

## Partisan politics under scrutiny in Florida

■ The Republican secretary of state is under attack for enforcing the recount time limit.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — Florida's secretary of state had this message Monday for election workers weary from the tedious task of counting presidential votes: Hurry up.

Sticking to a firm state deadline, Republican Secretary of State Katherine Harris said all 67 counties must finish their recounts by 5 p.m. Tuesday.

But her decision was challenged hours later in court by lawyers for Palm Beach and Volusia counties, Democrat Al

Gore and the Florida Democratic Party, who said counties should have as much time as they need to complete their hand counts.

Broward County, one of the four Florida counties weighing full recounts by hand, rejected the idea late Monday after workers performed a manual count in three precincts and turned up no major problems.

The strong Democratic county, which includes Fort Lauderdale, found only four additional votes for Gore after hand counting 3,892 ballots in three precincts. Attorneys for George W. Bush and Harris' office defended the deadline.

Circuit Judge Terry Lewis said he would issue a ruling Tuesday morning.

The deadline is a major concern for Democratic officials because the manual recounts they requested cannot all be completed by the end of the day Tuesday. The state said counties that don't certify their vote by the deadline "shall be ignored."

Weary workers, meanwhile, continued the counts Monday in scattered counties.

■ Volusia County, home of Daytona Beach, resumed hand counting 184,339 ballots and might finish by late Monday. Election workers also were recounting roughly 29,000 absentee ballots.

■ Palm Beach County, home of West Palm Beach, prepared to start hand counting 425,000 ballots Tuesday. They expect to con-

*"The best course of action is to allow the existing two recounts to stand. Anything less ... would be neither fair nor right."*

Ari Fleischer  
Bush spokesman

tinue through Sunday.

■ In Miami-Dade County, the largest, officials planned to meet Tuesday to consider the Democrats' request for a hand recount.

An informal survey of 61 of Florida's 67 election supervisors found that they had mailed out more than 18,500 overseas ballots. Of those, about half had been returned and the majority of them counted. It was not immediately

known how many ballots were outstanding. Election supervisors plan to count the remaining ballots on Friday and send the results to the Harris's office.

The latest unofficial tally by The Associated Press gave Republican Bush a 388-vote lead in Florida, but hand recounts and overseas ballots due by Friday will determine the final margin — and likely the winner of the presidency.

## Rate jump to stamp mail in January

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — The cost of mailing a letter will be going up a penny, probably in January.

The independent Postal Rate Commission acted Monday on a request by the U.S. Postal Service for a rate increase to offset rising costs.

Under the commission's action, the price of a first-class stamp will rise to 34 cents. But the 22-cent cost of a second ounce of first-class mail will stay the same, as will the 20-cent postcard. The Postal Service had asked that the second-ounce rate be raised by 2 cents and the postcard by 1 cent.

The post office Board of Governors will decide when the higher rates will go into effect. Jan. 7 is said to be the likely date.

The Postal Rate Commission approved the increase after months of hearings and deliberations. The higher rate for a first-class stamp will bring in about \$1 billion a year.

The commission also raised the cost of mailing two pounds of priority mail from \$3.20 to \$3.95.

The last rate increase was Jan. 10, 1999. It tacked a penny onto the cost of a first-class stamp.

Because it takes so long to print the billions of stamps needed when new rates take effect, the Postal Service already has interim stamps in the works.

In the past, those changeover stamps carried letter designations, A through H, but that practice has been discontinued.

The post office's proposed increases averaged about 6 percent over all classes of mail.

In addition to letters and postcards, the Postal Service sought significant rate increases for magazines and catalogs. Magazine publishers called the requested rate jump "devastating" to their business.

Newspaper postage will increase from 26.6 cents for a 10-ounce mailing to 28.7 cents.

The post office is required by law to base its rates on the cost of handling each type of mail.

When rate cases go before the rate commission, hours are spent debating whether costs have been properly allocated.

Postmaster General William Henderson has noted that the 1-cent boost in first-class mail rates is below the rate of inflation.

The post office had a \$363 million profit in its 1999 fiscal year but was expecting to lose money in fiscal 2000, which ended Sept. 30. Final figures are scheduled to be announced in December.

Unlike its commercial competitors, when the Postal Service wants to raise prices it must seek permission from the rate commission and provide detailed supporting documents. The commission then holds hearings and issues its decision.

The process takes 10 months.

The Postal Service is a semi-independent federal agency. It does not receive tax money for operations and is expected to make enough money to break even over time.

It still carries a \$3.5 billion accumulated deficit, built up over many years of operating in the red.

