

Mayor:

# Colorado Springs Fire Destroys 346 Homes

P. SOLOMON BANDA AND THOMAS PEIPERT  
Associated Press

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. — A raging Colorado wildfire that forced tens of thousands to flee destroyed an estimated 346 homes this week, making it the most destructive fire in the state's history, officials said.

From above, the destruction becomes painfully clear: Rows and rows of houses were reduced to smoldering ashes even as some homes just feet away survived largely intact.

On one street, all but three houses had burned to their foundations, said Ryan Schneider, whose home is still standing in a neighborhood where 51 others were destroyed.

"I was real happy at first. My wife was happy," he said. "The emotion of seeing the other homes, though, was instant sadness."

While the aerial photos showed the scope of one of the worst fires to hit the American West in decades, they did little to help ease the concerns of many residents who still did not know the fate of homes.

Amid the devastation in the foothills of Colorado Springs, there were hopeful signs. Flames advancing on the U.S. Air Force Academy were stopped and cooler conditions could help slow the fire.

Colorado Springs Mayor Steve Bach said the 346 estimate could change. A fire in northern Colorado, which is still burning, destroyed 257 homes and until Thursday was the most destructive in state history.

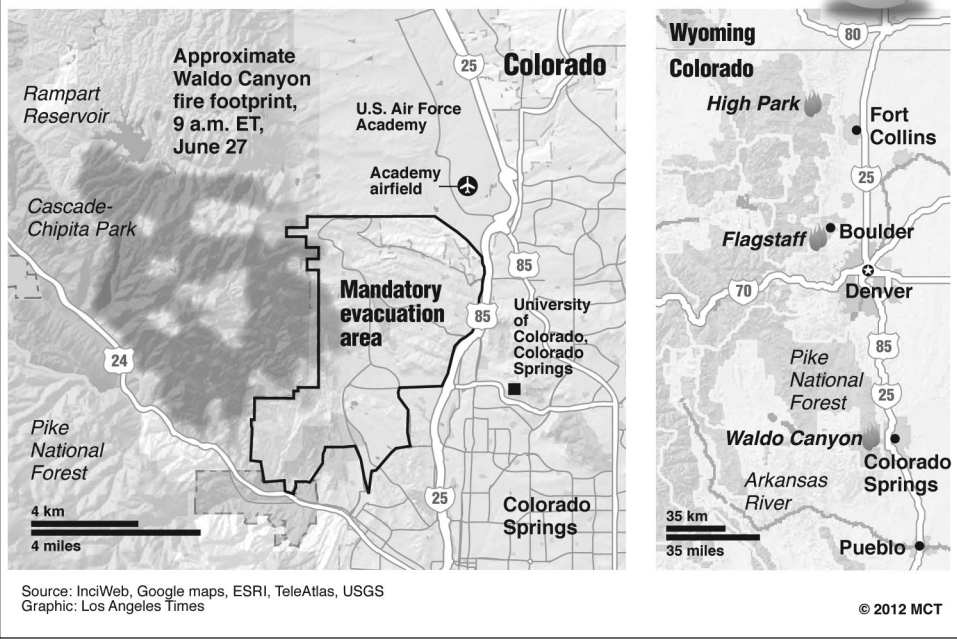
For now, Bach said, the news of the destruction would make it very difficult for the city about 60 miles south of Denver.

"This is going to be a tough evening, but we're going to get through it," Bach said. "This community is going to surround them with love and encouragement ... We will move forward as a community."

More than 30,000 people frantically packed up belongings Tuesday night as the flames swept through their neighborhoods. While there's no indication yet the blaze

## Colorado Springs is burning

Thousands evacuated their homes in and around Colorado Springs June 27. Major fires also burned out of control near Fort Collins and Boulder.



claimed any lives, fire officials said they would search each home looking for possible remains.

Community officials were planning to begin the process of notifying residents Thursday that their homes were destroyed. For many residents, the official notification was a formality.

Residents recognize their street on aerial pictures and carefully scrutinize the images to determine the damage. Photos and video from The Associated Press and the Denver Post showed widespread damage.

Colorado Springs, the state's second-largest city, is home to the U.S. Olympic Training Center, NORAD and the Air Force Space command, which operates military satellites. They were not threatened.

Conditions were still too dicey to allow authorities to begin trying to figure out what sparked the blaze that has raged for much of the week and already burned more than 29 square miles.

President Barack Obama was to tour fire-stricken areas Friday as hundreds of locals and some tourists who were staying at Red Cross shelters hoped life would return to normal. Other stayed with friends and family.

Bill and Lois Bartlett said they believe their neighborhood was spared, but remained wary as they waited at a YMCA shelter set up by the Red Cross.

