

Worker should leave shoes on

Dear Annie: I have a different problem with people taking off their shoes. I work in a small office where we have outside visitors on a daily basis. One woman who works here likes to take off her shoes and walk around barefoot. No socks, no slippers, nothing. I think this is totally disgusting, as well as unprofessional.

The managers in the office see this, but must not mind because nothing is said. I have been trying to ignore it, but it's such odd behavior that I'm simply baffled. Although I'm new to this particular office, I've worked in other offices for 15 years, and this is a first. Any advice on what to do? — *Save Your Feet for the Beach*

Dear Beach: Perhaps your co-worker finds shoes confining and uncomfortable, or she has problems with her feet. Nonetheless, it is inappropriate to walk around this way in an office where outside visitors stop by regularly.

If the managers don't mind, there probably isn't much you can do. But you can certainly say to the woman (with sincere concern), "You know, there are probably a lot of germs on that floor. I'm worried that you might pick up something awful, or step on a

Annie's Mailbox

Creators Syndicate Inc.

Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar



loose staple. You ought to protect your feet by wearing slippers." It might not help, but it can't hurt to try.

Dear Annie: In the course of one day, a spinal cord injury caused me to go from a very active young woman to a paraplegic. Because of my injury, I finally know the "rules" for that handicapped stall in public restrooms, and want others to know, as well.

I used to wonder if it was like the handicapped parking space that able-bodied people aren't supposed to use for any reason. Before my injury, I didn't think twice about using the handicapped stall if no one there needed it and the others were taken. In fact, I'd use it even when other stalls were available, simply because it was so spacious.

So let me tell you, yes, it is to be treated just like a handicapped parking space and should be reserved solely for those who need it, even if every other stall is occupied. Because my nervous system is damaged, I don't have a lot of time between when I recognize the need to go and actually going. And since I now move very slowly, every second counts. My legs are extremely weak and I really need the grab bars in the handicapped stall. In emergencies, I've had to use regular stalls and have twice pulled the toilet paper holder off the wall though I weigh only 115 pounds. I am counting on that handicapped stall being empty when I get to the restroom.

Not everyone who needs that stall is as obvious as I am. Just because no ticket is issued when an able-bodied person uses the handicapped stall, please don't do it. It's a matter of consideration. — *Learned the Hard Way*

Dear Learned: We agree, but we would make an exception for those who are about to wet their pants, there are no other available stalls, there is no disabled person in sight, and they will be really quick about it.

Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You've been trying to nestle yourself into a niche, but maybe it's not as complicated as you're making it. You know what you'd like to see and what you want to happen. Therein lies your niche. You don't have to invent anything.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). The simple courtesies you extend are what make people feel warm and comfortable in an environment. Experience has taught you which ones: Trust yourself. Bonus: Your social graces are contagious.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You're drawn to and inspired by talented people. Their skill brings them so wholly into the present moment that you become immersed in it, too, just by being audience to them.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You feel like you're being pulled in five directions at once. Unplug for a while. When you turn off all the glowing screens in your life and opt for just breathing, nothing else, it's remarkable how much this helps.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). There's a bit of show business to pull off today. The hype and excitement are half of the fun. Without them, this is just "business," and that wouldn't be nearly as lucky or profitable for you.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). There's no reason to try and push the action along — and it wouldn't work anyway. Sit back, relax and watch. Things will happen naturally and in their own time.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Education is your engine. As long as you're learning, you're moving forward. When the learning stops, ask a different question. One good question is all it takes to change everything.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). All gifts come with responsibilities. Sometimes the responsibility is as small as a gracious reception or a tacit agreement to keep the item. Even that is sometimes more trouble than it's worth.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). The sun shines down on everyone around you in equal measure. Some bask in the warmth, and others flee from the radiation. Your life experiences have taught you how to protect yourself. You have metaphorical sunscreen.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Ask for what you need, even if the right people aren't around — even if no one is around! Ask anyway. Asking helps you articulate more exactly what it is you want to happen next. Also, invisible forces are listening.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). It will be slow going at first, but once you commit, you'll soon find yourself in the zone. In fact, you'll kill it! You'll be particularly good at tasks that require verbal, social and athletic skill.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). There's no such thing as being permanently excited or permanently bored. You'll pass through many states of mind today — twice as many as usual. Whatever state you're in, acknowledge its temporal nature.

WEDNESDAY'S BIRTHDAY (April 20). Your mastery of a skill will bring a rainbow of opportunity. Over the next three weeks, much good comes out of your affection for family. A business deal will get you into the lifestyle changes you've been wanting. Late summer brings greater intensity to your love life. A long struggle ends favorably for you in September. Libra and Pisces adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 47, 9, 14, 28 and 32.

