



Top Stories

New Jersey's State Supreme Court says gay couples have same rights as heterosexual couples

New Jersey's State Supreme Court has said that gay couples are entitled to the same rights and privileges as heterosexual couples, but also said that totally legalizing gay marriages in the state will be up to New Jersey's legislators.

NASA launches STEREO spacecraft

NASA's STEREO spacecraft has been successfully launched atop a Delta II (7925) rocket from Cape Canaveral, Florida. The spacecraft will be placed into a Heliocentric orbit (around the Sun), and will monitor solar phenomea.

Featured story

Wikinews interviews South Koreans about relations with North Korea

An informal poll by a Wikinews reporter found that very few of those South Koreans polled changed their mind about reunification with North Korea and the perceived threat posed by the North, following the nuclear weapons test by North Korea on October 9.

Wikipedia Current Events

•Afghan government officials claim at least 60 civilians were killed in ISAF Operation Medusa in the Panjwayi district of Kandahar province on Tuesday.

Wikipedia Current Events

- In Australia, Sheikh Taj El-Din Hilaly apologizes after a public uproar over his statement comparing women who did not wear the hijab to "uncovered meat".
- The National Assembly of Nicaragua passes a law banning all abortions in the run-up to general elections.
- A Russian Progress spacecraft hauling fresh food, oxygen and vital spare parts for the International Space Station (ISS) arrived at its orbital destination after a successful rendezvous marred by a last-minute antenna glitch.
- Four firefighters are killed and one is critically injured as they tried to control the Esperanza Fire that drove hundreds from their homes near Palm Springs, California, United States. An arsonist started the fire.
- The Governments of Kiribati and Tuvalu say the citizens of their countries will need to be permanently relocated over the next ten years due to rising sea levels caused by global warming.
- ExxonMobil Corp., the world's largest petroleum extracting company, says its third-quarter net income rose to USD \$10.5 billion from \$9.92 billion as crude prices rise to an all-time high. This is the second highest quarterly profit figure for a United States company.
- A German minister claims that

Wikipedia Current Events

two Israeli fighter jets fired two shots over a German naval peacekeeping ship near the Lebanese coast. Israel denies the jets fired.

U.S. Republican Party Television Ad bashes Canada

A "critical" campaign ad, launched by the Republican Party that took a swipe at Canada has been pulled.

"Canada can take care of North Korea," a man in the television ad says. "They're not busy."

The ad's purpose was to blast Democratic Senate candidate Harold Ford Jr, who is running against Republican Bob Corker. The comment about Canada is secondary to the ad's first purpose.

An official for the Republican National Committee told NBC the ad had been pulled because it had "run its course," just one day after party chairman Ken Mehlman defended the ad and said it would continue to run.

"Just imagine if I registered a complaint every time my country or president was criticized," said the U.S. Ambassador to Canada, David Wilkins. "Compare that (one ad) with the criticism early this year during the (federal) election that happened every day in Canada ...ads that were run consistently throughout your country."

A source within the Canadian government told the Canadian Press that Canadian ambassador to the U.S., Michael Wilson, called the White House to remind the Republicans of the heavy load Canada is carrying in Afghanistan.

The Canadian Embassy in Washington has been on an advertising campaign, plastering subway stations in Washington with posters depicting Canadian troops in Afghanistan. There is also a website featuring military cooperation between Canada and the U.S.

The Canadian ambassador to the U.S. has issued a complaint to Washington in response to the television ad.

The 30 second ad (see source below) can now be viewed on YouTube.

Mutant chicken dies in New Zealand

A mutant Barnevelder chick born with four legs and two anuses died last Friday.

Marlene Dickey, farmer, said she believed that the chick, called Forzie, died because it had two anuses, "...he developed two bottoms, and I think he got plugged up". The chick weighed about as much as a "good pound of butter", and grew feathers very slowly she said - "...he was a bit of a laugh."

Mutants, or chicks born with defects, are usually stillborn, so it was surprising that Forzie was born live and was able to survive as long he did.

Forzie is stored in a freezer waiting for a taxidermist to stuff it. Once stuffed Dickey will hand the chick

over to the Auckland Museum.

Seven British soldiers face war crimes charges.

The first charges under the new U.K. International Criminal Court Act have been brought against seven British servicemen. The charges include manslaughter, inhumane treatment, causing actual bodily harm, and common assault of Iraqi civilians. A Warrant Officer and a Major in the British Intelligence Corps, and the former commander of the Queen's Lancashire Regiment (now the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment) are charged with negligently performing duties. The charges relate to the mistreatment of civilians and the death of Baha Mousa (26) a hotel receptionist in Basra in 2003.

The first British serviceman to give evidence, a senior aircraftsman in the RAF, testified that he saw prisoners with bags over their heads being kicked and verbally abused. He said that he had never seen anything like it before and didn't know what to do. He had not intervened 'because they (the soldiers) were bigger than me, and I didn't know what their orders were'.

The court martial at the Military Court Centre, Bulford Camp, Wiltshire continues.

