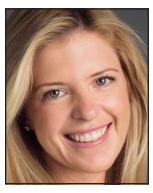
Mother-in-law spreads rumors

DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane
Creators Syndicate Inc.

Dear Annie: I am a longtime reader of your column, but now I need advice. I recently married my husband after nearly a five-year engagement. Things were rough, as all new things can be, but we have pulled through. However, my husband's mother has begun vocalizing some colorful opinions of late, and it is causing problems. She has been spreading rumors that I fancy abusing my husband. She makes sure to find his friends on social media and then convince them that I am harming him.

I am unsure where this newfound hatred for me is coming from, but I can think of two possible reasons. The first is that despite acting as if she was OK with her son's marrying another man, she isn't very comfortable with it. The second is that she used to be able to convince him that she needed money, which she would promptly spend at the casino, a financial burden we could not afford. I recently persuaded him to stop supporting her gambling habit and said that if she needs something, we can buy it for her. I need advice. I want our marriage to thrive, but I am afraid his mother will not allow that to happen. Please, any guidance is appreciated. — *Loved and Loathed*

Dear Loved and Loathed: Spreading false rumors about someone is not only rude; if it goes too far, it can be considered slander and have legal consequences. I am in no way suggesting that you sue your mother-in-law, but I want to reassure you that your frustration is valid and this is a serious matter.

Likewise, your mother-in-law's gambling addiction is serious. Addictions have a way of ensnaring whole families in unhealthy patterns of behavior. At the very least, you and your husband should consider attending a Gam-Anon meeting in your area. If he refuses to go, then go on your own at first. (The meetings are open to anyone who is affected by a loved one's gambling.) Furthermore, I recommend that you and your husband find a marital counselor. There's no shame in reaching out for professional help, especially when it could save your marriage.

Dear Annie: I work at a fast-food restaurant, and there are nights when we get very busy. Whenever we do get busy, my co-workers are very cranky. They're constantly arguing with one another and snapping at one another. It's almost as if they don't want to do their jobs, as if they'd rather be standing around doing nothing. Annie, it feels as if I'm the only one at my workplace who even tries to keep a positive attitude when we're busy. Should I try to persuade the others to let things go, or is this a case of "if you can't beat them, join them"? — *Only Optimist*

Dear Optimist: Keep smiling. My father used to always say that no hard work goes unnoticed. Even if at the moment it doesn't seem as if you are being appreciated or you are the only one in the restaurant with a smile on your face, in the long run, you will be much more successful in life with a positive attitude. It feels good to take pride in your work. With your outlook, you'll end up running the restaurant or achieving any goals you set your mind to.

TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Before you let your guard down with anyone, he or she must pass the battery of social, emotional and intellectual tests of your subconscious design. This is how you keep your life orderly.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). A mischievous mood prevails, though you must be somewhat careful about how you act on it. There's much you'll get away with, and it's all in the name of fun.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You'll see what others miss. So go on and state the obvious, because it's only obvious to you. Eventually, this may earn you a position of leadership. But right now it's earning you some serious respect.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Learning not to worry about things that are outside of your control is a skill that will contribute in a huge way to your personal happiness and satisfaction.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Actors strive to learn everything they can about the characters they play, as one must understand something to become it. The change you want to make will begin with study and understanding as well.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Do two things at once and you'll accomplish neither. Multitasking will be at best a waste of time, at worst a dangerous opening for stupid mistakes. Give your focus exclusively.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). The darkness of night often turns on the light of the movie projector in your mind. Your imagination will be especially strong tonight; envision a beautiful future.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Life is the true wealth. Vitality is the most desired quality. Make a concerted effort to avoid sacrificing sleep, nutrition and other things that create optimum health.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Time will sail for you today, mostly because you'll get so into what you're doing. You'll make something special and figure out how to put the thoughts of what you love into this project.

