

E-Dues emphasis

Local, National launch conversion effort

Members to receive \$50 for switching over



AFGE National Organizer Jessica Dobles talks to members about E-Dues during the membership meeting held Jan. 16. (AFGE Local 987 photo/Don Moncrief)

By **DON MONCRIEF**
Editor, The Union Advocate
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Bargaining Unit Members will see an increased presence of AFGE representatives – Local and/or National – on Robins Air Force Base next week and in the coming month(s).

The purpose, according to AFGE National Organizer Jessica Dobles will be to help members to convert to E-Dues. Dobles, who spoke at the Local’s membership meeting Jan. 16, described it as a simple process.

“We’ll have tables, laptops or tablets and a code we can just scan and pull up the page. If they’re not members, we’ll have benefits people there to do the same.”

She continued: “We built AFGE E-Dues, which collects membership dues through convenient bank draft or credit card payment, to guard against assaults on paycheck dues deduction. E-Dues puts union members in control of their dues dollars, not Agency management. We need to be proactive and stay ahead of the storm. We can’t afford to wait until it’s too late.

Also, she added, “There are

moves underway to eliminate dues on the federal level. We need to be proactive and stay ahead of the storm. We can’t afford to wait until it’s too late.”

Dobles also said AFGE would not be storing anyone’s financial information on their equipment. “Your payment will be processed by one of the largest payment processors in the world, which is certified at the highest level of security for customers’ financial information.

“Just like now, you will have the opportunity to leave 30 days before your anniversary date of signing up

with AFGE. You will need to alert your local president (or designated local AFGE official) in writing during that time so they can end your dues. You may also send notice to EDues@afge.org.”

Acting AFGE Local 987 Executive Vice President Tom Scott explained that people could be dropped via a promotion, a change in supervision or something “outside” the bargaining unit. “You would still be a member,” he said, “because now it doesn’t drop automatically because you got promoted. It stays under E-Dues.”

Added AFGE Local 987 Trustee Jeanette McElhaney: “They won’t tell you when they drop you. So people

ple still think they’re getting their benefits but they’ve been dropped. And they don’t know they’ve been dropped until we contact them and ask if they want to retain their membership. They’ll say, ‘I’m already a member.’ We’ll say, ‘No, the Agency dropped you when you got promoted or whatever.’”

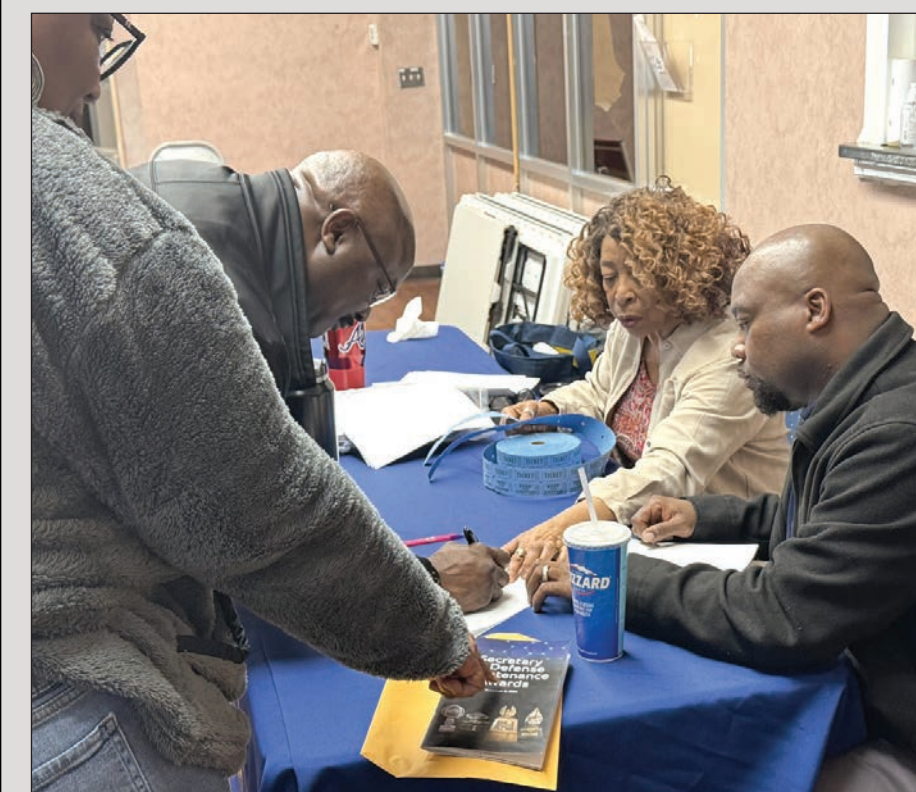
Scott also added: “When the (incoming) President does an executive order he can actually say by national defense he wants to take the DoD out of the bargaining unit where they don’t have any rights. That would stop dues, the contract, the whole nine yards. So, E-Dues would still have you as a member.”

McElhaney went on to elaborate even more: “We all know with a new administration it’s possible for them to go after the DoD. They went after the VA the last time and were successful. So, they were able to get to the VA the first time, so they’ll (the VA) probably be the first target this time.

