



Facts over fiction - know your rights

By **JAMES WATSON**
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James Watson

and call-in practices

- safety and health protections
- training and qualification processes
- performance processes and how they're applied
- details/reassignments impacts and how changes are implemented

Core rights every federal employee should know

1) Weingarten Rights (representation in investigatory meetings)

FACT:
If management calls you into a meeting and you reasonably believe it could lead to discipline, you have the right to request a union representative before answering questions.

FICTION:
"If you ask for a steward, you look guilty."
FACT:
Requesting representation is a protected right. It's the workplace equivalent of saying: "I want a fair process and a witness."

Key point: You generally must ask for representation. Management often won't volunteer it.

What to say: "If this meeting could lead to discipline, I am requesting union representation before answering questions."

2) The right to join (or not join) a union

FACT:
In the federal government, union membership is voluntary. Employees can be in the bargaining unit whether they pay dues or not (subject to coverage rules).

FICTION:
"The union can make you join."

FACT:
The union can't force membership.

3) Protected activity (you can speak up — within reason)

FACT:
Federal employees have protections when they engage in lawful union activity—talking to a steward, filing a grievance, participating in bargaining, and raising workplace concerns through the negotiated process.

FICTION:
"If you file a grievance, they can fire you for being 'difficult.'"

FACT:
Retaliation for protected union activity can be an Unfair Labor Practice (ULP). Agencies can still discipline for legitimate misconduct or performance issues—but they can't punish people because they used protected rights.

4) The Union's right to information (when it's needed)

FACT:
When representing employees, the union can request information that is necessary to perform representational duties—like policies, emails, rosters, overtime records, selection criteria, or other relevant documents—subject to privacy and security rules.

FICTION:
"Management never has to provide anything."

FACT:
They often do. Information requests are a normal part of enforcing the contract and ensuring fair treatment.

5) Bargaining over changes that affect working conditions

FACT:
When management changes conditions of employment, they often have a duty to bargain over procedures and appropriate arrangements (even when management has certain "management rights").

FICTION:
"Management can change anything—mission requirements."

FACT:
Mission matters, but it doesn't erase bargaining obligations. Many changes require notice and an opportunity to bargain before implementation unless a narrow exception applies.

Common myths that hurt employees (and what's true instead)

MYTH:
"Talking to the union is disloyal."

TRUTH:
Using established processes is part of a professional workplace. Congress created a legal system for labor-management relations in federal agencies. That's not disloyal—that's the system working.

MYTH:
"If you don't sign a memo, you're refusing an order."

TRUTH:
Often, signatures acknowledge receipt—not agreement. You can request clarification and note "received" if appropriate. Don't guess—ask and document.

MYTH:
"If you refuse to answer questions without a rep, that's insubordination."

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CENTRAL GEORGIA FEDERATION OF TRADES AND LABOR COUNCIL & GEORGIA STATE AFL-CIO

WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY

JOIN US IN HONORING OUR FALLEN AND INJURED WORKERS WITH YOUR BROTHERS, SISTERS, FRIENDS, AND FAMILY.
FOOD AND DRINKS PROVIDED.
PARKING IS FREE.
(TELL THE GUARD YOU ARE WITH THE AFL-CIO.)

APRIL 26, 2026 / 1-4 P.M.
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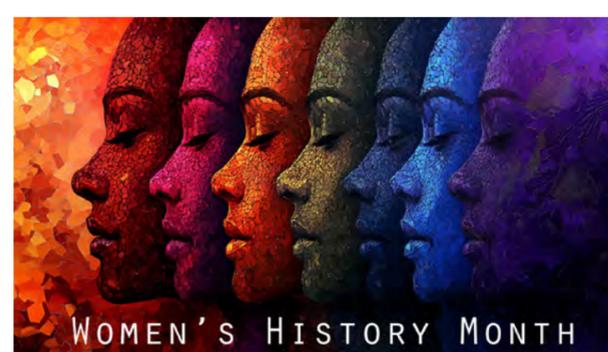
Women's Leadership Panel Discussion

Battle-shaped origins, inspiring leadership

By **DON MONCRIEF**
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AFGE's Women and Fair Practices department, in honor of Women's History Month, held a Women's Leadership Panel Discussion March 11. (Note: AFGE's Women's Department was established in 1974 with the mission, according to a WFP department release, of "improving the status of women and their families and to eliminate artificial barriers to the progress of women in government service.")

The panel discussion was opened by National Vice President Dr. Kendrick Roberson, who oversees the WFP department. "You're going to have a big powerhouse experience today," he summed



in his remarks. The discussion itself was moderated by Yvonne Renee Evans, Chair, National Human Rights Committee, National Fair Practices Affirmative Action Coordinators, AFGE District 7. "The women of AFGE, we are fortunate to have such power behind us and leading us in our force for this mission we've got going on. "And this is a time we need women in leadership. We've always been the backbone for a lot of things. I'm not just saying it as a woman, but I am saying it as a woman," she said.

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WR mayor talks accomplishments, vision in state of the city address

By **DON MONCRIEF**
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"American woman." That was the song playing – in perhaps a tribute to her tenacity – as Warner Robins Mayor LaRhonda Patrick took to the stage Wednesday at the Museum of Aviation to deliver the Warner Robins State of the City address. This marked its third year.

After thanking many, Patrick, now in her second term, highlighted some of the accomplishments she and the council had achieved this past year, "momentum making," as she described it. They included acquiring more than 70 percent of Commercial Circle as part of revitalization efforts – to include downtown hubs – honoring vets, she said, by naming a home for their memorial; establishing a lab for future engineers and establishing a "home of transition for those unhoused."

"These accomplishments represent more than just milestones," she said. "They reflect vision,

perseverance and what is possible when a community unites for a shared purpose.

