

LOFTON LAGNIAPPE MONTHLY EMPLOYEE NEWS



Hurricane Preparedness

By: Steve Ham, Lofton Safety Services

With life slowly getting back to normal, it's hard to think about another potential disaster. However, hurricane season is upon us, running from June 1st to November 30th, so it's time to get prepared. While hurricanes pose the greatest threat to life and property, tropical storms and depressions also can be devastating, causing flooding from heavy rains. Severe weather, such as tornadoes, can cause extensive damage and loss of life.

Now is the time to check your supplies from the pandemic to add those essential items you may need due to a hurricane. Here are a few things to help prepare for a possible hurricane:

- Prepare the interior of your home.
- Prepare the exterior of your home.
- Bring in light-weight objects, such as garbage cans, garden tools, toys and lawn furniture.
- Bring pets inside.
- If you have a trampoline, turn over (tarp facing the ground) and secure with deep stakes.
- Avoid low-lying areas.
- Prepare a supply kit, including batteries, candles, flashlights, first aid kit, portable radio, non-perishable food, and several days' water supply as power may be affected.
- Pick-up or refill prescription medications.
- Have plenty of cash on hand.
- With many states still on a stay-at-home order, you may need to plan an alternate place to go if told to evacuate as local shelters may not be available.
- Ensure everyone in the household has a face mask in case you need to relocate or evacuate.
- Re-fuel all vehicles.

After the hurricane is over, keep listening to the radio or television for instructions. No one knows where the next hurricane may form or hit, but being prepared is a good defense.

To stay prepared, you can log onto the National Hurricane Center's website at www.nhc.noaa.gov/prepare and download the Tropical Cyclone Preparedness Guide.

TeleHealth

By: Mary Dixon, Benefits Coordinator



Did you know that you could have a visit with your healthcare provider in the comfort of your own home? *Telehealth is available to all members participating in the Lofton-sponsored UMR plan. Contact your provider to see if a virtual visit is available. If

not, Call A Doc is accessible free of charge to members, 24/7, by calling 844-DOC-24HR or visiting www.247calladoc.com. Once you have taken a few minutes to complete the registration process and add a brief medical history, you will have immediate access to top doctors, who are available to assist you with medical advice, non-emergency care and, if necessary, short term prescriptions.

*Telehealth visits will be covered the same as a regular physician visit.

Employee Shout-Out!



Special kudos to **Kyran Charles**, New Orleans. Kyran is a CDL driver working for a local client in New Orleans. He impressed the client so much that they reached out to let us know.

"I wanted thank Lofton for sending Kyran Charles to us. He has proven to be a great asset to our company. He is always on time and never takes off. Kyran is always willing to learn, work extra if needed and always has a great attitude. Our drivers are the face of the company that our customers see on a daily basis. I have received many compliments from customers and coworkers about Kyran. I wish I had more like him. Thanks again!"

Way to go Kyran! You are the reason our clients come to Lofton. Great job!

JUNE 2020

JUNE 6

D-Day



JUNE 14

Flag Day



JUNE 19

Juneteenth



JUNE 20

First Day of Summer

JUNE 21

Father's Day





“Looking Back... Dealing with the Present...and Looking Forward ”

By: Glenda Lofton, Ph.D.

Each year my Delta Kappa Gamma Education group selects a book to read and discuss at our final meeting. This year’s selection was the book, **Refugee** by Alan Gratz. Though it was written for grades 4-7, it is one of the most emotional and inspiring books I have ever read. The book, a blend of truth and fiction, focused on three critical time periods that I lived through: World War II, the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the current war in the Middle East. Sadly because of the Covid-19 virus, my group could not meet, so we wrote our feelings about the book to share online. What follows is a condensed version of what I wrote.

The first story focused on **Josef, 12**, his sister Ruthie, 6, his mom and dad—a Jewish family already suffering persecution in Berlin in 1938. As I read his story my heart was touched for several reasons. I felt gratitude that my dad’s family, four Gaar brothers, had left Germany back in the 1700’s and traveled to America, three eventually to Winn Parish in Louisiana where my mom and dad met and married back in 1939. At the same time my heart ached for Josef and his family who were allowed to leave Germany after their father had been imprisoned with thousands of Jews for six months and travel to Cuba in hopes of coming to America, only to be denied entry and forced to return to Europe without their dad. They lived in France until France was invaded by the Nazis, and Josef was taken with his mom to a concentration camp where both later died. (I would not learn the rest of Ruthie’s story until the third time period.)

