

'Thank you for your service' should mean something!

By **HENRY BROWN**

Executive VP, Local 987
henry.brown@afgelocal987.org

There are many advantages to working for the federal government. While federal employees serve in a wide variety of jobs across the nation and abroad, I want to address some of the challenges faced by veterans today as they both retire and separate from the military branches.

The hiring and promotion process is fraught with challenges that are guided by regulatory guidance that governs the hiring process through the Department of Defense.

Unfortunately, between the Complex and the Wing it is



Henry Brown

difficult at best to hire a veteran with disabilities through the Schedule A process. Most reading this article will ask what Schedule "A" is and how

does it work.

Schedule "A" hiring authority for people with disabilities is an exception to the traditional hiring process. Schedule "A" provides for a streamlined hiring process for individuals with disabilities and, there is latitude for hiring officials to select directly from a list of qualified Schedule "A" applicants.

Considering the number of veterans retiring, separating from one of the branches of the military, there are struggles for some veterans to break the code for employment in the Complex or the Wing. Veterans continue to struggle

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The invisible workforce or the invisible marker

By **MARION WILLIAMS**

President, AFGE Local 987
marion.williams@afgelocal987.org

It is not often that I'm moved enough to write an article for the paper. Not because I don't want to, but often because I'm so engaged in other events concerning the workforce, I miss the deadline for print.

However, this week I have to talk to you all about some of the things that have transpired recently. I find it very disturbing when I'm TDY then talk to some senior leaders and the first thing they ask me is, "How are things on Robins?" Well, by now they know that I am going to tell it like I see it, good or bad.



I present the reality of the "Elephant in the room" based on facts and actual incidents on the Installation. Then we engage in difficult discussions. For instance, about three weeks

ago on a Thursday, I had to enter Building 215 downstairs. I was looking for an employee, not knowing exactly where the employee worked. I popped my head into the first office I came upon.

As I entered the office, I asked the workers in there if they could point me in the right direction. To my amazement and total disgust when I walked into the office space, I saw a wall, completely delaminated in places from the top of the ceiling and in numerous places left to right on the wall. (See the picture on page 3.) I asked the employees, "What is that?" They didn't know but told

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Local joins in celebrating Black History Month

By **DON MONCRIEF**

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

"Excellence."

That, said Warner Robins Mayor LaRhonda Patrick, was the return investment the Black community owes to its ancestors. "Excellence is what shows our ancestors, who took it upon themselves to take a journey, and show them that it meant something. The journey brought about something successful.

"Excellence is in our blood. Excellence is in our breath. Excellence is in our eyes. Excellence is in our soul."

Excellence was part of the overall theme of the program Patrick was speaking at: The

Black History Month luncheon held Feb. 28 at the Museum of Aviation. The full theme was: "Honoring the Past while Reaching for the Future with Excellence In All We Do." More than 100 were in attendance.

Seeing as the theme began with the past, Warner Robins' first Black Mayor, began likewise. She began with a couple of quotes. One was from Thomas Jefferson in 1785. It went: "Blacks are inferior to Whites in the endowments of both body and mind."

The next was from Abraham Lincoln, 1858. "There is a visible difference between Whites and the Black race. And I am in favor of the superior position assigned to the White race."

"These names," she said, "Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln we all know. Their names and faces embrace the currency we use every single day. These names are that of leaders and our founding fathers. The ones who established the United States of America. 'My country tis of thee. Sweet land of liberty. Of thee I sing.'

"These are our founding fathers. Ten of the first 12 Presidents of the United State were slave owners and advocated for slave labor. These names played an influential part in Black history. Our American history. As we address the theme of today's occasion, we will be honoring our past while reaching for our future in excellence in all

we do."

To do this, she continued, "we're going to briefly take a journey back through time." Usually during Black History

Month, she went on, "we lean in and celebrate our achievements birthed out of humble and painful beginnings. We talk of our heroes, our firsts, our triumphs.

But our past is a little bit more colorful than just that. As the theme suggests: To honor our past, we must understand."

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Left, Local 987 leaders enjoy the event. Above, an interpretive dance is performed. AFGE Local 987 photos/Don Moncrief

AFL-CIO presents its reading list

By **AFL-CIO Leadership**

Throughout labor history, women workers have fought in courtrooms, at the bargaining table, on picket lines, in state legislatures and in the streets for fair wages, quality benefits, and union recognition. And women of color have spearheaded movements at the intersection of racial and economic justice.

Black women in the post-Civil War South - who worked as laundry and domestic workers - were collectively organizing for fair pay standards, coordinating work stoppages and creating networks of resistance to economic subjugation.

And later, women led the charge on textile mill worker organizing in New England factories after the Industrial Revolution and helped form unions within the largely immigrant garment industry at the turn of the century—all of which paved the way for the child labor laws and workplace safety require-

ments that union members fought for.

When working women stand hand in hand alongside their union brothers, sisters and siblings, we know the labor movement is unstoppable. Women have the power to build a brighter future for our communities, free of sexism, racism and exploitation.

And this Women's History Month, we can do more than celebrate: We can learn from those who came before us and lead from their example. That's why we're excited to share this list of recommended books. We hope you'll find the time to read one of these during the month of March.

This Women's History Month, we at the AFL-CIO want to recognize that women's history is not a separate history; it's not a single month. Women's history is also America's history, and it's America's labor history, too. Women workers have always been a crucial part of the fight for justice in the labor move-

ment. And Women's history is not just the past—it's also the present. That's why we'll be celebrating a new generation of women labor leaders and activists as well, featuring workers from across the country. Our Civil, Human and Women's Rights Department has put together a list of recommended reading for the month—and we're making it easy for you to support women authors and to buy union-made. We've sourced each book and linked to some union bookstore choices where you can order it online.