She continued that one of the greatest transitions taking place was within city government where they were working hard to "strengthen communication and collaboration across departments across the city to achieve a joint mission. Today our team works more strategically, more cohesively than they ever have before," she said. "The unity, the feeling of progress you are noticing across our city today (is a result)."

She added: "If you think you've seen a lot in first term, buckle up. We've got a lot more coming your way."

Patrick transitioned from there to what she said would be talking about three topics: "Where we've been. Where we are and where we are going."

Where we've been included talking about challenges she inherited when she came into office in 2022. They included underpaid employees "at all levels," an understaffed police department

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Membership meeting

Local 987 will have a membership meeting March 19 at 5 p.m. It will be held at Union Hall, located at 1764 Watson Blvd. Membership will be verified. You can make updates to your contact information by calling Union Hall at 478-922-5758 or by emailing Linda Baxter at linda@afgelocal987.org or Jeanette McElhaney at jmac@afgelocal987.org.



Tiffany Gatewood, a 572nd Commodities Maintenance Squadron fabric worker, uses a double-needle sewing machine to sew seams together for an insulation blanket for a C-130 aircraft muffler assembly at Robins Air Force Base Dec. 9, 2025. The completed insulation blankets are used in aircraft to safeguard against extreme temperatures and mitigate fire risks. (U.S. Air Force photo by Joseph Mather)

WR-ALC Fabric Shop: stitching readiness

By **JOSEPH MATHER**
78th Air Base Wing
Public Affairs

Skilled fabric workers at the Warner Robins Air Logistics Complex, WR-ALC, at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, are the threads that hold crucial aircraft components together, ensuring readiness and lethality for the Air Force.

The 572nd Commodities Maintenance Squadron, or 572nd CMMXS, Fabric Shop operates as a critical component of the 402nd

Commodities Maintenance Group, producing a variety of specialized fabric items, primarily focusing on insulation blankets for airframes.

Roy Washington, a 572nd CMMXS Fabric Shop supervisor, said their efforts are often unseen but have a far-reaching impact.

“The Fabric Shop’s contributions extend to a range of aircraft platforms, including the C-130, C-5, F-15, KC-135, and C-17,” he said. “The work ensures proper insulation to safeguard against extreme temperatures and mitigate fire risks.”

Tiffany Gatewood, a 572nd CMMXS fabric worker, said the Fabric Shop plays a critical role in ensuring that aircraft and associated equipment are mission-ready and sustainable.

“We accomplish this through the repair, modification, and fabrication of essential components like insulation panels and sling assemblies,” said Gatewood. “It begins with a meticulous review of technical drawings, followed by precise measurement and cutting of materials, and culminates in the skillful sewing and assembly of the required components.”

A significant portion of their work directly supports the repair and overhaul of equipment that has sustained damage through operational wear and tear.

“A prime example is the fabrication of replacement insulation blankets,” said Gustav Meyer, a 572nd CMMXS fabric worker. “The work done on these aircraft directly contributes to their overall combat readiness and operational effectiveness.”

While dealing with challenges typical of depot maintenance operations when it comes to timely access to parts, Washington says his team remains dedicated to aircraft serviceability.

“I am exceptionally proud of my team’s commitment to providing outstanding support to aircraft and the warfighter,” he said. “Through their skill and dedication, the 572nd CMMXS Fabric Shop continues to be an essential contributor to the readiness and global sustainment of vital Air Force assets.”



Gustav Meyer, a 572nd Commodities Maintenance Squadron fabric worker, marks the proper measurements on interior insulation material to create a layout for a C-5 aircraft insulation panel at Robins Air Force Base Dec. 9, 2025. From the layout dimensions the fabric was trimmed to the correct form for a C-5 interior. (U.S. Air Force photo by Joseph Mather)

Warehouse Management System implemented at DLA Distribution WR

DLA Distribution
Public Affairs

NEW CUMBERLAND, Pa. -- Defense Logistics Agency Distribution officially implemented the Warehouse Management System at DLA Distribution Warner Robins, Georgia, Feb. 17, marking a significant milestone in their modernization efforts.

The go-live makes the site the first DLA Distribution Air Logistics Center to implement the new system and the 21 of 24 DLA Distribution sites to transition to the modern, SAP-based platform. Army Brig. Gen. Kevin Cotman, commanding general, DLA Distribution, and Joe Faris, acting deputy commander, DLA Distribution, were on-site to see the system in action and the hard work of the implementation and DLA Distribution Warner Robins, Georgia, team.

“This go-live is a testament to the incredible dedication of the entire Warner Robins team,” said Cotman. “Implementing a system of this scale, especially given the complexities of our Air Logistics Centers, required months of rigorous preparation, training, and collaboration. I am immensely proud of how the team rose to the challenge to make this a success.”

This go-live represents a crucial step in the final phase of the enterprise-wide rollout. Leading the effort on the ground was the DLA Distribution Warner Robins WMS Task Force, a



U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Kevin Cotman, right, commanding general, Defense Logistics Agency Distribution, Carl Veigle, center, DLA Information Operations deputy program executive officer, and Isheka Ellison, DLA Distribution Warner-Robins receiving branch chief, discuss the transition to a new system at DLA Distribution Warner-Robins at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, Feb. 20. DLA Distribution Warner-Robins went live with WMS in February after transitioning from the legacy Distribution Standard System. (U.S. Air Force photo by Lauren Boggs)

dedicated group responsible for ensuring a smooth transition.

“One unique challenge at Warner Robins is that we were operating in an environment that spanned two DLA Major Subordinate Commands, DLA Distribution and DLA Weapons Support,” said Air Force Maj. Nicole Torres, DLA Distribution Warner Robins WMS Task Force lead. “This has required personnel to be split across more buildings to ensure proper support is provided. Additionally, as we continue to go through

the process, we have identified SOPs that require development for the ALCs to ensure there is standardization among the ALCs on how to properly capture unique processes, that have not been integrated into WMS for previous sites.”

