

Boss monopolizes conversation

Dear Annie: I work in an office with nine other people. For some reason, my boss likes to share every boring detail of her personal life with us. We smile, listen politely and laugh at her "hilarious" anecdotes. This might be bearable if she showed any interest in our lives, but she doesn't. Occasionally, with one foot out the door, she will ask, "How are you doing?" but it's obvious she wants a quick answer at most. If she joins a conversation already in progress, she takes over and seems compelled to top whoever is speaking. She always has a bigger, better, funnier or more dramatic story, at least in her mind.

Why does she do this? She is bright, talented and accomplished in many aspects of life. Why the need to be the star? She constantly has to send the message: "My life is exciting, your life is nothing."

I hope people will read this and ask themselves how much time they spend talking about themselves compared to how much time they spend listening to others. Is there anything we can do to change this? — *Arizona*

Dear Arizona: Your boss, like many outwardly successful peo-

Annie's Mailbox

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and
Marcy Sugar



ple, still harbors deep insecurities. This is why she feels the need to prove that she is the most important and interesting person in the room. And because she is so focused on her own behavior, she has few brain cells left to devote to her staff's personal lives, nor, frankly, does she need to. Your personal lives are not her business. But she is still your employer and if this is the worst thing she does, we'd put up with it. You are handling it perfectly - you smile, listen politely and laugh when called for. It's annoying, but harmless. Just try not to roll your eyes.

Dear Annie: In general, I agree that a guest should not put a bride or groom "on the spot" by asking to bring a date. But I'd like to mention a time when it worked.

My partner and his daughter had been estranged for many

years. One of the best things to happen was when his daughter's fiancé, a wonderful man, facilitated a reconciliation. Part of the reconciliation was an invitation to their wedding.

After receiving the invitation, we had dinner with the fiancé. We felt we had little choice but to confirm that, as the father's partner, I was included in the invitation because my name was not on it. The fiancé said yes. We'll never know if that was simply his decision at the time, but had I not also been welcome, it would have undone all the work of reconciliation.

I attended with my partner, everyone was delightful, and a great, celebratory time was had by all. — *A North Carolina Gay Partner*

Dear N.C.: Your situation is not the same as someone asking to bring a "plus one." Established partners should always be included in such invitations. Nor was your partner asking to bring you. He was only clarifying the situation, which is perfectly fine. That fiancé sounds like a gem. We are so glad he helped reconcile father and daughter, and that you are both welcome members of the family.

Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). When your feelings tell you something different from what the rest of the world seems to be saying, what and whom should you trust? At least you can be heartened by the fact that your uncertainty is a sign of maturity.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Good news! You don't have to adjust your schedule to stay in tune with the Earth's rotation. You'll be naturally in synch with all the cycles and rhythms you encounter.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Tangible results motivate you. Intangible results are extremely demotivating. Please know that just because something is hard to describe doesn't make it any less real.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). People think about you. People you've lost track of and don't even remember think about you. Your extension of being goes much deeper and farther than you'll ever know.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). The highlight of the day is how your voracious appetite for learning brings you the best that life has to offer. Travel and the arts hold particular interest. Apply your knowledge, and you'll make money.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You'll ask for opinions from the people you admire even though you are well aware that they do not know your world a millionth as well as you know your world. Trust yourself.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). A new person in your life has just the maddening quirks and charming idiosyncrasies to thrill and challenge you. Is this attraction or an annoyance? Whatever you feel, you will feel it strongly.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). One encounter sets off a chain of events. When the scenery around you is different, you'll know that you've progressed. Take pictures to document this remarkable time.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Work brings a mystery, and you're just the one to solve it. Get others involved, though, so there will be people to applaud your genius in the end.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Relaxation and leisure — states that you believe seem better suited to people who aren't you. At some point, you'll see how important it is to kick up your heels — but not today.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). The current cosmic climate is heightening your awareness of others. You may even feel that you can read someone's thoughts. As your understanding of a loved one deepens, the relationship will become more rewarding.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). The simple pleasures like hot tea, cold soda or a car ride with the windows down are the things that make this day great. Your favorite person is the one who understands that.