■ **De Colores Means All of Us: Latina Views for a Multi-Colored Century**, by Elizabeth Martínez (2017)

■ **Reverend Addie Wyatt: Faith and the Fight for Labor, Gender, and Racial Equality**, by Marcia Walker-McWilliams (2016)

■ **Working 9 to 5: A Women's Movement, a Labor Union, and the Iconic Movie**, by

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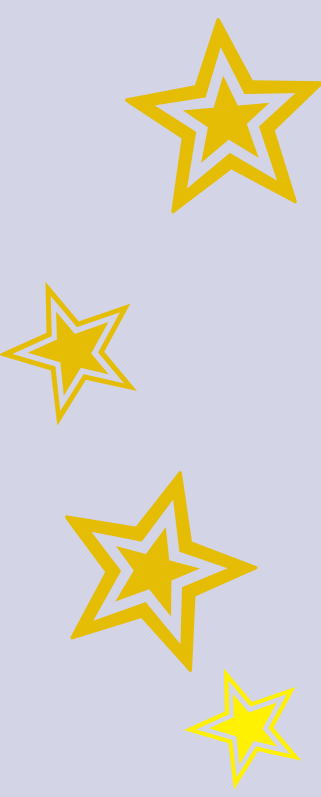
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Vote! Vote! Vote! Vote! Vote! Vote!

The team in the arena

It is not the critic who counts: not the sideline member who points out how the activist stumbled or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the activist who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat from long hours of representing the membership, who strives valiantly, who errs and comes up short again and again, because there is no effort without error or shortcoming, but who know the great enthusiasm, the great devotion. Who spend themselves in a worthy cause of representing our members, engaging the Agency on behalf of our members. Who at best, knows, in the end, the triumph of high achievement, and who, at the worst, if he fails, at least he fails while daring greatly, so that their place shall never be with those cold and timid souls that have not represented you, doesn't have the ability to represent you, have not attended a meeting in three years, and took the cowardly approach of not facing charges and got out of the union until it all blew over, now the Johnny-come-lately looking for your vote.

- Henry L. Brown Jr.



President
Marion Williams



Executive Vice President
Henry Brown



Monica Davis
Treasurer



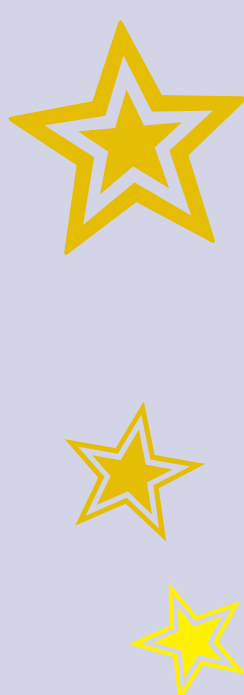
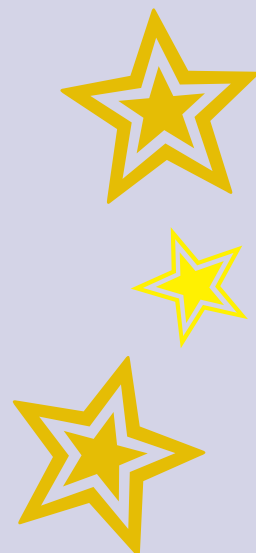
VP of Maintenance
James Watson



VP-At-Large
Mike Ferguson



VP-At-Large
Matthew Hawkins



VP - DLA
Gwen King



Sergeant-At-Arms
Sam Berry



Trustee
Teresa Freeman

Vote! Vote! Vote! Vote! Vote! Vote!

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INVISIBLE

From page 1

me they reported it. Both the 78th ABW Civil Engineering and Base Safety office came out, looked at the wall, as well as input a ticket for the repair of the problem.

I also asked the employees how long ago had this taken place, and to my amazement, it had been months. Then they opened a door to a little office, in the same space, and it looked like something out of a horror movie.

I took pictures and videos of the wall, called the Union Safety and VPP point of contacts, and they immediately came out. This is when they told me that this had been reported months ago, and nothing had been done to date by the Installation. What made me mad was, the Agency still had an employee report to that office, but neither CE or 78th Safety took this to be a real problem. Evidently because it did not have a direct impact upon any of them, thus giving this situation, a low priority in the system.

Needless to say, as soon as I got back to my office, I contacted OSHA, filed a complaint, and within one hour of my complaint and video, pictures, and comments, I received a call from an OSHA investigator. The investigator contacted me, the Union VPP and Safety personnel, and then the 78th personnel. Within a few hours, Base CE, and Safety got engaged. OSHA did a posting identifying the area of concern and the employees were immediately moved.

The employees filled out an OSHA Form 301 incident report and the area is scheduled to be fixed. However until then, no one is to go into that office or space.

My question in this entire story is, “Why did it take me contacting OSHA before the Installation or management took the issue seriously enough to take the action upon it themselves? Why didn’t anyone have enough compassion or sense of urgency to think about the safety of these employees and just do their jobs? The only rationale I can think of is we have become so desensitized, inhuman, that we only see people as numbers on a piece of paper, not as human beings. This is the only rationale I can find to explain the lack of urgency to act.

This behavior becomes more evident when one looks at the disciplinary actions and proposal presented by management personnel and Employee Management Relations (EMR). A supervisor or manager can send up any trumped-up allegations and ask EMR, “What can I do to this person, for doing this? The EMR personnel don’t take the time to ask, “Did this really happen?” or “Try to get the background on the situation.” It’s simply a game to punish employees, as former President Bill Clinton stated, “Because I can.”

