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BRIGHTER SKIES, OR THE EYE OF THE STORM?

It would be no mischaracterization to say that the past several months in Talossa have been a bit tumultuous. Between schisms and reunions in the governing Talossan National Congress, the renunciation of both a long-time Senator and a promising new Seneschal, political fence-mending and bridge-burning, an unorthodox election result, extra-Talossan news coverage, returns, departures, and the lingering results of the Wittpocalypse, Talossan life has been everything but dull.

There is a long-running adage, often attributed to American showman P.T. Barnum, that “all publicity is good publicity.” Given the entirely voluntary and largely online nature of Talossa, something similar could be said about activity. However, this is more often than not only true to a certain depth. If one were to engage in productive debate with Talossans one disagrees with politically, that’s good! Even if no legislation comes from it, a better mutual understanding of each others’ positions will at minimum “grease the wheels” of future debates. However, if one spends their time mostly just trying to make Talossan life unpleasant for their opponents, such activity is counterproductive.

My thoughts, as you may have surmised, are with our all-too-brief former Seneschal, Brăneu Excelsio. While he and I may have had our partisan differences – though I personally don’t believe it fair to characterize him as particularly ideological – we joined Talossa only a few months apart, and seemed to get along well in hopes of bridging political divides. He held promise as heralding a new, less bitter era of Talossan politics, the kind that leads to greater national activity and a renewed sense of what could be described as a micronational form of “civic pride”. Talossa is worse for his loss.

Similarly, while we have lost a hopeful symbol for Talossa’s future, we have also lost a fantastic source on Talossa’s past. Eiric S. Börnatfiglheu, a former Republican citizen who immigrated as part of Reunision, renounced in October of last year after roughly 17 years of citizenship between the Republic and Kingdom, in that his own Witt profile states he had been Talossan “since 2006 (ish).” This had the additional effect of vacating his Senatorial seat, having represented Benito in the upper house since August 2020. With the number of *reviensadeirs* steadily dwindling over

time, to lose one prematurely is particularly harmful to the Talossan cultural tradition; what tales ESB could have still shared with the rest of us may now be lost for good.

To say this trend is concerning is an understatement. Whether or not Talossa chooses to embrace the term, it fits the definition of a micronation, a word coined by its very founder. And as micronations’ citizens go, the nations themselves go. A relatively active and sizeable populus is the only way entities like Talossa can continue to exist, and the more of ourselves we manage to push out, the closer we walk to the cliff’s edge.

It should be noted, however, that all is not doom and gloom. Several newer citizens, including Barclamü da Miéletz and GTA resident Bentxamì Puntmasleu, have injected the Talossan public with new lifeblood. Puntmasleu even managed to publicize Talossa on CBS 58 in Milwaukee, and is leading the charge to get more students at UW-Milwaukee interested and knowledgeable about the nation they walk through every day without realizing it. We can only hope these publicity efforts bear fruit.



Benito to Rename Again?

Benito – already self-described as “the province so nice they named it twice” in reference to its original name of *Mussolini* – is once again exploring a possible renaming. Seeking to finally and completely wipe its hands of associations with some of modern history’s more unsavory episodes, the provincial government under Maestro Sir Lüc da Schir, UrB has had multiple suggestions for a potential new name come forth, many of which retain the initial “Be-”.

Talossan Art, Vehicular Edition

Recently–naturalized *citaxhien* Barclamü da Miéletz has proffered designs for both North American-style and Euro-style Talossan license plates, with an alternative Europlate design submitted by Mic’haglh Autófil. No word yet on whether one could ever actually get these for a vehicle, but stranger things have happened....

AFT’s “Lost Tapes” Found

L’Aßociù del Futbol Talossan – the Talossan Football Association – has recently “located the tapes of last summer’s games”, according to a spokesperson. “Our only video truck

was put out of commission after the finest PIT maneuver a Fiat 126 has ever performed,” he admitted. “The driver made off like a bandit with the records of the games, and we only recently got them back.” The AFT will be presenting the games in the coming weeks using its patented “Gratuitously Long Tape-Delay™” system.

Oh Yah, Vu Betcha?

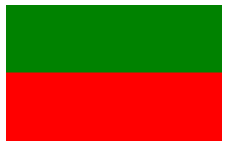
Following the reassignment of Ohio to the catchment area of Benito under 59RZ4, Florencia has proposed to compensate Vuode for its loss of a state by transferring Minnesota to the Vuodean catchment. The “Florencia <3 Vuode Act” (59RZ14), currently at a vote as part of this month’s Clark, proposes to amend El Lexhatx to this effect. This would end up creating somewhat of a patchwork of catchment areas in the Midwestern United States, with Northern Wisconsin becoming an exclave of Florenciality (Minnesota and Michigan would both fall into Vuode, with several other provinces bordering Florencia within Wisconsin). Similarly, Ohio is now a Benitian exclave surrounded by Vuode and Maritiimi-Maxhestic.

