

Appendix D

Newspaper Advertisements

As Europe leans secular, some see threat

Jewish leaders fear shift leading to intolerance of some practices

JACK EWING
THE NEW YORK TIMES

HOF, Germany — This sleepy town not far from the Czech border, in a hilly corner of Catholic Bavaria, is an unlikely place to find an active synagogue, and an even unlikelier focal point for a controversy that some see as a threat to religious tolerance in Europe and even the place of Jews in Germany.

Rabbi David Goldberg, a jovial 64-year-old Israeli who serves a community of about 400 Jews in Hof, has become an international cause celebre after four German citizens filed criminal complaints against him with the local prosecutor. His alleged crime, which made headlines in Israel and elsewhere, was performing ritual circumcisions.

The dispute reflects the ever deeper secularization of European life that, in the eyes of some religious leaders, has mutated into a form of intolerance.

This conflict between secular and religious values has most frequently involved Islam, with bans on minarets in Switzerland and veils that cover women's faces in France, not to speak of the recent anti-Islamic video that touched off violent anti-U.S. demonstrations.

Sensitivities were further inflamed Wednesday with the publication in a French magazine of unflattering caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad, several of them showing him naked.

But the debate over ritual circumcision shows that the tensions extend even further.

Goldberg does not seem especially worried. Anyone can file a complaint against anyone else in Germany, and he may never face formal charges. Goldberg has not



German prosecutors are considering charges of assault against Rabbi David Goldberg for having performed circumcisions. Goldberg, a mohel who lives in the German town of Hof, says the potential charges stem from an anti-Semitic court ruling. Claudia Himelreich / McClatchy-Tribune

hired a lawyer and declined an offer from one who was willing to handle the case for free.

The more serious threat, in the eyes of Goldberg and many Jews, Muslims and Christians in Europe, comes from what they see as an attack by secular society on religious ritual, on faith itself.

A seemingly insignificant decision by a lower court in Cologne, against a doctor who circumcised a Muslim boy, has fed a rapidly spreading drive to criminalize a practice that is core to Jewish and Muslim belief.

In contrast to the United States, baby boys in Germany and other European countries are not routinely circumcised for health reasons. The World Health Organization recommends circumcision as a way to reduce the spread of AIDS, but many doctors in European countries regard the practice as harmful and even barbaric.

The line of demarcation between church and state is also different in Germany than in the United States.

Chancellor Angela Merkel leads the Christian Democratic Party and is the daughter of a Protestant pastor. But, in contrast to the displays of piety expected of U.S. politicians, she rarely mentions religion or is photographed attending church.

Nevertheless, Merkel is pushing for legislation to allow circumcision to continue, and she is winning praise from Jewish leaders. And Goldberg says some of the most fervent letters of support he has received have come from religious Christians.

"They know the Bible," he said, speaking in the renovated schoolhouse in a residential neighborhood in Hof that serves as synagogue, community center and residence for him and his family. "They are afraid for their religion as well."

For the more than 100,000 Jews who live in Germany, the tenor of the circumcision debate has come as a shock, undercutting confidence that they had found a secure place in society after the horrors of the Holocaust. Only a few months ago, that

confidence had seemed justified when voters in Frankfurt chose their first Jewish mayor since 1933.

But now, some Jewish leaders say, the circumcision debate has exposed how ignorant many Germans are about Jewish beliefs.

"This discussion has shown that we are foreigners in our own country, doing something that Germans are not supposed to do," said Stephan J. Kramer, secretary general of the Central Council of Jews in Germany. "We are accused of torturing our own children."

Muslims express similar sentiments. "There are more than a few people who have something against Muslims and Jews and they are taking advantage of this," said Aiman A. Mazyek, chairman of the Central Committee of Muslims in Germany.

"They can hide behind this discussion. They can say what they always wanted to say."

A German pediatricians' association, as well as a children's aid group, are helping lead a petition drive calling for a two-year moratorium

on circumcision. For religious Jews, such a moratorium would be catastrophic. The Bible tells them to circumcise a baby boy eight days after birth, unless there is a medical reason to wait.

But Jews in Europe, not just in Germany, say that it is difficult to convince people who are not religious that circumcision is regarded as a command from God, and that without it a young man cannot enter Jewish society.

"It's a secular society. People don't have much sense about religion or much knowledge of religion," said Ervin Kohn, a Jewish leader in Oslo, where a debate about circumcision is also under way. There are about 1,500 Jews in Norway, he said, out of a total population of 4.7 million.

"When people hear debate about circumcision they have trouble connecting it with religious freedom," Kohn said. "When I say that circumcision for us is an existential question, they don't always understand it."

The catalyst for the controversy and the complaints against Goldberg in Hof was a state court decision in Cologne in June that found that a doctor committed criminal bodily injury by performing a circumcision on a 4-year-old Muslim boy.

Under the German legal system, the decision had no binding effect on other judges or prosecutors, even in Cologne, said Jan F. Orth, a judge at the state court there who serves as its spokesman.

A panel of three judges, two of whom were non-lawyers analogous to citizen jurors, did not impose a punishment on the doctor. More than a month went by before the decision was picked up by the German news media. The case is not being appealed and will not go to a higher court, Orth said.

Still, the Cologne case prompted hospitals as far away as Zurich to suspend circumcisions, and it emboldened an anti-circumcision movement in Ger-

many as well as in countries like Denmark that had gone little noticed until then.

Even though the court case involved a Muslim boy, the debate in Germany quickly pivoted to a discussion about Jewish religious practice — and then landed in Hof, a city of 45,000 that has been largely bypassed by the economic boom in the rest of Bavaria. Hof's population has been declining for decades, but the Jewish population has grown.

Gerhard Schmitt, the chief prosecutor in Hof, said he has not yet decided whether to start a formal investigation against Goldberg, much less file charges.

During 15 years in Hof, Goldberg said, he has never encountered anti-Semitism. A handful of neo-Nazis staged a march in May, but local citizens organized a much larger counterdemonstration.

Local Christian leaders have rallied around Goldberg. The Rev. Guenter Saalfrank, a minister who oversees Protestant churches in Hof and the surrounding region, attributed the controversy to ignorance of Judaism and said it is unfortunate that the debate has revolved around the definition of criminal bodily injury.

"It narrows the issue," he said. "Circumcision is about much more than that. It has been done for thousands of years, a totally normal ritual."

There is not much demand for circumcision in Hof. But Goldberg said he has been called to places like Prague and Budapest to perform the ritual, and he estimates that he has done about 4,000 in a long career. He is puzzled by suggestions that circumcisions are harmful to babies.

"In Judaism, the health of the baby is more important than anything," Goldberg said. The harm, he added, would come if the baby was not circumcised. "A man who is not circumcised cannot understand the context of the Bible," he said. "It is very, very important."

'60 Minutes' a preview of presidential debate

JOHN M. BRODER
THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Mitt Romney criticized President Barack Obama in remarks broadcast Sunday for refusing to meet with Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, during this week's U.N. General Assembly meeting, saying it sends a message that the administration is distancing itself from a key Middle East ally.

"I think the exact opposite approach is what's necessary," Romney said on the CBS News program "60 Minutes" on Sunday evening.

