



# NEWS BRIEFS

## From Around The World

Jaqueline H. Arroyo

Cofounder and President of ACA

Brief synopses of key events that made news headlines

### **RUSSIA**

#### **African Students Attacked on Street**

In December 2005, an African student was stabbed to death and another was seriously wounded in separate attacks on the same street in St. Petersburg, said prosecutors and a student activist.

The students were attacked by a group of youths as they walked from a subway station to their university dormitory on Saturday night. In the first incident, the attackers slashed a student, but he managed to escape, said Aliu Dumkara, head of African Unity, a group that advocates for African students in the northern Russian city.

In the second incident, a Cameroonian student was stabbed about two hours after the first attack. The student died on the spot from his wounds said Dumkara. The victim's friend, a Namibian student, managed to get away uninjured.

### **CUBA**

#### **Michael Parmly New Head of the U.S. Interests Section**

In September 2005, Michael Parmly replaced James Cason as Head of the U.S. Interests Section in Havana. As one of his first official acts, Parmly launched an electronic screen broadcasting message from the six-floor diplomatic building.

The electronic screen broadcasted news and information in crimson letters that measured more than three feet high. According to an Interests Section spokesman, "we are trying to provide the Cuban people uncensored information. The intention is to break the news embargo Cubans are subjected to."

---

### **AFRICA**

#### **Millions Could Starve As Drought Worsens**

Millions of people in the Horn of Africa are on the brink of starvation because of severe drought conditions. Some human deaths have already been reported in Kenya.

An estimated 11 million people in Somalia, Kenya, Djibouti and Ethiopia need food. Water, new livestock and seeds are also needed across the region, according to the

The dry season has just begun and the rain forecasts for March and April are not expected to be good. Normally, herdsman in the region move from place to place to get water and food for their livestock. However, the recent drought has covered too large a swath of territory for them to get what they need.

## Astronomy

### Discovery of New Planets

The nine-planet solar system that circles sedately in tidy paths around the sun isn't what it used to be. Astronomers recently discovered and announced publicly in the last six months that a flock of at least eight planet-like objects are circling in far-out and sometimes wildly eccentric orbits. These objects include four new "ice dwarfs" plus two more probable moons around Pluto.

---

## Health

### Deadly Bird Flu

The deadly H5N1 bird flu strain that killed at least 88 people around the world has been detected in Italy and Greece, according to health officials. The virus was found in swans in three Italian regions: Puglia, Sicily and Calabria, said Health Minister Francesco Storace. He did not say exactly how many birds had been infected by the virus, but commented that the "most part" of 17 swans infected by H5N1 were found dead. "It's certain that the virus has reached Italy," the Associated Press reported Storace as saying after he briefed the Cabinet on the situation.

No human cases of infection have been reported in Italy.

According to television reports, Greek authorities have revealed that the deadly strain of bird flu has been found in northern Greece. Additional, health officials in Azerbaijan say H5N1 was found in dead birds from the country's Caspian sea coast. State-run Lider TV cited the results from a London laboratory that had tested the dead birds and the Ministry of Health is expected to make a public announcement.

Meanwhile, Nigerian authorities say they are mounting a major effort to battle the virus, which has been detected in two more states, and has so far killed more than 100,000 birds. This is the first time the strain has been found in Africa, although no human infections have yet been reported in Nigeria.

Bird flu began ravaging poultry stocks across Asia in 2003, forcing the slaughter of 140 million birds. It has since spread to Europe and the Middle East. So far the World Health Organization has confirmed 165 human cases of the disease in a number of nations, including Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Iraq, Thailand, Turkey and Vietnam. Eighty-eight of those affected have proven fatal, a fatality rate of 53 percent. But public health experts worry that if the virus mutates, it could spread rapidly from person to person. If that were to happen, a global pandemic might ensue, killing millions of people.

Article from CNN.com

# In Remembrance

of notable people who left us in 2005 and recently

---

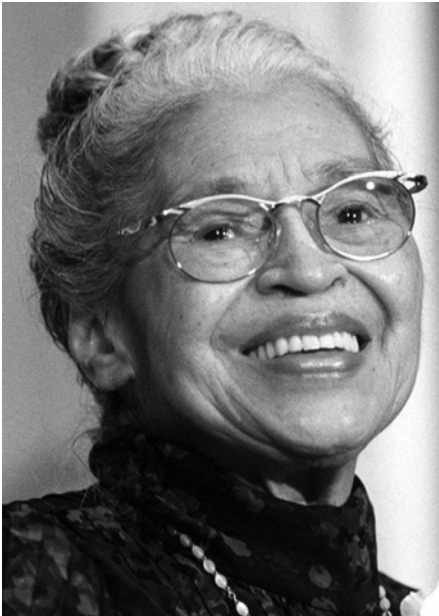


**Coretta Scott King**  
**First Lady of Civil Rights**  
**April 27, 1927**

-

**January 31, 2006**

Coretta Scott King was a supportive lieutenant to her husband, the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., during the most tumultuous days of the civil rights movement in the United States. She turned a life shattered by her husband's assassination into one devoted to enshrining his legacy of human rights and equality. The couple married in 1953. After his assassination on April 4, 1968, she kept his dream alive while raising their four children. She was 78.



**Rosa Parks**  
**Mother of the Modern-Day**  
**Civil Right Movement**  
**February 4, 1913**

-

**October 24, 2005**

Rosa Parks, a seamstress whose simple act of defiance on a segregated bus in Montgomery, Alabama in 1955 stirred the nonviolent protests of the modern civil rights movement. Her refusal to give up her seat to a white-male passenger catapulted an unknown minister named Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. into international prominence. She died of natural causes at her home in Detroit, Michigan. She was 92.



**Simon Wiesenthal**  
**'Conscience' of the Holocaust**  
**December 31, 1908**

-

**September 20, 2005**

Simon Wiesenthal, was an Austrian-Jewish architectural engineer who survived a dozen concentration camps. He spent his life hunting and bringing Nazi war criminals to justice and searing the Holocaust into the conscience of the world. He helped find one-time SS leader Adolf Eichmann and the policeman who arrested Anne Frank. He died in his sleep at his home in Vienna, according to Rabbi Marvin Hier, the dean and founder of the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles. He was 96.



**John Paul II**  
**Pope**  
**May 18, 1920**

-

**April 2, 2005**

John Paul II was the first polish and non-Italian pope. After his surprise election in 1978, he led the Roman Catholic Church for 26 years and helped topple communism in Europe. He was the most-traveled pope. He traveled the world, inspired a revolt against communism in his native Poland and across the Soviet bloc and preached against consumerism, contraception and abortion. He was 84.



**Ibrahim Ferrer**  
**Musician**  
**February 20, 1927**  
-  
**August 6, 2005**

Ibrahim Ferrer was a Cuban musician who was a leading voice with the hugely popular Buena Vista Social Club of vintage Cuban performers. He was 78.

**Shirley Chisholm**  
**Politician, Educator and**  
**Author**  
**November 30, 1924**  
-  
**January 1, 2005**

Shirley Chisholm was an advocate for minority rights and became the first black woman elected to Congress, specifically the United States House of Representative in 1969. She was the first black and first woman to seek a major political party's nomination for the U.S. presidency. Additionally, she was a riveting speaker who often criticized Congress as being too clubby and unresponsive and an outspoken champion of women and minorities during her seven terms Congress. Also, she was a staunch critic of the Vietnam War. She was 80.