The transition to WMS is a key component of DLA’s broader digital transformation, designed to standardize operations, take advantage of industry best practices, and enhance auditability. As a cornerstone of this

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BBB alert: Beware of traffic citation scams

Receiving a notice about an unpaid traffic ticket can be alarming. Unfortunately, scammers know this and are increasingly using fake traffic citation notices to pressure consumers into paying fines that don’t actually exist. The Better Business Bureau is warning consumers to be cautious if they receive unexpected messages claiming they owe money for a traffic violation.

Traffic citation scams typically arrive by text message, email, or automated phone call. The message often claims that you have an unpaid ticket, toll violation, or citation and warns that immediate action is required to avoid serious consequences. These consequences may include additional fines, license suspension, vehicle registration holds, or even arrest warrants.

The message usually includes a link directing you to a payment website or a phone number to call to resolve the issue. However, these links often lead to fraudulent websites designed to collect your credit card information or personal details, such as your driver’s license number.

How the Scam Works

Scammers rely on urgency and fear to convince victims to act quickly without verifying the claim. A typical scam follows these steps:

First, the consumer receives an unexpected message stating that they have an unpaid traffic ticket or toll violation. The message may appear to come from a local police department, court system, or department of motor vehicles. In some cases, scammers use technology to spoof official phone numbers or agency names, making the message appear legitimate.



Kelvin Collins

Next, the message warns that failure to pay immediately will result in penalties such as late fees, license suspension, or legal action. This pressure is intended to make recipients panic and pay quickly.

Finally, the message includes a link to a website where the consumer is instructed to pay the fine. These sites may look convincing and include official-looking logos or government language. Once a victim enters payment information, scammers can steal funds and potentially use the personal information for identity theft.

Red Flags to Watch For

There are several warning signs that a traffic citation notice may be a scam:

You receive a text message demanding immediate payment for a traffic violation.

The notice contains a link to an unfamiliar payment website.

The message uses threatening language about license suspension or arrest if payment isn’t made immediately.

The sender requests payment through gift cards, wire transfers, cryptocurrency, or payment apps.

The notice does not include official court documentation or instructions for verifying the citation.

Government agencies rarely send traffic ticket

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Medal of Honor spotlight

Lt. Col. Harold Arthur Fritz

By **KATIE LANGE**
DoD News

When his platoon was faced with impossible odds during an ambush in Vietnam, Army Lt. Col. Harold Arthur Fritz didn’t hesitate to do everything he could to save his fellow soldiers and stave off the enemy. He miraculously survived the fight. His bravery and actions that day earned him the Medal of Honor.

Fritz was born Feb. 21, 1944, in Chicago; however, by 1949, his parents moved him and his younger brother, Terrence, to Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, where Fritz grew up fishing, hunting and participating in the Boy Scouts. He wrestled, played baseball and was active in the National FFA Organization at Badger High School before graduating in 1962. Fritz’s high school principal once referred to him as a reliable teen who everyone expected to succeed.

By age 21, Fritz was working on an education degree at the University of Tampa while working in a factory to support his high school sweetheart-turned-wife, Mary Ellen, who was pregnant with their first child, Kimberly. In a Library of Congress Veterans History Project interview in the early 2000s, Fritz said he received a draft notice after dropping a few classes to pick up more hours at work. With his daughter’s upcoming birth, he decided it would be better for the family if he enlisted instead, so he did so in April 1966.

Shortly after starting his military journey, Fritz was accepted into officer candidate school. After graduating, he was assigned to the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment.

Fritz was deployed to Vietnam in January 1968. He had nearly finished his year-long deployment when, as a platoon leader for Troop A of the 11th’s 1st Squadron, he



Lt. Col. Harold Arthur Fritz

took charge during a firefight that would change his life.

On Jan. 11, 1969, then-1st Lt. Fritz was leading a seven-vehicle armored column south along a highway away from the Quan Loi Army base in South Vietnam to meet and escort a convoy of trucks. Out of nowhere, they were ambushed by about 270 North Vietnamese soldiers positioned along the route. The column didn’t even have time to move off the road before Fritz’s vehicle was hit, seriously wounding him.

Despite his injuries, Fritz quickly realized the platoon was surrounded, outnumbered and in danger of being overrun. So, he leapt onto his burning vehicle and began repositioning the two dozen men who could still fight and the remaining vehicles to give the platoon a chance at survival.

“You don’t have time to think about yourself,” Fritz told the Veterans History Project. “You’ve got to remember you have to survive long enough to get your people out of there.”

Without regard for his own safety, Fritz then ran from vehicle to vehicle, completely exposed, to continue repositioning men and improve their defenses. He helped the wounded, passed out ammunition, directed fire at the enemy and encouraged the few men who were left to continue the

fight. At one point, Fritz grabbed a machine gun and went to work, which inspired his fellow soldiers to deliver deadly fire that broke the assault and caused the attackers to flee.

However, minutes later, a second enemy force moved to within 7 feet of their position, again threatening to overwhelm the platoon. Armed with only a pistol and bayonet, Fritz led a small group of soldiers in a charge that inflicted heavy casualties and again pushed the attackers back.

“When the odds are the greatest, then you’ve got to be the most daring in what you do to turn them around,” Fritz said. “That’s what happened.”

A relief force eventually arrived, but Fritz noticed it wasn’t effectively deployed, so he moved through heavy enemy fire to redirect their positioning, which ultimately forced the enemy to abandon the ambush altogether and withdraw.

“The North Vietnamese found we were a little tougher [of a] force than they thought,” Fritz told the Veterans History Project.

