

## Opinion

## Sandy puts Obama, Romney on the sidelines

Mitchell L. Moss

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It takes a disaster to remind us how much we depend on our local and state governments. In the middle of a presidential campaign, Hurricane Sandy has put Barack Obama and Mitt Romney on the sidelines, reminding us how much we count on mayors and governors to protect us, to rescue us and to keep our streets, buses, subways, airports and commuter rails running.

After a season of debates about the deficit, taxes and health care, Americans have discovered that they cannot survive without government: to provide clean water, reliable transportation systems, and emergency services when floods, fires and power outages force them to abandon their homes. Hurricane Sandy even demonstrated that sometimes politicians should do more than what we want, especially when they are trying to save us from ourselves.

When New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie ordered everyone out of Atlantic City, most residents ignored his request. And when New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, three days before Hurricane Sandy landed, activated the city's storm plan and issued an evacuation order for the city's high-risk Zone A floodplain, many observers thought he was over-preparing, like a grandmother urging you to wear galoshes in the rain.

Next time, evacuation orders will not be dismissed as examples of the "Nanny State."

Hurricane Sandy did not just erode beachfronts; it also eroded partisan political differences. How else can one explain Gov. Christie's warm and gracious comments about Obama after the president did far more than what was required when he suggested that the New Jersey Republican personally call him if he needed any help with federal agencies.

Disasters never go away. They become part of our culture, providing stories of danger and heroism that we share with our children and their children. Disasters take neighbors and make them friends.

New Yorkers, widely considered to be tough and selfish, are suddenly eager to share cellphones, drink beer with strangers at their local bars, and to cook meals at home – since without subways there is no way to

go out for dinner and get home easily.

There is one simple lesson we can learn from Hurricane Sandy: We cannot ignore the essential infrastructure that moves people, information and goods.

These systems are under the control of mayors and governors – not presidents, senators or members of Congress. More than two-thirds of the funds spent on transportation come from states and localities, not from the federal government. And with today's current emphasis on cutting the federal deficit, states will need to do more since the federal government is clearly in retreat, at home and overseas.

It is not sufficient to have a smartphone or an iPad if we do not have resilient, robust networks that can function when we need them most, like in a disaster. It is not sufficient to have a home, if there is no power to run appliances and water to drink and cook with. And, what good is a job if you cannot get to work – whether by car, train, bus or plane?

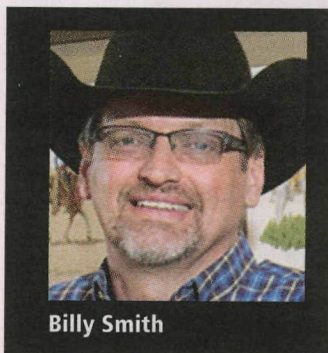
New York has a subway system that is more than a century old. Our nation's airports control our airspace with obsolete technologies, needlessly adding to delays and pollution. And our commuter railroads rely on railroad bridges that are well beyond their shelf life.

Hurricane Sandy is not over. The damage is still being assessed. The recovery is going to be slower than we anticipate. And the losses are beyond measurement. Homes destroyed, beaches reconfigured, boardwalks that cannot be replaced, and memories that cannot be renewed.

But we can recognize the vital need to invest in the future: to take steps now to minimize similar disasters. We cannot eliminate the power of ocean currents and wind and storms, but we can do more to invest in stronger, safer transportation systems that can diminish the disruptions caused by the next hurricane. Sandy certainly won't be the last of the destructive storms we encounter. ■

Mitchell L. Moss is director of the Rudin Center for Transportation and Henry Hart Rice professor of urban policy and planning at New York University's Wagner School of Public Service. He served as an advisor to Michael Bloomberg during his first campaign for Mayor of New York City in 2001.

## Paint horse makes mark in Fort Worth



Billy Smith

In the last year alone, the American Paint Horse Association world championship shows generated nearly \$6 million in taxable income to the Fort Worth community over a 21-day period.

