Proper grocery line etiquette

Dear Annie

By Annie Lane

Creators Syndicate Inc.

Dear Annie: I have an etiquette question for you. My co-worker and I are disagreeing on this, and we have decided to accept your answer as the proper way to behave in this situation.

At most larger grocery chains, there are now express lines or self-checkout lines for those individuals who either are in a hurry or want to process their checkout themselves.

More times than not, I have a full grocery cart and I stand in line and wait for the next cashier to check me out. More times than I can count, an individual comes behind me with a few items and begins to pace and sometimes makes verbal huffing noises in an effort to go ahead of me.

My feeling on this situation can vary. If I am not in a big hurry and I see someone with one or two items, I absolutely offer to let him or her go ahead of me. However, there are times when I am also in a hurry, and it's then that I think that these people should go to the express checkout line and not expect me to let them go ahead of me.

My co-worker disagrees with me and says I am being selfish and I should always let someone with fewer items go ahead of me. I should mention that if I have a few items and I get behind someone with a lot of items, I never expect to be let ahead of the person. I either suck it up and wait or look for a shorter line.

Am I wrong? What is the correct behavior in this situation? — *Waiting for Everyone*

Dear Waiting: I'm with you on this one. I don't agree with your co-worker that you should always let someone with fewer items go ahead of you in the grocery checkout line. Think of it this way: What if there are multiple people behind you in line who only have a few items? If you were to let every person go in front of you, you would leave the store looking like Father Time. Stand your ground and don't feel bad. They can huff and puff on over to the express lane.

Dear Annie: I am a man who is 5 feet tall. I get a lot of grief for it in stores, bars and even the workplace. I've even been denied employment because of it. It affects my life and total self-esteem. I'm tired of the short remarks. It is painful. I can't count the times I've been rejected and harassed by strangers. I want people to realize how mean they are being. It makes me feel worthless. Please publish this letter so other short men can write in. — *Sick and Tired*

Dear Sick: Great things come in all-sized packages. Also cliched but true: It's what's inside that counts. You are not your height, your weight, your face or even your age. You're not defined by any physical attribute. What matters is your heart — your compassion and love — something these asinine bullies are seriously short on.

Sticks and stones may break your bones, but words can only hurt you if you let them. So don't. Refuse to give them that power. Remember this, which Eleanor Roosevelt said: "No one can make you feel inferior without your consent."

Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Even though a current interest lights up many parts of your brain and life at once, you are careful not to get so wrapped up with pursuing an important goal that you lose sight of your dearest relationships.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). As for that person who has disappointed you numerous times, you're now starting to get a buildup of resentment. Passivity is no longer the way. Call this person out or get your needs met elsewhere.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You sense that a relationship is changing. There's nothing to fear here and plenty to embrace. All will develop in a wonderful direction for those who stay positive.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). If you have to explain a joke, it's not a joke. The same goes for magic tricks, athletic feats and acts of love. After all, if you didn't experience it as a loving act, how could it be that? Reception will be key today.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). A relationship needs a better pattern — a rhythm that will serve both of you well. The right actions, spaced well and repeated effectively, will make for a beautiful and seemingly effortless connection.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You notice a lot. If you were to bring attention to every little thing that displeases you, you'd be a most unpleasant person to be around. So instead you pick your battles and keep relationships harmoniously improving.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). All this trying to get the timing right, say the perfect thing, act smart — it's too much pressure! Still, it's too soon to give in. Press the pause button. Breathe, relax and think about something else for a while.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Revolutionary change, by definition, happens by force. The revolt is key. You want results, but do you really need them immediately? Might a gradual, gentle change serve just as well?

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). When one option doesn't work out, you don't feel personally rejected any more than a puzzle piece would feel rejected by wrong companion pieces. You've a sense that what's meant to be will be. This is peace.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Right now it would be pointless to negotiate with the established order. There is a worn path that none involved have reason to stray from. Wait, though: The balance of power will soon be upset and you'll have your opportunity.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You're doing so well in a certain endeavor that you may have worries about managing success. Are you peaking too early? When should you push yourself harder? When should you back off? All quality problems.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). There's more than one way to get unstuck. Don't bang up against the obstacle. You won't nudge it free with direct force. You need a lever. Step back and look again for new perspective and bright answers.

