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Top Stories

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Featured story

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Wikipedia Current Events

Pakistani soldiers and tribesman reportedly shoot down a suspected U.S. military drone near the village of Jalal Khel in South Waziristan. The report comes a day after intelligence officers said two United States helicopters crossed a mile into Pakistan over North Waziristan, but flew off after Pakistani troops and tribesmen opened fire.

Government officials say that the Federal Bureau of Investigation is looking into possible fraud for mortgage financing companies Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, Lehman Brothers, and insurer

Wikipedia Current Events

American International Group.

•The Large Hadron Collider near Geneva is shut down until the northern spring while engineers probe magnet failures.

•Ben Bernanke, the Chairman of the Federal Reserve, warns the United States Congress that failure to pass the Paulson Plan quickly would make a recession more likely.

•Japanese investment bank Nomura Holdings acquires the European, Asian and Middle Eastern equities and investment banking operations of Lehman Brothers.

•Sweden's National Television issues a public apology for a "misleading" report on comments made by foreign minister Carl Bildt about Sweden's intelligence services.

•Colin Barnett is sworn in as the 29th Premier of Western Australia.

•Eleven die in a school shooting in Kauhajoki, Finland.

Stressed plants produce aspirin-like chemical

Researchers at the National Center for Atmospheric Research have found that stressed plants produce an aspirin-like chemical, methyl salicylate. Methyl salicylate is also known as oil of wintergreen. This a semi-volatile plant hormone was detected in the air above the plants in the experiments conducted in a walnut grove near

Davis, California. According to the scientists the chemical may be a sort of immune response that help protect the plants.

Acetylsalicylic acid, commonly called aspirin, had originally come from the bark of Willow trees. It had never been observed to be emitted as a gas. The researchers observed spikes in methyl salicylate after nighttime temperatures dipped low, which suggested the plants were reacting to cold stress. The peaks were higher during a dry period, pointing to combined stress of cold nighttime temperatures and mild drought.

"These findings show tangible proof that plant-to-plant communication occurs on the ecosystem level." —Alex Guenther, NCAR scientist

Laboratory observations have shown that numerous plants produce methyl salicylate, but this is the first time the phenomenon is observed in the nature. Previous studies have also shown that plants being eaten by animals also produce chemicals, that can be sensed by other plants. A study conducted in 1997 had found that methyl salicylate is produced by tobacco plants inoculated with tobacco mosaic virus. Emitting methyl salicylate may be a means for the plants to warn other plants about a threat.

The finding may help to more readily identify plants under stress by monitoring for the airborne distress signal.

School shooting in Kauhajoki, Finland kills eleven

At approximately 11:00 a.m. Finnish time, a man in his twenties entered the Kauhajoen koti- ja laitostalousoppilaitos vocational

school in Kauhajoki, Finland with a gun and began to open fire, killing 11 people.

The man identified as Matti Juhani Saari, 22, was wearing a mask when he entered the school. Reports say he was a student at the school. The shooting is reported to have occurred in the school's cellar, where students were taking an exam. At least 150 students are reported to have been in the school when the shooting started.

According to superintendent Urpo Lintala, the shooter was apprehended by police, but suffered a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head. He was transported to police and taken to Tampere central hospital, but later died of his injuries. Police state he made a video of himself shooting a gun and later posted it on YouTube. On Monday after finding the video, authorities questioned him, but no charges were filed due to a lack of evidence.

At approximately the time the shooting started, police say a fire had been started, but was quickly extinguished by firefighters. There have also been reports of a bomb threat to a nearby building.

This is the deadliest school shooting in Finland since November 2007 when eight people were killed at a high school in Jokela.

Gordon Brown: I can lead Britain through economic crisis

Gordon Brown, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, today spoke at the 2008 Labour Party conference. In his speech he described his determination to lead his party and country, in addition to claiming that the current financial situation meant that this

was no time for a novice to claim a country, saying that he is the right man to lead. This speech comes as questions are raised over Brown's suitability as a leader.

Brown introduced the speech by telling the conference attendees that he wouldn't to discuss his reasons for leading the country. "I want to talk with you today about who I am, what I believe, what I am determined to lead this party and this great country to achieve," he said. "I know people have real concerns about the future of the country, the future of the economy and people in this hall have concerns about the future of our party too."