Interview with Vicky Dhillon, City Council candidate for Wards 9 & 10 in Brampton, Canada

The upcoming 2006 Brampton municipal election, to be held November 13, features an array of candidates looking to represent their wards in city council or the council of the Peel Region.

Wikinews contributor Nick Moreau contacted many of the candidates,

including Vicky Dhillon, asking them to answer common questions sent in an email. This ward's incumbent is Garnett Manning; also challenging Manning is Stella Ambler, Mandeep Dhaliwal, Daljit Gill, and Nalem Malik.

Q: List the three most important issues in your campaign.

A:

Property Tax Increases Too High.
Infrastructure Deficiencies.
Green Space needing protection.

Q: What one election issue do you feel is most relevant to your ward in this election?

A: There are many important issues facing Wards 9 & 10 Constituents and other people living and working in Brampton. Taxes have increased significantly, over ten percent in the last two years yet we see the infrastructure progressing too slowly. Schools aren't being built in new areas, highways (410/427) remained virtually unchanged and the list grows daily. We have an 'Official Draft Plan' for the City of Brampton. The City Council and Region should start delivering on the promises.

Q: What qualities or experiences do you possess, that make you more desirable than the incumbent?

A: I believe Mr. Manning has been insensitive to the needs of the Constituents in Wards 9 & 10. As an example, I have seen where he has been quoted as saying City Council has done a good job keeping tax increases to the 5 - 6% range. If this was the case in Toronto, he would be unemployed as Toronto voters wouldn't be so accepting. The average wage has only increased by 3 % in the same time period. We need to make sure families can afford to live in Brampton and that they get

purposeful infrastructure in place.

Q: Why do you want to represent your ward on council?

A: I have a strong and committed desire to contribute to my community to make it the best place it can be to live and work. I make sensible decisions with the best interests of my Constituents in mind.

Q: How are you currently involved in the community?

A:
Current President of the Brampton-Springdale Federal Liberal Riding Association.
Member of the Peel Multi Cultural Council.
Recipient of a Volunteer Appreciation Award from the Peel Multi Cultural Council.
President of the Pearson Airport Limousine Driver's Association.
Member of the National Association of Indo-Canadians.
Former member of the Great Lakes Public School Parent Council.
Former member of the Amalgamated Transit Union.
Founding member of the Bathinda Sports and Culture Club.
Recipient of President Scouts Award.

Q: Much of Brampton's existing council is seasoned in the civic political process. What could you bring to the table as a "rookie", above and beyond the current roster of councillors?

A: I don't feel like I am a "rookie" since I have been very involved with Federal politics for many years.

The South Asian community now represents about thirty percent of Brampton's population yet there is no representation from the community on City Council. My goal is to be a strong voice for all of my constituents and to bring diversity to City Council.

Q: Of the decisions made by (region/city) council since the last election, which do you take the most pride in, and why?

A: I was pleased Council put a development freeze in place. We need infrastructure to catch up and will need the revenue from increased development charges in the future to help finance projects.

Q: The Rose Theatre recently launched. What are your thoughts on this facility? Have you had a chance to tour it yet?

A: The facility itself is spectacular but came with a heavy priced tag for tax payers. Although, I haven't been able to verify, I have heard local residents complain that local Brampton amateur theatre groups have not been able to use the facilities. I hope this facility is available for the people of Brampton, not just the elite since it belongs to all of the people of Brampton.

Q: The province has strongly encouraged the development of high-density residences near the downtown. Do these buildings fit in with your vision of the downtown? How much say should other levels of government have in urban planning?

A: I believe that Brampton has not encouraged enough high-density housing. For a City to remain prosperous it needs affordable housing for young people, the less fortunate and for seniors. Not everyone can afford to live in a 3000 square foot house. The people who want to remain in the City need alternatives. We don't want young people to move away from the community because they can't afford their own place. I believe all levels of government have a role to play in urban planning since they all contribute in varying degrees to infrastructure and social programs.

Q: How do you feel about Brampton's rate of expansion? Council recently capped the annual amount of new development; do you agree completely with this decision, would you have slowed development even further, or not have imposed a cap at all?

A: I have already commented on this but let me expand a little. The City lost significant revenue from development charges when they approved many more building lots than usual before implementing higher development charges. Millions could have been added to the City's revenue if we had spread out the development over a longer period of time.

Q: What are your opinions on Brampton's congestion and the level of public transit funding?

A: Brampton seems to have been forgotten by government while other large communities like Mississauga and Markham got major expansion to transit and road systems. Brampton's transit system is one of the largest expenditures for the City but has not been efficient in serving the people. We need to improve this immediately.

Q: Why should businesses be attracted to locating in Brampton?

A: We have a large well trained local labour force, affordable housing costs compared to other GTA communities for employees to live and Brampton is located near major highways, rail and airports.

Q: How could Brampton further itself in attracting corporate investment?

A: Improve infrastructure (highways and transit) and keep property taxes low! We should make sure affordable housing is available so our local workforce can expand. Businesses need

affordable workforce and low overhead to operate successfully.

