



"It only takes one freaking grain of sand to stop the semitruck of right and just. Simply put, one person who does not want to remove that moron they shouldn't have given the job to in the first place allows that injustice to stand."
 - AFGE Local 987 Full-time Steward Sam Berry

Beached! How 'one grain of sand' erodes it all

By **SAM BERRY**
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Sam Berry

So, I started this article with the intention of writing about upcoming midterms for appraisals but something else rubbed me wrong this morning so I was forced to change gears and send a different message. However, if you want to help yourself with your appraisal, let me say a few words ...

Institutionally, we continue to struggle with the appraisal of employees. It's laughable when you think about it. I cannot think of one single supervisor that has accomplished any mission alone. Whatever is accomplished in maintenance and elsewhere is accomplished "collectively".

However, the appraisal system continues to fail our members. You ask how? The answer: Managers do not follow well-established policies and procedures. When they don't practice what is preached or if they're not being held accountable for an abject failure to follow "mandatory" guidelines, what is a member to think or feel? The Agency's actions engender disappointment, distrust and cynicism among our members. Their lack of knowledge, or willful failure to adhere to the most basic guidelines, imbues a disgruntled workforce. Until we overcome this deplorable mendacity, employees will never believe in this system.

It has been my pleasure to represent our members in far too many arbitrations where the arrogance of the labor office to assume that supervisors are following the guidance and/or, at the very least, are being truthful. I represent our members in utter disgust when labor and the supervisors attempt to defend the indefen-

sible.

I beg the question: Why do employees dislike and distrust the appraisal system and their supervisors? It's because supervisors do not rate them objectively in marginalizing their performance. There is a contaminated stench in the rating process that can be smelt across the entire installation. This contamination of the rating process produces the fruit of perceived and genuine unfairness in the rating process. Representation of you is what I do. And I might add, we are winning.

First, provide your supervisor with feedback as it relates to your "Performance Plan." The Performance Plan is ALL that you can be rated on ... the specific (rarely) standards and expectations that the supervisor gave you on day one of the appraisal cycle.

I know it talks about speed and performance and safety and some other crap, but let's just keep this simple. It is more than likely "general" (not specific) in the sense it says something like: have more than three and less than five of whatever. Appropriate feedback would say you had four of whatever. Just an example. Your feedback should mirror what they want from you.

Most importantly is to

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Cheering for the workers

By **HENRY BROWN**
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Henry Brown

I think the tenor of the time is that people are cheering for the workers and unions.

It has been a long time coming. There is a rising tide of "union pride" in our communities nationally and locally, in particular for the latter with the unionization of Blue Bird. It was in and of itself a watershed moment in the labor movement, but I'd say that unions in general have exceptional bargaining powers.

That is: A strong, active, union in the workplace - where the workforce pulls together to make a real difference is the only way we can improve the working conditions in the workplace.

How? It all begins with your

respective shop steward where we work to address issues impacting the workforce in the workplace through a montage of representation processes.

I dare say that the process includes but is not limited to filing a grievance (913) which is generally defined as a claim by an employee that he or she is

adversely affected by the misinterpretation or misapplication of the Master Labor Agreement.

The individual grievance is a right and must not be interfered with by anyone in your chain or other managers. By law you must be free from any kind of harassment resulting from exercising a right in the workplace.

There are members who have an abject fear of filing grievances and suffer in silence as a result of fearing retaliation from supervisors. There are those in management who would tell you that is simply not the truth - as rightly they should; and of course you will always hear that from us - and employees are free to address their concerns through the grievance process.

Stewards. You serve a purpose in every organization to which you are assigned to. Make yourself known in your

workplace.

A good steward is many things. An organizer, a negotiator, a counselor, a peace maker and a good troublemaker. However, there are certain things that a steward must avoid at all costs. That is: Failing to fairly represent our members. Failing to fairly represent our members can leave the Local open to complaints filed through the Department of Labor and the Federal Labor Relations Authority. Those filings undermine the whole purpose of the union and the very idea of solidarity.

Every grievance must be weighed on its own merit, regardless of whom it is filed by or the issue that has prompted the filing of the grievance. You must not compromise yourself as a steward.

See CHEERING, page 3

Local holds 'local' training

By **DON MONCRIEF**
 Editor, The Union Advocate
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There's general training and then there's specific, detailed training.

The training the AFGE National Office is an example of the first (although arguably they try to make it as detailed and applicable to the field as possible). The training AFGE Local 987 members received this past week - Sept. 25-29 - is an example of "specific,

detailed" training.

"The reason we had the training we had," explained AFGE Local 987 President Marion Williams. "The difference between ours and theirs, is that this was geared at what we do at Warner Robins (obviously on Robins AFB)."

The distinction is important, Williams continued, because: "This base leads most Unions in grievances based on its size. Meaning, we'll do more in a month than they do in day and

age.

"Arbitrations," he continued. "We do more in a year than some of them will do in 10 years. An example. Eglin. Eglin will do one arbitration, maybe two in a year. We're in excess of 200 that we work with. That we have scheduled. We go through. Sam (Berry) had 254 this year. He's a good ways through that, but our numbers are like that.

"We go to these National trainings, they know who we are because we just lead

on so much of everything. EEO's (Equal Employment Opportunity's). We made up at one point 62 percent of the entire Air Force in EEO complaints. That's the entire Air Force. You look at that in perspective, the Air Force has one hundred and seventy eight thousand people. Robins has twenty three thousand."

Merit System Protection Board complaints were the same, he said, and on it went, emphasizing once again why this particular week of training was so important.



AFGE Local 987 stewards listen to instruction during the training held this past week at Union Hall. (AFGE Local 987 photo/Don Moncrief)

It began on Monday with Williams providing an "overview", first getting an introduction from everybody, he said, then finding out what their level of experience was. The vast majority - minus a few "old hands" - had less than four months of experience. He also began to break down the Master Labor Agreement, really, he said, preparing them for the second day when Tom Muther, of Minahan, Muther, Klinger, P.C. - the law firm contracted by AFGE Local 987 - would go further into detail from there. "The real aspects of it," Williams said. "These are the statutes that govern us. These are what our contract says. EEOs. MSPBs. Muther continued along that path for the next three days.

