Local 987

Proud to make America work

Sept. 10, 2025

Opportunity for military Reservists to join lawsuit seeking unpaid differential pay

By AFGE Leadership

AFGE is proud to join Outten & Golden, LLP, and Burakiewicz & DePriest, PLLC, in representing current and former federal employees in a lawsuit seeking compensation for employees who: (a) served in the military reserves; (b) were deployed to active duty during a national emergency; and (c) were paid less while on active duty than the civilian salary they would have earned. The case name is Brandon Platero v. United States of America, Case No. 25-782 (Ct. Fed. Cl.) (May 6, 2025) ("Platero").

If you are a current or former federal employee who also was deployed to active duty while serving in the military reserves, please continue reading to see if you may be entitled to compensation from this lawsuit.

This case is the first case filed as a proposed class action after the U.S. Supreme Court's recent decision in Feliciano v. Department of Transportation, 145 S.Ct. 1284 (2025), clarifying that all federal employees who also serve as military reservists are entitled to differential or "top up" pay to their civilian salary when deployed "during a national emergency." Because the country has been in ongoing national emergencies dating back many years, it means that all reserv-

In memory ...

The need has never

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Sign up for E-Dues or

or Join.afge.org/L0987

or local987.com to sign

been greater!

direct dues.

up today!

James Scott Douglas

Member since Feb. 24, 2021

Passed away on Aug. 16, 2025

AFG E-Dues

ists' deployments should have qualified them for differential pay if their basic civilian pay would have been higher than the military pay and allowances they received while on active military duty.

Before this decision, the government frequently denied differential pay to civilian employees on active duty if their deployments were not directly "connected" to a national emergency. The recent Supreme Court decision clarified that those denials were illegal.

Now, we need to spread the word among eligible employees that it is time to sign up for the lawsuit. In order to best protect your rights, please learn more and sign up for the case as soon as possible, as the statute of limitations on your claim may be expiring. The electronic sign-up form is available at https://www.militarydiffpay.com/.

Here are some IMPORTANT FAQs about the case:

1. Who is eligible to join the class action?

Platero was filed on behalf of all eligible federal employees who also serve as military reservists in any branch and were:

- deployed to active duty between May 6, 2019, and the present;
- whose military pay and allowances did not meet

See LAWSUIT, page 2

Local hosts 'meet, greet'

Candidates for governor, other offices take center stage

By DON MONCRIEF

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

"It's a great activity. It's bringing together candidates all over the state. On a bipartisan basis. It gives people an opportunity to meet the people who are running. It's important. Probably more important than at any point in our lifetime, that we put the right people in office. Particularly in the midterms coming up. Because we're at a very critical point in history. If we don't put the right folks in and we continue in the direction that we're going, God knows where our country and the world will end up."

That was Congressman Sanford Bishop on the "meet and greet" with local and state candidates held Aug. 30 in the parking lot of AFGE Local 987. The Local, the Middle Georgia Central Labor Council and AFGE were host for the event. Richard Hollar and the Central Labor Council were also cosponsors.

A good number of those who took part were candidates running for governor. They included Keisha Lance Bottoms. The attorney and former Atlanta mayor (2018 to 2022) said she was there to, "earn your support. We've got a lot of challenges in this state, many are the result of what's happening in Washington, D.C. I asked Congressman Bishop was it as bad as it appeared on TV. He said it was even worse.

"So that means it's time to have a battle-tested leader who knows how to push back. Who knows how to stand up for FIGHT A COM, FAIRNIZE, & SECTOR

Congressman Sanford Bishop, center, talks with others taking part in the community-wide "meet and greet" held Aug. 30 in the parking lot of AFGE Local 987. (AFGE Local 987 photo/Don Moncrief)

FGE LOCAL 987 WOULD LIKE TO THANK ALL OF THE CANDIDATES AND ORGANIZATIONS WHO CAME OUT IN SUPPORT OF THE COMMUNITY-WIDE "MEET AND GREET" - IN TURN MAKING IT A HUGE SUCCESS! THANK YOU!

Georgia and how to get things done."

