

Should graduate pay for party?

Tomorrow's horoscope

Dear Annie: I had my high school graduation party at a local restaurant (because our house is too small). My father claimed he was unable to pay for it, and insisted I cover the bill, close to \$1,100, saying he will pay me back later.

I realize that my parents' business sometimes goes through hard times, but Dad still manages to eat out frequently. He's terrible with money, and I am not sure he will ever pay me back. I told him that I expect complete repayment by the middle of August and if I don't get it, I'll start selling his vast collection of unused musical instruments. He doesn't believe me.

I am paying for my first year of college through grants, scholarships, my savings and the money I earn from my job. I never expected anything from my parents because I know they can't afford much. But I had no idea I was going to get stuck with the bill for the party. What do I do? — *Farmer's Daughter*

Dear Daughter: Let's not turn this into a major conflagration. Dad should not have stuck you with a bill for a party neither of you could afford. But selling his musical instruments isn't the answer, either. Try to remain calm

Annie's Mailbox

Creators Syndicate Inc.

Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar



and work out a payment plan with Dad, in writing, with the amount he needs to pay each week until an agreed-upon total is reached. It may take longer than mid-August, and you might also consider paying for part of the bill because the party was for you. But it's better than the all-out war you are contemplating. We also suggest you involve your mother in this transaction since she, too, has a say in the family finances and may bring a more level head to the discussion.

Dear Annie: My husband's parents live several states away. They are both in poor health, one worse than the other. I fear that when one passes away, my husband will want us to move and take care of the other one.

We have two young children and this would involve us leaving

our jobs. When we visit, I am miserable the entire time and have no desire to move. We could not ask the remaining parent to move, either, because they both have jobs, as well.

Our marriage is struggling right now, so living in separate states would not help us repair our problems. And then there's the fact that I would want my husband to do this for my parents. So how can I deny him this? — *Unhappy Wife*

Dear Unhappy: In all fairness, you cannot. Taking care of one set of parents means a willingness to take care of both. But it doesn't necessarily mean moving across the country. If the parents are near retirement age, it makes just as much sense for them to relocate where your jobs are, instead of vice versa, and where family is already established to help in their care.

You and your husband should have this conversation now and talk about realistic alternatives, including retirement or assisted living communities nearby, and the type of medical facilities and senior assistance in the area. If the two of you cannot reach agreement, we recommend asking an unbiased, third party to act as a mediator.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You don't need to be confident to be effective. Some days you're unsure of yourself, and it's actually appropriate for the situation. A lack of confidence can help you learn all you can from the situation.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Though a cynical view may be more intelligent and snark can be hilarious, kindness cannot be overrated. It's connected to compassion, patience and, ultimately, love.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Some believe weakness should be rejected, stomped out, eliminated. Others think weakness can be turned into strength. You believe weakness must be turned into strength. It's the only way to greatness.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). There was a time when you didn't feel you had a right to express yourself. Now you see that speaking your mind and asking for what you need are ultimately better for everyone.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Like oxygen fuels a fire, what you lack fuels your ambition. Therefore, when you're sad or angry about what you lack, it's your choice. You could also apply another emotional tone to the situation — for instance, determination.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Most of the time you don't find yourself in a horrible situation you must endure. That's why boredom is a bigger threat than any other these days and one you'll stave off with the help of an Aquarius.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). When you look at something long enough, you start to unsee it. It's the primary reason people don't constantly celebrate the beauty of their hometown and family members take

one another for granted.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). The bigger obstacles need to be handled with a lever. Look around. What can you use to dislodge this? "Give me a lever long enough and a fulcrum on which to place it, and I shall move the world." — Archimedes

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). The day favors good habits. There's one that's quickly becoming part of your regular routine. Soon this will be deeply ingrained in your manner, and people will see it as "so you."

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You'll soon make the effort to see someone, and that intention, plus the scheduling, travel, parking, etc., will be, in and of itself, a gift. And yet, you still need to bring a gift. You'll find the perfect one today.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Usually, you're the one who has to come up with a plan. Today, someone you trust will present you with ideas you would be wise to accept. Excellent!