See TRAINING, page 6

Workplace bullying: From vulgar to violent

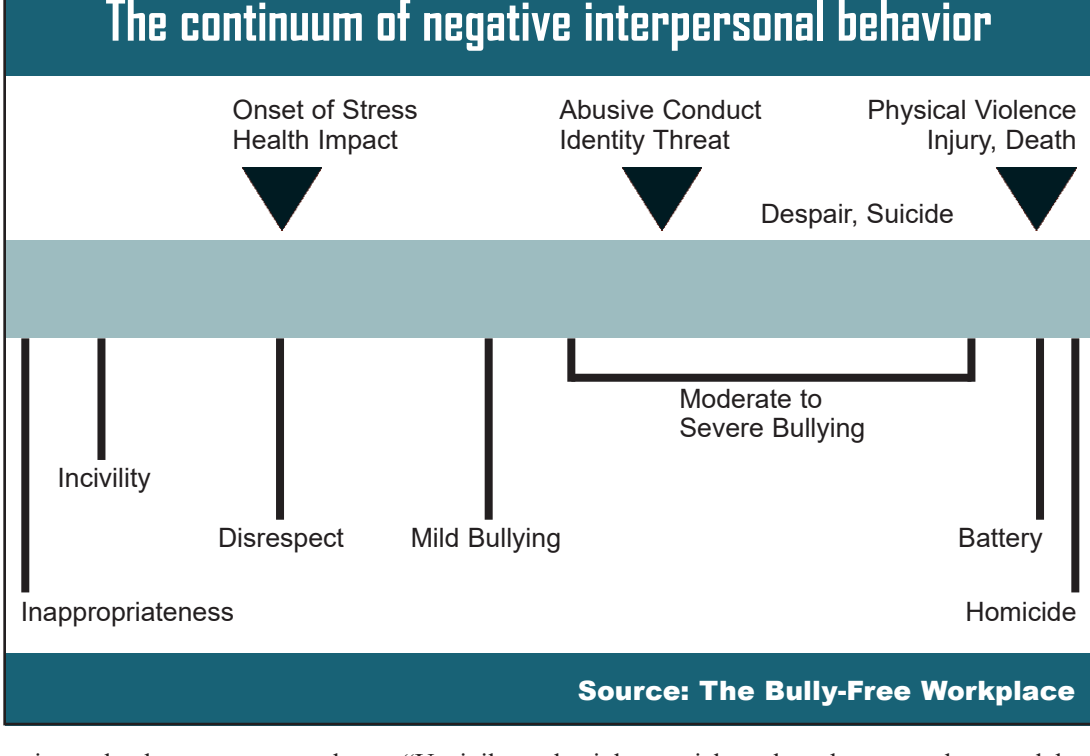
SPECIAL SERIES - PART II

Following is the second in our special series on workplace bullying. It is compiled from a couple of sources: The AFGE Women's and Fair Practices Departments Workplace Bullying Training webinar series, which began in September and concludes in December, as well as the books written by Dr. Gary Namie - he is also leading the webinar training.

By **DON MONCRIEF**
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The Continuum of Negative Interpersonal Behavior (see graphic at right).

It, per Dr. Gary Namie, in his book *The Bully-Free Workplace: Stop Jerks, Weasels, and Snakes From Killing Your Organization* (his wife, Ruth, is its co-author) represents the range of negative behaviors that occur in the workplace. And, he



writes, what happens as a result of these actions, and it places "bullies" within the continuum.

As can be observed, it starts on the left with the "least offensive and injurious types of negative behavior," and ends on the right, with "homicide".

"Uncivil people violate social norms," Namie writes. "They are typically aware of what constitutes 'proper' conduct but choose to ignore the limits of acceptability when in the presence of others. They act as though unspoken rules apply to

others, but not to them, and they may not feel normative pressure from the group like others do.

"Working with an uncivil coworker brings rudeness and boorishness—not necessarily aimed at anyone in

See BULLYING, page 3

Save the date

Membership meeting

Local 987 will have a membership meeting **Oct. 19 at 5 p.m. (Doors open at 4 p.m., with refreshments/snacks available.) It will be held at Union Hall, which is located at 1764 Watson Blvd. (It will also be available on Zoom.) As always, membership will be verified before you are admitted into the meeting. You can make updates to your contact information - address, phone, email, et cetera - by calling Union Hall at 478-922-5758 or by emailing Linda Baxter at linda@afgelocal987.org or Jeanette McElhaney at jmac@afgelocal987.org.**



A 78th Civil Engineer Group Environmental Management team picks up trash and debris around Scout Lake at Robins Air Force Base April 25. Trash and debris are cleared around the base lakes to ensure the environment is safe for wildlife and base personnel to enjoy. (U.S. Air Force photo by Joseph Mather)

78th CE keeps water clean for drinking, environment

78th Air Base Wing
Public Affairs

Water is a resource that has many uses whether; it's in your home or for industrial use, that resource must be protected.

The 78th Civil Engineer Group Environmental Management Flight at Robins Air Force Base ensures the water supply is safe to drink and flush.

Kristina Bridger, 78th CEG water subject matter expert, said their mission is to ensure the environment is healthy and safe for everyone at Robins Air Force Base.

"We manage permits from the Georgia Environmental Protection Division, and we ensure those permits are kept in compliance," she said. "We do this, so we have safe drinking water and the water we use is safe when it reaches the Ocmulgee River. That allows people to enjoy fishable and swimmable activities in the Ocmulgee River."

Bridger said water provided to the base comes from deep wells on Robins.

"There are multiple wells on a loop that pump water to the base," she said. "These wells continuously alternate to keep water flowing through the water mains to buildings across the base."