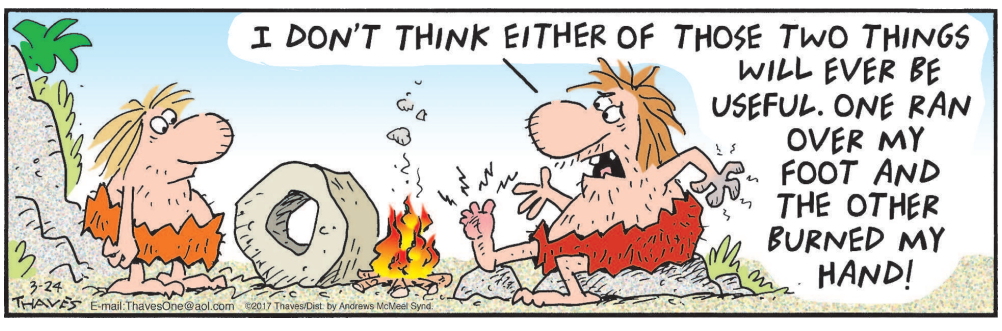
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Your day will improve as your powers of focus do. To direct your own mind very well is the one skill you can master that will enhance all of the others.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). When it's about communicating so others will relate to you and get your message, go with the current style. But in matters of principle, be unwavering. Principles never follow trends.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Socrates suggested that life contains two tragedies. One is not to get your heart's desire; the other is to get it. You'll escape tragedy altogether with today's interesting compromise.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (March 25). You'll make the future better as you endeavor to understand history, especially your personal history and that of your family. Next month brings sweetness and laughter with someone younger. There's a gold mine for you to discover in June. August is your shot at a high honor. Physical strength increases with late 2017 efforts. Leo and Sagittarius adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 1, 44, 15 and 30.

FRANK AND ERNEST



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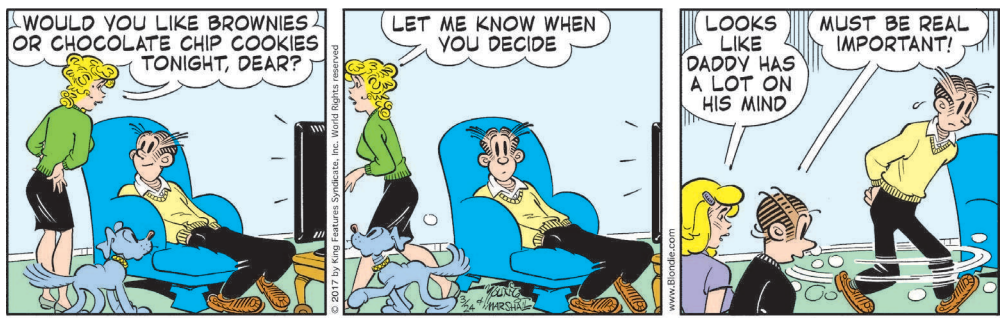

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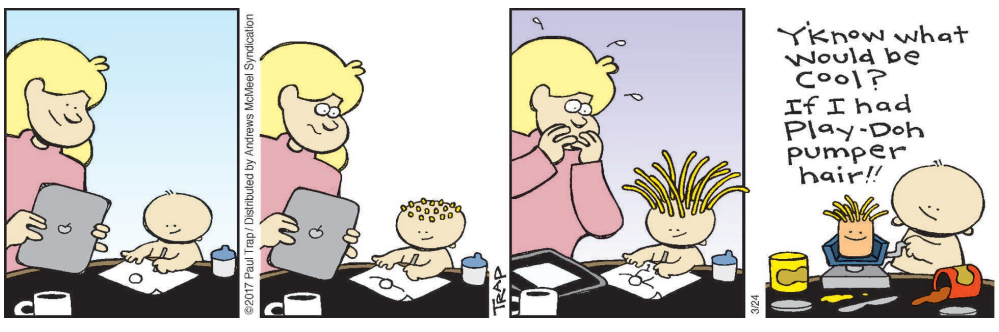

