

## Scouts sell lemonade at \$250 a glass to help with \$14M suit

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SALT LAKE CITY - A Boy Scout troop tried to put a dent in a potential \$14 million judgment Friday by selling lemonade - at \$250 a glass.

The federal and state governments earlier this week sued the Boy Scouts of America to recover costs of the 2002 East Fork Fire, allegedly started by Utah Scouts.

"C'mon, we need your help!" shouted one Scout to cars whizzing past during morning rush hour.

Troop 347 of Fruit Heights, a suburb north of Salt Lake City, was not involved in the camp-out two years ago that officials say precipitated the fire - a fact that the boys pointed out to potential donors. But they still wanted to help out their fellow Scouts.

The 12- and 13-year-olds spent two hours hawking lemonade to build up a fund in case the Boys Scouts lose the lawsuit.

But \$14 million is a lot of lemonade, so prices were inflated a bit. A sip cost \$1, a small glass \$3 and, for \$250, folks could get a large drink - about 16 ounces.

"If only one person in 40 in the entire state of Utah buys a large, it's over," said Scott Fisher, a morning radio disc jockey that helped organize the fund-raising event.

Salt Lake City attorney Paul Gotay handed the Scouts a \$10 bill for

"just a little bit" of lemonade.

Gotay, a criminal defense attorney, said he heard about the stunt on the radio and wanted to come by to reinforce the positive.

"What's more important? Teaching them what they did was wrong by showing them that there's no forgiveness for something they did unintentionally?" he asked. "That's not how the system should work. I had to come show my support."

They needed more donors like Gotay. After two hours, they had netted only \$66.43.

The lawsuit filed Tuesday alleges that about 20 Boy Scouts ages 11 to 14 were left without adult supervision for a night outside an approved campground. Some of the boys built fires that were left to smolder and spread across more than 14,000 acres, the lawsuit says.

U.S. Attorney Paul Warner said the complaint seeks \$13.3 million for the federal costs of fighting the fire and reclaiming charred land in the Uinta Mountains.

The state is asking more than \$600,000 for its firefighting expenses.

The Great Salt Lake Council has told state officials it has more than enough insurance to cover the costs, said Assistant Attorney General Mike Johnson.

The fire started June 28, 2002, about 35 miles south of Evanston, Wyo. It blackened 14,200 acres of the Wasatch-Cache National Forest and caused an estimated \$150,000 in damage within the Scout camp to 12 camping sites, a rifle range, climbing towers, some latrines and several thousand feet of water lines.

The Boy Scouts have not admitted responsibility for the fire.