

Neapolitan

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Theatre Conspiracy brews a 'Tea Party'

By Chris Silk

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How do you take your tea? One lump or two? With politics or polls unskewed?

No matter how you pull the lever at the voting booth, Theatre Conspiracy has the play for you. "Chatting with the Tea Party," from Rich Orloff, will run for a series of staged readings this weekend.

Karen Goldberg, a longtime amateur actress and director, will direct.

IN THE 239 "Audiences will find the characters honest and heartfelt," Goldberg said. "The conclusion: 'We can agree to disagree.'

Orloff got the idea for "Tea Party" after a discussion with liberal friends. The playwright set out to investigate the tea party phenomenon that swept American politics in 2010.

Goldberg promises although "Tea Party" talks about politics, the play isn't about left vs. right.

"It's a play about people," Goldberg said, "not pigeonholing."

"Talking With the Tea Party" takes the form of interviews, the 63 hours of interviews the playwright conducted at tea party events around the U.S. The cast includes local favorites such as Jason Parrish, Stephanie Davis, J. Mitchell Haley, Louise Wigglesworth, Jim Yarnes, Brent Smith and Katie Pankow.

For Parrish, the play spotlights the current no-holds-barred, no-quarter-given, "survival-of-the-fittest world" in politics.

"Washington has gotten to a point (where) there is no room for negotiating," Parrish said. "We all want to win, and that is not how things get done."

"Tea Party" finds no easy solution to Washington's gridlock, although the play offers a glimmer of hope.

"We can't even reach across the aisle if we can't see the other side," he said.

IF YOU GO

'CHATTING WITH THE TEA PARTY'

What: Rich Orloff attended two dozen tea party events

When: 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday; 2 p.m. Sunday

Where: Foulds Theater at the Lee County Alliance of the Arts complex, 10091 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers

Cost: \$20

Information: 239-936-3239

■ Be smart, safe and prepare early for this year's hurricane season

There's good news and some bad news about the 2014 hurricane season.

First the good news: the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration forecast a "slightly slower-than-average storm season, with eight to 13 named storms — one or two of those being major storms," in a statement released May 22. The statement added the season would be less active, with "the number and intensity of hurricanes in the Atlantic region likely to be lower because of El Niño."

Next, the bad news: With reports like this, it's our natural tendency to think "this would never happen to me." But no matter where we live or how prepared any of us are, this could happen to anyone.

Living in Utah, on a major earthquake fault, friends of mine, Dirk and Athena Vander-Meyden, are pros at emergency preparedness. As members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, they explained the standard procedures for all

Mormon households, which include having a 72-hour emergency kit (flashlight, batteries, blanket, food, change of clothing, medicines, etc.), as well as a minimum of three months' worth of accessible money (one month's worth in cash to pay bills and purchase necessities) on hand at all times.

Additionally, each of their kids has his or her own 72-hour emergency backpack, which includes a neon green T-shirt to wear post-disaster and a list of contact names and numbers (in and out of state) in case of an emergency.

Bottom line, whether it is an expected event, such as a hurricane or tropical storm, or an unexpected one, such as an earthquake or tornado, the more prepared you are, the better.

Be safe, be smart, be prepared and be proactive. And remember, just because hurricane season officially starts Sunday and ends Nov. 30 doesn't mean a storm won't hit before or after those dates!

Standard essentials: landline phone (yes, you really do need a landline connection), can opener and small camping stove, lanterns, candles, flashlights and plenty of batteries; blankets and pillows, plastic tarps, bottled water (1 gallon/person or pet/day for seven days); bleach and/or water purification tablets, bug repellent and a battery-operated transistor radio in case your electricity and local cellular towers are disabled.

And a week's supply of nonperishable food.

See STORM, 4D

■ **Rules for the region** Landscape code specifies where and how many trees to plant — and whether you can remove them. **3D**



COMING SATURDAY

Pick up a copy of our 2014 Hurricane Guide



STORM from ID

In addition to the standard essentials, your hurricane preparation should include the following "must dos" and "must haves."

MUST HAVE:

- Plenty of cash on hand; smaller denominations are best.
- Several multipurpose lighters.
- Stock up on canned foods, ramen noodles, peanut butter, dried fruit, granola bars and other high-energy snacks.
- Oranges, grapefruits and apples are an excellent source of nutrition and do not need refrigeration.
- Before the storm hits, fill several thermoses with coffee. (In a pinch, Starbucks and illy make canned coffee drinks.)
- Plastic utensils (one set, per person, per day) and paper plates.
- Toilet paper and paper towels.
- Rain gear — rubber galoshes, outerwear and umbrellas — and a change of clothes, including long pants, undergarments, a fresh shirt and sweater.
- One or more large coolers (preferably with wheels) and plenty of freezer packs.
- Disposable, rinse-free toothbrushes; liquid and/or disposable hand sanitizer wipes; baby wipes and disposable disinfecting surface wipes.
- A watertight storage container with a snap-on lid and plenty of small- and large-sized Ziploc bags.
- A well-stocked first aid kit. Check contents annually and restock.
- A strong bug repellent and insect bite relief treatment. (If you run out of bug spray, fabric softener sheets also work.)
- Purchase several hand-held fans (and extra batteries) to be used when the A/C goes out.
- Purchase several solar-powered exterior "pathway" lights to charge in the sunlight during the day and to use at night for additional interior lighting. (To keep upright, place base into an empty bottle.)

