



Top Stories

United Kingdom expels four Russian diplomats

The United Kingdom is expelling four Russian diplomats in an extradition row related to the Alexander Litvinenko case. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has not named the four Russian diplomats but, according to the BBC, they are intelligence officers.

Home-invaders pose as NYC police

In two separate incidents, men posing as members of the New York Police Department have invaded and robbed homes in the New York City area. One incident involved a sexual assault.

Featured story

Kwik-E-Mart promotion drawing thousands of visitors

Thousands of such fans converged on a 7-Eleven store in Los Angeles to witness that store's transformation for the month of July into a Kwik-E-Mart, a fictional convenience store from the popular animated television show.

Wikipedia Current Events

- The World Bank releases its Worldwide Governance Indicators, providing information on corruption, rule of law, and other indicators of stability on countries around the world.
- TAM Linhas Aéreas Flight JJ 3054 carrying 174 people crashes in

Wikipedia Current Events

- Congonhas International Airport, São Paulo, Brazil.
- The High Judicial Council of Libya commutes the death sentences against six foreign medical workers to life imprisonment.
 - An apparent leak of the seventh J.K. Rowling novel Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, taking the form of hundreds of photographs of pages from the book, emerge online in the week prior to release, leading American publisher Scholastic to seek a subpoena to identify the pirate. The content of the leak is described by Scholastic spokesperson Kyle Good as "convincing" but Good refused to comment on its authenticity, only noting that it conflicted with two other claimed leaks.
 - A train carrying yellow phosphorus derails in western Ukraine, sending a toxic cloud over several villages. At least twenty people are hospitalized and hundreds are forced to evacuate.
 - The Sudanese government says that a recent attempted coup d'état did not have the support of the United States government, contrary to previous accusations from Nafi Ali Nafi, Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir's assistant. The government has arrested 14 members of the Umma Reform and Renewal Party for plotting the coup.
 - Five people are killed in a twin bomb blasts in Islamabad near

Wikipedia Current Events

- the venue of a rally and meeting to be addressed by Pakistan Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry.
- 39 people are arrested, detained and kept at an undisclosed location in Pakistan due to an alleged connection with a recent attack on a plane carrying Pervez Musharraf.
 - All three men charged with supporting Tamil Tigers have been granted bail in Melbourne.
 - Delegates arrive in Beijing for the resumption of six party talks on Wednesday involving North Korea, South Korea, China, Russia, Japan and the United States to discuss the second phase of a deal on North Korean nuclear disarmament.
 - 2007 Niigata earthquake: The Government of Japan orders The Tokyo Electric Power Company to keep its Kashiwazaki-Kariwa Nuclear Power Plant closed pending safety checks after the earthquake caused a leak.

Tour de France: Mauricio Soler wins stage 9

Mauricio Soler of Colombia has won stage 9 of the 2007 Tour de France. Michael Rasmussen of Denmark retains the overall lead.

The 159.5 km stage 9 began with a cold start to the Hors Catégorie climb up to the Col de l'Iseran (15 km at 6%), followed by the Col du Télégraphe and the Col du Galibier (12 km at 6.7% and 17.5 km at

7%) with a 32 km downhill finish in Briançon.

The Colombian Barloworld rider was the first to top the peak of Col du Galibier and held on during the downhill finish. The chase group finished 38 seconds behind him.

Soler was excited by his stage victory: "It's an incredible day. I'm living out a dream. I worked very hard to arrive at the finish on my own and I received the superb prize for that effort. I wanted to achieve something for myself in my Tour debut and at 24 years of age, I've been able to stamp my name on a stage. Nobody believed I could win here, not even me."

Pre-Tour-favorite, Alexandre Vinokourov, who has been struggling since he crashed on stage 5, lost nearly three minutes the in chase for the yellow jersey and is now in 21st place overall.

"I did what I could," said Vinokourov. "The team worked well again and tried to reduce the gap. It was another horrible day for me."

Linus Gerdemann, who surprised everyone in stage 7, fell out of the top ten overall and had to surrender the white jersey to Alberto Contador.

Georgia Bureau of Investigation says drugs found in Benoit, wife, and son

According to the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, toxicology reports reveal that the former pro-wrestler Chris Benoit had 10 times the normal level of testosterone as well as hydrocodone (a painkiller), and Xanax (an anti-anxiety medication).

Benoit also reportedly tested negative for alcohol.