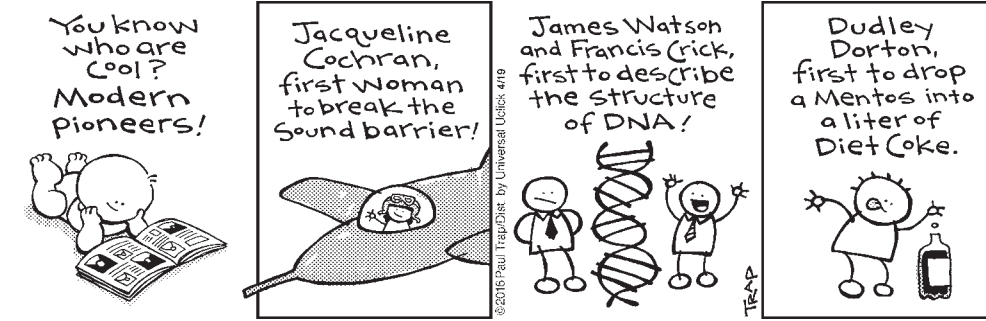
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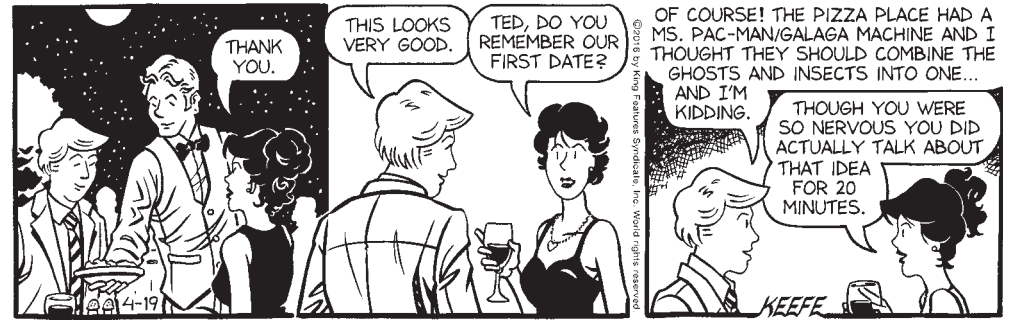
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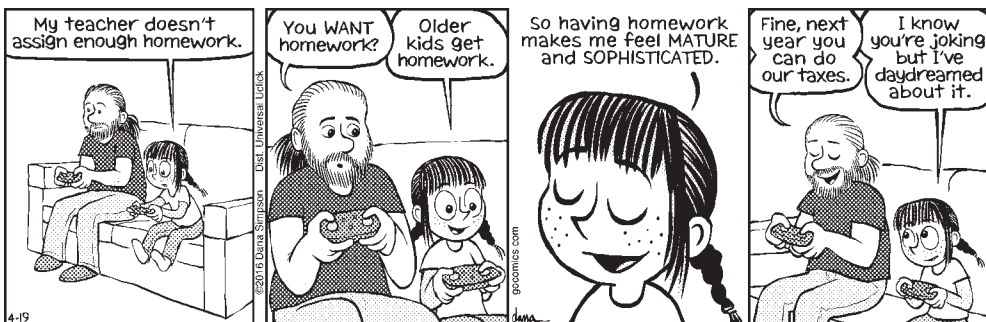
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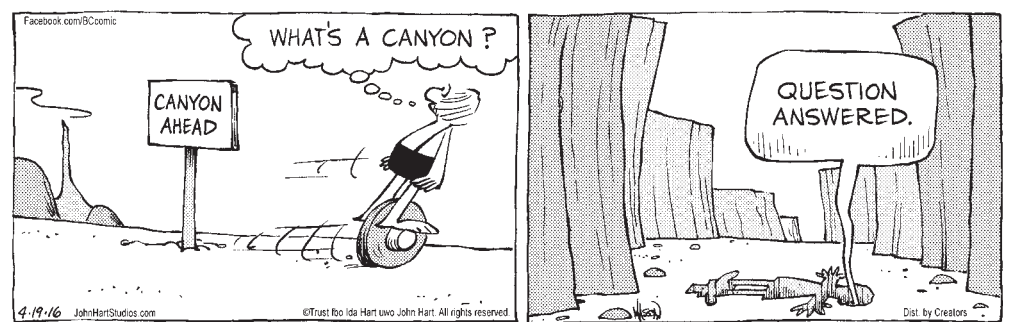
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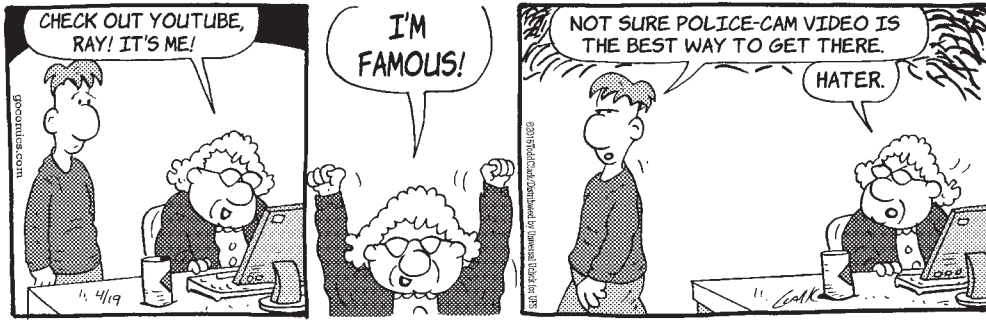
