

Please don't ghost the host

Dear Annie: I'm wondering whether you could settle a dispute between my friend "Laura" and me. She thinks it's rude to "ghost" — leave parties without saying bye. I think it's fine.

Last weekend, our friend had a barbecue. This particular friend is a social butterfly, so there were probably close to 75 people there. I knew a dozen or so of the guests. I enjoyed catching up with them and meeting some new people, but after a couple of hours, my socializing meter was about up and I was ready to go home and get to bed.

I didn't want to take the trouble to say bye to everyone, so I just said good night to the people in my immediate vicinity and then stepped out quietly. About an hour later, Laura texted asking where I'd gone. When I told her I was already at home, she got angry and said it was rude for me not to say goodbye.

I really have never thought of it as rude. I think of it as a timesaver for everyone. I hate awkwardly interrupting the flow of conversations to tell people I'm leaving, especially because then other people usually chime in, "Oh, I should get going, too," and I feel as if I've killed the party. I just want to slip out quietly.

Dear Annie



By **Annie Lane**

Creators Syndicate Inc.

What do you think, Annie? Is it bad manners to ghost? — *Tiptoeing Toward the Exit*

Dear Tiptoeing: People might better like your vanishing act if it came with a bang and a cloud of smoke. Almost all the people I talked to about this say it drives them crazy. They'll be out with friends and suddenly have a "Home Alone"-like moment in which they realize they're one short.

Though I don't condone the behavior, I get it; you don't want to interrupt conversations or derail the party train. Plus, there's a frozen pizza at home calling your name. (Admit it.)

I think a good rule of thumb is: Don't ghost the host. You don't have to make the rounds to say bye to everyone you know, but at the very least, seek out the host to say

thanks for having you. Then you may spirit yourself away and into your pajamas.

Dear Annie: My stepson was married in a small backyard ceremony. His father and I were not invited and were not even aware of the wedding until after it was over. Now, a year and a half later, we are invited to a "wedding reception." He lives in another state, and it is very difficult to travel (for health and money reasons). I don't want to go, but my husband insists we go. I won't know many people, but all his ex-wife's family will be there, and they are not very nice.

What can I do? The parties will be in a place I cannot stand to be. Should I grit my teeth and suffer through the long car ride and the rest? If he goes without me, his ex will be all over him. (It's happened before, right in front of me.) What to do? — *Wary and Weary Traveler*

Dear Wary: You may want to pick up a mouthguard, because yes, I think you have to grit your teeth.

When you marry someone, you also marry his family. If it's possible to overcome the health and financial issues (and it sounds as if it is), then go. It's just one weekend. Your husband should appreciate the effort on your part for a long time.

Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Don't be surprised if your personality naturally starts to curve to the job at hand. This flexibility of form is a strength, not a weakness. It is because you are so solid at your core that you're able to bend to your environment.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Every change is a key to the door of another opportunity. It is not always clear which door the key goes to, though. You'll spend part of the day trying different "doors," seeking the right fit.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Oddly, the difficulties attract you. Or maybe this isn't so strange. Maybe it's the mark of fine character to seek constant challenge. The rewards are, after all, richer where powerful efforts are the demand.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You'll ride a highly creative frame of mind all day, similar to the one you often experience just as you are drifting off to sleep. There is gold to be mined in this beautiful mix of conscious and subconscious awareness.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). The one you're wild for is always somewhere on your mind, no matter what you're doing. Therefore, being thoughtful comes easily to you. You're magnetized toward anything that might delight your love.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). As for your all-consuming, deep, affectionate attachment, sometimes you can't remember how it began. Other times you can't have a thought that's not remembering.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). The fresh luck will come after what's old has been wrapped up. Consider bringing in some outside forces to finish the job faster. The results will be well worth the money.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Get the word out about what you do. Post wide and far. You'll be surprised who can make use of your talent, and in ways you will really enjoy. That you make money too will be the cherry on top.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Troubled people sense your empathetic nature, and they will tell you their problems. Don't let this stress you out. Your mind will race to how you can help, but you needn't worry: Your listening ears are help enough.

