



Top Stories

E. coli outbreak kills 1 sickens nearly 100

An E. coli outbreak linked to fresh bagged spinach in at least 11 states, has killed 1 person and has made more than 50 sick, some severely and affecting people anywhere from 3 to 84 years old. Michigan, Oregon, New Mexico, New York, Indiana, Ohio, Wisconsin, Idaho, Connecticut, Kentucky and Utah all report human cases of the illness linked to the contaminated spinach.

Explosives found in Malegaon, Nashik, India

A bomb has been found at the Mohammadiya Madrassa shopping complex in Malegaon, detonators and gelatin sticks have been recovered by police in Nashik.

Featured story

NASA: Arctic Sea's icecap is melting

According to images captured by NASA's QuikSCAT satellite, the Arctic icecap has lost at least 14% of its 'perennial' ice between 2004 and 2005. Data shows that at least 280,000 square miles of ice, at least the size of Texas has been lost.

Wikipedia Current Events

•Pope Benedict XVI is criticized throughout the Islamic world for comments he made on September 12 regarding Mohammed and Islam, provoking street protests in South Asia.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Taliban insurgency: The Taliban have ousted Afghan security forces from a district headquarters in the western Farah province after days of heavy fighting, police say.
- Yemen foils two attempts by four suicide bombers to attack two oil refineries, Al Jazeera reports.
- Tarcisio Cardinal Bertone becomes new Cardinal Secretary of State of the Holy See, and Archbishop Dominique Mamberti is named new Secretary for Relations with States (foreign minister). At the same time, Angelo Cardinal Sodano retires after sixteen years as Cardinal Secretary of State.
- Close to one million people stage a march in Taipei to demand the resignation of President Chen Shui-Bian.

E. coli outbreak kills 1 sickens nearly 100

An E. coli outbreak linked to fresh bagged spinach in at least 20 states, has killed 1 person, a 77 year old woman in Wisconsin and has made more than 95 sick, some severely and affecting people anywhere from 3 to 84 years old. Michigan, Oregon, New Mexico, New York, Indiana, Ohio, Wisconsin, Idaho, Connecticut, Kentucky and Utah all report human cases of the illness linked to the contaminated spinach. All individuals sickened by the outbreak have the same strain, E. coli O157:H7. Officials are currently investigating cases in

Washington, Pennsylvania and California to determine if the new cases are linked to the current outbreak.

"Based on the current information, FDA advises that consumers not eat bagged fresh spinach at this time. Individuals who believe they may have experienced symptoms of illness after consuming bagged spinach are urged to contact their health care provider," said a statement on the Food and Drug Administration's website.

Health officials report that the symptoms from eating any contaminated spinach are kidney failure or Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome [HUS] which can occur easily in children and elderly people, bloody diarrhea, mild fever and in some cases death. At least 14 of the infected have suffered kidney failure.

"Given the severity of this illness and the seriousness of the outbreak, FDA believes that a warning to consumers is needed. We are working closely with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC] and state and local agencies to determine the cause and scope of the problem," added the statement.

Consumers are urged to throw out any fresh spinach they may have as washing it does not help, but officials say that cooking the spinach could kill the bacteria though officials still urge consumers to throw out all spinach.

"We are telling everyone to get rid of fresh bagged spinach right now. Don't assume anything is over," said Wisconsin Governor Jim Doyle. Wisconsin has seen the worst of the outbreak with one death reported and over 30 people infected.

"If you wash it, it is not going to get rid of it," said the Center for Food Safety and Nutrition director, Robert Brackett.

Health officials also say that they do not know what caused the contamination and do not know where the spinach originated from. Officials believe that the contamination was not "deliberate."

"It is too early to say where the spinach has come from. This is an active investigation and we will provide more information as it becomes available. We have no evidence that this was deliberate," said a spokeswoman for the FDA, Laura Alvey.

A company which produces natural foods in California is suspected to be the source of the illness. Natural Selection Foods LLC, located in San Juan Bautista, California has recalled all of their spinach voluntarily, including any food items containing the vegetable. Some of those infected with the illness have reported eating spinach which came from the company, but officials say that the outbreak may not be entirely isolated to just Natural Selection and that the investigation into the origin of the outbreak is still ongoing.

