



Top Stories

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Snow causes disruption in UK

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Featured story

Anna Nicole Smith dies

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Wikipedia Current Events

- American model Anna Nicole Smith dies at the age of 39 in Hollywood, Florida after collapsing in a hotel room.
- British police arrest Abu Izzadeen,

Wikipedia Current Events

the spokesman for al-Ghurabaa, an organization the British government has designated as terrorist, on charges of inciting terrorism.

- Seven alleged members of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, an organization affiliated with Al-Qaeda, are on trial in Tajikistan. If convicted of terrorism they could be sentenced to up to twenty years in prison.

Annie Awards for animation Sunday; Wikinews will be there

This Sunday, the International Animated Film Association (Association International du Film d'Animation) or ASIFA will hand out the Annie Awards in Glendale, California. As animation's highest honor, the crowd is always a who's who of direction, art design, character design, layout, visual effects, and voice artists.

There are 23 award categories in the Annies, sorted into Individual Achievement and Production categories.

Perhaps the most competitive category is "Best Animated Feature", which will be a fight between Cars (Pixar Animation Studios), Happy Feet (Warner Bros. Pictures/Village Roadshow Pictures/Kennedy Miller Production/Animal Logic Film), Monster House (Columbia Pictures/ImageMovers/Amblin), Open Season (Sony Pictures Animation/Columbia Pictures) and Over The Hedge (DreamWorks

Animation).

Cars, Happy Feet, and Monster House are all nominated in the Academy Awards for the same category, perhaps signifying an edge up in the competition.

Direct-to-DVD releases are eligible for the "Best Home Entertainment Production". Included are Bambi II (DisneyToon Studios), The Adventures of Brer Rabbit (Universal Animation Studios), and Winnie the Pooh: Shapes & Sizes (DisneyToon Studios).

Charlie and Lola, Foster's Home for Imaginary Friends, King of the Hill, The Fairly OddParents, and Wow! Wow! Wubbzy! are all up for "Best Animated Television Production".

"Best Animated Video Game" will be awarded to either Flushed Away The Game (D3 Publisher of America, Inc.), Monster House (THQ, Inc.), and SpongeBob SquarePants: Creature From the Krusty Krab (THQ, Inc.); the category was just created last year.

Adventure Time (Nickelodeon), Fumi and the Bad Luck Foot (Thunderbean Animation), No Time For Nuts (Blue Sky Studios), and Weird Al Yankovic Don't Download This Song (Acme Filmworks) are all up for "Best Animated Short Subject". Only No Time for Nuts is up for an Oscar, which has significantly different rules. "Best Animated Television Commercial" will go to either an advertisement for Candy Factory, ESPN, Hilton, St. Louis Zoo, and United Airlines.

Started in 1972

ASIFA is a non-profit worldwide organization dedicated to preserving and promoting animation, which maintains national branches in 55 countries, as far away as UlanBaatar, Mongolia and Tehran. The Annies are awarded by its California chapter ASIFA-Hollywood.

The awards were started in 1972, after voice actress June Foray noticed the industry lacked a formal way to acknowledge its achievements. Performing in over 202 productions, Foray's most known characters are Rocket J. Squirrel (Rocky and Bullwinkle) and Granny (Looney Tunes).

ASIFA also hands out "Juried Awards" to various notable figures in animation. Bill Plympton, Genndy Tartakovsky, and Andreas Deja will each win the Winsor McCay Award, in recognition of lifetime or career contributions to the art of animation. Bill Matthews, Michael Fallik, Marc Deckter, and Eric Graf will each win a Certificate of Merit. The June Foray Award will go to Stephen Worth, for his "significant and benevolent or charitable impact on the art and industry of animation." The Ub Iwerks Award and Special Achievement award will not be handed out.

Coverage upcoming

Professional photographer John Mueller will attend the ceremony on behalf of Wikinews, taking photos of nominees and the rest of America's animation elite. Mueller was selected from a wide pool of professionals offering their services. The photos from the event will be released under the Creative Commons By Attribution license, which allows them to be used by anyone for any purpose.

Four alarm fire in Old City, Philadelphia

The fire department was called to the building that hosted the Five Spot night club in Philadelphia's historic Old City section. The location was hot spot for many local jazz gurus who are disheartened to learn that a local hotspot has been destroyed.

