



Top Stories

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Fossilized remains of small dinosaur rediscovered in Canada

Scientists in Alberta, Canada have discovered a new species of dinosaur in remains left untouched for 25 years. The find has been published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

Namibia struck by floods, president declares state of emergency

Hifikepunye Pohamba, the president of Namibia, declare a state of emergency in in the country on Tuesday after heavy flooding killed 92 and displaced 5,032 since January.

Seattle's oldest newspaper to become online-only

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Wikipedia Current Events

At least 11 people are killed and four injured in an automobile accident outside Saltillo, Coahuila, Mexico.

- Madagascar's military installs former Antananarivo Mayor Andry Rajoelina as President, replacing Marc Ravalomanana.
- Nokia will cut 1,700 jobs.
- The Seattle Post-Intelligencer publishes its final print edition and becomes an online newspaper.
- North Korean Premier Kim Jong-il begins a five-day goodwill tour of China in Jinan, Shandong.
- The European Space Agency's Gravity Field and Steady-State Ocean Circulation Explorer launches from the Plesetsk Cosmodrome in Arkhangelsk Oblast, Russia.
- United States President Barack Obama meets Irish Taoiseach Brian Cowen and Northern Irish First Minister Peter Robinson and Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness at the White House.
- Twelve people are arrested during a disturbance in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

The Simpsons episode to premiere on Sky1

"In the Name of the Grandfather", the fourteenth episode of the twentieth season of the American animated television series The Simpsons will today become the first episode of the show to premiere in Europe. It will air at

7:30 PM on Sky1 in the United Kingdom and Ireland and be paired with "Sex, Pies and Idiot Scrapes". The special broadcast is part of FOX's year-long "Best. 20 Years. Ever." celebration which commemorates the 20th anniversary of the show. To promote the broadcast, executive producers Al Jean and James L. Brooks, as well as Nancy Cartwright visited Ireland and are scheduled to participate in the Saint Patrick's Day parade in Dublin. The episode was screened at the Lighthouse Cinema in Dublin on March 16. The American debut of the episode will be March 22, 2009.

Executive producer Al Jean stated the episode is intended to be "an affectionate love letter to Ireland" because many of the writers have Irish roots. The episode will feature Irish landmarks including Giant's Causeway, the Blarney Castle and the Guinness Brewery.

Previous episodes of the show where the Simpson family visits other countries have been controversial. For example, the two episodes, Simpsons visited Australia in "Bart vs. Australia" and Brazil in "Blame it on Lisa", generated controversy and negative reaction in the visited countries.

The Rio de Janeiro tourist board claimed that the city was portrayed as having rampant street crime, kidnappings, slums, and monkey and rat infestations; and threatened FOX with legal

action. When asked whether he thought this episode would generate similar controversies, Al Jean replied "I'm Irish American and I know Irish people have an excellent sense of humor so we weren't very worried."

FIFA receives eleven bids for 2018 and 2022 World Cups

FIFA has received 11 bids to host the 2018 and 2022 FIFA World Cup tournaments, an international football competition contested by the men's national teams. The countries vying to host the tournament are Australia, England, Indonesia, Japan, Mexico, Qatar, Russia, South Korea and United States, who have individual bids and the joint bids are from Belgium-Netherlands and Spain-Portugal.

Select bids are for 2018 and 2022 tournaments and two bids are just for the 2022 tournament. Qatar and South Korea are vying just for the 2022 tournament. The two winning bids will be chosen on December 2010 by the 24-man executive committee of FIFA.

Said FIFA president Sepp Blatter: "We are very pleased about the fantastic level of interest in our flagship competition, with all initial bidders confirming their candidature."

Among the individual bidders, England in 1966, Mexico in 1970 and 1986, Japan and South Korea in 2002, and the United States in 1994 have previously hosted the World Cup tournament. From the joint bidders, Spain hosted the tournament in 1982.

The 2010 World Cup will be held in South Africa, and Brazil will host the 2014 World Cup.