Benoit's wife, Nancy Benoit also tested positive for Xanax, and the painkiller hydromorphone. Benoit's son could not be tested due to a lack of urine samples.

Federal authorities have charged Dr. Phil Astin with improperly dispensing medication painkillers and other drugs to two other patients. Astin has pleaded not guilty.

Amtrak train collides with truck, derails

An Amtrak passenger train derailed after hitting a pickup truck in Plant City, Florida, in the United States. The driver of the pickup truck was killed on impact. The crash occurred at a marked railroad crossing inside of an industrial area, according to an Amtrak spokesperson.

None of the 133 passengers were seriously hurt, however, the train's engineer and five passengers were taken to a local hospital after suffering minor injuries. The remaining passengers were taken to a local bowling alley. Although the train's two locomotives and nine cars de-railed, they remained upright.

Witnesses report the train sounded its horns at the appropriate times. It was reported the pickup truck simply drove in front of the train.

The crash is the second to occur this week with a train; on Monday, a driver in a Pontiac Grand Am deliberately ignored the lights and crossing arms at another railroad crossing in the area, and drove around them, into the path of a different Amtrak train on the same route. The impact caused the car to go airborne. All four people in the car were killed; no one on the train was injured.

Anthrocon 2007 draws thousands to Pittsburgh for furry weekend

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania – Local caterers ready for big business, as almost three thousand fans converge on the David L. Lawrence Convention Center over the Independence Day weekend for the world's largest ever furry convention, Anthrocon 2007.

Many hope to renew acquaintances, or meet new friends. Others look to buy from dealers and artists, or show off new artwork or costumes. Some attend to make money, or even learn a thing or two. But one thing unites them: They're all there to have fun.

This year marks the second time this ten-year-old convention has been held in Pittsburgh. Members of the furry fandom have lived in the region for years, but prior to 2006 their annual gathering took place 300 miles to the east, in Philadelphia.

Fears of union rates kept the growing fan convention away from the Steel City for years, but Anthrocon ultimately outgrew all other options. The purchase and demolition by Target of its regular hotel, the Adams Mark, led to a cramped last-minute alternative for Anthrocon 2005. Convention leaders became determined to provide a better venue, no matter the cost.

And that cost is high. The convention hall alone runs to \$24,000; A/V and labor costs nearly triple that before accounting for the main ballroom. The board of Anthrocon, Inc. seems to like the venue, though, and has booked it through 2009. Its chairman, Dr. Samuel Conway — better known in the furry world as

"Uncle Kage" — seems determined to keep other fees to a minimum, taking time during the pre-con staff meeting to caution against last-minute extras.

Similar touches can be seen elsewhere; bag racks are shared with long-running sci-fi event Philcon, and spare paper is kept packed away for next year. It may seem like penny-pinching, but the results speak volumes: Anthrocon has kept in the black for the last three years.

Where does the money come from? Attendees pay from \$35 to \$50 depending on when they register - or perhaps nothing at all, if they worked as a volunteer last year. But that isn't quite enough to cover the costs.

It is Anthrocon's sponsors who make up the gap. Of the 2849 registered attendees, hundreds paid \$90 or \$175 for the privilege of faster registration, a convention t-shirt, and - for the 202 SuperSponsors - preferential seating and free food. This year the price includes a three-course luncheon with the convention's guests of honor; voice actor Rob Paulsen, Carolyn Kelly (daughter of Pogo artist Walt Kelly) and animation writer Mark Evanier.

Three courses may not sound like much, but this is at an event where the standard fare is cheese pizza and granola bars consumed between the many panels, workshops and special events. The vast majority of programming is provided by fans, though guests are expected to pass on their experiences in return for accommodation and travel expenses. Tutorials on arts, crafts and fiction are the order of the day, though several more exotic events do stand out.

This year's Masquerade (where costumed fans perform skits for the audience) ended with the performers dancing with the audience in the aisles to the tune of the Time Warp. Earlier that day members of the Funday PawPet Show provided a ninety-minute puppet extravaganza. Comedy plays a significant large part in the lineup, with home-bred entertainers such as Matthew Davis (or "2, The Ranting Gryphon") doling out the laughs. Dr. Conway played a part with his Story Hour — a regular fixture involving personal tales with a humorous spin.

