



Brishuna Collier

Brishuna Collier appointed Local 987 YOUNG Coordinator

By **DON MONCRIEF**
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Brishuna Collier’s first experience of how it pays to be a member of a union. She was a young cashier at Kroger’s. Her drawer came up short, “probably about \$12,” she said. “And if your drawer is short over a certain amount, it’s automatically you’re gone.” She went to the union, of which she was a member. (She learned the importance of that from her father, Henry Brown, a maintainer on Robins Air Force Base. Others were he taught her you can learn the “hard” way or the “easy way”, as well as not to procrastinate.) The union stepped in and fought for her. It resulted in management going back in, she said, redoing everything “and my drawer wasn’t short. They had left out a cashier’s check.” Collier was vindicated.

Someone in management was left with egg on their face. Collier today is all grown up. She’s 34 – looks to be a lot younger. She is also the latest full-time steward for AFGE Local 987 and has been appointed the Local’s Young Organizing Unionists for the Next Generation coordinator. Collier was born in Atlanta, raised in Warner Robins. She graduated from Northside High School and went off to college at Gordon State in Barnesville. She transferred from there to Valdosta about a year later, she said, but then got homesick, came back, worked a number of jobs while going on to earn a degree at Central Georgia Technical College in sheet metal. Her dad suggested she apply for Robins AFB. She did and got hired in the 140th Wing Shop, working on F-15s. That was in May 2022. It was perfect. “I love working with my hands,” she said. “That

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AFGE YOUNG

The AFGE Young Organizing Unionists for the Next Generation program seeks to mobilize young union members to become leaders and activists for social change within AFGE and the Labor Movement. AFGE members who are under the age of 40 and those mentors that are over 40 will work together to include younger workers into the union structure and keep them engaged in what’s at stake for working class Americans. AFGE YOUNG intends to provide young members with networking opportunities and resources to engage in mobilizing other young workers into AFGE, union training to promote leadership skills, innovative social gatherings, AFGE conference meetings, and other engaging events. In doing so, AFGE YOUNG participants work to build lasting labor solidarity, advance issues of social and economic justice, and find more inclusive ways to engage the current and future generations in the Labor Movement.

Goals of AFGE YOUNG

- Create tools to organize and mobilize young AFGE members and encourage non-members to join AFGE.
- Encourage mentors over the age of 40 to join the AFGE YOUNG Program to educate and prepare young members for leadership roles.
- Encourage Local & District leadership to select a YOUNG Representative.
- Educate members on the importance of AFGE YOUNG and the young workers movement as a whole.
- Include a AFGE YOUNG meeting/training or social event at major AFGE conferences.

Local leaders attend STAND conference



AFGE Local 987’s leadership team spends some time with AFGE National President Everett Kelley, center, during the STAND conference held recently. (Courtesy photo)

By **DON MONCRIEF**
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Ten from AFGE Local 987 soaked up a wealth of knowledge and understanding at the Service Through Action and National Development Conference held July 31 to Aug. 3 in Atlanta. Those attending were Trustee and Treasurer Jeanette McElhaney, President Ron Hill, Executive Vice President James Watson, Vice President At-Large Terrell Pressley, Vice President of Maintenance David Dunn, Secretary Timeka Bryant, Full-time Steward Jonathan Lee, Full-time Steward and newly-appointed Young Organizing Unionist for the Next Generation Coordinator, Brishuna Collier, Shaquita Pooler and Linda Baxter. Each had a variety of offerings to choose from. Just to name a few: EEO I (Basic), EEO II (Intermediate), Legal Writing, Coordinator Bootcamp, Collective Bargaining, Conflict Resolution, Workers’ Compensation, Financial Officers Training and Organizing Institute. There was also a separate track for the YOUNG Workers Summit. Collier took that as well as advanced steward training. Dunn attended the Character of a Leader training and Advance Steward training. Pressley attended the Conflict Resolution, EEO and leadership offering, Lee the Advance Steward training

and McElhaney the Financial Officers training. The main thing, Dunn said, was that they tried to spread their reach, “so that (we’re all at a point where) we’ve all taken notes and gotten materials from the class, so that we could compare for some of the classes we took that were the same. Because every one of us has a different perspective of what we’ve learned. “And then we’ve got the information from all the other different classes that we’re now sharing with each other here at the hall and in turn sharing with our stewards on the floor and the members when we’re interacting with them. Either by

call or e-mail or seeing them in person out of the shop. “So it was a lot to boil down, but working collaboratively, you know, comparing what we learned, what we saw, and then the information that, like, I didn’t go to either the EEO class, like Terrell did, so he’s able to share with me what he learned, and I’m able to share what I pulled from the Advanced Steward and from the Leadership Class that I took. And it’s like that with all of us. We’ve been able to compare notes.” The greater vision they all agreed was to develop an overall plan that they could use to serve members.