"I've been through a lot of stuff like this before but not in civilian life," said Bill Bartlett, who flew B-17 bombers during World War II.

## House Votes To Hold Attorney General In Contempt

BY LARRY MARGASAK  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Attorney General Eric Holder on Thursday became the first Cabinet member held in contempt of Congress, a rebuke pushed by Republicans seeking to unearth the facts behind a bungled gun-tracking operation and dismissed by most Democrats as a political stunt.

The vote was 255-67, with more than 100 Democrats boycotting.

African-American lawmakers led the walkout as members filed up the aisle and out of the chamber to protest the action against Holder, who is the nation's first black attorney general. Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi of California joined the boycott, saying Republicans had gone "over the edge" in their partisanship.

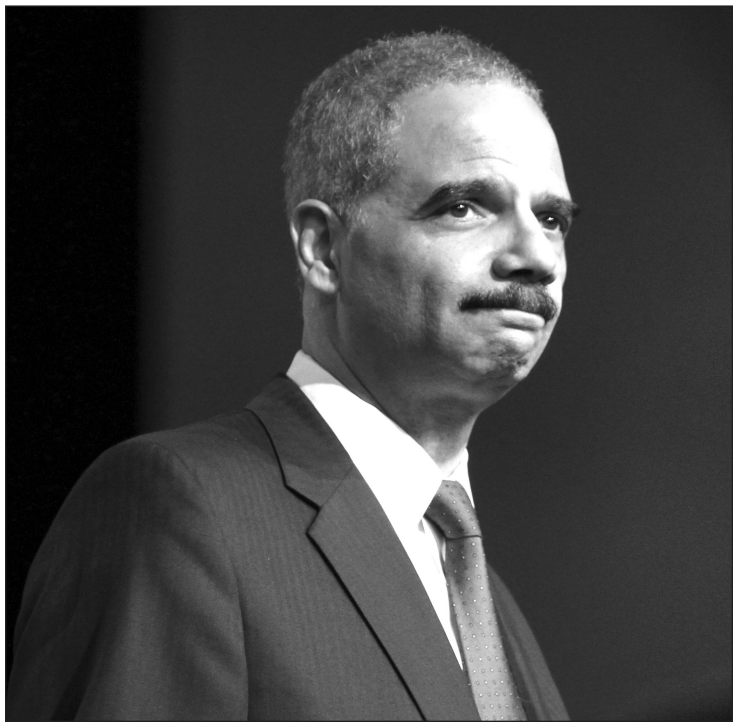
Seventeen Democrats voted with Republicans in favor of the contempt vote, while two Republicans — Reps. Scott Rigell of Virginia and Steven LaTourette of Ohio — joined other Democrats in voting against it.

The National Rifle Association pressed hard for the contempt resolution, leaning on members of both parties who want to stay in the NRA's good graces.

Andrew Arulanandam, an NRA spokesman, said all 17 Democrats who voted for criminal contempt had previously received an "A" grade from the organization.

Holder said afterward that the vote was merely a politically motivated act in an election year.

"Today's vote may make for good political theater in the minds of some, but it is — at base — both a crass effort and a grave disservice to the American people. They expect — and they deserve — far better," Holder said in New Orleans.



JOE BURBANK/ORLANDO SENTINEL/MCT

**U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder addresses the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) annual conference, Thursday, June 28, 2012, at Walt Disney World in Lake Buena Vista, Florida.**

The attorney general said the House vote would result in an unnecessary court fight. Republicans "were not interested in bringing an end to this dispute or even obtaining the information they say they wanted," he said. "Ultimately, their goal was the vote that — with the help of special interests — they now have engineered."

Republicans cited Holder's refusal to hand over — without any preconditions — documents that could explain why the Obama administration initially denied that a risky "gun-walking" investigative tactic was used in Operation Fast and Furious. The operation identi-

fied more than 2,000 illicitly purchased weapons. Some 1,400 of them have yet to be recovered in the failed strategy to track the weapons.

The vote on a criminal contempt resolution sent the matter to the U.S. attorney for the District of Columbia, who is under Holder. In previous contempt cases, federal prosecutors in the nation's capital have refused to act on congressional contempt citations against members of their own administration.

A separate vote on civil contempt passed 258-95, with 21 Democrats supporting it. It will allow

the House to hire its own attorney to bring a civil lawsuit in an effort to force Holder to turn over the documents.

In past cases, courts have been reluctant to settle disputes between the executive and legislative branches of government.