“And after that they’ll be coming after any other organization that they can get to and drop. They’ve already said we’re making too much money and people need to go back to work and they’ve already gotten teleworking and remote

See E-DUES, page 3

‘In person’ meetings resume



Above left: Local 987 members are checked in during the membership meeting held Jan. 16. Above right: Members wait for the start of the meeting. The next membership meeting will be Feb. 20 at 5 p.m. at the Local’s headquarters located at 1764 Watson Blvd. (AFGE Local 987 photos/Don Moncrief)



BLACK
BLACK LEADERS ADVANCING CHANGE AND KNOWLEDGE

AFGE’s BLACK committee has set up the following Zoom meetings. To register, visit afge.org. All meetings begin at 7 p.m.

- n Feb. 19
- n March 19
- n April 16
- n May 21
- n June 18
- n July 16
- n Aug. 20
- n Sept. 17
- n Oct. 15
- n Nov. 19
- n Dec. 17
- n Jan. 21, 2026
- n Feb. 18 2026

n March 18, 2026

n April 15, 2026

n May 20, 2026

BLACK is an acronym that stands for “Black Leaders Advancing Change and Knowledge.” AFGE BLACK, per AFGE’s website exists to “increase solidarity in AFGE by highlighting the issues specifically impacting our Black members. It is through understanding each other’s struggles that we can effectively fight for one another.”

Volunteers needed to serve on committees

By **DON MONCRIEF**
Editor, The Union Advocate
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AFGE Local 987 is seeking volunteers for the following committees: YOUNG, Women and Fair Practices, Publicity, Constitution and Bylaws, Retirees, Veterans, Sick and Welfare, Membership and Entertainment.

YOUNG, as most probably know, stands for Young Organizing Unionists for the Next Generation. It, per AFGE’s website “seeks to mobilize young union members to become leaders for social change within AFGE and the Labor Movement. Members under 40 and mentors over 40 work together to include young workers in the union structure and keep them engaged in working class issues.”

Women and Fair Practices has as its mission, per AFGE (of course all have/ will develop/focus on a “local” mission as well): To protect and advance

the “civil, human, women’s, and workers’ rights of federal and D.C. government workers and their families through education and training, member organizing and mobilization, legislative and political action, and representation through litigation.”

AFGE established the Fair Practices Department in 1968 to “function as the union’s civil rights arm and to strengthen and enforce equal employment opportunity laws. Six years later in 1974, the Women’s Department was created to improve the status of women and their families and to eliminate artificial barriers to the progress of women in government service.”

The Veterans committee, per AFGE, has the capacity to influence Congress, “Considering that one third of federal civil servants are veterans, AFGE has the capacity to influence Congress, “but only if union veterans are effectively organized and

mobilized. The AFGE Veterans program brings union members, who are military veterans, together to speak out on the issues that impact veterans most.”

Retiree committee member advocate for a “productive, healthy, and secure retirement as well as good jobs, pay, and benefits for those who are still working.”

Constitution and Bylaws members ensure the Local’s constitution and bylaws are up-to-date and ensure it is operating in a professional and organized manner and with the highest of integrity.

Sick and Welfare committee members help lift up those who are suffering/battling health issues or are bereaved from the loss of a loved one. This committee also assist members in need once notified.

To volunteer for any of these extremely important committees, call 478-922-5758 and ask to speak to Trustee Jeanette McElhaney.

Worth repeating

“A better trained steward/representative is always a positive thing to do, to refresh them on any new laws, regulations and agreements that may have come out. This will provide a better representation to the BUEs as a whole.”

– Acting Local 987 Executive Vice President Tom Scott, on the training for “newer” stewards held Dec. 19–20, 2024. It covered a range of topics, including the Master Labor Agreement and grievance procedures on both the DLA and Air Force side, Scott added.

E-board, members approve 2025 budget

By **DON MONCRIEF**
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AFGE Local 987’s 2025 budget was approved during its membership meeting Jan. 16. Approved by the e-Board prior to the meeting, the budget had only one amendment. It stemmed from a motion from acting Executive Vice President Tom Scott to add \$30,000 for training to the budget. It was

seconded and approved unanimously.

A motion was then made to approve the entire budget. It was seconded and also approved unanimously.

“It’s a good budget,” said Trustee Jeanette McElhaney. “It’s well thought out. It’s practical and it will enable the Local to be able to accomplish its mission while at the same time ensures we are good stewards of the members’ money.”

If you did not get a chance to view the

budget as presented in full – its contents – and want to do so, you can call 478-922-5758 to make an appointment to visit the Local’s headquarters at 1764 Watson Blvd., to do so.

Also, per McElhaney, a reminder: “Please remember membership meetings will be held in person the third Thursday of each month starting at 5 p.m. at 1764 Watson Blvd. in Warner Robins. Come out and bring your ideas.”



Members of the 51st and 52nd Combat Communication Squadrons pose for a photo with their Peruvian partners during the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation in Lima, Peru, Nov. 16, 2024. The inclusion of a Language Enabled Airman Program Spanish speaker allowed the combat communication Airmen to better integrate with local communities and partners, which led to strengthened partnerships and ties. (U.S. Air Force courtesy photo)

5th CCG supports Asia-Pacific economic cooperation

By **PATRICK SULLIVAN**
78th Air Base Wing
Public Affairs

LIMA, Peru - Ten Airmen from the 5th Combat Communications Group, located at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, were selected to support Air Force Southern’s efforts at Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation in Lima, Peru, Nov. 5-20, 2024.

AFSOUTH was named lead component for APEC, supporting the U.S. government’s involvement and the U.S. president’s engagements during the event.

The 5th CCG Airmen, from the 51st and 52nd Combat Communications Squadrons, were called upon by the 474th Air Expeditionary Group to support 24-hour operations and a requirement for uninterrupted, simultaneous command and control capabilities across multiple locations.