For instance, “From my standpoint of it,” Collier said. “Like with the YOUNG workers, my thing from James is that he wanted me to pull more YOUNG people in and try to engage with them and start coordinating stuff. “So, I actually learned a lot of ideas from them and what they’re doing in different places, different states, so I could carry that out.” “I was just going to say,” McElhaney said, “with the mixing and matching and interacting with other Locals, you find out how to put some of the situations that they have encountered compared to what you do.

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National Vice President Dr. Kendrick B. Roberson, who is a oversees AFGE’s Women and Fair Practices Department, speaks to those in attendance. (Courtesy photo)

Federal judge blocks VA’s illegal attempt to terminate workers’ contract

By **AFGE Leadership**

Less than 24 hours before the VA intended to cancel our contract, U.S. District Court Judge Melissa DuBose issued an order on Aug. 7 granting AFGE/NVAC’s motion to enforce the preliminary injunction she issued in March reinstating the contract. This was the VA’s third attempt to terminate our contract, which is the largest representing federal employees. Most recently, the VA issued a written notice on July 24 informing AFGE/NVAC that it intended to “re-terminate” the union’s contract – a clear violation of the March preliminary injunction and contrary to the plain language of the agreement

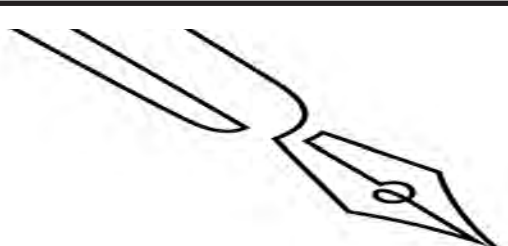
signed by both the union and agency that provides for an automatic extension of the contract pending renegotiation efforts. The union and agency are currently renegotiating a successor agreement to the contract, which took effect in August 2023 with an initial three-year term. “Unions that represent federal employees have long been under attack. Why? Because we are the roadblock preventing the privatization of the agencies we swore to protect,” AFGE National VA Council President Mary Jean “MJ” Burke said in a statement following the ruling. “No matter how many times we are kicked while we are down, we get back up, brush off the dirt, and get right back in the fight because we believe in the VA’s mission to

“It is shameful that the VA is hellbent on taking union rights away from the hardworking men and women who provide care to America’s veterans, a third of whom are veterans themselves.”

- AFGE National President Everett Kelley

serve our nation’s veterans. “Today’s victory is proof that the law sides with AFGE/NVAC because we fight for what is right.” AFGE/NVAC looks forward to continuing to litigate the case on the merits. “It is shameful that the VA is hellbent on taking union rights away from the hardworking men and women who provide care to

America’s veterans, a third of whom are veterans themselves,” AFGE National President Everett Kelley said. “We are grateful for Judge DuBose’s swift action forcing the VA to recognize our collective bargaining agreement which guarantees these rights, and vow to continue protecting the 320,000 VA employees AFGE proudly represents.”



Just for

King Crossword

ACROSS
1 Sheepish "Hello!"
4 Out of control
8 Regretted
12 U.S. Navy vessel
13 — Crunch (breakfast cereal)
14 Singer Guthrie
15 Mel of baseball
16 Manitoba tribe
17 The same
18 Cold-hardy salad veggie
21 Whatever amount
22 Green shade
23 Kick out
26 Send electronically
27 Extinct bird
30 Sunrise direction
31 Future flower
32 Border on
33 Tipsy
34 A Bobbsey twin
35 Dish
36 Cat's coat
37 Three, in Rome
38 Young person, metaphorically

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12					13				14			
15					16				17			
18				19					20			
				21				22				
23	24	25				26				27	28	29
30					31				32			
33				34					35			
				36				37				
38	39	40				41				42	43	44
45						46				47		
48						49				50		
51						52				53		

47 Actress Longoria
48 Lighten Wall St. debuts
50 Profit
51 Times Sq. force
52 Salamander
53 Hosp. areas

8 Indian yogurt dish
9 Language of Pakistan
10 Power co. supply
11 Stadium top
19 Diplomacy
20 — -Mex cuisine
23 Long, skinny fish
24 — alai
25 Proposal fig.
26 Gaiety
27 CEO's degree, often
28 Chic no more