Bridger said Robins is fortunate to have clean groundwater that the base can pull from.

"In comparison to other bases, we actually pull our drinking water from deep wells," she said. "This is rare compared to other bases. Normally other bases use a type of water they pull from the surface, and then they treat the surface water."

Bridger said unlike other bases Robins' drinking water is very clean with little to no additional treatment after extraction from the wells.

"We can actually drink straight from our wells here on the base," she said. "There is a level of treatment where chlorine is added to reduce the bacteria, but for the most part, our level of treatment is very small compared to what other bases must do. So, we have



George Rackard, 78th Civil Engineer Squadron wastewater treatment plant operator, places a water sample into a cuvette to test for heavy metals in the wastewater at Robins Air Force Base Aug. 23. Eleven separate water sample tests were completed to determine treatment options to remove heavy metal from wastewater. (U.S. Air Force photo by Joseph Mather)



Alex Tew, 802nd Maintenance Support Squadron chemist, compares water samples at the Warner Robins Air Logistics Complex Analysis Flight at Robins Air Force Base Aug. 23. The tests completed ensured the base drinking water was free of contaminants and bacteria, like coliform. (U.S. Air Force photo by Joseph Mather)

good, clean drinking water and groundwater."

Where the water is used on base, determines what type of waste treatment is required to return that water to nature.

"After the water has been used by people or processes here on base, it then becomes wastewater, and that wastewater, depending on the type, goes to two different locations," said Bridger. "If the water is used for processes on base, like aircraft maintenance

and commodities maintenance, then it becomes industrial wastewater and goes to the industrial wastewater treatment plant. Regular usage, such as washing your dishes or using the bathroom, that becomes sanitary sewer wastewater and that goes directly to the sanitary sewer plant."

Marissa Willis, 78th CEG water property program manager, said all the water used

See CE, page 3

Want to watch the local high school game? Be aware of scams

You used to have to go to the stadium to root on your local high school athletic team. However, the COVID-19 pandemic changed that. With schools forced to restrict entry to events, they turned to online streaming of games so that people could watch from the comfort of their living rooms. While attendance restrictions have been lifted, schools are still streaming games. Unfortunately, the scammers have followed. The scammers aim to capture personal information, including credit card and Social Security numbers, as fans log in to watch their team play.

How the scam works:

You want to watch the local high school's football game, or your niece's travel softball team is playing in a tournament out of state. You search on social media to find a link where the game might be streamed, and sure enough, a fan has put in a link where you can watch for free! It's almost time for the game to start, so you eagerly click the link. The next screen asks you to sign up for the streaming service, so you enter your name and email... and then you get asked for a credit card number and potentially more sensitive information. Are you seeing red flags yet?

These scammers infiltrate social media with links to fake streams. The posts often will tag the schools involved to make the post appear legitimate. The scammers hope the would-be viewer inputs their information and pays to watch the event. The consumer doesn't get to watch the game because the scammer has not set up a stream. Instead, whatever data they entered may be compromised.

As a new school year begins, Better Business Bureau reminds consumers to do their research when looking to watch a high school sporting event online.

On social media especially, take notice of



Kelvin Collins

Last year, many state associations that oversee high school athletics issued warnings about the fake streams.

If you want to watch a specific school's game online, check with the school to see if it has streaming options available. While many schools do offer live streaming now, there are others who do not.

BBB offers these tips on how to stay safe online:

■ Research any website before paying any money or entering any information. Check the company's BBB Business Profile at BBB.org.

■ Pay by credit card whenever possible if you need to challenge the payment. Credit cards offer extra layers of protections to protect consumers.

■ Check a site's security settings. If the site is secure, its URL (web address) should start with HTTPS://. You may also see a picture of a small closed lock in the screen's lower right-hand corner.

■ Be cautious before clicking through to links included in social media posts, unsolicited text messages, or emails. Clicking on unfamiliar links can place you at risk for malware or identity theft.

For more information, check out BBB's Social Media Scams page at BBB.org for more examples of scammers that lurk on social channels.

Medal of Honor spotlight

Marine Corps Pvt. Joseph Ozbourn

By KATIE LANGE
DoD News

Service members caught in a firefight will do whatever they can to protect their comrades. Marine Corps Pvt. Joseph William Ozbourn was one of those people during World War II.

His loyalty led to his death, but his personal sacrifice also earned him a posthumous Medal of Honor.

Ozbourn was born on Oct. 24, 1919, in Herrin, Illinois. He grew up there with his parents, Thomas and Eva Ozbourn, and his older brother, James, who served in the Army during World War II.

According to Ozbourn's father, who was interviewed in a 1963 South Bend Tribune article, his youngest son was well-liked by all who knew him and had quit school in the eighth grade to work at a factory.

Ozbourn later worked as a coal mine trip rider for Old Ben Coal Corporation, like his father had, in nearby West Frankfurt, Illinois.

Ozbourn's mother died in 1939. In December of that year, he married Helen Meacham, according to the Congressional Medal of Honor Society. They had a son named Ronald.

According to 1940 Census data, by 1940, Ozbourn was working as a laborer for the Work Projects Administration, a government agency formed under the New Deal.

Ozbourn enlisted in the Marine Corps on Oct. 30, 1943, right in the middle of World War II.

He was assigned to the 4th Marine Division's 1st

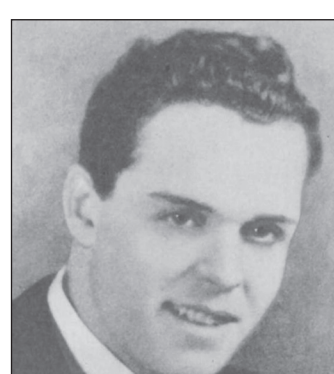


Photo courtesy defense.gov
Marine Corps Pvt. Joseph Ozbourn

Battalion, 23d Marines, a unit that was activated in July of 1942. By late January 1944, the unit was deployed to the South Pacific. Ozbourn's father said it apparently happened with little warning, as his son had asked his family for funds to come home on furlough but was instead shipped overseas.