During World War II my dad served in Guam, and I still remember as a four-year old waiting anxiously for weekly letters from Dad. The post-

man greeted me happily with the words I loved to hear: “Letter from Daddy!” And then for several weeks, letters did not come. As we feared the worst, a letter finally came! The postman was so excited, he opened the letter and began to read it to us. The letter, dated Feb. 20, 1945, and dictated by Dad, told us that “a fragment of coral or something hit me when a pit was blasted and struck me over the left eye,” but for us not to worry “because I think everything will be alright.” What he didn’t tell us was that he had been found by a fellow Navy man with part of his brain lying on the ground, and thankfully one of the best brain surgeons in the U.S. was there and performed the sur-

what to do, Castro came on the radio, blamed the CIA for the riots, and said anyone could leave Cuba that wanted to. Hurriedly, that night, Isabel’s family and their neighbor’s family, 9 people, fled in an old boat as a pistol shot rang out and hit their boat—a sad beginning to an even sadder journey that ultimately took the life of Isabel’s best friend, Ivan, caused her grandfather to give up his journey to divert the attention of the U.S. Coast Guard who were returning Cubans to Guantanamo Bay, and happily ended with Isabel in a sixth grade classroom in Miami wearing her friend Ivan’s baseball cap in his memory.

As I read Isabel’s story, my thoughts went back to October 16-28, 1962 known as the Cuban Missile Crisis when I was teaching second grade at Jefferson Terrace in Baton Rouge. Fidel Castro had taken over Cuba in 1959, and in 1961 Cuban exiles who opposed Castro failed in the Bay of Pigs Invasion to take back Cuba despite the assistance of the U.S., at the height of the Cold War with Russia. Major shifts in relations between the U.S., Cuba, and Russia eventually led to Russia’s



Gordon Gaar Jr.
U.S. Navy Seabee, WWII



Glenda Lofton’s 2nd grade class where they would practice “Duck and Cover” drills.

gery. Despite a 50% disability, he later went to college, he and mom gave me my brother 7 years later, and he became a beloved teacher and coach at Pride, LA. But... he had to retire early because of Parkinson Disease that doctors felt was the result of the head injury. Even then Dad remained positive. “When they get a cure for this disease,” he would say, “I’m going to...” Sadly he died at 69.

The second time period focused on **Isabel, 11**, and her family living in Havana, Cuba back in 1994 under Castro’s communist regime. When the Soviet Union fell in 1989, Cuba’s economy also fell, and people were starving. One night riots broke out, and Isabel’s dad was beaten and threatened with arrest as he fled. As the family discussed

deployment of a ballistic missile to Cuba capable of reaching the U.S. and Louisiana. At school, we began to store food and other supplies in our classroom and had daily drills on what to do in case of attack. It was scary! Thankfully negotiations with Russia resulted in removal of missiles in Cuba, assurances the U.S. would not invade Cuba without direct provocation, and creation of a nuclear hotline between the U.S. and Russia. Life returned to normal, and my students created a bulletin board entitled, “I Pledge Allegiance to America.”

Next month, I’ll share the story of **Mahmoud, 12**, and his family—refugees from Syria and the current, ongoing war in the Middle East... and hopefully we will be viewing the end of the war with the COVID-19 virus, too!

I Am Your Flag

I am the flag of the United State of America.
I am called Old Glory.
I am called the Star Spangled Banner.
I am the rockets red glare;
the bombs bursting in air.
I am the imminence of patriotism.
I am the trenches in France, Belgium, Anzio,
Normandy, Omaha Beach, Guadalcanal, and
Korea.

I am the jungle of Vietnam and the sands of
Desert Storm and the streets of Bosnia.
I am “One Nation under God.”
I am those that leave their families to serve
our nation.
I am the names of those who never came
back to keep this republic free.
When you salute me, you are saluting them.
I am the symbol of America.
The home of the proud, the brave and the
free.

- Author Unknown