Fritz waited to get medical attention until all his wounded comrades had been treated and evacuated. Only then did he allow himself to be helicoptered to a hospital, where he was treated for shrapnel in his neck and back and a few gunshot wounds. Fritz, who was a smoker at the time, said a Zippo lighter from his wife that was stored in his left breast pocket actually stopped one of the rifle rounds.

“If it had not been there, it probably would have hit me in the heart and killed me,” Fritz recalled. “Not that I’m advocating smoking, but had I not been a smoker at that particular point in time, maybe I wouldn’t be here to tell the story.”

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THE UNION ADVOCATE

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KNOW

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TRUTH: If Weingarten applies and you request representation, management generally must either (1) grant the request, (2) end the questioning, or (3) offer you the choice to continue without a rep. Simply asserting the right isn't misconduct. MYTH: "Grievances are just complaining." TRUTH: A grievance is a formal method to enforce the contract and ensure fair treatment. It's paperwork with purpose.

Big one: "The union must represent me no matter what" - fact vs. fiction

This topic gets people confused, so let's make it plain.

FICTION: "The union must represent every bargaining unit employee in every forum, even if they're not a dues-paying member."

FACT: In the federal sector, the union has representational duties to the bargaining unit in many situations, but not all forums are the same, and your MLA may place limits on the union's obligation to represent non-members in certain statutory (law-based) appeal forums. (MLA, Article 3, Section 3.02 (UNION RIGHTS) states: "It is recognized that the Union has no obligation to represent non-Union members for: a. EO complaints b. proposed disciplinary

- actions
c. MSPB appeals
d. workers compensation appeals
e. unemployment hearings
f. classification appeals
g. any other situations where statutory appeals are available

What that means in real life:

- If you're not a union member, the union may not be required to represent you in certain statutory forums (like MSPB, EEO/EO processes, workers' comp appeals, unemployment hearings, classification appeals, and similar processes).
Those forums often function more like external legal processes with strict deadlines, formal filings, and separate rules.
The union can still

provide general guidance and may still assist depending on resources and circumstances, but contract language says there is "no obligation" to represent non-members in those listed areas. Why this matters: Don't gamble your case based on a rumor. If an issue is headed toward MSPB, EEO/EO, OWCP appeals, etc., you want to know early what representation options you have so you don't lose on deadlines.

Practical "do this, not that"

When something feels off:

- Do write down dates, times, who said what, and keep copies of emails/texts/instructions.
Do ask: "Is this meet-

ing investigatory? Could it lead to discipline?"
Do clearly say: "I am requesting union representation."
Don't guess your way through a management interview.
Don't sign anything you don't understand without reading it.
When management changes a process:
Do save the announcement/email.
Do note what changed and how it impacts employees (schedule, overtime, duties, safety, training, evaluation).
Don't assume "it's final" just because it's announced.

Why "fact over fiction" matters
Rumors are cheap.

Rights are not. The fastest way to lose a right is to never use it—because people convince themselves they don't have it.
A union isn't a magic wand. It's a tool: contract + law + documentation + representation. When employees know the rules, the workplace gets more predictable, more fair, and frankly less exhausting.

Quick disclaimer

This article is general educational information about federal labor-management rights and the negotiated agreement and is not legal advice. For guidance about a specific situation, contact your steward/union office as soon as possible.

DISCUSSION

From page 1

finding the humor in what she had said. "I'm just thankful so much we have such wonderful women here with us (on the panel)." She continued she had the "honor" of providing remarks on women in labor, those who had led the way. With that, she provided a short history that included remarks on pioneers such as: Abigail Adams, wife of John Adams the second president of the U.S.; Elizabeth Cady Stanton, writer and activist during the mid-late 19th Century and founder of the first women's rights convention; Susan B. Anthony, cofounder of the National Woman Suffrage Foundation; Mary Harris Jones, one of the most famous labor female activists of 19th Century, Evans said; Addie Wyatt, a union member who broke gender and racial barriers in the Coalition of Black Trade Unions; Dolores Huerta, a member of AFGE and founder of the National Farm Workers Association and Andrea Brooks and Augusta Thomas. "I know for a fact there would not have been a Women's and Fair Practices (department) without these two women," Evans said. Brooks was first NVP for WFP and served as executive council for the AFL-CIO. She also led AFGE "successfully" in its vot-

ers protection campaign. Thomas was NVP for WFP. She also established the Young Organizing Unionists for the Next Generation program, the PRIDE program and "many more (programs)," Evans said. Guests for the panel included Christine Surette, NVP for District 4, Tatishka Thomas, NVP for District 5, Diana Hicks, NVP for District 9 and Cheryl Eliano, NVP for District 10. Evans began with a question for each: To think and describe the specific moment "heaven shaped you as a leader or activist today?" Surette said it was "a lot", but one that stood out was having a manager in the department where she worked who was changing work conditions negatively and ignoring progressive discipline. Enough that she was able to convince those in her chain to launch a fact-finding mission, and from that supervisors were written up for all of the violations of the contract and the manager was demoted and removed. Thomas said what "actually shaped my passion to move," was her performance. Her supervisor, she said, decided she was "not successful enough." She was like, "I knew I was doing way more than just being 'successful enough'." She went in, argued and proved her point, she said, to the point of getting her rating changed. "That's why I have a passion to

always speak up for the person who was actually treated wrong. Who was not being treated unfairly. And that their ratings weren't being done the way it was supposed to be. That's what actually started me and keeps me going. "I don't like it when anybody's being done wrong. It's what started the fire and keeps the fire going." Hicks said she was going to switch things up. She recalled a moment that made her a "better leader," but it was due to making "a really bad choice" when she was a leader on a team. "A lot of you ladies recall my story," she said. It was when she took over at the Veterans Administration, under "less than desirable conditions. The president had embezzled over eighty thousand (dollars). The whole team quit. I had two stewards when I took over. I put a team together. For the first year and a half we had over eight million in grievances for back pay. We were negotiating. We were going to prove to members that we were going to be a union. Preparing for negotiations, if you can imagine the heaviness that's going on while this is going on. "Well, while we were making proposals, there was someone on my team who was really getting on my nerves. He kept blurting out stuff. Kept making horrible examples. I really don't know how to explain it, and I got so mad, and I'm going to cuss so you can know the clar-

