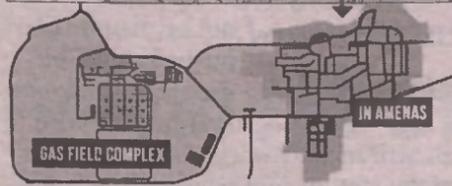
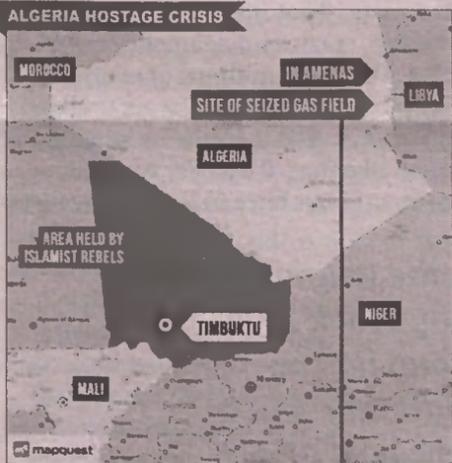


Algeria Hostage Crisis Proves Tragic

Jessica Feltner, staff writer

On January 16, gunmen claiming Al Qaeda ties seized a natural gas processing plant in Tigantourine, Algeria, taking several dozen hostages and prompting an armed response from the Algerian government. The crisis ended four days later, with an estimated 37 hostages and 29 gunmen dead.

News of the events filtered into the media slowly and unreliably. According to the BBC, the heavily armed gunman first attacked two buses outside the plant, killing two workers. Then they entered the living quarters area and took hundreds of employees hostage. They held mostly foreign hostages and freed more than 600 Algerians and 100 foreigners. There were reports that hostages were wired with explosive devices.



Map of Algeria and the location of the hostage crisis via Huffington Post

As these events unfolded, Algerian forces surrounded the plant, and on January 17, an airstrike attacked the vehicles used by the attackers to remove the hostages.

The gunmen involved are believed to be Islamists from various countries, including Algeria, Canada, Egypt, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Tunisia. They are said to have traveled from northern Mali, an area that is currently in the midst of turmoil and under French intervention. The gunmen claimed the attack was retaliation against the bombing of Mali by France, though experts analyzing the situation doubt this claim, saying that the siege must have been planned far longer in advance.

The Algerian police have pointed to Algerian ---cont. on page 2

Social Media Sites Grow and Change, Users Respond

Cody Jeffery, staff writer



Twitter and Facebook are two of the most popular social media sites

With over one billion international users, one billion dollars in net income, and 244 million dollars in box office sales with the hit biographical film, "The Social Network," Facebook has forever changed the way people meet, interact, and build relationships with one another, "Facebook is the iPhone of all social networking. It's so user friendly, I still use it every day," said Meredith Business Administration major Dee Evans.

Founder and CEO, Mark Zuckerberg, created Facebook one night in his Harvard dorm room. Originally known as Facemash, where the faces of two people were compared and users could vote on which was "hot and which was "not."

As Facebook grew from 100 million users in 2008 to one billion users in 2012, its next savvy step was to become a publicly traded company starting May 2012. Surprisingly, Facebook's stock is anything but consistent, with a 52-week low of \$17.55 and a high of \$45.00, Facebook doesn't even compare to the stock prices of companies like Google with a 52-week low of \$556.52. "I would not buy a single share of Facebook stock. Within the next few years, [Facebook] is going to fizzle out just like MySpace did," said Meredith student Nancy Merritt.

Along with the obvious financial woes that Facebook is facing, many users are not pleased with the constant updates and changes that the social network keeps installing, "From a marketing perspective, I thought the customized advertisements were a good idea, but as a consumer I find them annoying and an invasion of privacy," said Evans.

Others believe that Facebook is simply losing popularity due to its biggest competitor, Twitter. Created by Jack Dorsey ---cont. on page 7

Hillary Clinton Steps Down

AJ Thompson, staff writer

On December 30 Hillary Clinton was admitted New York Presbyterian hospital after receiving a concussion from fainting. There she received blood thinners to assist in the care of a blood clot which was located behind her right ear, and she has since fully recovered.

Perhaps in light of these health scares the political powerhouse has opted to step down from the office of Secretary of State and take it easier on her health. It is likely that her position will be filled by Senator John Kerry; the Senator has been endorsed by the President and a vote in the senate this past week favored him, 94 to 3.

When asked if she might consider running for President in the 2016 election, Clinton made no promises, but neither did she completely disavow the idea. Supporters are in favor of her running. A political action committee has already been created in her name, without her support, called "Ready for Hillary", which will be ready to raise money should she chose to run in the next election.

While she may not be confirming a presidential campaign, she has repeatedly assured that one of her main concerns is the lives of women and girls around the world, and she plans to continue supporting them through her writing, speaking, and other works.

State of Emergency in Egypt Threatens Potential Collapse

Kim Dixon and Hannah Thornton, staff writers

The atmosphere of Egypt has been tense since the Egyptian Revolution in January 2011. People watched the new government to see if changes would be made; however, the trust of the people has eroded as the government and President Morsi, former member of the Muslim Brotherhood, have, according to the Egyptian masses, leaned towards Islamist policies and governing.

On Tuesday, January 29, 2013, Egypt's top military officer warned of a potential "collapse of the state" if Islamist leaders and their opponents continue to disagree on matters of government.

Violence and demonstrations have arisen in cities across Egypt, including Cairo, Port Said, and Suez. Amidst

burning tires, trashed hotels, thrown rocks, tear gas, and bullets, riots have increased in brutality. On Monday, protestors in Cairo made a bonfire out of a stolen police car. At least 45 people have died in Port Said at the northern tip of the Suez Canal. Demonstrators in Port Said have declared their city to be an independent nation.

In response to the violence, President Morsi has posed a month long state of emergency in Port Said in order to protect the Suez Canal and regain control of the city. With this state of emergency, police have more power, the people have fewer rights, and curfews have been instated. However, the people are fighting this declaration, and at one protest, which started at the beginning of the 9pm curfew, one man told a New York Times Reporter, "This [curfew] doesn't apply to Port Said because we don't recognize him as our president. He is the president of the Muslim Brotherhood only."

Google Maps North Korea

Rachel Prati, staff writer

Yesterday, Google uploaded a detailed map of the North Korea, thanks to the help of "a community of citizen cartographers." People can now zoom in to see the country's capital and major landmarks, hotels, schools and hospitals, even the tower that celebrates the country's self-reliance.



Google's map of North Korea Image via New York Times

Google called for more mapping information in the North from "netizens." The posting of the map shed unwanted light on the North at a time when the country is in a tense standoff with the United States and its allies. The country has also promised to conduct a third nuclear test.

Although not very detailed in much of the country, the map does include four enormous prison camps. Google Maps will probably not be releasing new information to those countries which already have reliable sources of the nation's geography, obtained through years of surveillance.

North Korean ---cont. on page 7