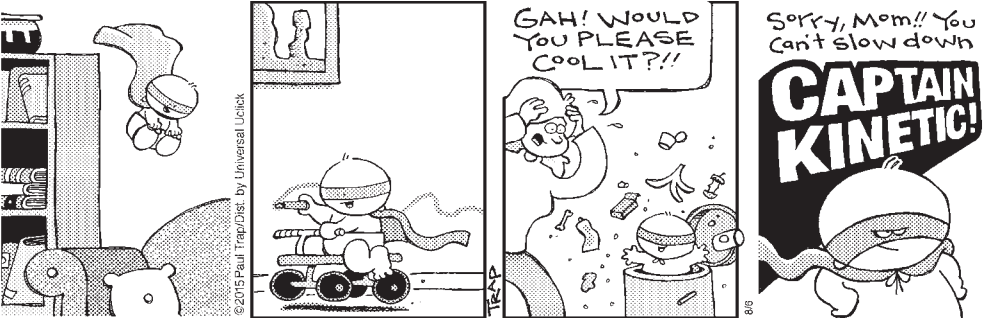
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You like to be liked, but you don't need it. That's why, when you catch yourself subconsciously working for the approval of an authority figure, it bothers you on a deep level. Remember that, ultimately, you are the boss of you.

FRIDAY'S BIRTHDAY (Aug. 7). Go for the long shot! Your bravery will be rewarded in many ways, starting with the companionship of a much-admired friend. September brings a landmark acquisition. You'll sparkle and inspire others to be resourceful and creative in October, a financial high. You'll ink a new deal in January. Sagittarius and Virgo people adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 4, 24, 41, 10 and 19.

