

Retirees don't want to host

Dear Annie: We're in a pickle. We've spent the past winter in a wonderful retirement area. We've gone out to dinner with some neighbors and had a nice time. Now that it's time to head home, two couples talk constantly about traveling our way this summer, staying with us while they see the sights of our city.

Annie, we like these couples, but our lives are very different. For starters, we are vegans and they are not. Just having them for meals in our house would be difficult. We have hinted that we have a lot to do when we get home and are not sure when we would be available, but it hasn't stopped them from assuming they are welcome.

Whatever happened to waiting to be invited? Is it because these retired couples have no set schedule and love to visit people? Why do they expect a big welcome mat to be thrown out for them?

I hope all snowbirds will read this. If you want to visit, book a hotel and we'll be delighted to meet up with you at a restaurant. How do we get out of this? — Give Me a Break

Dear Give: When people say they're planning to visit you,

Annie's Mailbox

Creators
Syndicate Inc.

Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar



reply sweetly, "We'd love to see you up our way. There are some charming hotels not far from our house and we'll be happy to give you the names. We could meet for dinner." You are under no obligation to let them stay with you, no matter how insistent they are in their efforts to freeload. Always be polite, but don't let them take advantage of you.

Dear Annie: This is about "Embarrassed About the Next Generation," who said kids can't make change or balance a checkbook.

When kids don't learn in school, or their parents refuse to teach them, then you get the cashier at our fast-food restaurant. The bill came to \$5.25. We handed the girl \$6.25, so she could give us back a dollar. She stated that she couldn't do that

and gave me back the quarter, along with 75 cents. She didn't know how to do it any other way.

Someone should teach these kids matters relating to finances. Remember, these are the next generation of bankers. — We're in Trouble

Dear Trouble: Not really. Someone who cannot make change is not likely to go into banking. Surely you remember kids in your grade school and high school who had difficulty with math. They probably couldn't make change, either, but you didn't know about it.

We have received dozens of letters from readers who are annoyed, upset, irritated and angry that their local 19-year-old cashier doesn't know how to make change. But it is unfair to blame an entire generation because one or two fast-food workers couldn't decipher how to give you back a dollar. Plenty of young people can make change correctly. However, we completely agree that it is helpful to learn these life skills, and it will be up to the parents and grandparents to take on this responsibility. Better to spend a few hours mentoring than griping about it.

Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) The idea comes to you, but it's not yours. It's a fickle entity, and it will go wherever it's most likely to be realized. You'll get first choice though; if you think this is worth following through on, make your move now, before it's too late.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) Your life is a bit like an abstract painting or a song today in that it's a work of art you really needn't explain. People will wonder. Let them come up with their own interpretations. It will be more interesting that way.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21) There are plenty of things on your wish list these days, including bigger reserves of patience, especially where the opposite sex is concerned. You may even move that to the top of the list.

CANCER (June 22-July 22) There's quite a lot of work that goes into making your home a beautiful place that runs smoothly — work you gladly do, especially since your domestic life is such a huge source of pride for you these days.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) Today you will give with a heart that's as big as the wide, open sky. Your beneficiary will be liberated by the gift and will feel free enough to fly through the expanse of it, ever closer to the sun.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) Some use tardiness as an attention-getting tool. They equate being late with being special. Since you need your life to run on schedule, give those chronically late people an earlier version of the expected arrival time.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) Have faith. Show up to work day after day after day like the sun showing up to the ground. One day, what's planted inside will stretch out and blossom before your eyes.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21) Powerful peo-

ple weren't always so — and, in fact, they aren't always powerful now, either. Everyone is vulnerable in some way. You'll see this today, and your compassion in this regard will be applied to good effect.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) The fake thing you're worried about will loom large in your mind until you challenge it, asking point blank: "What is the real thing I'm worried about?" The real thing is very easily handled once you know what it is.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) The main stress will be brief and followed by a happy moment, borne of a very simple question you ask yourself. "What can I do?" You'll come up with many answers, and then you'll act on the best one.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) People need you as much as you need them. This balance will make for an extremely productive day of cooperation and group effort. With deep appreciation, you'll accept the ample support you're offered.