He then claimed that he "didn't come into politics to be a celebrity or thinking I'd always be popular." "Perhaps, that's just as well," he continued. "No, 25 years ago I asked the people of Fife to send me to parliament to serve the country I love." He then said that he "didn't come to London because I wanted to join the establishment, but because I wanted and want to change it."

"I want to talk with you today about who I am, what I believe, what I am determined to lead this party and this great country to achieve" —Gordon Brown

"And so I want to give the people of this country an unconditional assurance - no ifs, no buts, no small print - my unwavering focus is taking this country through the challenging economic circumstances we face and building the fair society of the future," he said, later in the speech. "The British people would not forgive us if at this time we looked inwards to the affairs of just our party when our duty is to the interests of our country."

Brown then made more in depth comments on the credit crunch. "Each generation believes it is living through changes their parents could never have imagined - but the collapse of banks, the credit crunch, the trebling of oil prices, the speed of technology, and the rise of Asia - nobody now can be in any doubt that we are in a different world and it's now a global age," he claimed. "In truth, we haven't seen anything this big since the industrial revolution. This last week will be studied by our children - as the week the world was spun on its axis - and old certainties were turned on their heads."

Later in the speech, Mr. Brown discussed how he believes his government should deal with climate change. He also said that targets for an 80% cut in greenhouse gas emissions should be considered. "I am asking the climate change committee to report by October on the case for, by 2050 not a 60% reduction in our carbon emissions, but an 80% cut - and I want British companies and British workers to seize the opportunity and lead the world in the transformation to a low carbon economy and I believe that we can create in modern green manufacturing and service one million new jobs."

Labour ministers reacted positively to the speech. Jacqui Smith, the current Home Secretary, said that "I think today's speech showed that he is a great leader and a great prime minister." Foreign Secretary David Miliband, meanwhile, described the speech as 'excellent'.

Shadow chancellor George Osborne, however, responded to the speech by saying that "there was nothing really new in the

speech - no apology for the mess he's got the country into and no new ideas that show us how he's going to get us out of it."

First Google Android phone unveiled, will be available soon

The first phone that runs on Google Android was unveiled today by T-Mobile. The announcement of this new handset, named the T-Mobile G1, was made in an event run by T-Mobile USA which took place today.

The event started at 14:30 UTC (10:30 local time) when Cole Brodman, the chief technology and innovation officer of T-Mobile USA, started introducing the people who were going to be present at the launch. These people were Andy Rubin, who represents Google, and Christopher Schlafler, who is the CTO of Deutsche Telekom.

Five minutes later Schlafler announced that Google Android will be available for Christmas 2008 on T-Mobile for customers of Deutsche Telekom. The new phone was then revealed by Cole Brodman, who described the phone as "iconic."

Commentators, however, dismissed claims that the phone was iconic. Marguerite Reardon from CNET said that Android looks rather like the iPhone, and as a result she does not think the phone can be described as iconic. She also said that the Android device looks the Danger Hiptop device, which is also known as the T-Mobile Sidekick.

The new phone will be available free in the UK for users with contracts that cost over 40GB£ (Approximately 74 US\$) per month. These planned tariffs are expected to include unlimited web access.

Android is completely open source, and was developed by Google and the Open Handset Alliance, a partnership of over thirty companies working to develop open source software for mobile phones.

Mass delivery of anti-Islamic DVDs in swing voting states

Voters in swing states across the United States began receiving a one-hour DVD of *Obsession: Radical Islam's War Against the West* over the weekend. The video was produced and distributed by Clarion Fund, a non-profit organization connected with Zionist and pro-Israeli organizations. The DVDs were delivered with leading newspapers mostly in swing states such as Ohio, Florida, and Michigan.

The film focuses on drawing parallels between "Islamofascists" and Nazis, and opens with a series of videos of terrorist acts. It features interviews with counter-terrorist analysts, footage from Arabic TV, and interviews with former terrorists.

The film's website states that the filmmakers "are against the Radical Islamists [sic] who want to impose their violent, oppressive world view, with little value for life and the manifold pleasures within", with the film making a strong statement that they are only discussing Radical Islam, and not discussing American Muslims or moderate Islam. The goal of the film, they say, is to raise public awareness, link isolated terrorist events to global origins, correct media misinformation, recognize efforts for Muslim tolerance, and promote efforts to fight "the Radical Islamic threat".

Obsession has drawn both criticism and praise in the U.S.

"Obsession is without exaggeration one of the most important films of our time," wrote CNN's Glenn Beck. The film received awards at numerous film festivals like the Liberty Film Festival.