FRIDAY'S BIRTHDAY (Sept. 4). This year brings inspiration thanks to a partnership with someone from a different generation. Projects coming together this month require up-to-the-minute efficiency, which just happens to be your specialty. Powerful people will be impressed and will promote your cause. Capricorn and Libra people adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 45, 2, 33, 19 and 16.

FRANK AND ERNEST



THATABABY



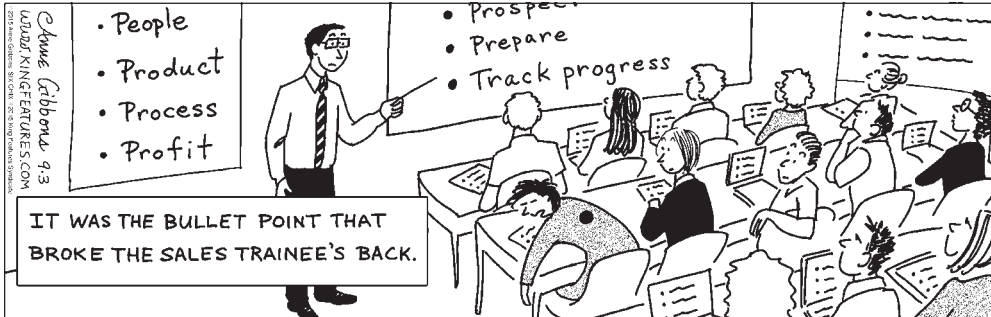
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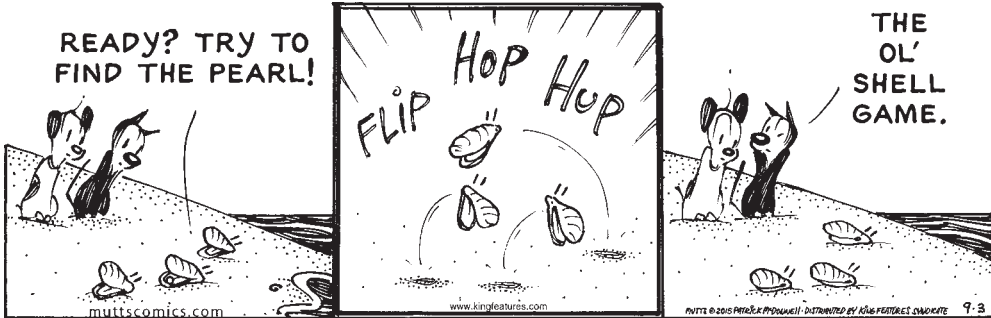
