GFD battles two local fires

Written by By Bernie Dotson Sun Correspondent
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A May 4 brush fire near the intersection of Patton and Dairy drives was quickly extinguished by crews from the Gallup Fire Department, according to reports.

Gallup Deputy Fire Chief Jesus Morales said a call regarding what looked like a tree on fire came into dispatch at around 6:05 pm. When firefighters arrived, there were residents of the neighborhood attempting to put the fire out.

“We don’t encourage that,” Morales said of resident participation. “This was a brush fire. We were able to contain it.”

Morales said the fire was centralized behind a church near the intersection. He did not identify the church in the fire report. He said the fire was put out by using hand tools and a chainsaw. A damage estimate was not immediately available. An official cause of the fire was not listed in

the report, but Morales said the investigation involving that fire is still open.

FIRST FINANCIAL FIRE

A second fire this week at the First Financial Credit Union at 313 Boardman Drive was called in at about 9:32 am on May 5, Morales said. In that situation, firefighters were dealing with what is classified as a structure fire, Morales said.

“There was heavy smoke coming from the attic vents,” Morales recorded in a fire report on the matter. “All staff and occupants had been vacated prior to our arrival,” Morales said.

Morales said the fire was isolated to the attic area. Gallup Fire Chief Eric Babcock said at this week’s city council meeting that something electrical triggered the First Financial Bank fire.

Morales and Babcock said the dollar amount of sustained damages to the First Financial building hasn’t yet been determined. The McKinley County Fire Department assisted in the extinguishing of the fire, according to the fire report.

There were no injuries reported in either incident, Morales said. The Gallup Police Department assisted in the incident, too, Morales noted.

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