



## AFGE offers help to those affected by hurricane

**By DON MONCRIEF**  
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If you've been affected by Hurricane Helene, AFGE's leadership wants you to know they are here to help. Through its disaster relief fund "we can offer some extra help as you recover."

For more, visit [afge.org/disasterrelief](http://afge.org/disasterrelief). There you will find a link to apply. You will also find one to donate to the fund. (Note: Both links go to the Federal Employee Education and Assistance Fund, [feea.org](http://feea.org), which AFGE uses to manage disaster relief efforts and assist government employees.) You will also find a link for "Project Porchlight". Project Porchlight, according to the website is a "new" and "temporary" program for those AFGE members who are in a declared disaster relief zone.

"The program's primary goal," according to the website, "is to help borrowers cre-

ate and follow a recovery plan to successfully return to their pre-disaster 'normal' as quickly as possible."

The program offers assistance with:

- Recovery assessment
- Plan development
- Monthly check-ins
- Aid application
- Denial assistance
- Educational resources

The effort was developed by the AFGE Union Plus Credit Counseling Program. More information, as well as how to enroll can be found at [Porchlight.org](http://Porchlight.org).

"We know our members have been deeply impacted by Hurricane Helene," reads an AFGE release. "We want to reach out and let you know that through the AFGE Disaster Relief Fund we can offer some extra help as you recover."

"AFGE will continue to do everything we can to support our members and get our communities back on their feet. Thank you for all that you do."

## 15,000 to get raise thanks to locality pay map merger

**By AFGE leadership**

The Office of Personnel Management last week took a huge step toward aligning the locality pay maps for employees on the Federal Wage System and General Schedule as recommended by the Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee whose members include two AFGE representatives.

OPM's proposed rule was published in the Federal Register with a 60-day public comment period. Once finalized, about 15,000 blue collar workers, most of whom work for the Department of Defense, will get the pay adjustment they deserve.

"This is a sweet victory that was a long time coming – too long—but I am thrilled that our efforts have finally paid off," said AFGE President Everett Kelley, who is a member of the committee along with AFGE Public Policy Director Jacque Simon.

AFGE's two-decade fight AFGE has been working for more than two decades to get successive administra-

tions, both Republican and Democratic, to align FWS wage areas with GS locality pay areas across the country. Even though they work side-by-side in the same building for the same employer, the base pay has been determined differently for the two groups.

Salaried workers have the same base pay throughout a GS locality, while hourly WG workers have had base pay that has varied even within the boundaries of a GS locality.

The GS locality boundaries are drawn according to commuting rates, which is the proper way to define local labor markets. Hourly workers' locality or wage area boundaries were drawn mostly in the 1950s, reflecting the location of large military installations that employed most federal WG workers at that time.

Since 2002, AFGE has worked every year to get OPM to issue a regulation that would align the two pay systems' area boundaries, so both systems would be governed by commuting rates. But our efforts faced staunch

**See RAISE, page 3**

## Matthew Hawkins, Curtis McCants secure runoff wins

**By DON MONCRIEF**  
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First there was an election, April 17. That ended with neither Sharon Kornegay nor Matthew Hawkins securing enough votes to win the vice president at-large position and having to go to a runoff. (Kornegay had 145 votes. Hawkins had 138).

Also, Curtis McCants – along with Teresa Freeman and Tommy Gibson – were voted in as trustees but stay tuned. There's more to that story. In particular Cathy Mills being the odd person out.

The runoff for vice president at-large – Kornegay and Hawkins – was held May 8. Kornegay won with exactly 100 votes. Hawkins had 84. But wait, there's more. The National, per its reasons, decided to "re-run" the entire election. That was held on July 8. Once again Kornegay and Hawkins ended up not having enough votes/percentage of votes – 133 (42.77 percent) for Kornegay and 109 (46.28 percent) for Hawkins. Once again they were headed for a run-off.

Also, this time McCants didn't secure enough votes for trustee and found himself in a future runoff with Cathy Mills.



**Election chair Casie Flowers Nation, standing, organizes ballots to be counted during the runoff election for vice president at-large and trustee held Sept. 25. (AFGE Local 987 photos/Don Moncrief)**

McCants received 49.21 percent. Mills had 48.20 percent.

Those runoffs were held Sept. 25. This time it was Hawkins besting Kornegay.

He finished with 105 votes (54.85 percent). Kornegay had 98 votes (48.28 percent).

McCants took the trustee spot with 113 votes (54.85 per-

cent) to Mills' 93 (45.15 percent).

So to sum. Hawkins was elected vice president at-large and McCants trustee.



## Local leaders meet with VP candidate



**By DON MONCRIEF**  
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A number of AFGE Local 987's elected leaders and other representatives got a chance to meet and talk with Minnesota Governor and Vice Presidential candidate Tim Walz Sept. 16.