But outraged Muslims have objected to the film and its distribution. According to the Council on American-Islamic Relationships, which has received a large amount of calls over the matter, the Muslims feel it is "an attempt to not only marginalize and demonize the American Muslim community". The Council believes the distribution of the DVD is an attempt to sway voters.

The film has been criticized for misquoting sources, poor fact checking, and including biased witnesses and testimony. Several of the analysts featured in the film have been criticized as being racist and anti-Islamic. Daniel Pipes, one of the talking heads in the film, was reported as saying that Muslims in America present "true dangers to American Jews". Nonie Darwish, a former Egyptian Muslim, also featured in the film, has been widely criticized for her belief that "Islam is cruel, anti-women, anti-religious freedom and anti-personal freedom in general."

Clarion Fund, which also sells a DVD titled *The Third Jihad*, states copies are being distributed to 28 million homes but there is no intent to sway voters. The organization's focus, however, is only on radical Islamic threats to national security, and the group also runs a website *RadicalIslam.org* which recently endorsed John McCain.

An investigation by IPS in 2007 revealed that *Obsession's* production was... closely tied to right-wing Zionists both in America

and Israel. Rabbi Ephram Shore, brother of Clarion Fund's founder Raphael Shore, is the head of an Israeli group which was involved in the film. Various weblinks on the group's website focus on anti-Semitism and Israel.

The funds for the production of the movie were reported as having been borrowed, but there is no word on where the funds for the distribution came from. A spokesman for the Council on American-Islamic Relations, Ibrahim Hooper, commented that he "can't imagine that you can produce, package, distribute and advertise this product for less than 50 million dollars".

American war deserter given stay of deportation in Canada

An American soldier who served in Afghanistan, Jeremy Hinzman was granted a surprise stay of deportation by the Federal Court of Canada one day before he was scheduled to be sent back to face trial for desertion in the United States. The move has put the issue of American deserters who fled to Canada following the 2003 Invasion of Iraq back in the national spotlight.

Judge Richard Mosley heard arguments from Hinzman's lawyer that suggested that while desertion was not an unfairly punished crime south of the border, the sentencing of deserter Robin Long several weeks ago proved that the country was targeting those deserters who had also been vocal opponents of the Iraq War with harsher sentences. Prosecutors had pointed to a media interview in which Long criticised the invasion as being illegal and immoral, arguing that it constituted an aggravating factor worthy of additional punishment.

Mosley ruled Hinzman would likely "suffer irreparable harm" if Canada were to forcibly return him to the United States.

One of the first American soldiers to cross the border in January 2004, Hinzman cited his religious conversion to the Quaker church which forbids violence, but was ordered deported back to the United States along with eight other soldiers who had entered Canada.

A non-binding vote in Canadian Parliament in June overturned the orders and supported allowing the deserters to remain in the country legally. However, the ruling Conservative Party ignored the vote and ordered the deportations to continue.

A number of grassroots protests spread across the country, demanding that Hinzman, his wife and two children, and as many as 40 other soldiers and their families now hiding in Canada be allowed to remain.

During the Vietnam War, more than 20,000 American men fled to Canada to avoid serving in combat, with as many as 125,000 family members, supporters and protesters following them. It marked the largest political emigration from the United States since the American Revolution two centuries earlier.

Republican Congressman Ron Paul endorses Constitution Party nominee Chuck Baldwin for President of the United States

Despite repeatedly saying that he would not endorse a particular candidate for this November's U.S. presidential election, Republican Congressman Ron Paul made a surprise statement Monday

afternoon in which he announced that he was supporting Constitution Party nominee Chuck Baldwin.

This comes after Libertarian Party nominee former congressman Bob Barr's controversial last minute refusal to attend Paul's third party unity conference at the National Press Club in Washington, DC nearly two weeks ago.

Instead, Barr held a press conference of his own a few hours later at the same location. In it he announced that he did not care about third party candidates getting a large amount of votes in the election, only himself. This statement caused Barr to rapidly decrease in voter popularity over the following week. Many of his former supporters have since joined Baldwin's and independent Ralph Nader's presidential campaigns.

"I've thought about the unsolicited advice from the Libertarian Party candidate," Paul said Monday. "He has convinced me to reject my neutral stance in the November election. I'm supporting Chuck Baldwin, the Constitution Party candidate."