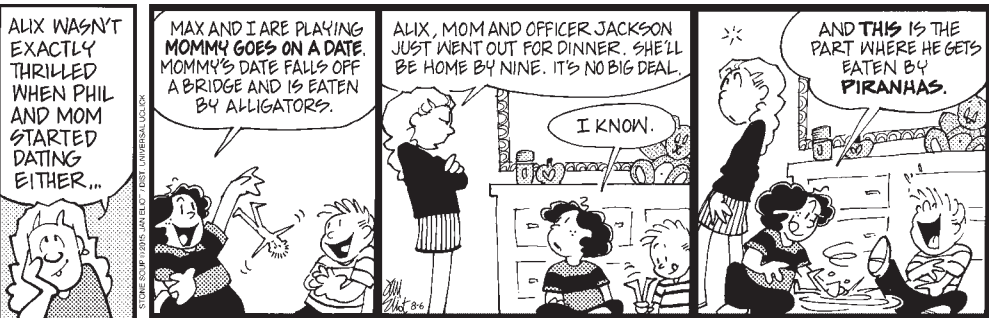
FRANK AND ERNEST



THATABABY



STONE SOUP



LOLA



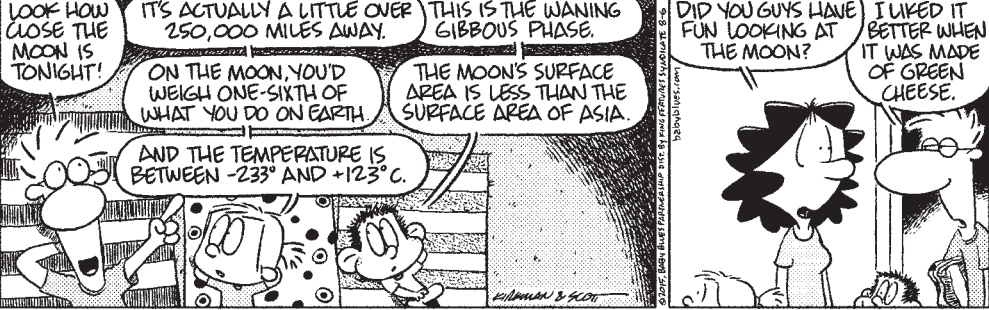
SIX CHIX



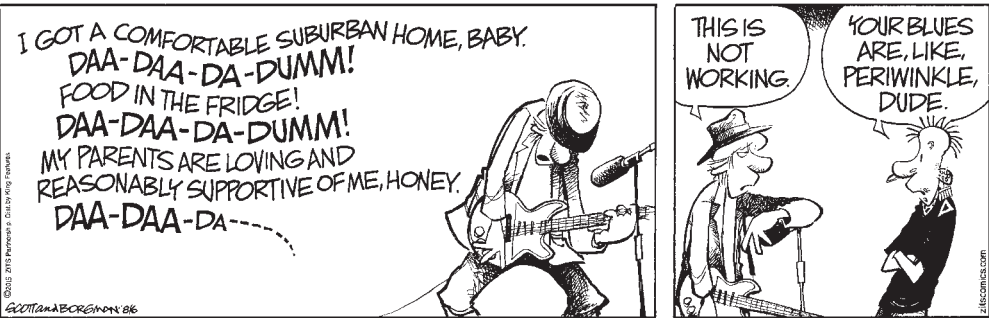
MUTTS



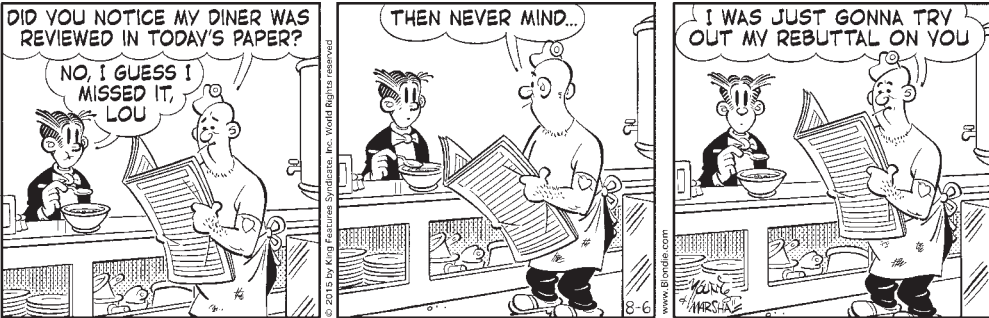
BABY BLUES



ZITS



BLONDIE



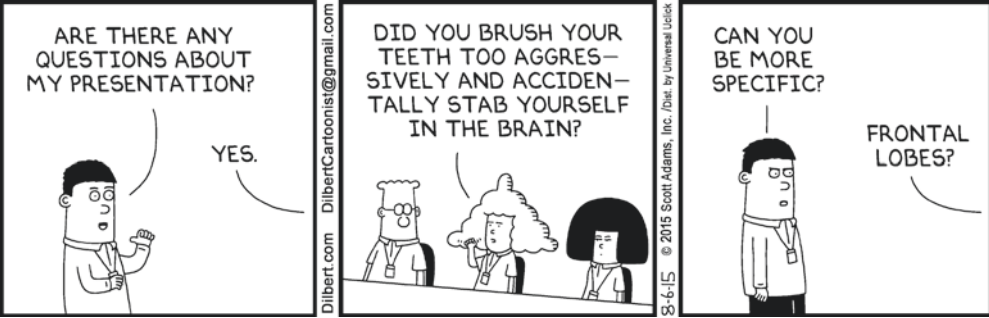
SALLY FORTH



B.C.



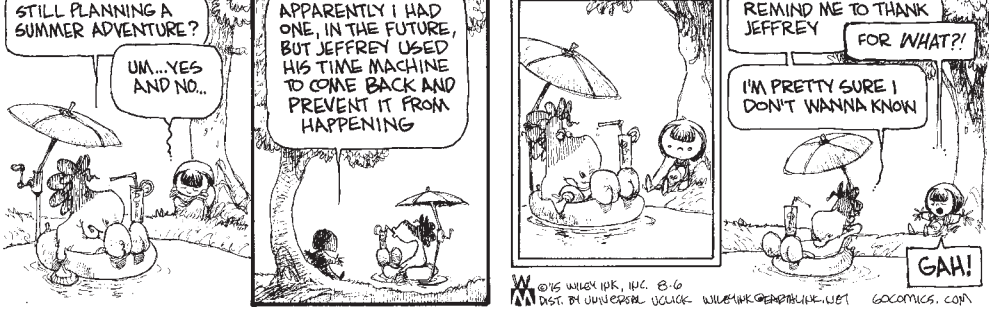
DILBERT



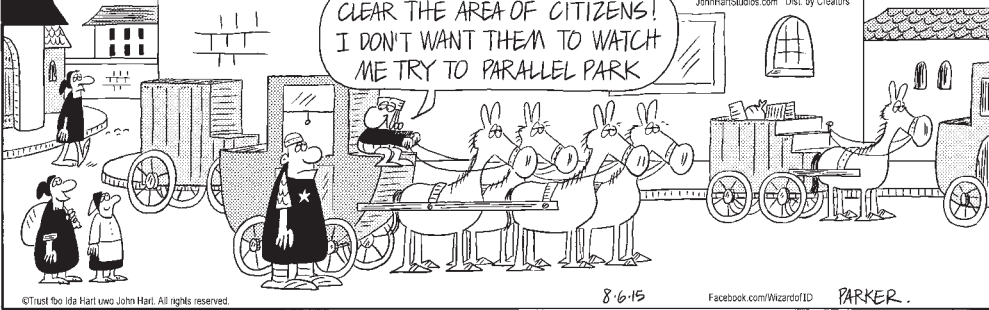
BIZARRO



NON SEQUITUR



WIZARD OF ID



ROSE IS ROSE