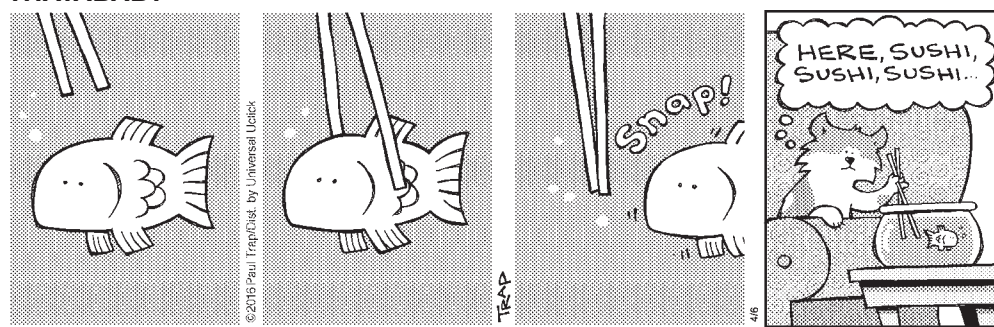
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) It's not time to ask for help yet. You're not ready for people to take notice of your idea. You're still working on it, and you'd prefer to do that under the radar. Once loved ones give you the space you need, you'll be in heaven.

THURSDAY'S BIRTHDAY (April 7) You'll make a special and expert contribution in May and soon after you'll be appreciated, thanked, celebrated and paid for it. Someone new will love you for who you are, all the while inspiring you to blossom in new ways. July shows you freer to express yourself, and you'll find the perfect public forum, too. Capricorn and Gemini adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 5, 20, 17, 22 and 38.