ity of my mistake. I looked at him and said, 'You need to shut the (expletive) up and get out of here. "I saw his face, right? He crumbled when I said that. I knew in that moment I had made a mistake. I was like 30, still young to being somewhat confident as to who I am as a person. "And that night. It sat on me all night. I called him the next day and went to the union office and I called the whole team in there and I apologized for that and said he didn't deserve that. I could have kept it at you know, 'You can go ahead and leave if you're going to be like this. But it was a learning moment for me because we had worked so hard and I didn't want my team to ever feel like that, that I would be that disrespectful to them again. "And we killed it. We won that grievance. We got what we wanted in those negotiations, so just a moment of learning how to be a better leader." Eliano said her revelation came when she became the president of a local that was in chaos. The local was divided, she said, and it and management didn't have a good relationship. "There were a lot of people who were angry," she said. "They were upset about the previous administration, so I learned if I was going to be the leader they needed, I was going to have to lead in front. I could not lead behind. "So that's what I did. I had to lead in

front. God knows I know how to pray so there was a lot of that. I learned then that what leadership is really about as a local president because I had to at least convince this group of folks that I was going to take them in another direction so that we could move as a successful local. "And it worked. We built one of the best partnerships in Fort Hood in the federal government. That's when I realized I had to be the leader out front for the labor movement." The evening continued with a number of questions. What does it take to become an effective leader. Why is women's representation in leadership so important? Who is one person or mentor you looked up to or who inspired or shaped you to be a part of the union? What barriers still exist in the workplace? Have they changed or remain the same? Those listening in were also able to offer up a couple of questions for the panel. (Note: Due to the quality of the information provided, you can read about many of their answers in a follow up article in our April 8 issue.) There was also - the event lasted a little over an hour and a half - an announcement about a couple of Women's History Month events: March 26, 7-8 p.m., the women's veterans webinar and March 31, 7-8:30 p.m. Kaiser Permanente will present a webinar on women's health. Visit afge.org for more information on those.

STATE

From page 1

and understaffed fire department. "We inherited an IRS audit," she went on, had outdated computers and outdated software. "Our technology just wasn't up with the times," she said. There was no plan for "downtown," she continued, homelessness was growing and the city had only one event for people to attend: Independence day. "We worked hard," she said. "It felt like we (the council and her) were sprinting to make our first strides." Progress, she continued, was "where we are today." They resolved an "unprecedented"

tax lien. They caught up on all audits, doing the "impossible," she said, completing two in one year. "Getting us off the naughty list and off the naught list we will stay." They decommissioned old computers and obtained licenses for new software and technology; moved to cloud-based, "into the 21st Century," Patrick said. In addition, there were "historic" raises - ranging from 5 to 35 percent, with the majority getting the latter, she said - to the "heartbeat" of the staff. They also began tearing down buildings in the Commercial Circle area and increased recruitment and retention of public safety officials; the police department saw an increase of 24.5 percent and the fire department is now 100

percent manned, she said. And the city had up to 26 events but has now settled into 22. There were "major wins" in public safety. The city built a crime center and the fire department had an individual receive the fireman of the year award for the state and another receive the rookie of the year award for the state. The city also celebrated the ribbon cutting for Haven Hope House, "and now we have a place where the unhoused can reach and transform their lives and be better citizens from whatever town they came from." She also mentioned the Vietnam Veteran Memorial, the city's new website and its app. As far as "where we're going,"

Patrick said one thing that would continue to be a priority would be to "excellence in service." There are also plans to update parks. For example, she said Peavy Park, would be 100 percent renovated while it will also continue to house Warner Robins National Little League - creating an "on demand" transit service and improvements will be coming to Perkins Park. "Walking pads, water pads, a small amphitheater, a renovated civic center, a new activity center, all these possibilities right there, right next to City Hall at Perkins Park," she said. "It's almost like an Uber, but it's a shuttle, so we're working on some ideas for that, to bring it here to Warner

Robins," she said. "Other counties surrounding Houston County has an option for transit, and we don't, and now is the time to change that." Traffic solutions are also on the radar, to include creating an "on demand" transit service. Phase developments will of course continue for downtown residential and commercial areas between Commercial Circle and Armed Forces Blvd. "So we're going to be developing concepts on what living downtown could look like," she said. "We're going to be developing concepts of what kind of commercial spaces can come there as we continue to renovate, grow and build on the vision for a better downtown network."

SCAMS

From page 2

notices through text messages with payment links. How to Protect Yourself If you receive a message claiming you owe money for a traffic citation, take a moment to verify the information before responding. Avoid clicking links in unexpected messages or emails. Instead, navigate to the agency's website manually through your browser. Contact the court or agency directly using the official phone number listed on its website. Many courts and law enforcement agencies provide online systems that allow you to look up citations using your name, driver's license number, or ticket number. Consumers should also remember that legitimate government agencies typically allow payment through secure online portals, mail, or in person, not through unusual payment methods like gift cards or cryptocurrency. What to Do if You Paid a Scammer If you believe you have fallen victim to a traffic citation scam, act quickly. Contact your bank or credit card company to report the fraudulent charge and request that the transaction be stopped if possible. Monitor your financial accounts closely for suspicious activity. You should also report the scam to BBB Scam Tracker, which helps warn others and allows law enforcement agencies to identify emerging fraud trends. Stay Informed Scammers constantly adapt their tactics, often impersonating trusted organizations to make their messages appear convincing. Staying informed and verifying unexpected requests for payment can help you avoid becoming a victim. If you receive a suspicious traffic citation notice, take the time to confirm it before taking action. A few minutes of verification can help protect your finances and personal information.

