

# The horrible pain of addiction

**Dear Annie:** I have a real problem with my 52-year-old son, "Robert," who is cross-addicted. He's struggled with substance abuse since he was 14 years old. Years ago, he got sober for a stretch of five years, so I know he is capable of getting clean. But he's using now.

He is very verbally abusive, especially to me. I tried to help him for two years by having him live with me. I kicked him out when I found needles and other paraphernalia in the house. Of course, he lies like a rug and recently claimed he was robbed of his medication. He had me running to the police to file a report of the robbery and then had me go to the pharmacy to pick up a refill.

I have had it up to my eyeballs and cannot help him. He always sends texts saying, "You never loved me," "You hate me," "You talk to me like I'm Dad." (He is just like his father.) His brother died of an overdose, and he throws that in my face — even to the point that he says I enjoyed watching him die! He is so sick, and when I say we need a long break, he turns that around to: "You have no feelings

and are a hard, cold woman." He lives in the same town I do and constantly calls for favors. He needs long-term rehabilitation, and I am fed up with his abuse. What should I do? — *Tired and Exhausted*

**Dear Tired:** Addiction is a cunning and opportunistic disease, one that leads its victims to go to great lengths to further afflict themselves. I'm so sorry it claimed the life of your other son.

Please know that when Robert says monstrous things to you, it's his illness talking, not your son. Tell him that you love and support him but you will not love, support or enable his addiction. That's that. Don't let him guilt you into lending him money; don't let him hoodwink you into refilling prescriptions.

And consider attending an Al-Anon or Nar-Anon Family Groups meeting so you can hear from others who know painfully well what you're going through. I cannot recommend these groups enough.

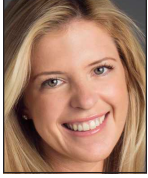
**Dear Annie:** I was so pleased with your response to "Speech Problems in Pennsylvania," saying

that the writer offered "an invaluable perspective." The writer is in a unique place, as the serving job he or she has gives him or her repeated opportunities not only to educate others but also to face his or her own feelings regarding having a speech disorder.

It sounds to me as if the writer is projecting his/her own emotions about the problem onto others. I would suggest that the writer say straight out and very kindly that he/she has a speech problem and do a little sharing. Also, most people who comment on a person's accent mean it as a compliment, not an insult. At any rate, this is my perspective, one based upon my being a certified speech language pathologist for over 45 years. The writer may consider receiving some counseling to clarify and study his/her own feelings, as well as to get support and encouragement. This person sounds very capable and just could use a little boost! — *Speech/Language Pathologist, Retired*

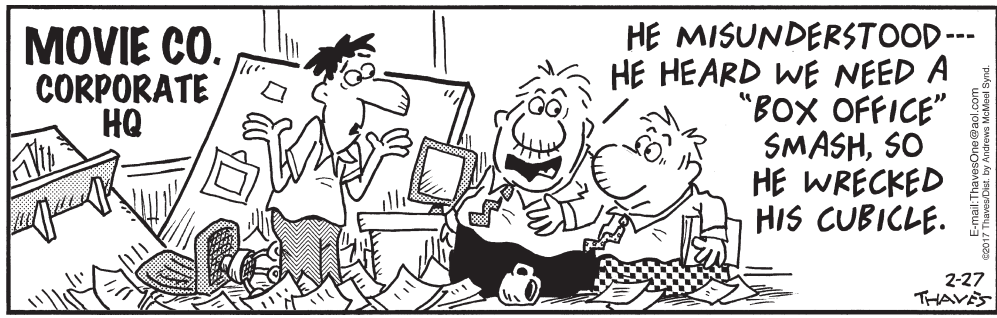
**Dear Speech:** Thank you for sharing your expertise. I'm printing your letter with the hope that it provides encouragement to "Speech Problems in Pennsylvania" and anyone else coping with speech issues.

