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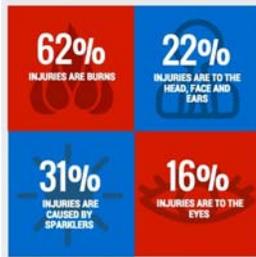
Monthly Employee News

July 2016

Fireworks Safety

By: Steve Ham, Lofton Safety Services

Fireworks are synonymous with our celebration of Independence Day. Yet, fireworks injure over 9,000 people each year. Fireworks can be dangerous, causing serious burn and eye injuries. You can help prevent fireworks-related injuries and deaths. Here are some fireworks tips to help you celebrate this Fourth of July safely:



- Don't buy or use illegal fireworks.
- Buy fireworks from reliable sellers.
- Use fireworks outdoors only.
- Never allow young children to play with or ignite fireworks.
- Always have adult supervision. Parents don't realize that young children suffer injuries from sparklers. Sparklers burn at temperatures of about 2,000 degrees, hot enough to melt some metals.
- Never place any part of your body directly over a fireworks device when lighting the fuse.
- Never make your own fireworks.
- Never try to re-light or pick up a "dud" firework.
- Never point or throw fireworks at other people.
- Don't use metal or glass containers to shoot fireworks.
- Keep a bucket of water handy at all times.
- Avoid shooting fireworks over houses, yards, or in areas where there is a fire/people hazard.
- Avoid drinking alcohol while using fireworks.
- Light only one firework at a time on smooth, flat surfaces, then move away quickly.
- Soak fireworks in water before disposing of them.
- Don't carry fireworks in your pocket.
- The shooter should wear eye, hand and ear protection.
- Keep pets indoors during fireworks. More pets are lost on Independence Day than any other day of the year.
- Be sure to clean up and dispose any debris left on the ground.

Open Enrollment

By: Mary Dixon, Benefits Coordinator



July 27, 2016 to August 12, 2016 will be the annual "Open Enrollment" period for Lofton employees. Employees that have met plan eligibility requirements will be given the opportunity to enroll. Employees currently participating will be able to make changes to current coverage(s). Medical deductions (health, dental and vision) are deducted on a pre-tax basis, deduction changes are not allowed during the policy year unless there is a qualifying event*. Unum voluntary products (life, disability, critical illness and accident) will also be offered (post tax). All elections for the new policy year will be effective September 1, 2016 through August 31, 2017.

Eligible employees will receive enrollment packets via U.S. mail prior to July 27th including benefit, rate and enrollment instructions. Please make sure your mailing address on file with Lofton is correct. If an offer of health coverage is extended, you must enroll in one of the plans or waive the coverage. If coverage offered is waived, you may be subject to a penalty of 2% of your annual income or \$325 per person, \$162.50 per child under the age of 18, maximum penalty for a family could be \$975.00 for 2015. The penalties will increase for 2016.

Health insurance participants will also be offered an opportunity to participate in the annual "wellness program." Wellness participants that complete all steps of the program will receive or maintain a discounted health insurance rate. Wellness incentive program information will be emailed to employees following the open enrollment process.

*Qualifying events are changes including but not limited to marriage, divorce, death, births, change in employment, change in entitlements to Medicare, Medicaid or Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

What's Happening This Month

July 4

Independence Day

July 4th is commemorated as the day the Declaration of Independence was adopted by the Second Continental Congress.



"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute a new government..."

Lofton offices will be closed on **Monday July 4th** in observance of Independence Day.

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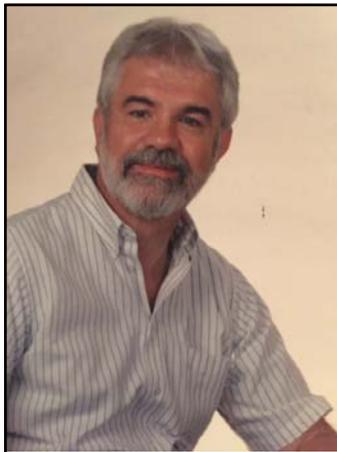
Job Board



Celebrating the Life of Gary Wayne Thomas

By: Glenda G. Lofton, Ph.D.

Those who read my column on a regular basis are familiar with the Jones Girls my mom, Hazel, and her three sisters: Elois, Eileen, and LaVerne—members of the “greatest generation” who were born in Gaar’s Mill, in Winn Parish, survived the loss of their dad at the age of 35, grew up during the Great Depression, and helped take care of me, the firstborn of the next generation, during World War II. I attended the weddings of all three aunts, was five when Aunt Elois’s first daughter came along, and seven when my brother, David, and Aunt Eileen’s first born, Gary were born. Although David and Gary lived far apart, they spent many special occasions together. My mom loved to sew, and when she made a fully lined and pleated coat for David, Grandma Jones insisted she make one for Gary, too. In 1952, when Aunt Eileen had to have surgery, Mother, David, and I rode the train from Baton Rouge to Sarepta, near Shreveport, to take care of Gary and his new little sister, Patsy. I still picture David and Gary happily playing in the sandbox behind the house while I held and hugged my newest cousin, Patsy. Gary’s younger sister, Jennifer, would come nine years later. Gary’s dad, Bill, a veteran of World War II and owner of a successful business in Sarepta, died in 1995, 27 years after a major heart attack that doctors could not believe he survived.



