

## Cuba Publishes New Photos Of Castro

HAVANA (AP) — Cuba has published the first photos of Fidel Castro in more than five months, showing the 88-year-old former leader engaged in what appears to be a lively conversation with a university student.

Nearly two dozen images were published virtually simultaneously on the websites of Cuba's main state media outlets around midnight Monday. In them, Castro is seated and discussing current events with the head of the main Cuban student union. A first-person account by student leader Randy Perdomo Garcia says the meeting took place on Jan. 23.

The photos are the first images of the revolutionary leader since a set of photos came out in August showing him talking with Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro.

Perdomo said that he and Castro met for more than three hours in the former leader's house after an event celebrating the 70th anniversary of Castro starting his studies at the University of Havana.

The student leader said Castro said that he is keeping abreast of the news and performing daily exercises, and he engaged Perdomo in a wide-ranging discussion of topics including international politics, agriculture, astronomy and even Namibia's donation of animals to Cuba's National Zoo.

## Britain Moves Toward DNA Designing

LONDON (AP) — Britain moved Tuesday toward allowing scientists to create humans from the DNA of three people.

The technology aims to liberate future generations from inherited diseases, but critics say it crosses a fundamental scientific boundary and could lead to "designer babies."

The U.K.'s House of Commons voted 382-178 in favor of legislation to license these experiments. If approved in the House of Lords, Britain would become the world's first nation to allow genetic modifications in human embryos.

"This is a bold step to take, but it is a considered and informed step," Health Minister Jane Ellison told the Commons.

The technology is completely different from that used to create genetically modified foods, where scientists typically select individual genes to be transferred from one species into another. But critics say it crosses a red line, since changes made to embryos will be passed on to future generations, with the potential for unforeseen consequences.

## Vaccine Debate Snarls WH Hopefuls

WASHINGTON (AP) — For a pair of first-time presidential hopefuls, the sudden injection of the childhood vaccine debate into the 2016 campaign is a lesson in how unexpected issues can become stumbling blocks. Long-held positions can look different under the glare of the national spotlight.

New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie and Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul, both weighing bids for the GOP presidential nomination, struggled this week to articulate their views on the emotionally charged vaccination controversy. The matter has taken on new resonance amid a frightening measles outbreak that has sickened more than 100 people across the U.S. and in Mexico.

Paul pushed back on criticism of his initial assertion that he was aware of "many tragic cases of walking, talking, normal children who wound up with profound mental disorders after vaccines." He issued a statement Tuesday denying immunizations cause disorders, saying they were just "temporally related." He also posted a photo on Twitter of himself getting a booster for a vaccine.

Christie, in the midst of a three-day trip to the United Kingdom, took a different approach, canceling plans to speak to reporters Tuesday after his comments a day earlier caused a stir.

"Is there something you don't understand about 'No questions?'" Christie snapped at reporters Tuesday.

## Pope OKs Martyrdom For Romero

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Thirty-five years after he was gunned down by a right-wing death squad as he celebrated Mass, Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Romero moved a step closer to possible sainthood Tuesday when Pope Francis declared he was a martyr killed out of hatred for his Catholic faith.

The decree by the first Latin American pope ended decades of debate over whether Romero — a hero of the liberation theology movement — was slain for his politics or his preaching. It opens the way for Romero to be beatified as early as this year, though no date has been set.

A human rights campaigner, Romero had spoken out against repression by the army at the beginning of El Salvador's 1980-1992 civil war between the right-wing government and leftist rebels.

## Keystone Pipeline

# EPA Eyes Impact Review

BY DINA CAPIELLO  
 Associated Press

WASHINGTON — With the recent dip in oil prices, the Environmental Protection Agency wants the State Department to "revisit" how much of a toll the Keystone XL oil pipeline would have on global warming.

The EPA suggests that lower oil prices could make the pipeline more important in the development of the oil sands, and thus a chief culprit in the "significant greenhouse gas emissions" they would produce. A January 2014 environmental analysis by the State Department found that the oil sands — which it said would significantly increase greenhouse gas emissions over conventional crude oil — would be developed regardless of whether the pipeline was built. But that conclusion was based on higher oil prices. Oil, the EPA points out, was trading at \$50 per barrel last week.

"Given the recent variability in oil

prices, it is important to revisit these conclusions," wrote Cynthia Giles, assistant administrator of EPA's enforcement office.

The comments sent Monday to the State Department come as the House prepares to vote next week and send to President Barack Obama's desk a bill approving the Keystone XL oil pipeline. The Senate voted 62-36 last week to build the \$8 billion project that would connect with existing pipelines to carry more than 800,000 barrels of crude oil a day to refineries along the Texas Gulf coast. That vote was short of the two-thirds majority needed to override the veto the White House has promised.

Obama has said all along that he would wait for the review process to conclude, and that the pipeline could not exacerbate global warming.

The EPA's comments leave open the possibility that the State Department could do additional analysis, delaying the project's review again.

The American Petroleum Institute said

the EPA was "inventing new excuses" to delay the project, which was first proposed in 2008, when oil prices were lower than they are now.