The Five Spot brought an eclectic mix to Philadelphia's Old City section where the business had thrived for 11 years.

Lovett Hines, a longtime guru of the Philadelphia Jazz music scene said the club was a creative caldrion of sorts for the neo-jazz genre. Cohen of Gloucester City said, "It was heart-wrenching; A lot of us were in tears."

Reports indicate that at least one wall inside the group of buildings that make the Five Spot collapsed, causing major structural damage. The fire was contained to three building, authorities say. No one was injured in the blaze.

During an interview the owner said, "It was just time. We were looking to sell... to somebody who would carry on the tradition."

Birks to create 2010 Olympic, Paralympic jewelry; wines on menu

Birks was recently announced as the "Official Supplier of Jewelry" for the 2010 Vancouver-Whistler Olympics. The company will create licensed products with the logos of the 2010 Olympic Games, 2010 Paralympic Games, and the Canadian Olympic team emblem, including necklaces, earrings, pendants and rings.

The partnership was announced at an employee celebration in Vancouver, to mark the centenary

of Mayors Jewelers Inc., an American company Birks acquired in 2002.

The six-year sponsorship includes the rights to the Canadian Olympic team logo during the Beijing 2008 and London 2012 Olympic Games.

Thomas A. Andruskevich, president and CEO, Birks & Mayors stated in a press release: "We are extremely proud to take part in this journey that honors our best athletes and celebrates excellence as the Vancouver 2010 Winter Games shine on the world wide stage. Canadians look to Birks to mark the most important celebrations in their lives which is why Birks wants to commemorate this important moment in Canadian history."

The products will be launched in early 2008.

Wines to toast Olympic "Esprit"

Also released today is information that Jackson-Triggs Esprit will be a special line of wines, created to celebrate the athletic event. The Vincor Canada wine is named in relevance to "spirit", both the spirit of the Olympians, and alcoholic beverage usage of the word.

President and CEO of Vincor Canada Jay Wright said, "We are thrilled to have this opportunity to honor our Canadian athletes while affirming our role as Canada's wine industry leader. Like our Olympic and Paralympic athletes, Vincor Canada shares a passion and determination towards excellence. This agreement is by far Vincor Canada's most ambitious and broad-reaching sponsorship and will be great for the Canadian wine industry. I hope Canada will join us in the excitement that we feel regarding this exceptional opportunity to position Canadian wine brands on the world stage."

The wines, featuring Olympic logo, will be distributed to liquor stores and restaurants across the country this summer. Proceeds from each bottle will go towards the Canadian Olympic Team.

Both the Chardonnay and Merlot will retail for CDN\$11.95 MSRP. Inniskillin Wines' vineyards, harvested since 1975, in either the Niagara Peninsula in Ontario or the Okanagan Valley in British Columbia will create the wine.

Other promotions

Within the past few weeks, the Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC) has announced a Omega-brand countdown clock that will tour British Columbia events, as the company is the "Official Olympic Timekeeper". Canadian Pacific was named official rail freight services provider, and the Royal Canadian Mint announced they will create circulation and collector coins to mark the occasion.

There are 1099 days until the XXI Olympiad, according to the official website of the event.

Anna Nicole Smith dies

Anna Nicole Smith, who was born as Vickie Lynn Hogan, has been found unconscious in the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino in Hollywood, Florida in her 6th floor hotel room. Entertainment Tonight, a major entertainment news source, is reporting that she has died.

Paramedics are reported to have performed CPR on the actress and had to have breathing equipment inserted into her chest after a nurse found her passed out in her hotel room and witnesses say that Smith was receiving CPR while the ambulance took her to the hospital around 2:00 p.m. [EST]. Smith's

bodyguard is reported to have given Smith "cardiopulmonary resuscitation" before paramedics arrived.

"I can confirm that she is deceased. It's as shocking to me as to you guys. I don't know what the cause was. This is just tragic and that's all you can say right now and I don't know anything further," said one of Anna Nicole's lawyers, Ron Dale.

Smith was taken by ambulance to Memorial Regional Hospital and "checked in Monday [to the hotel] at 8 p.m. as a guest. She was due to check out tomorrow," said cafe spokeswoman, Danielle Giordano.

