



John Sturdivant
National President Emeritus (1988 - 1997)

John Sturdivant was the first African American elected president of AFGE. His charisma and strategic thinking helped set the union, which had struggled with a precipitous decline, on a new course of cohesiveness and growth. The same convention that elected Sturdivant streamlined the union by reducing the costly national meetings from every two years to every three and provided for more consistent and experienced leadership by extending terms of office from two to three years.

Sturdivant's first challenge was to fend off an orchestrated attack by independent unions to pick off weakened AFGE locals one at a time. His leadership restored the union's financial health and repaired a public image weakened by talk, before he was elected, of insolvency.

But he knew that remaining on the defensive would not help the union grow

or protect its members. In 1990, AFGE created a new strategic organizing model the union still benefits from today. After years of debate, AFGE delegates also gave Sturdivant the funds to organize and the authority to reduce the number of districts in the union. He constantly challenged the union to step up in organizing politics and participation in state AFL-CIO bodies.

He promoted strategic planning and new ways of approaching labor-management partnerships with the government and with AFGE's own staff unions. He encouraged union leaders to become better educated to build a union for the future. These moves, along with the help of the AFL-CIO, helped AFGE turn the tide and start growing again.

Sturdivant died in office in 1997. He left the union strong and perceived as one of the most effective unions in the AFL-CIO. He remains one of the most beloved and popular presidents in AFGE history.



Everett Kelley
National President

Everett Kelley is the national president of the American Federation of Government Employees, which is the largest union representing federal and D.C. government employees. He began his first term of service as national president in February 2020, was elected to another term during the 42nd National Convention in June 2022, and was reelected during the 43rd National Convention in August 2024.

Everett Kelley has been a member of AFGE since 1981. He worked at Anniston Army Depot and retired from there after 30 years of service.

Kelley represented Anniston employees as president of AFGE Local 1945 from 2002 to 2011.

In 2011, Kelley was elected national vice president of AFGE District 5, which is the largest district in the federation. Under his leadership, membership grew from 38,000 to more than 51,000 in seven years.

Kelley was elected AFGE national secretary-treasurer in August 2018 and served in this role until becoming national president.

A native of Goodwater, Ala., Kelley attended Sylacauga High School and enlisted in the U.S. Army after graduation, serving in active duty for three years and as a member of the Army Reserves for eight years. Following his enlisted service, Kelley completed an Associate in Arts degree at Central Alabama Community College, matriculated to Selma University,

and earned a Bachelor of Theology and Master of Theology at Rushing Springs School of Theology. Upon graduation, Kelley honored his learning experience by serving as professor at Birmingham-Easonian Baptist Bible College and Rushing Springs School of Theology. He continued his education and obtained a Doctorate degree in 2016.

For his unyielding commitment to social justice, civil rights, and workers' rights, Kelley was awarded the AFL-CIO's Eyes on the Prize Award during the 2022 AFL-CIO Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Civil and Human Rights Conference.

Kelley has received numerous awards recognizing his leadership and commitment to AFGE members and the labor movement, including the AFL-CIO's Eyes on the Prize Award during the 2022 AFL-CIO Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Civil and Human Rights Conference, and the Alabama AFL-CIO's prestigious Labor Person of the Year Award for 2022.

Kelley is a published author and has served on numerous boards, including the Alabama Habitat for Humanity; the Economic Development Council of Calhoun County, Ala.; the East Alabama Planning Commission; and the Association of the United States Army. He served as the senior pastor of St. Mary Missionary Baptist Church in Lincoln, Ala., for nearly 32 years before retiring in February 2019 and being appointed pastor emeritus.



Raphael Warnock



Rosa Parks



Barack Obama



Claudette Colvin



Shirley Chisholm

'A Century of Black History Commemorations'

Honor. Remember. Inspire.

The official theme for Black History Month 2026 is "A Century of Black History Commemorations," celebrating 100 years of national observances and the enduring impact of Black history on American and global culture.

Theme Significance

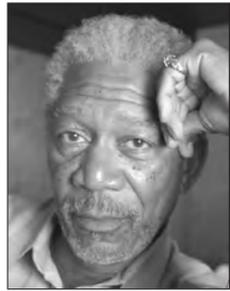
The 2026 theme marks the centennial of Black history commemorations, tracing back to the founding of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History in 1915 by Dr. Carter G. Woodson and other pioneering scholars. Originally established as Negro History Week in 1926, these observances evolved into Black History Month, highlighting the achievements, struggles, and contributions of people of African descent in the United States and worldwide.

The theme emphasizes the transformative role of Black history commemorations in shaping both self-perception within Black communities and broader societal understanding. It encourages reflection on how historical observances—from celebrating emancipation milestones like Juneteenth to honoring figures such as Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln—have contributed to social progress and cultural recognition.

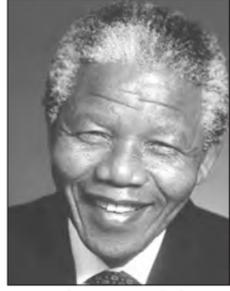
Historical Context

The theme also honors the legacy of antebellum Black scholars who documented milestones in the struggle for freedom and equality, including the Haitian Revolution, the end of the slave trade, and emancipation celebrations in the Americas. By commemorating these events, the 2026 theme underscores the continuity of Black historical scholarship and cultural observance over the past century.

Don't miss: AFGE BLACK Leaders Encouraging Membership Growth Through Activism Virtual Panel. Feb. 25 from 7-8:30 p.m. Visit <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/8122111111> to register.



