

NATION/WORLD DIGEST

Tropical Storm Hermine Sparks Warnings

NUEVO LAREDO, Mexico (AP) — Mexican authorities urged people to move to shelters while officials in Texas distributed sandbags and warned of flash floods as Tropical Storm Hermine headed toward the northwestern Gulf coast on Monday.

It is the second major storm to hit the area this season. Hurricane Alex roared ashore there in June, killing at least 12 people as remnant rains drenched a wide swath of northeastern Mexico for days.

Hermine could approach hurricane strength before making landfall early Tuesday in a sparsely populated area about 50 miles (80 kilometers) south of Matamoros, a city bordering Brownsville, Texas, according to the National Hurricane Center in Miami.

A hurricane watch was issued for the area from Rio San Fernando, Mexico, northward to Baffin Bay in Texas.

Iranian Woman Could Be Executed Soon

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — The lawyer for an Iranian woman sentenced to be stoned on an adultery conviction said Monday that he and her children are worried the delayed execution could be carried out soon with the end of a moratorium on death sentences for the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

In an unusual turn in the case, the lawyer also confirmed that Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani was lashed 99 times last week in a separate punishment meted out because a British newspaper ran a picture of an unveiled woman mistakenly identified as her. Under Iran's clerical rule, women must cover their hair in public. The newspaper later apologized for the error.

With the end of Ramadan this week, the mother of two could be executed "any moment," said her lawyer, Javid Houtan Kian.

The sentence was put on hold in July after an international outcry over the brutality of the punishment, and it is now being reviewed by Iran's supreme court.

Ashtiani was convicted in 2006 of having an "illicit relationship" with two men after the murder of her husband the year before and was sentenced at that time to 99 lashes. Later that year, she was also convicted of adultery and sentenced to be stoned, even though she retracted a confession that she says was made under duress.

Pakistan: Suicide Attack Kills 17

LAKKI MARWAT, Pakistan (AP) — A Taliban suicide bomber detonated a car in an alley behind a police station in a strategically important town in northwestern Pakistan on Monday, killing at least 17 police and civilians in an explosion that shattered the station and neighboring homes.

About 40 people were wounded in the attack in Lakki Marwat, which sits on the main road between Punjab province, Pakistan's largest and most prosperous, and the North and South Waziristan tribal regions.

A Pakistani army offensive pushed many militants out of South Waziristan in October. The militants still control much of North Waziristan, where U.S. drone aircraft have been conducting a campaign of targeted killings.

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COLORADO

Destructive Wildfire Forces Evacuations

BY DAN ELLIOTT
Associated Press Writer

DENVER — A wind-driven wildfire broke out in the rugged Colorado foothills and quickly spread across 4 square miles Monday, destroying some homes and triggering evacuations of hundreds of others.

No injuries were reported. Authorities could not say how many structures burned down, but they said at least some of them were houses.

The fire started in Four Mile Canyon northwest of Boulder, and erratic winds gusting to 45 mph spread the flames both to the west and northeast.

At least four roads in the area were closed, and a billowing, white plume of heavy smoke was visible for miles. County health officials advised residents to stay indoors if the smoky air became irritating.

The cause of the fire was unknown. Boulder County sheriff's Cmdr. Rick Brough

said the fire moved quickly through difficult country.

"It's very rocky, hilly, mountainous terrain," he said.

About 200 homes scattered in and near the canyon were evacuated earlier in the day. Authorities said residents of seven other subdivisions were ordered to evacuate by Monday night.

They included at least 200 additional homes, but the total wasn't immediately known.

The Boulder County Emergency Management Office website said the county's telephone alert system wasn't working properly and advised residents in the evacuation areas to leave rather than waiting for a call from authorities.

It wasn't clear whether authorities were going door-to-door. No one answered the main number at the Emergency Management Office Monday night.

At least 100 buildings were threatened.

One fire vehicle was destroyed, said Patrick von Keyserling, a spokesman for the Boulder County Office of Emergency Management.

