

Who pays for wedding?

Dear Annie: Our 22-year-old son recently asked his girlfriend to marry him. They have been dating for two years. Now he wants us to meet with her parents to talk about the wedding. The big topic of conversation will likely be finances.

What is the proper way to discuss who pays for what in regards to the wedding? I am not sure how things work these days, and I assume the etiquette has changed over the years. He is our oldest son, and this is our first wedding. — *Parents in Pittsburgh*

Dear Parents: You are right that things have changed, and generally for the better. It is no longer the rule that the bride's parents pay for nearly everything. Adult children with decent incomes should be encouraged to pay for their own weddings, perhaps with help from both sets of parents. Some parents give the children a specific amount and let them plan from there.

Decide how much you are willing to spend (and can afford). Tradition says that the bride pays for such things as the invitations, flowers, photographer and reception costs, while the groom covers the rings, the rehearsal dinner, the officiant's fee and the license. But we don't believe you must stick to

Annie's Mailbox

Creators
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the employee has extensive knowledge of the place and was planning to start a similar business when the current owner retires, it is time for "Concerned" to step up and offer to take over while there is still something left.

"Concerned" should discuss it with the owner in the kindest of terms — not as a hostile takeover, but rather a compassionate one, and take measures to make sure the family is on board. It might be possible to work out a schedule of payment that allows the owner to retire with dignity.

I worked for a wonderful boss who promised to pass the business down to me when he retired. That was all fine until he died in his sleep from a heart attack, and I found that there was no plan in place. So the business was closed and I found myself unemployed, with no health insurance or retirement plan, at an age where finding a job with the same benefits and pay was nearly impossible. "Concerned" should take care of his/her own future. — *Learned My Lesson*

Dear Learned: You've made an interesting suggestion. We hope the family is willing to consider allowing "Concerned" to buy out the owner.

that. Some families now split the costs right down the middle. Others split expenses entirely differently, but equitably, e.g., the bride's family covers the venue and the food and the groom's covers the flowers, photographer, liquor and orchestra. The bride's family may have their own ideas about the size and lavishness of the affair, so we urge you to be as agreeable as possible without going into debt. You can start this conversation by saying, "We are so happy the kids are getting married. What sort of event did you have in mind?"

Dear Annie: I read the letter from "Concerned Employee," whose boss is grieving over his wife and is drinking to excess, bringing the small business to ruin. I have a different suggestion.

"Concerned" must be practically running the business. Given that

Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Maybe you're watching to see what happens, and that is not the same, never the same, as just waiting around. Observation is the art of confident people.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Each person has a way of expressing and interpreting love that is unique to his or her own processing system. Today, you feel love in the warmth of physical touch.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You have something fresh to add to the mix and shouldn't hesitate for a moment to add it. Be confident. The world needs your input. Vitality will sweep over you the moment you put your two cents in.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). If you shrink from doing what's already been done, you'll shrink from everything. So don't back off. Seek a spot in what's been done, and do it better (or more you-like), and you'll be a hit.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). No, this will not happen all in one day. You have to piece it out. Plan to do a little chunk of this thing today, tomorrow, the next day and the next. Be in it for the long haul.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Often you do what you're supposed to do and then don't give yourself credit for the win. In your mind, it's all in a day's work. Well, that's not everybody's day. Give yourself the win!

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Accidental success is a rare occasion, but this is one of those. You'll land in it. Even better, you'll recognize that you've landed in it! These are the good ol' days.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). The guru

suggests that if you were to release your beliefs about being solid, you could walk through walls. Bruises prove otherwise. Today you'll have one foot in the ether, one firmly planted on the ground.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). No one, not even the actors who have played James Bond, is actually James Bond. And yet, with your current sophistication, class and international spy-like reflexes, you'll come close.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Your adventurous side will be prevalent. Whatever negative feelings or disappointments you experience are immediately routed into daring action.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You had a natural talent for your work, and over time, you've become quite the expert. You'll command a high fee for what you do, which will help several people at once.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You use your head, your gut, your talk, everything you've got to make today's arrangement work. You might have to dance around the issues a few times, but it's all in good fun.