Pretty quickly, the 1st Battalion was thrown into battle at Roi-Namur, part of the Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands.

After defeating the Japanese there, the division island-hopped by May 1944 to the Mariana Islands, which were the last bastion of Japan's Central Pacific perimeter. The Marines first took Saipan before moving onto Tinian Island.

On July 30, 1944, Ozbourn was on Tinian serving as a rifleman in a five-man platoon that was tasked with clearing out the remaining enemy troops from dugouts and pillboxes along a particular treetline.

As Ozbourn was about to throw a hand grenade into one of those dugouts, an explosion from its entrance knocked him and the four other men backward, injuring them all.

Ozbourn quickly realized that his grenade was armed and ready to blow at any second.

However, he was unable to throw it into the dugout, and he had no place else to get rid of it that didn't endanger the other Marines with him.

Without hesitation, the 24-year-old selflessly pulled the grenade close to his body and fell upon it as it exploded. He absorbed the full impact of the blast and died where he lay.

But his sacrifice saved his comrades.

The Marines succeeded in beating the enemy at Tinian, and the Allies eventually took over all of the Marianas. The win severed the Japanese's southern supply lines and pushed their defense west of the Philippines while also opening the Japanese homeland to aerial assaults.

Tinian later became the base of operations for the launch of the atomic bombs that ended the war.

Ozbourn was initially buried on Tinian, but his remains were later reinterred in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu.

His widow, Helen, received the Medal of Honor on his behalf, though the date on which that happened is unclear. She had received it by the time she christened the destroyer named for her fallen husband in March 1946.

The USS Ozbourn was commissioned at the Boston Naval Shipyard.

Ozbourn has been remembered in many ways in his home state, including along a portion of a highway in his hometown, which was renamed in his honor.

Navigating your Medicare options during the enrollment period

(StatePoint) The average Medicare beneficiary in 2023 has access to 43 Medicare Advantage plans, the largest number of options ever, according to KFF.

With so many plans to choose from, the Medicare and Prescription Drug Plan Annual Enrollment Period, taking place from Oct. 15 to Dec. 7, may be overwhelming and confusing.

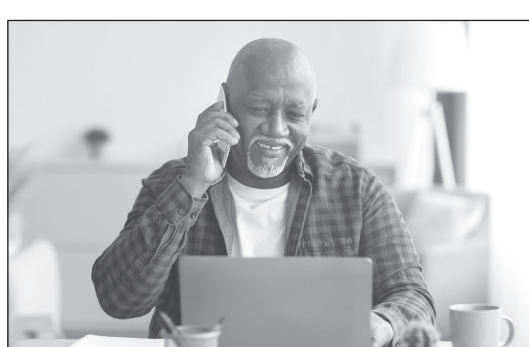
"The Medicare Annual Enrollment Period is when you can shop for a new plan, if you want to," says Kate Long, consumer financial wellness advocate at Assurance IQ. "If you have a new doctor, are taking new prescriptions or if your existing plan simply no longer meets your needs, it could be time for a change."

As Long points out, shopping for a new plan doesn't necessarily mean you cannot stay with the same carrier. They may have multiple plans available in your area.

The important thing is finding a Medicare Advantage plan that addresses your unique healthcare and budgetary needs.

To help you navigate your options, consider these tips from Assurance IQ:

● The first tip is to review your Annual Notice



Getty Images

of Change, which should have been mailed to you before Oct. 15. This document explains changes to your plan, such as providers, prescription drugs or services no longer covered.

Make sure to review it carefully to understand if these changes could impact your plan benefits.

● Next, you'll want to assess your healthcare needs and financial standing. Are there services you know that you'll need in the coming year?

If your finances have changed, can you still afford your current plan? Are you taking a

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Please submit articles, photos, etc to don.moncrief@afge-local987.org. For questions about story content, to pass on story ideas or to request coverage, please contact the aforementioned.

SAND

From page 1

ask in the midterm meeting for “specifics”. “Exactly” what is required to achieve a 5/out-standing rating at appraisal time. “Then”, send an email documenting that conversation, i.e., that you “asked” for “exact/specific” guidance on “how” to achieve an outstanding rating. This is “vital” come appraisal time ... and by appraisal time, I mean “arbitration” time. Help yourself win your grievance. The Union will be arguing these differently but giving a Designated Management Official all the information they need, from every angle, to grant your grievance never hurts.

So, all that wasn't what I set out to write this morning. I was pondering some recent “losses” of arbitration matters that were bothering me, but let me digress ... I like to argue and I like to win.

I know this job comes with inevitable losses and upset grievants (bargaining unit employees, BUEs) and that has never both-

ered me (no offense to those who have lost, but I did my best and I'm not losing sleep over something I cannot change). Those of you that know me know that I don't give a f*%\$ about what people think about me or what I do. Even have a jar on my desk to represent my feelings. I am not an elected official. I am appointed by the President and proud of that.

Suffice to say I may be the least socially acceptable person you know and for those of you who don't know me, you now know something about me.

The “losses” I'm referring to deal with “not” granting employees “any” desirable remedy when an employee is passed over for a position applied for or “not” fulfilling the Agency's obligation to abide by their word. Let me give you some hypotheticals ...

Scenario 1: I've been on base 20 years as a WG. I've been a worklead (WL) for 10 of those years. I apply for a supervisor's job (WS). I don't get it. I grieve. I win. Yay ... here's the hiccup. The Agency claims, right/wrong/or indifferent, is “only” obligat-

ed to grant the individual who was mis-considered (me, in this case) is “priority consideration” for the job they “accidentally” gave to a two-year employee who's 20 years old and who worked at Kroger for six months before he or she came to the base. Hence, what I won was ... well, the base f*&%!+ me. That person had no experience and most definitely didn't qualify for the position. But there's nothing we (Agency/Arbitrator) can do to fix me. Meaning, I don't get the job. The moron who got the job stays in the job. The idiots who selected him for the job face no discipline for violating the Contract, AFI, hiring practices, etc. All I got was “priority consideration”, which means the Agency will “consider” me first, then slide my resume aside and select the next dumb@\$ they like better than me. So that sucks ...