“Since AFSOUTH does not organically possess a robust expeditionary C2 capability to support the multiple on-demand locations that required support, they called upon the 5th CCG to bridge their communications gap,” said Maj. Nicholas Riascos, 52nd CBCS director of operations.

“The 5 CCG’s reputation and mission set of being a world-wide deployable unit that can project expeditionary communications and enable combat support whenever and wherever, across the full spectrum of operations for the nation,

really made us a go-to when the AFSOUTH staff was looking for a key teammate,” Riascos continued.

The team’s mission involved establishing communications on the Peruvian air base and setting up reliable networks in non-standard locations, such as hotel conference rooms, to support operational needs.

This required meticulous planning and flexibility as the team responded on short notice to support the exercise, taking what normally entails months of planning, and mobilizing in just a few weeks.

“One of the biggest challenges we faced was navigating the logistical constraints of transporting our equipment,” said Master Sgt. Paul Visico, the mission’s senior enlisted leader and 51st CBCS operations superintendent. “Unlike our usual practice of flying military air, this mission required us to fly commercially. To overcome this, we embraced flexibility, meticulous planning and a proactive mindset. The team’s positive attitude and adaptability were crucial in meeting tight deadlines and ensuring mission success.”

The adaptability of the team was further demonstrated by their ability to integrate with a variety of entities, including Special Operations Southern Command, the United States Secret Service, the White House Military Office, and U.S. embassies in Peru and Brazil.

According to the team, a key component of the mission’s

success was the inclusion of a Language Enabled Airman Program Spanish speaker, Riascos, whose cultural and linguistic skills aided in efforts like clearing customs, sorting transportation, and accessing the local military installations.

“I grew up with that background and that heritage. It’s very close to me. So a lot of the cultural-isms are familiar, and I helped the team kind of bridge that,” said Riascos. “So, it really helped that in speaking Spanish, we improved the team, because I was able to cut through a lot of the language barriers and built a relationship very, very quickly.”

Having a native language speaker also helped to create positive interactions with local partners, developing relationships that extended beyond the mission.

“Outside of being great teammates to our U.S. Air Force and sister agencies, we leaned forward heavily and strengthened our partnerships and ties with our Peruvian partners,” said Riascos. “We played the Peruvians in a friendly U.S. vs Peru soccer match. Our teams joined in a friendly, yet competitive match and later exchanged patches and laughs, and strengthened our bond during our time.”

The team left Peru with not only a successfully completed mission, but with new milestones and expanded capabilities.

“The team achieved

See COOPERATION, page 3

Brown takes command of Robins C2 test detachment

By **DEB HENLEY**
505th Command and Control Wing Public Affairs
505th Test and Training Group, Detachment 2

Lt. Col. Gregory Brown took command of the 505th Test and Training Group, Detachment 2, during a change of command ceremony, Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, Dec. 13.

The change of command is a military tradition, representing a formal transfer of a unit’s authority and responsibility from one commander to another. Col. James Fields II, 505th TTG commander, Hurlburt Field, Florida, presided over the ceremony.

Before Fields oversaw the transfer of command, he thanked outgoing commander, Lt. Col. Kevan Seamans stating, “Great leaders rise to the occasion during challenging times. This past year has definitely been a challenge as the E-8 mission was stood down and the future mission of the Detachment is still being figured out.”

Fields continued “I am honored to officiate this ceremony and share the stage with these two outstanding leaders. Lt. Col. Brown, you have my full confidence and support, and I know you will continue the great legacy of those that have come before you as you lead the men and women of Detachment 2 into their new mission.”

Before relinquishing command, Seamans acknowledged the men and women of Det 2 for their continued dedication to the operational test mission.

As the commander, Brown will manage operational test and evaluation for a suite of ground-based C2 programs across the U.S. Air Force. Under his leadership, the detachment will analyze combatant command support requirements and other system evaluations as required by the



U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Gregory Brown, 505th Test and Training Group, Detachment 2 commander at Robins Air Force Base. (U.S. Air Force photo)

Office of the Secretary of Defense, Headquarters Air Combat Command, Secretary of the Air Force Acquisition and 505th Command and Control Wing.

Prior to his current assignment, Brown was the director of operations, 505th TTG, Det 2, Robins AFB, Georgia. and the DO, 5th Expeditionary Airborne Command and Control Squadron at Kadena Air Base, Japan. He is a master air

See BROWN, page 3

Joining a gym? Avoid new year fraud in 2025

The beginning of a new year is often associated with increased interest in gym memberships, at-home workout equipment and programs designed around living a healthier lifestyle. As consumers recover from holiday celebrations, including holiday dinners typically more robust than the standard fare, the new year offers plenty of opportunities to help shed those extra servings of stuffing.

However, it is important to remain mindful of con artists who take advantage of shopper trends for their own gain and keep realistic fitness goals that consumers can carry throughout the year.

Rather than signing up for fitness classes at a local gym, many consumers may decide to purchase at-home equipment to exercise. For the past five years, Internet searches for ‘workout equipment’ peak during January. As is typical in the new year, BBB is expecting an increase in reports of fraudulent businesses advertising the sale of workout equipment that is either never received or of poor quality.

One recent consumer reported a loss of \$2,100 when purchasing an elliptical workout machine online. After paying for the equipment via Amazon pay, the consumer reported they “received no confirmation or contact of any kind. I received no response when emailing the company.”

In addition to the challenges presented by unethical and fraudulent businesses, consumers interested in improving their physical health in the new year must also assess their fitness goals and determine their priorities when choosing a gym membership or at-home system.

