



### Top Stories



**Kenya's leader Kibaki seeks Ghanaian president Kufuor's mediation**

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Christopher Lee McCuin, 25, from Tyler, Texas in the United States has been arrested after police found him

preparing to eat the body parts of his dead girlfriend, Jana Shearer aged 21. He was also charged with stabbing his ex-wife's boyfriend, William Veasley, 42.

### Featured story

Polska, the local polish chapter of the Wikimedia Foundation. Among the items were ten DVD's containing the Polish language edition of Wikipedia.

### Wikipedia Current Events

The war crimes trial of former Liberian President Charles Taylor resumes at The Hague, Netherlands.

- A warehouse fire in Icheon, South Korea kills at least 40
- Portions of Eastern Australia are affected by the worst floods in its last 20 years
- Two United States Navy F/A-18 Super Hornets, a F/A-18E and two-seat F/A-18F, flying off the aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman, crash in the Persian Gulf. The aviators were safely recovered. There was no indication of hostile fire.

Tour de Taiwan will successively include elimination races around roads of TWTC Nangang and Taipei City Hall.

According to the organizer, 23 teams from 15 countries will participate on this race, and for the promotion of "2008-2009 Visit Taiwan Year" by Tourism Bureau of Ministry of Transportation and Communications of the Republic of China, ESPN Star Sports and Formosa Television will record on this race, the organizer predicted that spectators from 63 countries will watch this race on television.

**Kenya's leader Kibaki seeks Ghanaian president Kufuor's mediation**

Ghana's President John Kufuor is expected to travel to Kenya this week to help resolve the escalating violence that has plunged Kenya into a political crisis. This comes after Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki sent an envoy to brief the Ghanaian president, who is also chairman of the African Union on the current situation in Kenya. Kibaki has also reportedly said he is willing to dialogue without pre-condition with opposition leader Raila Odinga of the Orange Democratic Movement who is claiming he won December's presidential election. Odinga has decided to call off protests that were due to take place tomorrow as a result of the action. He has agreed to take part in the mediation process. This is despite earlier reports that he would not take part in the mediation.

### Featured story

**Wikipedians support the Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity by bidding on Wikipedia DVDs**



On Thursday, January 3, a special Allegro.pl auction for the benefit of the

Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity featured items donated by Stowarzyszenie Wikimedia

**TWTC Nangang will be included into 2008 Tour de Taiwan**

2008 The 20th Tour de Taiwan, sponsored by Atunas, organized by Chinese Taipei Cycling Association, will be raced on March 9 to 16 from Kaohsiung City through Pingtung, Changhua, Taiching, Hsinchu, and Taipei County, to Taipei City. What's different from last year is that the cross-division road race will not be arranged.

For the joint promotion of Taipei Cycle at Taipei World Trade Center Nangang Exhibition Hall and TaiSPO at TWTC Hall 1, the 2008

Akwasi Osei-Adjei is Ghana's foreign minister. He tells VOA reporter Peter Clotey that President Kufuor is concerned about the tensions in Kenya.

"Basically, the president has been invited to Kenya to see for himself the situation and offer advice as to how the two leaders can come together to stop what is happening in Kenya. As you know, people are being killed and there are a lot of disturbances in Kenya and Kenya is like a pillar of a democratic country is now blowing up in our faces. And I don't think it is for any African country to stand by and more so the chair of the AU (Africa Union) to sit by for such a thing to happen to Kenya. He (president Kufuor) is going there to offer advice," Osei-Adjei noted.

He reckoned that President Kufuor's expected trip would yield positive results that would help alleviate the escalating violence in Kenya.

"We hope so. He (President Kufuor) wouldn't move from Ghana to Kenya not expecting to make a difference to make the situation calm and normal. You know so that is what we expect," he said.

Osei-Adjei denied speculations that President Kufuor's mediation efforts could possibly worsen the situation just like in Zimbabwe.

"No, I don't think so. Zimbabwe is quite a different issue. This is coming out as a result of elections, the recent elections and what is happening that we have to be there to ensure that the two leaders can sit down and then calm the situation," Osei-Adjei pointed out.

He said President Kibaki invited

the Ghanaian president to help solve the escalating violence, which is blamed on the controversy surrounding the December elections.