"Our rescue crews got there, and they were escorted to a bedroom, where they found a female alone in her room and unresponsive. We then began our normal protocol for dealing with a non-breathing individual. The victim never regained consciousness and we continued with CPR and all life-support methods right up until the time we delivered her to the hospital and then the hospital takes over," said a spokesman for the responding paramedics team. Smith was pronounced dead at the hospital at 2:49 p.m. [EST].

According to Broward County Medical Examiner's Office investigator, Edwina Johnson, an autopsy will be performed on Smith on Friday and that her death is currently being investigated. Authorities are not yet treating her death as a crime.

One of Smith's attorneys, Howard K. Stern is reported to have been staying with Smith in her room, but authorities have yet to locate Mr. Stern.

"He was here with her. I don't know where he's at right now," said

Charlie Tiger the chief of the Seminole, Florida Police Department also adding that Smith's 5 month old baby was not with them.

Smith was a spokeswoman for the company TRIMSPA when she passed, and TrimSpa has removed all content from their site for now, shutting it down and posting only a message in response to her death.

"Today, Anna Nicole Smith's grief stricken and tumultuous personal life came to an end. Anna came to our Company as a customer, but she departs it as a friend. While life for Anna Nicole was not easy these past few months, she held dear her husband, Howard K. Stern, her daughter, Dannielynn Hope, her most cherished friends, beloved dogs, and finally, her work with TRIMSPA. Anna knew both the joy of giving life, and the heartache of losing a child. We pray that she is granted the peace that eluded her more recent days on earth, and that she find comfort in the presence of her son, Daniel," said the statement on TRIMSPA's website posted by Alex Goen, CEO and Founder of TRIMSPA.

Smith was rushed to the hospital in November of 2006 after she was suffering from symptoms of pneumonia. Smith's son, Daniel Smith, died on September 10, 2006 shortly after Anna gave birth to a baby girl 5 months ago.

Smith was shopping for a new boat in Florida and reports say she felt ill and had a fever for at least a day.

Smith was 39.

China to effectively fight Internet piracy

Under criticism from its Western trading partners, China is working toward an effective resolution of

issues regarding illegal downloading of movies and videos protected by copyright law. Reports state that 205 websites were closed recently because of their illegal Internet activity.

Chinese officials state that in the period between September and January they have investigated 436 cases of Internet piracy and ordered 361 Internet offenders to stop infringement of the copyright law. Overseas organizations requested investigation of 130 cases.

Yan Xiaohong, who is currently the deputy director of the National Copyright Association, mentioned at a news conference that Internet piracy in China caused serious damage to the interests of the copyright owners. This, he says, leads to a number of disputes, which, in their turn lead to disruption of the orderly functioning of the Internet.

Most of the investigated cases involved sites that offered a free download of software, movies, music and textbooks. The main reasons why Chinese people actively download pirated works are the high prices on authorized copies and restrictions on cultural imports set by the Chinese government.

According to the numbers provided by Chinese officials, China has around 843,000 websites and 140 million users, which means that China is the second largest Internet market in the world. Mr. Yan Xiaohong outlined the fact that due to the quick pace of China's development, it may take some time to effectively fight Internet piracy.

Snow causes disruption in UK
Heavy snow has caused disruption

in the United Kingdom with airports and schools closed and delays on the road network.

Snowfall was highest near Worcester with 9cms of snow falling. The snow has caused hundreds of school closures and major disruption to airports with Birmingham, London Gatwick and City, Bristol and Cardiff runways closing although these have now re-opened. However the runways at Luton and Stanstead remain closed due to the bad weather.

The road network has also been affected with some snow settling and accidents occurring causing major congestion in some areas, although gritting by the Highways Agency and local authorities has limited the effect on trunk roads and motorways.

Schools were closed in Birmingham, Solihull and Dudley, while some remained open in Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, East Anglia and Wales, Shropshire, Staffordshire and Cheshire.

Drivers are being warned that driving conditions will continue to be adverse and are being advised only to travel if absolutely necessary.

Train services by Midland Mainline and Virgin as well as the London Underground are affected, with delays, reduced services and cancellations.

The overall economic effect of the snow is predicted to cost the British economy approximately £400 million due to loss of work hours.