WWE Raw Results from Cincinnati, OH for September 22, 2008

Monday evening was the 800th episode of WWE Raw, although not as celebrated as last year's 750th "Raw Family Reunion" episode, it was "business as usual" for the show, pushing towards the WWE No Mercy pay-per-view in two weeks.

The show opened with WWE World Heavyweight Champion Chris Jericho coming to the ring and climbing atop a tall ladder where the WWE World Heavyweight

Championship belt was hanging overhead. Chris Jericho will face current antagonist Shawn Michaels in a Ladder Match for the championship at the pay-per-view. Jericho talked about the fact that while fans applauded Michaels' remarks regarding his accomplishments in ladder matches fans have forgotten that Jericho has won three championship titles in ladder matches, and has participated in more high-profile ladder matches than Michaels. This would draw out former champion Randy Orton, who has been injured with a shoulder injury for the last three months. Orton on a tear criticizing current and former champions as well as top contenders as to their worthiness of holding the title, and Chris Jericho was no exception. Just as it looked like Jericho was ready to pummel Orton, Orton declared that WWE Raw General Manager Mike Adamle made a new proclamation that anybody who attacked Orton would be suspended indefinitely.

Jericho withdrew from the ring, but was immediately replaced by CM Punk, a man Orton attacked a few weeks ago, costing him the WWE World Heavyweight Championship in a four-way match at the WWE Unforgiven pay-per-view. Punk and Orton would come nose-to-nose before Punk slapped Orton in the face, sending him reeling to the corner. General manager Mike Adamle came out along with acting on-air representative Shane McMahon. Together they diffused the situation between Punk and Orton, and announce the main event match, champion Chris Jericho and John "Bradshaw" Layfield against Shawn Michaels and Dave Batista.

Before that main event happened, Jericho would talk with Mike

Adamle in his office, speculating that the reason Shane McMahon was at the show was to test Adamle's skills as a leader rather than a company yes-man, and that rather than following Mr. McMahon's directions to the letter, that he should use them as a suggestion for his own ideas. This would result in the main event becoming a three-on-two match, with the addition of Lance Cade to the team of Jericho and Layfield. Cade, a former protégé for Shawn Michaels and current ally of Jericho, played a major factor in the match. Cade's presence in the ring was a distraction to Shawn Michaels, who spent the majority of the match fighting off double-team efforts and cut off from making a tag to his partner. Dave Batista would eventually make that tag, but would be quickly overpowered by Jericho and Layfield. Michaels would tag in one last time while Batista would continue to fight outside of the ring with Layfield. Michaels appeared to have Cade defeated, but a distraction by Jericho allowed Cade to recover and attack Michaels from behind, pinning him after executing a sit-out powerbomb.

Full match results for the evening: CM Punk def. WWE World Tag Team Champion Cody Rhodes by pinfall; WWE Intercontinental Champion Santino Marella def. Deuce Shade by pinfall in a non-title match; Kane def. Evan Bourne by pinfall; Kelly Kelly def. WWE Women's Champion Beth Phoenix by pinfall in a non-title match; Mike Mizain & John Morrison def. Cryme Tyme by pinfall; WWE World Heavyweight Champion Chris Jericho, John Bradshaw Layfield & Lance Cade def. Shawn Michaels & Dave Batista

Today in History

622 – Muhammad and his followers completed their Hijra from Mecca to Medina to escape religious persecution.

1789 – The First United States Congress passed the Judiciary Act of 1789, establishing the U.S. federal judiciary and setting the number of Supreme Court Justices.

1841 – The Sultan of Brunei granted Sarawak to British adventurer James Brooke.

1903 – Alfred Deakin became the second Prime Minister of Australia, succeeding Edmund Barton who left office to become a founding justice of the High Court of Australia.

1988 – Canadian Ben Johnson finished the 100 m sprint at the Seoul Olympics in a world record time of 9.79 seconds, ahead of rivals Carl Lewis and Linford Christie, but was later disqualified for doping.

September 24 is Independence Day in Guinea-Bissau (1973); Republic Day in Trinidad and Tobago (1976); Heritage Day in South Africa

Quote of the Day

At any rate, let us love for a while, for a year or so, you and me. That's a form of divine drunkenness that we can all try. There are only diamonds in the whole world, diamonds and perhaps the shabby gift of disillusion. ~ F. Scott Fitzgerald

Word of the Day

obtund v
(medicine) To reduce the edge or effects of; to mitigate; to dull.

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