"Well, the envoy came yesterday to brief the president of Ghana and at the same time the chair of the AU the situation before elections, during elections and after the elections. Upon this then he also added the President (Kibaki) has also asked him to invite the president of Ghana that is President Kufuor of Ghana to be there to help calm the situation. This is what was said yesterday that President Kufuor is going to Kenya to talk to the two leadership and then make them come to if you like some the peace pipe so that things in Kenya will calm down so that of course the necessary things could be done, and then ensure that people go about their normal businesses," he said.

### **U.S. Supreme Court hears arguments on constitutionality of lethal injection**

The U.S. Supreme Court is hearing arguments on the constitutionality of the use of lethal injection as a method for the imposition of the death penalty in the United States. Two men, Ralph Baze and Thomas Clyde Bowling Jr., who were convicted of murder in the Commonwealth of Kentucky and sentenced to death, sued the state in 2004 arguing that the use of lethal injection as a method of imposition of capital punishment violates the Eighth Amendment's prohibition on cruel and unusual punishment.

Thirty-seven states and the Federal Government have capital punishment for some crimes, all except Nebraska (which uses

electrocution) use lethal injection. The process uses three chemicals in a "cocktail", which, by the procedures that are used to apply them to the condemned, (three injections given consecutively) allegedly "create a significant and unnecessary risk of inflicting severe pain that could be prevented by the adoption of reasonable safeguards", their lawyers said in court papers. "Kentucky seeks to execute in a relatively humane manner and has worked hard to adopt such a procedure," Kentucky Attorney General Gregory Stumbo has said. The state has also argued in its brief against supporting the plaintiffs' appeal that it will lead to "an endless road of litigation. ... Condemned inmates will never run out of ideas for changes to the procedures, drugs or equipment used during lethal injection."

Baze was scheduled to be executed on January 8 after Governor of Kentucky Ernie Fletcher signed his death warrant, but the Kentucky Supreme Court suspended his execution on September 12, 2007, arguing it needed more time to examine arguments he had made in a separate appeal. He was convicted of killing Powell County Sheriff Steve Bennett and Deputy Arthur Briscoe in 1992 while the lawmen were trying to serve him with arrest warrants. Bowling was convicted of killing Edward and Tina Earley in Louisville in 1990.

According to the article on lethal injection in Wikipedia, the three chemicals used are Sodium thiopental to render the offender unconscious; Pancuronium/Tubocurarine: to stop all muscle movement except the heart, causing muscle paralysis, collapse of the diaphragm, and would eventually

cause death by asphyxiation; and Potassium chloride to stop the heart. The chemicals apparently cannot be combined together as they could precipitate into a solid and be ineffective. It is argued that thiopental is a very short-term anesthetic and may wear off during the procedure, causing anesthesia awareness and excruciating pain from the effects of the other drugs.

In oral hearings today, the justices seemed skeptical that the chemical concoction causes extreme pain or that a better method was available. A lawyer for one of the plaintiffs argued that if insufficient anesthetic is given, when the inmate is given the paralyzing drug, they will experience agonizing pain, but be unable to react, and that it is even illegal in Kentucky to euthanize animals in this fashion. Some of the justices have considered sending the case back for further hearings to determine if a single barbiturate would be superior to the current method.

While the Supreme Court has examined the application of the death penalty many times over the past 40 years, this is the first time the court has reviewed the issue of the method of execution in 100 years, according to lawyers for the plaintiffs. A ruling is not expected until June. There are about 3,000 people on death row in the United States, and about 60 are executed each year. Since the case was accepted by the Supreme Court, all executions in the United States have been temporarily suspended pending the decision.

The case name is Baze v. Rees.

### **Police in Texas arrest man eating dead girlfriend**

Christopher Lee McCuin, 25, from

Tyler, Texas in the United States has been arrested after police found him possibly preparing to eat the body parts of his dead girlfriend, Jana Shearer aged 21. He was also charged with stabbing his ex-wife's boyfriend, William Veasley, 42.

According to reports, Shearer's mother was told by McCuin to "look in the garage" where she discovered the mutilated body of her daughter. She then flagged down a police officer on the road.