They met him at H&H restaurant in Macon – a place he said he had heard about and had wanted to visit. (Several also greeted him when he flew into Macon Regional Airport the day before. He also visited the Democratic Party's Macon headquarters prior to going to the restaurant. There he, according to reports, urged people to get the word out about voting – the day being National Voter Registration Day –

**See MEET, page 3**



Photos courtesy Grant Blankenship, Georgia Public Broadcast

MONTH  
*Save the date*

**Membership meeting**  
Local 987 will have a membership meeting **Oct. 17 at 5 p.m.** (Doors open at 4 p.m., with refreshments/available.) It will be held at Union Hall, located at 1764 Watson Blvd. (It will also be on Zoom.) As always, membership will be verified before admittance to the meeting. You can make updates to your contact information - address, phone, email - by calling Union Hall at 478-922-5758 or by emailing Linda Baxter at [linda@afgelocal987.org](mailto:linda@afgelocal987.org) or Jeanette McElhaney at [jmac@afgelocal987.org](mailto:jmac@afgelocal987.org).



Firefighters assigned to the 778th Civil Engineer Squadron extract a mannequin from a C-130J Super Hercules aircraft wing cavity during confined space training at Robins Air Force Base Sept. 18. The training better prepared the Robins fire and emergency services team to respond to potential confined space incidents within the Warner Robins Air Logistics Complex. (U.S. Air Force photo by Patrick Sullivan)

## Robins fire department, WR-ALC join for confined space rescue training

By PATRICK SULLIVAN  
78th Air Base Wing  
Public Affairs Office

The Warner Robins Air Logistics Complex and 778th Civil Engineer Squadron fire and emergency services team joined for confined space rescue training at Robins Air Force Base Sept. 18.

The training simulated a WR-ALC member becoming unresponsive while conducting maintenance inside a C-130J Super Hercules wing cavity.

“Confined space rescues present several unique challenges that make them particularly complex and hazardous,” said Kevin Averill, 778th CES assistant fire chief of training.

Some of the challenges Averill described were physical constraints, communication difficulties, psychological stress and specialized training and equipment, among others.

The 778th CES typically use their own training area to practice these rescues, but for this iteration they partnered with the WR-ALC to utilize a real aircraft.

“Training with all of our mission partners advances our operational readiness with immediate feedback,” said Averill. “Joint training, especially with (WR-ALC) and real aircraft, ensures Robins F&ES maintains proficiency while utilizing realistic scenarios in a controlled environment.”

The WR-ALC has both industrial and aircraft confined spaces that are encountered daily, with aircraft confined space operations being the most common.

“Participating with the fire department in confined space training exercises allows us to look at strengths and weaknesses in our response procedures,” said James Neesmith, WR-ALC occupational safety and health manager. “There have been many lessons learned in this and similar trainings that have led to changes in protocol



Fire Chief Jeffrey Kinzer, 778th Civil Engineer Squadron fire station chief, helps a firefighter into the wing cavity of a C-130J Super Hercules aircraft. Using a real aircraft allowed the fire and emergency services team to test their capabilities in a real-world environment. (U.S. Air Force photo by Patrick Sullivan)

and procedure.”

Beyond testing response procedures, the training also served as an opportunity for Robins F&ES to certify three new members to the level of confined space rescue technician, strengthening the team’s capabilities.

As confined space operations remain a critical part of base safety, this collaboration between WR-ALC and Robins F&ES helps refine procedures and enhance team readiness for future rescue challenges.

## AF Units of Action: Combat Wings, Air Base Wings, Institutional Wings defined

Secretary of the Air Force  
Public Affairs

ARLINGTON, Va. - The Department of the Air Force implementation of a new construct that will evolve wings into cohesive Units of Action by separating into Combat Wings, Air Base Wings and Institutional Wings will be a phased approach, starting no later than the summer of 2025.

The new concept will create several organizations capable of conducting deployed combat operations, as well as base defense. Under this future construct, base, institutional and combat missions will transition into distinct organizations – called Institutional Wings and Combat Wings – each with separate commanders.

Air Force combat wings will be structured as mission-ready Units of Action, with all the necessary elements stationed together at the same installation, where they can train together on a day-to-day basis.

Deployable Combat Wings will evolve to deploy as fully trained teams and will replace the Expeditionary Air Base and Air Task Force models previously announced in Sept. 2023.

Combat Wings will focus on mission-level warfighting readiness, supported by Air Base Wings who are focused on power projection platform readiness (the installation).

Institutional wings will continue to provide support and capabilities essential to the organize, train and equip requirements of the U.S. Air Force.

The goal is 24 Deployable Combat Wings fielded to meet the Air Force’s rotational demands and provide depth for emerging crises – 16 Active Duty and 8 Reserve Component Wings.

The phased implementation approach includes:

Establishing Air Base Wings at installations that host Combat Wings and/or Institutional Wings with supported/supporting relationships.

Establish the deployable variant of the combat wing: the Deployable Combat Wing. Each DCW will have a redesigned concept of support for GPC schemes of maneuver, including Agile Combat Employment, to ensure the wings are prepared to execute their wartime functions and missions with assigned Airmen and units.

The Air Force will begin

deliberately implementing Combat Wings, Air Base Wings and Institutional Wings across the force as early as summer 2025. The first Combat Wings should be ready to deploy elements by late 2026 (FY27).

**Evolution from XAB to ATF to CW**

In 2023, the Air Force established the Expeditionary Air Base as an initial force presentation model in its transition from Air Expeditionary Wings to a future force presentation model. The Air Force has been deploying Airmen under the XAB construct since the fall of 2023 and will continue to do so in the coming years.