Many of the incidents I see make entirely no sense. What it boils down to in most cases is a personal conflict between the supervisor and employee. Supervisors know that they have EMR, Labor relations, the Judge Advocate Office (JAG) and other resources that will tell them, “How to take the action to discipline the employee.” Never to ask what happened or validate the incident. They simply write the check to support the alleged incident.

Then the government and people like us (taxpayers) are left to pay for the supervisor’s action. What I mean by this is the taxpayer pays the Government, the government pays EMR, Labor relations, JAG, the supervisor, and management officials as well as the Employee and Union representative in the form of hourly pay. Then the matter goes to a formal process like EEO, MSPB or a grievance in the form of an arbitration. The taxpayer has to pay all these people’s salaries to justify nothing more than the supervisor’s ego.

If the Agency made the supervisors prove that the incident actually happened, or questioned them, we would not be seeing



so many actions being taken so freely. However, there is no accountability.

When we take these cases to trial and the supervisors have to answer questions concerning the incident, and in most cases they can’t. They get caught in missed facts, lies and it soon becomes evident that the incident was made up and didn’t happen the way it was related by EMR by the supervisor.

If the Agency tracked the amount of down time that is spent or funds spent to defend lost productions, lost leave, medical bills, et cetera, it took to support these actions, they would take a harder look at this problem. When you see the same management names popping up on disciplines it should draw a red flag and cause someone to take an interest in that area and address the root cause.

But the reality of this situation is employees are dehumanized to: “Just a number on a piece of paper.” When all you see are numbers and paper, you don’t see the person that is being impacted. You justify your actions.

For those who are getting offended, I say good because “a hit dog will holler.” For those who know what I am saying is true, step out of your comfort zone and take action.

Your employees have families, lives, and work to support them. Often some of us do not plan for rainy days and live paycheck to paycheck and to miss one or even 14 days of pay due to a suspension for having a cell phone in the circle of safety, or not having on a reflective belt entering the flight line during dust to dawn time frames, receiving a Direct Safety Violation (DSV) doesn’t warrant this type of action.

And when a supervisor or Quality Assurance person hides and ambushes an employee just trying to get to the job site and write them up just so they can meet their “quota”. And yes, I said quota. This is wrong and against the AFI 91, but QA

leadership has placed a negative standard in the QA inspectors Performance plan, to punish them for not failing a certain number of performance evaluations.

They have to write so many DSV’s. Otherwise they are “not” doing their job. QA should stop as soon as possible any unsafe act before it happens if they can. But in the case of the Depot, these individuals along with some management have nothing better to do than engage in this type of behavior, which is a violation in itself. Because you had the opportunity to stop and correct an unsafe act before it happened. But instead, you lay in the bush like a coward because you are afraid to address this practice with your leadership and stop it. Instead, you destroy and disrupt another hard-working person’s life by impacting him/her and their family financially.

The reality of this entire situation is that we don’t see people anymore, just numbers. Each week managers address productivity numbers, the number of sick days taken, the number of hours of annual leave used in the squadron. The DSV tracking numbers, 202’s, number of disciplinary actions; the number of hours, days or weeks it will take to get to the next gate, or to issue a Contract, complete file maintenance.

All that is tracked on this Installation are numbers. But behind every number or action is a person. A living being, that eats, drinks, thinks, and dedicates over 1/3 or more of their day Monday through Friday for the sole purpose of moving this Installation and the Mission forward.

To the leaders of this installation, take the time to know the people who drive the numbers. Take the time to just say good morning and call them by name, acknowledge their existence, their contributions, acknowledge them, because without them, you would not exist.

Do not be confused, your very existence and being is solely because of all the hard work they do.

SERVICE

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to gain employment because of culture gaps between civilian society and their military service. Then there is the lack of seamless transitioning and integration into the workforce that is plaguing employment opportunities here on Robins.

Not hiring a veteran must be the exception as opposed to the rule. There will be those of you reading this article who say you cant believe this. I’m here to tell you that it happens all too often. Even if there is only one recorded instance, it’s one too many.

Is there a recourse for veterans who find themselves in such a position? The question is: What should I do? Reach out to the Local for assistance. Absent of that, this could be a prohibited personnel practice that is rooted in law.

If you are lucky enough to find yourself in the unenviable, the prohibited personnel have a well-established recourse set forth in subsection 2302(b)(11) of Title 5 of the United States Code. Subsection 23o2(b) is a part of the Veterans Employment Opportunity Act of 1998. It provides an avenue for veterans who believe their veterans-preference rights have been violated

to appeal to the Merit System Protection Board (MSPB) after review by the Department of Labor (DOL) has not resulted in corrective action.

In most cases this has the effect of addressing your issue. You need to know that these actions strengthen and broaden your veteran preference.

This article has taken a sharp turn and morphed into another issue, so let me return to your rights under Schedule “A.” Be ever alert to the fact that the hiring officials are prohibited from asking questions about your disabilities unless the questions are related to the function of the job and consistent with the business

needs of the position.

I would encourage everyone reading this article to review the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission’s guide about questions agencies can ask about an applicant’s disabilities. The Local recently represented an employee during an arbitration hearing where the agencies and a supervisor failed to discharge their responsibility to a veteran and found themselves in violation of the Schedule “A” process.

Let’s get it right and make the phrase “Thank You For Your Service” mean something. After all: Every day In Middle Georgia is Military Appreciation Day!