An interesting addendum to this paragraph is I have just found out that the “priority consideration” isn't as bad as I initially thought. Mind you, I only thought it from watching what happens with it. However, yet again, the Agency has violated

this simple process and done things their own way contrary to rules, regulations, policy and law.

I smile as I type this as this is simply par for the course as far as RAFB is concerned when it comes to “law, rule, policy, and procedure”. What that means here is “my way” (RAFB way, or, more accurately, “management's way”).

Scenario 2: I accepted the supervisor position after applying for it. The Agency first sends a tentative offer with salary info on it. I accept the tentative offer. (The Agency tells you at this point to “not” make any plans based on this “tentative” offer, which I don't.) The Agency sends me a “firm” offer. Maybe it has salary info and maybe it doesn't. Let's assume it does, in this case. I accept the “firm” offer. Now I make some plans ... maybe I buy a house, a ring for my girlfriend so I can propose, a new car, a car for my kid turning 16, whatever. I get me a start date. I put in my notice at my old job to quit, maybe burn the hell outta that bridge because I never liked them anyway. I show up for

NEO. I find out the “salary info” was wrong. The Agency takes “full responsibility” and tells me how sorry they are for making this “administrative error”.

So, full responsibility isn't crap because they aren't in trouble and aren't giving me a new job because I can't go back to the old one. They aren't going to pay me what they promised, either. The person responsible for this “error” isn't in trouble, either.

What the hell responsibility did the Agency accept? What happens then is the Agency will give me a brand-new, firm offer that, we assume, is correct and I now “must” accept because of the position the Agency has placed me in.

Same Scenario. I grieve. We arbitrate. I win. Wait, no, I lost.

Wait, what the hell? The Agency has hidden behind obscure AFI's and statutes that prevent them from paying me or giving me what they promised. The “decision” from the Arbitrator looks something like, you were screwed, no doubt about it, however, I can't help you. There was no violation of rule, law, or statute. I can't do

a thing. Sorry not sorry is about all I'm hearing.

Ok, so this has been a long, boring, diatribe of crap we have to face everyday up here at the Union Hall. What I wanted to make sure the readers know is this: There is “nothing” preventing the Agency from doing the right thing. Nothing! Let me say it again ... Nothing! They simply don't want to.

Don't get me wrong. There are good managers, supervisors, chiefs, directors everywhere. It only takes one freaking grain of sand to stop the semitruck of right and just.

Simply put, one person who does not want to remove that moron they shouldn't have given the job to in the first place allows that injustice to stand. One person who does not want to pay you a lump sum of money to fulfil their obligation of payment promised will prevent that from happening. One person ... only one person, one grain of sand, to prevent the Agency from doing the right thing.

Sift through your “sands” to find your rocks. Apparently, we work at the freaking beach on Robins Air Force Base.

CHEERING

From page 1

Respect the individual's right to file a grievance in an effort to obtain an official redress. As a steward you serve on the frontline of that representation process.

Our local 987 stewards, more than any other union leader or activist, has the opportunity to energize and mobilize the source of our union strength: the membership. Every day, the steward is the one union person members see when they are at work.

In the eyes of most of our members

you are the union. So, if they have faith in you, members will have faith in the union.

The steward takes on a number of roles. You provide dynamic leadership in the workplace amongst your peers, as union leaders' management can rely on you for answers from time to time.

You serve as an educator to members about solidarity, justice and the importance of political and legislative action.

Representing our membership must be of paramount concern on a daily basis. That representation loop cannot be successfully closed without doc-

umenting your finding. In carrying out each of these tasks to the best of your ability, you will earn the respect and confidence of the people you represent.

Once you have their confidence, you will be able to reach out to our members and encourage them to become active and involved participants in our Local.

There are those in management who have aligned themselves on the side of wrong by failing to understand that civility is not with those that are attacking our bargaining rights.

The greatest strength the shop steward brings to the membership is not

marginalizing their greatness. Here are some things I fervently believe in, and that is, your shop stewards walk amongst greatness. Greatness is a cornucopia of many things: honesty, integrity, passion, resilience, fortitude, self-belief and strong values.

Never compromise any of these by engaging in or making backroom deals. Never let management compromise you by promising to let you win the next one. You should aspire to win them all.

Never promise any grievant a remedy too quickly. The investigatory process must be through you want to get to the heart of the matter which

will deliver the correct result. The challenge is to meet head on any desolation suffered by our members as a result of management.

We are our brothers' and sisters' keepers and to that end, I hope that the tools presented to you during our week of training serve both you and the membership well.

Congratulations! You represent a very rich tradition of activism and leaders of every hue, every gender of the representative process. There is no greater calling than to serve your fellow worker.

Together we are building a labor movement together!

CE

From page 2

on the base must be cleaned before returning to the environment.

“Our permits are the guidelines to the treatment process,” said Willis. “There are testing processes for the drinking water and the wastewater treatment. That testing ensures any contaminants are removed before drinking and are removed from the wastewater before going back into the Ocmulgee River or Horse Creek.”

Willis said the base has two labs that test water samples weekly.

“Both the water testing and wastewater testing labs are certified by the state to conduct the tests,” she said. “The base must be certified by the state to run the testing processes for any drinking water or wastewater analyses. All the results done on base are sent to the state and the state, reviews those documents and makes sure that there are no permit level violations. Also, our operators must be state certified.”

According to Willis, the program is broken down by the various permits.