BBB provides the following tips to get the most out of your new year fitness goals:

Ask questions about limited free trials.

Gyms often give a one-week free pass for potential members, and at-home programs provide a trial period to allow consumers to deter-



Kelvin Collins

mine if it is the right fit for their fitness goals.

If interested in a gym membership, spend the time to realistically determine what time of the day you would be available to dedicate toward exercise and visit the gym during these times to see how crowded it is or if there is a wait for equipment you would typically use in your workout routine.

Check to see if limited trials are offered for any classes or specialized programs.

Don’t feel coerced. Do not give in to high-pressure sales tactics to join a workout program immediately or make a purchase online without first researching the seller or business.

A reputable gym or program will give you enough time to read the contract thoroughly, tour the facilities and make an informed decision. Be especially wary of claims that seem too good to be true, such as a guarantee of losing a large amount of weight extremely quickly.

Calculate the trust costs. Gyms and at-home workout programs often use introductory offers to encourage new members, especially in the new year. However, the price could go up more than you budgeted once the initial period is over. Make sure to read the contract carefully and understand the regular monthly fees and what they include.

Take a tour. If choosing a gym membership, take the time to tour the facility and make sure the gym has the equipment, classes and trainers you need or expect. Pay attention to the things that are important to you, whether that is the cleanliness of the showers or the availability of Wi-Fi.

Ask questions and make sure you understand

See FRAUD, page 3

Medal of Honor spotlight Army Sgt. William David Port

By **KATIE LANGE**
DoD News

Army Sgt. William David Port took his oath to protect his fellow soldiers seriously. In Vietnam, when a grenade landed among his platoon mates, he didn’t hesitate to give his life to save them.

Port never made it home from war, but for his sacrifice, he posthumously received the Medal of Honor.

Port was born Oct. 31, 1941, in Petersburg, Pennsylvania, to Paul and Cecile Port. He had three brothers and a sister. After graduating from Juniata High School, Port moved about two hours east to Elizabethtown, where he first worked as a medical aide in a senior residential community known as Masonic Homes.

At some point, Port married his wife, Tonya, and they had two children, Kimberly and Nevin. Newspaper accounts also show he had another daughter, Kathryn, from a previous relationship.

Port worked for a few years as a candy manufacturer at Klein Chocolate Company before he was drafted into the Army in March 1967 at the height of the Vietnam War.

Five months later, he was shipped to the Southeast Asian



Photo courtesy defense.gov
Army Sgt. William David Port

country to serve as a rifleman with Company C of the 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry, 1st Air Cavalry Division.

On Jan. 12, 1968, then-Pfc. Port’s platoon was on its way to cut off a group of enemy soldiers in the Que Son Valley when they came under heavy fire from an entrenched enemy force. The intensity of the gunfire required them to quickly withdraw.

Port was wounded in the hand during the initial fire-fight. Despite the continuing gunfire, he ran through the area to help a wounded soldier get back to the safety of the platoon’s perimeter.

As the assault continued, Port and three other soldiers were taking cover behind an

embankment when an enemy grenade landed in their midst. Without any concern for himself, Port shouted “grenade!” to warn his fellow soldiers of the danger before hurling himself on top of the device as it exploded.

According to newspaper reports, a medic worked on Port’s injuries for more than two hours as the fight continued, but eventually heavier enemy fire forced the unit to withdraw, and since Port appeared to be gravely injured, they were forced to leave him behind. His sacrifice, however, saved the lives of at least three men.

Port was initially listed by the Army as missing in action. The service later learned that the North Vietnamese had taken him as a prisoner and that he had died on Nov. 27, 1968, and was buried in a jungle grave with eight other men.

Port’s courage and devotion to duty were not overlooked. He was posthumously promoted to sergeant. On Aug. 6, 1970, his widow and two of his children, Nevin and Kimberly, received the Medal of Honor on his behalf from President Richard M. Nixon during a White House ceremony. In 1975, the children also received a Bronze Star in his name at a ceremony at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania.

Port’s remains were eventually repatriated to the United States. On Oct. 18, 1985, he was buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

Port is remembered near his hometown in Huntingdon, Pennsylvania, where a bridge crossing the Juniata River was named in his honor.

Without any concern for himself, Port shouted “grenade” to warn his fellow soldiers of the danger before hurling himself on top of the device as it exploded.

THE UNION ADVOCATE

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Please submit articles, photos, etc to don.moncrief@afge-local 987.org. For questions about story content, to pass on story ideas or to request coverage, please contact the aforementioned.

What pregnant people need to know about vaccines



Photo courtesy of Shutterstock

(Family Features)

A new year can bring feelings of hope and optimism. This can be especially true for pregnant people as they look forward to the arrival of their baby.

Keeping themselves and their baby healthy is also a great New Year's goal, and in the colder months, that means avoiding respiratory illnesses. Flu, COVID-19 and RSV - which are common in many parts of the country right now - can become severe, sometimes requiring hospital care.

Vaccines are the best protection against severe respiratory illness. They cut your risk of being in the hospital for flu or COVID-19 by about half and for RSV by about 70%, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Vaccines help pregnant people risk less severe illness and focus on preparing for their new baby.

How do vaccines protect pregnant people and babies?

Flu, COVID-19 and RSV can be very harmful to infants, especially in their first 6 months of life. Infants are at higher risk for serious flu-related illness and are hospitalized for

COVID-19 at about the same rate as adults ages 65-74. RSV is the leading cause of infant hospitalization.