The giggly Enterprise Rental Car clerk in Des Moines, Iowa felt self-assured about the horse connection she had made as I scribbled my employer onto the rental contract. I was headed to an American Paint Horse Show in Iowa, one of 1,100 across North and South America and throughout Europe – including two world championship shows in Fort Worth.

"Oh, those are the pretty ones," she said, proud that she had embraced what 60,000 of APHA's members have in joining Fort Worth's only equine breed registry and the second largest breed registry in the world. All those members and now the rental clerk had discovered that of all the stock horse breeds, the American Paint Horse is unique and beautiful – it stands out in the show ring and in the pasture. Watch the grand entrance each evening at the Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo – look for the "pretty ones."

Prior to the splash of American Paint Horses at the Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo, more than 1,000 entries will spotlight the breed's versatility from Nov. 7-17 at the APHA Open and Amateur World Championship Show at Will Rogers Memorial Center. The show features everything from the cadenced western pleasure classes to the speed and power of reining – English and western classes. In June, more than 700 entries will follow their youth exhibitors at the American Junior Paint Horse World Championship Show.

For the uninitiated, Paint horses are "cowboy" or stock horses with lots of white markings. Most of our members gravitate to this unique breed because unlike most other stock horse breeds, each horse is uniquely marked. In the last year alone, the American Paint Horse Association world championship shows generated nearly \$6 million in taxable income to the Fort Worth community over a 21-day period.

More specifically APHA World Championship shows generate nearly 6,000 visitors from all over the world (a special contingent of Costa Rican

Paint Horse owners will attend the Amateur and Open shows this year as well), more than 35,000 visitor days, and filled the Will Rogers Memorial Center for 21 days.

What draws horse enthusiasts to purchase Paint Horses is what has drawn similar fans for thousands of years – the unique splashes of white. Over the last 150 years the Paint Horses have captured the imagination of Plains Indians, many of whom considered the white markings sacred, to the cowboy movie makers in the 1930s to more current times (keep a look out for the remake of the Lone Ranger; Johnny Depp rides a Paint).

More recently and over the last few years, the folks at Will Rogers Memorial Center and the city of Fort Worth have embraced the Paint Horse community and given APHA an opportunity to showcase these amazing horses.

We plan to return the favor as we've launched both an aggressive membership campaign and an equally aggressive partnership effort to position both APHA and Fort Worth as the destination for American Paint Horse enthusiasts, whether or not they own an American Paint Horse or just appreciate what my new friend in Des Moines found appealing. What we expect that to mean for Fort Worth is a much greater plume of membership in the coming years and more world show participants that translates directly into sales revenue for Fort Worth retailers and restaurants.

Even more important, we'll make the effort to help provide the "Cowboys" to the "Culture" half of Fort Worth's motto. Perhaps as others have suggested, we might just provide the splash for a somewhat different interpretation – "Cowboys with Culture." Watch carefully at the stock show, rodeo and at the WRMC for the "pretty ones" – they won't be difficult to find. ■

Billy L. Smith is executive director of the American Paint Horse Association, based in Fort Worth.

## A prediction

## Everything's O.K. in the U.S.A.

With a tip of the top hat to Edwin Arlington Robinson and Richard Cory

Whenever Uncle Sam went to a foreign town,  
The people on the pavement looked at him:  
He was American from sole to crown,  
Chin whiskers and Star-Spangled Banner flag pole slim.

And he was always in red, white and blue and top hat arrayed,

And he always spoke in plain English when he talked;  
And once upon a time he fluttered pulses when he said,  
"Tear down that wall!" – and he glittered when he walked.

And he was rich – yes richer than a Saudi king,  
And Harvard schooled in every grace:  
In fine, they thought that he was everything  
To make them wish that they were in his place.

So on the Europeans worked, and waited for the light,  
And went without the meat, and cursed the lack of bread;  
And Uncle Sam one historic November night,  
Went home, watched election returns, smiled and went to bed.

Don Woodard,  
Fort Worth