“The permits we manage are for the wastewater, drinking water, general construction, industrial storm water, and the MS-4 permit, which is the municipal separate storm and sewer system permit,” she said. “The municipal separate



Brandon Waters, left, and Jose Ocegueda, 78th Civil Engineer Group water operators, make repairs to a soda ash feed system at a pump station at Robins Air Force Base Aug. 23. The soda ash systems are used to control water PH balance to the base water system. (U.S. Air Force photo by Joseph Mather)

storm and sewer system permits relate to the portion of the base that have the chapel, the base exchange and the base housing community.”

Bridger said the wastewater sampling systems have changed over the years.

“In the past, it was a manual system where people would have to go take a measurement,” she said. “That sample would be taken to the lab to determine how much chemical needed to be added, but now the science is changing, and Robins is currently automating some of those chemical additions.”

Bridger said the water cycle is also important to the base.

“The discharge point for the water used on base goes directly into the Ocmulgee River,” said

Bridger. “So, in order for it to be clean, it has to meet water quality standards set by the Georgia EPD and the Environmental Protection Agency. The water here on base is pulled out of the ground, we use it, we clean it, and then it goes back to the Ocmulgee River. That's our water cycle here at Robins.”

Bridger said she feels good to come to work and be able to have safe drinking water.

“I feel like my job is getting done,” she said. “I like to go rafting on the Ocmulgee River. So when I'm out there with my family and friends, I want to ensure that the river is healthy, so my family and future generations can enjoy it too. It means I have done my job well.”

BULLYING

From page 1

particular—into your workplace.”

Namie continues that it's difficult to be a target of incivility because it is not “personalized”. He cites research done by Christine Pearson, “the academic most closely identified with the study of incivility.” She found that only 12 percent of workers subjected to an uncivil workplace contemplated leaving.”

Hence, “Incivility is only mildly bothersome, hence its location on the continuum,” he writes. “Disrespect is more hostile and is pointedly aimed directly at another person. It can trigger distress as well as a host of anxiety-related health complications.”

“The perpetrator—the person who's ‘dissing’ another—acts in a manner that shows complete disregard for the target's humanity. It is as if the recipient has not earned the right to be treated well from the perpetrator.”

Namie goes on to say that their experience has found that U.S. employers will tolerate the labels of incivility or disrespect when referring to bullying, whereas Canadian employers are less likely to make euphemistic references to these situations. In other words, he writes, Canadian employers are not afraid to refer to bullying as bullying.

On the interpersonal behavior scale, he continues on the continuum, mild bullying falls to the right, on the more-harsh impact side of disrespect.

“Mild instances can be covert and infrequent. Bullying becomes moderate to severe when bouts of mistreatment increase in frequency and personalization. Bullies tend to ‘zone in’ on the targeted few, causing their misery to grow exponentially.”

“Compared with incivility, bullying is a laser-focused, systematic campaign of interpersonal destruction—one of warlike dimensions. Methods escalate in abusiveness, and escape routes for targets are blocked. Bullies even recruit coworkers to further spread the misery. And as hatred progresses, the targeted individual grows sicker from multiple stress-related health complications.”

“Workplace bullying is not merely hostile; it's abusive. And abuse is potentially traumatizing. The result is frequently destabilization—in the form of threats to one's self-identity—when abusers attempt to redefine the target's personality in ways to suit them. It is an extremely invasive tactic. If the target cannot find a way to alleviate the strain, he or she can quickly slide into despair. If hopelessness follows, the person might consider the option of violence.”

The National Institutes

for Occupational Safety and Health, he continues, deemed workplace bullying to be a form of workplace violence.

“Bullying stops short of physical violence; it is both sublethal and nonphysical. And once in a while, a target turns violent. Violence turned inward is suicide.”

Namie continues with the case of Kevin Morrissey. In 2010, he, the managing editor for the Virginia Quarterly Review, a literary magazine housed on the campus of the University of Virginia, committed suicide. Upon investigation, it was uncovered that he had been “tormented” for three years by his senior editor. The investigation eventually exonerated his senior editor, but the nature of the story did serve the purpose of prompting “academic writers to recognize bullying in their host institutions.”

Further right on the continuum is “battery” and “homicide”. This can happen when violence is directed “outward”, Namie writes, citing the case of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University student Seung-Hui Cho, age 23, who murdered 32 professors and students and wounded an additional 25.

He cites many details in the case but concludes that many lost their lives needlessly because the institution(s) involved failed to act appropriately – the bullying included – and adequately.

OPTIONS

From page 2

new prescription that your current plan doesn't cover?

● Now it may be time to shop around.

Before enrolling in a plan, make sure that your preferred doctor, specialists and any prescriptions you need are covered. Ask which out-of-pocket costs you will be responsible for.

It's important to find an affordable plan for you.

● You could also speak with a licensed insurance agent about your needs. Prep for the conversation by having a list of your prescriptions on hand, having your Medicare card nearby, and having a list of your doctors and medical equipment you use.

Knowing which company provides your medical equipment is also important. Be sure to also read the “Medicare & You” handbook that is mailed to all Medicare beneficiary households in late September. You can also find it online by visiting medicare.gov/medicare-and-

you. Medicare options are more expansive than ever. And while that makes the Annual Enrollment Period more complicated, the upside is that by doing your homework, you'll be more likely to find a plan that works for you.

STEP 1:

Go to www.joinafge.org



STEP 2:

Select your Agency and Local Number



STEP 3:

Fill out the one-page membership form and click “Join”



STEP 4:

If you're a new member, select a rebate campaign and fill out the brief form (local participation may vary)



Join in 4 easy steps:

Supporting Future

All-Stars

5 Winning Tips for Youth Sports Parents



Photos courtesy of Getty Images

FAMILY FEATURES

Some of the fondest childhood memories for many people include practicing sports, game days and teammates turned friends. Parents hoping to provide their children with similar experiences can look to organized youth sports as a perfect outlet for expending some energy all while learning valuable life lessons like teamwork, goal-setting, humbly celebrating victories and bouncing back from defeat.

In fact, sports can provide a multitude of benefits for young athletes. From improving physical health to gaining valuable social and leadership skills, team-oriented activities give kids a way to explore their own interests and have a little fun.

