

Hunt residents literally keep eyes on the cross

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HUNT—Weeks after the deadly July 4 Guadalupe River flood, its survivors still live with memories of danger, fear, confusion, loss—and faith. Will and Ann Britt awoke that morning just in time.



Texans on Mission volunteers arrived to rip out ruined wooden flooring, remove appliances and cut away sheetrock in preparation for Will and Ann Britt to rebuild their home. (Photo / Ferrell Foster)

Two weeks later, Texans on Mission volunteers arrived to rip out ruined wooden flooring, remove appliances and cut away sheetrock in preparation for the Britts to rebuild their home. The Britts told what happened.

While darkness still reigned outside, Will got out of bed in their first-floor bedroom and walked to the living room, checking the weather app on his phone. When he looked at the glass front door, he saw flood waters already

head-high beyond the door.

He turned to run and get his wife when the front door exploded open, and water rushed through and smashed out of the broad, glass back door.

If he had not acted so quickly, Will would have been swept out of his home and into the raging river.

“We were awake all night, because the storm was so loud,” Ann said. But she didn’t make it to the front door that morning, as Will grabbed her in retreat from the water and up the nearby stairs.

“I just had my puppy dog and had Will’s hand, and we just ran around the corner and came up here,” she said, standing in the room that became their waiting room in the midst of the flood.

‘OK, Lord, you’ve got us ... in your arms’

From upstairs, they watched the waters outside rise. A 10-foot tall cross stood outside their window, and by the time the Britts got to the second floor, water had risen to just below the horizontal bar of the cross.



Raging floodwaters knocked down trees, but a 10-foot tall cross remained standing on the property of Will and Ann Britt. (Photo / Ferrell Foster)

In the darkness punctuated by lightning, they continued to watch, pacing from one window to another and praying.

“I mean, literally, I hit those steps (to the second floor), and I just started praising [God],” Ann said. Once upstairs, she made “a little warpath” in prayer back and forth across the room

The cross outside the window held up while the water swept away trees. Just as the water neared the top of the cross, it stopped rising.

“When we saw the arms [of the cross], we thought: ‘OK, Lord, you’ve got us. ... You’ve got us in your arms.’”

Thankfulness overtook the Britts, because 18 people from their family usually spent July 4 at the house. They had delayed the family get-together awaiting the birth of the newest family member.

“They all were going to be here, so every bed would have been full,” Ann said. “We were here by ourselves, thank the Lord.”

‘Grief is just overwhelming’

As she spoke two weeks later in front of the window above the cross, Ann’s thoughts turned to Camp Mystic. The Britts’ home is just up river from the camp, and the cross is planted at the edge of their property line with Camp Mystic.

The loss of so many girls’ lives has “affected all of us at home here,” she said. “The grief is just overwhelming. ... And the Eastlands are very good friends of ours.”

Camp Director Rick Eastland died in the flood.

The Britts thankfulness their family did not come for the holiday and they made it upstairs in time is mixed with the grief that so many people in Kerr County are grappling with in the aftermath.

A testament to God’s love and mercy

Day after day, funerals, often multiple funerals in one day, became part of the community experience. But the Britts, literally and spiritually, kept their eyes on the cross.

A large cedar tree on their property had fallen, and “a good friend made a cross out of it and just put it in the ground without a lot of direction from us, because we didn’t really know where to put it,” Ann said.

“So, it landed right there,” she said, pointing out the window. “It is the most perfect place. because the sun rises over here, over the bluffs,” Ann said, pivoting to the east. “And it’s the first thing that the sun shines on.

You can see it from every room in our downstairs.”

In the evening, the cross is “the last thing that the sun shines on” as it sets behind another bluff. “So, it was the perfect, perfect placement of that cross.”

And during the storm, it seemed to be in the perfect place, as well.

“The cross stayed standing, and it’s just such a testament to [God’s] love and his grace and mercy for us and his protection.”

There is another testament to God on their property. The sign at the property’s entrance gives its name, “Rock House.”

Underneath is a portion of Psalm 18:2, “The Lord is my rock.”