



### Top Stories

#### **Agriculture Department investigating possible U.S. case of mad cow disease**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is investigating a possible case of mad cow disease spotted when a routine test came back positive. Further tests are being done; no results will be available for at least 4 to 7 days.

#### **Former Yugoslavian president Slobodan Milosevic found dead in his cell**

The Serbian Socialist party and UN officials confirm that Slobodan Milosevic, 64, has died in his cell at the U.N. war crimes tribunal's detention center in Den Hague.

### Featured story

#### **Buffalo, N.Y. hotel proposal delayed further**

The Common Council voted on Tuesday to send the proposed hotel development "to committee for further discussion." Although the city's Planning Board will meet for discussion about the proposal on the morning of March 14, they are not expected to make any decisions.

### Wikipedia Current Events

- Venezuela introduced its new national flag with eight, instead of seven stars, and the coat of arms in the upper left corner.
- Reports claim a post-mortem examination has found that former Yugoslav President Milosevic died from heart failure.

### Wikipedia Current Events

- Six car bombs explode in Sadr City, a neighborhood in Baghdad, killing at least forty-six people.
- In Malta, the Malta Labour Party makes a big victory in the Local Council Elections )
- U.S. Senator Russ Feingold announces that he will introduce a motion of censure against President George W. Bush.
- Schering, a Berlin, Germany based pharmaceutical firm, announces that it has received a hostile merger bid from Frankfurt-based rival Merck.

#### **Bush nominates a new ambassador to Australia**

United States President George W. Bush has nominated Robert Davis McCallum, Jr. to be the new US Ambassador to Australia. The ambassadorship has been vacant for 13 months.

McCallum is an associate attorney-general for the Department of Justice and previously represented big tobacco companies at an Atlanta law firm. He also has a master's degree from Oxford University and is a Rhodes Scholar as well as having his bachelor's degree from Yale.

Former deputy secretary of state, Richard Armitage, said earlier this month that the fact Australia was still without an ambassador might indicate a "lackadaisical attitude" to the region.

McCallum is one of the 15 Skull

and Bones members from the 1968 group, of which President Bush was also a member.

#### **Arrests for kite flying in Pakistan spring festival**

A ban against kite-flying during a traditional festival to welcome the onset of spring in the Punjab region of Pakistan has led to significant numbers of arrests. Conservative figures put the number arrested following the imposition of Thursday's ban at around 500, higher figures of 1,400 are given in Australian reports which describe events following the ban as a crackdown.

At issue is the use of glass coated or metal kite strings, and this leading towards serious injury or even death. In the 2004 celebration of the Basant festival up to nine people were killed including from electrocution when using metal strings.

#### **Man takes baby and woman hostage in hospital**

The man that took a woman and her newborn baby hostage has been arrested by the police. He made no demands, neither has it been confirmed whether he had a gun. Nobody suffered any injuries in the incident. The 32-year-old man was the woman's ex-boyfriend.

He entered the room in the hospital in Eschweiler, Germany, where a woman and her new born child lay. He took them both hostage, no contact was achieved, and his eventual demands are not

known. The smell of fuel was reported from the hospital, and part of the hospital was evacuated as police and fire department entered the building.

### **Czech woman wins the first Sudoku world championship**

Jana Tylova, a 31-year-old Czech woman, came from behind to win the inaugural Sudoku world championships to become the top sudoku player in the world. Tylova works as an accountant for a construction company in the Czech city of Most, and she beat 85 players from 22 countries.

A graduate student from Harvard University, Thomas Snyder, who had been leading, came in second and Wei-Ha Huang, a 30-year-old Google software engineer in California, came third.

Tylova, the only woman in the top 18, finished only ninth after the first round before passing all the men to claim the championship. She is already being called "Queen Jana of Sudoku".

"There is no difference between men and women, and I tried to prove that even in logic, men and women are on the same level", said Tylova as people cheered loudly. Jana smiled shyly while accepting her trophy from Wayne Gould who came upon Sudoku in Japan and popularised the game worldwide.

Jana told reporters: "I find it very difficult to give advice at all, but I can advise people to practice every day and to follow websites where there are a lot of games available." Tylova revealed that before competitions she played sudoku two hours per day. "It will probably be more now", she said. She showjumps with her horse Impulse during the rest of her

spare time.

Austria, Belgium, Britain, Czech Republic, Croatia, Denmark, France, Germany, Poland, Hungary, the Netherlands, India, Italy, Japan, Venezuela, Switzerland, the United States, the Philippines, Estonia, Slovakia and Turkey were the countries represented in the championship contest.

### **NASA spacecraft enters Mars orbit**

A NASA spacecraft set to probe Mars reached orbit around the planet on Friday, joining five others currently active. The Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter's two-year mission is expected to gather more information about Mars than all 12 previous successful missions put together.

The MRO's tasks will include scouting for possible future landing sites, analyzing the planet's atmosphere, monitoring its weather, and searching for locations where there may have been water in the distant past. The US\$450 million spacecraft is the most advanced probe so far sent to Mars, and can radio data back to Earth 10 times faster than any previous probe. Cameras on the MRO can see objects on the planet the size of a card table.

After its seven-month journey toward the planet, reaching orbit was a critical step. Several previous probes have failed due to the difficulty of the precise timing needed to keep the spacecraft from being pulled in by the planet's gravity. Twenty-one of the thirty-three previous probes have failed for some reason to complete their missions.

Project manager Jim Graf, who described himself as "relieved" at

the "picture perfect" completion of this step, expects the results to "rewrite the science textbooks on Mars." The next step is for the craft to begin "aerobraking" to slow down and change its orbit from elliptical to circular.

The total cost of the mission, including the spacecraft, launch, and support team, is US\$720 million.

### **Today in History**

874 - The remains of Saint Nicephorus were brought back to Constantinople to be interred at the Church of the Holy Apostles.

1781 - William Herschel discovered the planet Uranus.

1881 - Tsar Alexander II of Russia was assassinated in a Nihilist plot by Ignacy Hryniewiecki.

1921 - Mongolia, under the Black Baron, proclaimed its independence from China.

1954 - Viet Minh forces under Vo Nguyen Giap unleashed a massive artillery barrage on the French military to begin the Battle of Dien Bien Phu, the final battle in the First Indochina War.

March 13 is Fast of Esther in Judaism, Commonwealth Day (2006).

### **Quote of the Day**

"Don't play for safety. It's the most dangerous thing in the world." ~ Hugh Walpole

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