Obama, speaking in a separate interview on the same program, said that he speaks frequently with Netanyahu and described Israel as "one of our closest allies in the region."

He also challenged Romney, who has accused Obama of not standing up forcefully

enough to Syria and Iran, to be more specific about his foreign policy plans.

"So if Gov. Romney is suggesting that we should start another war," Obama said, "he should say so."

The two presidential contenders carried out a shadow debate that offered a likely preview of the tone and substance of the first of their three face-to-face debates, to be held in Denver on Oct. 3.

Romney tried once again to undo some of the damage done by remarks to a group of wealthy donors recorded in May and released last week, in which he said that 47 percent of the American people paid no income taxes, were dependent on government and would never vote for him. Republican critics have called for a shake-up in the Romney campaign in the wake of the furor over the remarks and other issues.



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Libyan militias resist bid to control them

GOVERNMENT WANTS THEM TO FALL IN LINE

But challenge emerges from security forces

BY MEL FRYKBERG
McClatchy Newspapers

CAIRO — The Libyan government said late Saturday that all of Libya's militias would be brought under government control or forced to disband within 48 hours, but was quickly challenged.

"We are disbanding all armed groups that do not fall under the authority of the government," said Mohammed Magarief, president of the General National Congress. "We are also banning the use of violence and carrying of weapons in public places. It is also illegal to set up checkpoints."

Within hours, however, the government faced its first challenge from some of its in-subordinate security forces and the extrajudicial militias.

On Saturday afternoon Libya's Tripoli Rixos hotel was stormed by members of the Supreme Security Council (SSC) — an amalgamation of security forces under the jurisdiction of the interior ministry — who threatened to blow it up. The Rixos Hotel is a de facto headquarters for the Libyan government.

The SSC men were angered by a lack of support



MOHAMMAD HANNON / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
Libyan soldiers prepare to enter a militia compound in Benghazi on Saturday. The government said militias would be brought under its control or forced to disband.

from the Defense Ministry after fierce fighting between the SSC and alleged Moammar Gadhafi loyalists in the central Libyan town of Brak.

Clashes started Wednesday after SSC members tried to arrest a number of Gadhafi sympathizers celebrating Gadhafi's "Fateh Revolution Day" on Sept. 1.

Many of the SSC members are Salafists, and the group is said to be sympathetic to the Muslim Brotherhood.

In the arrest attempts, they

shot dead the sister of a sympathizer as they tried to arrest her brother at the family home.

During the fighting, six people, mostly SSC members, were killed.

There was a lull on Thursday, but on Friday deadlier clashes broke out with 16 SSC members killed and 50 wounded.

During the week preceding the bloody confrontations, tensions had been building in the town after alleged mis-

treatment of locals by the SSC.

After running low on ammunition, the SSC men withdrew from Brak and returned to Tripoli with the bodies of their comrades. They then stormed the Rixos Hotel after claiming that Interior Minister Fawzi Abdel Al and Defense Minister Osama Juwai-

ly had refused to provide them with weapons, more ammunition and ambulances despite promises made by the defense ministry.

The two men also had ignored their repeated requests for a meeting.

The incident ended without casualties.

However, at least 14 people were killed and more than 70 wounded after the storming of several militia bases in Benghazi by thousands of unarmed, angry Libyans on Friday.

The attack on the militia bases followed a "Save Benghazi" mass demonstration held to protest the deteriorating security situation in the eastern city, where there has been a spate of kidnappings, bombings and assassinations over the past few months.

Libyans have been angered by what they see as government complacency and even collusion in a number of militia attacks, including the targeting of Sufi shrines and mosques in several cities.

However, the killing of U.S. Ambassador Christopher Stevens and three other Americans, allegedly by Islamists from the Ansar Al-Sharia Militia, during the

storming of the U.S. Consulate several weeks ago was a trigger.

The Libyan government has been either unwilling or unable to control the hundreds of armed militias that still control large areas of the country.

Unarmed, thousands of protesters set the headquarters of Ansar Al Sharia ablaze, forcing the gunmen to flee. They then moved on to other militia bases that were not connected with the Islamists and forced the gunmen there also to flee.

The reprisals began early the next morning when the bodies of five soldiers from the defense ministry were found on the outskirts of Benghazi. They had been shot in the head, and their hands were tied behind their backs. A sixth member remains in critical condition in a hospital.

The killing of the five soldiers, who were not related to any militia or Salafist group, was thought to have been carried out by militia members in revenge for what they said was the involvement of the army and police in helping to orchestrate Friday's protests that targeted them.

Rebel groups united only in their cause

FIGHTING ASSAD IN SYRIA

Some are getting outside help

BY DAVID ENDERS
McClatchy Newspapers

BAB AL HOWA, Syria — When members of the Farouq Battalions first began to wear distinctive green T-shirts with their fighting unit's logo in the spring, you could see them only around Homs, more than 100 miles south of the crossing point of Bab al Howa along the border with Turkey.

Now, however, they can be seen not only in Bab al Howa, one of two crossing points the Syrian rebels control, but also all over northern Syria, a sign that as the war goes on, some of the rebel groups that began as local rebellions now stretch throughout the country, with a chain of command that's national in scope; in Farouq's case, stretching all the way to Damascus.

Farouq's T-shirts identify their wearers as part of the Free Syrian Army, but Farouq itself has no operational links to the former army officers who defected to Turkey and who nominally claim leadership of the rebel fighting force. Neither do a number of other battalions and brigades, big and small, that have emerged across the country. By one count, there are more than 600 battalions, though fewer than 10 are organized across large swaths of territory.

The news-media convention of referring to all these groups as the Free Syrian Army is accurate only in that they all oppose the government of President Bashar Assad. In reality, they're independent actors, sharing little in ideologies or resources.

In northern Syria, the largest of these groups is Ahrar al Sham, a unit whose fighters generally belong to the conservative Salafi strain of Islam and have proudly hoisted their banner from Aleppo to the outskirts of Hama. There are even reports of them fighting as far south as Syria's border with Jordan.

"If you want to join Ahrar al-Sham, you have to pray," said one Ahrar fighter near the city of Hama, who spoke on the condition of anonymity out of security concerns.

In Aleppo, the country's largest city, the Tawhid Brigade controls the largest number of fighters, many of whom also espouse a fundamentalist Islamist creed.

In Damascus, much of the fight is led by the Islam Brigade, which a Syrian analyst, who also spoke on the condition of anonymity for securi-

ty reasons, described as a grouping of battalions that also are primarily Salafists.

The idea that army defectors make up much of the rebel forces has long been a myth, one that in past months rebel media spokesmen have done less to promote. Farouq's fighters are largely volunteers, as are those of Ahrar al-Sham.

"We are making a lot of progress. In the past, we were unorganized; now we are much more systematic and organized," said Khalid Amin, a member of Ahrar al-Sham in Qalat al Mudiq, a city of about 30,000 in the western part of Syria where rebels move with relative ease and use the space they've carved out to train and to construct weapons.

Though the rebels largely solved problems with acquiring light weapons and ammunition earlier this year, Amin said both remained expensive. That's a major impediment, the rebels say.