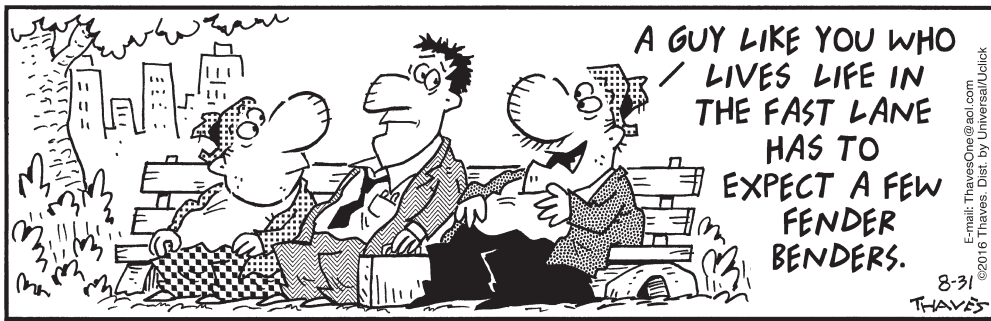
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You have an excellent sense for placing people in the position they are best suited to. Now the trick is in knowing how to state things to make the job appealing to the person who should be doing it.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). There's so much that needs to be wrapped up today that you'll wish you had your own staff to help you finish. Unless you do have your own staff, and then you'll wish said staff were slightly more efficient.

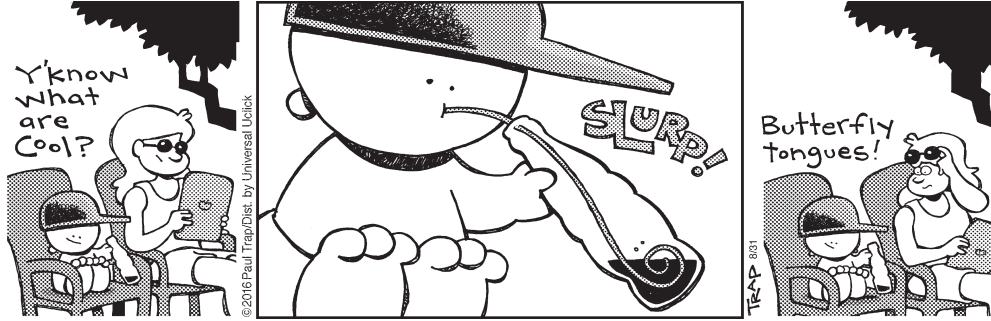
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). To the untrained eye, your carefree ways belie your strong character. The reality is that it's precisely because of your inner strength and faith in yourself and life's process that you can afford to be easygoing.

THURSDAY'S BIRTHDAY (Sept. 1). Your cosmic birthday gift is a heightened sense for what people need and how to deliver it. Put to good use, this sense will make you rich in love and dollars. You'll give new life to the group in September. Your exceptional handling of VIPs will earn you a role in a very important mission at the start of 2017. Cancer and Aries adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 5, 12, 40 and 19.