THURSDAY'S BIRTHDAY (Oct. 15). Just because you've lived your life doesn't mean you know it. You'll learn the reasons for many previously misunderstood events. Relationships get healed, and things you wanted will finally be yours. November and June are your lucky months for love. January and March bring money. Capricorn and Taurus people adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 7, 15, 39, 33 and 20.

FRANK AND ERNEST



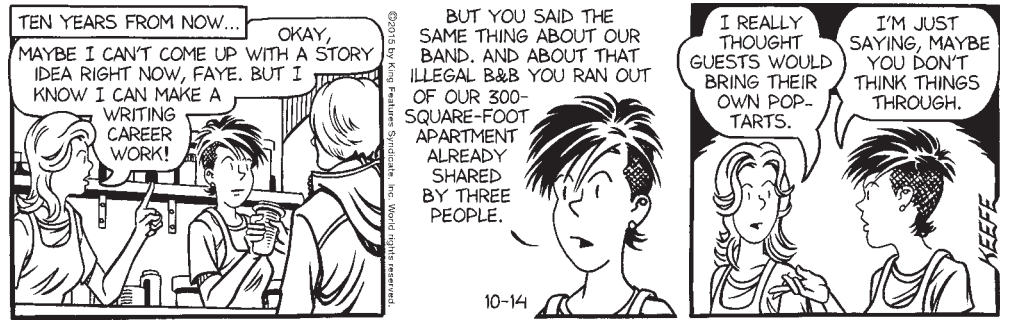
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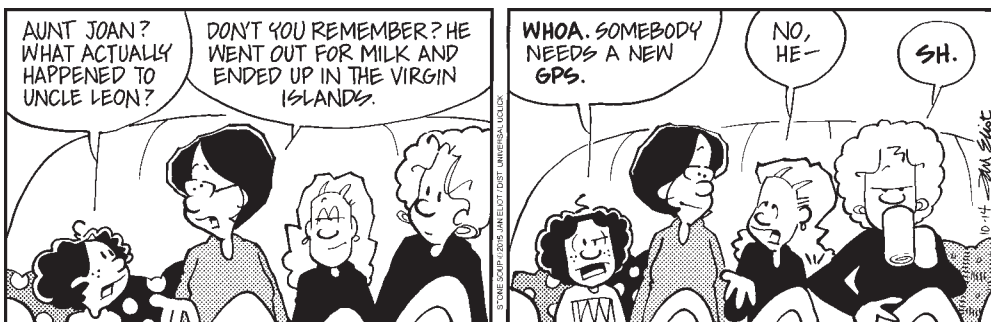