British actress Natasha Richardson reportedly brain dead after skiing accident

According to conflicting reports, British actress Natasha Richardson is brain dead following a severe head injury from a skiing accident on Monday, March 16. The New York Post reported that friends of Richardson said she "was brain dead," after earlier reporting that she was "dead". They later issued a correction which said she was brain dead. Other media reports say that her brain is severely swollen. Fox News Channel also reports Richardson as brain dead.

Richardson is currently being transported by plane from Sacré-Coeur Hospital in Montreal, Canada to a care facility in New York City in the United States. She remains in very critical condition and reports say she is not likely to survive. Once in the U.S., she will be taken off life support.

Richardson, 46, was taking a private skiing lesson in Mont-Tremblant in Quebec when reports say she fell, hitting her head. Despite the fall, witnesses say she did not appear to have been seriously injured. An hour after the fall and after she returned to her hotel room, Richardson began to feel ill and was taken to a local hospital. She was later transported to Sacré-Coeur Hospital.

"She was talking and making jokes and there was no sign of any apparent injury. She said she was okay and didn't want to go to hospital or see a doctor. About an hour later she said she was not feeling that good after all. She said she had a headache. They agreed to dial 911 and an ambulance came to take her away," Mont-Tremblant resort ski station spokeswoman Catherine Lacasse to The Daily Telegraph.

Richardson's husband, actor Liam Neeson, has left Toronto where he was filming a movie and will be with Natasha when she arrives in the U.S.. He was acting in the movie 'Chloe', which was being filmed in the area. Both were staying at the resort in Mont-Tremblant. The couple have two children who were also staying with them, Daniel Jack age 12 and Micheal Richard Antonio age 13. They are said to have been skiing with their mother when she fell.

"Liam Neeson left the Toronto set immediately to fly to Montreal upon news of his wife's accident. We do not have any details at this time, but we hope for the best and our thoughts and prayers are with Natasha and Liam and their family," said spokespeople for Nesson in a statement to the press. Richardson's family and spokespeople are expected to issue a statement sometime after she arrives in New York City.

Namibia struck by floods, president declares state of emergency

Hifikepunye Pohamba, the president of the southern African country of Namibia, declared a state of emergency in in the country on Tuesday after heavy flooding killed 92 and displaced 5,032 since January.

"It is with a heavy heart that I declare an emergency for the north-central and north-eastern parts of Namibia," the president said to reporters. "Crop fields are submerged in water and I send out an urgent appeal to the international community for assistance [...] as the current flood is worse than a year ago and could be one of the worst in recent memory."

100,000 children were unable to

attend classes due to the disaster, which closed 218 schools.

Severe flooding occurred in Namibia about the same time last year, when 42 people were killed by the disaster.

This year's floods appear to be worse, as President Pohamba stated that the Zambezi River had reached 7.1 metres, compared to last year's peak of 5.37 metres.

Flooding has also reached neighbouring Angola, where nineteen people have died, according to the Red Cross.

Five dead in murder-suicide in Miami, Florida

Five people are dead following a murder-suicide in Miami, Florida today, after a man crashed a birthday party early Sunday morning. He informed the party-goers that they were responsible for his wife's decision to leave him, and then proceeded to open fire with a semi-automatic hand gun. The guests fled the scene into the street, or found cover.

The man, whom police identified as Guillermo Lopez, 48, immigrated to the United States from Cuba about 10 years ago. There were about a dozen people in attendance at the party. He killed his wife, who had left him, and shot her daughter, her daughter's boyfriend, and the boyfriend's grandmother. They were killed at approximately 12:15am in Little Havana, Miami.

Police first responded to the 2800 block of Southwest 38 Court following reports of gunfire. Four bodies were discovered behind the house.

"It was chaotic. I can't imagine what it was like in there," said

homicide detective Ervens Ford.

Lopez fled the scene in a red Toyota Tacoma pickup truck to his home, which was about 3 miles (5 km) from the original scene. He set both the house and truck on fire and committed suicide.

Police and firetrucks responded to a second 911 call regarding the blaze at the 700 block of Southwest 33 Avenue where the assailant's body was found with a gunshot wound.