LIST

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Ellen Cassedy (2022)

■ Fight Like Hell: The Untold History of American Labor, by Kim Kelly (2022)

■ Household Workers Unite: The Untold Story of African American Women Who Built a Movement, by Premilla Nadasen (2016)

■ Living for Change: An Autobiography, by Grace Lee Boggs (2016)

■ Putting Their Hands on Race: Irish

Immigrant and Southern Black Domestic Workers, by Danielle T. Phillips-Cunningham (2019)

■ Nickel and Dime: On (Not) Getting By in America, 20th Anniversary Edition, by Barbara Ehrenreich (2021)

Young Organizing Unionists for the Next Generation

The AFGE Young Organizing Unionists for the Next Generation program seeks to mobilize young union members to become leaders and activists for social change within AFGE and the Labor Movement.

AFGE members who are under the age of 40 and those mentors that are over 40 work together to include younger workers into the union structure and keep them engaged in what’s at stake for working

class Americans.

For more information, or to get involved at the Local 987 level, contact Brandon Respress at brandon.respress@afgelocal987.org.

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

Actions/decisions:

Chipotle to pay \$400,000 to settle EEOC sexual harassment lawsuit

Chipotle has agreed to pay \$400,000 to three former crew members at its Sammamish, Washington, restaurant location, and will provide other relief to resolve a sexual harassment lawsuit filed by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the federal agency announced recently.

According to the EEOC’s lawsuit, Chipotle permitted the three young crew members, including one who was only 17 years old at the time, to be harassed by their 29-year old service manager and subsequently by a 24-year old coworker. The harassment included the manager sexually assaulting the underaged employee and touching another worker’s buttocks. He also made unwelcome sexual comments and requests for sex, and isolated employees by trapping them in the restaurant’s walk-in refrigerator—blocking their exit—and caused them to fear for their safety. Despite the employees’ reports to the Sammamish restaurant’s general managers of being sexually harassed, Chipotle failed to adequately investigate their complaints and did not take adequate remedial measures to stop the sexual harassment.

Under the three-year consent decree settling the suit, Chipotle will pay \$400,000 to the three former employees and will appoint an internal consent decree coordinator to review, revise and implement anti-discriminatory policies and procedures that prohibit sexual harassment and retaliation. Chipotle will provide additional sexual harassment training to its employees, supervisors and managers at seven of its Washington restaurants in Bellevue, Redmond, Issaquah and Sammamish. Chipotle will also provide additional training to its HR investigators on how to conduct sexual discrimination and harassment investigations. Chipotle will also adopt and disseminate policies holding its supervisors and managers accountable for their compliance with its EEO policies and procedures.

Dollar General to pay \$1 million to settle disability, GINA lawsuit

Variety store retailer Dolgencorp, LLC, doing business as Dollar General, has agreed to pay \$1 million and provide other relief to settle a lawsuit filed by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission alleging that its hiring process violated the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Genetic Information Non-Discrimination Act, the federal agency announced recently.

According to the lawsuit, after making job offers to work at its Bessemer, Alabama Distribution Center, Dollar General required applicants to pass a pre-employment medical exam during which they were required to divulge past and present medical conditions of family members such as cancer, diabetes, and heart disease. The EEOC also alleged that Dollar General used qualification criteria that screened out qualified individuals with disabilities. For example, Dollar General rescinded job offers to applicants whose blood pressure exceeded 160/100 or who had less than 20/50 vision in one eye, even when those impairments did not prevent the applicants from safely performing the job.

Under the 27-month consent decree settling the suit, in addition to monetary relief, Dollar General must review and revise its ADA and GINA policies and distribute them to all individuals involved in the hiring process should they resume requiring medical exams. In addition, Dollar General must require their medical examiners not to request family medical history; must consider the medical opinion of an applicant’s personal physician; and must inform applicants how to request a reasonable accommodation if needed. The decree also requires Dollar General to provide annual training to all individuals involved in the hiring process on the ADA and GINA and to post a notice to employees on their rights under these statutes and how to file a charge of discrimination with the EEOC.

PRC Industries pays \$400,000 to settle EEOC racial harassment, retaliation lawsuit

PRC Industries, Inc., an E-commerce remanufacturing company, will pay two former employees of its Reno, Nevada, location \$400,000 and implement company-wide preventative measures to resolve a racial harassment and retaliation lawsuit filed by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the agency announced recently.

According to the lawsuit, two Black workers endured months of racial taunts and slurs, including the “n-word,” and hostility from their supervisors at PRC’s Reno, Nevada, facility. The harassment occurred openly. Despite the employees’ reports to multiple levels of PRC leadership, the employer failed to intervene, the EEOC said. Shortly after the workers escalated their complaints to a vice president, one of the harassers fired the workers via text message.

Under the three-year consent decree settling the suit, PRC Industries will pay \$400,000 to the two former employees; retain a consultant to improve and implement policies and procedures prohibiting racial harassment and retaliation; establish a comprehensive and effective complaint process; and hold supervisors and managers accountable for their compliance with these measures. The company will train its employees, supervisors and managers on anti-discrimination laws and PRC’s revised EEO policies and procedures and will ensure that employees designated to conduct racial discrimination and harassment investigations receive investigative training as well.

Mueller Company and IH Services to pay \$150,000 to settle EEOC sexual harassment, retaliation suit

Mueller Co. LLC, a nationwide manufacturer and seller of gas and water distribution products, and IH Services, Inc., which provides cleaning services in Mueller facilities, agreed to pay \$150,000 and provide other relief to settle claims of sexual harassment and retaliation in a lawsuit filed by the EEOC, the federal agency announced recently.

