

# Ruffling some feathers

**Dear Annie:** I was at my brother's home for my sister-in-law's birthday a few weeks ago. My sister-in-law, "Jess," had a stroke some years ago and can only say a few single-syllable words at a time. She has an 18-year-old bird that she loves and takes care of.

My nephew's fiance, "Becky," and her daughter, "Emily," came over during the party, and Emily started to tease the bird. Jess looked at me and said, "Cover bird." I went over and very politely put the cover on the birdcage and said, "I think it's time for the bird to go to sleep. When there are a lot of people in the house, the bird gets stressed out. The cover helps him calm down."

Everything was fine for about 10 minutes. But then Emily went over, flipped part of the cover off the cage and started to tease the bird again. Becky was sitting right there and did not say a word to her daughter. I looked on silently because I felt it was not my place to say anything, and Emily sat down after a few minutes anyway. But then she went over to the

cage a third time. She began teasing the bird. At this point, my brother politely told Emily to stop because she was upsetting the bird, and she did.

At that point, Becky got upset. She told my brother, "She's only playing with the bird." She and Emily left the birthday party early because of this.

My brother and I would like your opinion on whether or not it was inappropriate for him to tell Emily to stop. — *Birdy-guard*

**Dear Birdy-guard:** Of course it was appropriate of your brother to speak up. If that ruffled Becky's feathers, she should have stepped in before he had to. The next time you're all together, set some ground rules right from the start, and make them clear to Emily, Becky and your nephew: no ifs, ands or squawks about it.

**Dear Annie:** I couldn't agree more with your reply to "Wondering Why at the Y," who complained about the odor of his fitness classmate. But this isn't just a problem at the gym. In today's offices, people are

often crammed into small areas to save money. If one inconsiderate man or woman puts on too much fragrance, it can give headaches to everyone around them. It's unfortunate when the person causing this problem is a supervisor. You don't tell the HR manager she stinks if you want to keep your job for very long! Once, my manager approached a corporate vice president about her perfume, because the noxious smell was making his employees ill whenever she visited. She replied that she paid big money for her French perfume and anyone who didn't like it could hit the road!

Long ago, I was given a piece of advice that I feel should be stressed in employee training and at work-out centers: If you wear scents on a daily basis, you must be very careful. Over time, you become immune to the smell. Bottom line, if you put on enough that you can smell it, it's probably terribly strong for everyone else! — *Glad I'm Retired*

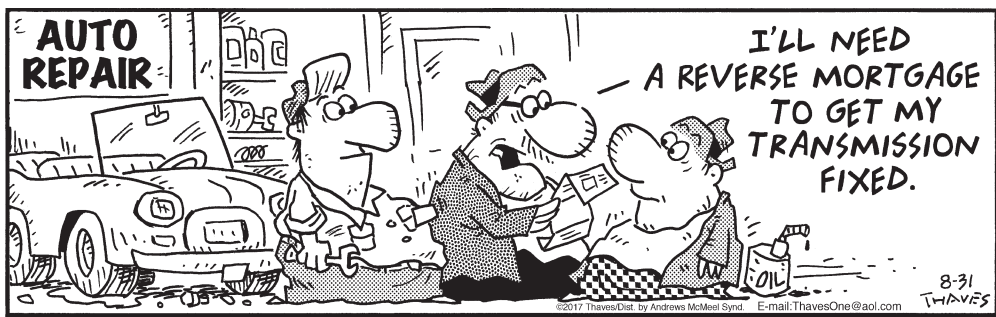
**Dear Glad I'm Retired:** Let this be a public service announcement: The perfumes and colognes you wear could ruin a co-worker's day. Spritz responsibly.