"Just a few of my priorities," she continued, "are to expand Medicaid in this state. Today we are kicking off football. College football. We love to talk about beating Alabama and LSU, but Alabama and Louisiana are beating us in healthcare. They have expanded Medicaid because we've not done it in

this state. Rural hospitals are closing. There are over three hundred thousand people who don't have coverage costing us today over seven hundred million dollars. We haven't even gotten to the big ugly bill yet."

Bottoms also said she was for giving relief to teachers, eliminating their state income tax for one, as well as providing affordable housing and supporting small businesses and employers.

Olu Brown is also running for governor. The pastor, small business owner and author, said he believed, "All of Georgia matters, and you need a governor who cares about all people, and who focuses on all of Georgia ... I am fighting for working families!" He repeated, three times to be exact, each one building in intensity: "I am fighting for working families!"

State senator and governor candidate Jason Estevez said it was not lost on him that on Labor Day "our workers and the organizations that organize them are under attack. In ways that they've never been under attack before. And it is time **See CANDIDATES, page 3 and 6**



AFGE Local 987 Trustee/Treasurer Jeanette McElhaney, Centerville Mayor J. Micheal Evans, center, and AFGE District 5 District Manager Kevin Harper talk about the day's activities. (AFGE Local 987 photo/Don Moncrief)

Public opposition growing in response to Trump's attacks on public institutions, labor rights and personal freedoms

By AFGE Leadership

President Trump's policies targeting our federal government programs, our labor rights, and our personal freedoms as U.S. citizens is being met with growing public resistance.

A coalition of more than two dozen leaders from civil rights, labor, and religious organizations held a March on Wall Street on Thursday, Aug. 25, to protest the administration's assault on diversity, equity, and inclusion programs and on immigration policies that are militarizing our city streets.

"Donald Trump's attacks on DEI were only the prelude, as he is now dangling threats to take over American cities led by Black mayors," said the Rev. Al Sharpton, founder and president of the National Action Network, which organized the Wall Street protest. "If we leave him unchecked

What workers should do: Call your congressional offices and make sure your representative has sponsored the discharge petition to bring the Protect America's Workforce Act to a vote. This critical bill would overturn Trump's union-busting executive order and restore collective bargaining rights to all federal workers. A discharge petition would allow the bill to bypass committees and bring a bill directly to the floor for a vote.

- AFGE Leadership

Membership meeting
Local 987 will have a membership meeting Aug. 21 at 5 p.m. It will be held at
Union Hall, located at 1764 Watson Blvd.
Membership will be verified. You can
make updates to your contact information by calling Union Hall at
478-922-5758 or by emailing
Linda Baxter at linda@afgelocal987.org
or Jeanette McElhaney at
jmac@afgelocal987.org.

on DEI, if we do not get out and march, if we do not speak up, he will completely erase the freedoms our parents and our grandparents fought, bled, and died for."

Joining in the march was AFGE National

protest goers of the true reason for the attacks on the federal workforce.
"Donald Trump retaliated against

President Everett Kelley, who reminded

See OPPOSITION, page 3



Fall yard cleanup tips from lawn care experts

(StatePoint) Fall means school is back in session, football season's beginning, and your lawn is going to need some extra care to stay healthy

"With the change in seasons, your lawn care routine is also going to change to include less mowing and more dealing with leaves and debris," says Nick Heiser, product manager at Exmark. "And if you've got a lot of debris and material to get up and off your lawn, you're going to want to do that by bagging when you mow."

In "Lawn Mowing Tips for Fall Yard Cleanup," a video on Exmark's Backyard Life site, Heiser explains that doing so might require switching out the type of blade you have on your mower. While most mowers come standard with high-lift notch blades, which are good for many cutting conditions, for heavy bagging, you should be using an extreme blade. This will do a few things

- It will create an aggressive lift that creates the vacuum and suction needed to pull up debris.
- It will evenly cut up, break down and compact everything on your lawn to help the bagging sys-

tem do its job more effectively.

Once you've cleared most of the debris, you should switch back to mulching for the last few cuts of the season to put nutrients back into the ground and allow the lawn to retain moisture. A micro mulch system, which is an easy-to-use and easy-to-install lawn mower accessory, provides an extra set of blades to break down clippings to a fine mulch, then directs the area of deposit, so you control where the mulch lands.