According to the lawsuit, IH Services assigned three female janitors to work at Mueller’s Albertville, Alabama, fire hydrant manufacturing plant. Several male Mueller employees solicited these female employees for sex, exposed their genitals and made sexual comments about the women’s bodies and sex lives. The EEOC further alleged that one Mueller employee attempted to rape one of the female janitors. After they complained to multiple IH Services and Mueller managers, IH Services retaliated against two of them by reducing their hours, making them work overnight shifts, and suspending or terminating them, the EEOC said.

Under a three-year consent decree, in addition to monetary relief for the victims, both companies will review and revise their sexual harassment and retaliation policies and post them in prominent locations frequented by employees or distribute them to all employees. Both companies will also provide annual training on their sexual harassment and retaliation policies and employee rights under Title VII to both managers and non-supervisory employees.

Sourdough from Scratch



4 variations of friendship breads



Chocolate Loaf
Recipe courtesy of “Cookin’ Savvy”

Medium bowl
Warm water
Sourdough starter
Salt
Unbleached all-purpose flour
Cocoa powder
Sugar
Silicone spoon
Milk chocolate chips
Sharp knife

In medium bowl, combine 350 grams warm water, 150 grams sourdough

starter and 10 grams salt. Stir well then add 500 grams flour, 50 grams cocoa powder and 50 grams sugar. Using silicone spoon, mix dough to sticky ball. Let rest, covered, about 45 minutes.

Pull dough from bottom and stretch to top of dough ball. Repeat around entirety of dough ball a few times, adding 1 1/2 cups milk chocolate chips during process, then cover. Repeat process four times then cover and let sit at room temperature at least 6 hours but no more than 14 hours. Dough should double.

Sprinkle flour on counter then spread dough flat on floured surface. Fold dough from sides then turn and roll into ball. Place on parchment paper and put back in bowl 1 hour.

Heat oven to 450 F with uncovered Dutch oven inside.

Using sharp knife, score dough then place parchment paper and dough in Dutch oven. Cover with lid and bake 40 minutes. Internal temperature should reach 195-205 F. Let rest at least 1 hour before cutting and serving.

Plain Sourdough
Recipe courtesy of “Cookin’ Savvy”

Medium bowl
Warm water
Sourdough starter
Salt
Unbleached all-purpose flour
Silicone spoon
Sharp knife

In medium bowl, combine 330 grams warm water, 90 grams sourdough starter and 10 grams salt. Stir well then add 525 grams flour. Using silicone spoon, mix dough to sticky ball. Let rest, covered, about 45 minutes.

Pull dough from bottom and stretch to top of dough ball. Repeat around entirety of dough ball a few times then cover. Repeat process four times then cover and let sit at room temperature at least 6 hours but no more than 14 hours. Dough should double.

Sprinkle flour on counter then spread dough flat on floured surface. Fold dough from sides

then turn and roll into ball. Place on parchment paper and put back in bowl 1 hour.

Heat oven to 500 F with uncovered Dutch oven inside.

Using sharp knife, score dough then place parchment paper and

dough in Dutch oven. Cover with lid and bake 20 minutes then remove lid and lower temperature to 475 F for 25 minutes. Internal temperature should reach 195-205 F. Let rest at least 1 hour before cutting and serving.

Sourdough Starter
Recipe courtesy of “Cookin’ Savvy”
Total time: 7 days

Digital kitchen scale
Unbleached all-purpose flour
Warm water
Glass bowl
Silicone spoon
Mason jar

Day 1: In glass bowl, stir 50 grams flour and 50 grams warm water. Let sit at room temperature, covered.

Day 2: Add 50 grams flour and 50 grams warm water to bowl. Stir and let sit at room temperature, covered.

Day 3: Discard half the starter. Add 100 grams flour and 100 grams warm water. Stir and let sit at room temperature, covered.

Day 4: Discard half the starter. Add 150 grams flour and 150 grams warm water. Stir and let sit at room temperature, covered.

Day 5: Discard half the starter then pour remaining starter into Mason jar. Add 150 grams flour and 150 grams warm water. Stir and let sit at room temperature, covered.

Day 6: Discard half the starter. Add 200 grams flour and 200 grams warm water. Stir and let sit at room temperature, covered.

Day 7: Place warm water in bowl and add spoonful of starter to water. If it floats, it’s ready to make bread. If it sinks, repeat Day 6 instructions. If not floating by Day 10, throw out and start over.

Tips: If making bread every day, starter will need fed every day. If not making bread every day, starter can stay at room temperature and be fed every other day. If starter can’t be fed, it can be safely stored in refrigerator up to 10 days, covered, without feeding.

To measure correctly, place empty bowl on scale then clear to zero before each measurement.

**Cinnamon Brown Sugar Loaf**
Recipe courtesy of “Cookin’ Savvy”

Medium bowl
Warm water
Sourdough starter
Salt
Unbleached all-purpose flour
Silicone spoon
Everything bagel seasoning
Sharp knife


In medium bowl, combine 330 grams warm water, 90 grams sourdough starter and 10 grams salt. Stir well then add 525 grams flour. Using silicone spoon, mix dough to sticky ball. Let rest, covered, about 45 minutes.

Pull dough from bottom and stretch to top of dough ball. Repeat around entirety of dough ball a few times then cover. Repeat process four times then cover and let sit at room temperature at least 6 hours but no more than 14 hours. Dough should double.

Sprinkle flour on counter then spread dough flat on floured surface. Sprinkle with everything bagel seasoning. Fold dough from sides then turn and roll into ball. Place on parchment paper and put back in bowl 1 hour.

Heat oven to 500 F with uncovered Dutch oven inside.

