



Top Stories

Results of 2005 German federal election

According to the preliminary result, the alliance consisting of chancellor Gerhard Schröder's Socialdemocrats and the Greens has lost its majority but the future government is still uncertain.

Iran determined to continue with nuclear program

The President of Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, announced Saturday the resolve of his country to proceed with the development of nuclear energy. He stated that Iran would not pursue nuclear weapons.

Featured story

NASA plans for future moon missions

NASA proposed two lunar missions a year, starting in 2018, with a crew of four remaining on the Moon for as long as a week.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Two British undercover soldiers are arrested by Iraqi police in Basra following a car chase. They are reported to have fired on the police.
- At least 10 people have died following a series of explosions at a Shia festival marking the birth of the Imam Mehdi in Karbala.
- Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: An Israeli judicial inquiry rules out prosecuting police officers who shot dead 13 Israeli Arabs during a violent demonstration in 2000.
- At least 154 of the dead in New Orleans were patients in hospitals and nursing homes. They represent more than 25 percent of the bodies recovered to date.
- One person is injured following an apparent letter bomb attack in the British Embassy in the Croatian capital Zagreb.
- One person dies following an apparent grenade explosion at the Kuwait information office in the Lebanese capital Beirut.
- Dennis Kozlowski a former CEO of Tyco International was sentenced for up to 25 years in prison for looting the company.

Idaho meteorologist promotes Hurricane Katrina conspiracy theory

Scott Stevens, weatherman at KPVI-TV in Pocatello, Idaho claims that someone used Russian KGB technology to create Hurricane Katrina. According to a brief article published September 8, 2005 on

Flashnews.com, Stevens blames the Japanese Yakuza mafia, who he says were attempting to manipulate futures markets via the natural disaster.

Stevens' website, WeatherWars.info, includes documentation he has collected in an attempt to bolster his theories that energy weapons and airplane contrails are part of secret weather manipulating activities.

Artists erect giant bunny on Italian mountainside

Gelatin, a group of artists from Vienna, has erected a pink bunny measuring 200 feet in length (about 60 metres) on the the side of a northern Italian mountain.



Aerial view of giant pink bunny on Italian hillside

The artwork, titled "Hase" (which translates simply as "Rabbit"), is located at a height of 1600m on the mountain Colletto Fava, close to Bar La Baita, above the Village of Artesina, Piemonte, Italy.

The soft rabbit is constructed out of pink wool, and is expected to remain on the mountain until 2025. Though it seems like a giant children's toy at first glance, a closer look or an in-person exploration quickly leads to the

Wikipedia Current Events

- North Korea agrees to abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs and return "at an early date" to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

realization that the rabbit's side is split open, and it's entrails pulled out.

The group designed it, but claims it was "knitted by dozens of grannies out of pink wool." The group's website, however, provides the actual credits for all the people involved.

Group member Wolfgang Gantner said: "It's supposed to make you feel small, like Gulliver. You walk around it and you can't help but smile."

The press release provided by the group explains rabbits as "the things one finds [while] wandering in a landscape, familiar things and utterly unknown." Though they compare the initial reaction they hope people to have to that of those encountering the giant Gulliver in Gulliver's Travels, looking around it in awe, the group does make it clear that they hope for people to climb onto the rabbit to explore and relax on it.

NASA plans for future moon missions

NASA has announced plans for sending humans back to the Moon, as a first step to Mars.



Two new launch vehicles, using Shuttle rocket technologies.

A 2018 lunar mission is proposed, where a crew of four would remain on the Moon for as long as a week. A minimum of two lunar missions a year is planned, with astronauts remaining as long as six months.

Some of the technology had previously been proposed for replacement of the Space Shuttle. Astronauts will be launched in a capsule, similar in concept to that used for the Project Apollo but three times larger. The top part of an Exploration Transportation System (ETS), the Crew Exploration Vehicle (CEV) will be a capsule attached to a service module which contains supplies, power, and propulsion units. The CEV is designed for use in Earth orbit.

On lunar missions, crew or cargo versions of a Lunar Surface Access Module (LSAM) would be used with a CEV. The LSAM will have design concepts related to the Apollo Lunar Module, with a four-legged landing unit carrying an ascent stage.

An Earth Departure Stage (EDS), a powerful propulsion unit, will be used to move CEV and LSAM units out of Earth orbit, such as on lunar missions.

Heavy Launcher unmanned cargo rockets will be used for heavy loads of equipment.

The launch rockets, Shuttle Derived Launch Vehicles, will use engines developed for the Shuttle program.

CEV will be launched atop a Crew Launch Vehicle (CLV), a single solid fuel booster with a second stage using a shuttle main engine. The CLV can carry a payload of 25 metric tons into low Earth orbit. The heavy-lift system uses a pair of longer solid rocket boosters and five shuttle main engines to put up to 125 metric tons in orbit -- about one and a half times the weight of a shuttle orbiter.

For a lunar mission, the LSAM and EDS would be placed in orbit by a cargo launcher, then a CEV would dock with the assembly before leaving Earth orbit.



Apollo landing sites.

The goal is to begin production of the new spacecraft by 2011. Robotic missions will be sent, probably the first one in 2008. Past experience with lunar dust is being used in designing equipment and spacesuits which may encounter it.

Surface mobility with open and pressurized rovers for use in such missions is also being developed. The CEV can be reused up to ten times.

Crew capsule, upon return to Earth, will set down on dry land. It can also land on water.

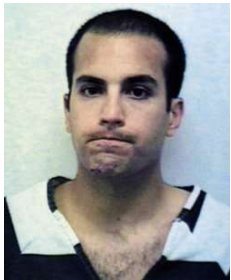
The CEV and lunar lander ascent stage use methane as fuel, as methane may be available on Mars.