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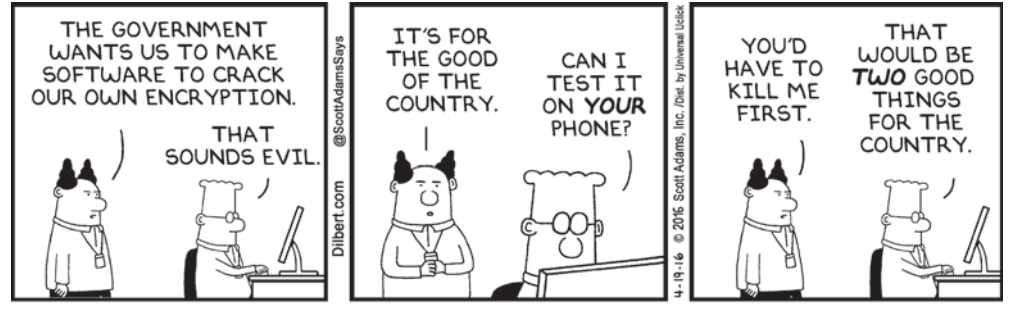
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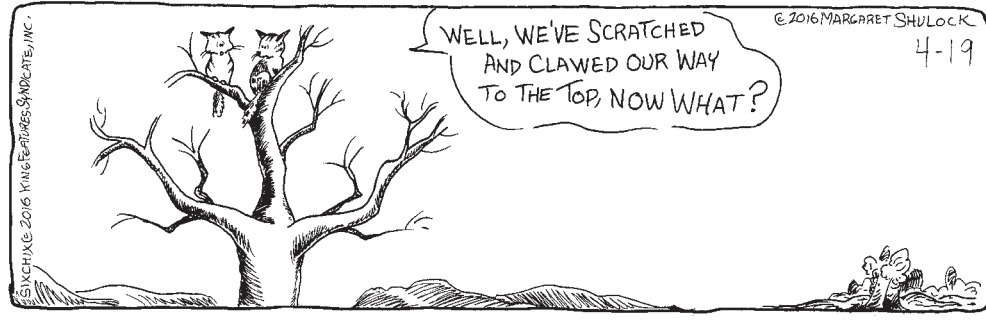
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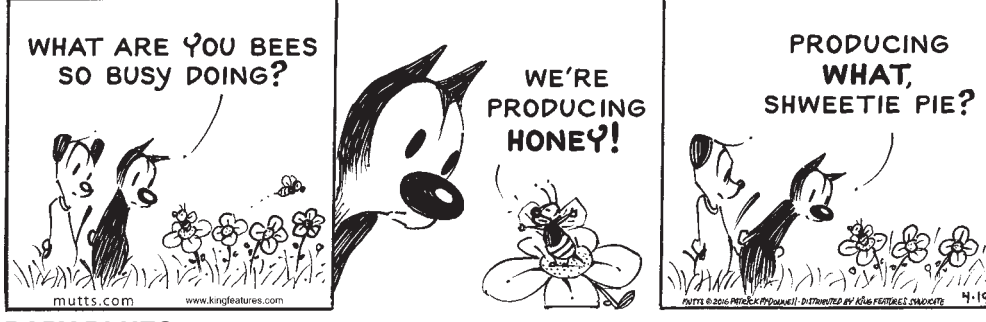
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