

NEWS

National and world news in brief

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Trains collide in South Africa

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa: Ten people remain hospitalized after a freakish head-on train collision in which there were no fatalities.

The famous South African Blue Train collided with the Trans Karoo Express on Wednesday night. Officials on the scene said that the collision was most likely caused by a signaling failure after the Express was diverted onto the same track that the Blue had been idling on.

The Blue Train, a world-renowned luxury train, was heading south to Cape Town while the Trans Karoo Express was making a normal northerly run when the collision occurred.

Iran renews threats to destroy Israel

UNITED NATIONS: Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad recently took up the calls of his predecessors for the destruction of the State of Israel, in violation of the United Nations charter. "Israel must be wiped out from the map of the world," said Ahmadinejad. "And God willing, with the force of God behind it, we shall soon experience a world without the United States and Zionism."

Nations across Europe and the Americas were quick to condemn the new calls for violence.

"It is a completely unacceptable statement, of course," said European Commission President Manuel Barroso. "We should respect borders and respect the integrity of Israel, and we want Israel to live in peace with its neighbors."

French Foreign Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy issued a similar statement calling into question Iran's rights to make such a statement.

"If these comments are correct, they are unacceptable. I greatly condemn them and have asked for the Iranian ambassador in Paris to be summoned to the Foreign Ministry to demand explanations," he said.

"For France, the right for Israel to exist should not be contested. This state was created by a decision of the U.N. General Assembly. International law applies to all. The question of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict cannot be used as a pretext to put into question the fundamental right for Israel to exist."

U.S. representatives say that the latest statements only underscore the threat of Iran developing nuclear weapons.

A special meeting of the U.N. Security Council may be convened within the next week to debate several issues brought about by the latest statements from Iran.

Oil Giant Exxon posts record-setting profits

NEW YORK: The Exxon Mobile Corporation has posted the biggest quarterly profit in U.S. corporate history; some see this as proof of price gouging.

When gasoline prices sky-rocketed earlier this year as the summer travel season came to an end and enormous hurricanes battered the Gulf Coast, Big Oil was reaping windfall profits as people were willing to pay almost any price for gas.

What makes it even more amazing is that the \$10 billion profit numbers were actually below Exxon's quarterly forecast.

"They were a bit disappointing, but this is a temporary phenomenon," said Paul Kuklinski, an analyst with Boston Energy Research & Soleil Securities. "This is largely attributable to hurricane effects."

The windfall of profits for the huge American oil company has led some lawmakers to push for a new tax that would make it more difficult for companies to take advantage of natural disasters to inflate their corporate coffers.

Miers Nomination at an end

WASHINGTON: The battle over the confirmation of Harriet Miers as the next member of the U.S. Supreme Court came to an end Thursday when she withdrew her nomination.

In a letter to President Bush, Miers asked the President to withdraw her nomination, writing "I am concerned that the confirmation process presents a burden for the White House and its staff and it is not in the best interest of the country."

Her nomination, which came under heavy fire from Republicans and Democrats alike, lasted only a few weeks before pressure from various groups convinced her to back out.

Many conservatives now hope that Bush's next nominee will be more easily defined as a strict conservative. "The president did the right thing in withdrawing her and saving her from further embarrassment," said Phyllis Schlafly, the founder of conservative activist group The Eagle Forum. "I now hope he'll deliver on his campaign commitment to pick a judge in the mold of [Justices] Thomas and Scalia."

Democrats blamed the failure on right-wing Republicans. "Apparently, Ms. Miers did not satisfy those who want to pack the Supreme Court with rigid ideologues," said Senator Harry Reid, a Democrat from Nevada.



Source: CNN.com, Yahoo! News

If you are interested in writing for The Behrend Beacon, you should write for us or at least submit your articles. You can submit articles and ideas to Jennifer Haight or Pat Webster at newseditor@psu.edu

Matchbox Players combine humor and horror

By Ashley Bressler
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As All Hallows Eve approaches, Behrend's Matchbox Players prepare to scare you silly with a weekend full of Halloween-inspired humor. The members of Matchbox Players have organized three days of events that are themed

for the festive holiday of Halloween. The first of the events will take place on Friday, Oct. 28 at 7:00 p.m. in the Studio Theatre and has been titled a "Variety Show." This will not be the typical improv show but instead will consist of two shows. The first one is a standard improv event and the second will be a practiced production of horrific humor. The night will be filled with random humor acts, chilling

musical performances, dramatic readings taken from the works of Edgar Allen Poe, Orson Wells and many other spooky surprises. Costumes will not be required but are greatly encouraged, as they will help set the mood of the evening. "People are welcome to wear costumes to any of the Improv shows, but especially this one. I wear a costume to every event," said Jerry Pohl, who heads the Matchbox Players events. If students are interested in taking part in the Halloween Variety show, they are welcomed by the Matchbox Players to attend, laugh, and enjoy.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Members of Matchbox Players perform improv.

For Saturday, Oct. 29, the Matchbox Players have organized an outing to the "House of Jack-O-Lanterns," located on Nagel Road. The house features a massive, glowing display of jack-o-lanterns, which can be a fun event to take part in on a Saturday evening. All who wish to attend can still sign up at the RUB desk.

Transportation will be provided for the attending crowd. Attendees and Matchbox Players members plan to meet at 7:00 p.m. in room 117 of the Reed Union Building. The Student Activity Fee has also granted the funding so the Matchbox Players can provide the comforts of free pumpkin cookies and apple cider to all that attend.

The main event for the weekend is the second annual Halloween Improv show which will take place in the McGarvey Commons at approximately 7:00 p.m. There will be a costume contest, and the best costumes will be chosen to appear on stage so the whole crowd can vote for the winner. This event brought in a great crowd last year and is expected to be a hit as well this year. The Halloween show is typically one of the best Improv events of the year! Jerry Pohl said, "Halloween Improv is endorsed by your favorite celebrity!" This will be the event where all the best skits and most creative puns are exhibited by the Matchbox Players and audience members. This weekend, it's all about Halloween humor.

Top 5 Percent Coast to Coast!



Senior business students at 469 colleges and universities across America recently matched wits with the ETS Major Field Test in Business, armed only with their #2 pencils and what they learned in college.

The results? The students from the Sam and Irene Black School of Business shown here around Pat Black scored **in the top 5 percent!** And the **average score** for the 124 seniors from the school ranked **in the top 10 percent!**

Our students excelled because they worked hard and studied with a world-class faculty. They also have the support of people like Pat Black, whose family's gift propelled the school to national recognition in *Princeton Review* and *U.S. News & World Report*. Congratulations to all these new graduates. And thanks, Pat.

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Classifieds

Civilizations should be measured by "the degree of diversity attained and the degree of unity retained."

— W.H. Auden, English poet (1907-1973)

Janet Neff Sample Center
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