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#### **China launches space probe to the moon**

The People's Republic of China today launched its first moon orbiter as part of the country's lunar exploration program.

### Featured story

#### **Libertarianz discusses a free state with Wikinews**

Libertarianz party president, Craig Milmine, and the party leader, Bernard Darnton, spoke exclusively to Wikinews journalist Gabriel Pollard about the political philosophy, libertarianism in New Zealand.

### Wikipedia Current Events

A storm in the Gulf of Mexico kills 10 Mexican oil workers fleeing an oil rig with Navy rescue teams trying to reach survivors.

•Moderating winds improve the outlook in the flight against the California wildfires of October 2007.

•Richard J. Griffin resigns as head of the Bureau of Diplomatic

### Wikipedia Current Events

Security in the United States State Department following the Blackwater shooting in Iraq.

•Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands begins her four-day visit to India to strengthen bilateral ties between the two countries.

•The United Kingdom announces a unilateral end to the Common Travel Area with the Republic of Ireland. From 2009, passports will be required for the first time, bringing to an end centuries of unimpeded travel between the two islands.

•Reuters reports that Turkish forces launched an attack on Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) positions in northern Iraq earlier in the week killing 34 PKK fighters.

•Turkish warplanes attack a village near Shiranish Islam in Kurdistan.

•China launches its first lunar orbiter, Chang'e 1, on an exploration mission to the moon.

•The Pakistan People's Party claims that its leader, former Prime Minister of Pakistan Benazir Bhutto has been forbidden from leaving the country.

•Prime Minister of Denmark Anders Fogh Rasmussen calls early elections for 13 November 2007, less than three years after the last elections in early 2005.

#### **Bush says missile shield "urgently" needed to counter Iranian threat**

In a speech on Tuesday, U.S. President George W. Bush said that deploying a missile shield in Europe is necessary to counter an emerging nuclear threat from Iran. The planned missile shield is strongly opposed by Russia, which sees it as a threat to its security.

"The need for missile defense in Europe is real and I believe it's urgent. Iran is pursuing the technology that could be used to produce nuclear weapons, and ballistic missiles of increasing range that could deliver them," Bush said in a speech at the National Defense University. "Today, we have no way to defend Europe against the emerging Iranian threat, so we must deploy a missile defense system there that can."

In his speech, Bush emphasized the threat posed by the range of Iran's missiles. "Last November, Iran conducted military exercises in which it launched ballistic missiles capable of striking Israel and Turkey," Bush said. He warned that, with "continued foreign assistance", Iran could develop an ICBM capable of reaching the United States by 2015.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has suggested that the United States and the West could rely on Russian-operated early warning radar in Azerbaijan to counter missile threats from Iran.

The U.S. missile defense plan includes 10 ground-based interceptors in Poland and a radar system in the Czech Republic. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said previously that the shield was seen a "potential threat" by Russia and that Russia could take measures to "neutralize" it. In his speech, Bush said that the missile shield was not designed to intercept missiles from Russia and "would be easily overwhelmed by Russia's nuclear arsenal."

Also on Tuesday, U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates proposed delaying the activation of part of the missile shield if Russia cooperates with the project. "We continue to encourage the Russians to partner with us in missile defense and continue our efforts to reassure them that these facilities are not aimed at Russia and could benefit Russia," Gates said. He also suggested that the missile shield could remain inactive until "definitive proof" of a threat arose. "We would consider tying together the activation of the sites in Poland and the Czech Republic with definitive proof of the threat, in other words, Iranian missile testing and so on," he said.

### **Turkey launches airstrikes against Kurdish rebels**

According to reports, Turkey has today launched airstrikes against Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) bases near the border to Iraq. F-16 fighter jets and helicopter gunships are said to have bombed targets on both sides of the border.

Turkish officials said that a major incursion was not implemented at this time to give diplomacy a final chance. An Iraqi delegation, headed by defense minister Qadir Obeidi (aka Abdel Qader Jassim),

is scheduled to visit Turkey on Thursday.

"We do not accept in any way... the use of Iraqi territories, including the territories of the Kurdistan region, as a base to threaten the security of neighbouring countries," Massoud Barzani, president of the Kurdistan Regional Government, said in a statement condemning the PKK.

"We are concerned about the continuing skirmishes that are happening up there, and terrorist attacks that are being launched by the PKK against the Turks," White House Press Secretary Dana Perino said.

### **2007/08 UEFA Champions League: Werder Bremen vs. Lazio**

Werder Bremen beat Lazio at home to claim their 1st 3 points of this season's UEFA Champions League. The win allows Werder Bremen to move ahead of Lazio in the standings with Werder Bremen now 3rd. The win also brings them 1 point behind Olympiacos.

