



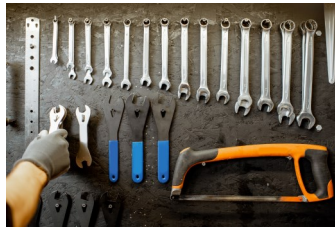
# LAGNIAPPE

## MONTHLY EMPLOYEE NEWS



### Hand Tool Safety By: Jeremy Olivier, Lofton Safety Services

Hammers, wrenches, chisels, pliers, screwdrivers, and other hand tools are often overlooked as sources of potential danger. Hand tools may look harmless, but they are the cause of many injuries. In fact, an estimated 8 percent of all workplace injuries are caused by incidents associated with hand tools. These injuries can be serious, including loss of fingers or eyesight.



Hand tools can cause many types of injuries, such as cuts, abrasions, amputations, and punctures. If hand tools are designed to cut or move metal and wood, remember what a single slip can do to fragile human flesh. The following are some of the most common injuries associated with hand tools:

**Repetitive motion injuries** - Using the same tool, in the same way, all day long can stress human muscles and ligaments. Carpal tunnel syndrome (inflammation of the nerve sheath in the wrist) and injuries to muscles, joints and ligaments are increasingly common if the wrong tool is used, or the right tool is used improperly. Injury from continuous vibration can also cause numbness or poor circulation in hands and arms.

**Eye injuries** - Flying chips of wood or metal are a common hazard, often causing needless and permanent blindness.

**Broken bones and bruises** - Tools can slip, fall from heights, or even be used improperly by careless employees, causing severe injuries. A hammer that falls from a ladder can be a lethal weapon.

To avoid such injuries, remember the following safety

procedures:

- Use the right tool for the job. Don't use your wrench as a hammer. Don't use a screwdriver as a chisel, etc. Go back and get the right tool in the right size for the job.
  - Don't use broken or damaged tools, dull cutting tools, or screwdrivers with worn tips.
  - Cut in a direction away from your body.
  - Make sure your grip and footing are secure when using large tools.
  - Carry tools securely in a tool belt or box. Don't hand carry tools up ladders. Use a hoist or rope.
- Keep close track of tools when working at heights. A falling tool can kill a co-worker.
- Pass a tool to another person by the handle; never toss it to them.
- Use the right personal protective equipment (PPE) for the job. Follow company instructions for selecting and using safety eyewear, steel toe boots, gloves, hard hats, etc.
- Never carry sharp or pointed tools such as a screwdriver in your pocket.
- Select ergonomic tools for your work task when movements are repetitive and forceful.
- Always keep your tools in good condition. A dull blade or blunt point can lead to injury.
- Store tools properly during and when you complete work.

By following these precautions, you can help prevent injuries and provide a better workplace for everyone. Remember, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!

### You've Been Caught!

During a visit to a client on 1/10/24, Lofton's Account Executive Manager and The Director of Security Operations were greeted by **Officer Shelia Turner** in the parking lot. Officer Turner had noticed that no one had exited the parked vehicle and walked over to check if everything was okay. This simple yet effective act exemplified the critical importance of being aware of one's surroundings as a security officer.

Congratulations Officer Shelia, **"You've Been Caught"** for providing exceptional Customer Service! Thank you for all your hard work!

Will you be the next officer to get caught?



### February 2024

February 2  
Groundhog Day



February 13  
Mardi Gras



February 14  
Ash Wednesday  
Valentine's Day



February 19  
Presidents' Day





## Exploring Louisiana's Rich Culture and Heritage

By: Glenda Lofton, Ph.D.

My husband, Tommy, and I have lived in various regions across the United States, discovering the richness and history of each place. We lived in Kentucky for a while, the birthplace of Lincoln, and then moved to Georgia. Our travels took us through rural towns, horse towns, picturesque mountains, the vast Atlantic and Gulf coasts, and long boat rides on lakes Tobesofkee and Sinclair. When we returned to Louisiana, I became part of a statewide school improvement project where I visited almost every parish, sparking an interest to learn more about my home state.

I thought I had discovered our uniqueness and culture; but it wasn't until we had the opportunity to see Louisiana from a different perspective - traveling by boat on the Intracoastal Canal from Pecan Island by way of Morgan City, Houma, and Lafitte to Grand Isle. Along the way, we witnessed the beauty of the marshland, stately cypress trees lining the canal, and vast resources such as shipyards, barges, crew boats, crab traps, and shrimp trawlers. Visions of Louisiana's wildlife of alligators, egrets, pelicans, and the American Bald Eagle between Morgan City and Houma filled our sights.