Using sharp knife, score dough then place parchment paper and dough in Dutch oven. Cover with lid and bake 20 minutes then remove lid and lower temperature to 475 F for 25 minutes. Internal temperature should reach 195-205 F. Let rest at least 1 hour before cutting and serving.

**Everything Loaf**

Medium bowl
Warm water
Sourdough starter
Salt
Unbleached all-purpose flour
Silicone spoon
Softened butter
Brown sugar
Cinnamon
Sharp knife

In medium bowl, combine 330 grams warm water, 90 grams sourdough starter and 10 grams salt. Stir well then add 525 grams flour. Using silicone spoon, mix dough to sticky ball. Let rest, covered, about 45 minutes.

Pull dough from bottom and stretch to top of dough ball. Repeat around entirety of dough ball a few times then cover. Repeat process four times then cover and let sit at room temperature at least 6 hours but no more than 14 hours. Dough should double.

In bowl, mix 4 tablespoons butter, 1/2 cup brown sugar and 2 tablespoons cinnamon.

Sprinkle flour on counter then spread dough flat on floured surface. Spread cinnamon mixture on dough. Fold dough from sides, pinching to keep cinnamon inside, then turn and roll into ball. Place on parchment paper and put back in bowl 1 hour.


Heat oven to 475 F with uncovered Dutch oven inside.

Using sharp knife, score dough then place parchment paper and dough in Dutch oven lined with aluminum foil. Cover with lid and bake 20 minutes then remove lid and lower temperature to 450 F for 25 minutes. Internal temperature should reach 195-205 F. Let rest at least 1 hour before cutting and serving.



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

AZULEJO
DO
GAZEBO
JAZZBO
JUMBO
MOJO
PROXIMO
WHO

BOZO
DOJO
GIZMO
JINGO
KAZOO
OUZO
VAQUERO
ZOO

CHORIZO
EXPO
GONZO
JOCKO
MEZZO
PALAZZO
WACKO
ZYDECO

A little humor ...

Jim: If you're such a good fortune-teller, you should be able to tell me the score of tonight's hockey game before it starts.

Tim: Before the game starts, the score will be nothing to nothing.

Father: Son, do you realize when Lincoln was your age he was already studying hard to be a lawyer?

Son: Right, Pop, and when he was your age, he was already president of the United States.

A Sunday school class was being quizzed on the prodigal son. The teacher asked one youngster, "Who was sorry when the prodigal son returned home?"

The boy gave it a lot of deep thought and then said,

STATEPOINT
CROSSWORD

THEME: March Madness

ACROSS

1. Window addition?

6. Huge software company

9. Spill the beans

13. Watcher

14. Acronym, abbr.

15. Words to live by

16. Ocean-dwelling ____ ray

17. Polynesian necklace

18. "Once upon a midnight dreary" bird

19. *Fill-in-the-blanks, March Madness style

21. **One ____ Moment"

23. Like jalapeño

24. Give off

25. Bean counter?

28. *Dominate opponent, slangily

30. *____-elimination tournament

35. Bricklayers' carrier

37. Wood sorrels

39. Jeweler's unit

40. Alight, past tense

41. Swings around

43. Spice Girl

44. Bubonic plague carriers

46. Away from wind

47. D'Artagnan's sword

48. *Elite Eight, or the ____ round of tournament

50. Bono's bandmate, with The

52. Make a mistake

53. Landlord's due

55. Small lump

57. *State Farm Stadium state

61. *Not pro

65. Chocolate substitute

66. Hot temper

68. Derived from oats

69. Cuckoo

70. Sir George Ivan Morrison's stage name

71. Baby at a recital

DOWN

72. Have supper

73. Young newt

74. Many affirmatives

1. Brush alternative

2. Culture-growing turf

3. Long forearm bone

4. Satyr

5. City in Poland

6. *Delta Center location: ____ Lake City

7. Hole-in-one

8. Type of polyhedron

9. Raisin's breakfast companion

10. Denim innovator

11. Port in Yemen

12. Toker's pipe

15. Professional reviewer

20. Not pathos

22. Not hers

24. Shoulder rank display

25. Winnowing leftovers

26. Chicken in Mexico

27. Farewell in Paris

29. *School with most NCAA basketball titles

31. Back of the neck

32. Search blindly

33. Lightsaber beam

34. Olden days anesthetic

36. *____ player

38. Garden starter

42. D.S., in sheet music

45. Dance club light

49. Female chicken

51. Speech at a funeral

54. Lacking guile

56. What speakers do

57. LSD, e.g.

58. Indian princess

59. Turkmenistan's neighbor

60. *Type of defense

61. One tenth of a dime

62. Airline postings, acr.

63. Type of pool

64. What means justify

67. Churchill's "so few"

CROSSWORD

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				62	63	64
65						66	67			68				
69						70				71				
72						73				74				

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

MR. WATSON, COME HERE, I WANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN. MR. WATSON? HELLO? WATSON, PICK UP! I KNOW YOU'RE THERE. WATSON!

The telephone - day two.

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STR8TS

No. 675 Medium

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

Previous solution - Easy

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

How to beat **Str8ts** – Like Sudoku, no single number can repeat in any row or column. But... rows and columns are divided by black squares into **compartments**. These need to be filled in with numbers that complete a 'straight'. A **straight** is a set of numbers with no gaps but can be in any order, eg [4,2,3,5]. Clues in black cells remove that number as an option in that row and column, and are not part of any straight. Glance at the solution to see how 'straights' are formed.

You can find more help and strategies at www.str8ts.com along with more puzzles, Apple apps and books.

Pastor: Yes, that's true, but they make much better time when somebody is after them.