## Gore: Recounts honor democracy

*Vice president's lawyers press judge for hand tallies, extended deadlines*

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — His back to the White House he yet hopes to claim, Al Gore urged patience on the nation. He suggested Monday that the presidential election could be settled in days.

"While time is important, it is even more important that every vote is counted and counted accurately," Gore told reporters who had been summoned to the driveway outside the West Wing.

"Having enough patience to spend the days necessary to hear exactly what the American people have said, is really the most important thing because that is what honors our Constitution and redeems the promise of our democracy."

It was the vice president's first public comment on the election tumult since his sober homage to the Constitution last Wednesday, after TV networks awarded the White House to Republican George W. Bush. Then they took it back because

Florida's vote was too close to call.

In the intervening five days, Gore has made family touch-football games and church outings available to the news media but studiously has avoided comment on the election outcome.

He spoke Monday as his lawyers were deeply involved in court in Florida.

They were persuading a federal judge to allow their requests for hand recounts to continue in several counties. They also wanted a state judge to permit the new tallies to continue beyond a Tuesday 5 p.m. deadline set by state election officials allied with Bush.

"I would not want to win the presidency by a few votes cast in error or misinterpreted or not counted," Gore said. "And I don't think Governor Bush wants that either."

The vice president made no direct mention of any of the legal wrangling but, in a contest of images with the Bush camp, appeared intent on sounding a calming and presiden-

*"What is at stake is the integrity of our democracy, making sure that the will of the American people is expressed and accurately received."*

Vice President Al Gore  
Democratic presidential candidate

tial note for the nation.

His backdrop was a West Wing entrance often used by visiting heads of state.

The absence of a uniformed Marine standing guard there signified that President Clinton had already departed for Asia.

Gore spoke self-consciously, as if aware that all eyes were on him and that his words would be scoured for clues to his strategy in the looming court battles.

He forced a laugh into his voice when he spoke of the schoolchildren's civics lesson that is the blessing of this protracted election — "if there's any saving grace at all to the extra time that this is taking."

"What is at stake is more important than who wins the presidency," he said.

"What is at stake is the integrity of our democracy, making sure that the will of the American people is expressed and accurately received."

He refused to take any questions as the finish of his remarks was met with applause from the two dozen White House aides gathered beside journalists in the driveway.

While at the executive mansion, his first visit since meetings there last month on the Mideast peace crisis, Gore received his daily security update directly from his national security adviser, Leon Feurth.

In the thick of the campaign, those daily readouts were often handled by telephone or by the military aide who traveled with Gore.

## Family, engaged couple among missing

■ Eight U.S. military personnel and relatives are presumed dead after the Austrian cable-car fire.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WUERZBURG, Germany — Neighbors in this tight-knit military community remembered Maj. Michael C. Goodridge on Monday as a father who did everything he could to help his two young boys adapt to life on an overseas military base.

He helped out with his 7-year-old's Cub Scout troop, coached soccer and T-ball teams and took the family to weekend football games. On a long Veteran's Day weekend, Goodridge, his wife Jennifer and sons Michael and 5-year-old Kyle joined a military-affiliated ski trip to neighboring Austria.

The family from Texas are among eight U.S. military personnel and their relatives who are missing and presumed dead in a cable car fire at Kitzsteinhorn mountain in Kaprun, Austria, that killed at least 159 people Saturday. U.S. military recovery teams joined the effort to identify bodies Monday and were collecting the belongings of the missing, including the Goodridges' green SUV parked in

front of the Sport Hotel, its ski racks empty.

The other members of the Wuertzburg ski club who are still missing — 1st Lt. Erich R. Kern, 25, of Dobbs Ferry, N.Y., and 2nd Lt. Carrie L. Baker, 23, of Florida — had just become engaged last week.

Two other missing Americans traveled with another ski club from the Kaiserslautern area, near the U.S. military's Ramstein Air Base. They are Paul A. Filkil, 46, and his son Ben, 15, of Deerfield, Mich. Filkil's wife, Karen Kearney Filkil, is a civilian who works for the Air Force's Warrior Preparation Center in Germany.

Despite being told that their son and his fiancée were seen boarding the doomed cable car, Kern's parents haven't given up hope yet. "We don't know yet for sure. They didn't find them yet," his mother Angela Kern said in a telephone interview from her home.

Kern talked to his parents a week ago and told them how excited he was about the trip with Baker. He had missed skiing last season while commanding an infirmary in Macedonia.

"He was ecstatic" about the trip, Rudolf Kern said. An accomplished skier, "he was happy to be getting back on

skis."

Back in Germany, the Goodridges' neighbors cried and held each other as they gathered at the military apartment complex where they all lived near the main entrance to Leighton Barracks, headquarters of the 1st Infantry Division.