Morgan Freeman



Nelson Mandela



W.E.B. Du Bois



Thurgood Marshall



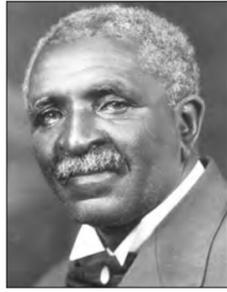
A. Philip Randolph



C.B. King



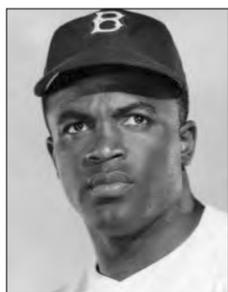
Ella Fitzgerald



George Washington Carver



Langston Hughes



Jackie Robinson



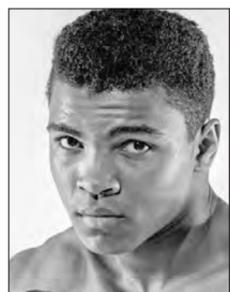
James Baldwin



Kamala Harris



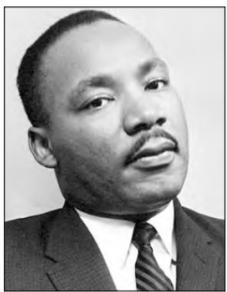
Guion Buford



Muhammad Ali



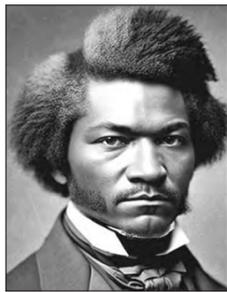
Harriet Tubman



Martin Luther King Jr.



Maya Angelou



Frederick Douglass



Alice Coachman



Ella Baker



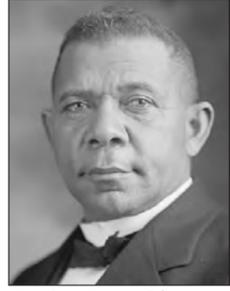
Hank Aaron



Bessie Coleman



Rutha Mae Harris



Booker T. Washington



Col. Joshua De Paul, left, 402nd Aircraft Maintenance Group commander, poses with Amy Johnson, center, Warner Robins Air Logistics Complex safety specialist, and Wingman Save Award recipients at Robins Air Force Base Dec. 1, 2025. Johnson nominated the award recipients for their quick actions when she had several seizures while on duty. (Courtesy photo)

'My heroes' - Robins team recognized for life-saving actions

By LAUREN BOGGS
78th Air Base Wing
Public Affairs

Fifteen civilian Airmen with the Warner Robins Air Logistics Complex safety office, 402nd Aircraft Maintenance Group and 402nd Commodities Maintenance Group were presented with a Wingman Saves Award at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, Dec. 1, 2025.

They were recognized for turning the Team Robins mentality into action, providing life-saving intervention when a team member experienced multiple medical crises.

When Amy Johnson, WR-ALC safety specialist, had a seizure while on temporary duty at a conference in Colorado, and again at Robins AFB in September and October 2025, her teammates moved quickly

when time was of the essence. They assessed the situation and took decisive actions to ensure her safety.

"My entire team stepped up and jumped into action," said Johnson. "They were there for support, making sure I didn't hit my head, guiding the EMT's to me and calling who they're supposed to call."

Johnson says she nominated the team for the award to thank them for being there for her when she needed them most.

"They are my medical response team, my heroes, my lifesavers," she said. "Without their quick thinking, I don't know what would've happened."

Johnson also stressed the importance of sharing critical information with wingmen and having a plan in place for teammates with medical conditions.

"It's important to have an emergency action plan," she explained. "If you have an EpiPen, or if you're epileptic, tell people where they are or what to do if something happens. It's important to be a wingman and make sure you have a wingman."

Greg Purvis, 78th Air Base Wing Integrated Prevention and Resilience Office prevention coordinator, said the award recipients perfectly exemplified Team Robins' wingman culture.

"One of our core messages in being a good wingman is 'observe and engage.' It involves an intentional commitment to pay attention to those around you and take action if something doesn't seem right," said Purvis. "The Wingman Saves coin program is designed to recognize and celebrate such incidents."

Hunter Henry, right, a 402nd Commodities Maintenance Group additive manufacturing mechanical engineer, and Remington Warthen, a 402nd CMXG additive manufacturing mechanical engineer, work together to arrange parts across a qualification build at Robins Air Force Base May 22, 2025. The build plate was printed by a 3D printer as part of an annual requirement to demonstrate the printer is operating in accordance with specifications. (U.S. Air Force photo by Joseph Mather)



Robins additive manufacturing lab boosts AF readiness

By JOSEPH MATHER
78th Air Base Wing
Public Affairs

A small team at the Warner Robins Air Logistics Complex at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, is using cutting-edge additive manufacturing technology to improve operational readiness and aircraft availability for the Air Force.

The 402nd Commodities Maintenance Group Reverse Engineering, Additive, Design and Inspection Lab utilizes additive manufacturing, reverse engineering and specialized engineering services to generate parts for aircraft, addressing supply chain challenges and sustainment of legacy aircraft systems like the C-130, C-5, C-17, B-1, B-52, KC-135 and the F-15.

The additive manufacturing mission began roughly 10 years ago with polymer machines. Approximately two years ago, the lab brought on metal additive machines to increase their mission scope and efficiency at which they create and produce parts.