"We have temporarily stopped shipping spinach products, and have taken spinach out of our salads that contain them. Everyone at Earthbound Farm is

terribly upset about these illnesses and death and their potential relationship to a product that is ordinarily a very healthy food choice. We are committed to producing exceptionally fresh and healthy produce. Quality and food safety continue to be our top priorities," said Natural Selections in a statement on its website. Natural Selections is operated by Earthbound Farm.

"It is possible that the recall and the information will extend beyond Natural Selection Foods and involve other brands and other companies, at other dates," said chief medical officer with the FDA's Center for Food Safety, Doctor David Acheson.

Natural Selection sells many different brand names of spinach including Dole, Trader Joe's, Green Harvest, Ready Pac, Earthbound Farm, Rave Spinach and their own brand of spinach, Natural Selections.

Officials say that more cases are expected to be reported, but many individuals will recover from the illness within a week.

E. coli, on average, affects more than 75,000 people a year and can kill as many as 60.

Wikimedia sites database locked, takes hour to get back to normal

Today at 20:30 (UTC), Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, and other projects hosted by the Wikimedia Foundation suffered downtime. The database was locked so no edits could be made. The Recent changes on Wikipedia were very slow.

The message said: The Wikimedia Foundation system administrator who locked the database offered

this explanation: "Applying a database update, will be in read-only mode for a few minutes."

Instead of a few minutes, it took an hour.

As of 21:38, Wikipedia and other projects are now working.

Nickelodeon to cease broadcasting temporarily in US, to encourage play

Those trying to view the Nickelodeon on Saturday, September 30th need not be alarmed. The popular children's channel will be airing a black screen, starting at 11 a.m.

To promote the Worldwide Day of Play, the channel "goes dark from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. CT, to encourage kids to play outside. In its third year, the Viacom-owned channel attempts to stop childhood obesity through encouraging activity.

Nickelodeon has set up "Let's Just Play", a website that lists possible activities for parents and kids to participate in. Nickelodeon also awards one grant to an organization in each state.

The program, or lack thereof, is presented by The Alliance for a Healthier Generation, a partnership of The Clinton Foundation and the American Heart Association.

ABC Family, Cartoon Network, Discovery Kids, The Disney Channel, and MTV are all among the alternatives for those youth not wanting to participate in this event.

Paris Hilton too costly to ridicule, says Charlotte Church
Opera singer-turned-talk show

host Charlotte Church wanted to book hotel heiress Paris Hilton on her program, to insult her. Church says Hilton is too expensive though, charging USD\$650,000 for an appearance, and her producers dropped the idea.

Church told a British radio show "We asked Paris to be on the program because I could take the mick out of her and not feel at all bad about it — she's such a complete airhead. But she demanded a ridiculous amount of money — like the price of a big house just to say a few stupid things. She's hardly going to announce anything world-changing, is she? It's absolutely pathetic, isn't it?"

While Church was hoping to dish insults and ridicule, she has proven she isn't willing to take them.

Comedian Johnny Vegas peeved Church during his appearance. She slapped him, and shouted "Shut the f*** up", after he made numerous rude comments and stared down female audience members.

The comedian suggested Church looked tense, and offered the former smoker "have a cigarette." Church has appeared in a national anti-smoking campaign.

When Church commented that she and he sang karaoke together in a hotel owned by her mother, Vegas replied "Yes and I sh*ggged your grandma too."

Mentioning his 2004 movie *Sex Lives of the Potato Men* had bad reviews, he replied "Well I listened to your album and it was sh*t." Her album, "Tissues and Issues", reached #5 on the UK music charts.

The Charlotte Church Show has aired on Britain's Channel 4 since September 1, 2006.

Larry Sanger announces Wikipedia fork

Larry Sanger announced Citizendium.org, a fork of the English Wikipedia, at the Wizards of OS conference in Berlin today.

Sanger was employed by Jimmy Wales to work on Nupedia and later Wikipedia from 2000-2002. He currently works on the Digital Universe initiative with entrepreneur Joe Firmage and astrophysicist Bernard Haisch, but does not anticipate Citizendium being part of Digital Universe.

