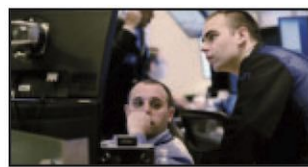


Longhorn legend dies

Darrell Royal, 88, led Texas to national prominence, battled Broyles. — Sports, 1C



Dow takes post-vote dive

Investors jittery about politics at home, economy abroad. — Business, 1D

Arkansas Democrat Gazette

ARKANSAS' NEWSPAPER

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In the news

■ **Rep. Michele Bachmann**, a Minnesota Republican who founded the House Tea Party Caucus and briefly sought the 2012 GOP presidential nomination, squeaked past Democratic businessman Jim Graves 179,189 to 174,891 in unofficial results with 100 percent of precincts reporting in a race that wasn't decided until the morning after the election.

■ **Steve Bullock**, a Democrat, will succeed Democratic Gov. Brian Schweitzer as governor of Montana, besting Republican Rick Hill 225,418 to 217,058 in unofficial results with 94 percent of precincts reporting.

■ **Jerome Isaac** has pleaded guilty in New York City to first-degree murder, arson and torture in the December death of 73-year-old Deloris Gillespie, who was fatally burned inside the elevator of her Brooklyn apartment building.

■ **Joe Arpaio**, 80, the self-proclaimed "America's toughest sheriff," won a sixth term as sheriff of Arizona's Maricopa County, beating retired Phoenix police Sgt. Paul Penzone by more than 88,000 votes in unofficial results with 84 percent of precincts reporting.

■ **David Marion Araham**, 44, a Spotsylvania, Va., man who pleaded guilty to driving under the influence, driving on a suspended license and refusing to take a breath test in what was his 12th DUI, has been sentenced to seven years in prison.

■ **Sen. Mark Kirk**, 53, an Illinois Republican who hasn't been back to the U.S. Senate since suffering a stroke earlier this year, said he is setting priorities for his return to Washington in January.

■ **David Jimenez**, a Mexican immigrant whose right leg had to be amputated after it was crushed by a Roman Catholic church's 600-pound crucifix that toppled over while he was cleaning it in 2010, is suing St. Patrick's Church in Newburgh, N.Y., contending the marble statuary wasn't properly anchored, his lawyer said.

GOP's Boehner offers to deal

After losses, 'fiscal cliff' the focus

COMPILED BY DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE STAFF FROM WIRE REPORTS

House Speaker John Boehner of Ohio said Wednesday that he was ready to accept a budget deal that raises federal revenue as long as it is linked to an overhaul of entitlements and an overhaul of the tax code that closes provisions, curtails or eliminates deductions and lowers income-tax rates.

Boehner's gesture — made a day after the Republican Party's electoral setbacks — was the most explicit offer he has made to avert the "fiscal cliff" in January, when billions of dollars in tax increases and automatic spending cuts go into force.

"We're willing to accept

NATIONAL MAP of the popular vote. Page 4A.

MORE U.S., state election coverage. Pages 6-8A, 1-7B.

PULASKI COUNTY results by precinct. Page 6B

new revenue under the right conditions," Boehner said.

His offer came hours after Sen. Harry Reid, D-Nev., the majority leader, offered his own olive branch, saying, "It's better to dance than to fight."

"Mr. President, this is your moment," Boehner told reporters in the Capitol. "We're ready to lead, not as Democrats or Republicans, but as Americans."

The offer may be enough to get the parties to the table after an election that kept President Barack Obama in power, strengthened the Democrats' grip on the Senate and chipped away at the still-large Republican majority in the House.

But Democrats and Republicans are still far apart. Boehner made clear that his vision for additional revenue includes a tax code that lowers even the top income-tax rate from where it is now, 35 percent, not where it would be in January when the Bush-era tax cuts are set to expire — 39.6 percent. At least some of that additional revenue would come from economic growth that he said would be

See **ELECTION**, Page 4A



AP/CAROLYN KASTER



The Obamas and their daughters Sasha (left) and Malia head from Marine One to Air Force One on Wednesday in Chicago.



NWA Media/FLIP PUTTHOFF

Jamie Fields (left) and **Serena Green** count paper ballots by hand Wednesday at the Benton County Election Commission offices in Bentonville.

Benton County in a pickle

Problems at polls put a whammy on election count

BRENDA BERNET
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

Election results in Benton County remained up in the air Wednesday while officials waited for three ballot-counting machines to be repaired.