Put your future all-stars on a path to success with these tips for youth sports parents.

Encourage Kids to Try Multiple Sports

If your little ones are first-time athletes, signing up for multiple sports exposes them to a variety of options. They can navigate their own interests and discover their unique talents through each sport's different challenges. For example, some require more endurance, like soccer and basketball, while others call on coordination and balance, such as dance or baseball. Once they've experienced a few activities, allowing them to choose which sports to continue participating in provides a sense of independence.

Outfit Athletes with the Proper Gear

Each sport and activity comes with equipment requirements, ranging from simple (a ball and a net) to complex (helmets, pads, bases and more). Proper footwear is a must, whether it's cleats for outdoor events or shoes with ankle support for a sport like basketball. Remember, safety comes first, which is why your children may need helmets, shin guards, knee pads or other protective equipment. Be sure to talk to coaches or league coordinators about what equipment is provided and what you may need to purchase (or borrow).

Familiarize Yourself with the Sports

While you don't need to be a hall of fame coach to enjoy your kids' events, understanding the rules and regulations can help you be a more informed parent. Plus, it shows your little athletes you're taking an interest in their activities when you can discuss the game together. If you're able, one of the best ways to learn is to attend a local professional, semi-professional, college or even high school game with your children so everyone can get in on the fun together.

Make Postgame Cleanup a Breeze

Many people don't know sweat can lead to bacteria, which secrete acids with a distinct, stinky odor. Just think about all the bacteria living in a gym bag after your children's big games. Behind a team of bacteria-fighting scientists, Lysol Labs is hitting the road to visit youth sporting events across the country on a mission to educate parents and their young athletes that bacteria can be the source of their stinky clothes.

"A single stinky sock can contain more than 8 million bacteria," said Callum Couser, Reckitt Research and Development Operations Manager, Hygiene. "This program was created to show parents the number of bacteria in their kids' clothes and how to eliminate 99.9% of the odor-causing bacteria on stinky clothes during the summer sports season."

You can strike out stink with a laundry additive like Lysol Laundry Sanitizer, which kills 99.9% of odor-causing bacteria on laundry when used as directed and helps simplify your postgame routine. Available in 41-ounce and 90-ounce containers in a variety of scents and formats, it contains 0% bleach and even works in cold water. Find more information at [Lysol.com](https://www.lysol.com).

Be Supportive and Make It Fun

It's exciting to watch children excel on the field, but not all kids are destined for the big leagues. For most youth athletes, more important than the advancement of on-field skills are the growth in areas like taking direction, following rules, developing work ethic and learning to socialize. You can make it a positive experience for your children by supporting their endeavors regardless of skill level. Remember to acknowledge their effort, encourage fun with teammates and friends, celebrate successes and let them learn from their mistakes.

The 'Strike Out Stink' Routine: A Parent's Guide to the Perfect Postgame Victory

The fun of a baseball, softball or soccer game in the summer sun usually involves getting dirty and working up a sweat. The stinky gear is a sure sign of youthful exuberance, but also means postgame laundry for parents.

Along with its mobile science center teaching parents how to eliminate stink, Lysol Labs teamed up with mother of two Jordana Brewster, who shared her top tips for keeping laundry sanitized.

"The 'Strike Out Stink Routine' can help parents keep their laundry smelling fresh all summer long," Brewster said. "I know from firsthand experience that odor-causing bacteria plays hardball, but it's officially met its match. There are just four steps to this routine, and they couldn't be easier to follow."

1. Warm Up

- When the game ends, parents spring into action. Get your athletes and their stinky gear home.

2. The Unbagging

- If the odor is enough to make parents break into their own sweat, it's game on.

3. Sanitize

- Let your MVP play. An option like Lysol Laundry Sanitizer strikes out stubborn bacterial odor on socks, uniforms and gym bags.

4. Cool Down

- When stink is defeated, parents can cool down and plan for the next game.



YOUNG

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 will work together to include younger workers into the union structure and keep them engaged in what's at stake for working class Americans.

AFGE YOUNG intends to provide young members with networking opportunities and resources

to engage in mobilizing other young workers into AFGE, union training to promote leadership skills, innovative social gatherings, AFGE conference meetings, and other engaging events. In doing so, AFGE YOUNG participants work to build lasting labor solidarity, advance issues of social and economic justice, and find more inclusive ways to engage the current and future generations in the Labor Movement.

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

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		5	9	7					1
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© StatePoint Media
Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

STATEPOINT CROSSWORD

THEME: CHEMISTRY 101

ACROSS

- 1. "Planted" customer
- 6. Pie and mode connection (2 words)
- 9. *Atomic ____ unit
- 13. Salk's conquest
- 14. Beesly of "The Office"
- 15. Secret storage
- 16. Crème de la crème
- 17. Flow alternative
- 18. a.k.a. vampire
- 19. *Any substance in chemistry
- 21. *Periodic table entry
- 23. Douse or soak
- 24. Pavarotti's song
- 25. Between Big and Wolf
- 28. Mattress description
- 30. *Positively charged particle
- 35. Elevator manufacturing giant
- 37. Horsefly
- 39. Rabbit trap
- 40. Sure or uh-huh
- 41. Saintry rings
- 43. North Sea feeder
- 44. Flax flower genus
- 46. Shrivel, as in plant
- 47. Like undesirable row
- 48. Related on mother's side
- 50. Barbara of "I Dream of Jeannie"
- 52. Porky's home
- 53. Practice in the ring
- 55. Burmese neighbor
- 57. *Core of an atom
- 61. *C
- 64. Theater guide
- 65. Org. that gets parents involved in school
- 67. Sign up again
- 69. Supernatural being
- 70. Three, to Caesar
- 71. Grouchy Muppet
- 72. European sea eagles
- 73. News channel acronym