Werder Bremen, who held the majority of the possession throughout the game, broke through in the 28th minute through Sonago. Almeida gave the Germans a two-goal cushion nine minutes into the second half. Clemens Fritz sent a long low cross to the Hugo Almeida, who then doubled the lead. Lazio managed to pull 1 back before the final whistle.

The 2 clubs match up again in 13 days from now with both teams needing to pick up points to have a shot for 2nd place in Group C.

### **China launches space probe to the moon**

The People's Republic of China

today launched its first moon orbiter as part of the country's lunar exploration program.

At 18:00 hours local time (10:00 UTC) the rocket Chang'e 1 lifted off from Xichang Satellite Launch Center in southwestern China. The name of the probe refers to the Chinese goddess of the moon.

The state television network broadcasted live footage of the countdown and launch, which took place in the presence of Chinese officials and some 2,000 Chinese who paid around US\$100 to attend the event, but without any international press.

The 2350 kg probe is expected to enter a lunar orbit on November 5. On its year-long mission, Chang'e 1 will obtain threedimensional images of the Moon's surface and gather information related to the chemical and physical properties of the lunar soil. It will do so circulating at about 200 kilometers above the lunar surface. On its way to the Moon the spacecraft will register data regarding the solar winds, or space weather, on the way there. It will also broadcast 30 patriotic Chinese songs when orbiting the Moon.

The communist-ruled nation which hosts next year's Olympics hopes to put a taikonaut on the moon in 10 to 15 years. Last month, Japan launched a lunar probe while India hopes to achieve the same next April. In 2003, China used one of their own rockets to get the astronaut Yang Liwei into space. Yang told the Xinhua News Agency last week that once China has a manned space station, he and his fellow taikonauts could form a new branch of the Communist Party in space.

Last January, China used a rocket

to blow up one of its own satellites, sparking fears from the United States and other countries that China might have a military agenda in space, besides the problems of space pollution and danger to other satellites the explosion caused. China says the goals of its space program are scientific and peaceful

## 7.1 earthquake strikes

### Indonesia

According to the United States Geological Survey (USGS) a magnitude 7.1 quake struck Sumatra in Indonesia just after 4:00 a.m. local time.

The epicenter was located 135 kilometers (85 miles) west of Bengkulu, Sumatra, Indonesia in the Indian Ocean, with a depth of 30 k.m. (18.6 miles).

The NOAA issued a tsunami alert that was later lifted saying "no destructive widespread tsunami is expected," but that "local tsunamis can affect locations no more than 100 kilometers from the epicenter." They also state that lack of "sea level data" may delay the center's determination of whether or not a tsunami was generated.

The USGS states that damage may be "light to moderate" but so far there are no reports of injuries, deaths or damage.

### Evidence of 'shattered moon' found inside rings of Saturn

Scientists say that floating inside Saturn's rings are pieces of what they believe to be a "shattered moon," according to images captured by NASA's spacecraft Cassini-Huygens.

The scientists from the University of Colorado at Boulder looked at the images which were captured in

2004, and found what they call "moonlets" or large pieces ranging from the size of a stadium to a semi truck, of what they say are the remains of a large moon which was likely destroyed when a comet or asteroid slammed into it.

"This is the first evidence of a moonlet belt in any of Saturn's rings. We have firmly established these moonlets exist in a relatively narrow region of the "A" ring, and the evidence indicates they are remnants of a larger moon that was shattered by a meteoroid or comet," said one of the researchers, Miodrag Sremcevic.

The Cassini spacecraft captures eight new propeller-like features within Saturn's A ring in what may be the propeller "hot zone" of Saturn's rings. Propeller features form around small moonlets that are not massive enough to clear out ring material, but are still able to pull smaller ring particles into a shape reminiscent of an airplane propeller. Scientists believe that propellers represent moonlet wakes, which are denser than the surrounding ring material and appear bright in the images. The length of the belt in which the moonlets were discovered is almost 2,000 miles long.

Scientists estimate that the size of the moon was relative to the size of Pan, the innermost moon of Saturn. It only measures 20 miles wide at its widest point.

### SDSU vs. BYU football game postponed due to wildfires

The San Diego State University (SDSU) and Brigham Young University (BYU) football game, originally scheduled for October 27, 2007 in San Diego, has been postponed until December 1. Qualcomm Stadium, home of the SDSU Aztecs, is currently housing

12,000 evacuees from the Southern California wildfires.

In addition to the housing of evacuees at the stadium, the decision to postpone the game was made for several other reasons. Federal and state declarations of a state of emergency; air quality; transportation considerations; closure of SDSU; student-athlete well-being; fan safety; and competitive equity, all played a role. Mountain West Conference commissioner Craig Thompson said, "There is a far greater priority than sporting events in the San Diego area at this time. The focus should be on emergency response and resources, and getting the community back on its feet. Our thoughts are with our colleagues at San Diego State University, as well as everyone who has been affected by this disaster."