Rebels in Turkey and Syria confirmed that Saudi Arabia and Qatar are providing financial support for different rebel groups. They said the Qatari government was directly involved in supporting groups associated with the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood, a longtime opponent of the Assad dynasty, and that Saudi Arabia was channeling money to Salafi groups such as Ahrar al-Sham.

The Farouq Battalions, fighters said, get support from both governments and the Muslim Brotherhood. Many fighters said that even though the Brotherhood has no network in Syria, its alliance with the Qatari government had given it significant economic clout.

In rural areas outside Hama, the rebels have set up local administrations to take care of basic governmental functions. The most senior military and police defectors are responsible for, among other things, trash collection, controlling the prices of fuel and bread, and filling the security vacuum left by government officials who fled.

Demonstrating some of its newfound organization, the military council in Hama recently distributed a list of local members of Assad's Syrian Arab Baath party, which has controlled the country for decades.

The military council has registered more than 400 army defectors, issuing papers to protect them from arrest at rebel checkpoints. It holds court sessions four days a week — at night, because most of the assaults take place during the day.

The council is also responsible for negotiating with the government when soldiers

are captured. Some are traded for prisoners held by the government. Others are released after their families pay ransoms.

While some rebel organizations claim to police their ranks, the chaos in Syria makes it easy to shift blame. In Aleppo, Abdul Hakim, who is in charge of security for Tawhid Brigade, shrugged off questions recently about the executions of 20 government soldiers, as depicted in a video.

"Those people died fighting," Hakim said, although the video showed a line of men who appeared to have been mowed down in place. Off camera, two people can be heard discussing whether recording the scene was a good idea.

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White House narrative on Benghazi attack evolved

Reason for shift in administration accounts a mystery

HANNAH ALLAM AND JONATHAN S. LANDAY
MCCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

WASHINGTON, D.C. — In the first 48 hours after the deadly Sept. 11 attacks on U.S. diplomatic outposts in Libya, senior Obama administration officials strongly alluded to a terrorist assault and repeatedly declined to link it to an anti-Muslim video that drew protests elsewhere in the region, transcripts of briefings show.

The administration's initial accounts, however, changed dramatically in the following days, according to a review of briefing transcripts and administration statements, with a new narrative emerging Sept. 16 when U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Susan Rice asserted in a series of TV appearances that the best information available indicated that the attack had spun off from a protest over the video.

What prompted that pivot remains a mystery amid a closely contested presidential election and Republican allegations that President Barack Obama intentionally used outrage over the video to mask administration policy missteps that led to the deaths of four Americans, including U.S. Ambassador to Libya Christopher Stevens. The issue is sure to arise when Obama and Republican rival Mitt Romney meet Monday to debate foreign policy.

Paul Pillar, a former top U.S. intelligence analyst on the Middle East, said that it's natural with such incidents for accounts to change as new information is gathered. "You have not only a fog of war situation, but fragmen-

tary, incomplete information, and as the responsible agencies develop and acquire better information, the explanations are naturally going to evolve," he said.

But the administration's statements offer an ironic twist on the "fog-of-war" phenomenon: They apparently were more accurate on the day after the attacks than they were when Rice made her TV appearances four days later. Administration officials so far have provided no detailed explanation for the change.

Tommy Vietor, a spokesman for the National Security Council, declined to comment for this report beyond saying, "These issues have been covered in countless comments by the president and briefings."

State Department deputy spokesman Mark Toner declined to address specifics. "An independent board is conducting a thorough review of the assault on our post in Benghazi. Once we have the board's comprehensive account of what happened, findings and recommendations, we can fully address these matters," he said in an email.

On the day after the attack, transcripts show, senior administration officials, briefing reporters, declined in response to three direct questions to link the Benghazi assaults to protests over the video. One senior official told reporters during the briefing that "unidentified Libyan extremists" launched what was "clearly a complex attack." The official isn't named because such briefings typically come on the condition of anonymity.

At campaign stops in Colorado and Nevada the next day, Sept. 13, Obama referred to the Benghazi assault as "an act of terror." At the State Department press briefing that day,

spokeswoman Victoria Nuland was asked directly and repeatedly whether there was a link between the video protests and the attack on the U.S. consulate.

While she mentioned that commentary on social media was making the link "to this reprehensible video," Nuland emphasized several times that there wasn't enough information for officials to make that leap, even though some news reports, including those of The New York Times and Agence France Presse, were citing unnamed witnesses in Libya who said that anger over the video was the reason the consulate was targeted.

"We are very cautious about drawing any conclusions with regard to who the perpetrators were, what their motivations were, whether it was premeditated, whether they had any external contacts, whether there was any link, until we have a chance to investigate along with the Libyans," Nuland said.

That evening, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton presided over a State Department reception marking an Islamic holiday; her remarks made no mention of a protest and made only passing reference to reports that listed "inflammatory material posted on the Internet" as a possible motive.

One of the speakers, Ali Suleiman Aujali, the Libyan ambassador to the United States, told Clinton and the other attendees in no uncertain terms that what happened in Benghazi was a terrorist attack.

"I hope that this sad incident which happened, this terrorist attack which took

place against the American consulate in Libya, it will tell us how much we have to work closely," Aujali said, according to the official transcript.

The story, however, began to change the next day, Sept. 14.

With images of besieged U.S. missions in the Middle East still leading the evening news, White House press secretary Jay Carney became the first official to back away from the earlier declaration that the Benghazi assault was a "complex attack" by extremists. Instead, Carney told reporters, authorities "have no information to suggest that it was a preplanned attack." He added that there was no reason to think that the Benghazi attack wasn't related to the video, given that the clip had sparked protests in many Muslim cities.

"The unrest that we've seen around the region has been in reaction to a video that Muslims, many Muslims, find offensive," Carney said.

When pressed by reporters who pointed out evidence that the violence in Benghazi was preplanned, Carney said that "news reports" had speculated about the motive. He noted again that "the unrest around the region has been in response to this video."

Carney then launched into remarks that read like talking points in defense of the U.S. decision to intervene in last year's uprising against Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi: that post-Gadhafi Libya, he said, is "one of the more pro-American countries in the region," that it's led by a new government "that has just come out of a

revolution," and that the lack of security capabilities there "is not necessarily reflective of anything except for the remarkable transformation that's been going on in the region."

By that Sunday, Sept. 16, the evolution of the narrative was complete when Rice, the U.N. ambassador, showed up on all five major morning talk shows to make the most direct public connection yet between the Benghazi assault and the incendiary video.

While she couched her remarks in caveats — "based on the information we have at present," for example — Rice clearly intended to make the link before a large American audience.

According to the then-current assessment, Rice told ABC's "This Week," the attack was "a spontaneous — not a premeditated — response to what had transpired in Cairo" — a reference to a demonstration triggered by the anti-Muslim video in which hundreds breached the U.S. Embassy compound there and tore down the American flag. Rice repeated the claim throughout her talk-show appearances and later blamed intelligence services for giving her incorrect information before she went on air.

The next day, Nuland faced pointed questions about Rice's remarks from the State Department press corps, which noted that even the Libyan president was describing the events as a coordinated terrorist operation. Fielding a barrage of questions from reporters trying to pin down the administration's position in light of

the divergent statements, Nuland defended Rice's remarks with a repeated line about the ambassador's statements accurately reflecting "our government's initial assessment."