"Suggesting that the drop in oil prices requires a re-evaluation of the environmental impact of the project is just another attempt to prolong the KXL review," said Finkel. "Keystone XL was put forward when oil was less than \$40 a barrel so price has little impact on the project."

But environmentalists, who have fought vigorously to kill the pipeline, applauded the EPA's assessment Tuesday.

"The EPA's assessment is spot-on. There should be no more doubt that President Obama must reject the proposed pipeline once and for all," said Danielle Droitsch, a director for the Natural Resources Defense Council who specializes in Canada's tar sands.

A State Department spokeswoman said it would take into account the views of all agencies in the review process.

# Republicans Challenge Obama On All Fronts

BY DAVID ESPO AND ALAN FRAM  
 Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Newly-empowered congressional Republicans challenged President Barack Obama at both ends of the Capitol on Tuesday, voting in the House to repeal the health care program he signed into law but faltering in an initial Senate attempt to roll back immigration policies he issued on his own.

There was a third challenge as well, as Republican leaders announced the House would give final approval next week on legislation clearing the way for construction of the Keystone XL Pipeline. That would trigger Obama's threatened veto, the first in a new era of divided government.

The skirmishes all seemed likely to end in eventual defeat for Republicans, but served as a potent reminder of their power after Obama challenged them bluntly last month with his State of the Union address and a no-balance budget on Monday calling for higher taxes and new spending. The GOP won control of the Senate in last fall's elections, and has its largest House majority in nearly 70 years.

Badly beaten in last fall's elections, Democrats were defiant.

"They're buying at the moon, something that is not going to work," said the party's leader in the House, Rep. Nancy Pelosi, referring to Republicans as the health care vote neared.

The vote was 239-186 to repeal the health care law known as Obamacare. Similar votes have been held more than 50 times in the four years, but the day gave newcomers to Congress their first opportunity to vote to uproot the health care law they campaigned against last fall.

"Today, I am making good on my commitment to support a full repeal of Obamacare," said Rep. Alex Mooney, a West Virginia Republican who took his seat in Congress last month.

The day's vote was marked by a second defiance. The bill included instructions to key committees to begin work on a replacement that the party promised in the 2010 political

campaign. Officials described that as a measure of preparation in case the Supreme Court overturns a key portion of the existing program in a ruling expected this June.

Only three Republicans opposed repeal of the program, Reps. Bob Dold of Illinois and first-termers John Katko of New York and Bruce Poliquin of Maine.

Across the Capitol, Democrats blocked debate on legislation to fund the Department of Homeland Security and simultaneously overturn presidential executive orders that have spared an estimated four million immigrants in the country illegally from the threat of deportation. The vote was 51-48, nine shy of the 60 needed to begin work on the measure.

Senate Democratic Leader Harry Reid said his rank and file would continue to block action on the measure until Republicans agree to strip out the immigration provisions.

Echoed by other Democrats, he said Republicans were "playing politics with national security," citing the execution-by-burning earlier in the day of a Jordanian pilot held hostage by Islamic terrorists in the Middle East as evidence of a threat.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky said that by issuing his immigration policy by executive order, Obama had committed a "power grab" that exceeded his authority as president.

"So I'm calling on Democrats to vote with us now to fund the Department of Homeland Security. I'm calling on Democrats to join us and stand up for core democratic principles like the rule of law and separation of powers," he said.

It was an offer they refused, unanimously. A total of 51 Republicans voted to advance the bill, while all 44 Democrats, two independents and two Republicans were opposed. The two GOP opponents included Sen. Dean Heller of Nevada, whose state is home to a large Hispanic population, and McConnell, whose vote will permit him to call for a revote in the future.

The Department of Homeland Security will lose a portion of its funding on Feb. 27 unless Congress has acted by then.

## Jordan Retaliates After Video Shows Pilot Being Burned

AMMAN, Jordan (AP) — Jordan executed two al-Qaida prisoners before dawn Wednesday, a government spokesman said, just hours after Islamic State militants released a video purportedly showing a captured Jordanian pilot being burned alive in a cage.

Jordan confirmed the pilot's death and vowed a swift and lethal response.

Government spokesman Mohammed al-Momani identified the two prisoners executed by hanging early Wednesday as Sajida al-Rishawi and Ziad al-Karbouly.

Over the past week, Jordan had offered to trade al-Rishawi, a failed suicide bomber, for the pilot, Lt. Muath al-Kaseasbeh, but froze any swap after saying it had received no proof that the pilot was still alive.

Al-Rishawi had been sentenced to death after her 2005 role in a triple hotel bombing in Amman that killed 60 people. Al-Karbouly was sent to death row in 2008 for plotting terror attacks on Jordanians in Iraq.

The killing of the pilot outraged Jordanians and drew worldwide condemnation, including from President Barack Obama and the U.N. Security Council.