HONOR

From page 2

He said that lighter is one of the few items he brought back with him from Vietnam in March 1969. By early 1971, Fritz was serving at Fort Lewis, Washington, preparing for a move to Fort Benning, Georgia, when he got a call notifying him that he would be receiving the Medal of Honor. "At first, it was disbelief," Fritz said of the call. "It takes a while for it to really sink in." On March 2, 1971, then-Capt. Fritz received the nation's highest medal for valor from President Richard M. Nixon during a White House ceremony. Five other soldiers and one Marine also received the medal that day. "It was really overwhelming," Fritz later said of the honor. "I feel very humble and proud to be a recipient." By then, Fritz's family had expanded to include two sons, Christopher and Jeffrey. Fritz continued in the military and eventually returned to school to complete his degree in 1975, according to the University of Tampa. Fritz retired as a lieutenant colonel in 1993 after nearly 28 years of service. Since then, he has taken part in several veteran-related events and attends speaking engagements with student groups to talk about the Medal of Honor and what it means to be a recipient. "I try to tell people the important job that the military plays in keeping this country safe," he told the Veterans History Project. Fritz's name is well-known among military circles. As recently as 2015, he was president of the Congressional Medal of Honor Society. In November 2024, the Peoria County, Illinois, Veterans Assistance Commission was officially named in his honor. Fritz Field at Fort Irwin, California, also bears his name.

SYSTEM

From page 2

strategy, WMS moves DLA beyond legacy platforms into an interconnected, data-driven ecosystem, providing real-time visibility and traceability of inventory. This shift is critical for enhancing support to the warfighter in an increasingly complex global logistics environment. The new system equips the DLA workforce with powerful tools for data-driven decisions, enabling logisticians to anticipate disruptions and optimize warehouse performance. "With WMS, we are not just upgrading our

technology, we are fundamentally enhancing our support to the warfighter," said Faris. "The real-time inventory visibility and streamlined processes this system provides will allow us to be more agile and responsive, ensuring we can deliver the right material, at the right time, every time." The DLA Distribution enterprise-wide WMS implementation began with a pilot in 2018 and has since expanded across Army, Navy, and Marine Corps support sites. With Warner Robins now online, the final ALC phase will continue with rollouts at DLA Distribution Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and DLA Distribution Hill, Utah. A non-ALC site, DLA Richmond, Virginia, will implement WMS in April.

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.
AFGE Y.O.U.N.G.
AFGE
Human Rights

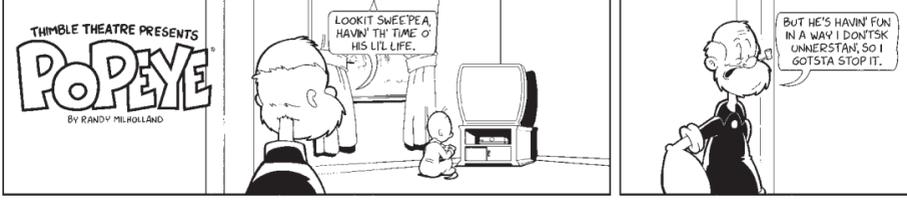
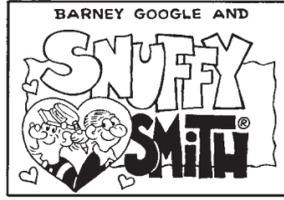
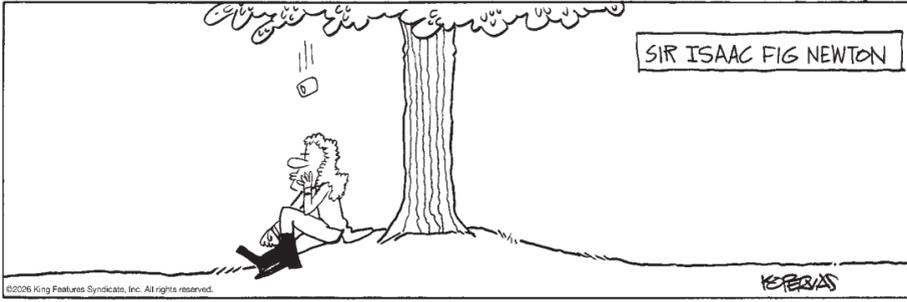
fun

Amber Waves



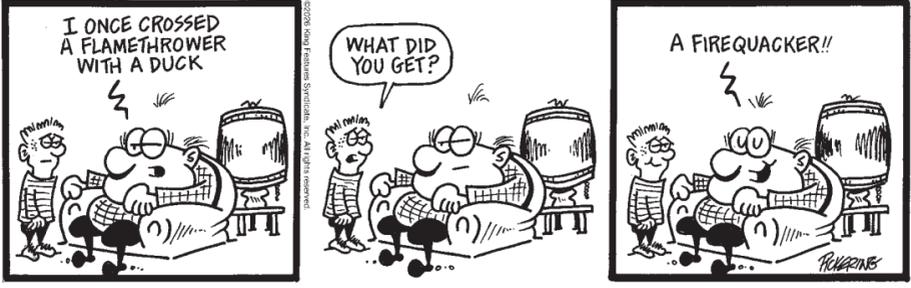
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



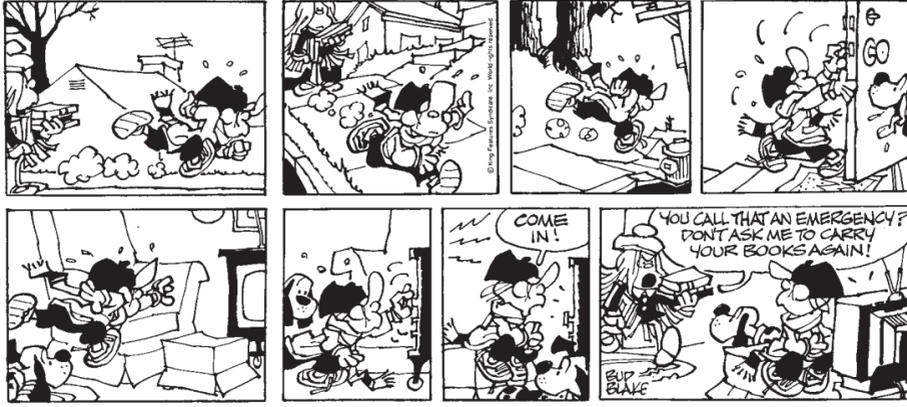
The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



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GRIN & BEAR IT

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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.

