

Spouse feeling left behind

Dear Annie: My wife and I have been happily married for eight years and were blessed with healthy triplets four years ago. My problem is that every year, my wife's generous employer takes the entire staff on an incredible trip. I'm talking Napa, Europe, etc.

DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

It's wonderful of him and wonderful for the employees. However, spouses are not included in the invitation. I would gladly pay my own way, and we would then be able to experience these trips together. Instead, I stay home, working my full-time job and taking care of our children.

I feel left out of being able to enjoy this with my wife, as well as resentful of my time at home without her. Of course, I want her to go and am happy for her, but on the other hand, I am having a hard time talking to her about it, and it is difficult to be supportive of her anticipation of the upcoming trip. Do you have any advice on how to handle this or even deal with my conflicting emotions?
—Homebound

ciate that you're worried about looking selfish and sullen, but you're being pretty reasonable, considering the circumstances. I don't think anyone would blame you for feeling overwhelmed by caring for triplets on your own and working a full-time job.

So communicate. Let your wife know how these trips make you feel and that you're not trying to send her on a guilt trip; you just want to avoid resentment. From there, you two can find a solution that works for both of you, such as arranging for a reliable sitter to help out while she's gone or planning a vacation for just the two of you soon.

Dear Annie: I was impressed by "Peacemaker in Pittsburgh," the writer who still has friends on all sides of the political spectrum, as many have become too polarized to be friendly anymore. He wrote about having trouble with these friends' continual efforts to persuade everybody to come around to their points of view, dragging down social occasions. I think he has an opportunity to

change the tone of these conversations, maintain the friendships and set a positive example. We can all do this: Listen. Ask individuals why they think a certain way (how their personal values led to their viewpoints). Ask them about when certain beliefs first started for them. Give them a chance to talk. Make sure they're done before you start. Don't interrupt them, and ask others not to interrupt or give support. Try saying, "That's interesting. Tell me more." Ask about their goals and hopes, as there are likely to be some you share. Then explain your own frustration, too. If you've heard something that seems misguided, try saying, "Hmm, that's not been my experience." Then offer an account of what values and experiences caused you to form a different opinion. I've been helped by Essential Partners' guide titled "Reaching across the divide" (available at <http://whatisessential.org>). —Vermont Grandma

Dear Vermont Grandma: Thank you for the helpful suggestions. I'm sure many people could use that guide. I look forward to hearing from readers who try incorporating those tips into their conversations.

TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Negative emotion is nothing more than a contradiction between what is and your opinion of what should be. Resolve the contradiction and the feelings become positive.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Illusion dissolution is difficult because the very nature of an illusion is that you can't tell where the fake part starts and the real part ends. Anyway, why be so discerning? That said, a little joyful nonreality goes a long way.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Monologues that go on and on will spring from the mouths of those with too much time and not enough awareness or interest in others. Better to keep it brief and professional today, even when you're not on the job.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Children don't want to go to sleep when they should. They'd rather eat candy than vegetables. With maturity, we learn to trust the intelligence of the body. Don't let childish impulses override the body's wisdom.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You're a lifelong learner and a little worried that you won't have enough brain storage for the new stuff coming up. Luckily, today's knowledge can be applied immediately to real life in an unforgettable way.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Wisdom isn't glamorous. It's typically depicted by an old scribe on a mountain or a short green alien. Ryan Gosling wouldn't play Wisdom in the movies. And yet, "wise" is the most attractive thing you could be today.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Your choices won't all be healthy ones and this may actually keep you healthier than if they were. A little bit of danger builds up a tolerance that will keep you safe.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). There's a pressure to deliver. It would be nice to think it's all in your head, but you know better. There really are people depending on you. Don't worry; you're heat-resistant. With your feet to the fire, you do amazing things.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You want gracious people around you, but if they are too generous it makes you nervous. How will you return the favor? Seek situations that settle into a natural and easy reciprocity.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). There's so much that you're good at, but there are also areas in life in which you're still a baby learning to walk. So do like the babies do. Put one foot in front of the other, until you fall. Then get back up and try again.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Low points are tests, not permission slips for bad behavior. Those who rise to the occasion when the chips are down are the true gems. Note: It takes an even stronger person to stay humble when the chips are up.