The first Air Task Forces entered the AFFORGEN cycle during the reset phase in the summer of 2024 and will become deployment-ready in the fall of 2025. These initial ATFs will replace some of the XABs as the US Air Force’s deployable unit of action.

During this pilot period, the Air Force will deploy Airmen using both the XAB and ATF force presentation models. Concurrently, the Combat Wing, Air Base Wing and Institutional Wing phased approach will begin. Combat Wings will replace ATFs and XABs.

## After disaster - 7 tips to help you make an insurance claim

If your insurance policy has been lost or destroyed, or if you are confused about the policy benefits or exclusions, contact your insurance company to find out what coverages you have and request a copy of the policy.

The Better Business Bureau offers the following seven tips when dealing with insurance after a disaster strikes:

**Contact your insurance company immediately.**

Not only does this get the ball rolling on the claims process, but you might be eligible for loss-of-use benefits, which means you could be reimbursed for hotel costs, food, and other living expenses while your house is unlivable. Be sure to document all conversations with your insurance company or their adjuster and get any promises for reimbursements in writing. Be sure to retain all receipts.

**Beware of contractors who claim to be insurance claim specialists.**

Be sure you have thoroughly checked out your contractor before you permit them to deal directly with your insurance company and seek approval of repairs for you.

Unscrupulous businesses have tricked consumers into signing a work estimate without reading the fine print, which commits you to automatically contract with their business if your insurance claim is approved.

**Document the damage to your property and possessions thoroughly.**

Take pictures or videos if possible. Go from room to room and create a detailed account of your belongings if it is safe to do so. It is possible that people will not be allowed near their property until the area has been secured by emergency responders and local authorities. Keep all your receipts spent on supplies and



Kelvin Collins

living expenses for future reimbursement.

**Make any temporary repairs to limit further damage to your home or business.**

You may be liable for damage that occurs after a storm has passed, so make temporary repairs, such as boarding up broken windows or throwing a tarp over a leaky roof.

Beware of contractors who may try to offer these services for exorbitant fees. Be sure to get quotes in writing in advance or seek out volunteer groups in your area that may be offering assistance for free.

**Do not make any permanent repairs until you get approval from your insurance company.**

Make sure you understand how your insurance company will reimburse your repair costs. Your insurer might not fully reimburse you for repairs made without their authorization.

**Do not hand over an insurance check to a contractor for repairs prior to work being started.**

Never give more than one-third of the job price upfront, and make sure that your insurance company has approved all repairs before your final payment is given to the contractor.

**You may qualify for additional assistance when insurance doesn’t cover all of your losses.**

Check with the Federal Emergency Management Agency at fema.gov for more information. Stay up to date on BBB’s natural disaster resources and news at BBB.org.

## Medal of Honor spotlight

### Army 1st Lt. George Robb

By KATIE LANGE  
DoD News

Army 1st Lt. George Seanor Robb commanded several soldiers in a famed military unit fighting in the trenches during the brutal last days of World War I. Robb took his duties to heart and refused to back down, even after several injuries. His bravery and fortitude led him to receive the Medal of Honor.

Robb was born on May 18, 1887, in the small farming community of Assaria, Kansas, to Thomas and Charlotte Robb. He had two older siblings, Francis and Susie.

After high school, Robb went to Park College (now Park University) outside of Kansas City before attending Columbia University in New York, where he graduated in 1915 with a master’s degree in American history.

For the next four years, Robb worked as a history teacher. In the spring of 1917, he was selected to be the principal of Great Bend High School in Great Bend, Kansas. However, as World War I was raging in Europe, he resigned from that position in the fall to join the Army.

Robb trained to be an officer for three months before he was assigned to help lead the 369th Infantry, 93rd Division — an all-Black unit made up of New York National Guardsmen who



Photo courtesy defense.gov

Army 1st Lt. George Robb

became better known as the Harlem Hellfighters. The unit was sent to France by steamer ship in January 1918 to join the 4th French Army as part of the American Expeditionary Forces.

That summer, Robb took part in the Champagne-Marne and Aisne-Marne campaigns. His biggest show of valor, however, came during the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, the largest fought by AEF troops and the war’s most deadly battlefield. The offensive began in late September 1918, around the same time Robb was promoted to first lieutenant.

On Sept. 29, Robb was leading his platoon in an assault near Sechault, France, when he was severely wounded by machine gun fire. Instead of moving to the rear to get treatment, though, he stayed with his men until he was ordered

to the aide station by his commanding officer.

About 45 minutes later, he returned to the front lines and stayed on duty all night, inspecting his platoon’s lines and setting up outposts. He was wounded again the next morning, but again, he refused to seek medical attention.

Later in the day, Robb was wounded twice more by a bursting shell, which also killed his commanding officer and two other company officers. Robb quickly assumed command of the entire company in their stead, organizing its position in the trenches. He ended up being the only officer in his battalion to advance beyond Sechault, clearing machine gun nests and sniping posts as they went and even capturing a key railroad unit.

