

# Feeling like a Scrooge

Dear Annie: Christmas used to be a time that I enjoyed. I have always enjoyed spending time with siblings and cousins who live in other cities and catching up with them. Over the years, our families have grown. Our older children have grown, and they have children of their own. Some of the younger kids have significant others who always join in with the family celebrations.

My family's gift-giving tradition is that we have a Kriss Kringle type of exchange for the adults and we all buy gifts for the children. In my case, I need to buy gifts for nearly 20 children/spouses/significant others. I am on a limited budget and honestly cannot afford to buy gifts for everyone, yet I still do because I am reluctant to say anything about it. After all, Christmas only happens once a year, and I don't want to appear to be a Scrooge.

Summer is barely over, and I am already dreading December. I would love to get through a holiday season without getting into a lot of debt. Any ideas would be much appreciated. — *Broke but Still Spending*

Dear Broke: Ouch. My wallet hurts just reading this. It's wonder-

## Dear Annie



By Annie Lane

Creators Syndicate Inc.

ful your family members are all so generous and appreciate the joy of gift giving, but Christmas shouldn't put you under an avalanche of debt.

I have a feeling you're not the only one in your family who feels this way, so try talking to your siblings and cousins. You mentioned that some of the younger kids bring significant others. If they're old enough to be dating, they're old enough to get a gift for a relative. You could include them in the secret Santa. That way, everyone spends less money and can spend more time picking out one thoughtful gift.

If your family is resistant to changing up the tradition, you can at least work on simplifying the process and reducing the cost for yourself. One option is to pick a uniform gift, one you give to every-

one. For instance, you might have everyone send you a favorite dessert recipe, after which you compile them into a family cookbook with photos and attribution and print out booklets. You'll be giving people a gift that's unique to your family and that they can use for years to come.

Dear Annie: This is about the person who wrote about a social group that has potlucks where one member always takes more than his share, getting in line first, loading his plate, gobbling up his food and then getting in line again. Then he makes sure he's at the end of the line after everyone else is done, getting another plate so he can finish up what's left. (I assume he's the only one who gets seconds and thirds.) The folks have asked him nicely on several occasions to not go back for more until everyone has had a chance to get a plate, but he doesn't listen.

I would tell the rest of the group to give him one more chance. Then I would tell him that if he continues his rude behavior, he will be excluded from the group.

That's just my take. I am a senior citizen, and I may not be so tolerant of rude behavior as younger people.

# Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19).** Today is rife with potential for emotional excitement. Steer clear of touchy conversational topics and hot buttons in general. Stay alert; some seemingly innocuous items could have symbolic significance to others.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** The hardline approach just isn't working. Let things slide a bit today, in the name of self-compassion. Do the best you can, and let the cards fall where they may.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** When you're distancing yourself, you're doing it for a reason. More reality is often more stress. For now it's enough to be a kind observer of yourself. What do you think you're trying to accomplish with your behavior?

**CANCER (June 22-July 22).** High-tech scales can report water and body fat percentages now. Regardless, what's controllable in the scenario is what always has been: what goes into your mouth and how you burn it off. This plays large into your day.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** Extreme cuteness has a way of melting your heart. So do extremes of pathos, need, affection, vulnerability, softness, beauty and more. You'll come across remarkable instances of at least one or more of these qualities today.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** Studies show that daily hassles can have a more significant impact on health and well-being than big life events do. That's why it's important to fix the small things that are bothering you. Do it now.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** People who are overly dramatic (or who, through no fault of their own, just happen to need lots of attention) make it harder for you to choose the actions that will uphold values that reflect what

you care about.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** Food could be and should be a pleasure. Instead of wondering what will work adequately for your next meal, you want to delight in the daily practice of eating. What would be ecstatic on the taste buds?

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** The ability to observe external and internal information is governed by different parts of the brain. Switch back and forth often today. There will be magic in the fusing of your outside and inside worlds.