FRANK AND ERNEST



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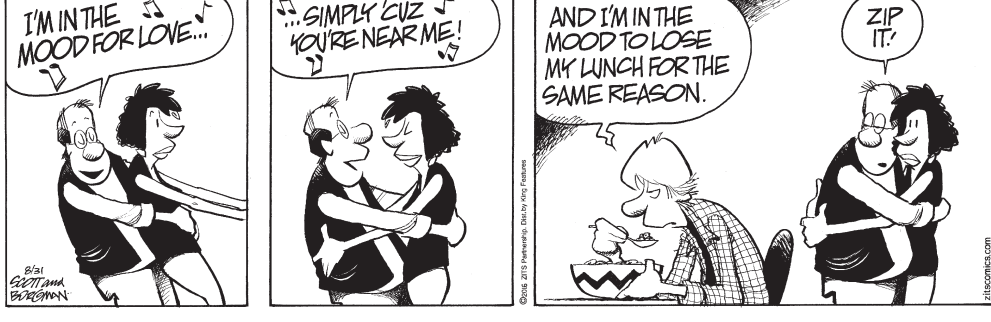
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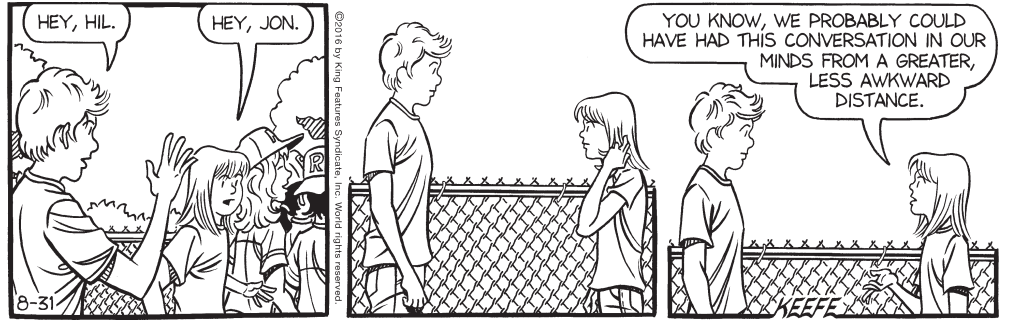
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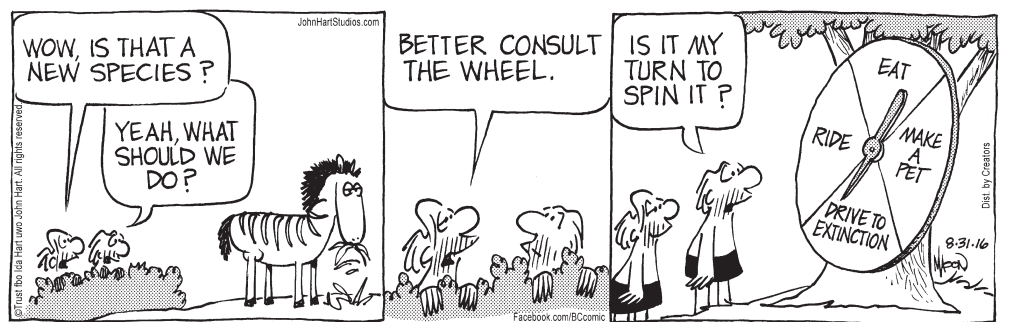
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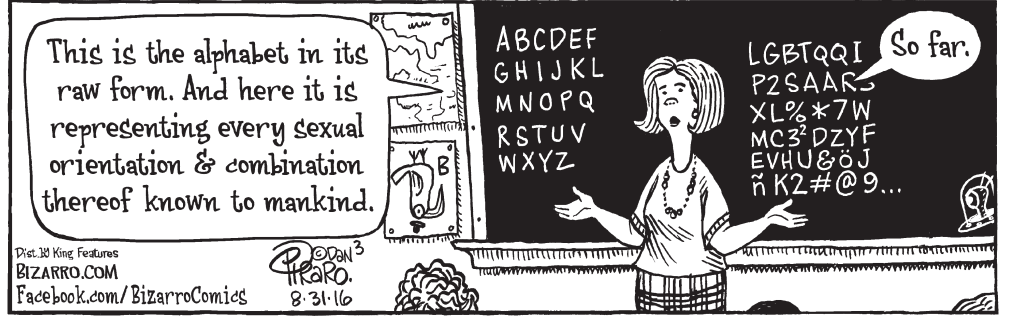
B.C.



DILBERT



BIZARRO



NON SEQUITUR



WIZARD OF ID



ROSE IS ROSE