The victims have been identified as Lazara Mendez, 50; Nayla Canfux, 19; Francisco Casas, 27; and Maria Lefran Christ, 77.

Madagascar President resigns, unclear rule in Antananarivo
Leadership in Madagascar is unclear as Madagascar President Marc Ravalomanana announced his resignation in favor of a military committee headed by Vice Admiral Hyppolite Ramaroson, only to have that resignation rejected by the Admiral, the military and opposition political groups. Admiral Ramaroson joined other military leaders in saying they would back opposition leader, former Antananarivo mayor and former DJ Andry Rajoelina.

Mr Ravalomanana attempted to hand power over to the heads of the military, given the tasks of discussing and drafting constitutional changes, rather than transfer power to Mr Rajoelina. After the resignation was announced to the opposition, four Army generals and a head of the church were detained for reasons unknown. The true extent of the Army's loyalty to Mr Rajoelina is unclear, as reportedly the military refused to arrest President Ravalomanana despite orders from Mr Rajoelina.

Mr Rajoelina installed himself in the Presidential Palace in upper Antananarivo, which troops had seized yesterday. A cabinet loyal to him has been in operation since the end of January, when Mr Rajoelina proclaimed Mr Ravalomanana's rule to be illegitimate. The Madagascar opposition accuses Mr Ravalomanana of mismanaging the country while restricting personal freedoms.

President Ravalomanana was reportedly first announced via an text message from one of his aides before being confirmed by Ravalomanana's office in a radio broadcast, in which the President proclaimed, "After deep reflection, I have decided to dissolve the government and give up power so that a military directorate can be established". Madagascar Army Chief of Staff Colonel Andre Ndriarijaona has declared his support for Rajoelina and says that "99% of the forces are behind" the opposition leader.

The African Union, meanwhile, reiterated its position that a military takeover in Madagascar would be considered a coup d'etat, which could result in "firm measures" such as Madagascar's suspension from the organization or a blocking of international aid, and urged the military to obey the country's constitution, which bars Mr Rajoelina from the presidency due to his age, and not hand power over to the former mayor, instead suggesting that power could be given to Madagascar Prime Minister General Charles Rabemananjara. Members of the Madagascar opposition say they plan to re-write the constitution and electoral code before holding new elections within two years.

While reports are that the country has been overall stable during the coup, the unrest of the past two months has deprived the country of tourist revenue. Tourism, especially eco-tourism highlighting the country's rainforests and unique mammal species, brings \$800 million annually to the Madagascan economy.

Seattle's oldest newspaper to become online-only

The Seattle Post-Intelligencer (P-I), the 146-year-old Seattle newspaper, will make its final print edition on today, before becoming an online-only news agency.

However, the online version is to be for local news only. The editorial staff would consist of twenty people, less than one-seventh of the 150 staff that were employed before the closure.

With this closure, the Seattle Times is now Seattle's only major daily newspaper.

"We don't feel like we have to cover everything ourselves. We'll partner for some content; we won't duplicate what the wire is reporting unless we have something unique to offer; we'll continue to showcase the great content from our 150 or so reader bloggers and we'll link to content partners and competitors to create the best mix of news on our front page," said Michelle Nicolosi, who is to be the executive producer of the online paper.

The Hearst Corporation, the owner of the P-I, was not able to find a buyer for the newspaper when it was put up for sale back in January.

The newspaper industry in the country has been suffering as revenue from advertising plunges.

Other newspapers in the United States have also shut down recently: Denver's Rocky Mountain News shut down earlier this year, whilst the Tucson Citizen of Arizona will print its final edition on Saturday.

Wikinews previews the 2009 Queensland state election

With an election coming up this Saturday in the Australian state of Queensland, Wikinews reporter Patrick Gillett previews the contesting parties.

The current distribution of seats has the Australian Labor Party with 58 of the 86 total, the Liberal National Party with 25, the Queensland Greens & One Nation with one each and independents holding four.

The Australian Labor Party (ALP) is currently in government and have been since 1998. Current premier and leader of the ALP Anna Bligh will be, if Labor wins, the first female to elected premier in Australian history. Ms Bligh became the third female premier in Australian history when Peter Beattie resigned in 2007.