On Sept. 19, as the video story began to collapse amid news reports from Libya and intelligence leaks from Washington, D.C., that pointed to a premeditated attack, the administration's story underwent yet another alteration in what seems to be an effort to reconcile the dueling narratives.

At a congressional hearing, Matthew Olsen, director of the National Counterterrorism Center, offered testimony that wove together both versions. He called it a "terrorist attack," but also deemed it an "opportunistic attack." He made no specific mention of a preceding demonstration over the video — witnesses interviewed by McClatchy Newspapers for stories on Sept. 12 and 13 had said there was no protest — but did say that the violence "evolved and escalated over several hours."

"What we don't have at this point is specific intelligence that there was a significant advanced planning or coordination for this attack," Olsen testified.

Under intense pressure from Republican critics over the handling of the Benghazi aftermath, the Obama administration finally came full circle on Sept. 20, returning to what Libyan and U.S. officials had said at the very beginning: the attack on the Benghazi consulate was separate from the region's video protests and bore the hallmarks of a terrorist attack.

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Environmental Impact Statement

Proposed Gateway Pacific Terminal/Custer Spur

Participate in scoping the environmental impact statement for the Gateway Pacific Terminal and Custer Spur modification proposal

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Provide scoping comments:

- Mail to:
GPT/BNSF Custer Spur EIS Co-Lead Agencies c/o CH2M HILL
1100 112th Avenue NE, Suite 400
Bellevue, WA 98004
- Email to: comments@eisgatewaypacificwa.gov
- Participate in an online meeting and submit comments at www.eisgatewaypacificwa.gov
- Attend a scoping meeting

Attend an upcoming meeting:

Bellingham
11 am–3 pm Sat., Oct. 27
Squalicum High School
3773 E McLeod Road
Bellingham, WA

In addition to this meeting, the Co-Lead Agencies will host six other meetings around the state. Visit www.eisgatewaypacificwa.gov or call 360-398-5087 to learn more.

To ensure equal access, the Co-Lead Agencies will provide auxiliary aids/services to persons with disabilities. Please call the project hotline at 360-398-5087 with any requests. Persons with hearing loss can call 711 for Washington Relay Service. Persons with a speech disability can call 877-833-6341. All meeting-related requests must be received 72 hours in advance.

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Letters:

Continued from page 6

The hearing will be held in Friday Harbor, Saturday, Nov. 3, at Friday Harbor High School (45 Blair Avenue) from noon to 3 p.m.

A scoping hearing for GPT in the San Juans was far from a given. We were granted this hearing because many community members, local organizations and our county council asked for it.

I would like to thank everyone who helped with the effort. We put our county and the larger Salish Sea on the map. We have successfully shown that San Juan islanders are ready to take action and protect the Salish Sea from the negative impacts of coal exporting and the lead permitting agencies for GPT are coming to listen to our concerns.

We need a huge turnout at the scoping hearing. With the San Juan Islands in the heart of the Salish Sea, we will be at the center of environmental impacts resulting from increased shipping of coal exports — 947 transits of giant bulk carriers are proposed for GPT.

Join your community on Nov. 3 if you are concerned about the increased likelihood of an oil spill, the safety of recreational, commercial, and tribal boaters, impacts of increased vessel traffic on orca, fish, birds and other wildlife; the introduction of invasive species in ballast water and increases in ocean acidification associated with the carbon dioxide emissions from burning fuel and coal.

Attending the scoping hearing on Nov. 3 and commenting on GPT are the most important actions you can take to date on this issue. Please mark your calendars.

KATIE FLEMING
San Juan Island

— Editor's note: Katie Fleming is Friends of the San Juans community engagement director.

I-502: bad idea, poor public policy

Regardless of the outcome of I-502, the marijuana legalization initiative on our ballot, the following facts remain.

Marijuana is a schedule 1 controlled substance. Marijuana will still be unlawful to possess, manufacture or deliver under federal law. Marijuana is addictive and it impairs a person's ability to function.

If I-502 were to pass, marijuana would become more available and more pervasive in Washington, placing our youth and our communities at further risk. Under I-502, marijuana remains unlawful for people under 21, similar to alcohol. I-502 puts the state in the marijuana business, in competition with the current drug traffickers. If having the state in the liquor business was a bad idea, how can this even be considered?

Many of you have expressed grave concern about the drug problems in our island communities. I-502 is a bad idea, it is bad public policy and creates more problems than it will solve. Read the measure very carefully before casting your ballot, and join me in voting "No" on I-502.

ROB NOU
San Juan Island

— Editor's note: elected in

2010, Rob Nou is in the second year of a 4-year term as SJC sheriff.

Parties agree? Gotta' like that

There has been a lot of discussion in our community lately on proposed amendments to our county charter, which are on the ballot in the upcoming election.

Many opponents of these amendments have written lengthy letters explaining why they should not be approved. At first glance, the whole thing looks very complicated, perhaps even beyond the grasp of the average citizen who does not have a lot of time to spend

following local government. Which way should we vote on this important issue?

In my opinion, it's not complicated. Two facts stand out to me.

One, the Charter Review Commission that created these amendments was a very diverse group. The commissioners came from all over the county and represented many political viewpoints. They spent countless hours interviewing people with direct experience in local government, defining and researching the issues, and working out improvements to our charter.

The vast majority of these commissioners voted in favor of putting these

amendments before us, the voters. To me, this is a remarkable effort should not be ignored.

Two, our local Republican and Democratic parties have both endorsed the charter amendments. If this isn't bipartisan agreement, I don't know what is.

Please join me in voting "Yes" on charter amendments 1, 2, and 3.

DAVID MEILAND
San Juan Island

Better science is in our backyard

It is without dispute that the San Juan County is to review the current critical areas ordinance and "include the best available science" in

the update of its regulations (RCW 36.70A.172). One of the most glaring problems with the draft ordinance is that the county is incontestably in possession of better available science.

The proposed ordinance maps wetlands using a LIDAR survey which measures geographic contours. This technology does not define with any precision the boundaries of wetlands. In fact, in many areas, this technology erroneously identifies wetlands which, after physical inspection, do not actually exist. In simple terms, the critical areas wetlands as identified in the proposed CAO can only charitably be described as

See LETTERS, Page 12



Combined NEPA/SEPA

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High court weighs new look at voting rights law

By JAY REEVES and MARK SHERMAN
Associated Press

Three years ago, the Supreme Court warned there could be constitutional problems with a landmark civil rights law that has opened voting booths to millions of African-Americans. Now, opponents of a key part of the Voting Rights Act are asking the high court to finish off that provision.

The basic question is whether state and local governments that once boasted of their racial discrimination still can be forced in the 21st century to get federal permission before making changes in the way they hold elections.

Some of the governments covered — most of them are in the South — argue

they have turned away from racial discrimination over the years. But Congress and lower courts that have looked at recent challenges to the law concluded that a history of discrimination and more recent efforts to harm minority voters justify continuing federal oversight.