"We've seen significant savings with 3D printing," said Hunter Henry, 402nd CMXG additive manufacturing engineer. "3D printing lets us quickly create everything from prototypes to tools, saving both time and money by avoiding complex machining processes."

Evan Johnson, 402nd CMXG additive manufacturing engineer lead, said a key driver for this capability is the need for legacy aircraft parts when original suppliers no longer exist or are unwilling to manufacture small production runs. "We can bridge the gap through additive man-

ufacturing by providing an alternate solution for producing parts that can no longer be sourced in a reasonable amount of time and at a reasonable cost by using polymer parts and tools in place of a metal one," said Johnson.

The small four-person team within the READI Lab constantly finds themselves approaching aircraft sustainment with an eye for efficiency.

"Our team provides engineering solutions to manufacturing challenges, improving sustainment capability, and enhancing the speed, safety and accuracy of manufacturing processes," Henry said. "We benefit all our customers by providing engineering services to solve problems or produce parts that can't be sourced efficiently through other traditional supply chains, which — as a result — improves readiness and aircraft availability."

Remington Warthen, 402nd CMXG additive manufacturing mechanical engineer, said another benefit is the ability to print with various materials. This allows the lab to create parts previously manufactured using other traditional methods.

"With these capabilities, we can provide customers custom solutions, as well as extended asset life, with design alterations and material specifications," she said.

With all these capabilities, the READI Lab team continues to provide increased readiness capability through its innovative and efficient means of rapidly generating critical parts for a wide range of aircraft. Their direct impact on the sustainment mission keeps aircraft flying, ensuring warfighter needs are met around the globe.

BBB offers tips on choosing a tax preparer

The IRS began accepting 2025 tax returns on Jan. 26, and the filing deadline will be Wednesday, April 15th. If you need help with your tax preparation, now is an ideal time to ensure you've secured the services of a trustworthy tax professional.

For many people, major life changes, business ownership, or simply a lack of knowledge about the ever-changing tax laws make finding a reliable tax preparer a good idea. That said, not all tax preparers have the same level of experience and training. BBB offers tips for finding someone you can trust with your finances and sensitive personal information.

First, it's important to understand the different types of tax preparers and their qualifications. Only enrolled agents, certified public accounts, and attorneys may represent their clients to the IRS on matters such as audits, collection issues, and appeals.

Enrolled Agent: An EA is a tax preparer who has been approved by the IRS to represent taxpayers. An EA must either have prior qualifying employment with the IRS or pass an intensive two-day exam on federal taxation and complete a background check. To maintain EA status, they must complete a specified number of credit hours each year of continuing education in accounting methods and tax regulations. An EA may work independently or as part of a firm and specialize in specific areas of tax law.

An EA is a good option if you have a more complex tax situation. However, you'll want to make sure their area of expertise applies to your personal situation. Fees and availability may vary, but you can expect an EA to charge less than a CPA. An EA is also qualified to help you with financial planning and give you tips that could help you reduce your taxes in the future.

Certified Public Accountants: CPAs have a college degree (or the equivalent in work experience). They are licensed after passing a state professional qualifying exam. They are highly skilled in accounting. This makes them good candidates for complex tax planning and preparation



Kelvin Collins

if they are experienced in handling tax matters and enrolled in continuing education programs that keep them abreast of the constant changes to tax laws. If your return is quite complex, a CPA may be your best choice for tax preparation, but keep in mind they will charge much more

than basic tax preparers.

Attorneys: Tax attorneys often charge the highest fees as tax preparers. For taxpayers looking to shelter part of their income legally or for those who need specialized advice on municipal bonds, estate planning, and similar items, hiring a tax attorney is a good option.

Non-Credentialed tax preparers: There are about 700,000 people who work as non-credentialed tax preparers in the United States. They often work part-time or only during the tax season. These preparers must have an active preparer tax identification number (PTIN) through the IRS, but beyond that, regulating tax preparers is done at the state level.

Most tax preparers are legitimate and competent, but it's important to conduct a thorough interview with a tax preparer before you hire them. When it comes to choosing the right kind of tax preparer for you personally, much will depend on the complexity of your tax situation.

After you've decided what qualifications your tax preparer needs, the following tips will help you choose someone who is trustworthy and competent:

Review the tax preparer's credentials. EAs, CPAs, and tax attorneys are all qualified to represent their clients to the IRS on all matters. Other preparers can help you with forms and basic matters but cannot represent you in case of an audit. Don't be afraid to ask about these or other qualifications before you hire someone.

Be wary of spectacular promises. If a tax

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Medal of Honor spotlight

Navy Cmdr. Arthur Preston

By KATIE LANGE
DoD News

During World War II, Navy Cmdr. Arthur Murray Preston risked his life to save a pilot while navigating his own seaborne vessels through heavy gunfire. This remarkable display of courage in the Pacific Theater led him to receive the Medal of Honor.

Preston was born on Nov. 1, 1913, in Washington, D.C., to Ord and Carolyn Preston. He had a younger brother, also named Ord.

Preston graduated from Yale University and the University of Virginia before going on to practice law in his hometown. However, in September 1940, he chose to enlist in the Navy's V-7 training program, which accelerated the expansion of the service's officer corps.