The premier has received criticism from other parties for backflipping on its commitment to run a full term. "After 11 years in office, Ms Bligh only cares about one job: her own," said Lawrence Springborg head of the Liberal National Party (LNP) and the Leader of the Opposition.

The Liberal National Party is currently in opposition. It is seen as a prototype for a national merger between the Liberal and National parties. The Opposition need to pick up at least twenty seats from the government to overcome the significant Labor majority and a number of

independents.

The Queensland Greens are the states largest minor party. The Greens unveiled its policy to open two solar power stations on the weekend of January 31/February 1.

"We can tackle climate change and create long-term jobs, but Labor can't see that because they are blinded by the interests of their big donors - the urban development and coal industries," said Mt Cootha candidate Larrisa Waters.

The Greens main policies have been stated "Green collar jobs", "managing where the money is going", education and transport.

"The Greens want to give the community and the environment a voice back in State Parliament," says Ms Waters.

The Socialist Alliance will run two candidates as independents because of what they call "restrictive rules for registration."

Wikinews conducted an interview with the Socialist Alliance on March 2rd in which they said, "That choosing between "tweedledee" and "tweedledum" once every few years is not real democracy, and with the planet in peril, facing an economic meltdown, and all manner of social problems, we can't afford to leave sociaety [sic] in the hands of the pro-corporate parties."

The Daylight Saving for South East Queensland (DS4EQ) party was set up in late 2008. DS4SEQ leader Jason Furze gave an interview to Wikinews in January. "DS4SEQ would like to gain a sizeable percentage of the primary vote and win a number of seats," Mr furze said. Courier Mail writer

Dennis Atkins wrote in today's Courier Mail that DS4SEQ "will poll better than anyone expected - polling close to double figures in some seats around Brisbane and on the coasts."

News Limited newspapers The West Australian and the Courier Mail reported that swing voters would decide the election.

Latin America suffers drop in remittances

Slumping economies in the United States, Spain and Japan are causing reverberations in the countries of Latin America as migrant workers send less money home. The Inter-American Development Bank reported that for the first time since they began tracking remittances in 2000, remittances to Latin America declined in the fourth quarter of 2008, dropping 2% relative to the fourth quarter of 2007. In January, remittances declined further, with Colombia experiencing a 16% drop relative to 2008, Brazil suffering a 14% decline, Mexico 12%, and Guatemala and El Salvador each falling 8%. These numbers come as 2008 saw an average 10% increase in remittances. Nearly US\$70 billion was sent back to families in those areas in 2008.

Low-skilled jobs such as construction, manufacturing, and restaurant and hotel work have been especially negatively impacted by the global economic crisis, putting the squeeze on migrant workers who depend on these industries. The fall in remittances could have long term effects in the workers' home countries: In times of scarcity, spending on health care and education -- investments that alleviate poverty -- gives way in favor of the bare necessities of survival.

Remittances are number one source of foreign income for Guatemala. At \$4.3 billion in 2008, they account for more than the combined income from exports of coffee, sugar and other goods. According to the Central American Institute of Social and Development Studies, 3.5 million people in Guatemala depend on remittances from 1.35 million Guatemalan citizens living in the United States.

The decline in remittances also has serious consequences for Guyana, which receives 43 percent of its GDP in remittances, the most of any country in Latin America and the Caribbean. Guyanese Finance Minister Ashni Singh has projected a decline of 20.9 per cent in remittances for 2009.

Fossilized remains of small dinosaur rediscovered in Canada

Scientists in Alberta, Canada have discovered a new species of dinosaur in remains left untouched for 25 years. The find has been published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

The measurements put the fossil, the smallest discovered in North America, at one foot and a half (50 centimetres) tall, weighing in at an estimated 4 to 5 pounds (1.8-2.2 kilograms) when it was alive, about the size of today's modern domesticated cat. Scientists believe it had eaten things like insects, and other smaller dinosaurs. It is estimated to have roamed earth during the late Cretaceous Period about 75 million years ago in what is known as present day Alberta.