Getting vaccinated for flu and COVID-19 during your pregnancy can provide protection from serious respiratory illness for both you and for your infant in their first 6 months. Your immunity is passed along to your baby before birth.

An RSV vaccine during pregnancy can also protect your baby from severe RSV in their first 6 months. An RSV vaccine is recommended during weeks 32 through 36 of pregnancy if that period falls from September through January when RSV is more common.

It is safe for a pregnant person to get these vaccines at the same time. Any side effects from the vaccines are usually mild and go away on their own in a few days.

Get vaccinated for a healthy new year

Talk to your doctor or visit [cdc.gov/RiskLessDoMore](https://www.cdc.gov/RiskLessDoMore) to learn more about flu, COVID-19 and RSV vaccines. Find a pharmacy near you at [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov). You can also order free COVID-19 test kits (up to four per household) at [COVIDTests.gov](https://www.COVIDTests.gov).

Protecting your child from illness in winter months

(StatePoint)
Your child has a stuffy nose, cough and fever. Is it the flu? COVID? A common cold? Or are they symptoms of respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)? Or another virus known to cause the common cold? There seem to be so many, especially in young children who can have several colds per year.

Viruses can keep your child out of school for days and aren't cured by antibiotics. Days being sick mean missing activities and time with friends. One of the best ways to keep everyone healthy is to get vaccinated when you can, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics.

"Children spend a lot of time indoors close to others during the winter. It's easy to share germs when you are playing, especially for younger children who may not be as good at wiping their nose or washing their hands," said Dr. Joanna Parga-Belinkie, a neonatologist, pediatrician and mom of three.

"It's not too late to have your child vaccinated for flu and COVID to help keep them from passing and picking up viruses during play. These vaccines help boost the immune system. It's sort of like when your phone updates its software to recognize and resist viruses. This boost helps protect children and the community from severe illness."

If your child isn't feeling well and has a fever, stuffy nose, cough, headache or body aches, is throwing up or has diarrhea, it is most likely from a virus. There are tests for things like the flu, RSV and other causes of illness. Be sure to call your pediatrician to help sort out if you need testing and if it could be flu, COVID, or a cold.

Ask your pediatrician about the flu vaccine. It is recommended for everyone 6 months and older each year. Just last year in 2024, nearly 200 U.S. children died of flu-related illness. Eighty-three percent of the children who died from the flu were not vaccinated, making it clear that the flu vaccine helped children avoid getting very sick.

It's also important to get the updated COVID vaccine. This virus has not gone away, and it still makes kids sick. In August 2024 during a COVID spike, nearly 6% of emergency department visits for children younger than 5 years old were from COVID, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Lastly, the most common cause of hospitalization in infants under 1 year of age is RSV. Infecting nearly all children at least once by the time they are 2 years old, RSV can be dangerous. The infection can spread to the lungs and cause serious breathing problems that can't be managed at home. Nirsevimab (Beyfortus) immunization is for infants



PHOTO SOURCE: (c) Drazen Zigic / iStock via Getty Images Plus

under 8 months of age during RSV season. It is also for some children age 8 through 19 months who are at

increased risk for severe RSV disease and entering their second RSV season.

Healthy Children, the parent and

caregiver website of the American Academy of Pediatrics, offers more information at [healthychildren.org](https://www.healthychildren.org).

FRAUD

From page 2

the gym's policies, procedures and how they maintain their equipment.

Determine your fitness goals. Determining realistic fitness goals allows you to choose a facility or workout program that is most appropriate for you and will prevent you from failing to follow through with your workout resolution for the rest of the year.

Be sure to consult with the physician before embarking on a new fitness regimen, especially if there are medical conditions that might be of concern.

Figure out your priorities. What exactly are you looking for in a gym membership or at-home program? Is it a convenient location near your home or a chain with numerous locations around the country that

you can go to while traveling? Answering these questions will help you determine the best fit for your lifestyle and fitness goals.

Understand the terms. Read the contract carefully before signing and make sure that all verbal promises made by a salesperson are in writing. Pay close attention to the cancellation and renewal policies. Some gyms may charge a cancellation fee if moving or will automatically renew your contract at the end of its term.

Use a credit card when shopping online. BBB strongly recommends using a credit card for all online purchases rather than a debit card, wire transfer or mobile banking app transaction. In case of a fraudulent seller or business purchase, credit cards offer additional protection and the ability to cancel charges than other forms of payment.

Visit [BBB.org](https://www.BBB.org) for more tips on how to have a fraud-free new year.

BROWN

From page 2

battle manager with more than 2,200 hours in the E-8C and MU2B.

Brown began by thanking his family and friends. Next, he took a moment to address the men and women newly under his command.

"I am honored to assume command and lead the team as we embark on this transformative journey from the former JSTARS [joint surveillance target attack radar system] operational test detachment to an operational test squadron. I eagerly anticipate serving our airmen and fostering their personal and professional

development. Our initial mission and challenge will be to transform the unit from its current state by recruiting the appropriate professionals to establish a robust operational test squadron.

"While this endeavor presents its own set of obstacles, I am confident that we possess the right team and the unwavering determination to excel within the operational test community."

Brown continued, "Our military is undergoing a rapid transformation to prepare for the evolving Great Power Competition. To maintain our position at the forefront of this change, the operational test community must modernize its processes and operational methodologies. It is paramount that our

Airmen remain mission-focused and mission-ready. Ensuring that the weapons systems of the future are prepared for combat if required is of utmost importance. We must prioritize the well-being and empowerment of our Airmen, fostering an environment that encourages innovation and creativity. By doing so, we can transform our airmen into a formidable force, capable of confronting any challenge that may arise."