Citizendium will be free content, licensed under the GNU Free Documentation License as Wikipedia is, but with a different editorial structure.

Brad Patrick, General Counsel and interim Executive Director of the Wikimedia Foundation, said "A great strength of the free culture movement is in the freedom to experiment. It is good to see Mr Sanger continuing to push forward with freely licensed content in his new project."

Many static mirror sites exist of the English Wikipedia. The only fork that is actively edited is Wikinfo.org, run by Fred Bauder, an administrator and arbitrator on the English Wikipedia.

Pupils fed through gates, school criticised

Schoolchildren at Rawmarsh Comprehensive School in South Yorkshire, England, are being fed fish and chips by their parents through the school gates at lunchtimes because parents do not believe their children are being

given enough choice of food at lunchtime.

The parents are standing outside the school gates in a cemetery to take the orders of food from the children, and then go and pick up the food for them. Parents say that this is because the children do not like the quality of food being served in the school cafeteria, and so the parents are only giving the children what they want - which is a hot and tasty lunchtime meal.

Head Teacher John Lambert has lashed back at the parents, calling the delivery of food through the gates immoral and stating that it is not "helping the children or their school" by bringing the junk food in. He also stated that "[The School] aims to provide good quality food which is within government healthy eating guidelines and helps the children's learning in the afternoon". Parents have defended the delivery of food by saying that not only are they receiving orders for burgers and chips, but also for salad rolls, jacket potatoes, and other healthy foods.

Canadian Governor General speaks on Montreal shooting

Canadian Governor General Michaëlle Jean issued a statement regarding the recent fatal shooting at Dawson College, near Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

"It was with great sadness that my husband Jean-Daniel Lafond and I learned of the terrible tragedy that unfolded this afternoon at Dawson College in Montreal. My first thoughts went immediately to the wounded, students, parents, and college staff for whom this has been a very trying time. We are all stunned and saddened by this inexcusable act but remain firm in our resolve to condemn violence in all its forms. I commend all those

who reached out to those affected by this tragedy: the police, emergency services, ordinary citizens who responded with caring, professionalism and urgency."

At 12:41 p.m. local time (UTC-5), a man opened fire at Dawson College, in Westmount, Quebec, Canada; the college is located near the heart of downtown Montreal. The shooter and student Anastasia DeSousa were both killed in the incident. Police report at least 20 people being injured, some of which are still in critical condition.

Muslim world condemns Pope's criticism of Islam

Pope Benedict XVI has enraged the Islamic world by quoting a 14th century emperor who said Islam had brought "things only evil and inhuman", on Tuesday, August 12.

Whilst speaking on his six-day visit to Germany he quoted a book recounting a conversation between 14th Century Byzantine Christian Emperor Manuel Paleologos II and a Persian interlocutor.

"The emperor comes to speak about the issue of jihad, holy war," the Pope said.

"He said, I quote, 'Show me just what Mohammed brought that was new, and there you will find things only evil and inhuman, such as his command to spread by the sword the faith he preached'."

"It certainly wasn't the intention of the Pope to carry out a deep examination of jihad and on Muslim thought on it, much less to offend the sensibility of Muslim believers," Vatican spokesman Reverend Federico Lombardi said.

Many Muslim leaders have condemned the comments, some of them stating that the Pope had fallen into "the trap of bigots and racists".

Mohamed Mahdi Akef head of Muslim Brotherhood has asked Islamic nations to break off relations with the Vatican, until the Pope apologises for his statements.

He said, "The Pope has aroused the anger of the whole Islamic world and strengthened the argument of those who say that the West is hostile to everything Islamic."

"The remarks do not express correct understanding of Islam and are merely wrong and distorted beliefs being repeated in the West," he also said in a statement.

Other than that he said that the comments "pour oil on the fire and ignite the wrath of the whole Islamic world to prove the claims of [hatred] of politicians and religious men in the West to whatever is Islamic".