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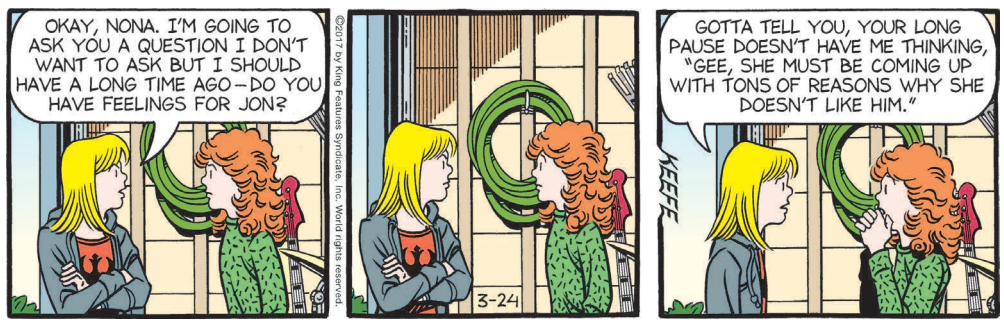
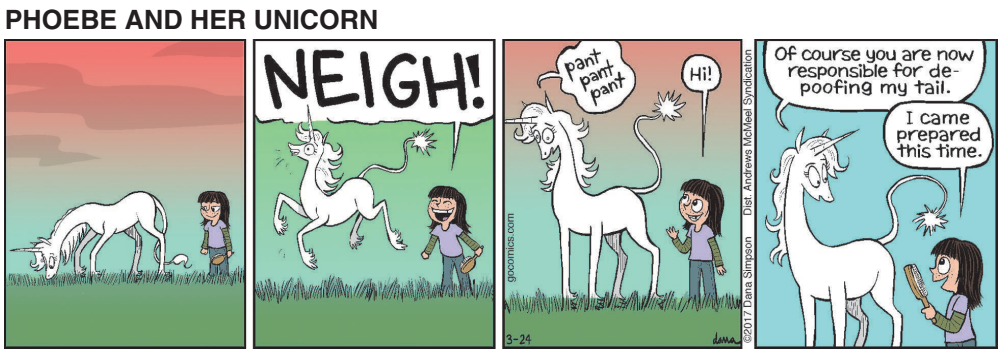


PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN



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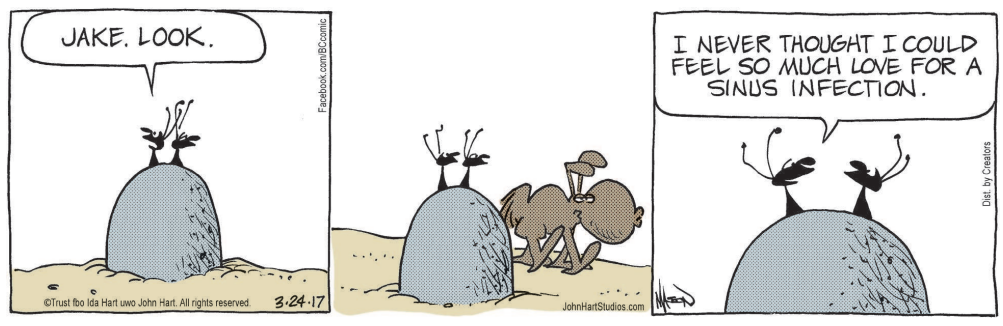

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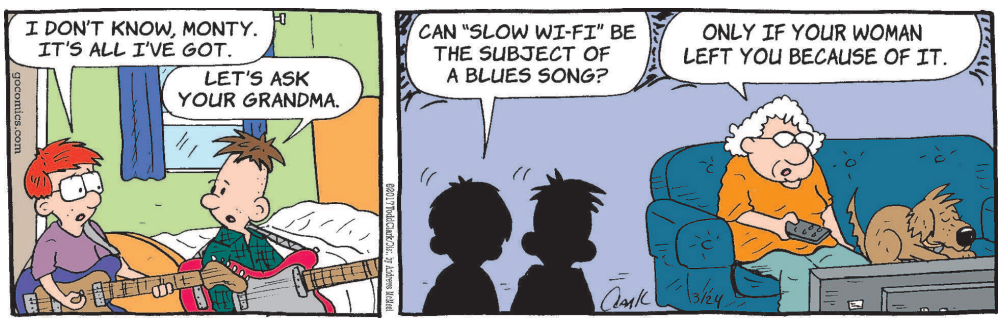