After completing his training at Northwestern University's Naval Reserve Midshipmen's School, Preston was commissioned as an ensign in March 1941. His early naval career included service with Motor Boat Submarine Chaser Squadron One, followed by advanced training at the U.S. Naval Torpedo School and the Packard Marine Engine School. He was assigned to



Photo courtesy defense.gov
Navy Cmdr. Arthur Preston

Motor Torpedo Boat Squadron One in Hawaii by August 1941 and he was there when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, a turning point that propelled the United States into World War II.

Preston's service continued to evolve, and he was promoted to lieutenant by the end of 1942. After a stateside stint as an instructor at Motor Torpedo Boat Squadron 4 in Newport, Rhode Island, he took command of Motor Torpedo Boat Squadron 33 in October 1943. Under his command, the squadron was deployed to the South Pacific.

On Sept. 16, 1944, while operating in the hazardous waters near Wasile Bay off Halmahera Island, Preston

embarked on a rescue mission. A Navy pilot, Ensign Harold A. Thompson, had been shot down near the Japanese-held coast.

Leading two patrol torpedo boats, Preston navigated through 60 miles of heavily mined waters. Facing intense enemy fire that forced his team to retreat twice, they successfully rescued Thompson and returned to safety at high speed. For his "conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity" during the mission, Preston was bestowed the Medal of Honor.

Later in 1944, Preston's squadron played a crucial role in preparing for the landings during the Battle of Leyte Gulf and the Battle of Surigao Strait. By December, he had become senior squadron commander for motor torpedo boats in the Philippine Islands and operations officer for all PT boats in the Leyte area. He continued to participate in significant operations throughout the region, including landings in the Southern Visayas region during the winter and spring of 1945.

Preston received the Medal of Honor from President Harry S. Truman on Dec. 19, 1947, during a White House ceremony. Preston's wife, Elizabeth, whom he married in 1941, celebrated with him. The pair went on to have two sons.

After the war, Preston returned to the U.S. and served as aide and flag secretary to the commandant of the Fifth Naval District at Norfolk, Virginia. In July 1945, he was promoted to lieutenant commander.

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Leading two patrol torpedo boats, Preston navigated through 60 miles of heavily mined waters. Facing intense enemy fire that forced his team to retreat twice ...

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How workplaces can better support employees facing domestic violence

(StatePoint) Employers can provide meaningful support to their workers when they face domestic or sexual violence, but a new survey finds most are unprepared to do so. The majority of survivors of domestic violence report that they were in the workforce when the violence occurred, and four in five (79%) say it made it more difficult for them to stay in their jobs. Yet doing so — and maintaining their income — is essential for many trying to create a safe and stable future.

The Intersection of Work and Abuse, a new report, highlights the results of a 2025 online survey of more than 2,000 survivors of domestic and dating violence, sexual assault and/or stalking, conducted by the National Domestic Violence Hotline and Futures Without Violence. It finds that more than half of domestic violence survivors did not tell their employers about the violence because they feared they would face discrimination or retaliation, or lose their job, if they did. When survivors did go to their employer for help, often the outcome wasn't good:

- Less than half (43%) report their employer protected their

confidentiality;

- Three in ten (30%) say their employer shared ways they could get help;
- Two in ten (19%) say their employer let them use paid vacation time to address the problem; and
- Even fewer (17%) report their employer offered paid sick time they could use while seeking safety and help.

"That's a lost opportunity, both for the people experiencing violence who need support and for the businesses that want to keep workers they need and value," said Futures Without Violence Vice President Ana López Van Balen. "This study should be a call to action for workplace leaders."

"The fact that we now know so many victims are actively in the workforce while experiencing abuse represents a significant opportunity for intervention and support," added National Domestic Violence Hotline Policy Director Dorian Karp.

Everyone can advocate for better programs and policies at their workplace. Futures Without Violence runs the Workplaces Respond to Domestic & Sexual Violence

National Resource Center, which offers a wealth of resources for employers, survivors of violence, co-workers and advocates.

And the new study offers a series of recommendations for employers, including:

- Invest in training and education to help ensure managers and human resources leaders are prepared to support workers facing violence;
- Adopt survivor-centered policies such as paid leave, flexible accommodation, and reasonable adjustments to schedules and assignments for those facing violence; and
- Partner with domestic violence and sexual assault programs, which can help with these initiatives.

To learn more, and to access workplace resources for both survivors and employers, visit www.futureswithoutviolence.org and www.thehotline.org.

Domestic and sexual violence can threaten the economic security of survivors and their families and undermine the success of businesses. By providing better support, employers can help create a safer, more stable and successful future.



Minimum speed limit on Georgia highways could rise by 10 mph

ATLANTA — Get out of the way, slow drivers. The minimum speed limit on Georgia highways might increase to 50 mph. Georgia lawmakers are considering raising the speedy minimum speed limit from 40 mph as a safety measure to reduce crashes caused by disparities in speed. The maximum speed limit on some highways is 70 mph.

"I want to limit the number of rear-end collisions," said state Rep. John Carson, R-Marietta, the sponsor of House Bill 809. "I've received fatality reports ... It's horrific."

The max speed limit in Georgia has steadily increased over the last few decades from 55 mph to 70 mph, but the minimum speed limit has remained at 40 mph, Carson said.

Col. William Hitchens, commissioner of the Georgia Department of Public Safety, said Georgia State Patrol officers have seen significant damage and injuries involving slow-moving vehicles.

"Driving below the speed limit can, in some cases, be as dangerous as traveling above the posted speed limit," Hitchens wrote in a letter last month to Carson about his proposal. "Vehicles that are traveling below the minimum speed can cause traffic issues such as long backups and cause motorists to take evasive actions due to approaching the vehicle faster than expected."

