

Scout tents destroyed by storm

Written by Elizabeth Barrett

Thursday, 21 June 2012 14:06 - Last Updated Thursday, 21 June 2012 14:09



Donations for more sought

Mother Nature swooped down on a gathering of Gothenburg Boy Scouts in Kansas last week and demolished tents, camping supplies and some personal items.

Gothenburg cubmaster Chris Healey estimated tent damage at \$2,000.

The scouts were camping with about 265 other boys for a week at Camp Hansen. The camp is nestled on the edge of Kirwin Reservoir, about 15 miles southeast of Phillipsburg.

Healey said a Thursday night thunderstorm, packing winds up to 90 mph, roared into the camp about 7 p.m.

They sought shelter in a building where they squeezed in “like sardines” while the gale destroyed nine of 11 tents and two canopies the troop had brought from Gothenburg.

“Some blew away and some were shredded,” Healey said.

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Fortunately much of the camping gear, like camp stoves, lanterns and food, was stored in wooden boxes and survived the winds intact.

The storm lasted until about 10 p.m. but the scouts were not released from the shelter until midnight.

At some point after the storm, camp counselors set up canvas Army tents sent from Fort Riley.

“They were like old MASH military tents,” Healey said.

Not deterred by the violent storm, the scouts chose to camp another night.

“Camp was over at 4 p.m. Friday but the kids all wanted to stay another night,” he said.

Healey said they had a big campfire and went to bed about 11 p.m.

“About 1 p.m., all hell froze over again,” he said. “There was hail, thunder and lightning and rain.”

No tornado watch, like Thursday night, or a need to return to the shelter however.

And some scouts didn't even wake up.

“They were exhausted from Thursday night,” Healey said.

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The local scouts ranged in age from 11 to 16. Besides Healey, scout leaders on the trip were John Wilkerson, Steve Gugel man and Rick Whitney.

Because they will have to spend the remaining scout budget on the purchase of new tents, Healey said donations would be appreciated.

To help, call Boy Scout committee chair Todd Larson at 529-0006.

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