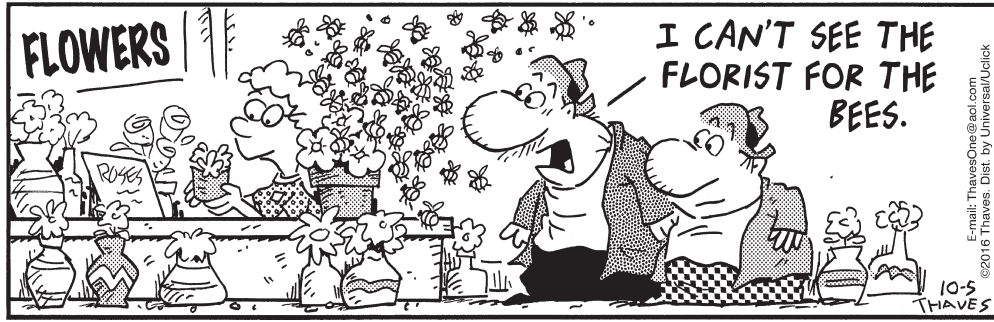
**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** You would like to have more empathy, love and compassion, but you also have goals to reach that disallow you to spend too much time trying to sort out and cater to those messy things called "feelings." There's the rub.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** Your friend seems happy to accept what is. Why can't you be? Sometimes it's problematic to have this kind of mind that reaches here, there and everywhere for answers, but thinkers like you are integral to the human race.

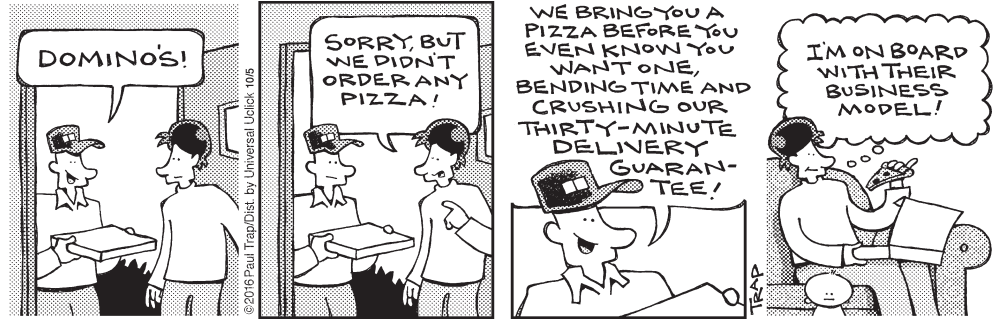
**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).** You'll embrace differences, dance with complexities and have your way with the contrasts that make life so interesting. With your open mind and big spirit, you'll accomplish unusual things.

**THURSDAY'S BIRTHDAY (Oct. 6).** That part of your life that has been frustrating you gets lifted and solved, and it will have you soaring in big ways in 2017. Dedicate yourself fully to a mental or physical fitness challenge in the next 10 weeks, because this will favorably alter your fate. Love bonds are made when you're part of a team. Leo and Aquarius adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 7, 20, 15, 38 and 45.