Q: Why have you chosen to involve yourself in the political process?

A: Since an early age I have shown an interest in the political process. I feel so fortunate to live in a country like Canada. We have to protect it. This is why I want to be a leader in my community.

Q: What does Brampton mean to you?

A: Brampton is my family's home. My children go to school here, I work in the Brampton area and we shop here. We worship in Brampton and many of our friends live in Brampton. This is why I am so passionate about making Brampton a great community to live and work.

Notes

The entire original text can be read on the article's talk page.

NASA launches STEREO spacecraft

NASA's STEREO spacecraft has been successfully launched atop a Delta II (7925) rocket from Cape Canaveral, Florida. The spacecraft will be placed into a Heliocentric orbit (around the Sun), and will monitor solar phenomena, such as Solar Flares. It was the 121st launch of a Delta II rocket, and the 119th success.

The Solar Terrestrial Relations Observatory (STEREO) consists of two nearly identical solar observatories. These will enable stereoscopic observation of solar flares in 3-D and will provide warnings of emissions from the Sun that might effect satellites in Earth orbit.

Launch occurred at 00:52 GMT.

'Evidence against ISI not

clinching' says Indian National Security Adviser

The Indian National Security Advisor M K Narayanan has said that India doesn't have "clinching" evidence of the involvement of Pakistan's intelligence agency, the ISI in the Mumbai train blasts of July 11, which killed 207 people and injuring several hundred more.

"I would hesitate to say we have clinching evidence but we have pretty good evidence," he was quoted as saying on CNN-IBN.

This statement from a high-ranking Indian official goes against the assertion of the Anti-Terror Squad chief KP Raghuvanshi on October 1 that there was enough evidence "to nail ISI" in the blasts.

Following Narayanan's remarks, the Union Home Secretary V.K. Duggal on Monday characterised the evidence as "very good [...] it is fairly solid evidence,".

According to Narayanan, India has information related to connectivity, linkages, confessions and arrests, but there are pieces of puzzle that are not available.

The statement from the security advisor to the Prime Minister reveals that India is yet to complete the investigation, although the Mumbai police had given the impression otherwise.

New Zealand Xtra broadband "unleashed"

New Zealand Internet service provider (ISP) Xtra, owned by telecommunication giant Telecom New Zealand, has today "unleashed" the downstream lines as fast as the line will allow. The speed could reach up to seven megabytes per second. All new plans will feature maximum

downstream speeds, upstream speeds will still be constrained however.

Before the new speeds, three and a half megabytes per second use to be the maximum downstream speed.

Both Xtra and ihug didn't respond to questions sent via e-mail.

And with these new speeds also comes two new plans. These new plans include the Go Large which has no data cap and the Go Express which offers "fast upstream connection."

On September 26, 2006 Telecom announced the speed changes and Kevin Bowler, Telecom's general manager of Consumer Marketing, said: "With maximum speeds customers may find it easier to do things online that are bandwidth-intensive. Some customers will notice a difference in the time it takes to do things like download music... watch video or send and receive large email attachments."

Xtra says existing customers will be transferred onto the new plans progressively from October 26, 2006.

Former South Korean president Choi Kyu-hah dies

Former South Korean President Choi Kyu-hah died in Seoul on October 22, 2006. He was 87 years old.

Choi was found unconscious in his home by family members at 6 a.m. local time (UTC+9) on Sunday morning and was rushed to Seoul National University Hospital, where he was later pronounced dead at 7:37 a.m. Doctors said that he died from acute heart failure. Choi became acting President after

then-President Park Chung Hee was assassinated on October 26, 1979. He was officially sworn as the 10th President in December of the same year following a military coup, but resigned that post on August 16, 1980. After his resignation, he refused to discuss the coup in much detail.

Born in Wonju, Gangwon Province, on July 16, 1919, Choi was a graduate in English language and literature from Tokyo Teachers College and worked as a professor at the Teachers College of Seoul National University for a short time after the end of Japanese rule in Korea in 1945. He entered politics in 1946 and served as foreign minister from 1967 to 1975 and prime minister from 1975 to 1979.

Choi was buried in Daejeon National Cemetery after a state funeral. His wife, Hong Gi, died in 2004 but her remains were exhumed from the current burial site in Wonju and buried next to those of her husband.

Today in History

1553 - Condemned as a heretic, Michael Servetus was burned at the stake outside Geneva.
 1904 - The first section of the New York City Subway opened, running between City Hall and the Bronx.
 1958 - General Ayub Khan deposed Iskander Mirza in a bloodless coup d'état to become the second President of Pakistan, less than 3 weeks after Mirza had appointed him the enforcer of martial law.
 1961 - NASA launched the first Saturn I rocket.
 1971 - The Democratic Republic of the Congo was renamed Zaire.
 October 27 is Independence Day in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (1979) and Turkmenistan (1991)

Quote of the Day

The youth are not always right, but the society which ignores them and beats, is always wrong.
 ~ François Mitterrand

Word of the Day

idyllic; adj

1. Extremely happy, peaceful, or picturesque.

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