"I do not think any good will come from a visit to the Muslim world by a person who has such ideas about Islam's prophet. He should first of all replace the grudge in his heart with moral values and respect for others," said Ali Bardakoğlu, head of Turkey's Religious Affairs Directorate, on the Pope's plan to visit to Turkey in November.

The Pakistani parliament unanimously passed a resolution saying, "This House demands that the Pope should retract his remarks in the interest of harmony between religions."

"The derogatory remarks of the Pope about the philosophy of jihad and Prophet Mohammed have injured sentiments across the Muslim world and pose the danger of spreading [bitterness] among the religions."

Din Syamsuddin, the chairman of Muhammadiyah, Indonesia's second largest Islamic organisation, said: "The Pope's statements reflect his lack of wisdom."

"It is obvious from the statements that the Pope doesn't have a correct understanding of Islam."

Hamid Ansari, chairman of the Indian National Commission for Minorities said, "The language used by the Pope sounds like that of his 12th-century counterpart who ordered the crusades."

In Qatar, prominent Muslim scholar shaikh Youssef al-Qaradawi discounted The Pope's comments and said that Islam was a religion of peace and reason.

Thought-controlled cybernetic arms demonstrated

Jesse Sullivan has two cybernetic arms, after electrical burns suffered while working as an electrical utility lineman resulted in amputation of both his arms at the shoulder. Claudia Mitchell has a similar cybernetic left arm, after a motorcycle accident resulted in amputation. Sullivan and Mitchell shook hands with these thought-controlled prosthetic arms at an event staged Thursday in Washington, D.C. by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) and Center for Artificial Limbs at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago.

Unlike traditional prosthetic limbs, these are actuated through muscle

reinnervation; nerves are grafted onto specific muscles, controlling their contraction, which are then detected by electrode sensors and control the prosthetic limb.

"Basically it is connecting the dots. Finding the nerves. We have to free the nerves and see how far they reach," says Kuiken. By this chain of communication the prostheses utilize thought-controlled biomechanics.

According to Sullivan, "When I use the new prosthesis I just do things. I don't have to think about it ... I do all the yard work. I take out the garbage."

DARPA, as an agency of the United States Department of Defense, seeks to eventually provide such prostheses for soldiers losing their organic limbs in combat. "We're excited about collaborating with the military," said Dr. Todd Kuiken, developer of the prostheses and director of neuroengineering at the Rehabilitation Institute. 411 U.S. troops in Iraq and 37 in Afghanistan have had wounds that cost them at least one limb according to the Army Medical Command.

Astronaut Steve MacLean talks with Canadian PM over phone

The PM Stephen Harper spoke with Canadian astronaut Steve MacLean over the phone yesterday from Ottawa. MacLean was on the STS-115 (space shuttle Atlantis). He is also the second Canadian to walk in space.

Harper, congratulated him and asked him questions, including one from his son, Ben. The question was: "What time do the astronauts go to bed?" "On our mission, with where the sun is, we have 55 minutes of daylight followed by 75 minutes of darkness ... and that does affect your circadian rhythm," MacLean replied. The

astronauts' sleep pattern "is driven by the rendezvous that we do with the station. That time is the key milestone and then we arrange our sleep schedules around that."

"But you can tell your son that sleeping in space is wonderful. We all sleep down on the main deck, some of us right side up, some of us are on the side and some of us are upside down. There's more orientations up here, basically."

Harper told MacLean that the country is proud of his achievements. "I'm sure it's an adventure of a lifetime and ... I expect your mission will inspire millions of Canadians, young people, and even some who are talking to you today to become interested in space and science and technology," Harper said.

Harper wished MacLean well as the mission winds down. "I know you said ... you wanted to bring home a gold medal for Canada, from everything I've seen on your performance yesterday, you are well on your way," Harper said.

Canadian school children also got a chance to ask MacLean about his time aboard the shuttle.

MacLean walked in space on Wednesday. MacLean with fellow Atlantis crew member Dan Burbank started their six-hour spacewalk at the international space station at 5:05 am ET. They are focusing their attention and tools on a ferris-wheel-like rotary joint that will allow two solar arrays, once unfurled, to always face the sun as the space station circles Earth. The solar arrays will supply a quarter of the space lab's power when it is completed by 2010.