Robb’s leadership was a large part of why the battalion was able to hold its objective. His courage, despite his many wounds, set a wonderful example for the enlisted men he commanded. However, the win came at a high cost. The 369th suffered some of the worst casualties of the war by any American regiment. About one-third of the unit was either wounded or killed.

The Meuse-Argonne Offensive was the last major battle of World War I. It knocked out Germany’s last manpower reserves, helping to break the stalemate in the trenches and force the Germans out of France. The war ended on Nov. 11, 1918. Robb’s courage and tenacity were honored on April 16, 1919, when Army Brig. Gen. William H. Sage — a

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Later in the day, Robb was wounded twice more by a bursting shell, which also killed his commanding officer and two other company officers.

## THE UNION ADVOCATE

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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.

# What Older Adults Need to Know About Flu and COVID-19 Vaccines

FAMILY FEATURES

Older weather brings a change in seasons and often an uptick in flu and COVID-19 cases. The viruses that cause COVID-19 and flu keep changing and infecting thousands of people each year, with older adults being most at risk. The vaccines are updated to provide protection against the viruses currently circulating in communities.

“Vaccines are the best way to prevent serious illness from flu and COVID-19,” said Dr. Nirav D. Shah, principal deputy director of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). “People who get flu or COVID-19 after getting vaccinated are much less likely than those who did not get a vaccine to get very sick or go to the hospital.”

Here are answers to commonly asked questions about flu and COVID-19 vaccines from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services *Risk Less. Do More.* public education campaign.



Photos courtesy of Shutterstock

### Which older adults should get vaccinated?

The CDC says all people ages 6 months and older should get updated 2024-2025 COVID-19 and flu vaccines. Adults ages 65 and older have the greatest risk of infection or having to go to the hospital from sickness. Getting these vaccines is important for older people who live in nursing homes or other places where a lot of people live together and viruses can spread easily.

### When should older adults get vaccinated?

The best time to get the flu and COVID-19 vaccines is in September and October. If that’s not possible, then getting vaccinated later in the fall and winter can still help limit serious symptoms. Getting these vaccines early is not recommended given that immunity may start to wane just as respiratory viruses usually peak.

### Can older adults get the flu and COVID-19 vaccines together?

It is safe for older adults to get both the flu and COVID-19 vaccines at the same time. For most people, it’s also simpler to get them during the same visit. Getting the vaccines in different arms is recommended.

### Why should older adults get vaccinated?

Vaccines are the best way to protect yourself from serious sickness and death. Older adults have a higher risk of serious illness. As people grow older, their immune systems tend to weaken, and older adults are more likely to have pre-existing health issues that may put them at higher risk. Most people who end up in the hospital for flu or COVID-19 are older adults – especially older adults who have not been vaccinated. More than 95% of adults who went to the hospital for COVID-19 last year had not gotten the updated vaccine.

### What should people who support older adults with their health care decisions know?

Flu and COVID-19 vaccines help people *risk less* severe illness and *do more* of what they enjoy. Yet many people are unaware of the benefits of these vaccines. That’s why it’s important that people talk with their older family members about getting flu and COVID-19 vaccines this season.

Talk to your doctor about the updated flu and COVID-19 vaccines as well as treatment options. You can also learn more at [cdc.gov/RiskLessDoMore](https://cdc.gov/RiskLessDoMore).



## HONOR

From page 2

Medal of Honor recipient himself — bestowed the nation’s highest honor upon the first lieutenant. The ceremony was held at an amphitheater in Salina, Kansas, about 20 minutes from where Robb grew up. Hundreds attended the special event, newspapers at the time reported.

After the war, Robb returned to Kansas and to civilian life. He married Winona McLatchey, and they had two daughters. The former soldier served as the postmaster in Salina for about 12 years before being appointed as the state auditor in 1935, a position he held for more than 20 years.

Robb died on May 14, 1972 — four days before his

85th birthday. He is buried in Gypsum Hill Cemetery in Salina.

His memory lives on at the George S. Robb Centre for the Study of the Great War, which was established in 2005 at his alma mater, Park University.

The center is home to the Valor Medals Review Project, which began in 2019 after a bipartisan congressional effort called for a review of the records of Black and minority World War I service members who may have been denied certain honors due to racism of the time. In 2024, that review is ongoing.

The Valor Medals Review Project is the first to focus on service member records from World War I. Records for minorities who served in World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War have also received reviews over the past few decades.

## MEET

From page 1

and even joined volunteers on the phones, talking with voters.)

After being recognized in a short speech at the restaurant, Walz talked about how he and his family had had an opportunity to visit Selma, Alabama, “a transformational place,” he said, continuing: “Georgia is also a transformational place. (Referring to Joe Biden winning it during the previous election.) Once again the Presidential race is running right through this restaurant. We know that the words spoke here. That hopefulness. That joy. When we carry signs, when we talk about politicking, its about the future.

“And I would end by saying (a remark he twice attributed to Democratic Presidential candidate Kamala Harris) the mark of a leader is not taking people down, it’s lifting people up.”

After getting food to go - he ordered the Allman Brothers-inspired special, The Midnight Rider chicken biscuit - Walz returned to the airport where he reportedly headed up north to Atlanta for more political appearances.