FRIDAY'S BIRTHDAY (Sept. 16). When you don't have the means to reach a goal alone, this is the blessing that will band together with others for a common cause. This will involve an advanced training and the financial sector will be favorably affected by what you'll learn. Your love life will be anything but predictable in the spring. Aries and Capricorn adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 19, 4, 40, 44 and 14.

FRANK AND ERNEST

BLONDIE

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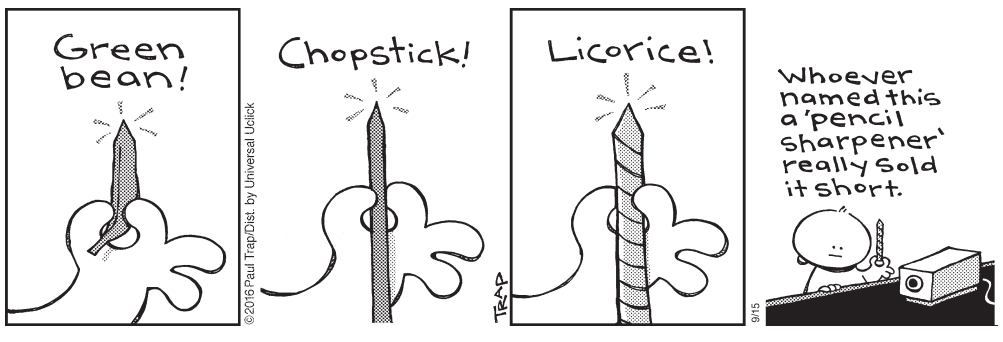

SALLY FORTH

PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN

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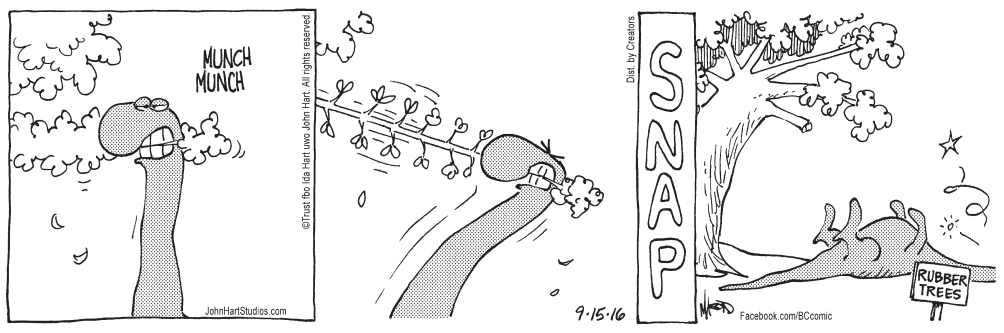

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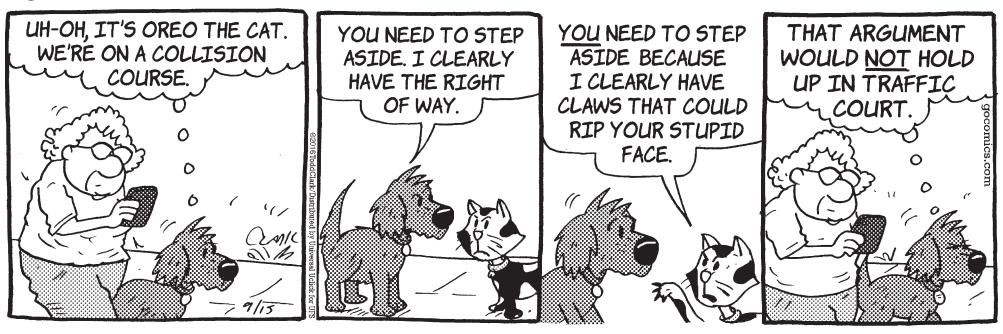