During the debate before the vote, Republicans said they were seeking answers for the Michigan family of Brian Terry, a Border Patrol agent killed in December 2010 in a shootout with Mexican bandits. Two guns from Fast and Furious were found at the scene. Democrats insisted that they, too, wanted the Terry family to have all the facts, but argued that only a more thorough, bipartisan investigation would accomplish that.

Terry's family issued a statement through the Brian Terry Foundation, saying: "The Terry family takes no pleasure in the contempt vote against Attorney General Eric Holder. Such a vote should not have been necessary. The Justice Department should have released the documents related to Fast and Furious months ago."

The NRA contended the administration wanted to use Operation Fast and Furious to win gun control measures. Democrats who normally support the NRA but who vote against the contempt citations would lose any 100 percent ratings from the group.

That could affect whether they get endorsements from the powerful organization, particularly if Republican opponents surface who are strong NRA backers. But a former NRA board member and the longest-serving House member, Rep. John Dingell of Michigan, argued gun control was not at issue. He failed in attempt to head off the contempt votes.

## Turkey Fortifies Its Border With Syria

BEIRUT (AP) — Turkey deployed anti-aircraft guns, rocket launchers and other weapons along its border with Syria on Thursday, a military buildup that came as world powers showed new urgency to resolve the crisis before it ignites the region.

A bomb exploded in central Damascus near a busy market and the country's main justice complex, wounding at least three people, damaging cars in a parking lot and sending a black cloud rising above the Syrian capital. It was not clear who was behind the bombing.

Much of the violence that has gripped Syria since the uprising began in March 2011 has been sanctioned by the government of President Bashar Assad to crush dissent. Activists say more than 14,000 people have been killed.

But rebel fighters are launching increasingly deadly attacks on regime targets, and several massive suicide attacks this year suggest al-Qaida or other extremists are joining the fray.

Assad told Iranian state TV Thursday that his country still supports him, and he warned that any intervention in Syria will cause a "domino" effect in the region. He has given similar warnings before, saying the entire Middle East will go up in flames if others meddle in his country.

## 'Miss Holocaust Survivor' Crowned In Israel

HAIFA, Israel (AP) — Fourteen women who survived the horrors of World War II paraded Thursday in an unusual pageant, vying for the honor of being crowned Israel's first "Miss Holocaust Survivor."

Billed by organizers as a celebration of life, the event also stirred controversy. In a country where millions have been touched by the Holocaust, many argued that judging aging women who had suffered so much on physical appearance was inappropriate, and even offensive.

"It sounds totally macabre to me," said Colette Avital, chairwoman of Israel's leading Holocaust survivors' umbrella group. "I am in favor of enriching lives, but a one-time pageant masquerading (survivors) with beautiful clothes is not what is going to make their lives more meaningful."

Pageant organizer Shimon Sabag rejected the criticism, saying the winners were chosen based on their personal stories of survival and rebuilding their lives after the war, and physical beauty was only a tiny part of the competition.

"They feel good together. They are having a good time and laughing in the rehearsals," said Sabag, director of Yad Ezer L'Haver, or Helping Hand, which assists needy Holocaust survivors and organized the pageant.

## Some Democrats Are Skipping Convention

WASHINGTON (AP) — Some Democrats in tough races are returning their invitations to the Democratic National Convention with a note attached: Thanks, but no thanks.

Sen. Claire McCaskill of Missouri is the highest-profile Democrat to announce she'll skip the September shindig in Charlotte, N.C. At least 11 Democratic incumbents and front-running challengers will be no-shows, according to a count by The Associated Press.

All hail from conservative-leaning or toss-up states where President Barack Obama, whose speech accepting the party's presidential nomination will be the climax of the three-day convention, could be a drag on down-ballot Democrats.

Sen. Jon Tester, D-Mont., is out, his campaign said. So are Democratic Reps. Mark Critz of Pennsylvania and Jim Matheson of Utah. In West Virginia, where more than 40 percent of Democratic voters chose an incarcerated felon over Obama in the May primary, Sen. Joe Manchin and Rep. Nick Rahall will both steer clear of Charlotte.

Rep. John Barrow of Georgia, a top target of House Republicans, won't attend, his office confirmed. Neither will former Rep. Charlie Wilson, D-Ohio, who is fighting to reclaim the seat he lost in 2010, and Pam Guleson, the Democratic nominee for an open House seat in North Dakota.

## Pottery 20,000 Years Old Found In China

BELJING (AP) — Pottery fragments found in a south China cave have been confirmed to be 20,000 years old, making them the oldest known pottery in the world, archaeologists say.

The findings, which will appear in the journal Science on Friday, add to recent efforts that have dated pottery piles in east Asia to more than 15,000 years ago, refuting conventional theories that the invention of pottery correlates to the period about 10,000 years ago when humans moved from being hunter-gathers to farmers.