### Calls made for prosecution in light of Garuda Indonesia Flight 200 report

Australia is calling for criminal charges to be made in light of the final report into the Garuda Indonesia Flight 200 disaster, which was published yesterday. Five Australians were among the 21 killed when the Boeing 737 jetliner overshot the runway at Adisucipto International Airport, near Yogyakarta, Indonesia on March 7 this year.

Australian Minister for Foreign affairs, Alexander Downer, said that the "very credible report" made it clear the two-man cockpit crew were responsible for the accident. The report found that alarms sounded no less than fifteen times to warn the pilot in command that he was flying at an excessive speed for proper operation of the flaps, and that the co-pilot had also been ignored

when he asked for a go-around to be made. The co-pilot was criticised for not taking control of the aircraft. The pilot was found to have ignored fifteen emergency activations of the Ground Proximity Warning System telling him to slow down. Other criticisms were leveled at the inadequate training provided by the airline, the inadequate inspections by authorities, the lack of a mandatory runoff area at the runway and improper fire suppressants and slow response from the Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting facilities at the airport.

"I've asked our ambassador today to make it absolutely clear to the Indonesians that we want people prosecuted for this accident," said Downer. "I want to see people who have negligently allowed Australians ... to be killed, I want to see those people brought to justice," he added. He has also expressed a pledge to discuss plans for a class action suit with survivors and relatives of victims, but he commented that "you're dealing with the Indonesian system here, it's a different system from our own, so it's not necessarily going to be very easy." Bill Madden from the law firm Slater and Gordon, who have a speciality in class actions, disagreed: "It would seem as though the families and people injured would have a fairly strong case," he said. "You'd be holding an airline responsible for the negligence of a pilot and that's a fairly standard approach that the law can follow."

Meanwhile, the Sydney Morning Herald spoke with Ari Sapari, head of operations at Garuda Indonesia. He told reporters that the pilots, who remain grounded after the crash, may be sacked next week, when any disciplinary

action is expected to be announced. However, if they are charged over the crash, he has promised the airline will assist in their defence, saying "They are still our employees, up to now. They have the right to be assisted." Police say they are examining closely the possibility of charging both with manslaughter, which could see them sent to prison for up to five years if convicted. When queried about the fact that the report found the crew had not received adequate simulator training from the airline, he defended the company, saying "Nobody is perfect in this entire world." Since the suspension of the pilots, all other Garuda pilots have undergone the appropriate training missed out by Garuda.

Australian Prime Minister John Howard said in a statement made after the report came out "I am quite astonished. I can understand how people who are still grieving, both in Indonesia and Australia, might feel."

The Opposition Leader, Kevin Rudd, has said he has telephoned secretary-general of Indonesia's foreign affairs department and former ambassador to Australia Imron Cotan, telling him that he wanted those responsible "prosecuted to the absolute full". "This is a serious matter, many Australians visit Indonesia, Garuda is an often used airline and there is a basic national interest at stake here as well," he said.

It is, however, stipulated in the Convention on International Civil Aviation that accident reports and related material, specifically transcripts of interviews, communications with crew and cockpit voice recorder and flight data recorder (collectively known as black boxes) readouts, must

not be used for any purpose other than determining the cause of an accident or incident. The only possible exception to this is where potential benefit would outweigh the "adverse domestic and international impact" on the investigation in question or any other either in progress or in the future. This legislation is in place to provide protection to witnesses on the basis that without it they may be less likely to cooperate with investigational procedures.

Downer's response to this law was to comment that "I think our first priority is to make sure those who are responsible - who survived the accident - are brought to justice." Aridono Sukman, the police member in charge of the criminal investigation, has said that the contents of the black box are vital evidence. Officials have commented that some relatives have expressed their frustration over the legal challenges involved in the prosecution effort.

Tatang Kurniadi, chairman of the Indonesian National Transportation Safety Committee, has already confirmed that investigators cannot speak to the police, with the only permitted testimony under the legislation being to testify at a court hearing. He also pointed out that the document does not actually appoint any blame. "The investigation determined the flight crews' compliance with procedures was not at the level to ensure the safe operation of the aircraft. That's enough," he said. However, Sisno Adiwino, a police spokesperson, told reporters the police would attempt to summon the investigators to court as expert witnesses on aviation, rather than as the actual investigators involved with the disaster.