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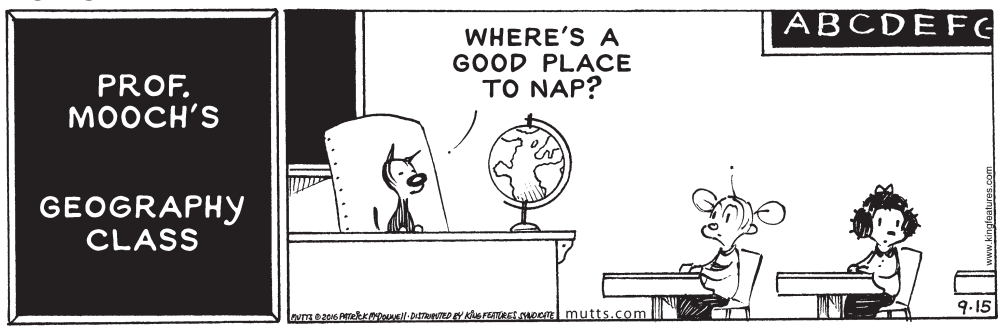

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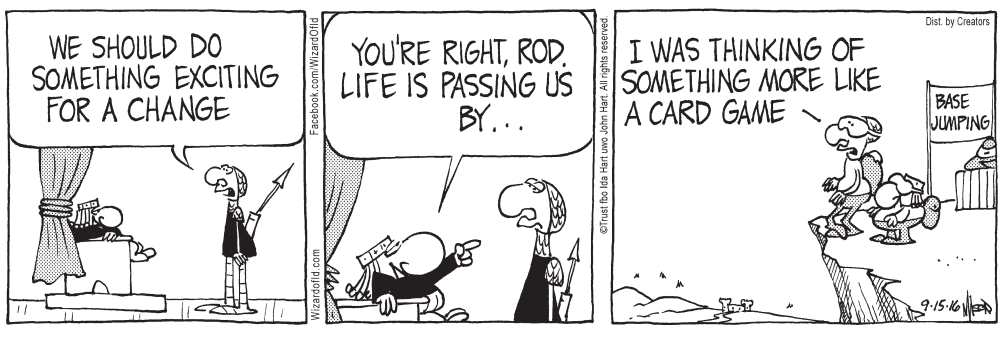

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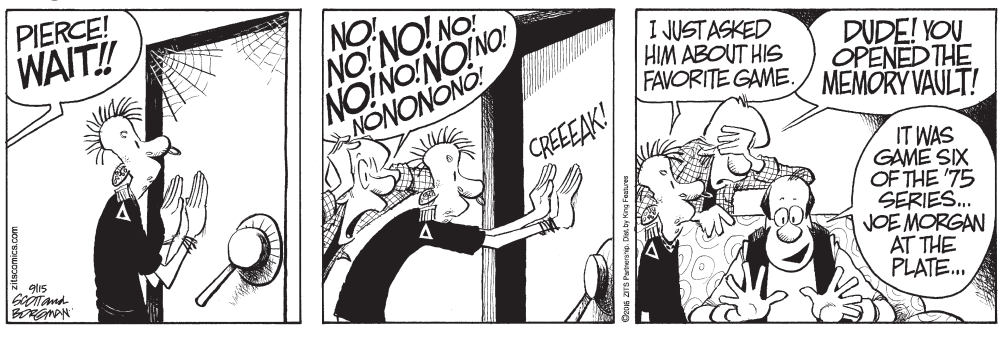
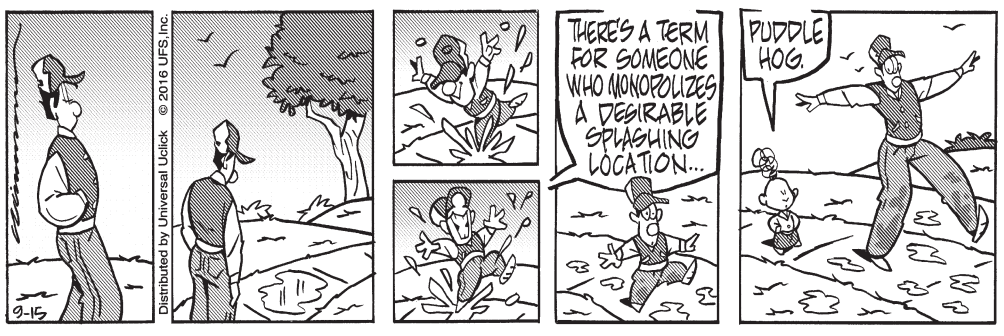
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