The fossil was discovered in 1982 by Elizabeth "Betsy" Nicholls, a Canadian paleontologist who died

in 2004. The fossils went largely unstudied since their discovery in the 80's and were later located in 2007 at an archive in the University of Alberta.

"Hesperonychus is currently the smallest dinosaur known from North America. [This] raises the possibility that there are even smaller ones [dinosaurs] out there waiting to be found," said Nick Longrich, paleontology research associate with the University of Calgary's Department of Biological Sciences, and one of the scientists publishing the report. He added that the creature spent most of its time on the ground.

Hesperonychus elizabethae is a species of the family Dromaeosauridae and is a cousin of Velociraptor . This fully feathered, warm blooded bird of prey was believed to have walked upright on two legs with claws like the Velociraptor. Its second claw was larger, giving rise to the name Hesperonychus which means "western claw." elizabethae was chosen in honor of Nicholls.

Australian Senate to decide sport footage ownership

An inquiry set up by the Australian Senate will decide where footage taken at sporting events can run.

"The potential precedents for this are enormous," said the head of a major news agency. "This will set a global benchmark -- it has been coming to a head for a long time."

The inquiry was set up off the back of a feud between sporting organisations and media outlets over the use of footage, some of which was pirated and uploaded to YouTube, and photos taken at sporting events. It will also look at whether companies who own broadcast rights can get a

commercial return by limiting the use of their footage.

Agence France-Presse, Reuters and Australian Associated Press boycotted the Australian cricket season because Cricket Australia required them to sign documents restricting the use of photos and video footage they [AFP, Reuters and AAP] collected. Journalists working for Fairfax Media and News Limited were almost banned from covering the 2006-07 Ashes Series after their respective organisations refused to sign accreditation documents. The issue was resolved.

"This is a matter that has been of immense concern to the media all over the world and control over access to events is being used to control access to images," said Chris Warren, secretary of the Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance (MEAA). He said that many Australians were unaware of how agreements were limiting their access to sports coverage.

The debate over video footage has centred on "fair use" provisions in Australian copyright laws. The laws allow a small amount of video owned by some one else for the purpose of news reporting online.

Austrian man who imprisoned daughter pleads guilty at start of trial

An Austrian man charged with keeping his daughter prisoner in a dungeon for 24 years and fathering her seven children, has pleaded guilty to rape, incest, false imprisonment and coercion but innocent to enslavement and murder at the start of his trial today.

Josef Fritzl, 73, allegedly began imprisoning and raping his daughter Elisabeth, now 42, on

August 8, 1984. He lured her to the basement where she was locked in a room, handcuffed and drugged. He is charged with incest, false imprisonment, murder, rape and the enslavement. The murder charge stems from allegations that Fritzl murdered a twin of one of the children. He then disposed of the body by placing the corpse into a turned on oven, burning the body. Police say the child had died shortly after being born.

Police became suspicious when a 19-year-old daughter, Kerstin, was taken to hospital with a mysterious life-threatening illness, and the family's medical records were checked. Police say that Elisabeth F. appeared to be "greatly disturbed" psychologically, and only agreed to talk after the authorities assured her that she would not have to have contact with her father, and that her children would be cared for. When authorities arrived at his home, Fritzl told police what he had done. Of the surviving six children, there are three boys and three girls, between 5 and 20 years old.

The 27 page indictment says that Fritzl "had equipped it [the cellar] with a double bed, a wash basin, a toilet, a TV, a video recorder, an oven and plastic crockery. In the cellar there was no daylight or fresh air. The only opportunity to wash was in a sink, there was no shower. There was also no hot water or heating." The indictment also stated that Fritzl's actions were "premeditated."

Fritzl's lawyer, Rudolf Mayer, opened the trial saying that Fritzl was "not a monster" and that Fritzl "was scared [and] regrets his actions". As a precaution to prevent media infiltration and Fritzl's escape, authorities issued a

no-fly warning above the courtroom.