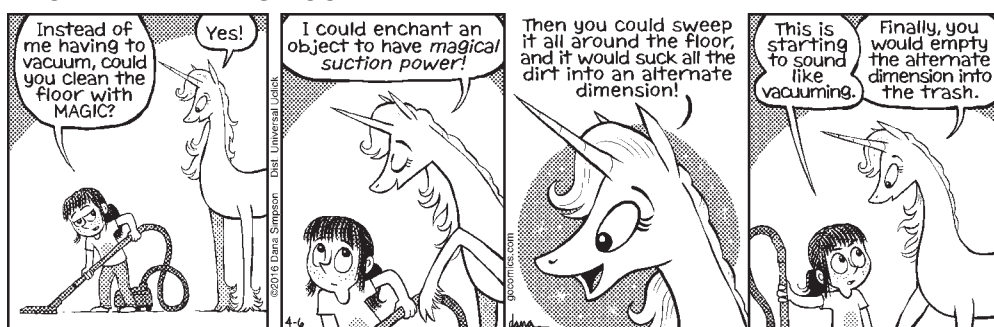
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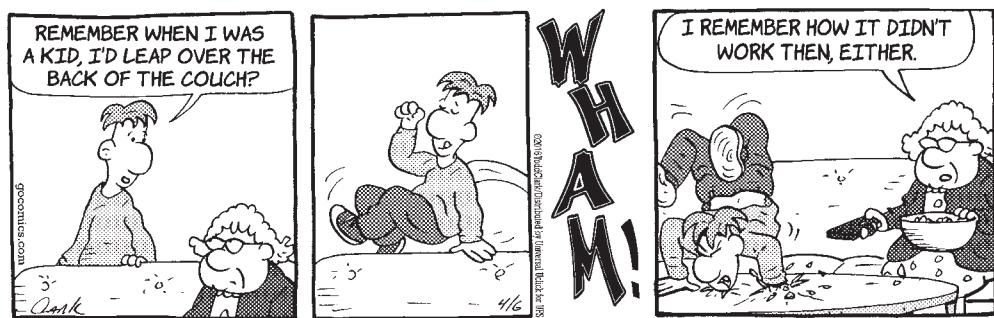
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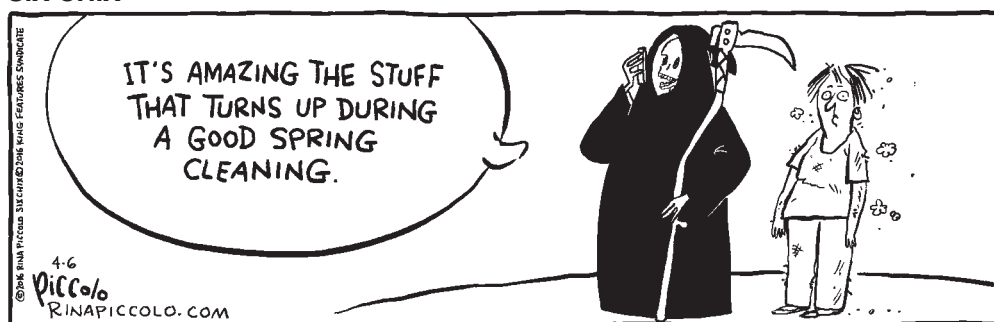
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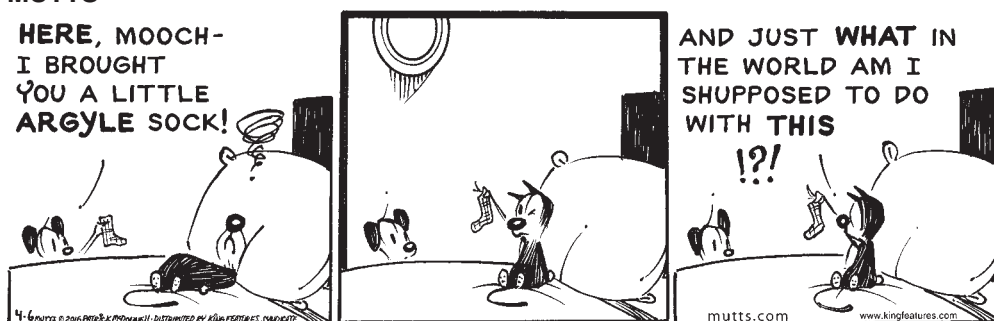
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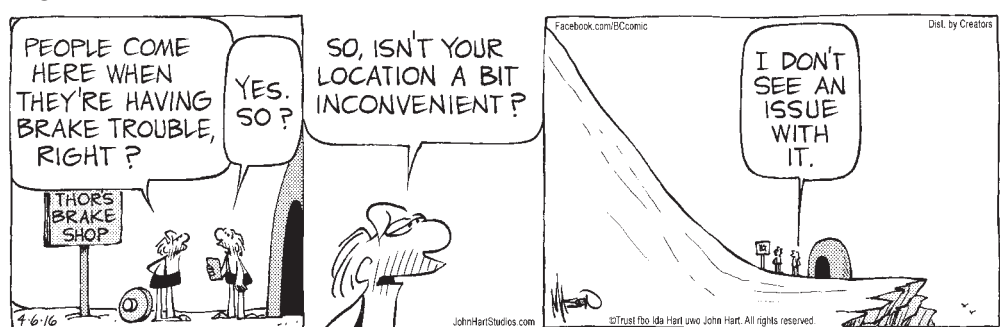