32 Novelist Waugh
34 Mother Teresa, for one
35 Mass celebrant
36 Mailed a tax return
37 Toss
38 Beheld
39 Stage show
40 Grate
41 Superhero's garment
42 Vegas game
43 Always
44 D.C. baseball

DOWN
1 Gust
2 Wine region
3 Envelope abbr.
4 Emphasize
5 Tie the knot
6 Autobahn

Planting in early fall

When the earth is still warm but the air is getting cooler, leafy greens (such as spinach, kale, lettuce and arugula) and root vegetables (like carrots, radishes and beets) thrive. Later on, when the temperatures drop below freezing, the greens will have a noticeably sweeter taste, and the root crops will improve in flavor and tenderness. Early-fall planting of trees, shrubs and other perennials helps their roots anchor firmly, access nutrients, and prepare for winter dormancy. - Brenda Weaver
Source: www.epicgardening.com

THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.
— Acts 17:30-31 —

Five Spot™

Investment terms

J	O	I	N	T

Knee or knuckle
Part before the singing starts
A bridge position
Unable to raise sufficient funds
Speak badly about
Offer to others

Solve each row by replacing one letter from the answer above or below and scrambling to make a new word. When complete, the top and bottom words will have no letters in common.
FiveSpot is a trademark of Michael McLinden
See more at www.sprouts puzzle.com 02652

E	R	A	H	S
H	S	A	R	T
T	R	O	H	S
H	T	R	O	N
O	R	T	N	I
T	N	I	O	J

Solution

"I'll have the chef's special and no need to hurry — unless you want a _____!"

SCRAMBLERS

Unscramble the letters within each rectangle to form four ordinary words. Then rearrange the boxed letters to form the mystery word, which will complete the gag!

Student
RENTIN —

Rural
SIRCUT —

Slime
GLUDES —

Anarchy
HAMMEY —

TODAY'S WORD

SCRAMBLERS

Solution

1. Intern; 2. Rustic
3. Sludge; 4. Mayhem

Today's Word
GRATUITY

Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS

HERE'S A SITUATION WHERE IT SEEMS THE ONLY WAY OUT IS TO DROP CLEAR AND TAKE AN UNPLAYABLE - LIE PENALTY. BUT BE SURE TO CHECK EVERY OPTION BEFORE YOU GO THAT ROUTE.

STROKES CAN BE SAVED BY BEING INVENTIVE — PLAYING LEFT-HANDED, SWINGING FROM THE KNEES, OR JUST NUDDING THE BALL INTO A PLAYABLE POSITION WITH THE PUTTER.

IN OTHER WORDS, IT PAYS TO STRETCH YOUR IMAGINATION BEFORE ACCEPTING A PENALTY.

SNOWFLAKES
by Japheth Light

There are 13 black hexagons in the puzzle. Place the numbers 1 - 6 around each of them. No number can be repeated in any partial hexagon shape along the border of the puzzle.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦
♦ Easy ♦♦ Medium ♦♦♦ Difficult

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Americanisms

"People who love to eat are always the best people."
— Julia Child

Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps

WELL ... I SUPPOSE AT THIS POINT THERE'S NO DEBATING IF WE LIKE IT OR MAYBE HAGGLING OVER PRICE?

S	R	O		T	W	E	N		D	P	Y	N
E	T			S	I	P	O		E	A	S	E
A		E	V	A	R	E	A		A	L	A	L
E	N		K	C	H	I	C		S	P	R	I
				R	E				F	U	R	
E		A	T	E		P		N	A	N		L
				A	B	U		B	U	D		E
				M	O	A		F	A	X		
								A	N			
				E				T	E	R	L	E
								C	R	E		
								C	A	P	N	
								R	U	E	D	

Weekly SUDOKU

	4					8	2	
1	9	8				3		
2				1		4		
4					5		9	
		7				4		3
	3	9				7		
6						9	5	8
	1		2	4			7	
					6			3

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦♦
♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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Weekly SUDOKU
Answer

3	1	2	6	7	5	4	8	9
6	7	9	8	4	2	5	1	3
4	8	5	9	1	3	2	7	6
5	4	7	1	2	6	9	3	8
2	3	1	4	9	8	7	6	5
8	6	9	3	5	7	1	2	4
9	6	4	7	8	1	3	5	2
1	9	8	4	6	2	3	5	7
7	4	6	9	3	5	8	2	1

King Crossword
Answers
Solution time: 21 mins.

fun

Amber Waves

OK, CLASS, NEXT WEEK WE ARE GOING TO DO SOMETHING A LITTLE DIFFERENT FOR FUN.

I WANT EACH OF YOU TO INVITE ONE OF YOUR PARENTS TO CLASS.

