Tuesday, April 3

The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, April 3, the 94th day of 2012. There are 272 days left in the year.

Highlights in history on this date:

1512 - Beyazid II, Sultan of Turkey, abdicates in favor of son, Selim I.

1559 - Peace treaty between France and Spain is signed at Cateau-Cambresis, France, leaving Spain the dominant power in Italy for the next 150 years.

1612 - Protestant Union of Germany signs defensive alliance with England.

1833 - Attempt by revolutionaries to take over Frankfurt Diet in Germany is crushed.

1865 - Union forces occupy the Confederate capital of Richmond, Virginia during the American Civil War.

1882 - Jesse James, an outlaw who killed and scalped his victims and an American folk hero of sorts, is killed by a member of his own gang.

1930 - Ras Tafari becomes Emperor Haile Selassie of Abyssinia (Ethiopia).

1936 - Bruno Hauptmann, convicted of the kidnapping and murder of aviator Charles Lindbergh's baby, is executed.

1941 - British troops evacuate Libyan port of Bengazi during World War II.

1946 - Lt. General Masaharu Homma, the Japanese commander responsible for the Bataan Death March, is executed in the Philippines.

1948 - United States creates the Marshall Plan, allocating $5.33 billion in aid to 16 European nations to help in rebuilding after World War II.

1978 - U.S. President Jimmy Carter decides not to produce the neutron bomb. His decision cancels development of a weapon designed to destroy living things while leaving buildings intact.

1982 - British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher orders a naval task force to the Falkland Islands. The islands had been British territories since 1833 and Argentina's seizure of the islands was considered an act of aggression.

1984 - U.S. President Ronald Reagan signs a policy directive designed to combat international terrorism.

1988 - Iraq says its warplanes raided two Iranian oil refineries, but Iran says the bombs hit residential areas.

1990 - The Bulgarian parliament adopts legislation for free elections and appoints Petar Mladenov as president.

1991 - U.N. Security Council votes 12-1 to accept a cease-fire resolution requiring Iraq to destroy its weapons of mass destruction and authorizing peacekeeping troops to be deployed in the region.

1992 - Communist Ramiz Alia resigns as president of Albania, two weeks after a noncommunist parliament is elected.

1995 - At least 150 Hutus, mostly women and children, are massacred in a single village in northeastern Burundi.

1996 - A U.S. Air Force military plane carrying U.S. Commerce Secretary Ron Brown and 32 others crashes outside Dubrovnik, Croatia, killing all aboard.

2000 - A U.S. judge deals a momentous legal setback to software giant Microsoft Corp., ruling that the company violated federal antitrust laws by building a monopoly and trying to take over the Web browser market.

2001- The death toll in a meningitis outbreak in Burkina Faso tops 1,000. The government and the World Health Organization scramble to secure vaccine to control the epidemic from spreading to neighboring countries.

2003 - The World Health Organization reports 2,270 illnesses, including 79 deaths, from a spreading epidemic of a new respiratory ailment known as SARS, or severe acute respiratory syndrome.

2004 - Police in southwestern France arrest two important Basque militants — the logistics chief of the separatist group ETA Felix Ignacio Esparza Luri and former leader Felix Alberto Lopez de la Calle. The Basque Homeland and Freedom or ETA is blamed for more than 800 killings since the late 1960s with bombings and shootings aimed at carving out a Basque homeland.

2005 - Iraqi lawmakers choose a Sunni Arab as their parliament speaker, clearing a major hurdle that held up the formation of a new government two months after the country's first free elections in 50 years.

2006 - Thailand's prime minister claims victory but acknowledges a strong protest vote in an election held after weeks of demonstrations demanding his resignation for alleged corruption and abuse of power.

2007 - A French V150 train with a 25,000-horsepower engine and special wheels breaks the world speed record for conventional rail trains, reaching 357.2 mph (574.8 kph) in the French countryside.

2008 - Greek and Turkish Cypriot authorities tear down barricades and open a border crossing at Ledra Street for the first time in 44 years, boosting hopes for peace talks to reunite the island.

2009 — John Demjanjuk, accused of being a Nazi death camp guard, marks his 89th birthday by winning a reprieve of his ordered deportation from the U.S. to Germany to face possible trial.

2010 - President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad says that new sanctions because of Iran's nuclear defiance would only strengthen the country's technological progress by encouraging it to become more self-sufficient.

2011 — Demonstrators battle police in southern Afghanistan's main city of Kandahar and take to the streets in the turbulent east for the first time as Western pleas fail to halt a third day of rage over a Florida pastor's burning of the Quran.

Today's Birthdays:

Washington Irving, U.S. writer (1783-1859); James Hertzog, South African statesman-soldier (1865-1942); Camille Chamoun, Lebanese statesman (1900-1988); Marlon Brando, U.S. actor (1924-2004); Doris Day, U.S. actress-singer (1924--); Helmut Kohl, German chancellor (1930--); Eddie Murphy, U.S. actor (1961--); Alec Baldwin, U.S. actor (1958--); David Hyde Pierce, U.S. actor (1959--).

Thought for Today:

Bureaucracy is a giant mechanism operated by pygmies — Honore de Balzac (1799-1850)

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