## RAISE

From page 1

opposition from DoD and various administrations. Opponents complained about cost and necessity, while we argued, correctly, that the cost was negligible compared to the cost of constant turnover and training. We also emphasized the issue of equity and the negative impact on morale that this continuing inequity imposed.

We also repeatedly asked Congress to introduce bills that would mandate equal pay boundaries between the two pay systems, but they didn’t advance because too few lawmakers had Wage Grade employees in their districts who would benefit from the change.

AFGE never gave up on this fight. We managed to get language in a defense authorization bill that instructed OPM to fix the issue, and that made a big difference. AFGE also got a firm commitment from then presidential candidate Joe Biden to fix the inequity. We still faced stiff opposition from DoD, but we finally succeeded in getting everyone

to fix the problem.

AFGE is extremely proud of our accomplishment on this issue for Wage Grade employees in addition to another big accomplishment 20 years ago when we succeeded in getting language in every year’s appropriations bill giving all Wage Grade employees the exact same annual pay adjustment as their GS counterparts who work in the same location. Previously, many Wage Grade employees got a smaller raise because Congress for decades has prevented WG pay to rise by more than the average GS raise but had never insisted on any kind of minimum raise. AFGE added a floor to the ceiling which resulted in all WG employees receiving the same annual pay adjustment as their GS coworkers within each GS locality.


Submit comments on the proposed rule

The rule will be available for public inspection on Monday Oct. 7, but the 60-day period doesn’t start until Friday, Oct. 11. AFGE urges members to submit comments in support of it - from the website.

# JOIN AFGE IN 4 EASY STEPS


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### STEP 2:

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### 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)





Photos courtesy of Shutterstock

# Keep Cold and Flu Season at Bay

## FAMILY FEATURES

It doesn't take much for cold and flu symptoms to take over. Even a mild case of the sniffles can make it difficult to navigate the demands of everyday life. It's virtually impossible to avoid germs altogether, but you can make sure you're ready to fight off an infection, whether it's a minor cold or a full-blown case of the flu.

"I always share a few easy and simple methods with my patients when cold and flu season comes back around to keep them in the best shape," said Dr. Tim Tiutan, board-certified internal medicine physician. "Not only does getting ahead offer protection, but knowing what to do when symptoms start to come on, and what to have in your medicine cabinet, can help ease the burden of an oncoming illness."

Preparation and prevention play important roles before a bug hits, but it's also valuable to know how to effectively treat an illness and keep your loved ones from getting sick.

## Prevent

Short of stashing yourself away in a bubble, there aren't many failsafe ways to fully avoid germs. However, some basic hygiene and preventive care can go a long way toward minimizing your risk. Regularly washing your hands can help get rid of germs before you accidentally introduce them to your eyes, mouth or nose. Be especially diligent after spending time in crowded places.

Maintaining an overall healthy lifestyle also helps ensure you're in optimal condition if you do get sick. That means eating a nutritious, well-rounded diet and keeping up with your exercise routine. Also be sure to talk to your doctor or pharmacist about getting a flu shot; while it may not fully prevent you from getting sick, in most cases it helps your body fight back and keeps your symptoms manageable.

## Prepare

Knowing you can't completely eliminate your exposure to germs, it's a good idea to ensure you have everything you need to fight a cold or flu on hand. At least once a year, give your medicine cabinet a thorough cleaning. Discard any expired medications and replace products that have run low, especially those designed to help fight symptoms like pain relievers, fever reducers, decongestants, antihistamines and cough syrups.

It's also a good time to restock items like tissues, cough drops, hand sanitizer and antibacterial soap. Medical supplies like thermometers and humidifiers also come in handy when you're under the weather; check to be sure yours are in good working order and consider adding any supplies you don't already have, such as a blood pressure cuff or home oximeter.

## Treat

Once you're sick, sleep is one of the best remedies. Your body can redirect energy toward healing when you're sleeping, which helps boost your immune system, so give yourself permission to rest when you're feeling down.

In addition to getting enough rest, it's important to treat your symptoms, not just mask them. Because symptoms like fever, runny nose, chest congestion, cough and more can indicate a more serious problem, finding the root cause of the symptoms can be a more effective treatment strategy.