Another fact that has become

aparant is that the runway at Adisucipto International will not be lengthened to meet international standards despite assurances that work would begin shortly. The airport claims it cannot build the mandatory 90-metre runway end safety area because, says a small-print comment by the state-owned airport operator, the airport does not have the land." It has, however, promised to bring other airports under it's jurisdiction up to standard, with work initialising next year. The company has also stated that a study of engineering methods providing alternative solutions could be completed by June.

### **American television personality James Lipton was a pimp**

James Lipton, the host of Inside the Actors Studio, mentions in his recently released memoir, Inside Inside, that he once worked as a pimp when he was living in France.

"This was when I was very very young, living in Paris, penniless, unable to get any kind of working permit," said Lipton. "I had a friend who worked in what is called the Milieu, which is that world and she suggested to me one night, 'Look, you'll be my mec... We would translate it perhaps... as pimp. We were earning our living together, this young woman and I, we made a rather good living, I must say."

He had spoken about it before on his show, when he interviewed Julia Roberts and mentioned his familiarity with prostitutes.

"I had to set the record straight," he said. "God, it was awful that night with Julia. I was dying. And those were my students laughing at me!"

### **Libertarianz discusses a free state with Wikinews**

Libertarianz party president, Craig Milmine, and the party leader, Bernard Darnton, spoke exclusively to Wikinews journalist Gabriel Pollard about the political philosophy, libertarianism in New Zealand. This article follows on from interviews with republican, Lewis Holden; and monarchist, Noel Cox.

The idea of libertarianism is where consent is required for all actions between people, and that these interactions are voluntary. Over four million people will be given freedom to run their own lives as Mr Milmine said. He says the Government doesn't follow this generally accepted principle. "They take money without consent, order us around, and tell us what we can and cannot put in our bodies." Their party website states, "We will put paid to bloated government bureaucracy and its authoritarian inclinations."

Mr Darnton said that one of the biggest jobs of Libertarianz is to show New Zealanders how their lives could be better. "Most parties complain when others steal their policies. We just smile and get on with the next thing." Libertarianz is, as Mr Milmine says, "principled opposition to the idea of a large nanny-state government in New Zealand.

"A burglar stealing your TV is in the wrong because they are taking without permission. The government steals a proportion of your wealth every year, the fact that they allow a minor amount of input from you into how they are going to distribute the stolen loot does not change the fact that they stole it in the first place."

Mr Darnton also describes the

current system of governance as a game. "What's right or wrong doesn't really matter as long as the red team or the blue team or whoever is scoring more points. I think that's a terrible way to approach government."

The reason this political philosophy, underpinned by objectivism, isn't well accepted in the New Zealand culture is because New Zealanders are generally wary of major change, vote for the party they always have, and vote for the party they think will win, not the one they want to win, Mr Darton believes. "These sorts of behaviour reinforce the big parties, even though neither have much to offer," Mr Darton said, "What Libertarianz is proposing is something quite different to anything any other party is putting forward." Mr Milmine sees New Zealanders accepting libertarianism because, "Slowly people see that the government doesn't solve their problems, it caused them in the first place." And when this is followed by a significant minority, Mr Milmine says, the change will happen very quickly.

Although Mr Milmine does say that he cannot predict what will happen to New Zealand if it were to change to a libertarianism state, "because it is asking me to predict the interactions of over four million people when they are given freedom to run their own lives."

As well as changing the system of Government, Libertarianz also propose New Zealand becoming a republic and removing the constitutional monarchy. Mr Darnton said, "The monarchy is so distant in New Zealand that I don't think becoming a republic would make a big difference in many people's lives." Mr Milmine says, "A

head of state has a valid role to play as a check on the power on the government, but it cannot perform this role if it is toothless."

Although Mr Darnton believes that New Zealand will eventually become a republic, he is wary of making a push to it too quickly. He cites anti-prosperity and the governmental interference as issues that could make it into a written constitution and making it harder to shift later. While Mr Milmine says they would run into problems with people disagreeing with the Treaty of Waitangi if it were placed into a written constitution. But says a written constitution is needed, "There are examples of where [a written constitution] has worked and there are plenty of examples of the government ignoring the rights in our Bill of Rights because of the lack of a written constitution."

And the final question asked to both Craig Milmine and Bernard Darnton was whether they were a Holden or a Ford fan. Mr Milmine said he preferred "Subaru – I prefer the rallies – they allow more freedom" while Mr Darnton bluntly said, "No, I'm not."

### **New Zealand repeals seditious law**

Wellington, New Zealand - At a time when many countries are tightening anti-terrorism legislation and discussing on whether to "crack-down" on freedom of speech, New Zealand has repealed its seditious law. The Crimes (Repeal of Seditious Offences) Amendment Bill was passed by the New Zealand Parliament by an overwhelming majority of 114 to 7.