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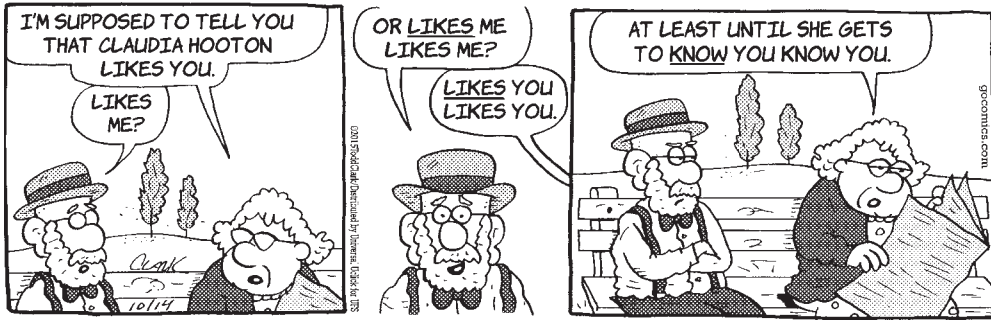
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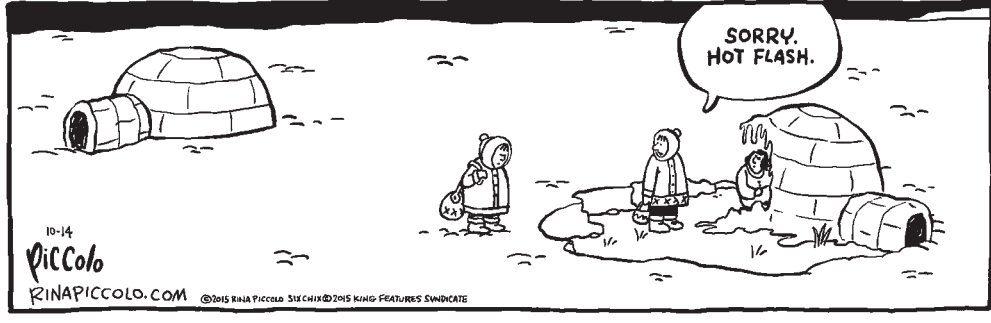
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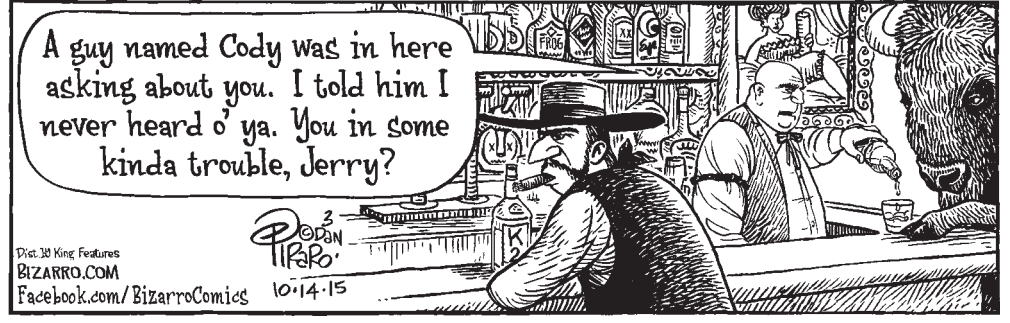
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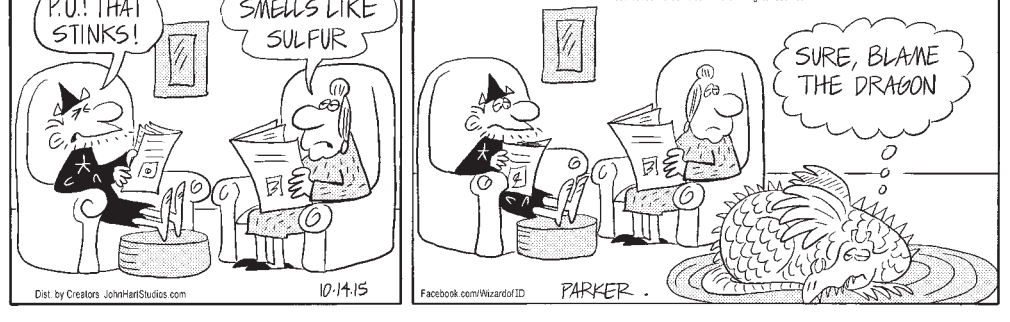
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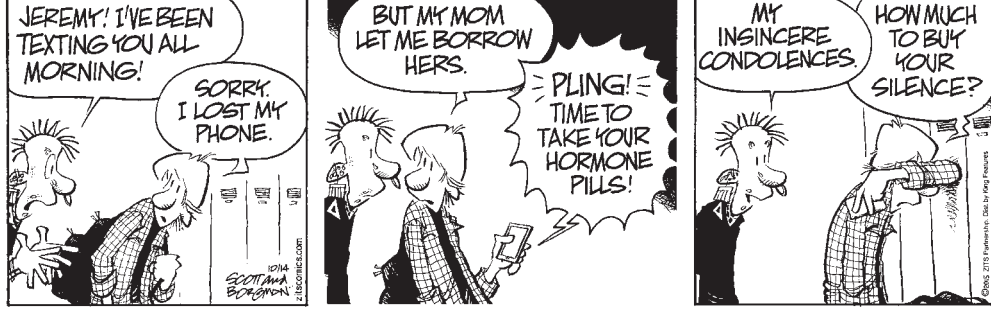
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