About 100 ground crew members were on the scene and 75 more were on standby, Brough said.

Late in the day, winds subsided enough that two aerial tankers were able to begin dropping fire retardant shortly before 6 p.m.

"It was tremendously dark about an hour ago," said Marilyn Cole, who was working at the Country Corner Store in Hygiene, about 10 miles northeast of the fire. "It's very, extremely hazy."

Three evacuation centers were set up in Boulder and in the mountain village of Nederland, and at least 65 people had checked in at the three centers by mid-afternoon.

A shelter for livestock was set up at the Boulder County Fairgrounds in Longmont.

Obama Has Gotten Fewer Judges Confirmed Than Nixon

WASHINGTON (AP) — A determined Republican stall campaign in the Senate has sidetracked so many of the men and women nominated by President Barack Obama for judgeships that he has put fewer people on the bench than any president since Richard Nixon at a similar point in his first term 40 years ago.

The delaying tactics have proved so successful, despite the Democrats' substantial Senate majority, that fewer than half of Obama's nominees have been confirmed and 102 out of 854 judgeships are vacant.

Forty-seven of those vacancies have been labeled emergencies by the judiciary because of heavy case-loads.

Even some Republican senators have complained. Sen. Lamar Alexander took to the Senate floor in July to plead with his own leaders for a vote on an appeals court judge supported by Alexander and fellow Tennessee Republican Sen. Bob Corker.

With Congress returning Sept. 13 for a session shortened by members' desire to campaign for re-election in November, there's little time to reverse the trend. Some say there's little chance of reversing it as polls show a rising chance the GOP will capture the Senate, which

could stiffen GOP resistance to confirmation votes.

The Obama administration got a slow start sending names to the Senate last year and has yet to try to fill two vacancies on the high-profile federal appeals court in the District of Columbia, where four current Supreme Court justices once served.

Obama has voiced only tepid public objection as more and more of his judicial nominees become stranded in Senate limbo. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., has been unwilling to set aside the considerable time needed to force votes under complex Senate rules.

Now there are 45 nominees awaiting action, two for nearly 13 months. After Alexander's complaint, the Republicans agreed to allow a mid-September vote for appeals court nominee Jane Strach, first nominated by Obama in August 2009.

At this point in President George W. Bush's first term, 72 judges had been confirmed by a Senate that Democrats controlled for much of Bush's first two years. By contrast, the Senate has had 59 or 60 seats under Democratic control during Obama's tenure but has only confirmed 40 of his judges. Nixon got 33 judges through a Democratic-controlled Senate.

Pioneering Little Rock Student Dies At Age 68

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (AP) — Jefferson Thomas, who as a teenager was among nine black students to integrate a Little Rock high school in the nation's first major battle over school segregation, has died. He was 68.

Thomas died Sunday in Ohio of pancreatic cancer, according to a Monday statement from Carlotta Walls LaNier, who also enrolled at Central High School in 1957 and is president of the Little Rock Nine Foundation.

The integration fight was a first real test of the federal government's resolve to enforce a 1954 Supreme Court order outlawing racial segregation in the nation's public schools. After Gov. Orval Faubus sent National Guard troops to block Thomas and eight other students from entering Central High, President Eisenhower ordered in the Army's 101st Airborne Division.

Soldiers stood in the school hallways and escorted each of the nine students as they went from classroom to classroom.

OBITUARIES

Twyla Adams

SCOTLAND — Twyla Maxine Adams, 78, of Scotland formerly of Plankinton, died Sunday (Sept. 5, 2010) after a courageous battle against cancer, at the Good Samaritan Center in Scotland.

Funeral services are at 11 a.m. Wednesday at United Methodist Church, Tyndall, with burial at the Sunset Memorial Cemetery in Mitchell.

Visitation is 5-8 p.m. today (Tuesday), with a prayer service followed by Order of Eastern Star Service at 7 p.m., at Will Funeral Chapel, Mitchell.