Bayou Barataria took us through the historic town of Lafitte where our boat was built by the Boudreaux Brothers, who can trace their family tree to the band of Jean Lafitte, pirate

and patriot, who played a key role in the Battle of New Orleans. Near Grand Isle, Louisiana's only barrier island, we saw large flocks of brown pelicans flying overhead, playful dolphins following in our wake, oyster beds, bay fishermen, and in the distance, the oil rigs, shrimpers, and fishermen offshore.

One of the places in Louisiana that our family loves is Grand Isle, where we spend many vacations. From the time Bret and Bart were little, we had vacationed there where we would fish all night by the lights at Bridgeside, catching two speckled trout at a time. There were no limits back then, so it



One of our favorite places...Grand Isle.

was not unusual to fill a large 50-gallon garbage can in one night. We also discovered Pecan Island, a sparsely populated area at the western end of the Cajun Gulf Coast. The waters abound with fish, crabs, and shrimp, and during hunting season the skies are filled with ducks and geese of infinite varieties.

We heard tales of John Veazey, a member of one of the early families to settle on Pecan Island, who survived Hurricane Audrey by climbing through the attic (along with his pig) and getting in a pirogue that was tied up to the side of the house where he stayed holding onto the treetops until he was rescued - over a week later. John Veazey was part of the little known Cajun Coastguard, a group of volunteers who patrolled the gulf coast on horseback during World War II. They were the only military unit in World War II that served in their own hometown. They didn't go through boot camp or any formal training in anti-submarine attack techniques, and many of them only spoke Cajun French. While they never spotted a German U-Boat or submarine, they rescued 35 crew members from several planes that crashed offshore and were renamed the "Swamp Angels" out of gratitude for saving their lives.

Like the Cajun Coastguard, the Cajun Navy was born out of a shared sense of duty and heritage. Louisiana locals rallied together to aid those impacted by the rising waters once the levees failed in New Orleans. Senator Nick Geautreaux's rallying cry resulted in 300 to 500 boats joining forces to travel over the Atchafalaya Basin on I-10. Today, the Cajun Navy is composed of devoted volunteers from across different Parishes, all united in their mission to perform rescues throughout the United States.

This month as we celebrate Mardi Gras and our unique Louisiana heritage, take the time to explore Louisiana, or the place that you call home. Marvel at the miracles and reflect on the people, like the Cajun Navy, who serve our community with "joie de vivre."



We have a lot to be thankful for as we enter a new year with Vitality. With a new year comes a few changes to your Vitality account:

- Vitality status has been reset to Bronze status.
- 10% of your Vitality points has rolled over as a "kick-start" bonus in 2024.
- All of your unspent Vitality bucks will be available.

FOR EMPLOYEE			
BRONZE	SILVER	GOLD	PLATINUM
0 pts	2,500 pts	6,000 pts	10,000 pts

FOR SPOUSE			
BRONZE	SILVER	GOLD	PLATINUM
0 pts	3,500 pts	9,000 pts	15,000 pts



Be sure to stay connected on the **Vitality Today app** where you can submit documentation of activities, check in at the gym, complete your Vitality health review and more!

Ring in the New Year with **750 Vitality points** for completing the Vitality health review (VHR) by March 31, 2024. This health assessment takes 10 minutes to complete and can be accessed through the Vitality Today mobile app or log in at [www.powerofvitality.com](http://www.powerofvitality.com).

You can earn over **3000 Vitality points** when you complete your Vitality check biometric screening. Download the Vitality check biometric screening form and have your physician sign off at your next annual visit.

Connect your fitness device (Fitbit, Garmin, Polar, etc) or app (Apple Health, Samsung Health, Map My Run, etc) and begin earning points daily.

New employees to the program can register at [www.powerofvitality](http://www.powerofvitality) or the Vitality Today mobile app.



SCAN TO  
DOWNLOAD APP

## MARDI GRAS KING CAKES

Mardi Gras and king cakes go hand in hand. You can find these delicious rings of pastry anywhere in Louisiana, but especially in New Orleans where hundreds of thousands of king cakes are enjoyed at home, parties, offices and even shipped across the U.S. every year.

The king cake is believed to have been originally brought over from France in the 1870s. The ring shaped dough is braided and baked, and topped with sugar in the traditional Mardi Gras colors of **purple, green and gold**. **Purple** for "justice," **green** for "faith" and **gold** for "power".

Each king cake has a tiny plastic baby inside. The person who receives the slice of cake with the baby is considered lucky and hosts the next king cake party or brings the next cake for the office.

Laissez les bons  
temps rouler cher!