Violations of Georgia's minimum speed law are punishable by fines up to \$1,000, but local jurisdictions across the state generally set penalties much lower, in the \$100 to \$200 range. Fines wouldn't change under HB

809.

The bill calls for the 50 mph minimum speed limit on any part of a highway in Georgia with a speed limit 65 mph or greater.

The House Motor Vehicles Committee didn't vote on the bill after a hearing Tuesday while lawmakers gather more information about crashes and research the cost of replacing speed limit signs. The bill could be brought up for a vote afterward.

Lawmakers support measure to let pharmacists provide HIV prevention medicines

ATLANTA — People who worry about exposure to the HIV virus may soon be able to walk into a Georgia pharmacy and buy preventative medicines. Bipartisan legislation that would allow pharmacists to order and dispense or inject preventative HIV drugs passed the Georgia House by a wide margin Thursday.

Seven Republicans opposed the measure, which was authored by a Republican.

Sen. Chuck Hufstetler, R-Rome, who has a master's degree in medical science, said he introduced the measure for a simple reason.

"I'm in healthcare, I do anesthesia, and I look at the data, and the data says this is far, far more cost effective to prevent it than to treat it, as many things are in medicine," he said.

The South had the highest infection rate in the country, with 49% of the new cases in 2022, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Gay and bisexual men accounted for 67% of new infections and 86% of diagno-

ses among all men, the CDC reported.

Republicans approve lower income taxes as their answer to affordability

ATLANTA — The Republican-led state Senate adopted an historic income tax cut plan Thursday that Democrats decried as an election year ploy that would undermine the state budget.

There was no official estimate of the cost of Senate Bill 476, which calls for no income tax on the first \$50,000 in annual earnings by an individual or \$100,000 for a married couple.

The absence of an official analysis of the impact to the more than \$40 billion budget led Democrats to assert the plan would cost \$9 billion while Republicans touted it as a boon for working people.

"It would represent the largest tax cut in state history," Lt. Gov. Burt Jones, a Republican, said after the measure passed 32-18, with all Republicans in favor and nearly all Democrats opposed.

Sen. Blake Tillery, R-Vidalia, the lead co-sponsor of the legislation, said it would help firefighters, teachers, restaurant employees and middle-class workers in general, ridiculing Democrats' arguments against it.

Democrats said the wealthy would benefit more, since the bill would also reduce the base income tax rate to 4.99% from the current 5.19%. They said it would result in budget shortfalls in the long run, forcing budget cuts and sales tax increases that would drive up prices for groceries, child care and other expenses that are making life difficult for many Georgians. They called the measure a trick to mislead voters. Several Senate Republicans are running for higher office, including Jones, who wants to succeed Brian Kemp in the governor's office, and Tillery, who hopes to follow Jones as lieutenant governor.

Sen. Kim Jackson, D-Stone Mountain, called the bill "a scam." Sen. Derek Mallow, D-Savannah, said it was "robbing Peter to pay Paul."

Kemp's own budget proposal would reduce the income tax rate to 4.99%, but it does not include increases in the standard deduction for income.

TAX

From page 2

preparer promises you larger refunds than the competition, this is a red flag. Many such tax preparers base their fees on the amount of your return and may be likely to use questionable tax preparation tactics. In addition, it's wise to avoid tax preparers who offer "refund anticipation loans" as you'll probably lose a large percentage of your return to commission fees.

Get referrals from friends and family. One of the best ways to find a trustworthy tax preparer is to ask your family and friends for recommendations. Once you have a few options, check BBB.

org, paying careful attention to other consumers' reviews or complaint details. This will give you a clear view of what you can expect. You can also find a BBB Accredited tax preparer near you on bbb.org.

Think about availability. If the IRS finds errors in your tax forms or decides to perform an audit, will your tax preparer be available to help you with the details? Find out whether you can contact the tax preparer all year long or only during tax season. Ask about fees ahead of time. Before you agree to any services, read the contracts carefully and understand how much the tax preparer charges for their services. Ask about extra fees for e-filing state, federal, and local returns, as well as fees for any unexpected complications.

HONOR

From page 2

and later that year, he was released from active duty. Preston resumed his law prac-

tice in Washington, D.C., but remained connected to the Navy in the inactive reserves. In recognition of his wartime service, he was promoted to commander upon his retirement in 1953. Preston passed away on Jan.

7, 1968, and was laid to rest with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery. His Medal of Honor can be found on display at the Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina.

HEALTHY HABITS MADE EASY

Update Your Pet's Health and Wellness Routine Without Fuss

FAMILY FEATURES

Pets are more than companions — they're family — and keeping them healthy can be simple, enjoyable and rewarding.

Today's pet parents may be busier than ever, yet they're also more committed to wellness than previous generations. That means approaching their furry friends' unique needs with the same balance, care and attention to overall well-being as they do their own.

In fact, according to the 2021 Human Animal Bond Research Institute Benchmark Survey of Pet Owners, increased knowledge about the health benefits of the human-animal bond led 91% of pet owners to say they would be more likely to take better care of their pets.

Pet health isn't just about food, however. A holistic approach to wellness combines daily supplements, dental care, exercise, mental enrichment and proactive health, with many owners looking for ways to simplify routines to support their pets every day.

These practical ideas can help support a pet's overall wellness routine.

supplements — available in Hip & Joint, Calming and Multi-Vitamin formulas for dogs and cats — offer a simple way to make wellness an effortless part of everyday life.