## DEAR ANNIE

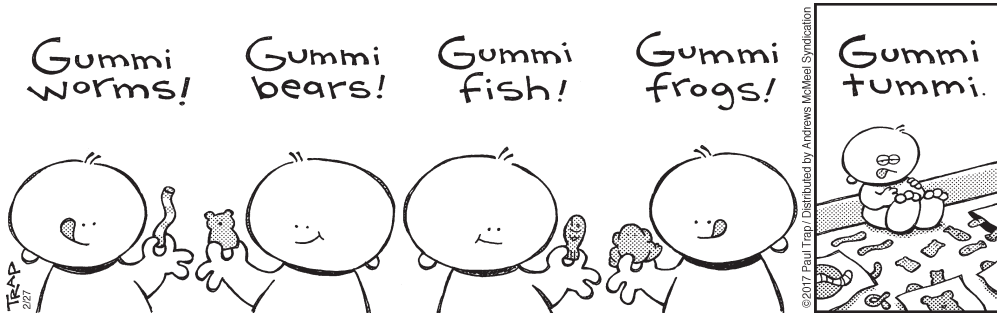


Annie Lane  
Creators  
Syndicate Inc.

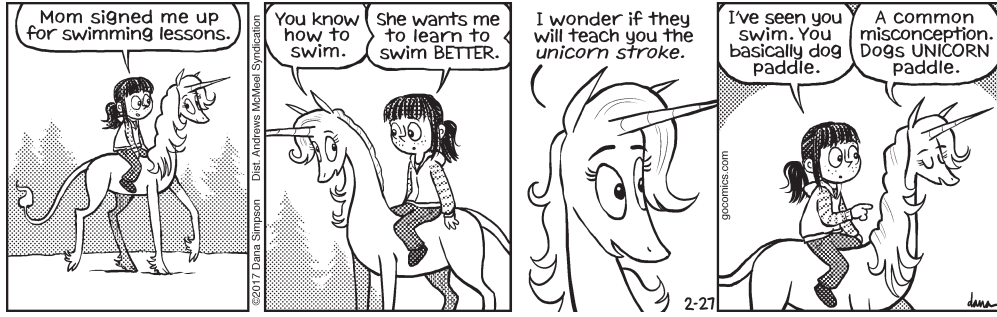
## FRANK AND ERNEST



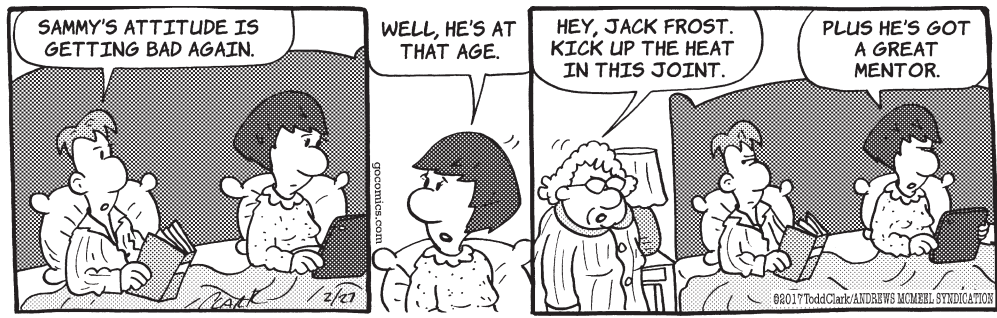
## THATABABY



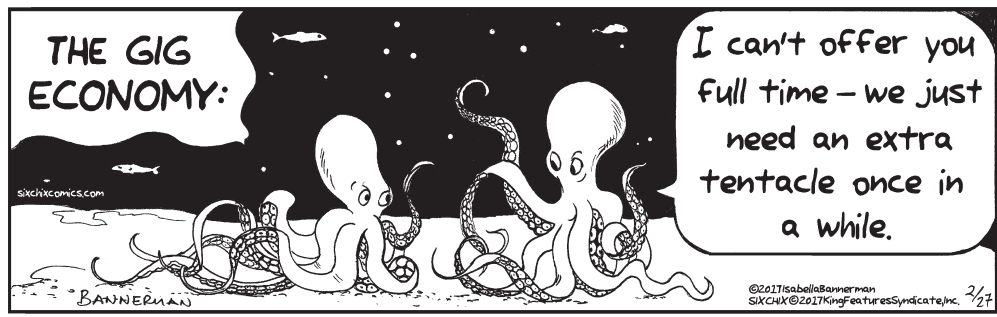
## PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN



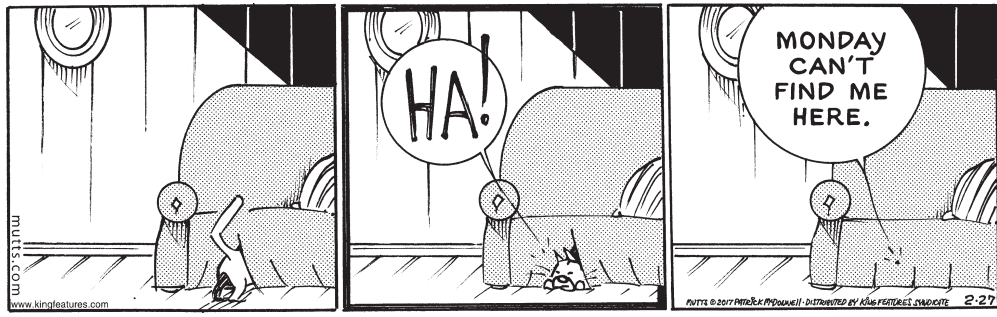
## LOLA



## SIX CHIX



## MUTTS



## BABY BLUES



## ZITS



## TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19).** People are paths, not points. Knowing a person at one time of life is different than knowing that person at another. Your path will join with someone else's, and you'll take the next stretch together.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** The work that used to be hard will get easy. For fleeting but profound moments you'll lose yourself in it, your senses alert and alive in a feeling of oneness with all things.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** Do not accept that the way things are is the way things have to be. First of all, to accept such a thing would be a slight to that amazing imagination of yours. And secondly, you have more heart than that.

**CANCER (June 22-July 22).** You are valid in what you need. If the person you seek it from cannot provide it, that's nobody's fault, just a mismatch. The passing of blame confuses things and stalls the search for a better match.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** From belladonna to foxglove, many poisonous plants are the source of lifesaving medicines. So it is in your current circumstance. In the right context, a low dose of the source of toxicity will actually make you better.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** No matter how well you plan or how many resources you have to work with, life will still offer challenges. You'll handle them better when you're well-rested and fed. Set yourself up for success: Get more sleep.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** There are emotions you have a low tolerance for feeling. These get locked up in certain areas of your body. They become like an armor of tightness,

tension and pain. To release it is to free yourself to creativity and fun.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** The key to riches is extremely simple these days; make more and bigger deposits than withdrawals. When there are people around you who are doing the same thing it will be much easier.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** You usually look ahead, push forward and march on without looking back. But right now you might feel rather stuck until you can sort through and organize the baggage of the past to make it light enough for travel.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** Many things can be true. The cynical view may be true, but that doesn't make it better than any other view. There's a nastiness in cynicism that makes it destructive to the very things worth cherishing.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** If you read much but believe little of it, you'll find yourself in the sweet spot of being reasonably informed, mightily empowered and perhaps even wise.

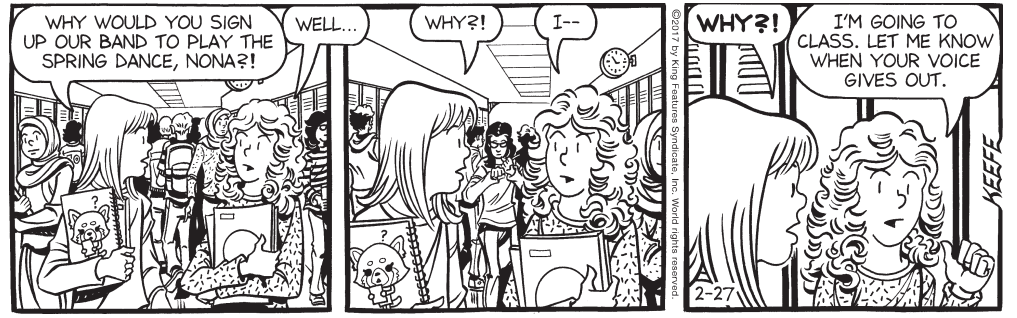
**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).** Start the social planning straightaway. To hold out for the wittiest people in the world so that you can have the best dinner party since the dawn of time is to set yourself up for a frozen dinner for one.

**TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Feb. 28).** You'll make changes in the structure of your days to generate a greater sense of flow through this work of art called life. Your favorite people to be around this year are the ones who not only accept who you are but also help you become the fullest version of yourself. You'll attract even more of this type. Financially, there's a boom in March. Libra and Gemini adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 10, 3, 33, 38 and 50.