Sophie Kafka

WAGNER — Sophie Kafka, 104, of Wagner died Monday (Sept. 6, 2010) at the Good Samaritan Society in Wagner.

Funeral services are at 10:30 a.m. Thursday at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic Church, Dante. Burial is in St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery, Dante.

Visitation is noon-5 p.m. Wednesday at Crosby-Jaeger Funeral Home, Wagner, followed

by a 7:30 p.m. Rosary/Wake service at the church in Dante.

Pearl Balfany

Pearl N. Balfany, 104, of Yankton died Monday (Sept. 6, 2010) at Avera Sister James Care Center, Yankton.

Arrangements are pending under the care of Opsahl-Kostel Funeral Home and Crematory, Yankton.

Michael Hays

BURBANK — Michael Dennis Hays, 43, of Burbank died Thursday (Sept. 2, 2010) at the Sanford/USD Medical Center, Sioux Falls.

Funeral services are at 1:30 p.m. Wednesday at First Baptist Church, Vermillion, with cremation to follow.

Visitation begins at 6 p.m. tonight (Tuesday) for family and

close friends at Iverson-Siecke-Kober Funeral Home, Vermillion with a prayer service at 7 p.m. Burial will be at a later date.

Mariann Pinkelman

HARTINGTON, Neb. — Mariann Alyce Pinkelman, 55 of Hartington, Neb., died at her residence on Thursday (Sept. 2, 2010).

Funeral services are at 10:30 a.m. today (Tuesday) at Trinity Lutheran Church, Hartington, with the Rev. Bob Bryan officiating. Burial will be at the Hartington City Cemetery.

Visitation will continue one hour prior to services at the church on Tuesday. Wintz Funeral Home, Hartington, is in charge of arrangements.

To send an online sympathy card, go to www.wintzfuneralhome.com.

Velda Bayne

COLERIDGE, Neb. — Velda G. Bayne, 82 of Coleridge, Neb., died Saturday (Sept. 4, 2010) at Faith Regional Hospital, Norfolk, Neb.

Funeral services are at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Coleridge, with the Rev. Katie Russell officiating. Burial will be in the Lawn Ridge Cemetery in Coleridge.

Visitation is 4-8 p.m. today (Tuesday) with a Prayer Service and Video Tribute at 7 p.m. at the

church. Visitation will begin one hour prior to services on Wednesday at the church.

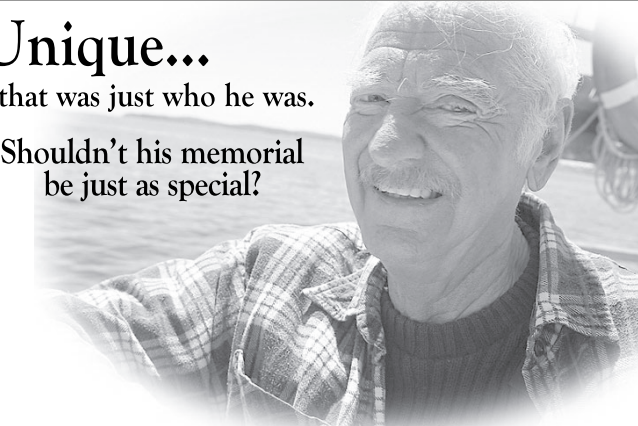
The Wintz Funeral Home, Coleridge, is in charge of arrangements. To send online condolences or to view the video tribute, visit www.wintzfuneralhome.com.

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HONORING THEIR MEMORY
Our Thoughts And Prayers Are With Them
Our care and concern does not end with the funeral service. This week we remember with family and friends the anniversary of the deaths of:
Edmund Hamann
who passed away on **September 9, 2009**
Illa Mackey
who passed away on **September 9, 2009**
Joanne Harty
who passed away on **September 10, 2009**
Randy Schoenberger
who passed away on **September 6, 2008**
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