The Supreme Court could say as early as today whether it will consider ending the Voting Rights Act's advance approval requirement that has been held up as a crown jewel of the civil rights era.

The justices sidestepped this very issue in a case from Texas in 2009. In an opinion joined by eight justices, Chief Justice John Roberts wrote then that the issue of advance approval "is a difficult constitutional question we do not answer today."

Since then, Congress has not addressed potential

problems identified by the court. Meanwhile, the law's opponents sensed its vulnerability and filed several new lawsuits.

The advance approval, or preclearance requirement, was adopted in the Voting Rights Act in 1965 to give federal officials a potent tool to defeat persistent efforts to keep blacks from voting.

The provision was a huge success, and Congress periodically has renewed it over the years. The most recent occasion was in 2006, when a Republican-led Congress overwhelmingly approved and President George W. Bush signed a 25-year extension.

The requirement currently applies to the states of Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Texas and Virginia. It also covers

certain counties in California, Florida, New York, North Carolina and South Dakota, and some local jurisdictions in Michigan and New Hampshire. Coverage has been triggered by past discrimination not only against blacks, but also against American Indians, Asian-Americans, Alaskan Natives and Hispanics.

Before these locations can change their voting rules, they must get approval either from the U.S. Justice Department's civil rights division or from the federal district court in Washington that the new rules won't discriminate.

Congress compiled a 15,000-page record and documented hundreds of instances of apparent voting discrimination in the states covered by the law dating to 1982, the last time it had

been extended.

Among the incidents in the congressional record:

■ In 1998, Webster County, Ga., tried to reduce the black population in several school board districts after citizens elected a majority-black school board for the first time.

■ In 2001, Kilmichael, Miss., canceled an election when a large number of African-American candidates sought local office following 2000 census results that showed blacks had become the majority in the city.

■ In 2004, Waller County, Texas, sought to limit early voting near a historically black college and threatened

to prosecute students for illegal voting after two black students said they would run for office.

But in 2009, Roberts indicated the court was troubled about the ongoing need for a law in the face of dramatically improved conditions, including increased minority voter registration and turnout rates. Roberts attributed part of the change to the law itself. "Past success alone, however, is not adequate justification to retain the preclearance requirements," he said.

He also raised concern that the formula by which states are covered relies on data that is now 40 years old. By some measures, states covered by the law were outperforming some that were not.

East Coast storm wreaks havoc on presidential race

Associated Press

the two White House hopefuls reshuffled their campaign plans as the storm approached. Both can-

didates were loath to for- Ohio before heading Monday to Wisconsin, where Romney has chipped away at Obama's lead.

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Bellevue, WA 98004
- Email to: comments@eisgatewaypacificwa.gov
- Participate in an online meeting and submit comments at www.eisgatewaypacificwa.gov
- Attend a scoping meeting

Attend an upcoming meeting:

Mount Vernon
4-7 pm Mon., Nov. 5
McIntyre Hall
2501 E College Way
Mount Vernon, WA

In addition to this meeting, the Co-Lead Agencies will host other meetings around the state. Visit www.eisgatewaypacificwa.gov or call 360-398-5087 to learn more.

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going, nothing, as well.

The Skagit Valley Herald takes a look at the jail issue in a five-part series that will run Sundays through Nov. 4.



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Dr. Hawkins' Education:

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- INTERNSHIP - Virginia Mason Medical Center General Surgery - Seattle, WA (2008)
- RESIDENCY - Virginia Mason Medical Center General Surgery - Seattle, WA (2012)

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000 10/29

Inslee holds on to lead over McKenna

GOVERNOR

BY JIM BRUNNER
AND JUSTIN MAYO
Seattle Times staff reporters

Democrat Jay Inslee maintained a 50,000-vote lead in the gubernatorial race Thursday night, and despite the long odds against a comeback, Republican Rob McKenna continued to insist he'll close the gap and win as the final votes are tallied.

With an estimated 770,000 votes left to be counted, time is running out for McKenna, whose vote deficit has remained nearly unchanged since Election Day.

Governor's race

As of
10 p.m.
Thursday
Jay Inslee (D)

51.13%
1,230,618

Rob McKenna (R)

48.87%
1,176,220

To catch up, the Republican would need to grab 54 percent of the remaining votes — a target he has not hit on any day of vote-counting so far.

In Thursday's count, McKenna received 48.9 percent of the vote from the 20 counties that reported results. That's an improvement from Election Day in those same counties, when he got 47.6 percent. But it was down from Wednesday's tally when he got 50.4 percent.

If the vote in King County stays the same, McKenna would need 62 percent of the estimated remaining votes outside King County to pull even. McKenna is now getting 53.4 percent outside the county and 37.8 percent within.

Inslee, the former Democratic congressman from Bainbridge Island, already has started planning his transition team for the governor's office.

But McKenna's campaign was digging in for a fight — arguing that the outcome may not be known until the weekend or later. The two-term attorney general is trying to become the first Republican governor of the state in three decades.

Randy Pepple, McKenna's campaign manager, recorded a video for supporters Thursday in which he scrawled out vote numbers on a whiteboard to explain his theory on why a win was still possible.

In a conference call with reporters Thursday night, Pepple said the campaign's internal tracking polls showed late voters breaking for McKenna by 2-to-1. Two independent polls shortly before Election Day also showed a possibility that McKenna would do better among later voters.

Pepple declined to release the campaign's polling: "You can either believe me or not believe me, I suppose."

Sterling Clifford, an Inslee campaign spokesman, said the math continues to point to an Inslee victory. "The

McKenna campaign seems to think they can lose a little on every sale and make it up on volume. The numbers just aren't there for him."

Scraping for every last vote, McKenna's campaign said its field staffers are focusing on about 18,000 challenged ballots across

the state. Those ballots are frequently flagged by elections officials because signatures on the ballot envelopes do not match the ones on file. They are set aside and not counted unless officials can verify the identity of the voter.

Such "ballot rehab" efforts

are commonplace for campaigns, especially in close elections. Clifford said Democrats also have staff monitoring challenged ballots from their supporters to ensure they are counted.

Jim Brunner: 206-515-5628 or jbrunner@seattletimes.com. On Twitter @Jim_Brunner.



Jay Inslee

Rob McKenna

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- Participate in an online meeting and submit comments at www.eisgatewaypacificwa.gov
- Attend a scoping meeting

Meeting rescheduled:

Seattle 4-7 pm Tuesday, Nov. 13 North Seattle Comm. Coll. Wellness Center Gym 9600 College Way N Seattle, WA	Seattle 4-7 pm Thursday, Dec. 13 Washington State Convention Center Ballroom 6F 800 Convention Place Seattle, WA
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Visit www.eisgatewaypacificwa.gov or call 360-398-5087 to learn more.

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Holiday bazaar brings vendors downtown

Old Jarvie's Department Store building to be full every Saturday

By Mark Reimers
 The quarterly lunch pro-
 ceedings were held at a Leadership Lunch event on Nov. 16.

building was most recently vacated by a tenant earlier this year, leaving Larson and her sister with needed renovations but open options.

However, with no renter at the moment, Larson is more than happy for the building to find some use.

