

Bad weather has always been a part of trying to enjoy the great outdoors. I'll never forget one time that my good friend David Elrod and I took part in a winter camporee at Dotson Point near Sewanee. I had been asked a couple of times to deliver the Sunday morning message to the Scouts, and I thought that David might like to do it this time. As we planned our trip and the equipment that we would need, I remember David claiming that he had a tent that we could carry the few miles into the campsite.

We were late getting started, and as we parked our cars at the trailhead, I discovered that the tent David had brought was rather large and heavy. This was definitely not a backpacking tent. We ended up having to carry it between us in a most non-Scout-like fashion. We laid it on poles and it looked a lot like we were carrying a dead body on a stretcher. As we began to walk down the Jeep path toward the camping area, it began to sleet. Thus began a great adventure.

The sleet changed to snow, and it continued to snow all evening long. We reached our campsite and set up the tent. We had another young man with us named Mark that had never been camping before. We had a good fire that night, and eventually we turned in. That night the storm got much worse. We were camped on the top of a ridge (thus the name 'Point'), and the winds roared over us with sounds similar to a high-speed freight train. In the middle of the night, the wind broke one side of the tent loose and threw our little our little friend on top of us. Don't you just love getting out into a storm to fix a tent?

That morning there was about six inches of snow on the ground. I got a fire started and cooked breakfast, but no one seemed interested in eating except me. As David and I walked down to the camporee headquarters, we saw many people packing out. At headquarters we learned that the morning service, our whole purpose in being there, had been canceled. David walked out and drove his car back on that mushy trail and we loaded up and got out before our feet froze.

Even though the reason we went on this trip sort of vanished, I have absolutely no regrets for going. This trip has some really great memories; snow survival and fire building, bodies flying through the air, terrifying weather, and good fellowship. You can't always predict the weather in life, but you can try to have the most enjoyment possible! This should be the way we approach everything.

Believe it or not, our friend Mark went camping again with us. It snowed then, too!