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**KID SCOOP AMERICAN LEGENDS**

## ANNIE CHRISTMAS

*Paul Bunyon isn't the only giant in American legends. Old-timers along the Mississippi River tell of a giant of a woman — Annie Christmas. The stories say she worked on the river docks near the French Quarter in New Orleans and she was fearless — especially when it came to dealing with bullies who hung out on the docks.*



**FLOODED STEAMBOAT PASSENGERS WEATHER DRESS SINK MISSISSIPPI**

When you see blank line in the story below, a word is missing. Select one of the words in Annie's barrel for each blank until the story makes sense.

**Annie and the Red Dress**

Occasionally, Annie liked to get all dressed up. Once, she put on a red satin \_\_\_\_\_ and red feather plumes in her hair and took a trip on a \_\_\_\_\_ called the *Natchez Belle*.


The captain of that boat was as stubborn as he was mean. When the \_\_\_\_\_ turned bad, he decided to take a shortcut through a channel that cut across a bend in the \_\_\_\_\_ River.

Annie knew the river like the back of her hand and she knew that the cutoff was full of snags and sandbars that could \_\_\_\_\_ the big paddle wheeler.

But the stubborn captain wouldn't listen. When the boat hit a sandbar, Annie loaded passengers on her keelboat and fought the current back to the main river. Behind her the *Natchez Belle* was broken up and \_\_\_\_\_ by the muddy, swirling river water.

The \_\_\_\_\_ hugged Annie, thanking her for saving their lives. They say Annie's face turned as red as her dress.

**Help Annie find the two matching barrels.**



Standards Link: Visual discrimination.

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**VOCABULARY BUILDERS**

**Longshoreman** *n.* A dock worker who loads and unloads ships.  
**Keelboat** *n.* A large flat-bottomed river boat used to carry freight.


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**Annie's Strength**

For longshoremen along the Mississippi River, it was the highest compliment to be called "as strong as Annie Christmas." Legends say that Annie could carry a barrel of flour under each arm and another balanced on her head. Once she towed a keelboat from New Orleans to Baton Rouge and never got out of breath.

Use the map to calculate how many miles or kilometers she towed her keelboat.

Standards Link: History: Students understand various cultures drawing from folklore.



**Baton Rouge**      **New Orleans**

25      20      25      40

45      25      75      52

LOUISIANA      Mississippi River

■ = miles  
 ● = kilometers

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**Extra! Extra!**

**Spin a Tale**

Glue a newspaper photo onto a piece of paper. Then draw a picture of what might happen next. Pass the two pictures to a friend and have him/her draw a picture of what might happen after your picture.

Standards Link: Writing Applications: Students use pre-writing strategies to organize and focus narratives.

### Pearls of Wisdom

Because she worked on the docks, Annie wore men's clothing most of the time. But she always wore her pearls. She added one pearl every time she whipped a man in a fight. Add the numbers on each string of pearls below to learn more about the amazing Annie Christmas legend.

Length (in feet) of Annie's pearl necklace:

(6) (5) (8) (7) (4) = \_\_\_\_\_

Annie's weight (in pounds):

(75) (25) (25) (25) (25) (75) = \_\_\_\_\_

Annie's height (in inches):

(20) (15) (13) (12) (7) (3) = \_\_\_\_\_

Standards Link: Number Sense: Students compute sum to 250.

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### Double Double Word Search

Find the words in the puzzle, then in this week's Kid Scoop stories and activities.

ANNIE	A	G	T	I	S	S	A	N	T	S
CHRISTMAS	T	W	O	O	K	I	L	F	A	S
KEELBOAT	N	R	O	P	G	E	T	K	B	E
LEGENDS	I	D	R	E	S	S	D	W	L	L
RIVER	R	O	N	A	I	R	I	V	E	R
FEARLESS	T	D	M	R	A	N	N	A	E	A
DRESS	S	V	H	L	B	E	N	D	K	E
PEARLS	N	C	N	S	E	E	L	A	T	F
DOCKS										
TOWED										
STRING										
SINK										
TALE										
DRAW										
BEND										

Standards Link: Letter sequencing. Recognizing identical words. Skim and scan reading. Recall spelling patterns.

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### FROM THE KID SCOOP LESSON LIBRARY

#### Exaggerate the News

Exaggeration makes legends like Annie Christmas entertaining. Look through today's newspaper for a story that offers an idea for a legendary tale. Rewrite the story, greatly exaggerating the details.

Standards Link: Writing Applications: Students write narratives that provide a context to enable the reader to imagine the experience.

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### Write On!

#### Woman I Admire

Write about a woman you admire. Include reasons why you chose this woman.

Standards Link: Reading Comprehension: Read grade-level appropriate text.

**Kid Scoop Together!**

### Proof It!

Are you an eagle-eyed reader? Read the article below and circle the seven errors you find. Then rewrite the article correctly on the lines below the article.

**Folktales are Everywhere**

While people live in different places and speak different languages, they all love a reelily good story. really

Before there were books, people told stories to each other. Parents told the stories two their children. Those children told the stories to their childrens and so on, for hundreds off years. Each storiteller might change the story a bit, but for the most part the stories stayed the same.

These are called folktales. Do you no any of these folktales?

Paul Bunyan  
 Brer Rabbit  
 Cinderella  
 Jack and the Beanstalk

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Standards Link: Reading Comprehension: Read grade-level appropriate text.