After 21 years of faithful service in the U.S. Air Force, Seamans will retire.

The 505th TTG, Det 2 is one of two detachments assigned to the 505th TTG and 505th Command and Control Wing, headquartered on Hurlburt Field, Florida.

COOPERATION

From page 2

historic milestones, including the groundbreaking commercial transport of 43 Pelican cases of communications equipment - a first for the 5th Combat Communications Group," said Riascos. "Their exceptional technical expertise and leader-

ship enabled the rapid configuration of secure communications, providing C2 capabilities within 30 minutes for senior leadership."

The 5th CCG's performance during the APEC summit highlighted their readiness, adaptability and professionalism, solidifying their role as a key expeditionary communications unit capable of supporting

diverse operational requirements.

"As a combat communications unit, our training prepares us to provide communications anytime, anywhere," said Visico. "This mission exemplified that by requiring us to set up communications in non-standard locations, highlighting the adaptability we develop through our training."

telework/remote working is getting their salary based upon the D.C. area, and that is not true. You're not basing your salary off most of the National and Locals.

"So if you do the E-Dues they can do whatever they want, and you will still have your Local organization. And for those who are members of Local 987," she continued, "who switch, we will give you a \$50."

E-DUES

From page 1

working confused. They think most people are remote working. They're not. Most people are teleworking.

"If you're remote working you can be anywhere. But they're thinking everybody working

Know your WEINGARTEN RIGHTS

You have the right to have Union Representation at any meeting that you reasonably believe may lead to discipline. Invoke your Weingarten Rights by saying:

"If this discussion could in any way be related to me being disciplined or terminated or affect any of my working conditions, I hereby request that my union officer or steward be present. Without their presence, I choose not to participate in this discussion. Please do not request that I waive this right."

Weingarten Rights have been invoked.

1975 U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *NLRB v. J. Weingarten, Inc.*



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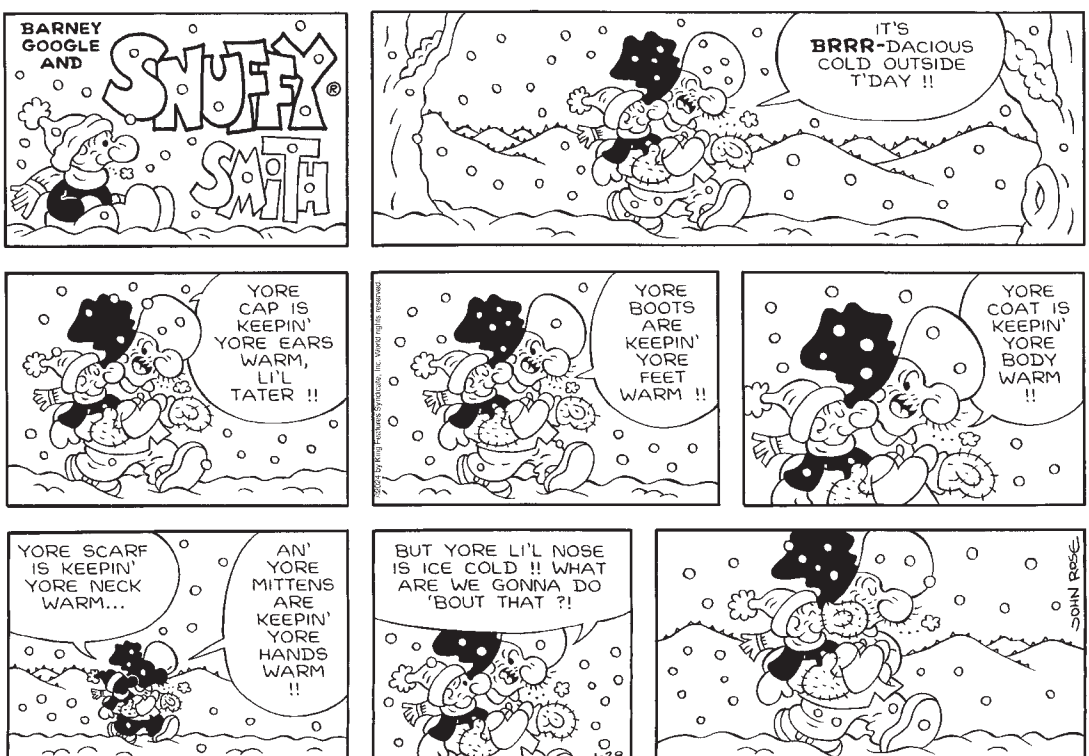
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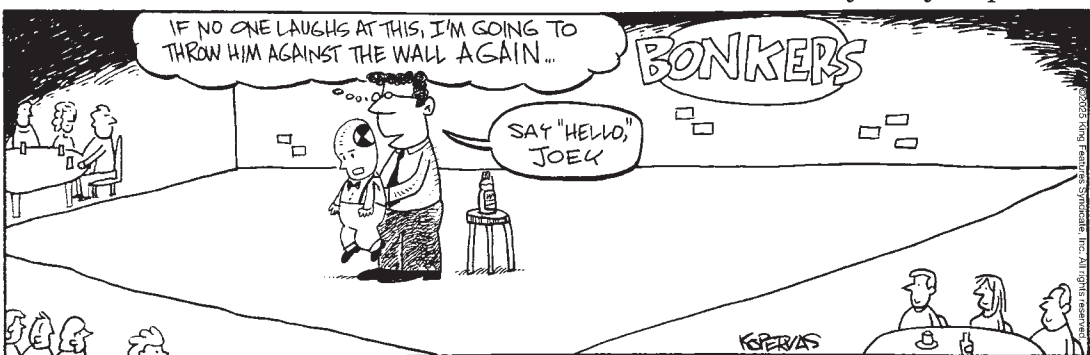


The Spats



Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



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Go Figure!

answers

6	+	9	÷	5	=	3
-		-		+		
1	+	8	×	7	=	63
-		+		÷		
4	-	2	×	3	=	6
=		=		=		
1		3		4		

FEAR KNOT

By: rj johnson

DOUBT? ...OR DARE!