I WANT YOU TO INTRODUCE THEM AND TELL US ALL WHAT EXCITING JOB THEY HAVE.

GOOD NEWS, DAD. I GUESS YOU'RE STILL YOUNG ENOUGH TO JOIN THE NASA PROGRAM!

by Dave T. Phipps

Out on a Limb

ISN'T IT IRONIC, DON'T YOU THINK?

by Gary Kopervas

SLOSH, GULP... SLOSH, SLOSH, SLOSH, GULP!

A COW EATS A BOX OF MILK DUDS

BARNEY GOOGLE AND SUFFY SMITH

I'M TH' ONLY ONE IN HERE ?! WOW !! WIF IT BEIN' SUNDAY MORNIN' I THOUGHT THAR'D BE A FULL HOUSE !!

CAREFUL THAR, SMIF, OR I'LL HAFTA ARREST YA AG'IN !!

FER STEALIN' PARSON TUTTLE'S LINES !!

BEIN' IN HERE ALL BY YORE LONESOMENESS GIVES A FELLER LOTS'A TIME T'THINK !!

I'M SHUFFLIN', SMIF !! YA COMIN' ?

OF NEW WAYS TO CHEAT OL' SHERIFF TAIT OUTTA HIS POKER MONEY !! HEH-HEH !!

JOHN ROSE

THIMBLE THEATRE PRESENTS

POPEYE

By RANDY MILHOLLAND

I LOVE COMING TO THIS BEACH!

I HAVE SO MANY MEMORIES OF COMING HERE WHEN WE WERE KIDS.

ALL I REMEMBER IS YOU PLEDGING ME INTO JELLYFISH.

YES, BUT I DID IT MORE THAN ONCE, SO IT COUNTS AS "MEMORIES."

THAT'S ALL FOR NOW! I'M GONNA HANG OUT WITH MY COUSIN OLIVE! THANKS FOR JOINING ME!

WHO WERE YOU TALKING TO SUTRA?

MY FOLLOWERS. I WAS LIVESTREAMING.

SOUNDS LIKE YOUNG PEOPLE NONSENSE.

A LOTTA PEOPLE IN OUR FAMILY ARE DOING IT.

CYNLDA HAS A FASHION VLOG. COUSIN SWEET STREAMS GAMING.

UNCLE SYLVANUS GOT A BIG FOLLOWING IN THE CONSPIRACY COMMUNITY...

...WHICH ACTUALLY ISN'T THAT GREAT, NOW THAT I SAY IT OUT LOUD.

THE HUMAN TRAIN WRECK GENRE IS SUPER-POPULAR RIGHT NOW. YOU COULD OWN IT!

SO IS TRUE CRIME. I CAN MAKE US BOTH STARS.

THANK YOU, SUTRA. THAT'S REALLY KIND.

NONSENSE, OLIVE! YOU'RE SUPER-INTERESTING! YOU GO ON ADVENTURES, FIGHTING MONSTERS AND A SEA HAG!

A LOTTA PEOPLE WOULD LOVE TO KNOW ABOUT YOU!

The Spats

DO YOU KNOW WHERE HAPPINESS IS MADE?

NO... WHERE?

AT THE SATISFACTORY.

TIGER

YOU WERE OUT, HUGO!

I WAS SAFE

HE WAS OUT!

HE WAS SAFE!

FOOTBALL? IN THE MIDDLE OF SUMMER?

IT'S BASEBALL

Sponsor this page. Call 478-733-9772.

GRIN & BEAR IT

“Checkers? No, this is my grandson’s Xbox.”

GO FIGURE!

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

	+		÷		=	13		
+		+		+				
	+		÷		=	3		
+		÷		-				
	-		x		=	6		
=		=		=				
23		2		3				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

FEAR & KNOT

By: rj johnson

DOUBT? ...OR DARE!

GIW
WEPORD
AILEK
PEKL
WULOAT
♥ADW
♥AEGP
DALPI
♥RKI
KADLET
ROLGW
♥ERWE

Unscramble these twelve letter strings to form each into an ordinary word (ex. HAGNEC becomes CHANGE). Prepare to use only ONE word from any marked (♥) letter string as each unscrambles into more than one word (ex. ♥RATHE becomes HATER or EARTH or HEART). Fit each string's word either across or down to knot all twelve strings together.

answer

FEAR & KNOT

When a particular coniferous tree felt a freaky prickly sensation, that was pine-tingling.

answer

CryptoQuip

	3			2		23
	=			=		=
9	=	2	x	5	-	8
		-		÷		+
	3	=	4	÷	3	9
			+	+		+
			÷	7	+	6
		1	÷			

answers

Go Figure!