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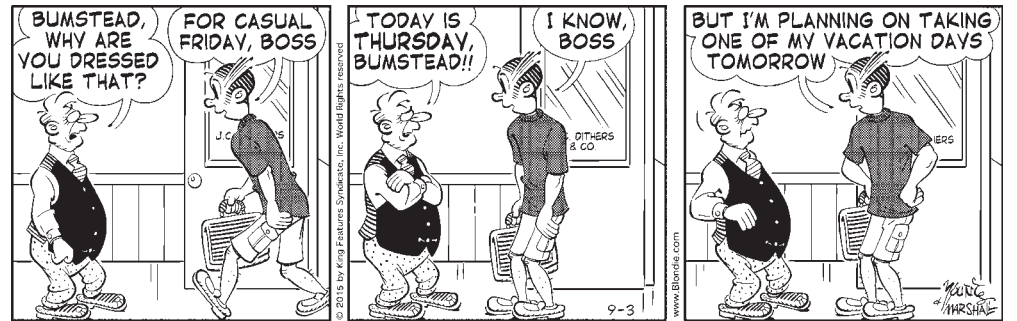
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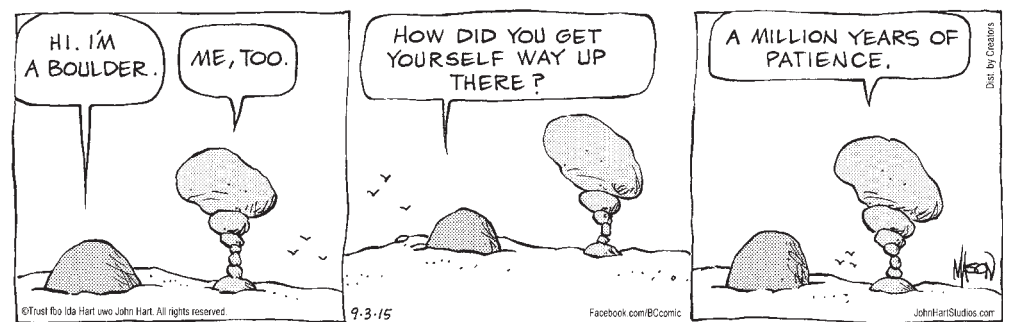
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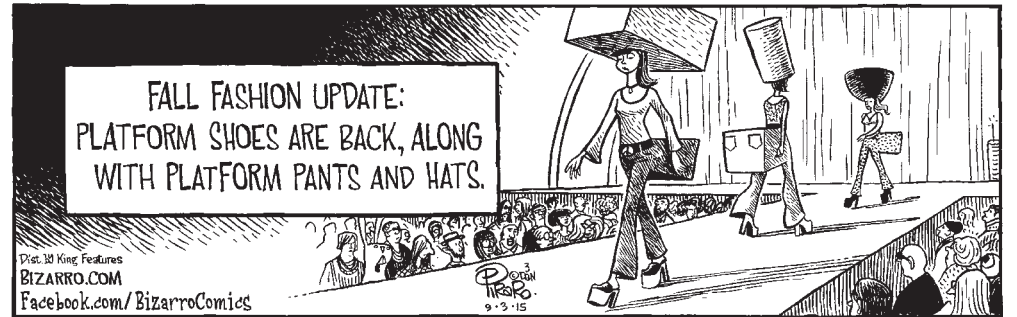
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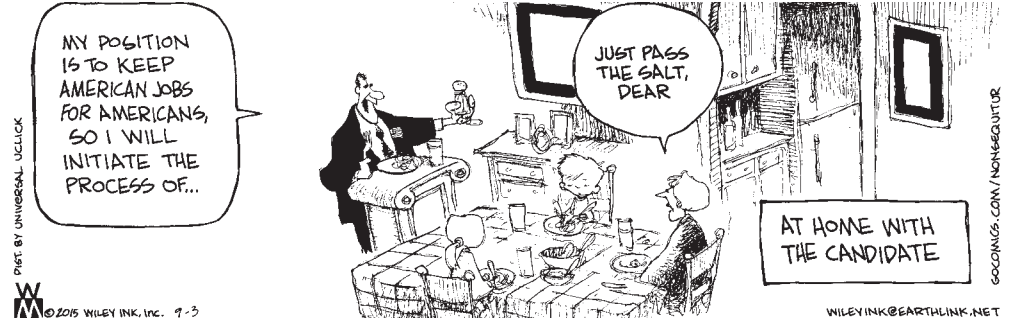
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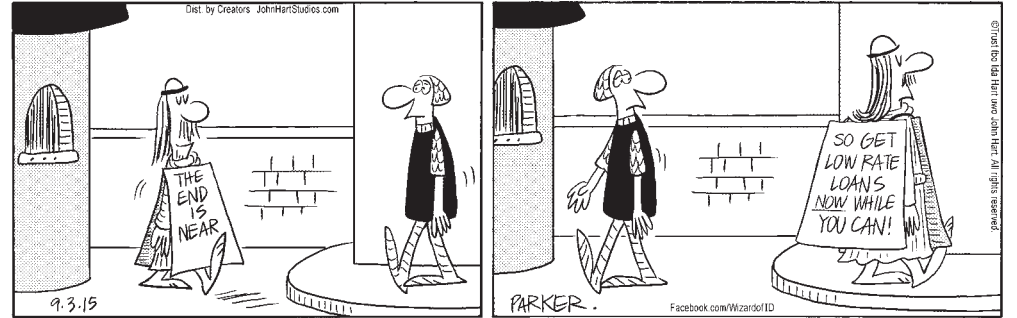
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