Promote Exercise and Mental Enrichment

Movement is essential to any wellness routine. Regular walks, agility activities and games help keep pets fit and happy. Physical exercise is only part of the puzzle, though. Interactive toys, puzzle feeders, scent games and agility training help dogs and cats stay mentally sharp, even on days when outdoor activity is limited.

Create a Calming Home Environment

Dogs and cats can experience stress when routines aren't followed, just like people. Maintaining a consistent daily schedule and providing a quiet, comfortable space — such as a bed in a low-traffic area — can help promote calm, comfort and security.

By taking a few simple, consistent steps each day, pet parents can create a balanced, enjoyable wellness routine that keeps their furry family members healthy, happy and thriving. From functional supplements and daily care habits to exercise, mental enrichment and a calming environment, small efforts can make a big difference, turning everyday care into a rewarding part of life with your pet.

To find more practical health and wellness solutions for your pet, visit naturvet.com.

Tailor Flexible Nutrition Plans to Pets' Needs

Every pet is unique, but balanced nutrition forms the foundation of wellness. Dog and cat parents are increasingly seeking customizable food and supplement solutions designed around their furry friend's age, needs and lifestyle. Age-specific formulations and products featuring natural, minimally processed ingredients and eco-friendly sourcing allow owners to support their pets' overall health, from mealtime to daily wellness routines.

Support Healthy Skin and Coat

A pet's coat often reflects its overall health. Along with a balanced diet and plenty of water, adding a daily supplement can help support a natural shine. While professional grooming keeps dogs and cats looking their best, incorporating regular at-home brushing and bathing with a gentle shampoo strengthens the bond you share and provides an opportunity to spot any changes, like lumps or bumps.

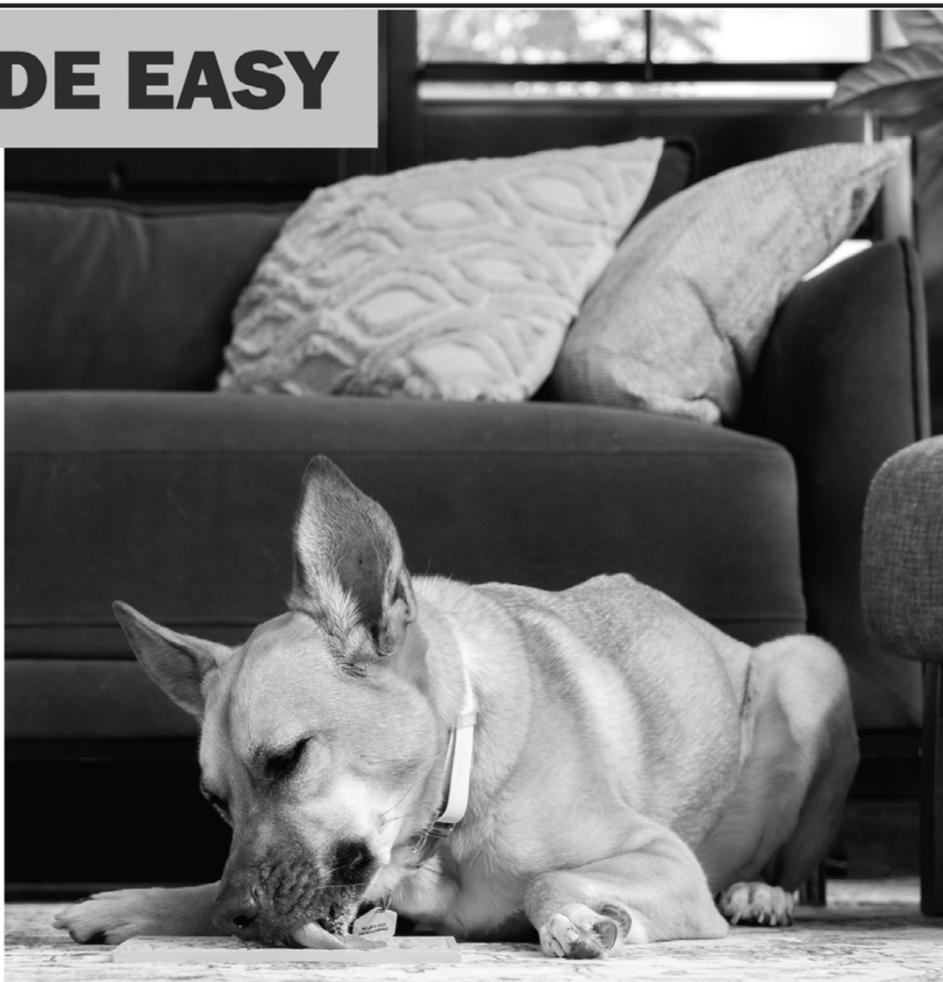
Enhance Pet Wellness with Functional Support

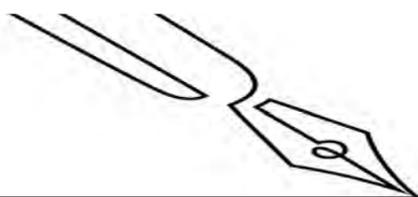
Even with a balanced diet, many pets may benefit from extra support to maintain their overall well-being. Functional supplements can help target specific needs, including joint mobility, immunity and stress relief. For example, NaturVet's easy-to-use Lickable



5 Easy Steps to Help Pet Owners Build Healthy Habits

- Creating a consistent health and wellness routine doesn't have to be complicated. Consider these simple steps:
1. **Start slow.** Introduce new supplements or activities gradually to avoid overwhelming pets.
 2. **Be aware.** Review product labels and ingredient certifications to ensure they are safe and appropriate for your pet.
 3. **Incorporate naturally.** Mix functional supplements into meals or use them as a reward for good behavior.
 4. **Stay consistent.** Small daily actions can add up to long-term health and wellness.
 5. **Monitor and adjust.** Work with a veterinarian to create a tailored plan and observe your pet's energy, mobility and mood, adjusting as needed.