Eventually the designs could be expanded to support six astronauts for a trip to Mars.

The plans are a means to implement President Bush's "Vision for Space Exploration" program. Goals include: Implement a sustained and affordable human and robotic program to explore the solar system and beyond; Extend human presence across the solar system, starting with a

human return to the Moon by the year 2020, in preparation for human exploration of Mars and other destinations; Develop the innovative technologies, knowledge, and infrastructures both to explore and to support decisions about the destinations for human exploration; and Promote international and commercial participation in exploration to further U.S. scientific, security, and economic interests.

John "Jebby" Bush, son of Florida Governor Bush, arrested for public intoxication



John Ellis "Jebby" Bush in a September 2005 Austin, Texas booking/mug shot.

Early Friday morning, John "Jebby" Ellis Bush, the 21 year old son of Florida Governor Jeb Bush, was arrested in Austin, Texas for public intoxication and resisting arrest. Roger Wade, Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission spokesman, said Bush was apprehended at 2:30AM near the corner of Trinity and Sixth Street in the city's downtown entertainment and bar district.

Jeb and Columba Bush's youngest son allegedly wobbled up to TABC and Austin police on duty in the city's downtown entertainment district and began badgering police about an earlier arrest of people he knew. TABC agent Capt. David Ferrero said Bush appeared to be

drunk and "was observed to be a danger to himself and others."

According to the arrest affidavit, "Subject further resisted by pushing back with his body as he was restrained at the [Austin Police Department] transport van." During the scuffle, Bush suffered a cut on his chin and was transported to Brackenridge Hospital where he was treated and released. Bail was set at \$2,500, but Bush was released on his own recognizance later about 10:30AM. If he fails to appear for court, he will forfeit the bond. Austin law classifies Public Intoxication as a Class C misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of up to \$500, while Resisting Arrest is a Class A misdemeanor, and is punishable by up to a year in jail.

Authorities were unaware of Bush's identity until after his arrest and booking when they observed his Florida Driver License. Governor Bush appearing with his wife at a Miami museum reception bristled at reporters' questions Friday evening when the issue was mentioned saying, "I'm not going to discuss it on the public square with 30 cameras."

Several members of the Bush family have recieved considerable press converage for perceived or abusive use of alcohol and other substances, including George W. Bush's DUI, Jenna and Barbara Bush's underage drinking, and Jebby's sister Noelle arrest for forging a Xanax prescription.

DeLay declares 'victory' in war on U.S. budget fat

Republican House Majority Leader Rep. Tom DeLay has declared an "ongoing victory" in spending cuts. He stated that the federal government was running at peak

efficiency and that there was nothing left to cut from the U.S. federal budget. DeLay supports additional deficit spending for Hurricane Katrina relief efforts, on top of the this year's existing \$331 billion federal budget deficit.

DeLay's position has drawn criticism from some fiscal conservatives, including a few fellow republican representatives. Rep. Jeff Flake (R-Arizona) commented "I wonder if we've been serving in the same Congress." The majority of congressional republicans still support DeLay's view, and feel that their fiscal policies have been more sound than the democrats were in the past.

American Conservative Union Chairman David A. Keene claimed that federal spending was "spiraling out of control" before Katrina, and suggested fiscal conservatives were "losing faith" in the Republican congressional leadership. Mr. Keenes stated that "Excluding military and homeland security, American taxpayers have witnessed the largest spending increase under any preceding president and Congress since the Great Depression." Specifically, aside from millitary and security spending, federal spending increased by \$303 billion per year from 2001 and 2005, and the acknowledged federal debt increased more than \$2 trillion since fiscal year 2000. The estimates used by the American Conservative Union predict that the 2003 Medicare prescription drug bill will increase the government's unfunded obligations by \$16 trillion.

Tom Schatz, president of Citizens Against Government Waste (CAGW) claimed "there are plenty of places" to make budget cuts,

especially an estimated \$20 billion to \$25 billion in pet projects that make their way into must-pass spending bills each year. His group expects to release a list of \$2 trillion in suggested spending cuts over the next five years. In particular, CAGW and the Heritage Foundation believe that some 6,000 projects in the recently passed highway bill are not essential and should be cut. Such projects include the planting of flowers along the Ronald Reagan freeway in California and the controversial \$230 million Ketchikan bridge project, which is estimated to cost federal taxpayers at least \$28 per vehicle trip, without a toll. Mr. DeLay previously described these projects as "important infrastructure" and stated that eliminating them might harm the economy.

The debate was sparked by controversy over spending on relief and reconstruction in the wake Hurricane Katrina; which some fiscal conservatives have humorously labeled "Bush's New Orleans Deal." Liberal criticism of the reconstruction effort has focused on the awarding of reconstruction contracts to perceived Washington insiders.

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Today in History

451: Flavius Aëtius, with the help of Roman foederati, defeated Attila in the Battle of Chalons, and halted the invasion of Gaul by the Huns and their allies.

1378: Papal Schism: Unhappy with Pope Urban VI, a group of cardinals elected a rival papacy in Antipope Clement VII, throwing the Roman Catholic Church into a turmoil.

1854: The Crimean War began with a Franco-British victory over Russian forces in the Battle of Alma (pictured).

1946: The first Cannes Film Festival opened. Eleven films shared the Palme d'Or that year.

1973: Billie Jean King defeated Bobby Riggs in straight sets in an internationally televised tennis match dubbed the "Battle of the Sexes".

Quote of the Day

"May I remind you that it does NOT say R.S.V.P. on the Statue of Liberty!" (Cher Horowitz, "Clueless")

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