

Around the nation



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Florida

Democrats say Obama has won the state

MIAMI - Democrats say President Obama has won Florida, although all the votes haven't been counted and the state hasn't certified the election.

Florida Democrats issued a statement late Thursday afternoon saying the president had won the state. The Associated Press has not called the race, saying it is still too close. Obama led Mitt Romney 49.9 percent to 49.3 percent, or about 52,000 votes.

Romney's campaign and the Republican National Committee are waiting for the state to finish its count, which includes thousands of provisional ballots.

California

Boy becomes a man in more ways than 1

LOS ANGELES - To celebrate the day he became a man, a Los Angeles 13-year-old donated a sizable chunk of his bar mitzvah gifts to help mend injured American war veterans and active-duty soldiers.

On Thursday, UCLA's Operation Mend program accepted a \$13,000 donation from Joshua Neidorf, following his Jewish rite of passage.

Neidorf was inspired to make the gift after his family signed up to be a local social support system for an Operation Mend care recipient, Army Sgt. Louis Dahlman.

Dahlman was injured by a roadside bomb in Iraq in 2007.

District of Columbia

Clinton honors envoy to Libya, a 'fallen hero'

WASHINGTON - Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton paid tribute Thursday to slain U.S. Ambassador to Libya Chris Stevens, calling him a "fallen hero" who understood that diplomacy involves taking risks.

Clinton also stressed that diplomacy in unstable areas is inherently dangerous and praised Stevens for volunteering for difficult jobs to serve his country.

"Our country mourns a fallen hero," she said of Stevens in a speech honoring him and others receiving the Common Ground award for conflict resolution, negotiation and peace building.

Pennsylvania

Inmate escapes execution for now

BELLEFONTE - A condemned inmate escaped lethal injection Thursday for the murder of a teenage girl when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled the execution should be halted.

Just hours after a federal appeals court put a stop to the preparations, the high court agreed, preventing Hubert Lester Michael Jr., 56, from becoming the first person put to death in the state since 1999.

Michael pleaded guilty to fatally shooting Trista Elizabeth Eng in 1993.

After the Supreme Court decision, one of Michael's lawyers, Helen Marino, said the courts saw there were "compelling claims relating to Mr. Michael's debilitating mental conditions."