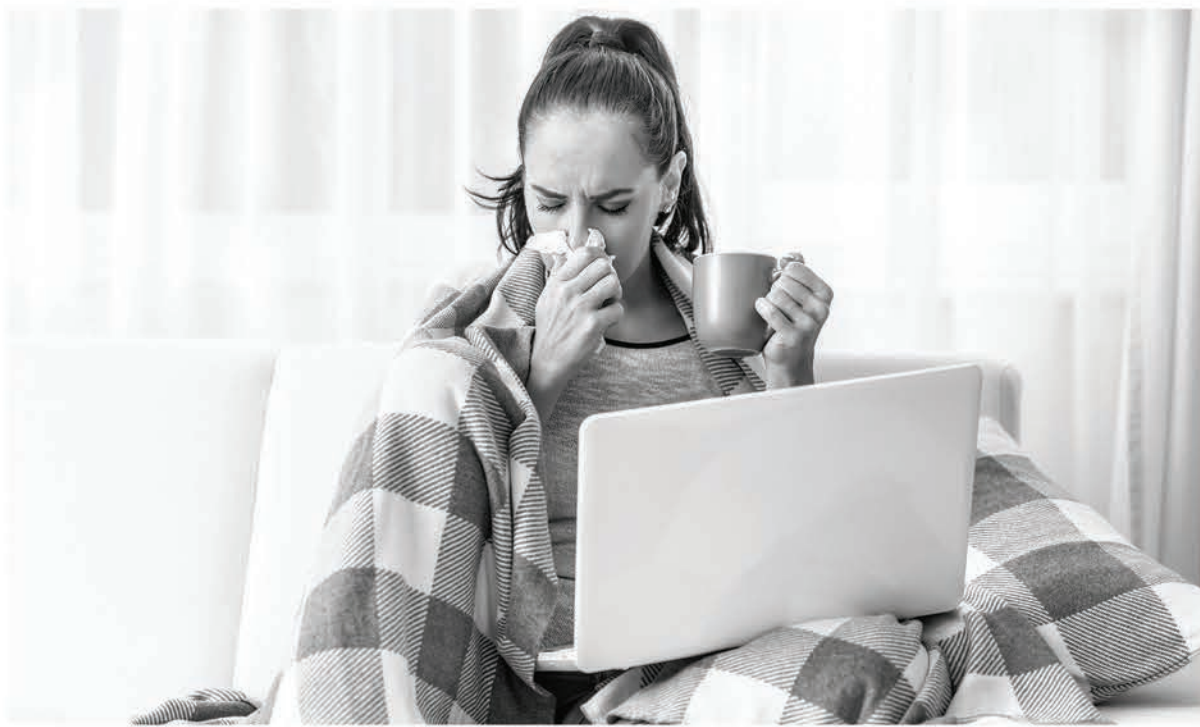
For example, some common remedies for chest congestion only mask the symptoms. Many doctors recommend an option like Mucinex 12-Hour because it treats the cause of chest congestion by thinning and loosening excess mucus. One dose lasts up to 12 hours, helping you clear mucus and relieve chest congestion.

## Contain

Getting rest and managing your symptoms are easier when you stay at home, but it's also the best way to prevent spreading germs to others. It's not always practical, but if you can, limit yourself to one area of the house, away from family members. Cough into your elbow or a tissue, never your hands. Use antibacterial hand sanitizer and wipe down surfaces to minimize others' contact with your germs.

Be especially wary of spending time with anyone who has a compromised immune system while you're contagious, including those with pre-existing conditions, older adults and pregnant women. Take advantage of delivery or curbside services for essentials like groceries and talk with your employer about working remotely or using sick time until you're feeling better.

Find more advice to help fight this cold and flu season at [Mucinex.com](https://www.mucinex.com).



## When to Call for Help if You're Feeling Lousy

If you're experiencing cold symptoms, you might wonder when it's appropriate to see a doctor for further evaluation. While most colds resolve on their own within a week or two, there are certain instances when seeking medical attention is advisable.

**High Fever:** If your fever persists for more than three days or reaches 102 F or higher, consult a health care provider.

**Persistent or Severe Headaches:** If you experience persistent or severe headaches that are not alleviated by over-the-counter medication, it's advisable to consult a health care provider, as this could indicate a more serious underlying issue.

**Persistent Symptoms:** If your symptoms worsen or don't improve after a week, seek medical advice.

**Unusual Symptoms:** If you experience uncommon or concerning symptoms during a cold, such as extreme fatigue, confusion, dehydration or a high fever that doesn't respond to treatment, consult

your doctor promptly for a proper diagnosis and treatment plan.

**Trouble Breathing:** Difficulty breathing, chest pain or wheezing can indicate a more severe respiratory condition and warrant medical attention.

**High-Risk Individuals:** For individuals at high risk of complications from colds, such as pregnant women, the elderly or individuals with conditions like diabetes or heart disease, it's important to seek advice early to prevent any potential complications.

Remember, your health care provider can offer guidance tailored to your specific situation, helping you manage your cold effectively and ensure optimal recovery.

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I got bored watching the earth turn. So after 24 hours I called it a day.

What instrument can only be played by sheep? The tubaaa

## Starts With A

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

ABANDON	ABOLISH	ABOVE
ABSORB	ABYSS	ACCEPT
ACHE	ACNE	ACTORS
ADDED	ADOBE	ADULT
ADVERB	AGELESS	AIRSHIP
ALBUM	ALFREDO	ANIMALS
APPLE	ARTIC	ASPECT
ATTIC	AVOID	AWAKE

## A little humor ...

A man wrote a letter to the IRS: "I have been unable to sleep knowing that I have cheated on my income tax. I understated my taxable income and have enclosed a check for two hundred dollars. If I still can't sleep, I will send the rest."

Why did the cucumber need a lawyer? It was in a pickle.

A police officer was investigating an accident on a narrow two-lane road on which the drivers had hit virtually head-on.

One driver, an extremely elderly woman, kept repeating, "He wouldn't let me have my half of the road!"

After gathering as much information as possible, the officer approached the other

driver, who was examining his own damage. The police officer said, "That old lady says you wouldn't let her have her half of the road. Why not?"