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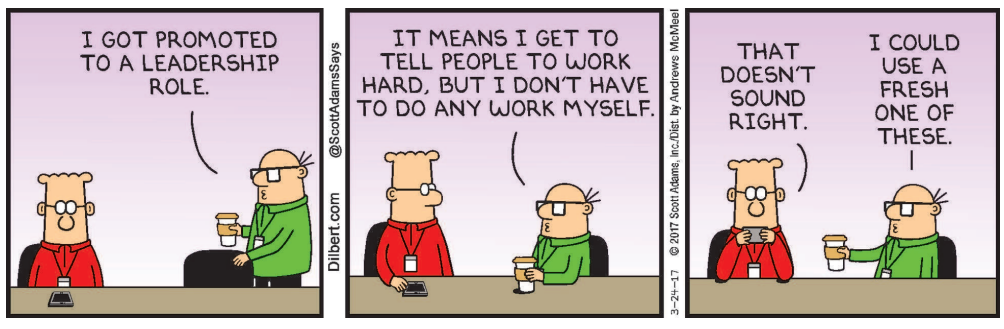

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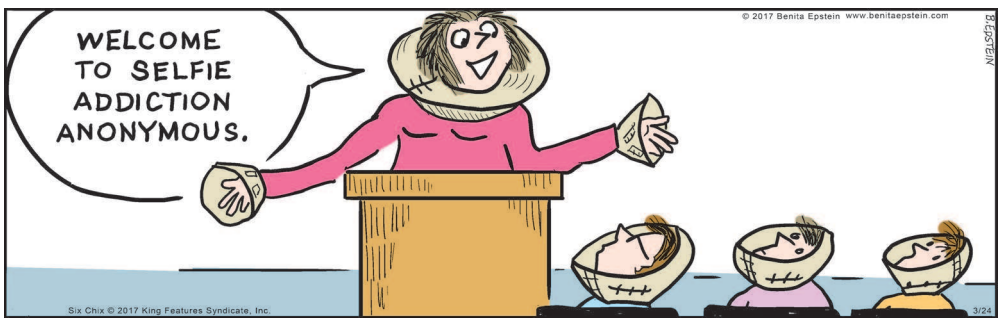

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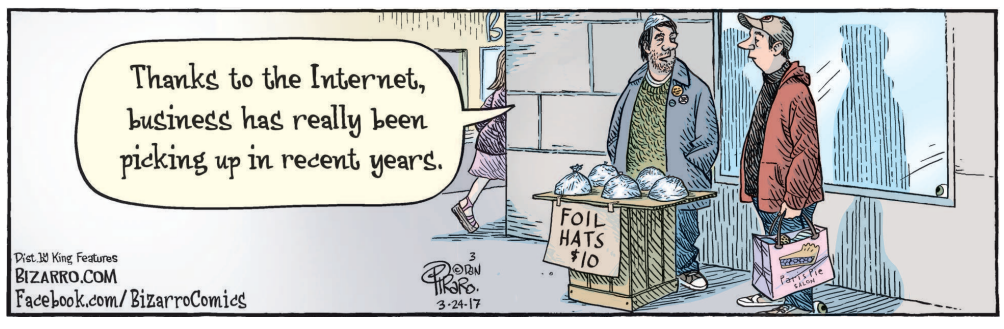


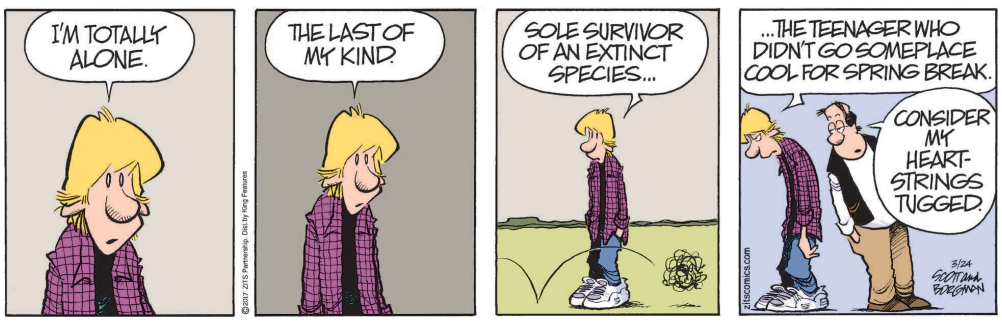
MUTTS

NON SEQUITUR

BABY BLUES

WIZARD OF ID

ZITS



ROSE IS ROSE