Anthrocon has historically held itself to three days of activities, though this year's holiday provided an excuse for many to arrive early. For some, the entertainment started early, too; Thursday night saw a staged reading of Furry Tales, a unofficial musical inspired by Anthrocon 2006. The cabaret found itself swamped by furry fans, and was well-received as a comedy, though Anthrocon board members had reservations about the show's accuracy. When its creators admitted not actually having attended a furry convention, Conway told them he "knew where there was one."

"It was a good production, it was a nice story . . . but it was not quite our story." —Dr. Conway on Furry Tales

Convention leaders have often found themselves having to explain things to those who have heard second-hand accounts. For example, while the fabled furplets of CSI do exist, they're hardly the public orgy depicted — you'll find furs snuggling together, but conduct in lobby areas remains firmly PG.

As for the fursuits, there's no denying their popularity. Surveys suggest that up to 15% of convention attendees have one, and Anthrocon 2007 is no exception, with 353 in the half-hour long Saturday parade; potentially a record for mascots in a procession. Guinness World Records were invited to confirm this next year, while convention staff promised more fans in the \$1,000/day headless lounge to keep the costumed critters from overheating.

Other groups sought a different brand of comedy. Four "protesters" from imageboard 7chan stationed themselves outside a daycare center opposite the convention hotel on Saturday. Two wore Afro wigs and bore anti-furry banners. Most attendees treated the "raiders" as part of the entertainment, especially after it began to rain. Dr. Conway and Operations Director Douglas Muth eventually took pity on the group, lending them Anthrocon-branded umbrellas.

"What exactly are these people fans of? Comics? Animation"
—Rob Paulsen

"Actually, they're fans of each other." —Mark Evanier

Anthrocon has a significant international draw. However, most are native English-speakers — of the 18 countries represented at the event, the USA, Canada and the UK make up over 98% of attendees.

Of course, other countries have their own furry events, but they're closer to one tenth the size. The largest outside of North America is Eurofurence, which drew 405 in 2006. Anthrocon's closest

competition is San Diego's Further Confusion, while Midwest FurFest in Chicago provides a third alternative, spurred by 35% growth last year. Anthrocon's own yearly growth was 14%.

Ontario's Feral! is set in a campground, but at Anthrocon hotels are a necessity. Many share four or (unofficially) more to a room, skirting the bounds of local fire codes. Part of this is due to the cost. Even at the discount rate, a night in the convention hotel is \$125 after tax; furry fans are often young, with little money to spare.

Money isn't the only explanation, though. Furrries are social creatures, and for some Anthrocon represents the only time in the year when they can meet up with friends from around the world. When not attending a panel or watching fellow fans fursuiting, many can be found chatting, drawing or playing games in The Zoo — the convention's 24-hour social space. If it weren't for the discos, some might never leave.

One prime attraction is the art show. On display are framed and unframed prints and originals, along with a few items of sculpture and even one fursuit head - and almost everything is on sale to the right bidder. Due to time constraints, only the most hotly-contested pieces go to voice auction. This year, one piece breached the \$1,000 mark in the PG category - "Just one more", by California artist Dark Natasha.

The piece was one of a set created by seven prominent furry artists to depict the seven deadly sins - in this case, Greed. Adult art commanded a slightly higher price, with one work by Taurin Fox going for \$2,000. But bargains could be

had in both sections for those willing to forgo a popular name. A number of items went for the minimum bid, sometimes as low as \$10 for large colored pieces.

"The folks I've met here at Anthrocon — with fewer exceptions than you'd imagine — have been decent, bright, creative and charming people." —Mark Evanier

Anthrocon does not require artists to pay for display space, though it takes a commission on sales, and will charge artists to ship them back if they are left unsold; a policy which encourages low minimums. Similarly, artists looking to sell commissions for items such as sketches and unofficial convention badges do not have to pay up-front for space in the crowded Artists' Alley — though they do face the risk of not being able to get a place at all, as happened to some on Friday and Saturday.

The convention does require payment for dealers tables, at which works by others may be sold. The fee for a full table is \$115, or \$70 over regular pre-registration. Extra table space is significantly more expensive, to encourage variety. 245 dealers and assistants registered this year, ranging from professional artists through comic dealers, publishers, musicians, costumers and plush toy vendors.

The convention supported Animal Friends, a local no-kill animal shelter. Over \$6,600 was raised by Sunday night. Of this, \$5,053 came from a charity auction featuring 77 items donated by members of the fandom. Some, like a Kevin and Kell original, would have been at home in the regular art auction. Other donations, such as the 12-packs of

Canadian Coke and the pound of beef jerkey, were more esoteric.