+	+	= 10						
+	+	+						
+	÷	= 2						
+	+	÷						
-	-	= 1						
=	=	=						
14	17	6						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

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9	17	14			
=	=	=			
1	2	3	6		
÷	+	+			
2	8	÷	9	+	7
+	+	+	+	+	
10	4	+	5	+	1

answers

Go Figure!

CryptoQuip

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

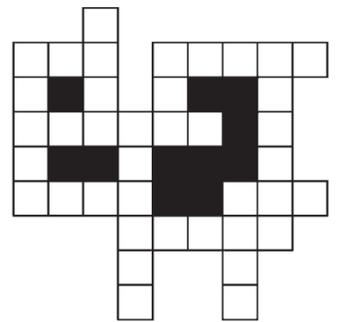
Clue: R equals H

IONYGBM YFPNYC CNQT GT
 QRGWR FJFYXENBX ONJFP
 PGTZGTZ PMWYFB RXLTP NI
 DYMGPFF: DPMOL EFMWR.

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FEAR & KNIGHT

By: rj johnson



- OJY
- TANIRU
- HERTI
- ♥OYRG
- NANEMP
- AUT
- DOUJ
- NYROA
- ♥GRA
- NOYEMP
- MYJPU
- ♥UTNR

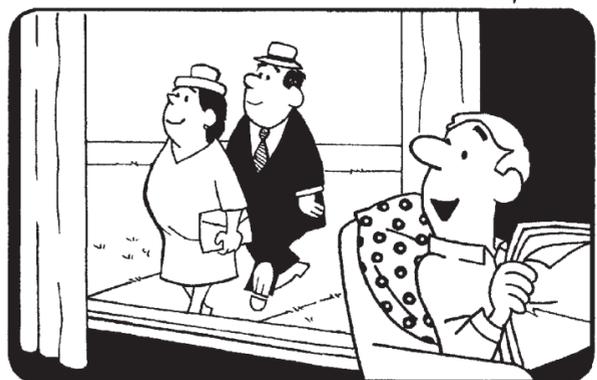
Unscramble these twelve letter strings to form each into an ordinary word (ex. HAGNEC becomes CHANGE). Prepare to use only ONE word from any marked (♥) letter string as each unscrambles into more than one word (ex. ♥RATHE becomes HATER or EARTH or HEART). Fit each string's word either across or down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

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTIHOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Page is added to newspaper. 2. Hat is smaller. 3. Arm is shorter. 4. Pillow is different. 5. Cuff is added to sleeve. 6. Curtain is not as wide.



answer

FEAR & KNIGHT

Florida resort town in which everybody loves singing sacred hymns of praise: Psalm Beach

ANSWER

CryptoQuip

WALK MORE TO STRESS LESS

Get Moving to Improve Well-Being

FEATURE IMPACT

More than 10 years ago, a mere five words frightened desk jockeys everywhere: “sitting is the new smoking.” Still, many people across the U.S. are walking less than they used to. Long days spent sitting can take a toll over time, negatively impacting bodies and minds.

Research from the American Heart Association shows 1 in 4 adults in the United States sits for longer than 8 hours each day, leading to an increased risk of cardiovascular disease, obesity, Type 2 diabetes, certain cancers and premature death.

Feeling stretched by the demands of everyday life is common. However, simply adding just 20 minutes of daily physical activity may reduce the risk of disease and improve mental health, according to research published in “JAMA Internal Medicine.” Additionally, being physically active reaps many benefits down the road. It keeps your mind sharp as you age; studies show higher levels of fitness are linked to better attention, learning, working memory and problem solving. It also slashes risk of depression and boosts an all-around sense of joy.



Photos courtesy of Shutterstock

Research continues to show physical activity, like walking, reduces stress, boosts mood and promotes overall well-being. This year, in honor of National Walking Day – created by the American Heart Association more than 10 years ago to encourage more movement throughout the day and help people live longer, healthier lives, one step at a time – consider these ideas to get your body moving to help lower stress, improve sleep, lift your mood and support both mental and physical health.

Step into the Great Outdoors

Slipping on a pair of comfortable walking shoes and heading outside is a simple way to get more movement in your life. Walking outside has the added benefits of helping reduce stress, improving mood and boosting cardiovascular health. Sunshine also provides a boost of vitamin D and immune support.

Make It Fun

Think of movement as something you give yourself, by moving more your way. When you choose activities you enjoy, it becomes easier to make them part of your day. If you can't find 20 minutes for a walk outside, even short bursts of movement can help. Walking in place at a brisk pace, walking up and down the stairs in your home, finding a quick dance workout online or even seated exercises and stretch breaks throughout the day can help you feel more refreshed and ready to take on everyday tasks, like cooking and running errands.

Walk with a Furry Friend

Pets can be a great motivator to get moving. Plus, taking your furry friend for a stroll can support heart health, lower stress and boost overall happiness. In fact, a study published in the “Journal of Physical Activity and

Health” shows dog owners are 34% more likely to reach their fitness goals and get the recommended amount of physical activity than those who don't have a dog. Walking with your pet can also lead to more social connection, such as meeting neighbors or other pet owners.