In exasperation, the man turned from his smashed car and said, "Officer, I would have been more than happy to give her half of the road, if she would have just let me know which half she

wanted."

Heckling in the courtroom had constantly interrupted the trial, and the judge had had enough.

"The next person who interrupts the proceeding will be thrown out of my court!" he said severely, at which the defendant yelled, "Hooray!"

A group of kindergarteners was on a class outing to their local police station where they saw pictures, tacked to a bulletin board, of the ten most-wanted men.

One of the youngsters pointed to a picture and asked if it really was the photo of a wanted person.

"Yes," answered the policeman.

"Well," wondered the child, "why didn't you keep him when you took his picture?"

A police officer saw a lady driving and knitting at the same time, so after driving next to her for a while, he yelled, "Pull over!"

"No!" she called back. "It's a pair of socks!"

A man was speeding down the highway. An officer

## CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12			
13					14			15						
16					17			18						
19					20			21	22					
					23			24						
25	26	27			28			29		30	31	32	33	34
35					36			37		38		39		
40								41		42		43		
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48								49		50		51		52
								53		54		55		56
57	58	59	60							61		62	63	64
65								66	67			68		
69								70				71		
72								73				74		

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L	R	O	N	S		P	A	R		W	E	S	P	E	S										
S	O	L	O	S		E	L	E		S	E	S	S	P	S										
D	E	R	O	D	E		A	L	E		A	L	E	G	L										
N	O	N	S	O	N		J	A	C	K	S	I	C	L	A	S	S	I	C	L	A	S	S	I	C
							A	V	A		S	S	A	S											
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## STR8TS

No. 700 Tough

			6			3				
	2					7				
										4
					9		6			
						4			2	
	9	6								
						2				
						1				
6		7								

Previous solution - Medium

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

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](http://www.str8ts.com) along with more puzzles, Apple apps and books.

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# A picture is worth a thousand words

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By HENRY BROWN

Let's face it, we're a poor judge of character when the narrative is being presented by someone with a hidden agenda.

As members of Local 987 we must be sensitive to someone that continues to befuddle the membership with lies and innuendoes of great achievements.

There is an old axiom "tomorrow will make all words spoken today either a truth or a confirmed lie tomorrow".

Most of the membership has

we have a foretaste of chaos option. If we understand we can and must do something about it.

As members of local 987, we find ourselves fighting against this poor talent pool of not-so-smart holdovers from the Trusteeship.

They are working night and day to get the travel club back together, your hard-earned membership dollars paid to send that guy that was in charge to a class he intimidated during a conversation that he could teach the class. Not so fast my travel club member. It's called defrauding the membership.

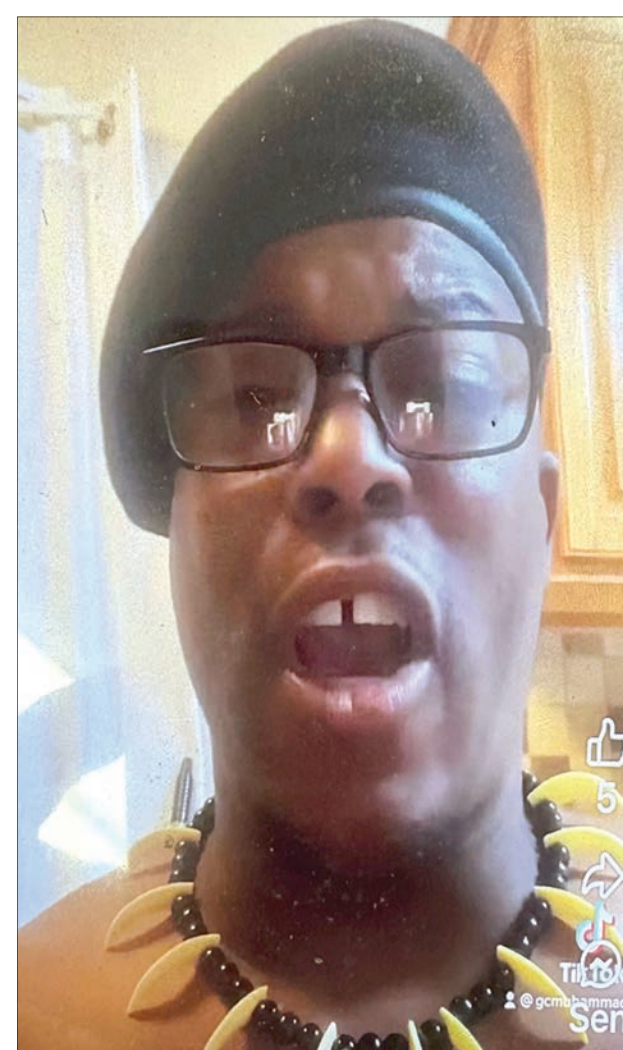
These reruns have cost us over \$15,000. The reframe is often that a member's voice isn't being heard or that an elected official takes on the role of an insider, someone that will not have your best interest as he wheels and deals on behalf of those that either can't serve you or are unwilling to do so.