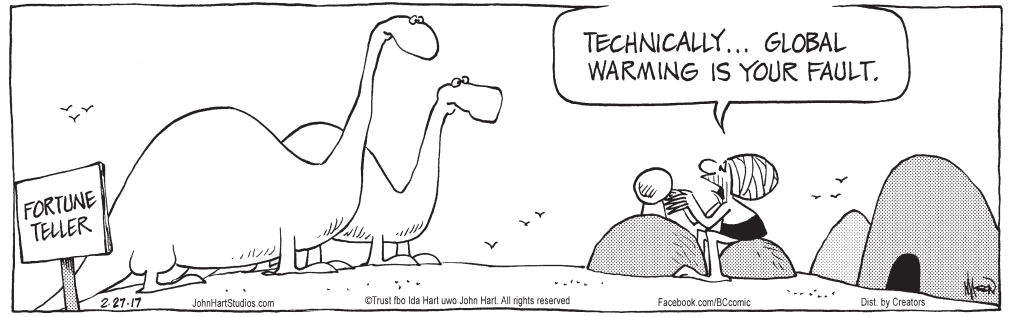
## BLONDIE



## SALLY FORTH



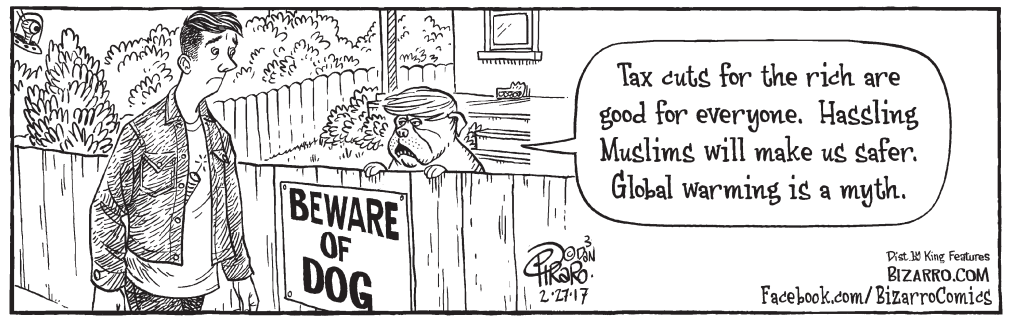
## B.C.



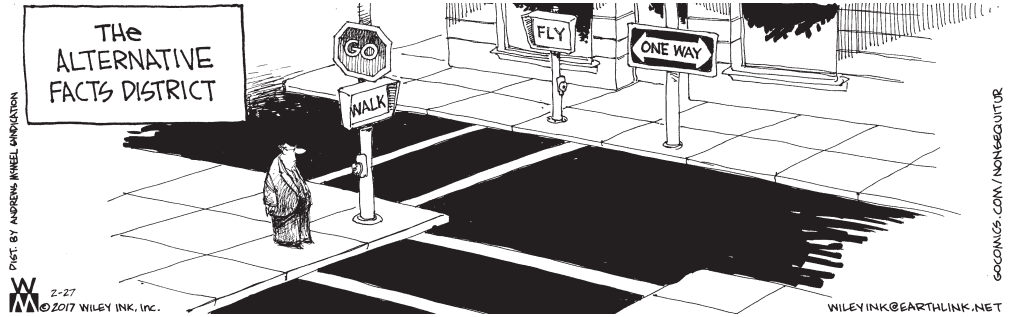
## DILBERT



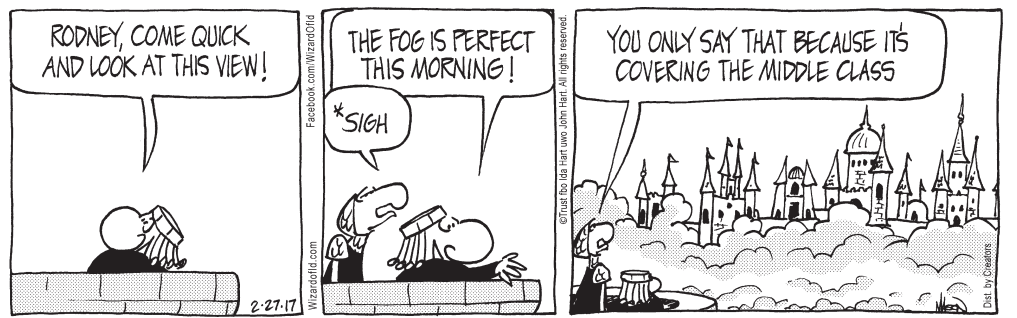
## BIZARRO



## NON SEQUITUR



## WIZARD OF ID



## ROSE IS ROSE