New Democrats score upset in Ontario's Parkdale-High Park

by-election

The Ontario New Democratic Party has scored an upset victory in a hotly contested provincial by-election in the Toronto riding of Parkdale—High Park. New Democrat Cheri DiNovo defeated Ontario Liberal Party candidate Sylvia Watson by over 2,000 votes. DiNovo received 41% of the vote compared to 33% for Watson. Progressive Conservative Dave Hutcheon was third with 17% of the vote while Green Party leader Frank De Jong was fourth with 6%.

The by-election was an important one for the ruling Ontario Liberal Party as the province enters an election year. The Liberals held the riding until former MPP Gerard Kennedy resigned, earlier this year, to focus on his bid to win the leadership of the federal Liberal Party of Canada. In the 2003 provincial election he held the riding with a commanding 57% of the vote.

Speaking Thursday night, NDP leader Howard Hampton said "There are no safe seats for the McGuinty government. People see us as a viable option."

Despite having been considered one of the safest Liberal seats in the province the by-election campaign has gone badly for the Grits who have pulled out all the stops in the past week after internal polling showed them in danger of losing. On Monday, Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty and eleven of members of his cabinet spent much of the day campaigning in the riding. The last seven days has also seen a series of aggressive accusations aimed at DiNovo, a United Church minister. The allegations, which were initially made on blogs and anonymous fliers have, in the past

few days, been issued in official Liberal Party press releases and statements and accuse her of not being suited for sitting in the provincial legislature. They focused on her admitted drug use when she was a street kid in the 1960s and what a Toronto Star column called "carefully edited excerpts from her sermons". Liberal candidate Sylvia Watson, a Toronto City Councillor, issued a press release alleging that DiNovo described the media's treatment of murderer Karla Homolka to the "persecution of Jesus Christ". DiNovo, who has billed herself as the "Radical Reverend" responded by saying the comments were taken entirely out of context and threatened to sue Watson's campaign.

Toronto mayor David Miller issued a statement denouncing the Liberal tactics as a "smear" while the media has been generally critical of the Liberal attacks on DiNovo as has the Progressive Conservatives whose candidate, Dave Hutcheon accused the Liberals of trying to "assassinate the character" of DiNovo. Premier McGuinty responded to the negative reaction saying "Look, it's a tough by-election for us."

Some Liberals and some columnists have argued that the anti-DiNovo campaign is payback for the 2001 Beaches—East York by-election in which the NDP suggested that a sex scene in a novel written by Liberal candidate Bob Hunter condoned pedophilia.

Graham White, a political science professor at the University of Toronto, told the Globe and Mail that the tactics might hurt the Liberals. "It just looks like really bad politics," he said. "Even if this is enough to sway voters in the riding for the by-election, it seems

to me the larger risk is very substantial."

Today in History

- 1597 - Seven-Year War: Twelve Korean ships commanded by Admiral Yi Sun-sin sank 31 enemy ships and defeated a Japanese invasion.
- 1810 - Miguel Hidalgo, the parish priest in Dolores, Guanajuato, delivered the Grito de Dolores to his congregation, instigating the Mexican War of Independence against Spain.
- 1941 - Shah Reza Pahlavi of Iran was forced to abdicate in favour of his son, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi.
- 1963 - Malaya, North Borneo, Sarawak and Singapore merged to form Malaysia.
- 1982 - A Lebanese militia led by Elie Hobeika carried out a massacre in the Palestinian refugee camp of Sabra and Shatila.
- September 16 is Dieciséis de septiembre in Mexico (1810), Independence Day in Papua New Guinea (1975), Constitution Day in the United States (2005).

Quote of the Day

"The public does not like you to mislead or represent yourself to be something you're not. And the other thing that the public really does like is the self-examination to say, you know, I'm not perfect. I'm just like you. They don't ask their public officials to be perfect. They just ask them to be smart, truthful, honest, and show a modicum of good sense." ~ Ann Richards

Word of the Day

- vicarious; adj
- 1. Experienced or gained through someone else; done by watching or reading rather than through personal experience.

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