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From today's featured article



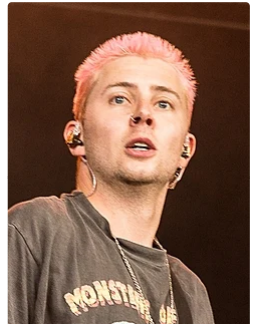
Methanol (left) looks and smells like ethanol (right).

More than 70 people died of methanol poisoning in the Russian city of Irkutsk in December 2016. Caused by the consumption of adulterated surrogate alcohol, it was the deadliest such incident in Russia's post-Soviet history. Russian consumption of surrogate alcohol rose rapidly in the early 2010s amid worsening economic conditions because they were commonly available and cost less than government-regulated vodka. In the Irkutsk incident, people drank hawthorn-scented bath oil which was typically made with and labeled as containing drinkable ethanol. At least one batch was made instead with a toxic amount of methanol (*pictured with ethanol*), causing injuries and deaths among residents of Novo-Lenino, a neighborhood in Irkutsk. An investigation found that the surrogate alcohol's producer sourced the methanol from an employee of a local windshield washer fluid production facility. The Russian government increased punishments for illegally producing and selling alcohol, and they made it more difficult to acquire surrogate alcohol. (**Full article...**)

Recently featured: Tropical Storm Gabrielle (2007) · Boot Monument · "My Little Love"

Did you know ...

- ... that **Sam Matlock** (*pictured*) formed Wargasm with a woman who photographed **Dead!**, his rock band?
- ... that a **SpongeBob-themed channel run by AI** quickly devolved into characters discussing depression, drug use, kleptomania, communism, and tax fraud?
- ... that some workers in Japan pay **agencies to tell their employers that they are resigning?**
- ... that **Jennifer Jones** has won a record-tying six Canadian women's curling championships?
- ... that botanists at Kew Gardens suggested in 2018 that there were only three **Madagascar banana trees** left?
- ... that the movies available to **Florida's first TV station** were so bad early on that the host called his show "The P.U. Club"?
- ... that **Kailash Puri** became Marks & Spencer's first advisor on Indian ready meals?
- ... that the 2021 U.S. Supreme Court ruling in NCAA v. Alston made student athlete **influencers** eligible for compensation?
- ... that **Jailson Mendes** had to gain weight for his first pornographic film?



Sam Matlock

In the news

- President of Romania **Klaus Iohannis** (*pictured*) resigns from office, and is succeeded by **Ilie Bolojan**.
- The Baltic states **complete synchronization** of their power grids with continental Europe's, disconnecting from Russia's.
- The ruling Vetëvendosje party, led by Albin Kurti, **wins the most seats** in the Assembly of Kosovo.
- The Patriotic Union, led by Brigitte Haas, **wins the most seats** in the Landtag of Liechtenstein.

Ongoing: [M23 campaign](#) · [Russian invasion of Ukraine \(timeline\)](#) · [Sudanese civil war \(timeline\)](#)

Recent deaths: [Sukri Bommagowda](#) · [Helen Hays](#) · [Margarita Forés](#) · [Maria Tipo](#) · [Rutherford Chang](#) · [Moses Lim](#)



Klaus Iohannis

On this day

February 17: Presidents' Day in the United States (2025)

- 1859 – [Cochinchina campaign](#): [French Navy](#) forces captured the **Citadel of Saigon**, defended by 1,000 Vietnamese soldiers of the [Nguyễn dynasty](#).
- 1904 – Italian composer [Giacomo Puccini](#)'s ***Madama Butterfly*** premiered at La Scala in Milan to poor reviews, forcing him to revise the opera.
- 1964 – **Gabonese military officers overthrew** President Léon M'ba, but French forces, honouring a 1960 treaty, forcibly reinstated him two days later.
- 1974 – A U.S. Army soldier stole a Bell UH-1 helicopter (*pictured*) and **landed it** on the [South Lawn](#) of the [White House](#) in Washington, D.C.
- 2011 – Arab Spring: Bahraini security forces **killed four protesters in a pre-dawn raid** at the Pearl Roundabout in Manama, while the "**Day of Rage**" took place in Libya with nationwide protests against [Muammar Gaddafi's](#) government.



Helicopter stolen in the 1974 White House incident

Joseph Favre (b. 1849) · **María de las Mercedes Barbudo** (d. 1849) · **Don Tallon** (b. 1916) · **Hung Liu** (b. 1948)

More anniversaries: [February 16](#) · **[February 17](#)** · [February 18](#)

From today's featured list

Winston Churchill was a prolific writer under the variant of his full name 'Winston S. Churchill', in addition to his careers as a soldier and politician. After being commissioned into the [4th Queen's Own Hussars](#) in 1895, Churchill gained permission to observe the [Cuban War of Independence](#), and sent war reports to *[The Daily Graphic](#)*. He continued his war journalism in [British India](#), at the [Siege of Malakand](#), then in the Sudan during the [Mahdist War](#) and in southern Africa during the [Second Boer War](#). Churchill's fictional output included one novel and a short story, but his main output comprised non-fiction. Churchill received the [Nobel Prize in Literature](#) in 1953 "for his mastery of historical and biographical description as well as for brilliant oratory in defending exalted human values". (**[Full list...](#)**)



Winston Churchill

Recently featured: [United States congressional delegations from Arizona](#) · [2012 NFL draft](#) · [Liechtenstein general elections](#)

Today's featured picture



Katharine Hepburn (1907–2003) was an American actress of film, stage, and television. Known for her headstrong independence and spirited personality, Hepburn's career as a Hollywood leading lady spanned more than 60 years. She won a record four Academy Awards, and in 1999 was named as Hollywood's top female legend by the American Film Institute. Hepburn began acting in college, and spent four years in the theatre before entering films in 1932. She became an instant star, but after a series of unsuccessful films was named "box office poison". *The Philadelphia Story* revived her career, and she subsequently formed a popular alliance with Spencer Tracy that lasted 25 years. In middle age, Hepburn found a niche playing spinsters, such as in *The African Queen*, and became a Shakespearean stage actress. She continued to work into old age, making her final screen appearance in 1994 at the age of 87. Hepburn is remembered as an important cultural figure, as she came to epitomize the "modern woman" in 20th-century America and helped change perceptions of women. This publicity photograph of Hepburn was taken around 1941.

Photograph credit: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios, restored by Adam Cuerden

Recently featured: Lesser violetear • Ernest Shackleton • Pomegranate

Other areas of Wikipedia

- **Community portal** – The central hub for editors, with resources, links, tasks, and announcements.
- **Village pump** – Forum for discussions about Wikipedia itself, including policies and technical issues.
- **Site news** – Sources of news about Wikipedia and the broader Wikimedia movement.
- **Teahouse** – Ask basic questions about using or editing Wikipedia.
- **Help desk** – Ask questions about using or editing Wikipedia.
- **Reference desk** – Ask research questions about encyclopedic topics.
- **Content portals** – A unique way to navigate the encyclopedia.

Wikipedia's sister projects

Wikipedia is written by volunteer editors and hosted by the [Wikimedia Foundation](#), a non-profit organization that also hosts a range of other volunteer [projects](#):



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