A Baptist minister rushed down to the train station every single day to watch the Sunset Limited go by. There was no chore he wouldn't interrupt to carry out his ritual.

Members of his congregation deemed his eccentricity juvenile and frivolous, and they asked him to give it up.

"No, gentlemen," he said firmly. "I preach your sermons, teach your Sunday school, bury your dead, marry you, run your charities, and chair every drive it pleases you to conduct. I won't give up seeing that Southern Pacific train every day.

"I love it! It's the only thing in this town I don't have to push!"

A burglar entered the house of a Quaker and proceeded to rob it.

The Quaker heard noises, took his shotgun downstairs, and found the burglar. He aimed his gun and said gently, "Friend, I mean thee no harm, but thou standest

where I am about to shoot."

A Scotsman and an Englishman were leaning against the counter in a store when a bandit walked in and brandished his gun.

The Scot, a quick thinker, hauled out his money and handed it to his English friend. He said, "Here's the ten dollars you lent me."

A visitor was engaged in conversation at the corner drugstore about the local drought.

"You think it's bad here," the merchant observed, "but down south o' here a-ways, they haven't had any rain for so long that the Baptists are sprinkling, the Methodists are using a damp cloth, and the Presbyterians are issuing rain checks!"

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



Warner Robins Mayor LaRhonda Patrick provides the keynote address for the event. (AFGE Local 987 photos/Don Moncrief)

MONTH

From page 1

We must truly understand this journey. For as the famous (Political Activist) Marcus Garvey once said: ‘A people without knowledge of their past, origin or culture is like a tree without roots.’”

The 1600s and 1700s, Patrick continued, was the era of slavery. Our story, she said, begins with the first African slaves touching American soil in 1619. “During this era, hundreds and thousands were invested to steal a people from its land. For financial and personal gain. Holding slaves captive for free labor was the norm in our country.

“The majority of our founding fathers. The ones who birthed the United States Constitution owned slaves and thrived due to our oppression. Slave owners depended on slave labor for their economy and survival in a new land. Many obtained riches and wealth based on forced labor, on the grand plantations. Slaves were taken from their homes and sent on a ship across the ocean to become property. A value was placed upon their head. Yet they were seen as worthless. Worthless property that was valuable to its owner. And brought forth riches.” They were conditioned not to see their own worth, she continued. “That’s because a person, a thing, is taught they are nothing more than dirt, then they think that is all they can become.”

Slaves, she went on, were forced to plow fields, pick cotton, harvest tobacco, labor on the farm from dusk to dawn. All, she said, without one penny of monetary compensation.

“Slavery is what built our nation. As we honor our past, we must acknowledge that slavery was encouraged in our nation. Rules and laws across the country were formed to legalize slavery. Regulate slave trade. Punish slaves and dehumanize an entire race. Many slaves never breathed freedom again.

“Generations of slaves were birthed from their tiers. But slaves were people. People with skin that glowed like mine. Cheeks that gleamed like mine. Hair that spirals like mine. Eyes that beamed like mine. Hips that swayed like mine and a nose that flairs like mine.

“They were chained, beaten, whipped, starved, hung, tortured, raped, hunted, shackled, sold. All because their skin was the color of mine. The theme says that we are to honor our past. But how can we honor such darkness? What is honorable about chains,

whips and agony. We started in a dark hole. Treated as less than man.”

The honor, she continued was that “we as a people did not stay there. To honor our past we must start from the beginning when there was no hope.” But, she continued, a new day was upon the horizon.

The darkness of slavery haunts our past, she went on, but the Abolitionist movement of the 1800s, she said, brought forth a little bit of hope. Civil war in turn brought the Emancipation Proclamation and slavery ended in 1863.

“One hundred and sixty one years ago, slaves were finally free. But that freedom in the South looked different than that freedom in the North.”

That, she said, was in part due to the Jim Crow era that began in the late 1800s. It legalized racial segregation and anti-Black racism for, Patrick said, almost 100 years. The Jim Crow laws she cited: “‘It shall be unlawful for Whites and Coloreds to eat in the same room.

“‘All restaurants shall serve exclusively White or Blacks.

“‘White female nurses shall not nurse in rooms or hospitals where Black men are placed.

“‘Colored persons shall not play in parks made for White people.

“‘Textbooks shall not be interchangeable between White and Black schools.

“‘Any person who rents a building or unit to a Negro family in a place that includes a White family shall be guilty of a crime and punishable by a fine or imprisonment.

“‘Movie theater entrances for Whites and Blacks must be separate.

“‘No Negro shall drink from a water fountain reserved for Whites. Negroes and Whites shall use separate toilet facilities.’

“At this point slaves were free but treated unequally in some parts of America. What is the honor in that part of our history,” she asked. “The honor is though we were treated as infectious diseases, that our counterparts did not want to be around, we did not allow history to stay there.”

That, she continued, was due to the fact the Civil Rights movement was right “around the corner.” It began in the 1950s and continued through the 1960s. It demonstrated, she said, that Black people had “had enough. When their ancestors had built a country yet they couldn’t walk in the same door as Whites. When they could join the military and defend our country yet couldn’t vote. When they could go to war



and make the ultimate sacrifice yet could not pick their own seat on a bus.”

The Civil Rights movement had many important figures, she said. She cited a number: Carter G. Woodson. Charles Hamilton Houston. James Weldon Johnson. Medgar Evers. John Lewis. Thurgood Marshall. Rosa Parks. “And of course, the great Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. King was the pioneer of his time. One of the most influential speakers during the Civil Rights movement. He understood that the change we needed started with one person. One pen. One book and one wit.

“This year marks his 60th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act. Outlawing discrimination in America. That was not that long ago.