## DEAR ANNIE

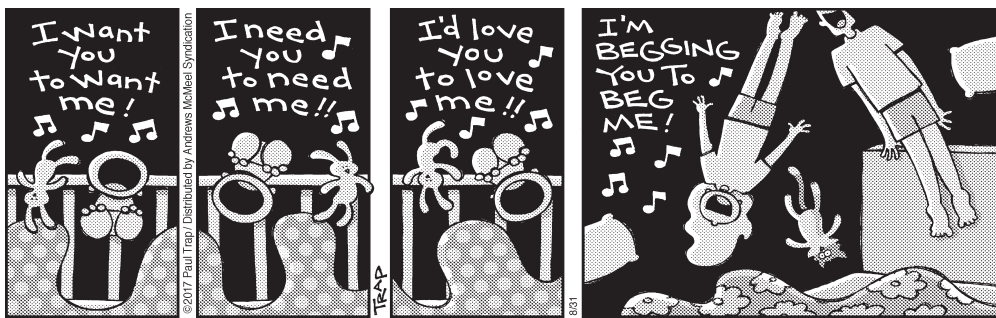


Annie Lane  
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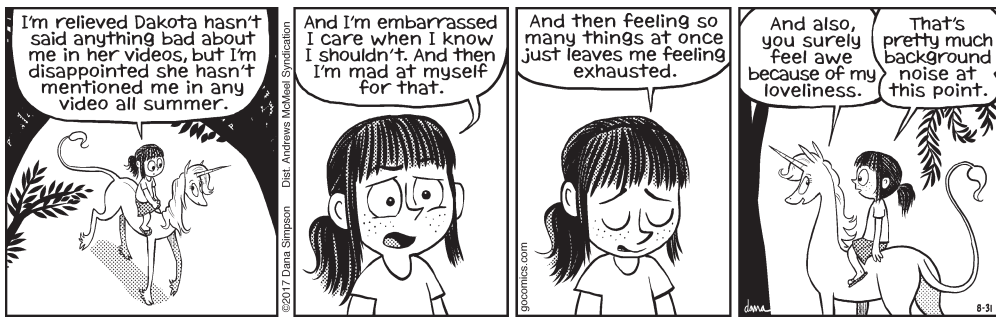
## FRANK AND ERNEST



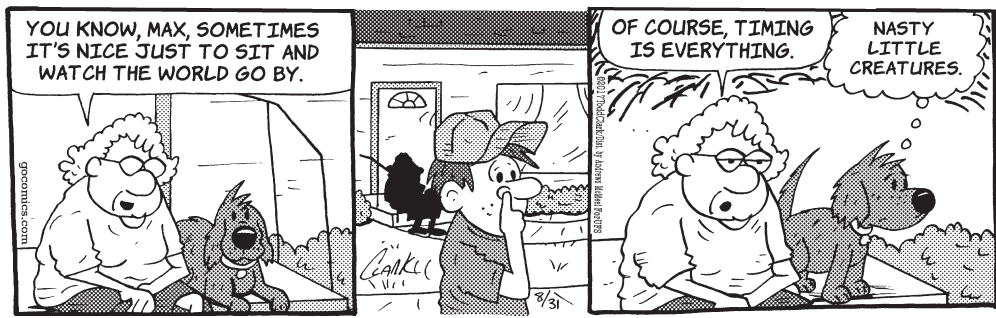
## THATABABY



## 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).** Many situations are ambiguous. It's the way we interpret them that gives them context and meaning. To take a neutral situation and turn it into something negative is to needlessly drain a little joy from your life. Let in the light.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** When working harder doesn't solve it, stop. You don't want to exhaust your energy in the wrong direction. Also, there's no need to prove you're the hardest worker. Anyway, you're more into getting results. So ask for advice.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** Contraction is the natural reaction to the cold or hardness of either external or internal circumstances — a narrowing of focus and life. Now what will you do to counter it?

**CANCER (June 22-July 22).** You know a lot on the subject at hand and will be asked for your opinion. You'll be slow to weigh in, though, ever aware that there are always new insights. Peers will respect your humility.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** When you're really "on" (as you'll find you will frequently be over the next three weeks) your stories will be like theme park rides that take people out of the atmosphere and into a new world before returning them safely back to the car park.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** Some things are beautiful because they fit so perfectly into a well-defined niche. Other things are beautiful because they are so difficult to explain or define. The latter kind brings today's wonderment.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** The human fight-or-flight response only works with outside stimuli. No human can run fast enough to get away from his or her inner life. Fighting with it

is futile, too. An accepting, gentle conversation will do much good, though.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** Nothing is interesting until someone is interested in it. When you pay attention and hook into what fascinates you, you'll make the subject more appealing to others. Your curiosity is, in essence, a public service.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** Relax. Let the stressful thoughts float by without grabbing hold of them. There's a lot running through your head that you can safely dismiss, if only because you've already thought it before. What's new and important will stand out.