Saturday's kickoff of the

The students, who were nominated by faculty in their respective departments, were:

Gilmore (Manufacturing and Supply Chain Management), of Spokane; Andrew Crouse, (Management and Finance), of Arlington; Stephanie Hermanutz (Accounting and Finance), of Bellingham; and Eric Gillison (Financial Economics and Accounting), of Kirkland.



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Chamber News

The Ferndale Chamber of Commerce welcomed several new members in October:

- AAA of Washington (Insurance) - Anthony Medawar in Bellingham.
- Gym Star Sports Center (Healthcare & Nutrition) - Carolyn Saletto in Ferndale.
- Waddell & Reed (Financial Services) - Sam Aldrich in Bellingham.

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The New Ferndale Public Library



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- Participate in an online meeting and submit comments at www.eisgatewaypacificwa.gov
- Attend a scoping meeting

Attend an upcoming meeting:

Ferndale
 3-7 pm Thurs., Nov. 29
 Ferndale Events Center
 5715 Barrett Road
 Ferndale, WA

In addition to this meeting, the Co-Lead Agencies will host other meetings around the state. Visit www.eisgatewaypacificwa.gov or call 360-398-5087 to learn more.

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COMMUNITY MEALS

THANKSGIVING DAY

► Five Columns Restaurant, 1301 E. Maple St., Bellingham, offers traditional Thanksgiving dinner with all the trimmings served free to those 65 and over from noon to 2 p.m. Restaurant open noon to 8 p.m. for either the Thanksgiving meal or its regular dinner menu at usual prices. Call 360-676-9900 for reservations.

► American Legion Family Post 86 will serve a free community Thanksgiving feast with a traditional menu from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Blaine Senior Center, 763 G. St. The event is open to everyone.

► Good Burger's fifth annual free Thanksgiving dinner will be in a new location — Lee's Drive-In at the corner of James and Alabama streets in Bellingham — this year. Traditional Thanksgiving meal served noon to 3 p.m. (despite the name, Lee's has lots of indoor seating).

FRIDAY, NOV. 23

► Lighthouse Mission free community meal will be noon to 2 p.m. at Assumption Catholic Church gym, 2116 Cornwall Ave., Bellingham.

Free meal a tradition for 40 years

HOLIDAY MEALS from A1

volunteers arrive, half in the morning, half later in the day, to work in the kitchen, bus tables and serve turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, side dishes and dessert.

Earlier this week, about 20 other volunteers showed up Tuesday and Wednesday night to chop onions, peel potatoes, tear up loaves of bread for stuffing and do other prep work.

Local longshoremen donate the turkeys, about 28 of them; local grocers and food suppliers donate assorted foods.

"Pretty much anybody I ask

donates something," Brainard said. "Everybody steps up to the plate."

Old Town workers cook the turkeys ahead of time. "We have a turkey cooking factory for like three days," Brainard said.

At St. Paul's Episcopal Church, members sign up to provide a total of 30 pumpkin or fruit pies, 30 side dishes and cookies, said Mary Horton, who oversees the operation for the church.

"Whatever we don't have is what I usually do," she said. "If we need more pies, I'll make a pie."

Folks at St. Paul's have helping for 12 years, maybe longer, Horton said.

"It's been a real privilege for us to do it," she said.

Sometimes, random community members bring side dishes or a warm pie because

they want to help, too.

"It's all by donation, all by volunteers, and it goes off without a hitch," Zener said.

PEOPLE ARRIVE EARLY

If this Thanksgiving is like other Thanksgivings at Old Town, people will line up an hour or two before the doors open at 10 a.m. If they do, volunteers will be waiting for them with hot coffee and something to nosh on, perhaps cookies or doughnuts.

"The whole idea is to make everyone feel like this is all about them," Zener said.

Homeless people show up, to be sure, but so do many other people. Single people. College students. Longtime cafe customers. Parents with kids. Friends and family of volunteers. People who just want to share in the good feelings.

It's crowded, but people

don't mind.

"Everyone who's there is happy and positive," said longtime volunteer Wendy Bevan, who owns a hair salon in Fairhaven. "That sounds too Pollyanna, but it's really true."

People eat to the accompaniment of local musicians who sign up for 40-minute slots. Chad Petersen, a guitarist when he's not working as a computer technician at Western Washington University, lines up the entertainment and loans his Bose sound system for the occasion.

"If everybody else would take care of each other like we do on Thanksgiving, it would be a better world," he said.

Contact Dean Kahn at dean.kahn@bellinghamherald.com or 360-715-2291.

Israeli army to remain at borders

CEASE-FIRE from A1

Hamas officials, served as a proxy for Hamas' interests.

An Israeli government source told McClatchy Newspapers that Israel and Hamas have agreed to a cessation of all violence as the first stage of the cease-fire agreement. He explained that there would be a second stage in which the finer details of a truce would be hammered out.

"There is going to be an ongoing process of negotiation and discussion. There will be a dialogue on those issues, those details, that in a second stage will start within 24 hours," the official said. "Israel has achieved its primary goal, which is peace and quiet in the south."

He said topics that could come under discussion in the second stage included an eas-

ing of the blockade in Gaza and an end to the flow of arms reaching militant groups in the Gaza Strip.

An Egyptian official said Israel had agreed to allow some goods to enter Gaza after a five-year blockade but offered no specifics.

The announcement, the first of several agreements, addressed the most pressing issue: ending the violence.

In the meantime, Egypt said it would work with all parties to monitor the implementation of the cease-fire, Morsi spokesman Yasser Ali said.

Senior Israeli military officials told McClatchy that the army had been told that if and when a cease-fire was to go into effect, the army would remain in place in case hostilities continued.

"A cease-fire deal is for politicians. As the army, we will continue our presence along Gaza's borders. We will not fire unless they fire. But we will not lower our guard," said an official in the southern command.

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Environmental Impact Statement Proposed Gateway Pacific Terminal/Custer Spur

Participate in scoping the environmental impact statement for the Gateway Pacific Terminal and Custer Spur modification proposal

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Provide scoping comments:

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- Email to: comments@eisgatewaypacificwa.gov
- Participate in an online meeting and submit comments at www.eisgatewaypacificwa.gov
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Attend an upcoming meeting:

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Ferndale Events Center
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PEOPLE / FROM THE FRONT PAGE

PEOPLE | From wire reports

Carter back in Haiti to help build houses

Former U.S. President **Jimmy Carter** on Monday urged donors to honor the billion-dollar pledges they made to help Haiti rebuild after its devastating 2010 earthquake.



Carter

Carter's call for greater humanitarian aid to Haiti came on the first day of a weeklong effort to build 100 homes with about 600 Habitat for Humanity volunteers.

It was the second time in the past year that Carter, 88, and his wife, **Rosalynn**, have come to help house people displaced at the epicenter of the disaster.

Donor nations and institutions promised \$4.46 billion to help Haiti after the quake. But only a little more than half of that money has been released, according to the U.N. Office of the Special Envoy for Haiti.

Comedy actor calls his show 'filth'

The teenage actor who plays the half in the hit CBS comedy "Two and a Half Men" says in a video posted online by a Christian church that the show is "filth" and that viewers shouldn't watch it.