WHA
DINSTU
♥ELTPA
♥OTDL
♥ACDELN
♥AET
ITWT
ETTEW
♥INT
CEHNEW
ISAPE
♥APLE

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.

FEAR KNOT

answer

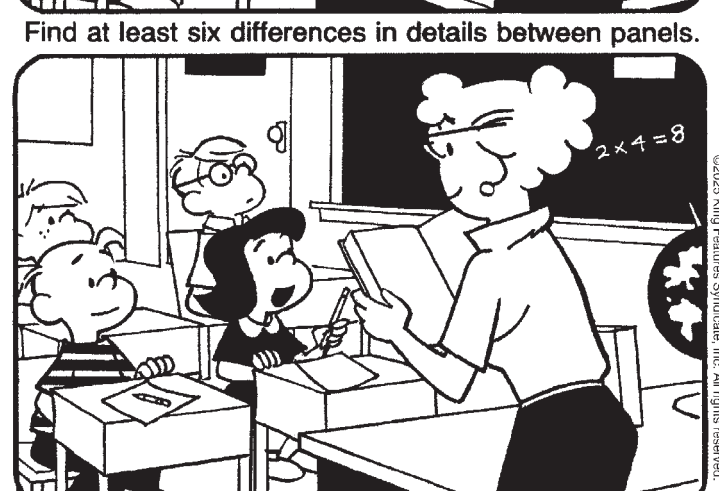
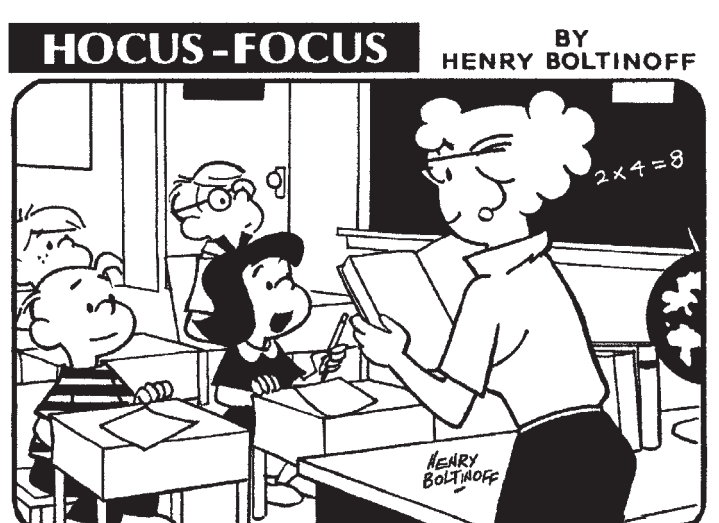
NUDIST
I O E
PETAL P
TWIT
HAW
PLANET
E C T
ATE

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.

DIFFICULTY: ★★
★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

	+		÷		=	3		
-		-		+				
	+		×		=	63		
-		+		÷				
	-		×		=	6		
=		=		=				
1		3		4				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9



CryptoQuip

answer

Part of an alarm clock producing the sounds of folks shooting the breeze: the schmooze button.

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: H equals S

UWMB RL WI WVWMG FVRFP
UMRSOFTIQ BZY HROISH RL
LRVPH HZRRBTIQ BZY EMYKY:
BZY HFZGRRKY EOBRI.

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Differences: 1. Desk leg is missing. 2. Book is missing. 3. Doorknob is higher. 4. Blackboard is wider. 5. Bow is missing. 6. Pencil is added on desk.

Easy, Fun and Good for the Environment

How to make every day recycling day

FAMILY FEATURES

With so many mixed messages, recycling can feel confusing, but the truth is simpler than you might think. Recycling isn't just for today – it's a year-round commitment to a healthier planet. In honor of National Recycling Day, consider these facts about recycling from the experts and tips to make a difference.

If Americans recycled **1 PET bottle** a day, they'd collectively:

Conserve **1,754 olympic swimming pools'** worth of water per year.

Avoid generating waste equal to the weight of **193,000 elephants** annually.

Avoid burning **3.5 billion pounds of coal** each year.

Lower annual CO2 emissions by an amount equal to the carbon sequestered by growing **53 million tree seedlings** for 10 years.

Courtesy of the National Association for PET Container Resources 2023 LCA



Photo courtesy of Shutterstock

Recycling Is Real

Americans recycle more than 6 billion pounds of plastic every year. Among the plastics recycled, polyethylene terephthalate (PET) remains a responsible material choice. PET is the world's most recycled plastic, with more than 1.8 billion pounds of PET bottles and containers recovered in the U.S. annually. Since PET bottles can be made from 100% post-consumer recycled content, each recycled bottle contributes to a circular economy where materials are continuously reused instead of wasted.