DOWN

- 1. Health resort in Baden-Baden, e.g.
- 2. River islet
- 3. Hip bones
- 4. To-do enumerations
- 5. Bingo and keno
- 6. Imitator
- 7. *Chemistry classroom
- 8. Fly in ____, or a reminder of the past
- 9. Hat-tipper's word
- 10. Highest point
- 11. Splints site
- 12. Assigned spot
- 15. Rids of obstruction
- 20. Period in history
- 22. Mouth piece
- 24. Designer's studio
- 25. *____-Mariotte Law
- 26. Dined at home
- 27. Late Princess of Wales
- 29. Defect
- 31. Two halves of two
- 32. Discussion intended to produce agreement
- 33. Galactic path
- 34. Demanding attention
- 36. Like a barred door
- 38. *Aurum, in English
- 42. Type of grave marker
- 45. It loves company?
- 49. PC "brain"
- 51. Limited in scope
- 54. Gelatin
- 56. Like one with high BMI
- 57. Artist's model, sometimes
- 58. Application utilizer
- 59. Keep it up?
- 60. TV classic "____ Make a Deal"
- 61. Jealous biblical brother
- 62. Fairy-tale opening
- 63. Less than average tide
- 66. *Sn, or stannum, on periodic table
- 74. Liable to cry

CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13					14			15			
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69						70			71		
72						73			74		

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I bought a handgun from a T-Rex. Because he's a small-arms dealer.

What did the llama say when he was getting evicted? I guess alpaca my bags.

National Parks

A	N	V	R	O	S	P	B	Z	T	G	U	A	D	A	L	P	E	N	K	C	
V	O	I	R	B	A	J	I	L	P	B	N	M	L	J	V	L	W	U	V	B	
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G	T	B	D	W	O	L	E	N	T	M	O	C	V	Y	V	G	J	A	D	B	R
E	A	U	F	I	E	D	T	A	O	N	L	L	B	S	A	Q	O	B	R	L	
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| ACADIA | BADLANDS | BIG BEND |
| BISCAYNE | CANYONLANDS | CONGAREE |
| DEATH VALLEY | DENALI | EVERGLADES |
| GUADALUPE | HALES KALA | KATMAI |
| OLYMPIC | PATERSON | PINNACLE |
| REDWOOD | RICHMOND | SEQUOIA |
| SHENANDOAH | VICKSBURG | VOYAGEURS |
| YELLOWSTONE | YOSEMITE | ZION |

A little humor ...

Three boys were talking about how much money their fathers made.

The lawyer's son said, "My father goes into court on a case and often comes home with fifteen hundred dollars."

The doctor's son said, "My father performs an operation and earns two thousand dollars."

The minister's son, determined not to be outdone, said, "That's nothing. My father preaches for just twenty minutes on Sunday morning, and it takes four men to carry the money."

A very small, sickly-looking man was hired as a bartender. The saloon owner gave him a piece of advice. "Drop everything and run for your life if you ever hear that Big John is on his way to town."

Several months later, a cow-hand rushed in shouting, "Big

John is a-comin'," and he accidentally knocked the small bartender to the floor in his hurry to get out. Before the bartender had a chance to recover, a giant of a man with a black bushy beard rode into the saloon on a buffalo, using a rattlesnake for a whip.

The man tore the swinging doors off their hinges, knocked over tables, and flung the snake into the corner. He then pounded his massive fist on the bar,

splitting it in half as he ordered a drink.

The bartender nervously pushed a bottle toward the man, who bit the top off the bottle and downed the contents in one gulp. As the man turned to leave, the bartender asked if he would like another drink. "I ain't got no time," the man roared. "Big John is a-comin'."

Catch any fish? Fisherman: Did I! I took thirty out of this stream this morning.

Stranger: Do you know who I am? I'm the game warden.

Fisherman: Do you know who I am? I'm the biggest liar in the country.

Judge: Thirty years in prison! Defendant: But, Judge, I won't live that long!

Judge: Don't worry—do what you can.

People who think that time heals everything haven't tried sitting it out in a doctor's waiting room.

Patient: My tongue tingles when I touch it to a cracked walnut wrapped in used toaster-oven aluminum foil—what's wrong with me?

Doctor: You have far too much free time.

Doctor: Nurse, how is that

little boy doing—the one who swallowed ten quarters?

Nurse: No change yet.

Life's briefest moment is the time between reading the sign on the freeway and realizing you just missed your exit.

Doughnut Customer: Waitress, why is my doughnut all smashed?

Waitress: You said you wanted a cup of coffee and a dough-

nut—and step on it.

A soldier who lost his rifle was reprimanded by his captain and told he would have to pay for it.

"Sir," gulped the soldier, "suppose I lost a tank. Surely I would not have to pay for that!"

"Yes, you would," bellowed the captain. "Even if it took the rest of your life."

"Well," said the soldier, "now I know why the captain goes down with his ship."

STR8TS

No. 660 Tough

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Previous solution - Medium

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

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.



Above/Right: Tom Muther of Minahan, Muther, Klinger, P.C. – the law firm contracted by AFGE Local 987 - instructs the stewards on the Master Labor Agreement. (AFGE Local 987 photos/Don Moncrief)

TRAINING

From page 1

Williams said he took back over Friday where “we filled in everything else. We followed up talking about our contracts. What certain things meant. How to address them. And we made our templates on how to address things.”

“They understood a lot more when they left,” he said. He added he was also able to address some “opinions” and dispel some “myths” about the MLA – particularly about the “intent” of certain passages/texts - that were out there. (His name is on the back cover of the MLA. Meaning, he was one of the ones who negotiated it and he said they were required to explain exactly what the intent was. In other words, he’s somewhat of an expert in that area.)

He continued: “We made them better aware. Let them know (also



that) they have support of the Local up here when they do these things.

“They comprehended quite a bit. That was thrown at them so fast. And one of the biggest issues was

confidence. What do we do about this? How do we handle this? (We stressed) whenever in doubt call up here and one of us will come out and talk to them about it and get it worked out.”



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