MinImm Sees Bites, Few Hooks

A fairly steady pace has been seen this year with the number of applications submitted to the Ministry of Immigration. 19 threads have been started since January 1, an average of about eight per month. This is a fine rate as compared to the first three years of the current Wittenberg board’s existence, and we can all only hope that it continues to increase. The caveat to this is that six petitions have actually resulted from these applications, and four of those have actually been naturalized, with the other two each having made exactly two posts each to Witt. As usual, attracting and *retaining* citizens proves a sticking point that has transcended governments.

Mad Chicken: Any Good?

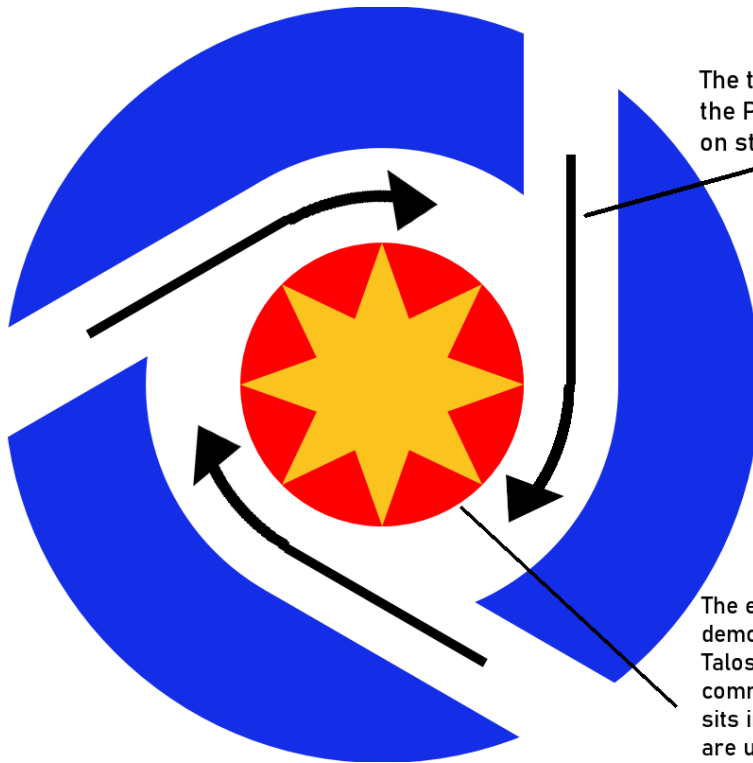
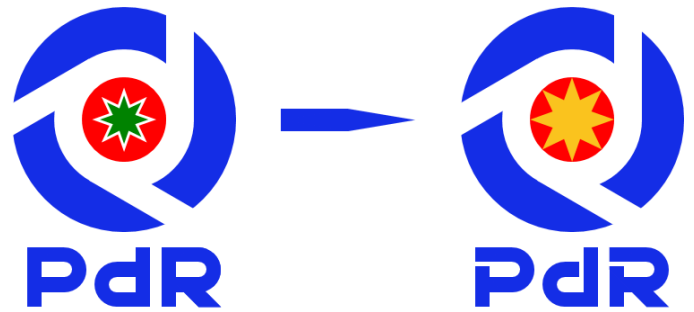
Citing the discovery of a new fast food place and its link to Talossa as being an “omen” to return to activity, Mic’haglh Autófil recently reviewed several offerings from the menu of Mad Chicken. Of particular note were the side of macaroni and cheese and the “raspberries chimichanga” for dessert, with the cheese curds and Mad Fries given “good but not *great*” marks.



PdR REANIMATES, REBRANDS

With the return of its founder and leader, Mic'haghl Autófil, to regular Talossan activity, the *Parti da Reformaziun* (that's the "Reform Party" for the Cestourats among us) has resumed activity in preparation for the July General Election. Part of this renaissance has involved a minor rebranding and visual refresh; changes are intended to bring significance to the elements of the party's visual identity in a way not usually employed in Talossan politics (see below). In addition to the facelifted visuals, Autófil has stated his intention to implement a party charter and a more concretely-stated platform, the former coming when the party's membership increases. To that end, he has noted that Talossans interested in helping our nationette mature as a society are welcome to contact him to join.

More information about the PdR, its goals, proposed structure, platform, etc. can be obtained either by contacting Autófil directly or perusing the party's much-updated wiki article.



The three lines flowing clockwise into the center circle symbolize the PdR's advocacy of a directorial system, a joint executive elected on staggered terms, continuously renewing with the passage of time.

Blue was initially chosen one: because it was unrepresented on the Talossan political spectrum; and two: it was the color of the Liberal Congress, a former progressive party in Talossa.

