

SEEN

THIERRY ROGE/REUTERS



Centenarian sisters

Marie (l.) and Gabrielle Vaudremer celebrated their birthday together in Spa, Belgium, earlier this month with a fruit tart and a news photographer. At 101, they now hold the Guinness World Record for being the world's oldest pair of twin sisters.

DISPATCH: CARACAS, VENEZUELA

The politics of bread

Nearly every morning locals line up alongside a street kiosk for *arepas*, corn flatbread stuffed with a jumble of meats, vegetables, and cheeses. The Venezuelan specialty has been a source of pride here since the Spanish tried to usurp native corn centuries ago with European wheat. “*Arepas* are part of our culture,” says Miguel Segovia, clutching a greasy paper sack filled with a warm *arepa*.

President Hugo Chávez furthered *arepa* national pride last year by opening up “Socialist Arepera” outlets, whose walls carry posters decrying the evils of the mass-marketed capitalist *arepa*. Mr. Chávez claims capitalist food producers drive up inflation.

But whatever the political bent of the *arepa*, Venezuelans will remain loyal.

“The *arepa* will never be lost,” says Adriana Vilar, a librarian at the Center for Gastronomic Studies in Caracas.

– **Girish Gupta**, contributor



CARLOS GARCIA RAWLINS/REUTERS

Stuffed arepas at the Arepa Factory in Caracas.

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA

Wedding Prep 101

To put it simply, says Renalyn Mulato, the daughter of a Filipino immigrant married to a South Korean man, the key to multicultural happiness is love and understanding.

That may seem like a painfully obvious prerequisite for most marriages, but for many immigrants in South Korea, it isn't always that easy.

South Korea has been grappling with shifting demographics that have left many middle-aged men cut adrift in a country that prizes marriage. As Korean women leave their hometowns for careers in the big cities, the men left behind are increasingly looking for brides from poorer Asian nations such as Vietnam, the Philippines, Cambodia, and Mongolia.

More than 100,000 women among South Korea's 1.2-million foreign population are estimated to be foreign brides. This influx of foreigners has accelerated multiculturalism in Korea. But many of those marriages don't turn out well. Part of the problem, say experts, is a lack of government oversight of agencies that locate foreign brides for Korean men. The result, say critics, is hundreds of unhappy marriages between middle-aged Korean men and young foreign women trying to escape poverty.

Korean men seeking to wed foreign brides are now required to take courses to prepare them for international unions.

– **Brian Kay**, correspondent

heard

‘Now we have a much better idea of what the future of war will look like.’ (p. 18)

– **Security expert Ralph Langner**, first to detect the computer ‘worm’ that crippled an Iranian nuclear plant

“‘Shared sacrifice’ is a polite way of saying ‘Pay up!’” (p. 32)

– **Claudia Ford**, an administrative assistant in New York and an ‘Occupy Wall Street’ protester

‘Saleh won’t quit until the whole country is on fire. But by God he has gone too far.’ (p. 8)

– **Akhan Faris**, who defected from Yemen’s elite Republican Guard, on President Ali Abdullah Saleh

the list

5 richest Americans

According to Forbes magazine, the 400 wealthiest people in the United States control a combined \$1.53 trillion – almost equal to the gross domestic product of Canada. The five richest among them:

- 1. BILL GATES, \$59 BILLION.** Mr. Gates built his fortune as cofounder of software giant Microsoft.
- 2. WARREN BUFFETT, \$39 BILLION.** Mr. Buffett owns Berkshire Hathaway, an investment firm. He also founded The Giving Pledge, which urges the wealthiest to donate much of their money to charity.
- 3. LARRY ELLISON, \$33 BILLION.** Two-time college dropout Mr. Ellison cofounded software firm Oracle in 1977.
- 4. CHARLES AND DAVID KOCH, \$25 BILLION EACH.** Known as much for their conservative politics as their wealth, Charles is the chief executive officer of Koch Industries, a conglomerate. Brother David owns 42 percent of it.
- 5. CHRISTY WALTON, \$24.5 BILLION.** Ms. Walton, widow of John Walton (son of Wal-Mart founder Sam Walton), inherited her wealth when her husband died in a plane crash in 2005. She’s the world’s richest woman.

– **Geoff Johnson**, *Monitor* library

Source: Forbes magazine, September 2011