MUST DO:

- Charge all small electronic devices, including cameras, cellphones, tablets, and buy car chargers in case the power lines are down.
- Before the storm, check your tire pressure; fill the gas tank and top off all liquids. (This is a good habit to adopt year-round.)
- Photograph any damage immediately and email to insurance company. If cellular lines are operating, use mobile phone



An emergency checklist is a must during hurricane season.

for this task.

- Backup computer files and keep external hard drive and/or flash drive in a Ziploc bag.
- Store computer/laptop in the dishwasher or clothes dryer. Both appliances, when closed and locked, are airtight.
- Unplug all small appliances, such as toaster ovens, coffee makers, hair dryers, computers and printers, etc.
- Every five years, photograph all personal property and download to a CD/DVD or flash drive. Keep one copy and send a backup copy to your lawyer for safekeeping.
- Create a master list of accounts, contact names and numbers for all credit/debit cards, bank and mortgage accounts and insurance policies; also include contact information for lawyer, accountant, financial adviser, insurance agent, friends and family. Store a copy on either a CD/DVD or flash drive to wear around your neck for safekeeping.
- Keep identification on you at all times, including a laminated wallet-sized I.C.E. card listing emergency contact numbers, insurance information and important medical information, such as allergies, doctors' names and contact numbers, prescriptions and any health issues.
- Be sure everyone in your family, from young children to aging parents, has identification on them at all times.
- Keep a current photo of each and every family member and pet on hand in case of an emergency. This is especially important if you have children and/or older family members living at home who might get disoriented and lost during or after a storm.
- Create an "emergency bag" for each family member to keep in the car in case you leave town in a hurry.
- Store all prescription medicines; contact lenses and spare eye glasses; wallet, credit/debit and ATM cards, checkbooks, passports, as well as important papers, including copies of all insurance policies (homeowners, auto and medical), current HUD statements, car titles and medical records, either in a watertight storage container or Ziploc bag.
- Scan copies of the above items to a CD/DVD or flash drive.
- Be sure to keep plenty of prescription medicine on hand in case of an emergency. Also, if you have any medicines that need to be refrigerated, put them in an insulated cooler with ice packs. (Note: not a "cooler bag," but an insulated cooler with a "lock-tight" lid.)
- Fill all bathtubs with water to use when flushing toilets. Note: bottled water is best for drinking, but if you run out and resort to using the bathtub's supply, be sure to purify with either eight drops of bleach or water purification tablets before drinking.
- Before the storm hits, crank up the air conditioning to get your home as cold as possible.
- Pull down the blinds to about two inches above the floor or windowsill to keep your home cool.
- Before the storm hits, crank up the freezer and refrigerator settings to cool the interior as much as possible.
- Precook all meat, fish and poultry in case of a power surge or outage.
- After a storm, when everything is operational and your electricity is running properly, be sure to return the HVAC

and refrigerator thermostats back to their normal settings.

■ A few days before the storm is expected to hit, make lots of ice and fill as many Ziploc bags as will fit in your freezer with "pre-packed" bags of ice. As long as you don't open your freezer more than is absolutely necessary, these pre-packed bags of ice should keep everything in your freezer relatively cold.

■ Make a last-minute trip to the recycling drop-off center to get rid of any unwanted hazardous materials. For more information, visit coliergov.net/recycles or call 239-252-2508.

PET OWNERS:

■ Store a week's supply of pet food, flea and tick and heartworm medicine, as well as some prescription pills to relax your pets during the storm, in an airtight container.

■ Print out a hard copy of your pet's most recent veterinary report, including all vaccines and licenses.

■ Secure animals in a crate with their favorite toys and a long-lasting rawhide bone before, during and after the hurricane.

■ Always keep pets on a harness and leash. Pets should wear collars with current identification at all times and be microchipped as well.

■ Invest in some puppy "pee-pee" pads, which, when soiled, can be folded-up and put inside a large Ziploc bag until you have a chance to dispose of them properly.

■ Be sure to have a current photo of all pets on hand in case one of your pets escapes during or after a storm.

Celebrate the end of hurricane season by cleaning out your pantry and refrigerator/freezer and donating all of the canned foods purchased for your emergency kit, as well as all of the unspoiled perishable items in your fridge, to your local soup kitchen; St. Matthews House in Naples, 239-774-0500, www.StMatthewsHouse.org or Harry Chapin Food Bank in Fort Myers, 239-334-7007, www.HarryChapinFoodBank.org.

Hint of the Day: Before the storm hits, get all the laundry done, run the dishwasher and clean your house/condo completely. You may lose electricity and having a week's worth of clean clothes will make a difference in how you face the challenge.

Get Organized appears on the first and third Fridays of each month. Naples-based professional organizer Marla Ottenstein is a member of the National Association of Professional Organizers and the Domestic Estate Management Association. For information: www.ProfessionalOrganizerFlorida.com or email: Marla@ProfessionalOrganizerFlorida.com.