"Everyone wants to see the parade, but only some people want to see the auction. When we lose people from the auction, we lose auction income. And we took a big hit." —Brian Harris, Charity Director

Proceeds were down from previous years, which Charity Director Brian Harris attributed to a scheduling snafu - the fursuit parade was scheduled on top of the charity presentation, and overran the auction. While most large furry conventions sponsor charities, not all have such auctions; many simply donate a portion of their "earnings" to the cause.

The task of manging these events falls to over 130 volunteer staff members, most of whom spend around 12 to 18 hours "on duty" during the convention. But they don't do it alone. Security for the event is provided by the red-shirted Dorsai Irregulars, known since the mid-1970s for their activities in the science fiction community. The Dorsai have been associated with Anthrocon since 2002, and plan to expand to other furry conventions, including Connecticut's FurFright. They have also begun to recruit from the furry fandom.

"They welcome new comers and friends with open arms...They enjoyed giving each other hugs, and I even got one before everyone left. There were people from all age groups and nationalities who got along just fine." —Pittsburgh cab driver

Last year gave local vendors plenty to think about. Dr. Conway reported the total impact on the local economy at \$2.5 million.

Regardless of the actual figure, the local Kwik-E-Mart started taking furry fandom seriously when shelves started coming up bare.

This year, vendors thought themselves better-prepared. The Steel City Diner printed 100 shirts celebrating the convention, only to run out on Friday afternoon. The diner met their weekly sales target by Wednesday, and doubled that by Friday night, working through Sunday to keep up with demand....

"I didn't get a lot of sleep. There were people in the room next to mine barking all night." —J.J. Hardy of the Milwaukee Brewers

Neighboring sub shop Fernando's drew blue paw-marks on the pavement to attract customers, and offered a special \$5 menu for attendees. Its proprietor also came to the aid of his furry customers as they were being harassed by a local beggar — who gave Fernando a mild skull fracture for his trouble.

While local cab drivers had compliments, not everyone appreciated the company. The Chicago Cubs decided to cancel their booking after hearing about the con, and J.J. Hardy of the Milwaukee Brewers reported being kept up by fans on Wednesday night. The Brewers lost their game the following day.

The convention closed with next year's date — June 26-29 — along with the announcement of a guest: Disney animator Floyd Norman. The event's theme will be "It's a Jungle Out There!"

Ukrainian railway accident generates huge phosphor cloud

An alarm for heavy chemical pollution has been issued in the Lviv region, Ukraine, where

yesterday evening a railway disaster led to a fire involving 15 containers of liquid yellow phosphorus.

Extinguishing the fire proved extremely difficult, since water cannot be used, as in contact with phosphorus it would generate poisonous gas. It took six hours before the flames were over. Gas was generated anyway, and at the moment the poisoned surface extends on about 90 sq. km. The casualties count is already heavy: 20 people were injured, 13 of them in critical condition. They have been carried to the Lviv hospital. Podrobnosti reports that the fire started when one of the containers started to leak and the phosphor caught fire.

The poisoned area includes 14 villages. From the five villages that are closer to the disaster area some 800 people have already been evacuated. Half of them had to manage on their own as there was not enough public transport for all.

At the moment there is no available data about the wind direction or next expected movements of the phosphorus cloud. Special firemen units remain on place to control the possibility of a new fire, while the Administration of the Lviv Oblast is trying to forecast the possible short- and mid-term evolution of the situation.

The Ukrainian Railways have officially excluded the possibility of a terrorist act as a cause for the disaster.

Podrobnosti reports the deadly dose of yellow phosphor at 0.1 g. According to the same source, when poisoning living beings, phosphor attacks their bones, their

spinal cord, and starts liver necrosis.

Nuclear leaks after Japan quake are worse than first reported

In the wake of yesterday's earthquakes, Japan is today reporting that leaks at the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa Nuclear Power Plant are worse than first reported.

In addition to a leak of 315 gallons (1200 liters) of radioactive water into the Sea of Japan, reports say that drums with nuclear waste lost their lids and radioactive gases cobalt-60, chromium-51 and iodine were released into the atmosphere. Several pipes are also reported to have broken.

Officials are also reporting 50 different problems at the plant of "malfunctioning and trouble," but officials would not comment further on the damage other than calling the issues "minor."