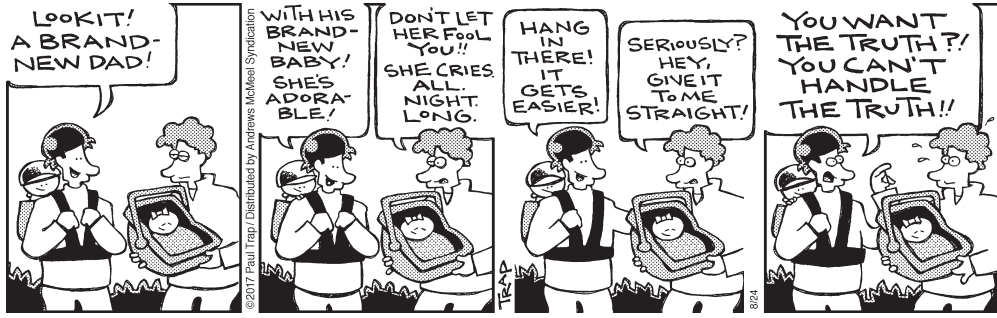
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). The smartest way is to keep your head. When you start to really want something, it becomes bigger, better, more lucrative — blown up to unreal proportions that it can't possibly live up to. Stay cool. See what's really there.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Aug. 25). It's like life is paying you back for all the good you put in. Love is dizzying in September. Concrete changes put you back on the ground and building something impressive. Rewards linked to your diligence come in February and you'd do well to invest immediately. May and July are lucky for your whole family. Capricorn and Scorpio adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 8, 2, 28, 44 and 15.

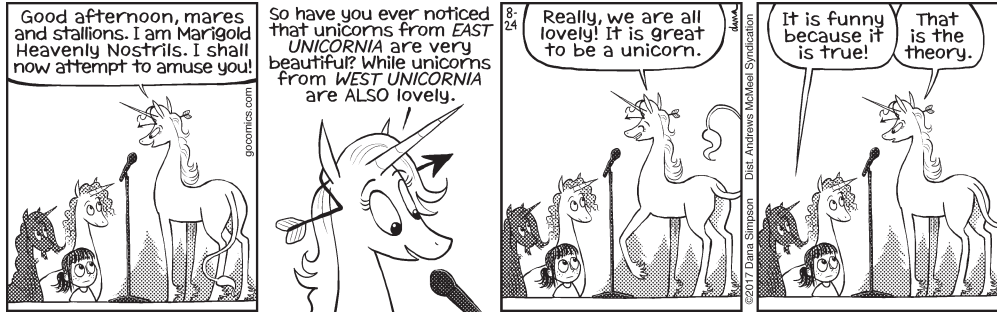
FRANK AND ERNEST



THATABABY



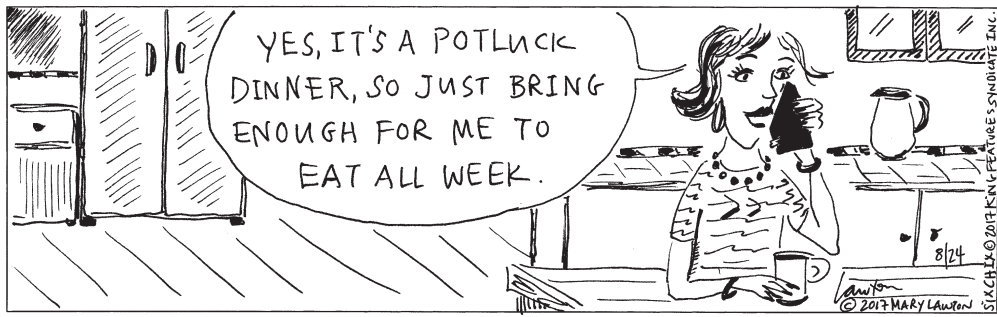
PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN



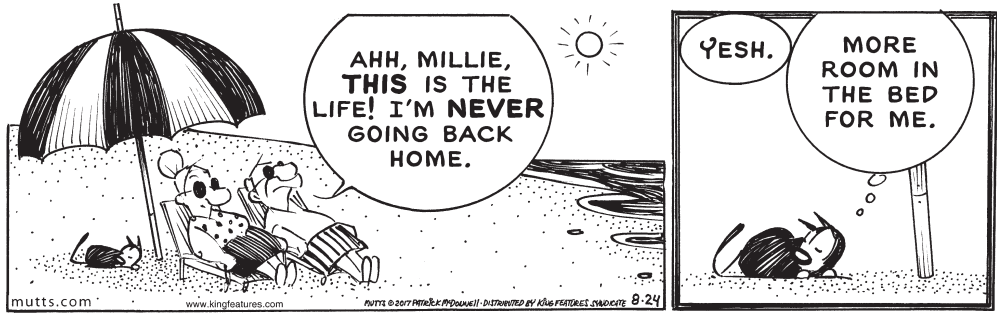
LOLA



SIX CHIX



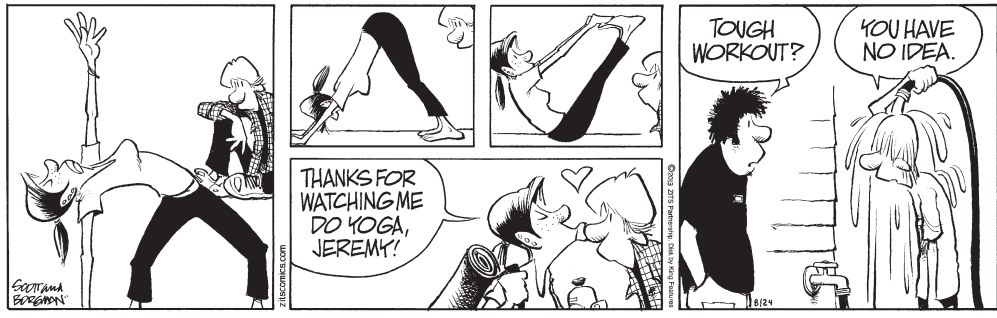
MUTTS



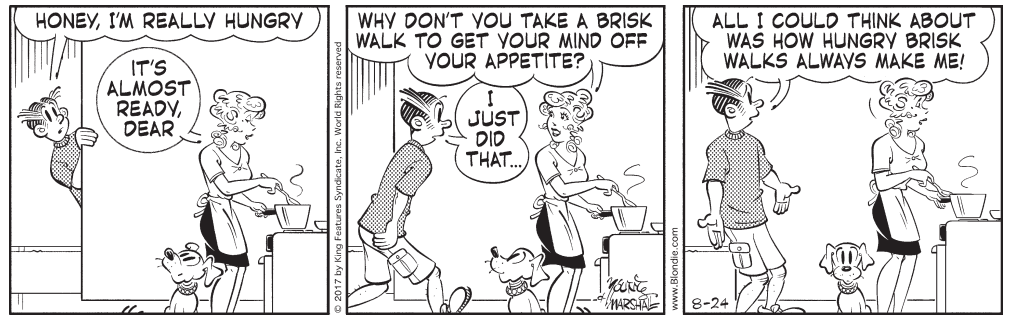
BABY BLUES



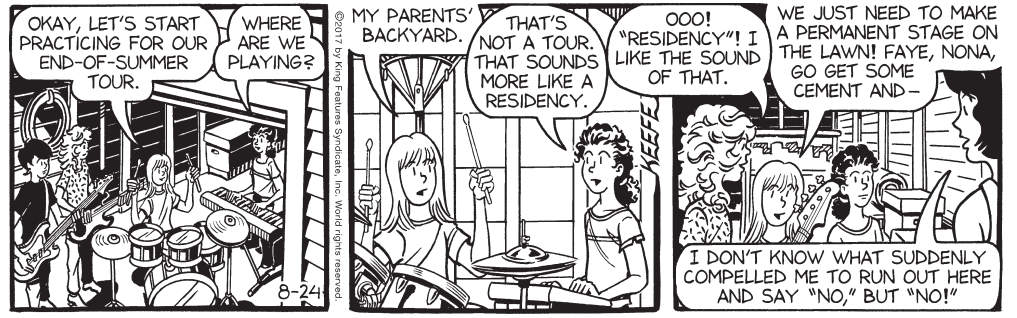
ZITS



BLONDIE



SALLY FORTH



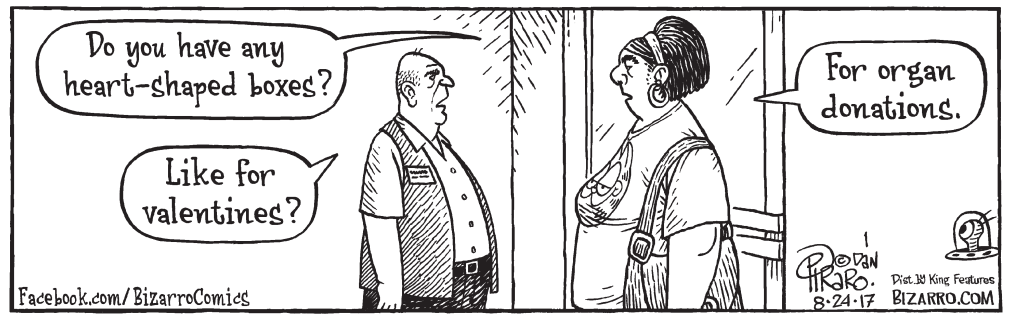
B.C.



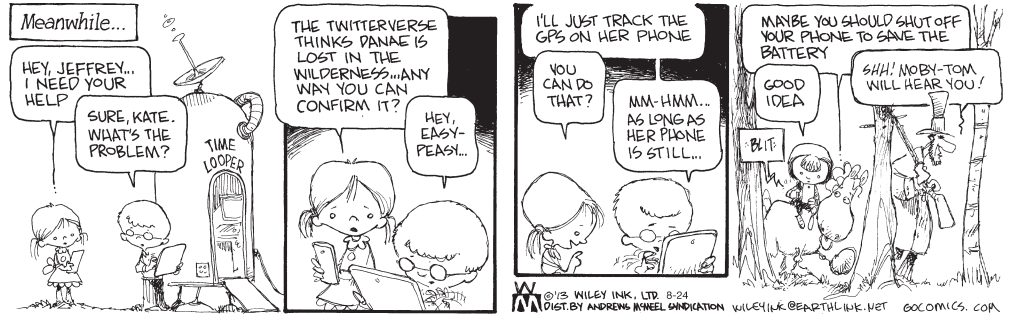
DILBERT



BIZARRO



NON SEQUITUR



WIZARD OF ID



ROSE IS ROSE

