

Absence from funeral causes rift

Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

Dear Annie: My children's grandmother passed away a few weeks ago after a long battle with Alzheimer's. Her children decided to have a service in the northeast where her husband is buried and where they all grew up. None of them lives anywhere near that area. I live 1,200 miles away.

I was very close to that family for 13 years before my husband and I divorced. I stayed in contact with his sister for a while by phone and visited and kept in touch with his mother even after I remarried. I hadn't talked to her in the last two years because they removed her phone.

My younger daughter is upset with me because I didn't attend the services. We haven't spoken in two weeks. She feels I should have been there. Believe me, Annie, had I been in driving distance, I surely would have gone. I actually checked into plane tickets, hotel and car rental, and the total for four days would have cost me more than I can afford right now. I didn't want to tell my daughter how tight my finances are. I also couldn't take two days off of work.

My children all went to the

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services, along with their father, and they stayed with an uncle. I was heartbroken when my ex-mother-in-law died. But I am no longer a part of that family like my girls are. They are a wonderful group of people, but it all seemed too much for me. Was I wrong? — *Heartbroken*

Dear Heartbroken: No. Your children had their father and other relatives to comfort them. We think your daughter is grieving and taking it out on you. Call her and apologize for not being able to attend the service, and tell her why. If she still refuses to talk to you, please enlist the help of your other children and, if possible, your ex-husband to intercede on your behalf. And if she seems mired in grief, suggest she look into grief counseling services, often available through her doctor

or the local hospital or hospice.

Dear Annie: This is in response to "The Oldest Sibling," whose brother inherited Dad's military medals and won't hand them down.

My father-in-law served during WWII, and all of his military awards have been lost over the years. We recently came across his discharge papers, which list all of his awards and decorations. An Internet search uncovered the National Archives Veterans Service Records (<http://1.usa.gov/1J07VBY>) where one can request the issue of replacement medals. Because records for many who served were destroyed by fire, it is best to provide them any records one might possess so they can be verified.

"The Oldest Sibling" may even find that the replacement medals will be a more inclusive set than what her brother has. — *Iowa*

Dear Iowa: Thank you so much for providing this information to our readers. We know that replacements are not as emotionally satisfying as medals that Dad actually handled, but they still are something tangible to have as mementos.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). No one is up and on all the time. Mojo comes and goes. Promise yourself that you'll stick with and believe in yourself through thick and thin. You would do it for any one of your friends.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). If you could take the pain away from another, you would, but growing is something no one can do for someone else. Perhaps that's what makes it so difficult to watch. It's almost harder to watch than it is to go through!

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Refuse to succumb to worry. Sing instead of stress; joke instead of getting impatient. Instead of doing something rash, do nothing at all, and problems will absolutely solve themselves.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Some of your best creations, relationships and opportunities have happened by way of accidental magic, and it's going to happen again in the next three days.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). One of your talents is dealing with other people's hot tempers, anxiousness and irritation. You have a way of acknowledging the reality of other people's feelings and thereby deescalating the situation and bringing peace.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Writing things down has magic powers that can somehow go many ways. Writing things down can make them more real or easier to let go of or harder to forget. Use the magic of writing today.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). If people did the right, considerate, fair and loving thing, then no one would need a governing system. The trouble is that even people in the same family can't agree on what the right, considerate, fair and loving thing is.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). If you wind up spending slightly more than you budgeted, don't feel guilt, regret or shame or in any way let the overage stress you out. The ends will find their own magical way of meeting.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Cheerfulness is an often underrated value, though if anyone can turn that around, you can. Your joyful, caring ways will energize all you touch. You never know when you can change someone's life with a smile.

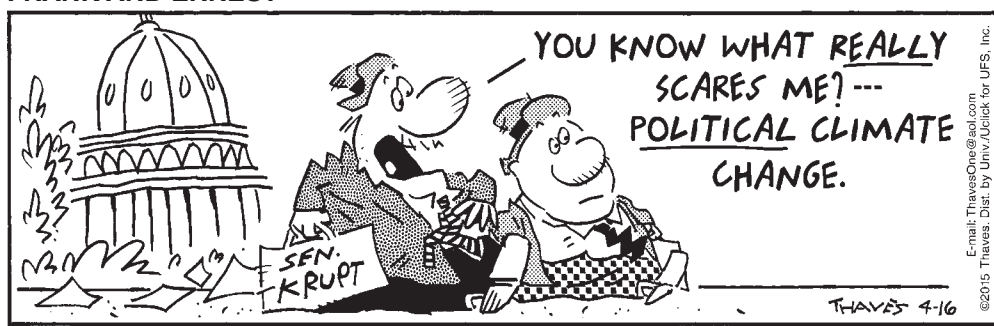
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Fashion sometimes seems silly to you. Why should a perfectly lovely look go in one year and out the other? Well, you don't have to worry about keeping up your classic tastes never go out of style.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You're going to solve the problem going on between two people you love or at least shrink it. Try not to form an opinion before or while you hear both sides.