Man becomes first to swim at North Pole

Lewis Gordon Pugh, 37, a man from the United Kingdom has become the first person to swim at the North pole. The water, 29 degrees F (-1.8 C), is believed to be the coldest waters any human has ever swam in on the planet.

"I am obviously ecstatic to have succeeded but this swim is a triumph and a tragedy. A triumph that I could swim in such ferocious conditions, but a tragedy that it's possible to swim at the North Pole," said Pugh who swam 0.6 miles in just under 19 minutes through cracks in icebergs.

Pugh says he swam at the North Pole to demonstrate the effects that global warming is playing on the Earth and is hoping that his act will gain the attention of

leaders from around the world.

"The decisions which they make over the next few years will determine the biodiversity of our world. I want my children, and their children, to know that polar bears are still living in the Arctic — these creatures are on the front line up here," added Pugh.

The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), which sponsored the swim, states that the only reason Pugh was able to swim in the freezing waters was due to global warming.

"[The swim was] a bittersweet victory, as this swim has only been possible because of climate change," said WWF U.K. spokesman, Colin Butfield. The waters were completely frozen 10 years ago and the swim would have been impossible to complete.

Pugh has also swam in the waters of Antarctica where he was credited to being the only person to swim so far south earning him the nickname "The Polar Bear." Pugh also swam the Indian Ocean.

"It was frightening. The pain was immediate and felt like my body was on fire. I was in excruciating pain from beginning to end and I nearly quit on a few occasions. It was without doubt the hardest swim of my life," added Pugh.

New Zealand dollar hits new high versus the United States dollar

The New Zealand dollar (NZD) value rose and, for a short amount of time, was worth US\$0.7932, the highest level in New Zealand since the dollar was floated in 1985 - 22-years-ago.

The value then dropped a little and as of 11.40 a.m. was trading at

US\$0.7925. This was due to the Reserve Bank of New Zealand announcing that it will intervene next week at their Official Cash Rate review if the dollar continued to rise.

Economists are predicting that the NZD will now go above US\$0.80.

The cause of this rise was mainly due to the release of the June quarter retail sales data. The consumer price index data showed that sales increased by 1.2%, instead of the predicted 0.4%. The bigger than expected sales data were mainly due to supermarket, car and petrol purchases. In May, the core sales figures showed a 0.8% rise, these figures excluded car and fuel sales.

Economist correspondents for Radio New Zealand have also said that a weak US dollar is also to blame for the rising New Zealand dollar. Danika Hampton, currency analyst for the Bank of New Zealand, says the NZD is looking expensive and doubts if it will maintain it's current high figure.

Michael Cullen, the finance minister of New Zealand, has said that investors will be hurt when the New Zealand dollar does fall. Dr Cullen personally believes that the NZD is currently overvalued.

The Wellington Chamber of Commerce has called for the New Zealand Government to slow down it's spending. Charles Finny, from the Chamber of Commerce, says this is one of the core factors and not oil and housing markets as much as has been speculated. Oil prices are at a current 11-month world high.

The retails sales figures also resulted in Government bonds being weakened. The two-year and

ten-year Government bonds are at 7.61% and 6.82% respectively.

The Official Cash Rate is currently at 8%, due to other interventions by the Reserve Bank.

The NZD is also trading well against the Australian dollar and Japanese yen.

Police officer killed, at least 18 injured in south Thailand blasts

A police sergeant was killed and at least 18 people were injured in a pair of bomb blasts today in southern Thailand.

Taking place in Yala, the capital of one of Thailand's three southernmost provinces, the first blast, at around 8 a.m. local time (0100 GMT), resulted in no injuries, but drew police and journalists to the scene. Then, about 30 minutes after the initial blast, a second, more powerful bomb went off.

The explosion tore through shops and a motorcycle taxi stand at a major intersection across the street from the city's railway station.

Police Sergeant Subin Pruekmongkol, 48, who lost his arms and legs in the blast, was taken to Yala Hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

At least eight other police officers were wounded, two of them seriously, while four local journalists were also taken to hospital. The injury tolls varied widely, with local news reports saying at least 18 people were injured, while CNN reported that up to 32 people had been hurt.

Police said the first bomb was hidden inside a motorcycle helmet and placed in the front basket of a

motorbike. The second blast was set off remotely after people had flocked to the blast site. This tactic of using a smaller bomb as a lure, followed by a second stronger bomb, has become more common in the south Thailand insurgency. Since attacks by separatists in Thailand's Malay Muslim-majority provinces flared up in January 2004, there are have about 2,000 people killed in bombings and almost-daily drive-by shootings.