Finally, fall is the best time for aeration for cool-season grasses. Aeration is essential to ensuring that the roots of your lawn get plenty of air and the nutrients they need before winter.

To view the video, visit Exmark's Backyard Life, a unique multimedia destination focused on helping homeowners improve their outdoor living spaces. There you can also download additional tips and view other Exmark Original

Now that you're armed with these fall yard cleanup tips, you can head out to take care of your lawn with confidence.

Maximize outdoor time with kids, pets during back-to-school season

(StatePoint) As the back-to-school frenzy kicks in, it's easy to get caught up in all that goes along with prepping for a new school year. But before the homework and afterschool activities take over, remember to save some time for soaking up the final days of warm weather.

Your backyard can be more than just an outdoor area. With help from products like Spruce, it can be a welcoming retreat for your kids, pets, and family memories. These quick tips will help you get the most out of your outdoor space so you can

enjoy the final dog days of summer.

Before They Play, Make Sure It's Okay Outdoor toys, sports equipment and playsets

have been the real summer superstars. But sun, rain, and repeated use can cause wear and tear. Inspect equipment for loose bolts, splinters, rust, or cracks. A few minutes of maintenance now can help keep playtime injury and stress-free.

Designated Fun Zones

To make sure everyone has a great time in the backyard, it's a good idea to create specific areas for both pets and kids. For your four-legged friends, set aside a grassy space for them to run and play with some soft balls and tug toys. For kids, a designated paved area is a great place for riding bikes and scooters or getting creative with chalk art. Having these specific zones gives everyone a chance to burn off much needed energy.

The back-to-school transition can feel hectic, but



carving out time to maximize your outdoor space now means getting more time to savor these final warm days. It's a simple way to enjoy the season's last moments and help your kids start the school year refreshed, energized, and ready to thrive.

3 things every older adult should do for their health this Fall

(StatePoint) For older adults, fall is an important time to focus on health and wellness.

According to Ryan Kocher, who leads Medicare growth for HealthSpring, the new brand for Health Care Service Corporation's Medicare business, formerly owned by the Cigna Group, the following three tasks are essential for seniors to complete as cool weather sets in.

An influenza vaccine can help prevent serious illness due to flu. As immune defense diminishes with age, older adults are increasingly susceptible to flu complications. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends the use of higher dose flu vaccines for people 65 years and older. This fall, in advance of flu season, visit your healthcare provider or pharmacist to get the right vaccine for you. This is also a good time to catch up on any other immuni-

zations that your provider rec-

Medicare is the government health insurance program for Americans 65 and older and others who qualify. Many Medicare beneficiaries choose or change their plans during the Medicare Annual Enrollment Period, which takes place between Oct. 15 and Dec. 7. Check out these tips for selecting a plan: • Check for plan changes:

Review your plan every AEP, especially if you've experienced changes to your health, lifestyle or finances. It's especially important to read your Annual Notice of Change letter - delivered every September - to find out about any modifications to

your current plan. • Dig into the details: A good plan is one that includes your favorite providers and specialists and covers the medications you

currently take. When reviewing

plans, take these factors into

consideration.

• Consider all your options: Medicare Advantage plans cover everything Original Medicare does, so do your research to see if these plans will work for you.

· Learn more: Before enrolling in a particular plan, be sure you understand the details. Call Medicare at 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; TTY users can call 1-877-486-2048. Or, visit the Medicare Plan Finder website at Medicare.gov/ plan-compare. For local assistance, refer to the State Health Insurance Assistance Program website at www.shiptacenter. org. You can also visit individual Medicare plans' websites for

maintain your independence and

vitality as you age.

more information. Annual enrollment also serves Company. as a good reminder to take The appearance of advertisadvantage of all your Medicare ing in this publication, includbenefits. Preventive care and a ing inserts, does not constitute healthy lifestyle can help you endorsement by The Union

September is National Preparedness Month: Be ready!

eptember is National Preparedness Month, and at BBB we're offering a number of tips and resources to help you ensure you're prepared should major

Make a Disaster Plan

An excellent resource for disaster planning is the Ready.gov website, which includes tips and suggestions to be prepared for the impact of stormy weather. Building a plan in advance is key to your family's safety (pets too) during destructive weather. Consider the following:

How will I receive emergency alerts and

What is my shelter plan?