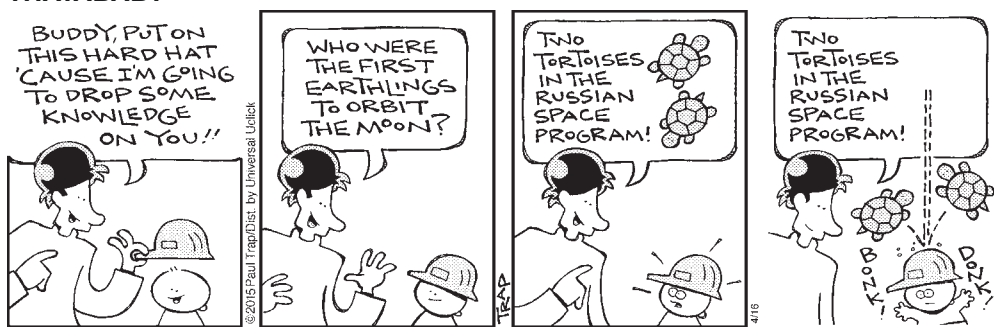
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). What was in favor one day goes out the next. Does that mean it was never true to begin with? You can't help what's trendy. You can only decide whether or not it's for you.

FRIDAY'S BIRTHDAY (April 17). You push yourself this year, and it's by exploring your fears that you'll learn your courage. A rather arbitrary action in May leads to remarkable luck. It won't always be easy to keep your commitments in relationships, but the sheer joy and beauty you experience this summer will make you glad you did. Taurus and Leo people adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 40, 2, 25, 21 and 16.