They described a family active in base life. Michael Goodridge ferried the boys to soccer, T-ball and Tae Kwon Do practice.

Mrs. Goodridge was involved with the base elementary school, helping prepare meals on holidays and working with the parent-teacher association.

"Both were Army brats, they knew what it took to make a community work," said Christine Merkel, who lived next to the Goodridge family.

After hearing about the accident in the mountain tunnel, Merkel's 8-year-old son Alastair recalled a trip to the Canary Islands he took with his mother and Mrs. Goodridge and her boys while the women's husbands were serving in Kosovo last Easter.

During a train ride, the children started whistling and making noise as they passed through a tunnel. "I bet Kyle was whistling when they went through that tunnel," Alastair said.

## Palestinians increase ambushes

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

JERUSALEM — Palestinians pushed their conflict with Israel to a more violent level Monday with ambushes in the West Bank and Gaza Strip that killed four Israelis. Four Palestinians also died from clashes, and as the death toll passed 200, Israel said the conflict is no longer an uprising, but open warfare.

Palestinians in a car opened fire on a convoy of Jewish settlers escorted by army vehicles between two Israeli settlements in the West Bank in the late

afternoon, killing an Israeli woman in a civilian car. The gunmen then raked an army bus with more than 50 bullets, killing two soldiers and wounding eight, the military said.

After nightfall, Palestinians opened fire on an Israeli truck near the Kissufim crossing point in Gaza, killing another Israeli.

Two Palestinian teenagers were killed in a clash with Israeli forces near the Gaza refugee camp of Khan Yunis, Palestinians said. The Israeli military denied its soldiers opened fire there.

Another teen-ager, Ahmed Dahlan, 17, died in an Israeli hospital of wounds suffered Saturday.

He was a nephew of the chief of Palestinian Preventive Security in Gaza, Mohammed Dahlan.

A Palestinian policeman was shot and killed in a nighttime clash with Israeli soldiers near the city of Qalqilya in the West Bank.

At least 206 people have been killed since the latest outbreak of Middle East violence began on Sept. 28, the vast majority Palestinians.

World/Nation

The Associated Press

### ■ New Hampshire

Bush loses votes to Gore in recount but keeps lead

CONCORD — Proofreading and computer errors whittled George W. Bush's margin of victory in New Hampshire to 7,211, the secretary of state's office said Monday.

A review of the voting showed Bush lost 731 votes and Al Gore gained 227, a net gain of 958 for Gore.

Monday was also the deadline to ask for a recount, and none was requested.

State and local officials spent the day examining problems in the count and determining how widespread they were.

A proofreading error at the secretary of state's office gave Bush 1,000 too many votes in one Nashua ward. In several other communities, a programming error miscounted votes — in some cases helping Bush, in some cases, Gore. And in several communities, straight ticket votes were not counted. The net winner on that error was Bush, who gained 153 votes.

The revised final counts were 273,559 votes for Bush and 266,348 for Gore. Initially, the official results gave Bush a 8,169-vote lead.

### ■ Antarctica

Two women aim to be first to ski across continent

QUEEN MAUD LAND — An American polar adventurer and her Norwegian partner arrived in Antarctica on Monday, hoping to become the first women to ski unaided across the frozen continent.

When their Russian-built Ilyushin 76 airplane skidded to a halt on an ice runway, American Ann Bancroft and Norwegian Liv Arnesen immediately called their support base in Minnesota by a satellite phone.

Bancroft and Arnesen want to be the first women to ski across Antarctica with no outside assistance. Towing a heavy sled, they plan to ski 2,400 miles across a barren expanse, where winds blast up to 100 miles per hour and summertime temperatures average 30 degrees below zero.

In 1994, Arnesen, of Oslo, became the first woman to ski alone and unaided to the South Pole — a 50-day journey. Bancroft was the first woman to ski to both the North Pole and the South Pole.

### ■ Washington, D.C.

Using dog, cat hair in retail calls fur prison time, fines

Selling or making products with dog or cat fur is now a federal crime under a bill signed into law by President Clinton.

Under the new law, selling, making or transporting clothing, toys or other items made with the fur or skins of dogs and cats could bring a maximum \$25,000 fine or up to a year in prison.

"This legislation sends a strong message to importers and retailers that sales of dog and cat fur will not be tolerated in the United States," said Wayne Pacelle, senior vice president of Humane Society of the United States.

There is no evidence that pets are being killed in the United States for their fur.

But DNA tests on furs have confirmed that products such as gloves, fur linings and insoles for shoes and boots made with dog or cat hair have been sold in this country, the Humane Society said.

Weather

TODAY

Mostly sunny  
high 40, low 24

TOMORROW

Scattered snow  
high 38, low 25

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