What is my evacuation route?

What is my family/household communication plan? (FEMA offers a template your family can use to build your plan at ready.gov/

Do I have an ample emergency supply

Make a Financial Readiness Plan:

FEMA offers excellent tips on building a financial readiness plan, which can also be accessed at ready.gov. Highlights include: Do a household inventory. Inventory

possessions and document them through photos or a video. This could help if you file insurance claims. Take advantage of technology.

Technology tools include online bill-pay, virtual safe deposit boxes, and USB flash drives. Buy a lockable, fireproof file box. Put

secure, accessible location so you can grab it Rent a safe deposit box. Consider storing

important documents in it and keep it in a

critical documents offsite. For easy access, consider keeping originals in your fireproof box and copies in your safe deposit box.

 Make sure accounts are updated. Review now to confirm that your bank account and other account information is current. Organize your finances and maintain copies of key account information in your fireproof box.

Stormproof Your Home

Now is the time to review your home for areas that need repair or can be strengthened. Here are some areas to consider: Are there any signs of leaks from your

roof or loose shingles? Do you need to shore Does your home have a basement that

may need a sump pump or needs to be waterproofed? Do you have any trees too close to the

house that need to be removed? Are there other areas that need to be

Kelvin Collins

repaired and could worsen during a storm?

Do you need to buy a home warranty? By being proactive in

these areas, you can minimize damage if strong storms roll through. BBB provides lists of BBB Accredited Businesses you can turn to for these

home projects at bbb.org.

Check Your Insurance

Check your current insurance policy to be sure your home has adequate coverage for storm damage, and for coverage to reimburse you for temporary shelter, clothing, furniture, or other items that could be affected by extreme weather.

Build or Replenish an Emergency Supply At ready.gov/kit, you'll find checklists and a printable shopping list to help you build

an emergency supply kit. Once you create or replenish your emergency supply kit, here are some additional things to consider:

Keep canned food in a cool, dry place.

Store boxed food in tightly closed plastic or metal containers.

Replace expired items as needed.

Re-think your needs every year and update your kit as your family's needs change. Since you do not know where you will be when an emergency occurs, prepare and store supplies for home, work, and in your cars.

Check Out Online Retailers & Watch for Price Gouging

Bogus and deceptive online retail sites have been charting at the top of BBB's scams list for the past three years.

While you're stocking up for emergencies, or any time that you're considering purchasing from an unfamiliar retailer, check them out first with BBB. Unfortunately, storm damage can bring price

gouging, which refers to when a seller spikes the prices of goods, services or commodities to a level much higher than is considered reasonable or fair. Buying in advance can help you keep costs down and avoid delays in getting supplies.

Start With Trust: Overall, being prepared will help you keep your family, pets and your home safer. "Start with Trust" by turning to your BBB to get a list of trustworthy companies as part of your plan. Visit BBB.org or call your BBB at 800-763-4222.

LAWSUIT

From page 1

or exceed their basic civilian pay; and

• who were not provided differential or "top ' pay by their civilian agency employer to make up the difference between their military and civilian pay.

2. How do I join the class action?

You MUST fill out and submit the form on the website to join the case and be eligible to receive damages.

Unlike traditional class actions where affected individuals are automatically included, you MUST sign up to be part of a case pending at the Court of Federal Claims alleging a violation of the Reservist Pay Security Act (5 U.S.C. § 5538). Only the people who fill out and submit the necessary forms will be eligible to recover damages from our case in the event of a settlement or judgment in employees' favor.

The link to the sign-up form is: https:// www.militarydiffpay.com/.

3. Can the government retaliate against me if I join the class action?

If you believe that you have been penalized, discriminated against, or disciplined as a result of you receiving this notification, considering whether to join, or joining this lawsuit, please let us know as soon as possible.

AFGE has long advocated for members serving in the nation's armed forces, including winning a major victory at the Supreme Court in 2023 that preserved the collective bargaining rights for dual-status technicians working

for National Guards in a civilian role. Outten & Golden LLP has brought some of the most impactful workers' rights class actions in the country, including on behalf of service members challenging major corporations' failure to comply with the Uniformed Services Employment & Reemployment Rights Act. Burakiewicz & DePriest PLLC is one of the leading firms with a specialty in representing federal employees and unions and has worked closely with AFGE on numerous cases seeking unpaid wages.