Just for

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Canine cry
- 4 Dalai —
- 8 Sultry Horne
- 12 Uncle, to Juan
- 13 Bard's river
- 14 401(k) relatives
- 15 Provider of free groceries
- 17 Lapel jewelry
- 18 Fawn's mom
- 19 Nome resident
- 21 Nuanced
- 24 English cathedral city
- 25 100%
- 26 Poseidon's realm
- 28 Follow
- 32 L-Q bridge
- 34 Cover
- 36 Gear teeth
- 37 Avid
- 39 Kauai souvenir
- 41 Last (Abbr.)
- 42 Conducted
- 44 Justice Antonin
- 46 Movie promo
- 50 Sprite
- 51 Campus mil. group
- 52 Eats for parakeets
- 56 Jazzy James
- 57 Singer Braxton

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				54	55
56					57				58		
59					60					61	

- 58 French assent
 - 59 Twain hero
 - 60 Jazz legend
 - 61 ER workers
- DOWN**
- 1 Justice Dept. agency
 - 2 2016 Olympics city
 - 3 Gourmand's online journal
 - 4 File stickers
 - 5 Director DuVernay
 - 6 "— Lisa"
 - 7 Bracelet site
 - 8 Feign singing
 - 9 Composer Satie
 - 10 "Peter Pan" dog
 - 11 Professional gp.
 - 16 Speck
 - 20 Pub pint
 - 21 "Ditto"
 - 22 Forearm bone
 - 23 Snaky fish
 - 27 Be sick
 - 29 1997 Vanessa Williams film
 - 30 Hybrid fruit
 - 31 "Como — usted?"
 - 33 Louisiana symbol
 - 35 — Moines
 - 38 Seminary subj.
 - 40 Stranded during a blizzard
 - 43 Unpaid bills
 - 45 TV alien
 - 46 Not kosher
 - 47 Indian flatbread
 - 48 Envelope abbr.
 - 49 Funny person
 - 53 Genetic letters
 - 54 Wilder's "— Town"
 - 55 Insult, slangily

Southern start
In Texas, Georgia, Florida and other southern states, February is the start of garden season.

- It's time for southerners to plant root vegetables, including carrots, beets, and onions sets. Plant your peas if you haven't already, and get your cabbages, kales, and broccoli in the ground.
- Cut back ornamental grasses and dead stalks on perennials.
- Transplant snapdragons and pansies. Direct seed poppies and sweet peas.
- Give the compost pile a flip. — *Brenda Waver*

Source: www.bhg.com

THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

Say to wisdom, "You are my sister," and call understanding your nearest kin, that they may keep you from the immoral woman, from the seductress who flatters with her words.

Proverbs 7: 4,5

Detail of "Eden Bar" by Max Beckmann (1921)

Five Spot™ Night out

D	A	N	C	E

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.

- Conservatory major
- Keaton or Ladd
- Hash house
- Brought on
- Where to find a Baggins
- Top

T	R	I	H	S
E	R	I	H	S
D	E	R	I	H
R	E	N	I	D
E	N	A	I	D
E	C	A	N	D

Solution

WARD GAFNEY FOR CONGRESS

"First they fill you with chicken, then _____."

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!

King
HICLAP

Inset
ALIYN

Weight
REDBUN

Feint
ODDEG

TODAY'S WORD

SCRAMBLERS

BALONEY
Today's Word

3. Burden; 4. Dodge
1. Caliph; 2. Inlay

Solution

Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS

DRAWING THE BALL FROM RIGHT TO LEFT ADDS DISTANCE BY REDUCING HEIGHT AND INCREASING ROLL.

FIRST INGREDIENT IN LEARNING TO SHAPE SHOTS THAT WAY IS KNOWING WHAT YOU MUST ACHIEVE AT IMPACT.

THE DRAW IS PRODUCED BY THE CLUBHEAD TRAVELING INTO THE BALL FROM IN TO OUT ACROSS THE TARGET LINE, WITH THE FACE SLIGHTLY CLOSED TO THAT SWING PATH.

SO, BE SURE TO SET UP AND SWING IN A WAY THAT PROMOTES THOSE TWO FACTORS WHEN YOU SEEK THE "STRONG" SHAPE.

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

"We never know the love of a parent till we become parents ourselves."
— Henry Ward Beecher

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Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps

AT THIS POINT I THINK MY BODY SHOULD BE DONATED TO SCIENCE. ACTUALLY, IF I KEEP IT UP, MAYBE SCIENCE FICTION.

S	R	D	N	S	N	F
R	O	I	N	O	T	E
D	O	F	B	I	R	C
		E	L	F	R	T
A	L	S	C	A	L	L
L	T		L	E	I	
S	G	S	L	I	D	
E	S	U	E	A	S	E
		E	L			
N	A	S	K	A	L	
S	P	I	N	K	B	A
S	A	S	I	R	A	
A	N	A	L	E	M	A

Solution time: 25 mins.