Red is taken directly from the *Bicoloreu*, where it symbolizes "the Talossan people and their tenacity"; the people are the source from which any republic draws its legitimacy.

The eight-pointed sun has been recolored from *Bicoloreu* **Green** (where it symbolizes "the Talossan monarchy and its magnanimity") to the **Gold** of liberalism, symbolizing the PdR's goal to replace monarchy with liberty.

The eight-pointed sun represents the bright future in store for a democratic Talossa, a new dawn of promise. The eight points represent the Talossan provinces united as one land, the people coming together for a common goal. Stars in general are also a common republican symbol. It sits in a red disc at the logo's center, symbolizing that the Talossan people are ultimately at the center of all we do.

SPORTS

Talossan Football Association – Results for 13.08.23

Canards da Cézembre 22 – 33 Nevitsch da Péngöpäts
 Pastours da Florencia 32 – 5 Capitaïs d'Atatürk
 Escunās da Maritiimi-Maxhestic 13 – 29 Squilats da Cjovani
 Rexhitaes da Vuode 27 – 19 Soleiglhen da Maricopa
 Cnec'hts del CNT 30 – 7 Repúblicánistaes da Fiôvâ
 MinXhust Savaes Savaxheux 18 – 19 Aquilās da Benito

North Division

POS	Team	GP	Pts	W	L	PF	PA	Diff	Win %
1	Benito	10	27	9	1	221	117	+104	0.900
2	Vuode	10	21	7	3	175	167	+8	0.700
3	Atatürk	10	18	6	4	184	140	+44	0.600
4	Cjovani	10	15	5	5	211	177	+34	0.500
5	Cézembre	10	9	3	7	154	219	-65	0.300
6	MinXhust	10	6	2	8	136	177	-41	0.200

South Division

1	Florencia	10	21	7	3	201	128	+73	0.700
2	Péngöpäts	10	18	6	4	180	200	-20	0.600
3	Maritiimi-Maxhestic	10	15	5	5	177	196	-19	0.500
4	Cnec'hts del CNT	10	15	5	5	198	162	+36	0.500
5	Fiôvâ	10	12	4	6	135	198	-63	0.400
6	Maricopa	10	3	1	9	146	237	-91	0.100

Cestour Sports

Hockey

The Maritiimi-Maxhestic Admirals, with 19 games and roughly one month left in the 2023-24 regular season, sit comfortably atop the Central Division standings. They currently possess the third-best record in the American Hockey League, trailing only the Coachella Valley Firebirds and the Eastern Conference's Hershey Bears – the previous season's two finalists. So far, only Hershey has mathematically secured a playoff berth. The Admirals' next games are a pair on March 19/20 against the Colorado Eagles in Loveland, Colorado.

Baseball

Els Cumplostseirs da Maricopa, better known as the Milwaukee Brewers, are still underway with Spring Training games. The team has had a streaky preseason performance, a concerning sign of the summer to come.

Basketball

The Benito Bucks have continued a strong season, despite the unorthodox mid-season firing of head coach Adrian Griffin. Since Griffin's firing (and the subsequent hiring of former NBA Champion coach Doc Rivers), the Bucks have cooled their pace somewhat, but maintain a half-game lead over the Cleveland Cavaliers in the Central Division. At this point, the Eastern Conference has effectively become a battle for second, with the Bucks themselves sitting in the #2 slot... 9.5 games behind the TN-endorsed Boston Celtics (who are also the Bucks' next opponent, playing on March 20 in Boston).

**THIS SPACE COULD
BE YOURS!**

Letter from the Editor

At its core, Talossan democracy is still evolving, still maturing. Most political parties are at least somewhat personalistic in nature, as opposed to entirely focused on policy. Despite existing for over forty years, Talossan democracy is still in development, in a sense. This is in some ways unsurprising; one could say that Talossa has only been *democratic* for a little over eighteen years, what with the dominant-party system and pocket votes of the Progressive Conservatives and later the Black Hand under King Robert I. For comparison, former Eastern Bloc nations have been “democratic” for thirty – and we see that some of them still have a much further distance to go to reach a mature democracy.

However, there has been progress made. Power has, slowly but surely, begun to be wrested from the Crown, in favor of entrusting it to the People. Power structures continue to evolve, supporting a more responsive and agile state apparatus. While the republican/monarchist debate is likely never truly dead in Talossa, the country has recently seen discussion revolving around Cosa reform picking up steam instead. Most of this centers around shifting from a purely proportional representation method to mixed-member proportional, allowing provincial concerns to be represented in the Cosa, rendering a bicameral legislature moot. *TN* endorses these reforms, which we are told will be an official platform plank of at least one party in upcoming elections. Reforming the monarchy, while important, is not the only method of improving the structure of Talossa and the experiences of its people.

Adiuc Talossa non isch pierdadă!
- Redacteir