We are proud to have filed the first class action lawsuit after the Supreme Court's landmark decision on this issue, but there is much more work to do in order to ensure that every

eligible worker can recover. If you believe you may be eligible to participate in this lawsuit, please visit the case website and submit the form to join the case.

Again, you can sign up to be part of the lawsuit at: https://www.militarydiffpay.com/.

You will find more information about the case on the website.

Please remember, you MUST fill out and submit the necessary forms to be eligible to recover damages from our case (although recovery is not guaranteed).

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Outten & Golden LLP by email at OGMilitaryDiffPay@outtengolden.com or by calling on the phone during normal business hours at (202) 769-3825. To make sure you receive emails about this lawsuit, please add OGMilitaryDiffPay@outtengolden.com to your email address book.

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Houston Home Journal Editor/layout and design **Don Moncrief**

Publisher

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tos, etc to don.moncrief@afgelocal 987.org. For questions about story content, to pass on story ideas or to request coverage, please contact the aforemen-

Community-wide "meet and greet"























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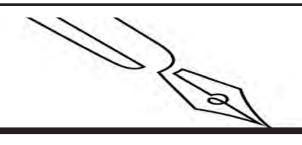
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Just for

King Crossword

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- **ACROSS** 1 Cambridge sch. Tizzies 9 NPR's Shapiro 12 "Rocks" 13 Old **Testament** book
- 14 Guitar master Paul
- 15 Puzzle solver's epiphany 17 "Tasty!"
- 18 Director DuVernay 19 Postpones
- 21 Supervised 24 Appear 25 Blackbird 26 Back talk 28 "Swell!"
- 31 Aliases 33 Corn core 35 "Go no further!"
- 36 Nerd 38 "Don't Start Now" singer
- Lipa 40 Tolkien creature
- 41 First lady of scat 43 Distress sig-
- nals 45 Band around
- a sleeve 47 Reunion gp.
- 48 Grazing tract

55 Yo-Yo Ma's instrument

cape

56 Farm female 57 Dijon denial

54 New England

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- 2 German pronoun
- 3 Chai, e.g. 4 Digging tool
- 5 Itinerant
- 6 British verb
- singer 27 Group of
 - whales

- ric 9 Yale, to Jodie **Foster**
- 10 Martin (cognac) 11 Doctrines
- 20 Cask sedi-
- ment 21 Round of
- applause 22 Sufficient, old-style
- 23 "Save Me"
- 29 Vocal quality

8 Lustrous fab- 32 Vend

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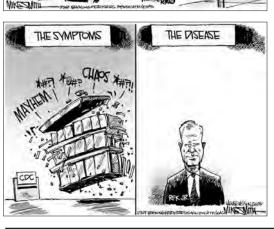
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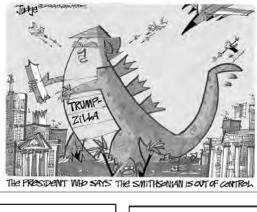
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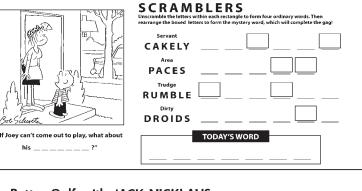
- 37 Laundry additive 39 Los -, New
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- Shepard 46 Gambling city
- 50 Unwell
- 51 Formerly known as 52 Hogwarts
- messenger 53 Old
- Oldsmobile



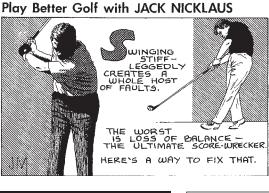








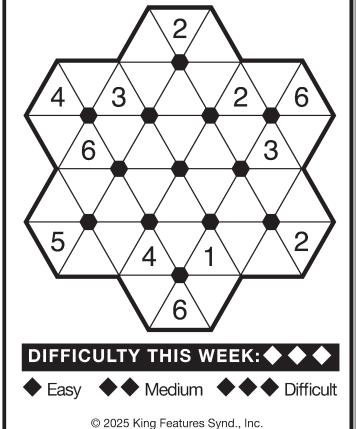
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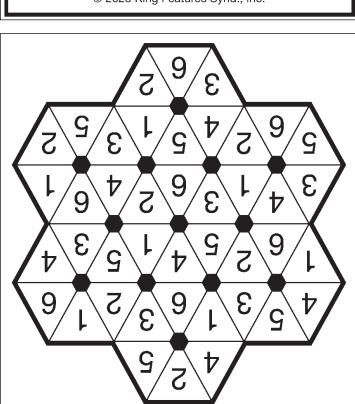