However, the disaffected voter who doesn't vote should take some time to self-reflect and realize that part of the culprit here is they (the hold-

overs) along with G. C. Muhammad have yet to represent a member's case to a satisfactory conclusion.

He showed up to an arbitration case as a witness for a grievance that he represented the employee. It turns out that he was a better witness for the agency than the employee when asked to read from a template in the case. Suffice it to say that he failed the employee.

Most, if not all, are acquainted with his antics and the real question is: Can you not see the fundamental error in his character traits? Not only can't he represent you, he has become acquainted with the



Greg Collins - aka "GC Muhammad" on social media (Facebook, TikTok).

been bamboozled and led astray with his contentious miss representing the facts or (lying). Wasn't it said that if elected he would have fitness leave restored by December? We are approaching another December and we are no closer to fitness leave than when he first uttered the words.

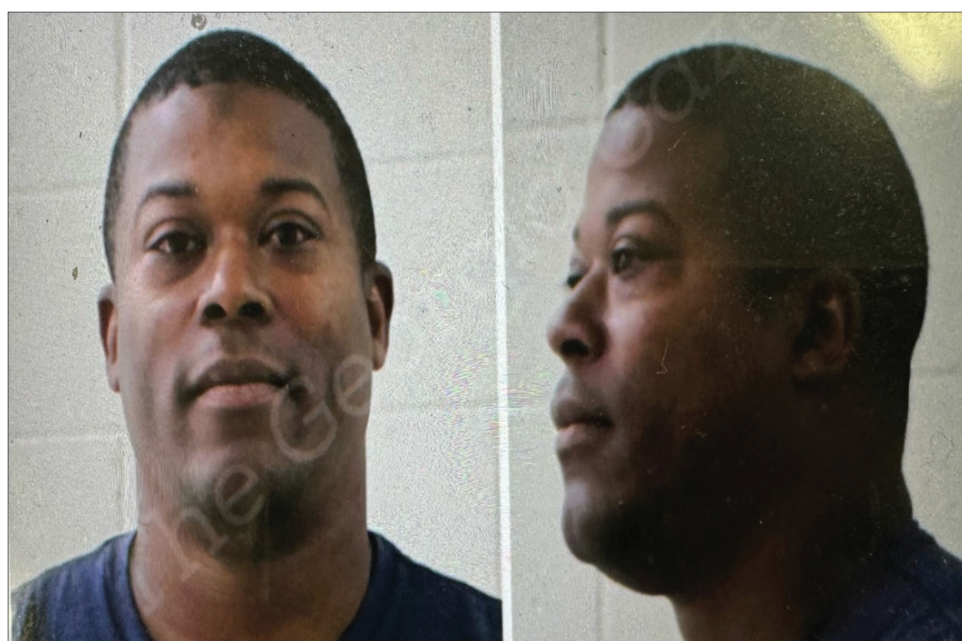
Then there was the: I will not accept a penny of the member's money. Yet his first day in office he presented the Local with a request for pay.

"G.C. Muhammad", is his "slim shady" alter ego (see picture as evidence), but he has also morphed into another tall tail and that is "cowboy".

In this federation, right now,

acronym's MSPB, EEO and grievance, yet in an email he freely admits not having any EEO experience and took a trip to San Diego to the tune of \$3,459.23 of your hard-earned money to attend a two-hour EEO seminar. Did I mention that AFGE has an online EEO course as well as the Atlanta regional office conducts a week long class for \$300? you can't make up this stuff.

The issue here is that he is not who he's trying to convince you of what he says he is. GC Muhammad, aka "cowboy" is not what he says he is. It's when he was elected to the office of VP of Maintenance and a short stint as Executive



Booking photo - Source: georgiagazette.com

VP.

Lured to the office by the pay and lack of responsibility and accountability however, he did a great deal of talking and never acts if nothing else he knows that he has been ineffective.

At some point, our members must feel betrayed by the lack of knowledge and the will to see issues through. There isn't a single point of failure in the election of officers that represent your best interest. But just like talent management, if you elect the wrong people, we as members are to blame.

You as voters have a responsibility and the power to understand and identify the correct qualities that define a successful elected official.

Elect smarter, the basic tenets of what we must have in a representative is to be able to clearly articulate the needs of the members and to function in the halls of power.

Unless we start to elect smarter we're going to consistently see poorly-equipped offi-

cial to represent us. Going to a demand-to-bargain and saying that everything looks okay is not enough. The shame is that G.C. Muhammad, aka "cowboy" has never taken the blame for anything other than to attach blame to someone else.

Candidates that best embody a good representative for the membership consist of two basic tenant's adherence to the needs of the members in the EEO, MSPB and grievance process.

Let's vote for a better representation of you the member so we can continue to get the result you so richly deserve.

We must vote for our Local as if our very existence depends upon on it. Enough of GC Muhammad and his antics.

I was asked how can you tell if he's lying or not. If you just so happen to see him vaping, and not talking any time after not seeing the vape, rest assure he's somewhere lying on someone or disparaging them.

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**Executive VP rerun election**

**Oct. 30**

**7 a.m.-7 p.m.**

**In person**

**Union Hall,**

**1764 Watson Blvd.**

**Vote Henry Brown**

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