Fritzl was arrested on April 27, 2008, in his home in Amstetten and if convicted, he would spend the rest of his life behind bars without the possibility of parole. The minimum sentence is said to be at least 15 years in prison. The trial is expected to last one week.

Two women in North Carolina arrested for allegedly using Family Dollar variety store as marijuana ring

Police in La Grange, North Carolina have arrested two women after they received a tip that the Family Dollar store was being used as part of a marijuana ring. Pending an investigation, police shut the store down.

Belinda Pearson, 46, the store manager and her associate Melissa Collie, 40, were arrested when police found 23 pounds of the drug inside the store. Earlier in the week, police said the anonymous tipster stated that a delivery of two packages of the drug was made. After a week of investigating, police arrested both women on March 14 and charged them with drug trafficking. Both were freed after making bail and were scheduled to be in court on March 15.

"The marijuana has a street value of approximately US\$35,000. It was about the only thing in the store you couldn't buy for \$1," said Chris Hill, a major from the Lenoir County Sheriff. He said the whole operation lasted a week.

Owners of the store are said to be on the way to the location where they will take over the store's management. Family Dollar is a United States chain that sells a variety of things from food items,

clothes and housewares. Most items in the store cost less than \$10.00. There are almost 6,600 stores across the U.S.

El Salvador elects leftist president Funes

Sunday night, Mauricio Funes of the left-wing Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) party declared victory in El Salvador's 2009 presidential elections. Although El Salvador's Supreme Electoral Tribunal has not yet certified a winner, Funes shows an insurmountable lead in the results, besting Alianza Republicana Nacionalista (ARENA) candidate Rodrigo Ávila by a margin of 51.27% to 48.73%, with 90.68% of votes counted. Ávila conceded defeat, vowing that ARENA would remain vigorous in opposition.

Funes' victory marks a major shift in the politics of the country: ARENA has controlled the presidency of El Salvador since the end of El Salvador's civil war in 1991. The FMLN was founded by Marxist guerrillas who fought in the civil war. When the guerrillas and the government signed a peace agreement in 1992, the FMLN became a political party.

Funes, a former television journalist, is the first FMLN leader not to have been an combatant in the war. In his victory speech in San Salvador Sunday night, he said: "I want to be the real president of the real reconstruction of the country, which starts with the reconstruction of people."

"I want to thank all the people who voted for me and chose that path of hope and change," added Lunes.

During the polarizing electoral campaign, Ávila tied the FMLN to

communism and said that an FMLN victory would turn El Salvador into a satellite of Hugo Chávez's Venezuela. Discontent with unemployment, gang violence and corruption under the government of ARENA president Antonio "Tony" Saca trumped concerns that the FMLN would return to its radical roots or spoil El Salvador's historically close relationship with the United States.

About 60% of the electorate voted, including thousands who returned to the country from the United States in order to cast ballots.

Today in History

1229 – Sixth Crusade: Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II crowned himself King of Jerusalem, although his wife Queen Yolande of Jerusalem had died, leaving their infant son Conrad as the rightful heir.

1871 – French President Adolphe Thiers ordered the evacuation of Paris after an uprising broke out as the result of France's defeat in the Franco–Prussian War, leading to the establishment of the Paris Commune government.

1892 – Canadian Governor General Frederick Stanley of Preston pledged to donate what would become the Stanley Cup, today the oldest professional sports trophy in North America, as an award for Canada's top-ranking amateur ice hockey club.

1915 – World War I: In one of the largest naval battles in the Gallipoli Campaign, a joint British and French operation to capture Constantinople, the defences of the Ottoman Empire sunk three Allied battleships and severely damaged three others.

1965 – Cosmonaut Alexey Leonov donned a space suit and ventured outside the Voskhod 2 spacecraft, becoming the first person to walk in space.

March 18 is Flag Day in Aruba (1976)

Quote of the Day

Candor is always a double-edged sword; it may heal or it may separate.

~ Wilhelm Stekel ~

Word of the Day

clairvoyant adj

1. Of, or relating to clairvoyance.
2. Able to see things that cannot be perceived by the normal senses.
3. Able to foresee the future.

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