There has also been loss of power in some areas of Wales including Abergaveny, Llandeilo and Blaenporth.

The snow fall is expected to continue into the evening but may turn to sleet in some areas. Also cold temperature tonight will mean that there is a high chance of ice forming on the road network. Up to 15 cm of snow is expected through the day in some hilly areas but wetter and milder weather is expected over the weekend.

New edition of Canada's Food Guide released

A new version of Canada's Food Guide was announced by Canadian Health Minister Tony Clement on Feb. 5, 2007. The guide has helped Canadians with healthy eating habits since 1942 but was last updated in 1992. It is the Canadian government's most-requested publication after income tax forms.

Changes to the Food Guide include: a first-time recommendation to include a small amount of unsaturated fat in regular diets; physical activity to complement healthy eating; advice for some people to take vitamin supplements; an advisory to limit foods with excess salt, sugar, fat and calories, which is considered an unprecedented caution regarding junk food.

U.S. helicopter crash in Iraq kills 7

A CH-46 Sea Knight helicopter crashed in the Al-Anbar province of Iraq approximately 20 miles outside of Baghdad on Monday. The helicopter was carrying seven passengers and crew at the time of the crash. No survivors were reported at the site.

Major General William B. Caldwell, a spokesman for the U.S. military told reporters in Baghdad , "A quick-reaction force is on site and the investigation is going on as we speak." He did not specify whether

mechanical failure or ground fire had brought it down.

Witnesses at the crash site report seeing gunfire from the ground. Al-Qaeda in Iraq has claimed responsibility for the attack, saying one of its "air defense brigades" had shot it down.

Including Wednesday's most recent attack, the U.S. military has suffered five such helicopter crashes, resulting in the loss of 28 servicemen in the past 3 weeks. Since May 2003 the U.S. has lost 55 helicopters to mechanical failure and being shot down.

At the time of the crash the helicopter was conducting "routine operations".

In response to recent losses the U.S. military has begun to implement new changes in flight operations. Although they would not stipulate the exact changes, General Caldwell insured the military was "making adjustments in our tactics and techniques and procedures as to how we employ our helicopters".

New stars found in Southern Cross

New stars have been recently discovered in the Southern Cross, or Crux, by scientists in the United States. This discovery could affect the flags of New Zealand, Australia, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Brazil.

The American scientists found the new stars in the Southern Cross by using the Chandra X-ray Observatory, a space satellite run by NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) which uses x-rays.

When the scientist team, led by David Cohen of Swarthmore College

in Pennsylvania, were using the Chandra telescope, they, to their surprise, saw two x-ray glows, each representing stars, where they expected to see one. The new star appears be orbiting Beta Crucis, the westernmost star in the Southern Cross, once every 2,000 years. Doctor Nick Lomb, an astronomer at the Powerhouse Museum, Sydney, Australia, said that the reason the star had not been found before was because the glare from Beta Crucis is too great and "It would be like looking for a glow worm next to a floodlight." Before the recent discovery, it was already known that Beta Crucis had a partner, which is invisible to the human-eye.

Mr Cohen said that they found it by accident, as they were really trying to get information about the x-rays emitted by Beta Crucis. "We were interested in how the highly supersonic stellar winds of hot, luminous stars produce X-rays."

The star found at the bottom of the Southern Cross, Alpha Crucis "Acrux", also has a partner star, which is also invisible to the human-eye. This invisible partner is not featured on any flags.

Dr Lomb said the apparent separation between each star is like looking at two headlights from 100 kilometres away, even though the two stars are actually 60 billion kilometres away from each other.

Dr Lomb said that if Australia was to put all eight stars in the Southern Cross onto the Australia flag then "the flag would have to be huge, probably the size of Sydney." Astronomer Alan Gilmore from University of Canterbury's Mount John observatory, also agreed that flags should not be altered because it is not about how many stars there are in the Southern Cross,

but the magnitude of the stars. Mr Gilmore said: "What you see by eye is what you see on the flag. If you wanted to add more stars, there's no end of stars you can put on if you go down in order of brightness. It would get very confusing."