Benton County election officials expected most voters to cast ballots electronically Tuesday, but election workers offered paper ballots when lines ran long. Polling sites quickly depleted the limited supply of paper ballots, and problems arose when the

county's three ballot-counting machines broke down Tuesday night.

With ballots still to be counted, results for the District 95 state House race were incomplete Wednesday afternoon. Republican Sue Scott continued to lead with 6,234 votes over independent Mark Moore with 3,893 votes. Both candidates are from Pea Ridge.

Problems occur during every election, said Janine Parry, a political science professor at

the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, and "it just seems like Benton County drew the short straw this time."

"I hope Benton County will be sharing its experiences with other counties so they could avoid that problem in the future," Parry said.

Problems at polling sites can disenfranchise voters, Parry said. If they see long lines, some voters will give up and not vote, she said.

Tim Humphries, legal

See **PROBLEMS**, Page 6A

State's House tilting to GOP

If election results stand, party has 1-seat edge over Democrats

SARAH D. WIRE
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

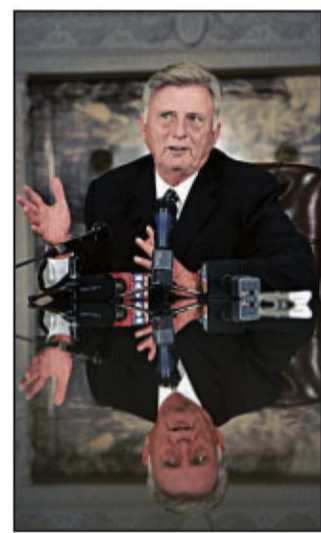
If the unofficial returns are correct, Republicans are confident that they have secured a one-seat majority in the Arkansas House of Representatives, but they'll have to wait until the rest of the votes are counted in District 95 to know for sure.

In the meantime, party leaders are puzzling over how to replace a Democratic speaker designee picked last spring.

"We're plowing through new ground, and I'm trying to learn as much I can as I'm trying to develop a solution," House Republican leader Bruce Westerman said Wednesday at the Capitol. "It's somewhat unprecedented."

Democrats have controlled the state House since the Reconstruction period

See **HOUSE**, Page 5A



Arkansas Democrat-Gazette/STEPHEN B. THORNTON

Gov. Mike Beebe said Wednesday that the changes brought about by the state legislative elections won't change his plans for the 2013 session.



Scan the photo above or go to arkansasonline.com/videos

Backers see turnaround in gay-marriage votes

ALEX DANIELS
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

WASHINGTON — In the first elections to be held since President Barack Obama and the Democratic Party endorsed gay marriage, supporters of same-sex nuptials notched victories in ballot measures in three states and narrowly led in a fourth, reversing a 14-year-long string of voter setbacks.

Despite opponents' predictions of "doom and gloom," Chad Griffin, an Arkadelphia native and president of Human Rights Campaign, a Washington-based homosexual-advocacy group, said Obama's support of the issue was a positive for the Democratic nominee and his party.

"They said it would ruin

See **SAME-SEX**, Page 6A

Traskwood woman gets life in murders of 2 men

CHAD DAY
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

A Traskwood woman charged with capital murder in the slayings of two men found buried in her backyard pleaded guilty Wednesday morning to lesser charges of first-degree murder.

Marissa Wright, 51, entered the plea in Saline County Circuit Court before Judge Gary Arnold, who then ordered her to serve two concurrent life sentences for the murders of Joe Lee Richards Jr. and Randall Anderson.

Wright had faced the death penalty.

On Wednesday, Prosecuting Attorney Ken Casady said Wright uttered few words — answering simple "yes and no" questions — as

she entered into the plea agreement.

"She had basically the same demeanor that I've seen her have in previous court hearings. Her demeanor is just odd. I wouldn't necessarily say cold but at least detached," he said.

Casady, who handled the case along with Chief Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Rebecca Bush and Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Andy Gill, said the plea agreement came about after discussions with the victims' families.

"They were interested in getting closure. They were all interested in getting this case finished and to get the resolution that we got," Casady said of the families.

See **PLEA**, Page 8A

New cuts, new protests



AP/DIMITRI MESSINIS

Flames from a protester's firebomb surround a Greek policeman outside the Parliament building in Athens during a large-scale protest against a \$17 billion package of austerity measures adopted Wednesday by lawmakers.

Article, 1D



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WEATHER

LITTLE ROCK
Today Sunny and cool.
High 60,
southeast winds at 5 to 10 mph.
Tonight Clear.
Low 44.



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