Jones

Nineteen-year-old **Angus T. Jones** has been on the show, which used to feature bad-boy actor **Charlie Sheen** and remains heavy with sexual innuendo, since he was 10 but says he doesn't want to be on it anymore.

"Please stop watching it," Jones said. "Please stop filling your head with filth."

Jones plays Jake, the son of **Jon Cryer's** uptight divorced chiropractor character, Alan.

In the video posted by the Forerunner Christian Church in Fremont, Calif., Jones describes a search for a spiritual home. "I'm not OK with what I'm learning, what the Bible says, and being on that television show," he said.

John dedicates Beijing show to Ai

Pop icon **Elton John** publicly dedicated his only concert in Beijing to Chinese artist and political critic **Ai Weiwei**, sending a murmur of shock through an audience accustomed to tight censorship of entertainment.

Minutes into a more than two-hour show Sunday night, John told the audience that the performance was dedicated "to the spirit and talent of Ai Weiwei," according to several audience members.

An internationally acclaimed sculptor and installation artist, Ai has used his art and his renown to draw attention to social injustice. He was detained for nearly three months last year, and he remains barred from leaving China.

Ai and John met each other briefly on Sunday before the concert. "I super like him," Ai said on his feed on Twitter, which is banned in China.

The birthday bunch

Actor **James Avery** ("The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air") is 64. Director **Kathryn Bigelow** is 61. TV personality **Bill Nye** is 57. Actor **Michael Vartan** is 44. Actor **Jaleel White** ("Family Matters") is 36. Actress **Alison Pill** is 27.

YOGA

Continued from A1

upgrade, perhaps, from their original name: "old fat guys and their hot chicks."

Yoga helped with age-related pain

Of Pat Lacy's friends, many of whom he's known from childhood or plays golf with regularly, everyone was dealing with some sort of health issue.

Back, knee and shoulder problems were the most common, he said, and several people told them yoga would help.

But the first few times he and a friend attended a class, they weren't able to keep up.

"There was a wide variation of ability, and we were at the very bottom of ability," he said.

That's when they approached Scanlon about a private group just for older folks.

Lacy said the class has made all the difference in his health and has kept him "feeling young."

"That's what brought me here, was so that I could continue to enjoy the things I like so much," Lacy said. "I think this more than anything has contributed to that."

After taking a monthlong break from yoga last year, Lacy said, his back was "screaming."

Scanlon said the early days were slow. She used several props, including the wall, chairs and blocks, to help the group with their balance.

"Slowly but surely, they each started to be able to do stuff," she said. "And then at the same time the whole ability of the whole class started to change."

The classes are challenging, partly because the room is set at

about 85 degrees. Using the wall or any other modification is always an option, and no one is pressured into trying things that make them too uncomfortable. Most of the participants said they are otherwise active people, whether it be golf or skiing, and several of them walk together for an hour on Wednesdays. Their professions range from real estate to massage therapy.

When new people join the group, Scanlon said, they see their peers succeeding and tend to catch up to the rest of the group faster.

Pat Burke, who joined the class about a year ago, said he participates in triathlons and yet he still finds yoga challenging.

"I find myself sore after yoga," he said. "It's pretty intense. Much more intense than I thought."

Lacy said it helps that each person is focused on their own growth.

"Because we all have restrictions at this age, I don't think there's any pressure to perform," Lacy said. "It's not a competitive thing."

Other studios following suit

A yoga studio can be an intimidating place. There are unfamiliar rituals and terms – utkatasana, anyone? – and people everywhere who seem to know exactly what they're doing.

That's why studios like Scanlon's are working to broaden their practice so there is a class for everyone.

"If you want to do yoga as some serious study, we have that here, but we just really want people to feel good in their bodies and know how to move their bodies correctly," Scanlon said.

Other studios have jumped on the trend, including Harmony Yoga, run

by 58-year-old owner Alison Rubin.

Harmony's offerings include a restorative yoga class that also uses props and is perfect for someone who is older and doesn't have any yoga experience, Rubin said. Steps up from there include a gentle yoga class and basic Yoga 1 class, for those who are more able-bodied but still want a slower pace.

For older adults, Rubin said, strength and flexibility are crucial.

"As you get older, you get tighter if you're not stretching, or you get weak if you're not working to strengthen your muscles," she said. "Injuries can show up for bad habits you've been practicing your whole life."

Rubin said she learned this in her own life and yoga experiences.

Through several health issues, Rubin said she was able to bounce back much faster as a result of yoga.

"At 58, I move pretty much like I did when I was 18 years old," she said.

Scanlon said the Yoga Fogies have been spreading the word about yoga, both for men and older adults in general.

Yoga Shala is running a free introduction-to-yoga class for men next month.

Scanlon said the interest has been overwhelming, and there is a possibility for another regular class geared toward men or older adults.

The Yoga Fogies class has been as much a learning experience for her as for the group, she said.

Scanlon said they have taught her that change is possible at any point in life and it doesn't have to be a six-day-a-week time commitment.

"The main thing they have taught me is how much you can benefit from doing a lot less," she said. "And it's still really valuable and really worthwhile."

GREECE

Continued from A1

path of growth," Juncker said.

The so-called troika of the European Central Bank, IMF and the European Commission, which is the 27-country EU's executive arm, have twice agreed to bail out Greece, pledging a total of \$310 billion in rescue loans – of which the country has received about \$195 billion so far. In return for its bailout loans, Greece has had to impose several rounds of austerity measures and submit its economy to scrutiny.

Greece is predicted to enter its sixth year of recession shortly and has a quarter of its workforce out of a job, and there had been fears it might be forced to drop out of the eurozone, destabilizing other countries in the process.

The main aim of the bailout program is to right Greece's economy and get

it to a point where it can independently raise money on the debt markets. It has been clear for months that the country is far from achieving that goal. The talks have centered on trying to get Greece back on the path to sustainability by reaching an agreement on how the country's debt load can be reduced.

Juncker said the agreement includes:

- ▶ A plan to reduce Greece's debt level to 124 percent of its gross domestic product by 2020 and below 110 percent by 2022. The IMF had originally insisted on a debt-to-GDP ratio of 120 percent by 2020.

- ▶ A cut of 100 basis points on the interest rate charged to Greece by other eurozone member states – excluding those that are also receiving bailouts.

- ▶ A 15-year extension of the maturities of loans from other countries and the eurozone's bailout fund, the European Finan-

cial Stability Facility, and a deferral of interest payments by Greece on EFSF loans by 10 years.

"This is not just about money," Juncker said. "It is the promise of a better future for the Greek people and for the euro area as a whole."

The head of the IMF, Christine Lagarde, also said the agreement was significant.

"We wanted to make sure that Greece was back on track," Lagarde said. "If

you put it all together it is a significant amount."

Greece will get \$40.84 billion right away and the rest in separate installments in January, February and March.

The political agreement reached today will have to be submitted to parliaments in some countries. After that, the finance ministers plan to hold another meeting, either in person or by telephone, to give final approval to the disbursement.