“We honor this point in our past because we as a people advocated. We fought and we stood up against mistreatment, just because of the color of our skin. This point in our history, the 60s was not that long ago. But it marks progress for which everyone benefitted. This era and the work of the great Martin Luther King allowed our nation to live out the true meaning of its creed. Where every man was created equally and judged by the content of his character and not the color of his skin.

“We honor the Civil Rights movement and the signing of the Civil Rights Act because it paved the way for equal access to opportunities which led to a multitude of accomplishments for the Black race over the past 60 years since its signing.

“Honor our past. Reach for the future and excellence in all we do. We stand on the shoulders of our ancestors. We are their wildest dreams. They sacrificed a lot.”

But what is their return, she then asked. What was it all for?

“What is the return on the investment of our grandparents, she asked, who grew up in the segregation of the South during the Civil Rights movement of the 60s?

“What is the return of our grandfather,” she continued, “born in the 1930s, who fought in a war for our country, yet still had to sit in the back of the bus and answer to the ‘n’ word.

“What is the return for our great grandfather born in the early 1900s who worked the fields as a sharecropper in the fields, earning just a few dollars a day, taking care of seven babies at home. Feeding them scraps and clothing that was torn and tattered. But anything was better than slavery.

“What is the return of our great grandmother who was born



AFGE Local 987 Stewards, from left, Antonio Lumpkin, James Watson and Sam Berry listen to one of the speakers. (AFGE Local 987 photos/Don Moncrief)

in the 1870s who wasn’t allowed to read or write because she was black and a descendant of slaves. What is the return for our great great grandmother, born in the 1840s, who had her babies ripped from her womb and sold on the market while she was forced to nurse the babies of her master as a slave.

“Our ancestors invested their lives for our today, and what is their return?”

Excellence, she answered. “For what value we give for the lashings, the screams, the tears, the suffering, the anguish, the brutality, the death. (This is where her words at the beginning of this article fit in.) The accomplishments we have made since the slavery of the 1700s and the 1800s. The end of the Jim Crow era and the Civil Rights movement that will forever require all men to be treated equally shows excellence.”

She continued that the accomplishments over the 60 years since the signing of the Civil Rights Act, continued to demonstrate “we have done some excellent things.”

One of the most notable, she said, came on Jan. 20, 2009, when Barack Obama was elected President. When, she said, the world watched some thought impossible take place in the United States of America.

“History has spoken. America has listened and the people voted for a President based on the great things that being had to offer the world. America had chosen a leader based on qualification, motivation, innovation, preparation, occupation, determination. And he became an inspiration. And we owe a great amount of admiration and appreciation to President Barack Obama, the 44th President of a nation 50 years earlier wouldn’t



have allowed him to enroll at Columbia University and obtain a doctorate from Harvard.

“Fifty-five years earlier they wouldn’t have allowed him to represent Congress as a U.S. Senator. A nation that 60 years earlier would have likely penalized the union of his mother and father.”

Patrick continued that Blacks have “many” notables – and their accomplishments – during “our” history. She cited a number: Jackie Robinson, Hank Aaron, Langston Hughes, Maya Angelou, Arthur Ashe, Serena Williams, Simone Biles, Lee Elder, Tiger Woods, Oprah Winfrey, Tiger Woods, Madam C.J. Walker, Rosalind Brewer, Michael Jordan and LeBron James.

“We honor a history where struggle led to triumph. Pride to a celebration and one step moved a nation.

“Our history began in 1619 but our journey to the future knows no bounds. We in this room are writing our present and our future and our future history. The past is history. The future a mystery.

“Learn from our ancestors. We embrace their story. They struggled for a purpose. They endured the fight for a future they would never see.

“We are the heirs of their tears. The branches of their roots. Respect their journey and appreciate the present, for we are living in the now and this is the gift of which our ancestors gave.

“Their strength endured the harshest treatment so that we could have a chance for today and tomorrow’s future and a chance for excellence. For the struggles of our ancestors, excellence is the reward. Excellence is the expectation. Excellence is what our history deserves.

“Even if the goal has never been achieved by a Black person before, history says that we can.

Excellence is about breaking barriers, removing boundaries, better standards, exceeding expectations, paving the way.

“Excellence because our history requires it. Excellence because our ancestors deserve it. Excellence because that is what we are.”

In closing, Patrick said she wanted to remind all of the theme and how all the pieces were tied together in “this story. As we think back and reticence. Remember this. Our past is painful. But also praiseworthy. Our future is bright and boundless. Excellence is who we are and what we must achieve.

“Black history doesn’t stop with our ancestors’ sorrows and our tomorrow’s. It goes beyond what we can imagine. It continues. Our accomplishments make us an inspiration for the world to see.

“Our past. It made us strong. The fight for freedom and equality, it made us brave. Our history. It makes us beautiful. Our future is full of destiny and success is the destination.

“So now we must honor our past and reach for our future with excellence in all that we do. Because that is what all of this is all about. Because that is why we celebrate Black History Month and that is why we still talk about Black history in 2024.

“Because even though we’ve paved so many ways, we’ve broken down so many barriers, we’ve exceeded so many ceilings, we still have history to write. Because of our past we can dream like Martin. Lead like Harriet. Think like Garvey. Write like Maya. Speak like Frederick. Educate like Webb. Believe like Thurgood. Challenge like Rosa. March like John Lewis. Inspire like Obama. Run like Kamala. Serve like me.”

AFGE Local 987 Trustee Tommy Gibson and Local 987 Bookkeeper Linda Baxter share a bit of fellowship before the start of the event. (AFGE Local 987 photos/Don Moncrief)