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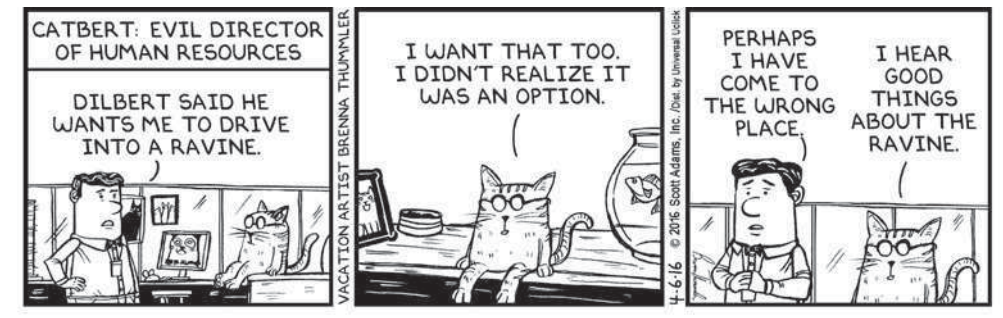
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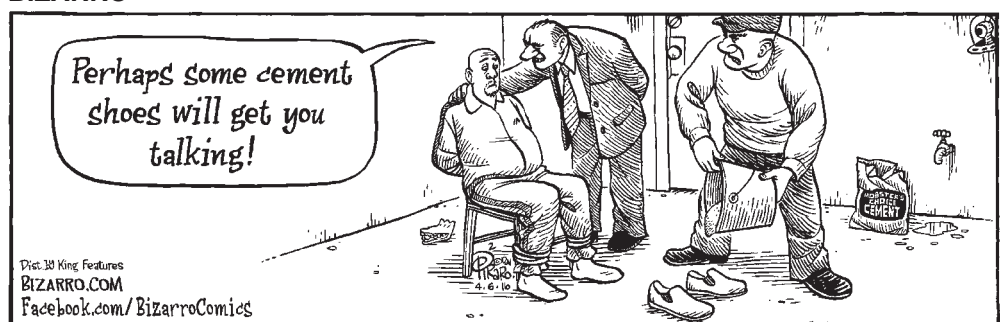
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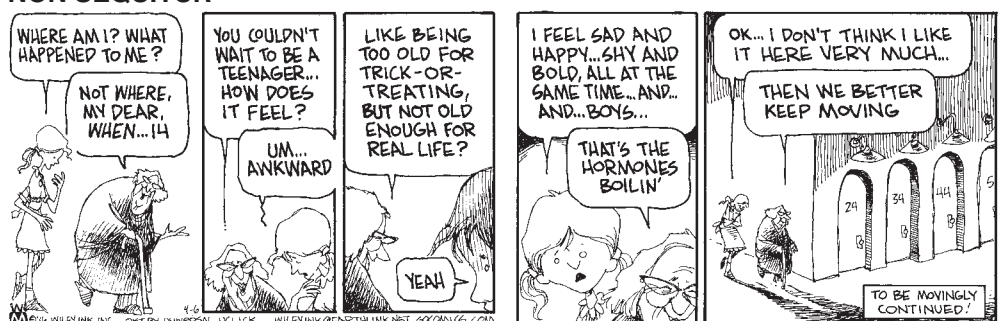
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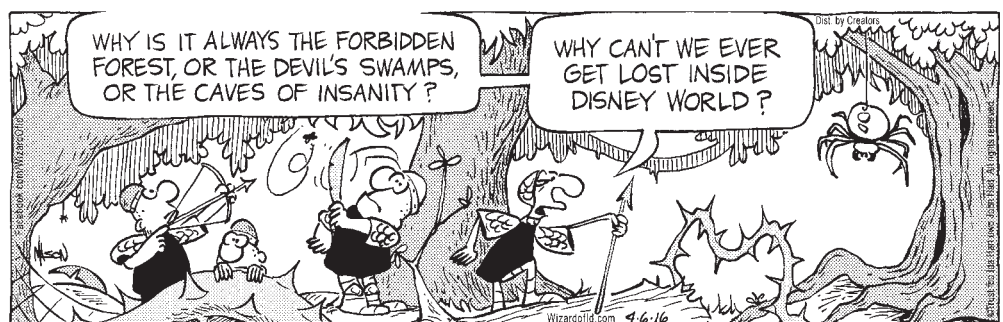
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