In a separate violence earlier today in Yala Province, a man was fatally shot in front of a tea shop in Yaha District.

In Bangkok, the central government's Cabinet agreed to extend an emergency law in the southern provinces for another three months. The current round expires on Friday. The emergency powers, which are set for three-month periods, were first enacted in 2005. Among other powers, the decree allows officials the authority to detain suspects for up to 30 days without charge. About 350 suspects have been rounded up and detained under the law in the past few weeks, according to The Nation newspaper.

Australian government under fire over Haneef visa decision

Australia's federal government has come under fire by prominent human rights lawyer Julian Burnside, Q.C. for using migration laws to circumvent the release of Mohamed Haneef after he was granted bail in Brisbane Magistrate's Court.

Haneef is alleged to have provided support to a terrorist organisation, for leaving his mobile phone SIM card with Sabeel Ahmed who allegedly had knowledge of the Glasgow attacks.

Haneef's lawyers have also attacked the government's decision saying it will make it more difficult for Haneef to mount a defence should he be held in immigration detention. His lawyers are considering delaying posting his bail surety until his visa issues are resolved. This will allow Haneef to stay in Brisbane near them, his lawyers say. They have also indicated that they will appeal the government's decision.

Australian immigration minister Kevin Andrews announced yesterday that he had used his powers under the Migration Act to cancel Haneef's visa as he had failed a character check.

Mr Burnside is sceptical of Mr Andrews' motives, claiming the government would not have cancelled Haneef's visa if he had not been bailed. He said Mr Andrew's moves amount to the government interfering in the judicial process.

"They want to keep him here for trial. They waited to cancel his visa until they saw whether he got bail," Mr Burnside told Southern Cross Broadcasting.

"If he didn't get bail then they weren't going to cancel the visa."

"This is a misuse of power in bad faith for the explicit purpose of trumping a magistrate's order that he should be let out on bail."

"I think it's disgraceful that Andrews has lent himself to doing it, because as a lawyer, he ought to know better," said Mr Burnside.

Mr Burnside attacked the government, claiming its decision to cancel Haneef's visa tramples on some of the key foundations of democracy. He further alleged that

the government was acting hypocritically.

"We are supposed to be a democratic society. I thought the war against terrorism was an effort to preserve our democracy. But here we are trashing it left, right and centre in the name of saving it."

Burnside also questioned the government's anti-terror laws, saying it was unusual for a person to be charged with giving someone a SIM card twelve months earlier.

Queensland's Premier Peter Beattie called on the immigration minister to explain the reason for Haneef's visa being cancelled. Mr Beattie said that the Australian people believed the government was being heavy-handed.

"But clearly the Federal Minister for Immigration has acted in relation to particular information from the federal police."

"If there's something they have become aware of since this investigation started that's not the subject of the charge, then they should share that with the Australian people," Mr Beattie told the media.

Today in History

64 – The Great Fire of Rome started among the shops around the Circus Maximus selling flammable goods, eventually destroying four of fourteen Roman districts and severely damaging seven others.

1863 – American Civil War: Led by Union Army Colonel Robert Gould Shaw, the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, the first formal African American military unit, spearheaded an assault on Fort Wagner near Charleston, South Carolina.

1982 – Guatemalan military forces and their paramilitary allies slaughtered over 250 Mayan campesinos in the village of Plan de Sánchez, Baja Verapaz department.

1989 – American actress Rebecca Schaeffer was shot and killed by Robert John Bardo, prompting the passage of anti-stalking laws in California.

1995 – During the fifteenth stage of the 1995 Tour de France, Italian cyclist Fabio Casartelli suffered a fatal crash on the descent of the Col de Portet d'Aspet.

1996 – Paris-bound TWA Flight 800 exploded at 00:31 UTC (20:31, July 17 EDT) off the coast of Long Island, New York, killing all 230 on board.

Quote of the Day

The world is a looking-glass, and gives back to every man the reflection of his own face. Frown at it, and it will in turn look sourly upon you; laugh at it and with it, and it is a jolly kind companion; and so let all young persons take their choice.

~ William Makepeace Thackeray

Word of the Day

eradicate; v

1. To pull up by the roots; to uproot.
2. To completely destroy; to put an end to; to extirpate.

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