Pound the Pavement with a Pal

Walking solo can be good for introspection, but bringing a friend, family member or coworker can make the time pass more quickly and add connection to your routine. Explore a greenway, waterfront or indoor mall for a fresh way to get some steps. If a loved one isn't available to join you, make a phone call while you walk or take a meeting or conference call outdoors if your work allows it.

Every step counts. Visit Heart.org/movemore for more tips to get moving.



Whip up honey-glazed salmon for a fast, nutritious supper

Photo and story by
Donna Erickson
King Features Syndicates

Shopping for salmon at your local fish market or grocery store can be a real-life geography lesson for your kids, so be sure to take them along. Alaska, Maine, Chile, Norway -- the places of origin read like a world atlas as you check out the signs and labels. Spin a globe when you get home and discover together where your dinner was swimming.

Besides sharpening geography skills, this good-for-you fish that is rich in heart-healthy omega 3 fatty acids, vitamins and minerals is also super easy to prepare. All this makes a family hungry!

Here's our favorite recipe, made with a sweet honey glaze that young sous chefs can stir up. Top with chopped nuts or herbs from your garden and roast in a hot oven while the table is being set, napkins are getting slipped into rings, and beverages are being poured.

HONEY-GLAZED ROASTED SALMON FILLETS

Serves 4
-- 4 salmon fillets, about 6 ounces each
-- 1/4 cup olive oil
-- 2 tablespoons honey
-- Salt, to taste
-- 4 tablespoons chopped pecans, or 1 tablespoon coarsely chopped fresh rosemary and 1 tablespoon coarsely chopped fresh thyme
-- 2 lemons, cut into wedges or thin slices

Preheat oven to 425 F. Line a baking sheet with foil and spray with cooking spray. Place salmon fillets skin-side down on the prepared sheet. Sprinkle with salt.

Pour olive oil and honey into a small bowl and stir to combine well. Spoon the mixture generously over the fillets. Press the nuts on top, or sprinkle with herbs.

Bake in the oven until completely cooked through, about 10-15 minutes, or until fish flakes readily with the tip of a fork. Use a spatula to transfer

fish to dinner plates.

Serve hot over salad greens that have been tossed with a light vinaigrette and topped with thin lemon slices, or set a lemon wedge to the side.

Extra “Peachy” Idea: As spring approaches, serve with fresh grilled peaches for a tasty, sweet, modern side.

To prepare, cut 2 almost-ripe peaches in half. Let kids remove the pits and brush the cut sides with the honey and olive oil mixture before coating the salmon.

Spray a grill pan with cooking spray and place the halves cut-side down on medium heat on your stove for 5-7 minutes, or until grill marks appear. Flip over to rounded side for an additional minute. Set on dinner plates with salmon and salad.

Donna Erickson creates relationships and community through food and fun. Find more to nourish and delight you at www.donnaerickson.com.

Don't waste a single bite: How one chicken becomes many meals

Photo and story by
Patti Diamond
King Features
Syndicate

A roast chicken in the refrigerator is more than leftovers. It's opportunity. Whether store-bought or roasted at home, that single bird can become the foundation for several meals with very little effort. Instead of serving it all at once, think of it as an ingredient to use gradually over several days.

Start by removing every remaining morsel of meat from the bones once the first meal is finished. Store it in a covered container in the refrigerator, along with any pan juices to keep it moist.

Cooked chicken is the most versatile ingredient to have on hand. It can be added to salads, folded into wraps, stirred into rice or pasta, or combined with vegetables for a quick skillet meal. Because it's already cooked, these meals come together in minutes.

After the meat is gone, don't toss those bones! They're so valuable. We're going to use them to make a rich broth.

CHICKEN BONE BROTH

Yield: 3 quarts
Total Time: 2 to 8 hours, 5 minutes
Bones from one or more chickens
1 cup each celery and carrots, roughly chopped
3 cloves garlic, smashed
1 onion, quartered with skin
1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
Salt and pepper
Place all ingredients in a stock pot and cover with 12



cups water. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a bare simmer for 2 to 8 hours. Strain, reserving the broth. Season with salt and pepper. Refrigerate up to 1 week or freeze up to 3 months.

Traditionally, avgolemono begins with a whole chicken and homemade broth, a process Greek yiayias have perfected over generations. The finished soup is silky and velvety, thickened with eggs and lemon rather than cream.

Now, I don't want to step on anybody's yiayia's toes, but this weeknight version uses some handy shortcuts: prepared broth, leftover chicken and cooked rice. When these are on hand, avgolemono comes together in about 25 minutes, giving new life to yesterday's chicken. The result is light yet satisfying, especially welcome as we edge lethargically, almost imperceptibly, toward spring.

AVGOLEMONO SOUP (GREEK LEMON CHICKEN SOUP)
Yield: 4 servings
Total Time: 25 minutes
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 medium yellow onion,

finely diced
1 cup celery, finely chopped
Salt and pepper, to taste
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
6 cups low-sodium chicken broth
2 bay leaves
2 to 3 cups cooked chicken, shredded
2 cups cooked rice
2 large eggs
1/2 cup lemon juice
Lemon zest (optional)
Fresh parsley and lemon slices (optional)

Heat olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add onion and celery, season with salt and pepper, and saute 3 to 5 minutes until softened. Add garlic and cook 1 minute.

Add broth, bay leaves, chicken and rice. Bring to a gentle simmer and cook 10 minutes.

In a bowl, whisk eggs and lemon juice and zest. Very slowly, whisk in one ladle of hot broth, then another to temper the eggs. Stir the tempered mixture into the soup and remove from heat immediately. Taste, adjust seasoning, and serve hot.