The research by a team of Chinese and American scientists also pushes the emergence of pottery back to the last ice age, which might provide new explanations for the creation of pottery, said Gideon Shelach, chair of the Louis Frieberg Center for East Asian Studies at The Hebrew University in Israel.

"The focus of research has to change," Shelach, who is not involved in the research project in China, said by telephone.

In an accompanying Science article, Shelach wrote that such research efforts "are fundamental for a better understanding of socioeconomic change (25,000 to 19,000 years ago) and the development that led to the emergency of sedentary agricultural societies."

## Unemployment Applications Fall To 386,000

WASHINGTON (AP) — The number of people seeking U.S. unemployment benefits fell last week, but the level of applications remains too high to signal a pickup in hiring.

The Labor Department said Thursday that weekly applications fell to a seasonally adjusted 386,000. That's down from 392,000 the previous week, which was revised up. The four-week average, which smooths week-to-week fluctuations, was mostly unchanged at 386,750.

"Jobless claims are still too high and show that employment growth is slowing and no progress is being made," said Jennifer Lee, an economist at BMO Capital Markets.

Separately, the Commerce Department said the expanded at a 1.9 percent annual rate in the first three months of the year. The third and final estimate for growth in the January-March quarter was unchanged from the government's previous estimate.

Most economists say growth has likely stayed roughly the same or possibly weakened since then. A sluggish job market and diminished consumer and business confidence have kept the economy from accelerating in the April-June quarter.

## OBITUARIES

### William (Bill) Snoozy

William (Bill) G. Snoozy, 84, passed away on Wednesday, June 27, 2012 at Morningside Manor in Alcester, SD. Bill was born on October 19, 1927 in Centerville, SD to Alfred (Edsol) and Ella (Johnson) Snoozy. He grew up in Beresford and graduated from Beresford High School in 1946. He then joined the Air Force and was stationed in Germany. Upon his discharge, he attended USD in Vermillion, SD, and received a Bachelor's degree in Education.



Snoozy

Bill married Letha Larson on June 15, 1952 in Beresford. In 1956, they moved their family to Fenton, MI, where he taught school for a number of years. He also attended the University of Michigan, where he earned his Master's Degree in Education Administration. He served as the principal of Fenton Middle School, retiring in 1976, when the family returned to South Dakota. He then ran a water hauling business, and he and Letha owned and operated the cafe and gas station in Davis, SD. In 1980, they moved to Scotland, SD where he was the Junior/Senior High School principal until retiring in 1989. He moved to Akron, IA upon retirement, and lived at and managed Ridgewood Apartments. He then moved to Yankton

to live near his daughter for several years, before returning to Beresford again in 2009. Bill was a resident at Morningside Manor in Alcester since November 2011 until the time of his death.

Survivors include his four children, Mike of Beresford; Nancy (Vick) Johnson of Yankton; Jane (Dan) Waterman of Hawarden; and Tom of Alturas, CA; four grandchildren, Brian (Jen) Weiland of Beresford; Becky (Dustin) Sohl of Hudson; Sadie Davis, and Sophie (Tyler) Jurens all of Hawarden; and six great-grandchildren, Katie, Lane, Jalyn, Leigha, Josie, and Kinlee, and one great-granddaughter due in October; two sisters-in-law, Audrey Snoozy of Beresford; and Eudora Larson of Flagstaff, AZ; and brother-

-in-law John Larson and wife Flora of Sun City, AZ; and many nieces and nephews.

Bill was preceded in death by his wife Letha; his parents; two brothers, Howard and Don; a sister, Vardell, in childhood; his in-laws, Harold and Hazel Larson; brother-in-law Harold (Lars) Larson; sister-in-law Ann Snoozy; and son-in-law Vick Johnson.

Funeral services will be held 2 p.m., Monday, July 2, 2012 at Beresford Zion United Methodist Church with burial to follow at St. Peter Cemetery, rural Beresford. Visitation with family present will be Sunday from 5 to 7 p.m. at Wass Funeral Home in Beresford.

Yankton Press & Dakotan  
June 29, 2012

## THANK YOU

Thank you to our family for the heart-warming weekend, celebrating our 60th Wedding Anniversary. You were all so caring and sharing.

We are proud of all of you.

Special thank yous:

to the relatives, friends, and government officials for the personal calls, face to face greetings and the multitude of beautiful cards.

We were overwhelmed. Howard & Joyce Combs

View Our  
**Video Tributes**  
on-line at...

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**Tuscano Pizza**

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**\$5.00**

*Tuscano Pizza grilled on the sidewalk in front of the store every Friday thru Summer. Weather permitting.*

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