

## Obama And Romney Focus Anew On Ohio

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — It's still all about Ohio. After a strong debate performance, Republican challenger Mitt Romney is intensifying his efforts in the state that's critical to his White House hopes, while President Barack Obama works to hang on to the polling edge he's had here for weeks.

Both candidates campaigned hard in the state Tuesday, the last day of voter registration ahead of Election Day, now just four weeks away. "Find at least one person who voted for Barack Obama last time and convince them to come join our team," Romney told voters in Van Meter, Iowa, before hurrying eastward to make a similar pitch in Ohio, where he was campaigning with New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie.

Obama, in Columbus, called out, "All right, Buckeyes, we need you." His campaign had buses nearby, ready to ferry students or other supporters to registration centers.

## Al-Qaida Shows Revival In Iraq

BAGHDAD (AP) — Al-Qaida is rebuilding in Iraq and has set up training camps for insurgents in the nation's western deserts as the extremist group seizes on regional instability and government security failures to regain strength, officials say.

Iraq has seen a jump in al-Qaida attacks over the last 10 weeks, and officials believe most of the fighters are former prisoners who have either escaped from jail or were released by Iraqi authorities for lack of evidence after the U.S. military withdrawal last December. Many are said to be Saudi or from Sunni-dominated Gulf states.

During the war and its aftermath, U.S. forces, joined by allied Sunni groups and later by Iraqi counterterrorism forces, managed to beat back al-Qaida's Iraqi branch.

But now, Iraqi and U.S. officials say, the insurgent group has more than doubled in numbers from a year ago — from about 1,000 to 2,500 fighters. And it is carrying out an average of 140 attacks each week across Iraq, up from 75 attacks each week earlier this year, according to Pentagon data.

"AQI is coming back," U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham, a Republican from South Carolina, declared in an interview last month while visiting Baghdad.

## Skydiver Cancels Try To Break Sound Barrier

ROSWELL, N.M. (AP) — Blame it on the wind. Again. For the second straight day, extreme athlete Felix Baumgartner aborted his planned death-defying 23-mile free fall because of the weather, postponing his quest to become the world's first supersonic skydiver until at least Thursday.

As he sat Tuesday morning in the pressurized capsule waiting for a 55-story, ultra-thin helium balloon to fill and carry him into the stratosphere, a 25 mph gust rushed across a field near the airport in Roswell, N.M.

The wind rushed so fast that it spun the still-inflating balloon as if it was a giant plastic grocery bag, raising concerns at mission control about whether it was damaged from the jostling.

The balloon is so delicate that it can only take off if winds are 2 mph or below on the ground.

## Netanyahu Orders Elections For Early 2013

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel's prime minister on Tuesday ordered new parliamentary elections in early 2013, roughly eight months ahead of schedule, setting the stage for a lightning quick campaign that will likely win him re-election.

For nearly four years, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has presided over a conservative coalition that has proven stable in a country where governments rarely serve out a full term. Re-election could grant him a fresh mandate to continue his tough stance toward Iran's suspect nuclear program, put the already deadlocked peace process with the Palestinians further into deep freeze and complicate relations with the U.S. if President Barack Obama is re-elected.

In a nationally televised address, Netanyahu said he was forced to call the snap polls after his coalition could not agree on a budget.

"I have decided that it is in Israel's better interest to go to elections now and as quickly as possible," he said. "For Israel, it is preferable to have as short a campaign as possible, one of three months over one that would last in practice an entire year and damage Israel's economy."

With no viable alternative on the horizon, Netanyahu is expected to easily be re-elected as prime minister: He is riding a wave of popularity and his opposition is fragmented and leaderless.

## Protests Greet Merkel As She Praises Greece

ATHENS, Greece (AP) — German Chancellor Angela Merkel got a hostile reception from many ordinary Greeks Tuesday when she flew into Athens on her first visit to the country since its debt crisis erupted three years ago.

But she praised the current Greek government for covering "much of the ground" required for recovery. "I hope and wish that Greece remains a member of the eurozone," Merkel said. "As partners, we are working hard to achieve that."

Her visit triggered protests attended by some 50,000 demonstrators in Athens. The rallies were mostly peaceful, but police briefly clashed with several dozen demonstrators and detained nearly 200 people throughout the day.

As Europe's largest contributor to the bailout fund that has rescued Greece from bankruptcy, Germany is viewed by many Greeks as the primary enforcer of the austerity measures the Greek government enacted in exchange for emergency aid.

## Student Killed By Campus Police Was Unarmed

MOBILE, Ala. (AP) — A nude University of South Alabama freshman had taken LSD and assaulted others before he chased the campus police officer who fatally shot him, authorities said Tuesday, though the student wasn't armed and didn't touch the officer.

Mobile County Sheriff Sam Cochran said at a news conference that 18-year-old Gil Collar took the potent hallucinogen during a music festival Saturday before assaulting two people in vehicles and attempting to bite a woman's arm.

Authorities said Collar then went to the campus police headquarters, where he was shot by university police officer Trevis Austin. Austin is on leave while investigators review the shooting.

Video taken by a surveillance camera showed Collar nude and covered in sweat as he pursued the retreating officer more than 50 feet outside the building, Cochran said. Collar got within 5 feet of Austin and the officer fired once, striking the student in the chest, Cochran said.

Cochran said Austin came out of police headquarters with his gun drawn after he heard Collar — a 5-foot-7, 135-pound former high school wrestler — banging on a door. While campus police typically carry pepper spray and a baton, Cochran said Austin was armed only with a gun during the confrontation.