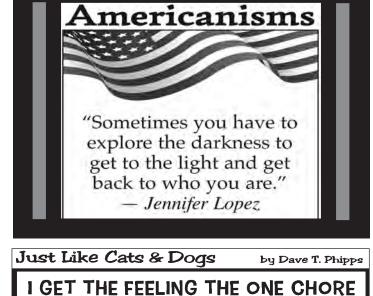


NOMELTARES by Japheth Light

There are 13 black hexagons in the puzzle. Place the numbers 1 - 6 around each of them. No number can be repeated in any partial hexagon shape along the border of the puzzle.







THAT'S GOING TO TAKE YOU THE MOST TIME WILL BE GETTING UP.

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Solution time: 22 mins.

Answers King Crossword

Weekly SUDOKU

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that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

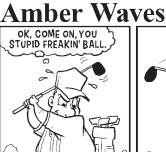
Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆◆ ♦ Moderate ♦ ♦ Challenging

♦ ♦ HOO BOY! © 2025 King Features Synd., Inc.

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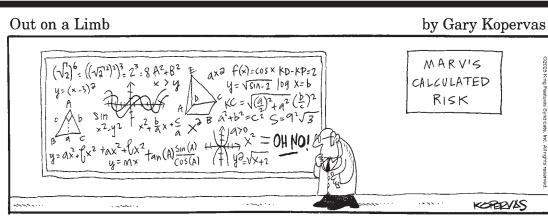
Weekly SUDOKU









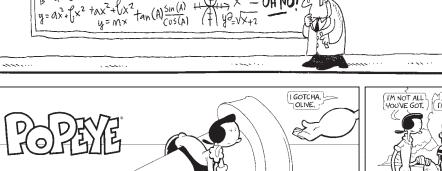


I KIN REPLACE A BOAT. I KIN'T REPLACE YOU.









OH, POPEYE! I'M SO SORRY









O THMBLE THEATRE
PRESENTS
"SHADOW OVER
FIN'S SOUTH"
PART 3

















GO FIGURE!

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive

at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the

diagram by following the arith-

metic signs in the order they are

given (that is, from left to right

and top to bottom). Use only the

numbers below the diagram to

complete its blank squares and

use each of the nine numbers

only once.



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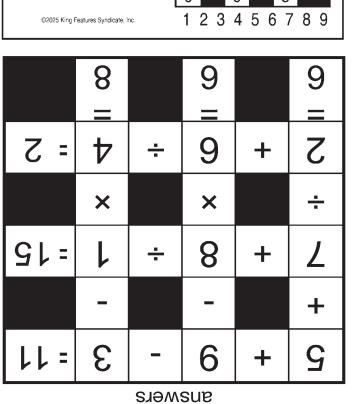
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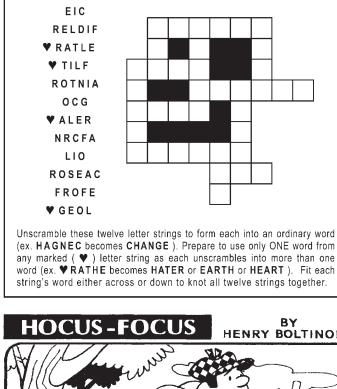
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3 K 3 0 9

guswer

crumbly. Sorry, I'm being brittly honest.

These cookies that you guys baked are too hard and

for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Solution is accomplished by trial and error. Clue: K equals B

NCYPY VAAQWYP NCLN FAZ

KYWIS KTWNNOF CAIYPN.

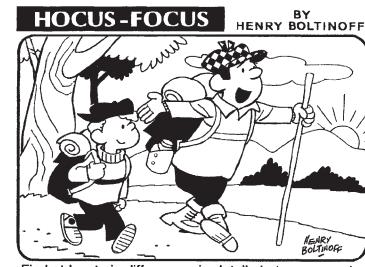
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Go Figure!