Sedition is the crime of inciting insurrection against the state. New Zealand's seditious law criminalised

speech intended to "bring into hatred or contempt" or "excite disaffection" against the monarch or the government or to incite or encourage "violence, lawlessness, or disorder". The law had been widely criticised following the conviction of Timothy Selwyn in 2006 - the first seditious prosecution in 75 years - and repeal had been recommended by the New Zealand Law Commission.

Minister of Justice Mark Burton criticised the law as an infringement on freedom of speech and a tool of political persecution - a view widely echoed by MPs from across the house. Green Party MP Keith Locke noted that "the roll-call of those charged is a roll call of our political heroes". However, New Zealand First MP Ron Mark advocated retaining the law in light of current fears about terrorism. New Zealand First was the only party to vote against the bill.

The bill repeals all seditious offences, and will come into effect on 1 January 2008.

### **Danish Prime Minister calls an election for 2007**

The Prime Minister of Denmark, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, has called for snap elections for Denmark's unicameral parliament, the Folketing. The parliamentary election will be held on Tuesday, November 13, 2007. The call follows over a month of rumours in the media.

Rasmussen made the announcement in an address to the Folketing at 1:06 p.m. CEST (UTC+2), stating that the current administration was not stepping down and that the election is to be held now to avoid having speculation dominate the current political debates.

The last election was held on February 8, 2005 for a term of 4 years. In Denmark, however, the Prime Minister has the option to dissolve the parliament and call a snap election at any time before the four years are up.

The current government coalition consisting of Venstre (Rasmussen's Liberal party) and Conservative People's Party has not resigned and seeks re-election. It has been the governing coalition in Denmark since 2001. The Danish People's Party backs the current government but is not part of it.

Recent opinion polls indicate the minority government and its supporting party would still command a majority among Danish voters.

### **Injured Buffalo, New York police officer returns home**

Patricia Parete, 42, a Buffalo, New York police officer who was shot two times and nearly killed by a fleeing suspect in December of 2006, has returned to her Buffalo home after being transferred to a specialized rehabilitation hospital in New Jersey to recover from her injuries. Another officer, Carl Andolina who was also responding to the scene, was also shot twice.

Parate is able to speak, but still is not able to walk, or move her arms because of one of the bullets severely damaged her spinal cord. The other bullet hit her bullet proof vest and did not cause any damage. Andolina was shot once in the neck and once in the shoulder.

The two officers were responding to a call at about 9:00 p.m. on December 5, that a male and female were fighting inside a

Valero gas station located on West Chippewa and Elmwood Avenues in Downtown Buffalo when one of the suspects, Varner Harris, 18 and lives in Buffalo, fled police. When the officers began to chase Harris, he turned and fired several shots at the officers, wounding both of them. Despite being shot two times, Andolina still managed to give a short chase to apprehend the suspect, tackling him to the ground.

Neither officer fired any shots. Both officers were shot by a .38-caliber revolver. At least 5 shots total were fired in total by the suspect.

Harris was convicted for the attempted murder of the officers, and could face 30 years in prison.

### **1,000,000 flee homes in California due to wildfires; over 500,000 ordered to evacuate**

Reports say that the amount of people fleeing from their homes in California located in the United States due to wildfires has reached the 1,000,000 mark as the fires continue to grow. More than 500,000 people have been ordered to evacuate areas of Southern California as firefighters have begun to realize that they may not be able to put all the fires out.

45 people have been injured, 21 of those being firefighters battling the blazes. At least one person was reported to have been killed earlier, but so far those reports cannot be confirmed.

"If it's this big and blowing with as much wind as it's got, it'll go all the way to the ocean before it stops ... We can save some stuff but we can't stop it," said captain of the San Diego fire department, Kirk Humphries.

Yesterday, U.S. President George W. Bush declared a state of emergency in California, clearing the way for the state to begin receiving federal aid assistance.

"All of us across this nation are concerned for the families who have lost their homes and the many families who have been evacuated from their homes. We send the help of the federal government," said Bush in a statement to the press.

The Santa Ana Winds have been blowing for three days and they are not forecast to stop for the next day or so.

Close to 2,000 homes are burned to ashes and nearly 70,000 more are believed to be at a high risk of catching fire. Almost 400,000 acres of land have been scorched with 18 fires burning.

### **Interview with Sue Gardner of the Wikimedia Foundation**

Wikinews reporters interviewed Sue Gardner, an employee of the Wikimedia Foundation, the project that runs Wikipedia and several other projects, including Wikinews.

Before coming to Wikimedia, she ran CBC.CA, the website of Canada's national public broadcaster. She was also a radio and television journalist for 10 years.

#### Interview

Matt: Hi Sue, could you explain what you do for the Wikimedia Foundation?