Gary Wayne Thomas

Gary grew up in Sarepta, was valedictorian of his high school class, and graduated with honors from Louisiana Tech in Ruston. At Tech, he excelled in music and acting, and had the lead in many musical productions there and later in Shreveport where he lived for many years. Although he cherished his Baptist upbringing, at Tech he was drawn to the beauty and reverence of the Episcopal Church and became an active member. Later, when his work as a Land Man in the oil and gas industry took him all over the state of Louisiana and to surrounding states, he immediately connected with the local Episcopal parish and participated in various aspects of parish life, especially outreach and music. He usually had his choir vestment on hand to participate, and many report “legendary” encounters with Gary at multiple locations, proceeding down the aisle with the choir, as if he’d always lived there. A priest in New Orleans recently referenced Gary with John Wesley’s famous quote, “The world is my parish.”

While his work in the oil and gas industry was important to him, his good friend of 30 years, Walter Jacob Baer, Rector of Grace Church on Canal Street in New Orleans for 13 years, said Gary’s primary work was “servant of the Lord”. He drove across two states if a friend was sick to visit and minister to him, attended funerals of countless people to comfort and pray with the family, drove desolate highways to minister to prisoners in Angola each month, organized

countless outreach programs to people in need, lived and ministered for a time at The Well, a homeless shelter in Lafayette, and organized the Deacons in the Dust Program with Deacon Ormonde Plater in New Orleans after Katrina. He worked tirelessly in rebuilding New Orleans after Katrina and hosted evacuees in his home. In his travels, he often stopped by Aunt Hazel’s, my mom’s, to visit and brighten her day with his rare sense of humor. I encouraged him to write a book. He never wrote a book, but he called me in 2007 to tell me he had had one page published in the book, *Louisiana in Words* edited by Joshua Clark, and Mom and I proudly showed up at Barnes and Nobel in Baton Rouge to get an autographed copy.

In 2003, when Rector Baer was preparing to move to New Orleans, Gary met his beloved wife, Susan, at St. Thomas’ Episcopal in Monroe. Rector Baer was a part of their wedding and still gives thanks for the joy that Susan’s family, including his stepchildren Joey, Stanley, and Frances and their spouses, and his step-grandchildren brought to Gary’s life. He loved them so much, and they loved him, but he also remained close to his two sisters and their families, and talked to his mom every day. (Gary developed a special bond with his brother-in-law, Patsy’s husband Eli, but that’s a heartwarming story for another time...)

In 2014, shortly after helping with his mom’s 90th birthday party that Michelle and I attended, Gary who was never ill, got a slight cough that would not go away. He was diagnosed with lung cancer that had spread to other parts of his body. He remained active in his church as long as possible, and his immense support system and network of family, church, coworkers, and the wider community was in action throughout Gary’s illness. Sadly, in April 2016, Gary became the first of my generation to die. His mom and his wife were with him. At his memorial service at St. Thomas’ Episcopal in Monroe on April 21, his long-time friend, Rector Baer who now lives in Vienna, Austria, gave a tribute to Gary. “Gary’s courage in the face of a deadly disease and the witness of his Christian faith is and will continue to be an inspiration to all...” and, he added, “I think Matthew 25 where Jesus enumerates “corporal acts of mercy” was written with Gary in mind: visiting the sick, visiting the prisoner, feeding the hungry and thirsty, clothing the naked, welcoming the stranger.”

Gary’s life reinforces one of the core beliefs on which Lofton Staffing was founded: We are all called to serve. We, ordinary people, have a story to be told, and we all touch others usually without realizing it.

Note: I would like to thank Rector Walter Jacob Baer who gave the tribute to Gary at his memorial service, and graciously shared it with me for this article.



Officer Kudos

One of our favorite things to put in our newsletter are kudos from our clients about our employees. Below are a few recent shout-outs to some of our outstanding officers.

Lofton received a call from a client wanting to give a BIG kudos to **Officer Whitney Buckles**. Whitney handled a very tough situation with a belligerent employee who had been terminated. Whitney stayed calm and handled everything

correctly. The client was VERY pleased with her performance! Way to keep your head during an intense situation! Keep up the great work!

Another shout out to **Officer Delicia Lewis**. While working the main gate, an employee was exiting the site when a car tried to enter the gate while it was open. Ms. Dee stopped the vehicle to investigate. It happens that the Executive Vice President of the company was in the car. He was vouched for by the employee leaving the site, so Ms. Dee let him in. He was very

proud and impressed by her actions and wanted to make sure Lofton expressed his gratitude. Great job, Delicia!

A special note to **Officers Rosheena Sanders and Tabitha Scott**, who returned a lost dog to the owner. While providing security at an event at City Park, Rosheena and Tabitha found the dog, contacted the owner and kept the dog safe. The dog’s owners were very happy to have their family pet returned. Way to look out for others, even the furry ones.