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Monthly Employee News

June 2016

Hurricane Preparedness

By: Steve Ham, Lofton Safety Services

It's that time of year again...hurricane season. The hurricane season runs from June 1st to November 30th. History teaches that a lack of tropical cyclone awareness and preparation are common threads among all major hurricane disasters. While hurricanes pose the greatest threat to life and property, tropical storms and depressions also can be devastating. Floods from heavy rains and severe weather, such as tornadoes, can cause extensive damage and loss of life.

Are you prepared for a tropical cyclone? A violent tropical cyclone with constant wind speeds of 75 miles per hour or more is known as a hurricane. A category 5 hurricane is the strongest storm, with wind speeds of 155 miles per hour and higher. A hurricane watch means conditions pose a possible hurricane threat in a specific area, usually within 36 hours.

Here are some things to do to prepare for a hurricane:

- Have plenty of cash on hand.
- Plan multiple escape routes.
- Plan where to go if told to evacuate.
- Learn locations of official shelters.
- Ensure vehicle has plenty of gas.
- Prepare a supply kit, including batteries, candles, flashlights, first aid kit, portable radio, non-perishable food, and several days' water supply.
- 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.
- Avoid low-lying areas.

After the hurricane is over, keep listening to the radio or television for instructions. When local officials tell you it is safe, you may return home. While no one knows where the next hurricane may form or hit, being prepared is a good defense.

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

Jambalaya Cook Off

Congratulations to Rae Milano and her son, Brennan on winning First Place in the 2016 Jambalaya Cook Off for the Gonzales Rotary Club. Rae is an active member in the Gonzales Rotary Club and has competed in the cook off in the past. Congratulations, Rae and Brennan. You two make a great team!



Valedictorian Honored

We would like to give a special "shout out" to Colleen Reese, who was honored as the Class of 2016 Valedictorian of Family Christian Academy. Colleen works part-time in the accounting department in Baton Rouge alongside her mother, Sherry Blattenberger. A very proud moment for mom and her extended Lofton family. Congratulations again, Colleen.



What's Happening This Month

June 6

D-Day

D-Day commemorates the epic battle in WWII on June 6, 1944 on the beaches of Normandy that foreshadowed the end of Nazi domination. More than 9,000 Allied Soldiers were killed or wounded.

June 14

Flag Day

Flag Day commemorates the adoption of the flag of the United States, which was resolved by the Second Continental Congress in 1777. U.S. citizens are encouraged to fly the American flag for the duration of the week.

June 19

Father's Day



June 19

Juneteenth

A holiday in the U.S. honoring African American heritage by commemorating the abolition of slavery in the state of Texas in 1865.

June 20

First Day of Summer

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On June 12, Tommy and I will celebrate our 56th wedding anniversary (we were just children back then). On my desk is a book I treasure, sent to us on that day back in 1960 by my Aunt LaVerne and her husband Dick Osborn entitled *Lovers Always (1899)*. The book had been theirs since their wedding day and the front page certified *that on the 16th day of July in the Year of our Lord 1949, Mr. Richard Lee Osborn and Miss Grace LaVerne Jones were united in Marriage at Dallas, Texas by W. Marshall Craig*. I was only eight years old, but I remember it well. You see, LaVerne was my mom's youngest sister, one of the four Jones girls that I've written about before. When my dad was fighting in World War II, the Jones Girls, who had lost their dad when LaVerne was only three months old, helped take care of me. When the war was over Aunt LaVerne and my dad (on the GI Bill) attended Northwestern State College in Natchitoches at the same time. I idolized her, and she often came by our house with one of her many boy-friends in an old rumble seat convertible. When she and dad finished Northwestern, despite all the guys she had dated, she was still single, and we all moved to Dallas, TX where the oldest Jones girl, Aunt Elois, a nurse, now lived with her husband, a rising employee in the Dr. Pepper Company.

One day LaVerne called my mom to tell her that Johnny (Dick's favorite uncle) had set her up with a blind date with his nephew, Dick. They went to Campisis' Pizza in Dallas and then out late for music and dancing at The Levy. It was love at first sight! She immediately called my mom for assistance, and the rest is history. Mother, who loved to cook (and pretended to have had help from LaVerne), fixed a fabulous meal, made LaVerne the most gorgeous yellow organdy apron trimmed in lace to wear, and invited Dick over. I loved her and him! He was really good looking, had a great sense of humor, and was incredibly kind.

Dick was born April 28, 1926 in Carnegie, Oklahoma and grew up during the great depression. "Life was hard...the kind of hard many of us know nothing about. His family moved from place to place in Oklahoma, and at times even the word 'family' would take on new definition. He lived in a number of different home environments and went to many different schools. There were times growing up when he wasn't sure where his next meal

would come from. Once, at eight years old, he was sent to live with his grandparents whom he loved dearly, and discovered only after he'd



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arrived on the bus that his grandparents had moved—and he had nowhere to stay. Many believe it was the hardness of his life that gave him the extraordinary character he possessed.

In the late 30's, Dick made his way to Dallas, TX, graduated from high school in 1944, and enlisted in the Navy that same year. He served as a Quarter Master and fought in WWII, until he was honorably discharged in 1946. Like many soldiers, Dick had contracted tuberculosis and spent almost a year in the hospital recuperating. He earned a year of college during that time, and then moved back to Dallas to complete his undergraduate degree at SMU. Dick had met a lawyer in the barracks in Albuquerque, and when Dick asked him if he thought he could be a lawyer too, the man replied, "You'll never be a lawyer. You're not smart enough..." Dick not only graduated from SMU with an undergraduate degree, he graduated from one of the best schools in the country with a law degree (his area of expertise was oil and gas)." As a young couple, LaVerne and Dick left Dallas in 1953. Dick worked for 14

years for a few small oil companies in Texas, and moved to the Denver area and settled in Broomfield, CO in 1967, where he continued to work in the oil and gas industry until his retirement in 1980."

On a personal level Dick and LaVerne had four wonderful children, (and gave me four special cousins)-- Vince, Vicki, Jim, and John, six grandchildren, and four great grandchildren. "Dick was known for his sense of humor, and his distinctive laugh. Dick could find humor in just about anything. He was funny, generous, respectful, stable, humble, loving, fun to be around, and never unkind to anyone." He also took care, as LaVerne is pleased to say, of our side of the family and often sent us Christmas cards with a special handwritten note.

"His life also reflected his simple faith in God that lived in his heart...a simple child-like faith that the Bible is true and you can believe what it says...He believed in heaven, that he would one day spend the rest of forever in heaven with God, but he also believed we should live out our faith through our actions while we're here on this earth. He ascribed to the Golden Rule, that we should do unto others as we would have them do to us."

On March 23, as many of you know, my beloved Uncle Dick died at his home in a tragic snow accident, at the age of 89. After his memorial service in Denver, he was buried in a memorial cemetery for veterans in Dallas. My Aunt LaVerne, his loving wife of 67 years was there, and happily Dick's Uncle Johnny, who arranged that memorable blind date between Dick and LaVerne so many years before, was there, too!

In Dick's life, the System of Beliefs on which Lofton Staffing was founded are given new meaning: Life is a temporary assignment; Learn to love Mondays; Don't wish your life away wishing for Fridays; Have a good day; you won't get it back; We are all called to serve; Why we do what we do...for the joy of it.

Note: I would like to thank Karl Shackelford, who conducted the memorial service for Dick in Broomfield, and graciously shared his eulogy with me for this article.