

SEVERE WEATHER

4TH BRINGS MOURNING, CLEANUP IN LAKE GENEVA



OWEN ZILIAK, STATE JOURNAL

People assess the damage on South Lake Shore Drive in Lake Geneva Saturday, a day after a powerful storm leveled trees throughout the area, damaged buildings and knocked over a line of utility poles.

Storm kills 3 young boaters, causes significant damage as holiday weekend begins

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LAKE GENEVA — Families dressed in red, white and blue filled Big Foot Beach near Geneva Lake on Friday morning, less than 24 hours after a sudden storm brought three boating deaths and widespread destruction to the area.

The storm hit this resort city around noon on Friday, as residents and visitors were preparing for the weekend's Fourth of July celebrations.

A private recreational motorboat carrying six adults and four children was overwhelmed by strong winds and waves, said the Lake Geneva Police Department in a statement.

Emergency responders rescued six adults and one child from the water. The three remaining children's bodies were later located and recovered. All four children on board were wearing life jackets.

"I don't know there's a lot that could have been done — it's tragic," said Todd Wooldridge, a visitor from Kentucky who watched the storm unfold. "Just looking out that way yesterday, it was black. In front of the black, there was this screen of grayish-white, and that was the rain, and you could see how fast it was moving ... that's when everybody took off running."

Wooldridge and his wife, Erika Wooldridge, traveled to southern Wisconsin to celebrate the holiday weekend. The couple

ran for shelter in an antique shop when the storm hit, seemingly out of nowhere, they said. After a brief power outage, during which they huddled toward the back of the store while listening to tornado sirens, they emerged to see downed trees and damage.

It wasn't until later that evening that they were saddened to hear about the capsized boats and deaths, they said.

The Wooldridges still decided to take their planned boat cruise on Saturday. They're trying to make the best of the situation, they said, despite wondering whether they "should even be here" due to safety concerns.

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US celebrates Independence Day, 250th anniversary

Trump crowd evacuated as storm delays his speech

ANDY SULLIVAN AND MIKE SNIDER
Reuters / USA Today

WASHINGTON — U.S. President Donald Trump said on Saturday he would deliver a speech to mark the country's 250th anniversary on the National Mall "no matter what," as summer thunderstorms threatened to delay or disrupt the event.

Authorities had ordered a crowd to evacuate the area near the Washington Monument where Trump was due to speak, but the group organizing the event, Freedom 250, said they would be readmitted and Trump would speak at 11 p.m. Eastern time, one hour later than previously scheduled.

"I will be there no matter what," Trump posted on social media. "It's Saturday night, LETS HAVE SOME FUN, even if

we are out late tonight."

Visitors had waited hours to get into the event, contending with stepped-up security and temperatures that reached 102 degrees. The record-breaking heat wave forced the cancellation of several parades and other events in the area.

"It's just part of the deal I signed up for," said Glen Solander, 60, a software engineer visiting from Sioux Falls, South Dakota, as he waited at a security checkpoint on Saturday afternoon.

White nationalists

Other visitors included the white nationalist organization Patriot Front. The group posted on social media that it arrived in the capital, and hundreds of people wearing the group's outfits traveled to the city on D.C. Metro trains. Local police said early Saturday evening they hadn't received reports of violence.

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JONATHAN ERNST, REUTERS

National Guard members hand out water Saturday to people waiting in line for the Great American State Fair on the National Mall in Washington.