McCuin called 911 after the mother left the house. According to reports, he told the dispatcher that he was boiling Shearer's body parts and preparing to eat them. When police got to his home, they discovered one of Shearer's ears boiling in a pot, and an unnamed piece of her flesh on the kitchen table, with silverware placed beside it. The rest of her body had several "chunks" missing from it, according to the Tyler Morning Telegraph quoting Sheriff J.B. Smith of the Smith County Sheriff's Department.

Police later found out that McCuin had stabbed his ex wife's boyfriend, and also broke into Tyler Custom Openings, a local business, sometime on Friday or Saturday. He started by going to Shearer's home on Friday January 4 to have a discussion with her, but she was never seen alive again. Before stabbing Veasley, he beat Shearer "with a blunt object, multiple times" to death. On Saturday Morning, he arrived at his ex-wife's home and fought with Veasley, stabbing him. He is currently in critical condition at a local hospital.

McCuin then broke into the Tyler Custom Openings and then went to his mother's house where he

took her to his home to show her what he had done. Although McCuin was inside the house when police arrived, he was able to escape and was chased for a short distance before being caught again.

McCuin is currently being held on a US\$2,000,000 bail at Smith County jail.

### **Wikipedians support the Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity by bidding on Wikipedia DVDs**

On Thursday, January 3, a special Allegro.pl auction for the benefit of the Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity featured items donated by Stowarzyszenie Wikimedia Polska, the local polish chapter of the Wikimedia Foundation. Among the items were ten DVD's containing the Polish language edition of Wikipedia. Most of the offers in the online auction came from people who actually helped to create the contents of the DVD.

One of the discs reached the "Featured Items" status on the same day when the item was offered for sale. Each of the ten DVDs has been autographed by a number of Wikipedians, mainly those who helped in creating the edition, together with Helion Publishing House. The release contains 238,000 articles whose quality had been checked by a panel of editors, complete with illustrations. It is the first stable version of the Polish-language Wikipedia.

The decision to offer the ten copies at the auction was taken in September 2007. Since then, the covers of the auction items have been circulating throughout Poland, in order to collect as many Wikimedians' signatures as possible during a number of Wikimedia events. All of the

autographs are nicknames that the editors use in their daily work. Among them is e.g. the signature of the founder of Polish Wikipedia. Krzysztof Jasiutowicz, nicknamed Kpjas.

Among the people who placed an offer to buy one of the ten copies in the initial 24 hours of the auction were the Polish Wikipedians known as Zureks, Jersz, Pimke, Vindicator, Rdrozd, Paterm, Bartekbas, Airwolf, Mathel, Nemo5576, Wykształcioch, Wpedzich and Kotasik.

Earlier, Stowarzyszenie Wikimedia Polska, a local chapter of The Wikimedia Foundation, decided together with Helion for those DVDs which have not been sold yet to be donated to various communities that would find them useful, mainly schools. Although currently Wikipedia contains about twice as many articles as the DVD version and it is freely available online, the income from the auction will add to the budget of a much older organisation, which is one of Poland's charity NGOs.

Stowarzyszenie Wikimedia Polska will prepare a special website for those people who offer the highest bids for the ten Wikipedia DVD copies, where they will be able to put their photos (together with the discs they have acquired), if they wish.

The auctions will end on the day of the Grand Finalé of the Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity, January 13th, at 20:00 CET.

### Today in History

1815 – War of 1812: American forces led by General Andrew Jackson defeated the British army at the Battle of New Orleans near New Orleans, two weeks after the United States and Great Britain signed the Treaty of Ghent to end the war.

1889 – Statistician Herman Hollerith received a patent for his electric tabulating machine.

1956 – Operation Auca: Five Evangelical Christian missionaries from the United States were killed by the Huaorani in the rainforest of Ecuador shortly after making contact with them.

1989 – Kegworth air disaster: British Midland Flight 092 crashed onto the embankment of the M1 motorway near Kegworth, Leicestershire, UK, killing 47 people and injuring 79 others.

2004 – RMS Queen Mary 2, at the time the longest, widest and tallest passenger ship ever built, was christened by her namesake's granddaughter, Queen Elizabeth II.

### Quote of the Day

If you cannot make knowledge your servant, make it your friend.  
~ Baltasar Gracián

### Word of the Day

hinder *v*

1. To keep back; to delay or impede.
2. To make difficult to accomplish.

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