Sue Gardner: Sure. I am a consultant & special advisor to the board. Essentially, I am here to help the organization professionalize and improve. It's a young organization with a lot of normal 'young-organization' challenges—and I am here to help

fix them.

Matt: What was your job position for cbc.ca, and what did you work on while you were there?

SG: I was senior director of CBC.CA. (That means I ran it.) Do you want me to explain a little about what it is?

Thunderhead: Please do

SG: It's the website of the Canadian public broadcaster, the only national public broadcaster in Canada and the equivalent to the BBC, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, the French pubcaster. etc. CBC is mainly a news organization, and CBC.CA is mainly a news website.

Thunderhead: How did you come to work for the Wikimedia

Foundation? Were you asked to join by someone? And if so, who?

SG: I actually first got interested in the Wikimedia Foundation in a serious way, when I saw it do such a good job on the Virginia Tech story. On the morning of the Virginia Tech massacre, I was following the story on Wikipedia/Wikinews, and reading the talk page. And it was a really excellent level of conversation that was being had there. I was really seriously impressed. So I started doing a little reading about the organization, which resulted in me talking with Brad Patrick [then General Counsel to the Board of Trustees] and then Florence [Nibart-Devouard, Chair of the Board]. Which resulted in me coming here.

Brian: In joining WMF was there anything you brought from CBC.ca's policies that you feel have influenced your contributions to the foundation? Can you give Wikinews any tips? I am assuming their similar balance/neutrality policies as the BBC's

SG: Yes, I think so. CBC is an extremely thoughtful, intentional, deliberate organization. I have borrowed from it liberally thus far—our code of conduct owes something to the CBC's, as does our travel policy, travel approvals policy, reimbursement policy etc. So there are a lot of new policies here (and there will be more) that have been heavily influenced by the CBC. In terms of journalistic policy, I have had no influence on how Wikinews handles things. And Brian, you are correct that CBC's editorial policies are very similar to those of the BBC.

Matt: Have you had much to do with Wikinews during the course of your work for the Wikimedia Foundation?

SG: No, very little. I am a big supporter of Wikinews for obvious reasons. Can I talk a little bit about that?

Matt: Sure.

SG: I am very interested in Wikinews because of my background. I worked for seven years in online journalism, and spent a lot of time talking with my colleagues at other organizations about the future of online news, citizen journalism, participatory journalism etc. I am still doing some of that—next week, for example, I will be in Washington helping the Corporation for Public Broadcasting decide who to give funding for to cover the US presidential election online. So I am very interested in these issues. And I don't think that any media organization has got this figured out, even a little bit. It seems to me that Wikinews is in a very good position to make real progress on participatory news/citizen journalism, etc., because the WMF projects are extremely good at fostering collaboration. So I am watching Wikinews with a lot of

interest. Yeah. I am really hoping that someone applying for funds from the CPB will propose a collaboration with Wikinews

Thunderhead: When the Foundation moves to San Fransisco, will you be going with it?

SG: Yes

Matt: Do you believe that citizen journalism sites like Wikinews should have an editorial review process?

SG: That is a good question. I assume you mean prepublication, right?

Matt: Yeah.

SG: It's a good question, and there are good arguments on both sides. I know that Nick Denton of Gawker Media has a kind of 'shoot first ask questions later' stance—they say they value transparency and are fine to admit their mistakes and publish corrections immediately. I think in general that's the direction the media are moving in; that we would publish and correct, rather than hold off publishing. There are lots of reasons for that, and there's an interesting argument to be made that it's the most respectful stance vis-a-vis the readers.

Brian: Gawker sounds like what we do, only a lot less cautious.

SG: Yes. I like Nick Denton a lot—he is very honest and modest about the work he does. He sometimes mocks traditional media for being overly pompous

Mike: Sue, the community initiative "Conference of the Americas" is getting support from Turner Broadcasting for the citizen journalism unconference. How do you feel about the community partnering with such a big name in journalism?

SG: I don't know anything about that particular proposal for collaboration, but I am generally very much in favour of us collaborating with external entities. I have begun talking a little with a guy at CNN myself, as I think Brian knows.

Mike: The proposal is basically that Turner will give us a venue for the conference and bring in industry people to speak, in addition to more citizen-oriented speakers and our own from Wikinews. I know personally I didn't believe such a media conglomerate would want to partner with free culture, so it was surprising to me. Does it surprise you, or do you see a good working relationship between "free" and "for profit" journalism outlets?

SG: It doesn't surprise me at all that Turner would want to partner with us. I have had useful conversations with all kinds of people; the head of CNN.com, the head of the BBC online, a head of programming at PBS, etc. And I know many of us are having similar conversations. People want to partner with the Wikimedia Foundation because it is extraordinarily successful and the material it creates is phenomenally relevant and useful.