This is a simple substitution cipher in which each letter used stands

SZFP KLQYG LTY NAA CLTG LIG VTZDKOF. PATTF, W'D



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



6. Cloud is not as large. stick is shorter. 4. Cap design is different. 5. Thumb is moved. Differences: 1. Tree trunk is wider. 2. Sun is smaller. 3. Walking

CryptoQuip

The Spats



(AFGE Local 987 photo/Don Moncrief)

CANDIDATES

From page 1

for us to come together to work together, to organize together to make sure we are defending and prioritizing our workers.

"I am proud to be running to be the next governor of Georgia, because Georgia deserves better than what they're getting.

"Georgia deserves a governor who is going to stand up and fight against the bullying of a White House that is causing chaos and destruction. That's costing your pocketbooks

Washington, D.C. "We need a government that's

going to stand up for labor. But also work to tackle the issues that have been plaquing Georgia for decades. We need a governor that is going to reduce the cost of living in this state. With childcare, with housing, with healthcare, but also investing in our families, making sure our children have more opportunities they deserve. Those dreams are currently slipping away.

with the work he's doing in

Estevez continued that he would work to bring down the cost of living, sue the Trump administration to "protect jobs", work to ensure living in Warner Robins and elsewhere people were safe and had public education that prepared their children for the future.

Army veteran Ken Yasger said he was running for governor because he loved the country, loved the state and "truly love the people. What I tell people is I want to get away from 'party' politics, red or blue. I truly want Georgia to be red, white and blue. To be 'with' the United States as opposed to 'in'

the United States. We shouldn't be focused on the party. We should be focused on all people no matter where they are, or what they are."

He continued that his priorities were to eliminate state income tax, support legalization of marijuana, legalizing sports betting, "if not all betting. To have more 'personal' liberties as opposed to the government telling us what's bad for us. I'm trying to get us back to core, conservative, values.

"I want Georgia to be Georgia. I don't want the federal government to have its hands in our business ... We give Georgians more freedom at the front of their paycheck instead of giving them two hundred and fifty dollars back at the end of the year. And like I said, more freedom."

He said he was also for increasing pay for teachers, while capping admin salaries in the school systems. "Give it back to the working people," he said, "teachers, bus drivers, cooks, and give more back to the school systems (themselves)."

Two who took part in the

event were Josh McLaurin and Dr. Takosha Swan, both of which are running for lieutenant governor. McLaurin is a member of the Georgia State Senate.

Swan is an Army veteran and appointed public official, who along with six others are over the Georgia Department of Veterans Services.

Another who took part was

Bob Trammell, a former state legislator, county attorney and lawyer. He is running for Georgia's attorney general position. Working for "men and women and working families," he said.

Adrian Consonery Jr. was another. He is running for secretary of state, with a focus, he said, on voting rights, fair and secure elections and licensing and monitoring over Georgia's security markets.

Agencies with booths, providing literature and answering questions, included: Black Voters Matter, the CDC, the A. Philip Randolph Institute, AFL-CIO, Rebuilding Together -Warner Robins, Houston County Democrats and Democratic Socialists of America.





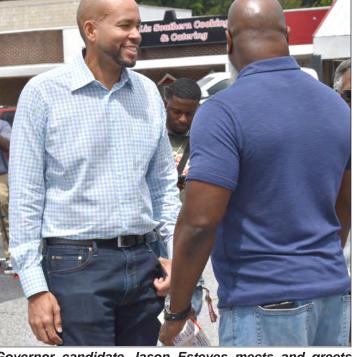




Georgia lieutenant governor candidate Josh McLaurin speaks to those in attendance.



Governor candidate Keisha Lance Bottoms meets and greets a future voter.



Governor candidate Jason Esteves meets and greets

those in attendance.



greetings from the National Office.







Kevin Harper, District 5 District Manager, brings



Georgia attorney general candidate Bob Trammell explains why he is running.



Georgia Secretary of State Candidate Adrion Consonery

Georgia lieutenant governor candidate Takosha Swan meets and greets those in attendance.