Recycling PET Plastic is Better for the Environment

Countless others from academics, researchers and industry experts show plastics, such as PET specifically, often have a lower environmental impact. In fact, glass bottles produce three times the greenhouse gas emissions compared to PET bottles, and making an aluminum can produces twice the emissions, according to Life Cycle Assessment studies. Producing PET also uses less energy and water and lowers acid rain and smog potential. Using and recycling PET is a more responsible, more eco-friendly choice than banning plastic outright.

Recycling Saves Energy

Recycling PET bottles requires less energy than producing new glass bottles or aluminum cans. Every PET bottle you recycle helps conserve resources and supports a more responsible production cycle.

Not All Plastics are Created Equal

PET is a superstar among plastics because it can be recycled repeatedly without losing strength or quality. It's also an inexpensive, lightweight and shatter-resistant package that preserves and protects the food and medicine people place in their bodies.

Recycling Can be Easy

Recycling services can be accessible, with many communities across the U.S. offering easy ways to recycle. Today more than 73% of all U.S. households have access to recycling, according to The Recycling Partnership.

By staying informed, choosing packaging that's easily recyclable and recycling consistently, you can help build a more sustainable future every day. Visit recyclecheck.org to find out where you can recycle in your community.

5 Recycling Tips

- 1. Know your plastics.** Look for the No. 1 recycling symbol – inside three arrows forming a triangular shape – to identify polyethylene terephthalate (PET), helping ensure your recycling efforts are impactful.
- 2. Recycle PET plastic packaging over bans.** Choose products packaged in PET bottles where possible, as recycling PET reduces reliance on resource-heavy materials and greenhouse gas emissions.
- 3. See recycling as energy conservation.** PET bottle recycling uses significantly less energy compared to producing new glass bottles or aluminum cans.
- 4. Think of recycling as an investment.** Every PET container you recycle contributes to a circular economy and more sustainable world.
- 5. Get involved within your community.** Connect with local recycling programs and stay updated on your area's recycling guidelines by visiting recyclecheck.org.

Here's to a *Healthy* New Year

What your family needs to know about vaccines

FAMILY FEATURES

This year, make a plan to keep your family healthy by helping them get vaccinated for respiratory infections like flu, COVID-19 and RSV. These respiratory illnesses are more likely to become serious for people who are not up to date on their vaccines. In colder months, respiratory viruses tend to surge, and people spend more time indoors where they are more likely to be exposed. These respiratory infections can cause serious illness and hospitalization. This season's flu and COVID-19 vaccines, as well as the RSV vaccine, are the best way to help your family risk less serious illness and do more of what they enjoy.

What should your family know?

Vaccines can keep you and your family from getting very sick from respiratory illnesses. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends everyone ages 6 months and older get this season's flu and COVID-19 vaccines. In addition, all adults ages 75 and older – and those ages 60 and older with certain health conditions or who live in a nursing home – should get one dose of an RSV vaccine if they haven't before. Pregnant people should also talk to their doctor about getting an RSV vaccine to protect their baby during their first 6 months of life.

Is your family at high risk?

It's important to know the risks of getting very sick from flu, COVID-19 or RSV. According to the CDC, some people have a higher risk than others, including:

- **People not up to date on their vaccines:** Vaccines cut your risk of needing hospital care for flu or COVID-19 by about half, according to the CDC. In 2023, 90% of adults admitted to the hospital for COVID-19 were not up to date on their COVID-19 vaccine. People who skipped their flu shot were twice as likely to need to see a doctor for the flu.
- **Older adults:** Most flu, COVID-19 and RSV deaths are in people ages 65 and older. If you help care for an older family member or friend, let them know vaccines are their best protection from getting very sick.
- **People with underlying health conditions:** Heart and lung disease, diabetes, kidney disease and other chronic conditions can cause complications and more severe illness from flu, COVID-19 and RSV.
- **Those who live in long-term care:** Respiratory viruses can be a greater threat to older people in long-term care, who often have health issues that raise their risk of severe flu, COVID-19 or RSV.
- **Pregnant people:** Pregnancy raises the risk of severe illness from flu and COVID-19. Getting vaccinated during pregnancy helps protect the pregnant person and baby. An RSV vaccine during pregnancy protects the baby from severe RSV in their first 6 months of life.

Get your family vaccinated now for a healthy new year

Join the millions of people who've already gotten vaccinated this season. Take your family to get vaccinated now to risk less severe illness and do more of what you enjoy. It's safe to get flu and COVID-19 vaccines (and an RSV vaccine, if eligible) at the same time.

Visit cdc.gov/RiskLessDoMore to learn more about flu, COVID-19 and RSV vaccines. Talk with your doctor about which vaccines are right for you or go to vaccines.gov to find a nearby pharmacy. You can order free COVID-19 test kits (up to four per household) at COVIDTests.gov.



Photos courtesy of Shutterstock



Know Your Risk

In the United States, there are additional groups of people who are at higher risk from these respiratory illnesses.

- **People in rural parts of the country:** Vaccines matter even more in rural areas where there may be fewer doctors or clinics to help people who get very sick. Yet in these regions, less than half of adults got a flu vaccine last year. Fewer than 1 in 5 got an updated COVID-19 vaccine.
- **Black and Hispanic people:** At last year's respiratory virus peak, Black people were more likely than white and Hispanic people to be in the hospital for flu, COVID-19 or RSV. By the end of last year's virus season, Hispanic people were more likely than non-Hispanic white people to have been in the hospital for flu.