# Sandusky Sentenced To At Least 30 Years

BY MARK SCOLFORO  
 Associated Press

BELLEFONTE, Pa. — Jerry Sandusky, maintaining his innocence, was sentenced Tuesday to at least 30 years in prison — effectively a life sentence — in the child sexual abuse scandal that brought shame to Penn State and led to coach Joe Paterno's downfall.

A defiant Sandusky gave a rambling statement in which he denied the allegations and talked about his life in prison and the pain of being away from his family.

"I've forgiven, I've been forgiven. I've comforted others, I've been comforted. I've been kissed by dogs, I've been bit by dogs," he said. "I've conformed, I've also been different. I've been me. I've been loved, I've been hated."

Three victims spoke, often fighting back tears. One looked Sandusky in the eyes at times. Two of the men exchanged a long embrace after court was adjourned.

The 68-year-old former Penn State assistant coach was found guilty in June of 45 counts of child sexual abuse, convicted of molesting 10 boys over a 15-year period. Witnesses said Sandusky used the charitable organization he founded for troubled children as his personal hunting ground to find and groom boys to become his victims.

Judge John Cleland handed down a 30- to 60-year term. He called Sandusky dangerous, saying he betrayed children and abused their trust.

Sandusky's arrest 11 months ago, and the details that came out during his trial over the summer, transformed Sandusky's public image from a college coach who had been widely admired for his work with The Second Mile charity into that of a reviled pervert who preyed on the very youngsters who sought his help.

Eight of the boys he was found guilty of molesting testified at his trial, describing a range of abuse that included fondling, oral



CHRISTOPHER WEDDLE/CENTRE DAILY TIMES/MCT

Jerry Sandusky, center, is escorted from his sentencing at the Centre County Courthouse in Bellefonte on Tuesday, October 9, 2012. Sandusky, maintaining his innocence, was sentenced Tuesday to at least 30 years in prison, effectively a life sentence, in the child sexual abuse scandal that brought shame to Penn State and led to coach Joe Paterno's downfall.

sex and anal intercourse. One of the prosecution's star witnesses, former graduate assistant Mike McQueary, testified that he saw Sandusky raping a boy in a locker room shower.

Sandusky has consistently maintained his innocence and plans to appeal. One element of the appeal is expected to be a claim that the defense did not have time to adequately prepare for trial. Sandusky was charged in November, following a lengthy investigation.

Sandusky said he knows in his heart that he did not do what he called "disgusting acts," repeating a comment he made in a three-minute monologue that aired Monday

night by Penn State Com Radio. In the radio recording, Sandusky described himself as the victim of a coordinated conspiracy among Penn State, investigators, civil attorneys, the media and others.

His statement in court lasted 15 minutes and his voice cracked as he spoke of missing his loved ones.

"I speak today with hope in my heart for a brighter day, not knowing if that day will come," Sandusky said. "Many moments have been spent looking for a purpose. Maybe it will help others, some vulnerable children who might have been abused, might not be, as a result of the publicity."

## Presidential Campaign

# Race Contested In Far Fewer States Than In Past

BY THOMAS BEAUMONT  
 Associated Press

HARRISBURG, Pa. — So much for Mitt Romney's plans to compete for Democratic-trending Michigan or Pennsylvania. And what about President Barack Obama's early hopes of fighting it out for Republican-tilting Arizona, Georgia or Texas? Forget them.

The presidential battleground map is as compact as it's been in decades, with just nine states seeing the bulk of candidate visits, campaign ads and get-out-the-vote efforts in the hunt for the 270 Electoral College votes needed for victory. That means just a fraction of Americans will determine the outcome of the race for the White House.

"It's difficult if not impossible to pull new states into that kind of competition," said Tad Devine, a Democrat who long has helped his party's presidential nominees craft state-by-state strategies to reach the magic number.

A month before Election Day, that means both candidates are concentrating their precious time and money in the handful of states that still seem to be competitive: Ohio, Florida, Nevada, Colorado, Iowa, Virginia, North Carolina, New Hampshire, and Wisconsin.

Obama succeeded in expanding the map in 2008 by winning the traditionally Republican states of Indiana, North Carolina and Virginia. But it took a Democratic tidal wave to do so, and he was the exception in a nation that's grown increasingly polarized, with demographic shifts heralding Democratic victories in the Northeast and on the West Coast and Republican dominance in the West and South.

"Politics in the country has become homogenized regionally and culturally," said Steve Schmidt, a veteran of Republican presidential campaigns. So, he added: "You're left with the only states that have the population and demographic mix where it's in question who is going to be on top at the finish line."

TV ad money — the best measure of whether a campaign is com-

peting in a state — shows that 93 percent of the \$746 million spent so far, or \$697 million — has poured into the nine battleground states. Less than a quarter of the nation's voters live in those states.

The trend is clear. Over the past 20 years, markedly fewer states have been competitive in presidential elections. In 1992, there were 33 decided by fewer than 10 percentage points. In 2008, just 15.

Despite seemingly having the

money to compete on a bigger playing field, neither Romney nor Obama is going after some states that long had been perennial swing-voting battlegrounds.

Romney hasn't given any love to New Mexico, which now tilts Democratic because of an influx of Hispanics. And the GOP didn't even consider competing in other traditionally Democratic states where the GOP had spent money in past presidential elections, including Minnesota, Oregon, Wash-

ington and Maine.

Obama, for his part, opted against competing in Indiana, a traditionally Republican state that's only grown more conservative after Obama's surprise victory there four years ago. The president also ceded Missouri; it was a presidential bellwether for years before it voted for Republican John McCain over Obama in 2008. And, unlike four years ago, there's been no talk about trying for North Dakota or Montana.

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