Mr Gilmore has said that in 20,000 years that Southern Cross will be different anyway, because the top star, Gamma Crucis is 90 light years away from Earth, while Alpha Crucis, Beta Crucis and Delta Crucis are all around 350 light years away and they are all moving in different directions. And Dr Lomb said that Alpha, Beta and Delta Crucis will die in a few million years.

These findings were presented to the American Astronomical Society, Seattle, Washington, by an undergraduate of Mr Cohen's team, Michael Kuhn.

Garth Turner makes his debut with Canada's Liberals

Garth Turner made his question period debut Wednesday in the Canadian House of Commons as a Liberal.

Turner, again, asked the prime minister to put byelections in David Emerson's riding of Vancouver Kingsway and Wajid Khan's Mississauga—Streetsville. Emerson accepted an offer to join the Conservative Party of Canada after he was elected as a Liberal last January. Khan in January, who was a special advisor to prime minister Stephen Harper for the Middle East and South Asia, also crossed the floor to the Conservatives.

Turner also said he would run again in his riding of Halton if Harper were to call a byelection. He added that he wants an immediate byelection if that were to happen.

"I will assure the member for

Halton if he wishes to see a byelection in Halton, it's fully within his control. He can resign today, I'm sure we would comply," said House leader Peter Van Loan.

Turner promised yesterday at the weekly Liberal caucus meeting that he will not reveal secrets nor criticize his new Party.

US army admits to private security contract in Iraq

The United States Army has confirmed that private security guards of the North Carolina security services company Blackwater USA were employed in Iraq by military subcontractors, reversing earlier statements in which army officials denied knowledge of the contracts.

Four security guards employed by Blackwater were killed by Iraqi militants in March 2004. Their families have sued the company, claiming the suit was the only way to disclose the events surrounding the deaths.

Locating the contract awarded to Blackwater has proved difficult -- the Pentagon has denied repeatedly that such a contract exists. The contract was extremely deeply nested beneath other contracts, obscuring its existence: KBR, a Halliburton subsidiary, has subcontracted to ESS Support Services Worldwide, which provides dining services. ESS hired Blackwater, but only indirectly, through a third company.

This was confirmed yesterday by Army secretary Francis Harvey, in a letter to Representatives Henry Waxman and Chris Van Hollen. This reverses earlier statements by Harvey, for example, in July he stated that KBR "has queried ESS and they are unaware of any services under the ... contract that

were provided by Blackwater USA."

Van Hollen said, "This ongoing episode demonstrates the Pentagon's complete failure to safeguard taxpayer dollars." According to Waxman, the contracts have cost the taxpayers as much as \$15000 USD per day per Blackwater employee.

The House Oversight and Government Reform Committee has scheduled a hearing on the Blackwater contract, to take place next Wednesday.

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American sports scores from February 7

NBA

Toronto 113, Orlando 103
Philadelphia 92, Charlotte 83
San Antonio 110, Washington 83
New Jersey 87, Atlanta 85
Cleveland 94, Los Angeles Clippers 77
Seattle 103, Indiana 102
Miami 91, Boston 79
Minnesota 121, Golden State 93
Dallas 113, Memphis 97
New Orleans 114, Denver 112 (OT)

NHL

Buffalo 3, Ottawa 2
New York Islanders 2, Philadelphia 0
Detroit 4, Phoenix 2
Chicago 3, Vancouver 0
San Jose 3, Anaheim 2

Today in History

474 - As the seven-year old Leo II was deemed too young to rule, his father Zeno was crowned as the co-emperor of the Byzantine Empire.

1621 - Alessandro Ludovisi became Pope Gregory XV, the last Pope elected by acclamation.

1895 - Volleyball was invented by William G. Morgan, a YMCA physical education director, in Holyoke, Massachusetts.

1950 - Red Scare: Senator Joseph McCarthy accused the U.S. State Department of being filled with communists.

1960 - Actress Joanne Woodward was honored with the first star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Quote of the Day

Belief may be no more, in the end, than a source of energy, like a battery which one clips into an idea to make it run.

~ J. M. Coetzee

Word of the Day

puerile; adj

1. Boyish, childish, silly.

About Wikinews

We are a group of volunteer journalists whose mission is to create a diverse community where citizens from around the globe (including **you**) can collaborate to report the news on a wide variety of current events. By making our content perpetually available for free redistribution and use, we hope to contribute to a global digital commons.

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