CryptoQuip

This is a simple substitution cipher in which each letter used stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Solution is accomplished by trial and error.

Clue: W equals P

RXSO B WBIYDHFABI

HMODZSIMFQ YISS ZSAY B

ZISBNV WIDHNAV QSOQB YDMO,

YXBY RBQ WDOS-YDOCADOC.

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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Towel is longer. 2. Tie is different. 3. Rope is missing. 5. Rope is missing. 6. Man is moved.

STAND
From page 1

“Because everybody was there. VA, Social Security, Bureau of Prisons, Border Patrol. That’s what I was doing. It was a mixture of all of the entities of AFGE.”

She added not just AFGE, but that there was a large variety of other groups not there from across the spectrum. NAFI, the Teacher’s Union, were just two.

“They even had some of them as presenters to show how they can interact, because you might be on the West Coast or the East Coast but the issues are going to be the same.

“So, you can work together and see how people are accomplishing situations at their place and you can exchange ideas.”

Said Dunn: “And being able to see that variety of issues that are similar and different, and the approaches that other people are taking to address them, what works, what doesn’t work, I think has really helped us broaden our focus.

“Instead of narrowing down to this is the one way, we’ve kind of expanded our search, if you will, or our processes to increase that strategic capacity to meet the changing issues that are popping up.”

Lee added: “And you get to pull that back to the Local and spread it throughout all of your members and things like that.

“But getting to see boots on the ground across the nation and understanding what’s going on in real time from other people is tremendously helpful because you can take that knowledge back and use it to win cases and use it to further what you’re trying to do at your home.”

Dunn said it was also a “shot in the arm” for them to see and realize it wasn’t just them in the trenches. That it was everyone, everywhere, he said, coast to coast, Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and all across federal agencies. And it’s a shot in the arm because, you know, you realize it’s not just us. In the trench out here, it’s everyone, everywhere. Coast to coast, Alaska, Hawaii. Across all federal agencies.

It was also great, Lee said, that they now have the opportunity to call up others and say things

like, “Hey, are you guys seeing the same thing we’re seeing over here? Because this is happening over here.” The connection between A and B (them and us) can help you figure out where the wrong is.”

They made those contacts in class. They made contacts out of class, McElhaney said. In fact, she said, when they weren’t working in class, they were working out of class. One such case in point was the interaction that was going on the night before, when people were checking in, as well as their after-hour, Gatsby/Harlem Knight, event.

“And people were dressing up in character, and they had a contest with that. And it was just - and people were still interacting. And they were also still discussing issues. Because you had some people still discussing what happened in class. This happened and this happened and this person did this. And then they’re like, ‘Oh, I didn’t even realize that was you until now. Because you had that different appearance when you were dressed in character versus when you were in class.”

“I really liked the idea of that,” Pressley said. “Just basically networking. For me, it’s like, Let’s say we have people from Social Security ... Even the stuff that actually doesn’t have anything to do with us here, it’s just you being able to have that contact for one of your members or just to be able to say they may have a VA issue.

“You being able to pick up the phone and call that person that’s actually part of the VA and saying, ‘Hey, I’ve got this person here that’s having trouble with this. And we are able to link them together. Get things satisfied and taken care of like that. And networking was the main thing that I really enjoyed the most.”

Looking deeper at the classes themselves, Pressley said he really enjoyed the Conflict Resolution Class because he said it taught him how to deal with that, “how to actually come to a common ground,” he said. “You know, like, you have to give a little to get a little. So it taught me about that, you know, being able to actually sit down with them and work things out instead of it always being one sided.”

From an observation in one of his classes, Lee said he felt



the Local was very fortunate to have the Collective Bargaining Agreement still intact, “and that other people (without one) are really fighting a tough fight and management is taking advantage of a lot of folks across the nation as a result.

“And that we all ended up in this battle,” he said.

The ones selected by the committee to attend were done so with the hope, McElhaney said, that they would come back challenged and energized. (She ensured they met and were able to interact with some of AFGE’s top leaders.) Mission accomplished on both fronts.

In fact, “It’s still an open-ended challenge because you still want us to grow, to continue to grow,” said Pressley.

“Every day,” Dunn said. “And it shouldn’t just be her

that wants us to grow,” Lee said. “It should be us wanting us to

grow as well.”

“Taking advantage of all

opportunities,” said McElhaney. All agreed to all of the above.



Jeanette McElhaney, left, and Linda Baxter show off their Gatsby/Harlem Knight evening wear. (Courtesy)