King Crossword
Answers

Weekly SUDOKU

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

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

Weekly SUDOKU
Answer

Members vote on Caucus, delegates

By **DON MONCRIEF**

Editor, The Union Advocate
don.moncrief@afgelocal987.org

AFGE Local 987 held a special called meeting at the Union Hall Feb. 4. The meeting was advertised here in The Union Advocate, but most importantly – to be in accordance with the AFGE National Constitution – in a letter sent out to members Jan. 15. (Note: According to AFGE National Representative Michael Martin, who served as the Local 987 Election Committee Chairman, there were 48 letters returned undeliverable. If you did not receive a letter, you might be one of those and would be advised by the staff to call and ensure your mailing information is correct.)

The letter stated three matters would be voted upon at the meeting:

Whether the Local would partic-

ipate in the District Caucus in May 2026 where the delegates would elect the National Vice President, National Fair Practices Affirmative Action Coordinator and National Women’s Advisory Coordinator;

Whether the Local would be represented by (a) delegate(s), alternate delegate(s) or a proxy (all of whom had to be elected by name via a “secret manual” or mail ballot election, and by plurality vote);

Whether the Local would: (a) authorize only its existing delegate(s) to cast the Local’s full membership strength at the District Caucus or (b) elect delegates up to its full complement, in addition to the existing delegates.

Those three made up the first three of eight agenda items at the actual meeting. Those in attendance voted unanimously – by a verbal vote; there

was some discussion prior to each vote – to participate in the caucus.

They also voted unanimously that the Local would be represented by delegates – the full contingent allowed – and they voted unanimously to allow its delegates to cast the Local’s full membership strength.

The fourth agenda item was to determine if the Local would fund expenses for the delegates participating. That, too – again, after some discussion – received a unanimous “yes” vote.

The fifth item began the nomination process itself. Martin made it known that two candidates had nominated themselves via email. Four from the floor nominated themselves and two were nominated via other individuals.

That settled, a manual ballot was constructed (agenda item six) and handed out. Those in attendance were instructed to circle their choice (agenda item seven) and then at the conclusion of voting, the results were announced.



The following were voted as delegates:

- Bromiekus King
- Sharon Kornegay
- Jeanette McElhaney

- Ron Hill
- Greg Collins
- Hattie Canady
- Marion Williams
- Sam Berry



AFGE National Representative Michael Martin, who served as the Local 987 Election Committee Chairman, goes over the agenda items at the start of the meeting Feb. 4. (AFGE Local 987 photo/Don Moncrief)



FRESH THINKING ABOUT FROZEN

Bring Quality Meals to the Table While Cutting Food Waste and Stretching Your Budget

FEATURE IMPACT

The key to easy preparation of high-quality meals, wasting less food and saving money may already be sitting in your kitchen.

For many families, the freezer is for last-minute meal options. However, new federal nutrition guidance and growing scientific consensus reveal a different reality: frozen foods can be the starting point for healthy eating, not a backup plan. That’s why the American Frozen Food Institute (AFFI) is launching “Fresh Thinking About Frozen,” a campaign to help families discover these benefits of frozen foods.

Making Nutrition Achievable

The recently released 2025-2030 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, the nation’s top nutrition advice, emphasizes portion control and nutrient-dense foods. Frozen options deliver on both counts.

Families who keep frozen produce on hand tend to eat more fruits and vegetables overall. Pre-portioned frozen meals also help people eat what they need without overdoing it. Plus, the convenience factor matters: frozen berries are ready for a morning smoothie, pre-cut frozen vegetables can be added to tonight’s stir-fry and a balanced frozen meal can be quickly paired with a salad. That isn’t cutting corners. It’s being smart on how best to feed a family well.



Photos courtesy of Shutterstock



Freezing Hits the Pause Button on Fresh Foods

Freezing food only changes a food’s temperature, not its nutrition. Freezing keeps food close to its original state without requiring additives.

Produce begins to lose nutritional value right after it’s harvested. Freezing fruits and vegetables hours after harvest pauses nutrient degradation and locks in the vitamins and minerals, so the food remains farm fresh even as it travels across the country to your grocery store. Frozen meals are similarly made with real ingredients and turned into just-cooked recipes then frozen for families to eat when they’re ready.

The nutrition community understands this. A recent survey conducted by AFFI found 94% of registered dietitians agree frozen fruits and vegetables are just as nutritious as their fresh counterparts. Another 92% said frozen foods offer a variety of nutritious meal offerings. These findings are central to the “Fresh Thinking About Frozen” message: Frozen is not second-best. It’s simply smart.

Solving the Food Waste Problem

Nearly 40% of food in the United States gets thrown away, according to the nonprofit ReFED. That translates to roughly \$1,500 per year per household, straight into the trash along with unused produce and forgotten leftovers.

Frozen helps fix that problem. Eight in 10 consumers agree buying frozen helps reduce food waste at home, AFFI research finds. The reason is simple: You use what you need, when you need it and the rest stays perfectly preserved. No more dreading the refrigerator cleanouts and feeling guilty over the uneaten food going into the trashcan.

Time for Fresh Thinking

Families already making this shift aren’t settling for less. They’re strategic about nutrition, budget and time. They integrate the freezer into regular meal planning. They feel confident about providing quality foods that are simply frozen.

The freezer isn’t a place of last resort. It’s a tool for eating well in real life. Visit frozenadvantage.org/FTAF for tips, recipes and resources to make the most of your freezer.

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