FRANK AND ERNEST



THATABABY



STONE SOUP



LOLA



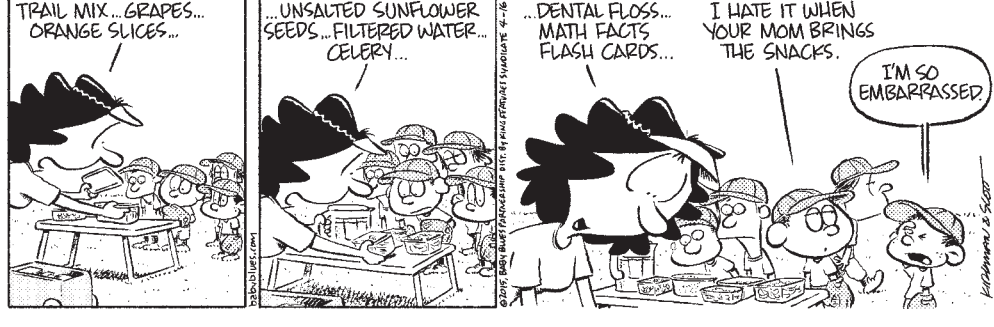
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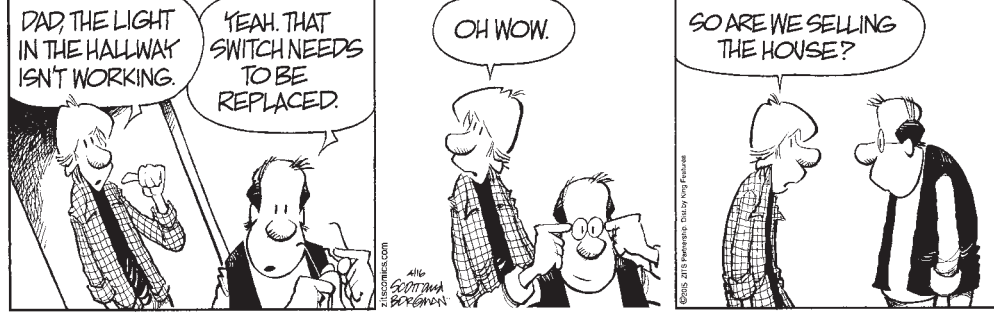
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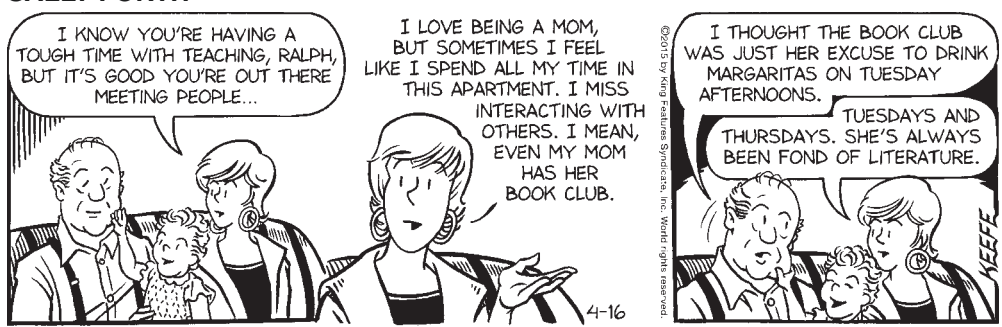
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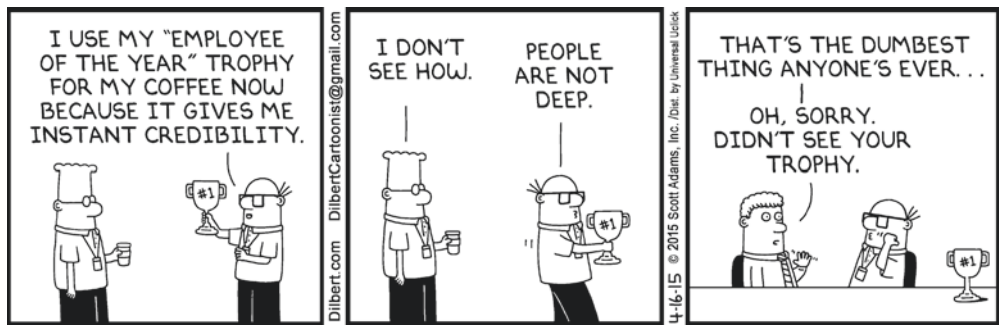
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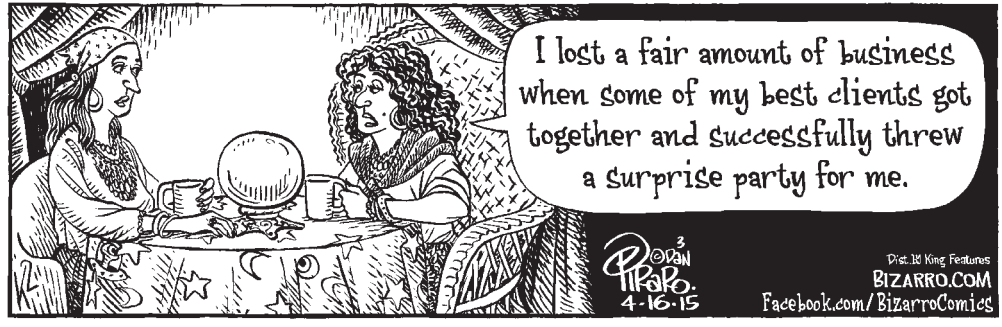
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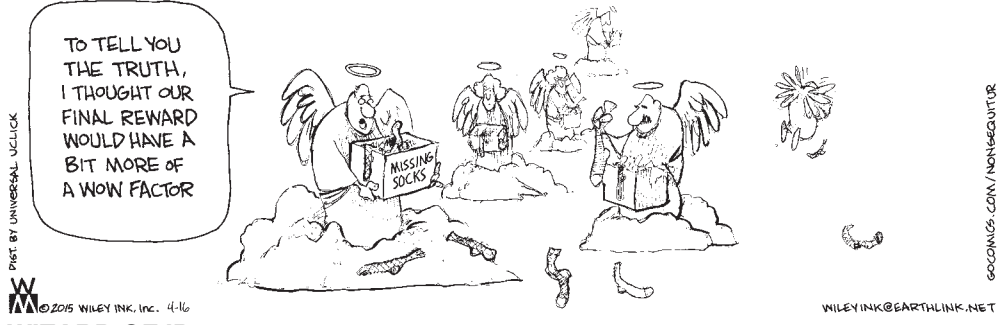
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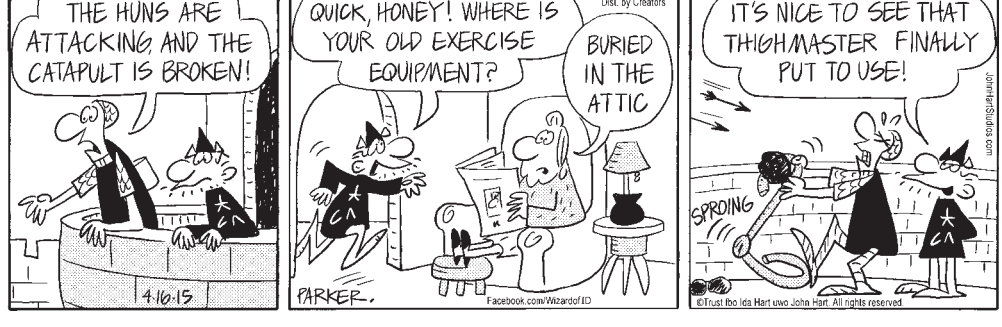
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ROSE IS ROSE