Brian: we had a reporter with the beeb for a week

Thunderhead: And the BBC used some of our content earlier

Matt: Do you think the fact that they can reuse what we make in partnership with them is one of the reasons for people wanting to partner with us, whereas a lot of traditional media want to retain copyright on work?

SG: This is great, and it's my opinion that we should partner up with lots of organizations in lots of



ways. Probably we will find the most constructive partnerships with the public sector organizations (as Brian and Thunderbird are saying, with the BBC). No, I don't think they understand the GFDL at all. And copyright is a problem for traditional media; it was my single biggest problem at the CBC, since it is so constraining and complex. I think they are interested in us because a) we are popular, and they strive for relevance/popularity all the time, and b) because we have managed to persuade people to participate in our world and to help us and work with us. Traditional media have been less successful than we have—than you have!—in creating an environment which people enjoy participating in.

Brian: If they don't understand GFDL, is CC-BY (per Wikinews) better for their legal folks?

SG: I think traditional media see copyright as a problem, and they do not understand it very well. Basically it just represents cost and complexity to them. I had a meeting with PBS the other day in which we tried to explain the GFDL to them; it makes them quite nervous.

Matt: Do you believe that (at least for non-profit news sources), releasing material into the public domain makes it simpler for them to manage/handle?

Brian: or do they not understand PD?

SG: The trouble for traditional media is, they don't own the rights to very much material. They operate inside a web of very complex agreements with multiple entities. We used to joke at the CBC that the only thing we owned was nature documentaries. And even those didn't entirely belong

to us. So they are very constrained.

Brian: For wikinews all they have to do is credit us with the story to comply with the license

SG: You mean, they can use your material if they credit you, yes?

Brian: Yes, a link to us would be nice too

Matt: Yeah, as long as they state its CC-BY-2.5 and give our name, they can use it. Can users who have edited Wikinews be respected around real journalists? Will they be turned down because they have written for an online website like Wikinews, which is not particularly fond of the mainstream media, and not traditional media?

SG: First, let me say that I don't think Wikinews and the traditional/mainstream media should consider themselves at all in opposition to each other. I think they can peacefully coexist. There are some things the mainstream media are very good at, and they are also (sometimes) happy to admit their faults. And yes, I think Wikinews writers can be respected by real journalists, because the work speaks for itself. The one major challenge to that would be the collaborative authorship issue. Because as in academia, authorship is significant for professional journalists, and so I think the idea that something was collaboratively authored is hard for traditional journalists to understand.

Matt: Although you have an account on the english wikinews (User:SueGardner), you have never edited. One would assume that as a journalist you would use this project. Is there any main reason you don't edit here or do you just not have time?

SG: I am just too busy. I think

there are lots of people who can do as good or better a job than I could, of editing Wikinews. But I think I am the only person who is paid to be thinking about the organization as a whole all day every day - so that's what I do.

Matt: If you could interview anyone for Wikinews who would you like to interview?

SG: Did you interview Doris Lessing?

Brian: Not yet, although we reported on her though (see Doris Lessing wins Nobel Prize for Literature)

SG: Okay. I read your Doris Lessing story, and I was thinking maybe someone had interviewed her later. For me personally, I would love to interview Doris Lessing.

Thunderhead: Do you use Wikinews as a primary source for news, or do you use other mainstream sources, and then look to Wikinews?

SG: I use a lot of different sources. I think it would be difficult to rely solely—or even primarily—on Wikinews, because I don't think it is yet particularly comprehensive; I don't know if it ever will be. I'd be interested to know what you think of that.

Brian: Wikinews may become comprehensive but it will be a difficult process in my opinion.

Matt: Do you think the reason for this is wikigroaning, such as more topics are written in focused areas rather than things of interest to the most people?

SG: I agree. And I'm not sure whether or not it should be a goal of the organization. Can I talk for just a second about one of the ways I think news is changing?

Brian: It is a "faster" project than Wikipedia.

SG: I have never heard of wikigroaning, what an interesting word. But it makes sense to me that Wikinews would reflect the interests of the people who edit it, which I imagine is one of the reasons it (and the other WMF projects) are successful. (Again, the relevance-to-audience issue.) But regarding news... I think it used to be the case that there was X amount of shelf space for news—like, 40 pages of newsprint daily, or 22 minutes of television time. So whether it was a busy news day or a slow news day, that was the amount of news that got created. And professional journalism is still pretty much constructed that way. So if a media outlet has a reporter in Johannesburg, they get a lot of news out of South Africa, whether or not anything particularly interesting is happening there. You have x shelf space and x resources. What I think changes— theoretically—with Wikinews, is that you are freed of both those constraints. You have limitless shelf space and very flexible resources. Which means, in theory, that you can cover lots of stories when there are lots of stories to cover, and do very little, when there isn't much going on. So I think this is very interesting. And I think it has implications for the future of news. People should consume news when there's something interesting to read about. And I think Wikinews has enormous potential on big stories. I am very interested to see how that plays out.