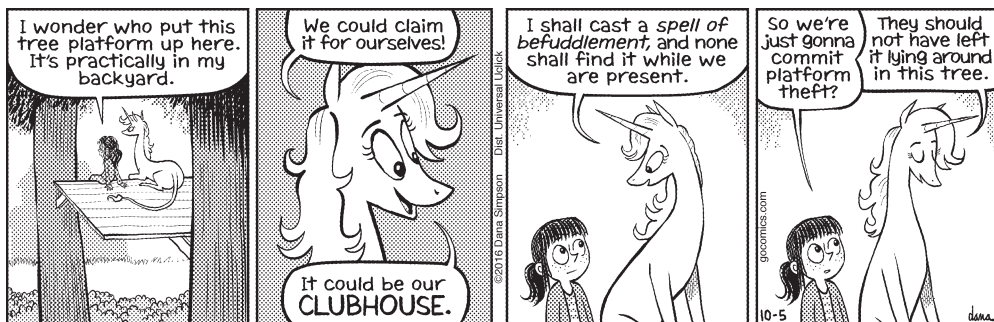
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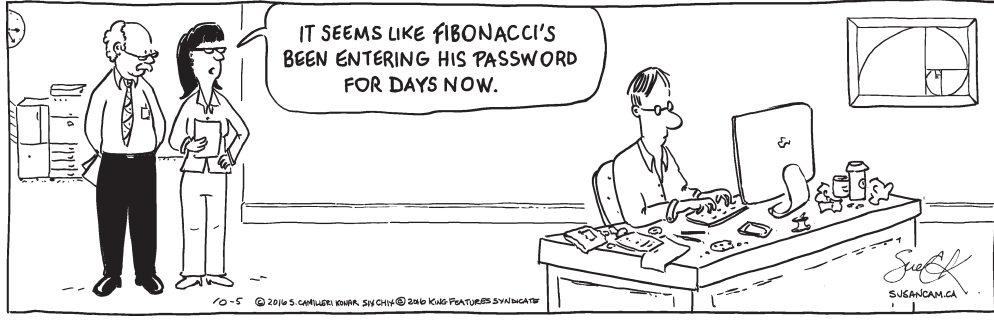
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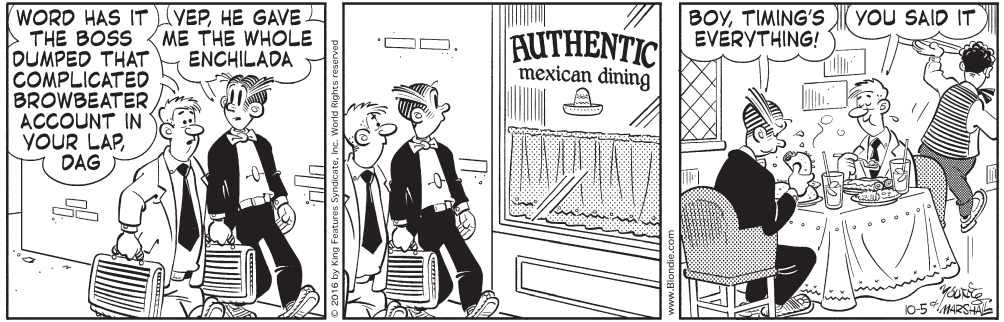
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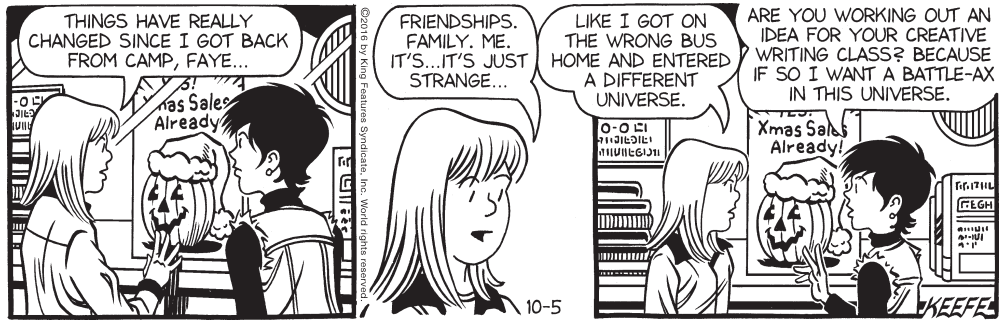
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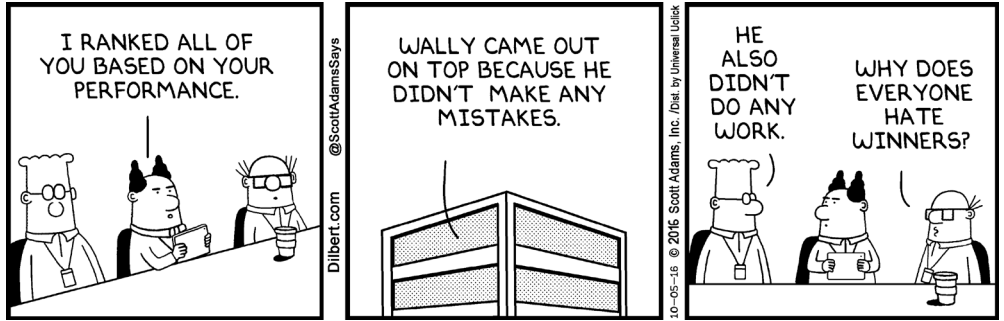
## SALLY FORTH



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## NON SEQUITUR



## WIZARD OF ID



## ROSE IS ROSE