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Environmental Impact Statement

Proposed Gateway Pacific Terminal/Custer Spur

Participate in scoping the environmental impact statement for the Gateway Pacific Terminal and Custer Spur modification proposal

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1100 112th Avenue NE, Suite 400
Bellevue, WA 98004
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- Participate in an online meeting and submit comments at www.eisgatewaypacificwa.gov
- Attend a scoping meeting

Attend an upcoming meeting:

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4-7 pm Tues., Dec. 4
Spokane Co. Fairgrounds Plaza
404 N Havana Street
Spokane Valley, WA

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Nation briefs

from news services

New judge appointed in Army base shooting case

The Army's highest legal branch has appointed a new judge to preside over the case of the Fort Hood shooting suspect.

U.S. Army Col. Tara Osborn was named Tuesday to head the case of Maj. Nidal Hasan. He faces the death penalty if convicted in the 2009 shootings that killed 13 and wounded more than two dozen on the Texas Army post.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces on Monday ousted the previous judge, Col. Gregory Gross, saying he appeared biased against Hasan. The court tossed out Gross' order to have Hasan's beard forcibly shaved before his court-martial.

Treaty to protect disabled fails in Senate

The Senate has failed to ratify an international treaty intended to protect the rights of those with disabilities, as a bloc of conservatives opposed the treaty believing it could interfere with U.S. law.

The Senate voted 61 to 38 to ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons With Disabilities, a tally that fell short of the two-thirds needed to sign on to an international treaty.

The 2006 treaty, which forbids discrimination of the disabled, has enjoyed bipartisan support. Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said the treaty would encourage other nations to develop the kind of protections the United States adopted 22 years ago with the Americans With Disabilities Act. Former senator and Republican presidential candidate Rick Santorum, the father of a developmentally disabled child, and other conservatives argued that the treaty could relinquish U.S. sovereignty to a U.N. committee charged with overseeing a ban on discrimination and determining how the disabled, including children, should be treated. They particularly worried that the committee could violate the rights of parents who choose to home-school their disabled children.

VA trademarks 'GI Bill' to protect veterans

Hoping to prevent online ads and the websites of for-profit schools from misleading Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, the Department of Veterans Affairs has trademarked the term "GI Bill."

Since the first GI Bill was enacted in 1944, it has represented the government's compact to provide an education for service members returning to civilian life. Recent government investigations, however, have spotlighted problems as for-profit schools compete for government dollars under the latest version of the bill.

Senate and Government Accountability Office investigations in recent months found that some for-profit colleges and universities recruit veterans without telling them the full truth about costs, loans, credit transfers and dropout rates.

Repairs focus of NYC Sandy response

Decision to forgo temporary housing has hit some bumps

By JENNIFER PELTZ
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Facing Superstorm Sandy's daunting toll of wreckage and displacement in the nation's largest city, officials have put much of their hopes and hundreds of millions of dollars into jump-starting repairs to make homes livable.

Federal and city officials see the strategy — focusing on getting people back into their own homes, not temporary housing — as an innovative and nimble answer to the challenge of housing thousands of storm victims in a notoriously expensive and crowded area.

But with relatively few homes fixed so far, questions are emerging about whether the "rapid repairs" initiative can live up to its name.

More than 10,000 homeowners have signed up for NYC Rapid Repairs in the three weeks since Mayor Michael Bloomberg launched the initiative to bring in hundreds of contractors to restore power, heat and other essentials free of charge.

Contractors have done initial assessments of about 7,000 homes in the city and 2,000 in similar initiatives on Long Island, but just about 400 projects have been completed so far.

Officials stress that the program is still gearing up. But a community meeting last week in hard-hit Stat-



Files/Associated Press

Cleanup continues on the site of a demolished home on the Rockaway Peninsula in New York on Nov. 29. Sandy damaged or destroyed 305,000 housing units in New York.

en Island boiled over with complaints that repairs and other aid aren't coming fast enough, a familiar refrain in storm-damaged areas.

Noreen Connolly-Skamnel's home on the Rockaway peninsula in Queens was hit by a basement fire and then a flood that swamped the cellar and two feet of the first floor. She said the NYC Rapid Repairs program was swift at first, conducting an assessment within two to three days after her call. But she heard nothing further for about two weeks, when she was told a new assessment had to be done.

Anxious to get the work going, she and her husband spent about \$8,300 of their own money on boiler, hot water and electrical repairs — the very sort the govern-

ment program might have done for free.

"I wish they were a little more rapid," she said, noting that the program has since pledged to help with other repairs.

Officials are asking for patience with the first-of-its-kind effort.

"We are moving as quickly as we can on these repairs," Michael Byrne, the Federal Emergency Management Agency official supervising Sandy recovery in New York state, said in a statement Monday.

FEMA is paying much of the bill for the home repair program, while also subsidizing hotel stays and apartments for thousands of Sandy victims — help some say has come promptly, but not without snags.

dy, an estimate that quickly shrank as many homes got heat and electricity back.

Byrne says he feels FEMA — which has OK'd more than \$673 million in housing and home repair aid so far in New York alone — has at least gotten a handle on the disaster. But "my job is to always feel like I'm missing something," he said.

More than a month after the Oct. 29 storm, the need for housing is a moving target that hangs on day-to-day developments for thousands of people.

Roughly 6,700 buildings around the city require significant repairs to be habitable, and about 750 more are deemed structurally unsound, according to city Buildings Department statistics. And in one measure of the demand for help, about 2,100 households are in FEMA-paid hotel rooms. Some storm victims also have gotten money for apartment rentals; a number isn't immediately available.

With her first child due on Christmas Eve, Corinna Sabatacos and fiancé Steven Ferrara had to move out of their severely damaged Rockaway house. They say they ended up in a hotel that doesn't take FEMA payments and have gotten conflicting answers on whether the more than \$2,000 bill will be covered.

"Things just change daily, and that's what's so frustrating," Sabatacos said. The couple expects to move this week into an apartment, aided by a \$1,200-a-month FEMA rent subsidy.

FEMA to release \$190M for NYC

By YANCEY ROY
Newsday

MELVILLE, N.Y. — The Federal Emergency Management Agency will release \$190 million in disaster aid to help New York City recover from Superstorm Sandy, New York's U.S. senators announced Tuesday.

The Obama administration will send \$114 million to help repair New York University's Langone Medical Center, and another \$75 million to the New York Police Department to cover staffing costs due to the storm, Sens. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., and Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., said.

This is the second funding announced by FEMA for recovery efforts in New York. Last week, FEMA said it would give Nassau County \$16 million and the city of Long Beach \$24 million to help pay for cleanup costs.

Schumer said taking FEMA administrator Craig Fugate on a tour of the city areas hit by Sandy helped speed up the release of federal funds.

The FEMA announcement came a day after Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo lobbied congressional leaders for a total of nearly \$42 billion in aid. Cuomo said he had a "positive" meeting with House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio.



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To ensure equal access, the Co-Lead Agencies will provide auxiliary aids/services to persons with disabilities. Please call the project hotline at 360-398-5087 with any requests. Persons with hearing loss can call 711 for Washington Relay Service. Persons with a speech disability can call 877-833-6341. All meeting-related requests must be received 72 hours in advance.

Si usted requiere este documento en un formato alternativo, favor de comunicarse a la siguiente línea directa: 360-398-5087 o TTY 711 o 1-877-833-6341 (Sólo servicios en inglés).

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