Matt: You may be interested in What Wikinews is not, the first point, Wikinews is not Paper

SG: Yes, precisely. And when there is a big story, lots of people come here to help, I assume.

Brian: We got great cooperation on some big stories like the UK attacks, did big media notice? (Major explosions at UK oil depot, Coordinated terrorist attack hits London)

SG: Yes, exactly (re London bombings). I am not sure how noticed that was. For the mainstream media, that was when they woke up to the power of collaborative media themselves. It was certainly the wakeup call for the BBC, who made a lot of changes to their newsgathering process based on the events of that day. I think the most interesting question for Wikinews is what uniquely you can do, that no-one else can. And I think your greatest strength may lie in coverage of really large breaking news events—the [2004] tsunami, the London bombings, Virginia Tech.

Matt: A lot of attention has been given to improving Wikipedia. Do you think more attention is needed for the other projects? If so, which ones do you think need more attention?

SG: I think that in a way, that question looks at WMF through the wrong end of the telescope. I don't think the best question is 'do the other projects need more attention'—I think the best question is 'what do our readers need from us, and how can we best give it to them.' I think Wikiquotes, for example, will always be smaller than Wikipedia in terms of readership, and that's fine. Wikinews, I think, needs to chart a path that may be quite different from Wikipedia. And Commons is an entirely different beast as well. So they are all quite different, with different needs.

Thunderhead: What advice can you give to aspiring journalists,

based on your experiences at the CBC?

SG: Hm. I think it's an incredibly exciting time to be a journalist. The best advice I could give people is to find excellent, curious, brilliant journalists to learn from. They might be here, or in a conventional newsroom; it doesn't matter. Journalism is a craft and the best way to learn it is to surround yourself with really good teachers. I was lucky at the CBC

Brian: "Above all, the central question about the Wikinews effort is its credibility. "Making a newspaper is hard... Someone who wants to do it but doesn't really know how hasn't solved the problem by gathering a lot of other people who don't know, either." This is a quote from a former editor of Encyclopædia Britannica, have we proven him wrong?

SG: I think most definitely, you have proven him wrong. Journalism is not a profession: it is not like being a surgeon or a lawyer. There was an uneasy attempt to professionalize it with the advent of j-schools etc., post-Watergate. But at its heart, it's just a craft. And that means that it can be practiced by anyone who is sensible and intelligent and thoughtful and curious, who bothers to learn the rules and do it carefully. I go back to the morning of Virginia Tech—the morning I decided I wanted to work here. The conversation on the talk page that day was extremely thoughtful. I remember thinking to myself that if my own newsroom had been having a conversation that intelligent (I was offsite that day), I would have been delighted. So yes, IMO you absolutely have proved Robert McHenry wrong. And you will continue to.

Matt: If you were the interviewer here, what else would you have

asked yourself?

SG: Nothing, really. You guys covered a lot of ground, and it was extremely interesting & fun for me. There is one last thing I would like to mention though. I was talking a little with Ilya about a proposal he's been working on for the Knight Foundation, and we started having what I thought was a quite interesting conversation about the future of Wikinews. This is something that really interests me, obviously.

were to create something (a conference, or conversation); I'd be interested in doing that with you. I am really interested in this project.

Matt: Thank you for your time.

**Today in History**

1147 – Reconquista: Forces under King Afonso I of Portugal captured Lisbon from the Moors after a four-month siege in what would be their only success during the Second Crusade.

1616 – The Dutch sailing ship Eendracht reached Shark Bay on the western coastline of Australia, as documented on the Hartog Plate etched by explorer Dirk Hartog.

1875 – The first performance of the Piano Concerto No. 1 by Tchaikovsky is given in Boston, Massachusetts with Hans von Bülow as soloist.

1922 – The Third Dáil adopted the Constitution of the Irish Free State, based on the requirements of the Anglo-Irish Treaty establishing the first independent Irish state to be recognised by the British.

1971 – The UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 2758, replacing the Republic of China with the People's Republic of China as China's representative at the

United Nations.

October 25 is Republic Day in Kazakhstan (1990); Retrocession Day in Taiwan; Armed Forces Day in Romania.

**Quote of the Day**

For out of olde felde, as men seith,  
Cometh al this new corn fro yeer to yere;  
And out of olde bokes, in good feith,  
Cometh al this newe science that men lere.

~ Geoffrey Chaucer ~

**Word of the Day**

quorum; n

1. The minimum number of members required for a group to officially conduct business and to cast binding votes.

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