

Crews making slow progress against huge Gila wildfire

RESERVE (AP) — Firefighters in southern New Mexico made slow progress Monday against the massive Gila wilderness fire, while crews in the northern part of the state worked to contain a lightning-sparked blaze in the Santa Fe National Forest.

Forest officials said the 30- to 40-acre Bear Springs Fire was burning about 6 miles south-east of Jemez Springs.

Crews had made little progress containing the fire Monday afternoon, but no structures were being threatened and no evacuations were planned.

The blaze was one of several sparked by lightning around the state as dry thunderstorms moved in Sunday and Monday, including two others in the Santa Fe Forest, one near Silver City and two near Taos. Firefighters were able to contain most of the fires quickly.

Meanwhile, the largest fire in recorded state history grew to 250,000 acres on Monday afternoon, or 390 square miles. That was down just slightly from 255,000 acres on Monday morning.

The blaze was 18 percent contained, and fire information officer Lee Bentley said crews were feeling better much about



AP PHOTO

A member of the Granite Mountain hotshots clears away brush Saturday from the fire line at the Gila National Forest blaze.

their progress and prospects for getting a handle on the fire than they were a few days ago.

Residents who were evacuated last week from the small privately owned ghost town of Mogollon were allowed to return Monday. But the National Forest Service shut down the Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument because of hazardous smoke from the fire. Officials said the monument and the Gila Visitor Center would likely remain closed until the rainy season

begins and the fire is out. They had no estimate on when that might be.

Crews were spending the day cutting lines and dropping water where needed, Bentley said. Although the weather remained hot and dry, winds were relatively calm, he said. Firefighters hoped that would enable them to make more progress containing the fire.

More than 1,200 firefighters are battling the blaze, which has destroyed a dozen cabins.



HOBBBS SCHOOLS PHOTOS

Teachers attend workshops

Sanger teacher Lee Morin, left, learns techniques for mixing paint to create various colors from Carlsbad artist Marie Johnson on Monday morning. Dozens of Hobbs teachers are spending a portion of their summer attending workshops this week aimed at improving their classroom curriculum.

Obituaries

Dorothy Jo Collins

Dorothy Jo Collins, 81, of Hobbs was called home by the Lord on May 30, 2012 at her residence.



Funeral services will be 11:00 AM, Wednesday, June 6, 2012 at Ebenezer Baptist Church with the Reverend Charles Becknell officiating.

Interment will follow at Prairie Haven Cemetery. Dorothy was born on November 5, 1930 in Ralls, Texas to Frank and Lillian Wells. She married Lial Collins, Jr. on January 2, 1951.

Dorothy graduated from Booker T. Washington, as class valedictorian and continued her education at University of New Mexico, The College of the Southwest and Eastern New Mexico University, earning a Bachelors and Masters in Science. Dorothy Jo was an educator with Hobbs Municipal Schools until her retirement in 1992.

As a longtime member of Ebenezer Baptist Church, she served in many capacities,

inclusive of choir member and lead pianist until her passing.

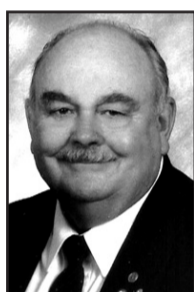
She was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Lial Collins Jr, mother and father Lillian Wells and Reverend Frank W. Wells, brother, Carl Edward Wells and sister Johnnie Mae Patterson.

Survivors include her son Lial Collins III, (Eddie, wife) of Plano, Texas; son Frank Collins (Pamela, wife) of Little Elm, Texas; son, Gary Collins of Seattle, Washington and daughter, LaJuana Bryant (Michael, husband) of Atlanta, Georgia. Additionally, her grandchildren: Derick Collins of Hobbs, Neil Collins of Denver, Co. Austen Collins, of Las Vegas, NV; Ian White and Morgan Bryant of Atlanta, GA, Brian Collins, Brandon Collins, LaTonya Flournoy, Ashley Hawthorne, Asheton Crosby and NaKisha Ortiz of Dallas, TX along with her great grandchildren and a host of nieces, nephews and cousins.

Services are under the direction of Griffin Funeral Home.

Eric Wayne Swenson

Eric Wayne Swenson, 76, went to be with the Lord June 2, 2012 after an extended illness. He was born on June 20, 1935 in Austin, Texas to Eric



Swenson

Carl and Thyra Anna Victoria Swenson. Funeral services will be held on Thursday, June 7, 2012 at 10:00 am at First United Methodist Church with

Rev. Vergil Ichtertz officiating. Burial will follow at Resthaven Cemetery. Services are under the direction of Kirby-Smith-Rogers Funeral Home.

On July 18, 1954 he married Carrie Kepford in Ringwood, Oklahoma. They resided in Wichita Falls, TX where Wayne worked for Warren Petroleum Corp. He then transferred to Lovington, NM where he worked for Chevron, Saunders Plant, for 40 years.

During the same time he proudly served his country with 25 years in the Army National Guard. He also served his community with a combined total of 27 years with the Lovington and Knowles Volunteer Fire Departments. He was a devoted member of the First United Methodist Church of Lovington and enjoyed participating in youth mission trips,

where he enjoyed doing the cooking, and sidewalk Sunday school activities. He was a member of the Men's Prayer Breakfast and was also an avid Wildcat fan.

He was preceded in death by his parents and one grandson, T. J. Swenson.

He is survived by his wife, Carrie, his daughter, Carolyn Parsons and son, Barry Swenson, all of Lovington; five grandchildren: Jared and wife Micah Swenson of Lovington and Jaden Swenson of Albuquerque; Rusty, Chad and Jeff Williams of Hobbs and three great-grandchildren: Wyatt Williams and Alissa Lobeck of Lubbock, TX and Isiah Swenson of Lovington.

Visitation will be Wednesday, June 6, 2012 from 10:00 am until 8:00 pm at the funeral home. Condolences may be sent to www.kirby-smithrogers.com.

Death notice

Charles L. Clark

Charles L. Clark, 62, of Hobbs died May 27, 2012, in Hobbs. He was born Dec. 18, 1949, in San Jose, Calif. Services are pending with Stevens Funeral Home.

Lake sees second drowning in a week

ALBUQUERQUE (AP) — A 47-year-old Albuquerque man became the second drowning victim at Conchas Lake State Park in a week.

The Albuquerque Journal reports that Jacob Sanchez drowned Saturday when he went swimming after drinking alcohol. State police Lt. Robert McDonald says that Sanchez's body was recovered by a dive team about five hours after the drowning.

Police say alcohol contributed to his death.

On Tuesday, state police divers recovered the body of 15-year-old Griffen Walter of Sandia Park from the lake.

Witnesses reported that Griffen dove into the lake and tried to swim to shore, but went under water and did not resurface.

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