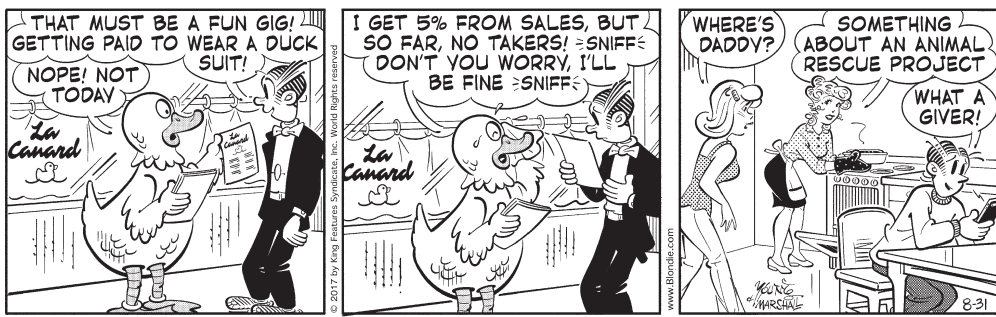
**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** People show appreciation in the way they know how. Often, it's not in the timeliest or politest way, but we're not all coming from the same teaching in that regard. Let it go and accept kindness however it comes.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** They're seeking the same thing that you are: love, peace and connection. Of course, a fair exchange of goods, services and money would be nice, too. You just might get it all.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).** When you get a whiff of something that reminds you of the past, this can trigger an incommensurable emotional response in you that's not an accurate representation of what's actually going on.

**TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Sept. 1).** The love coming into your life will grow and grow. In November, choices that seem monumental are actually as silly as worrying about choosing which side of the bread to butter. Sagittarius and Pisces adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 40, 33, 27 and 17.

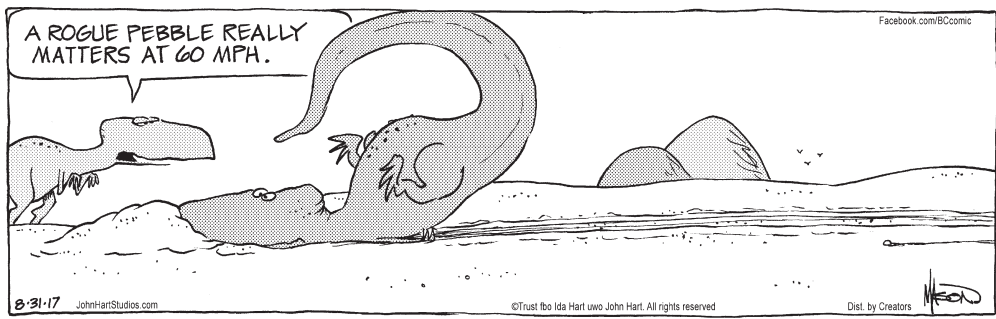
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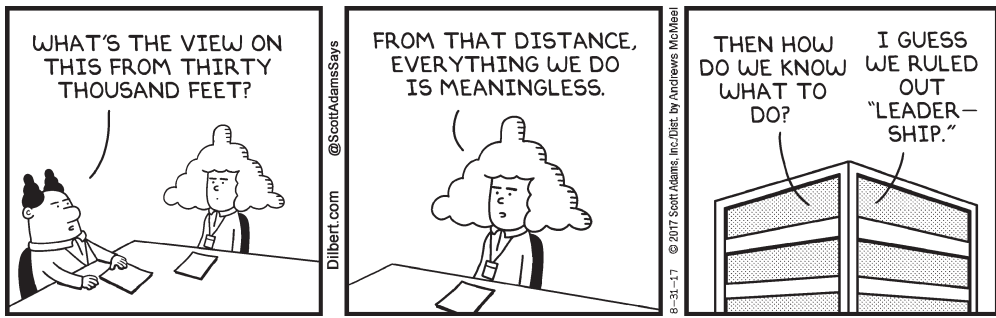
## SALLY FORTH



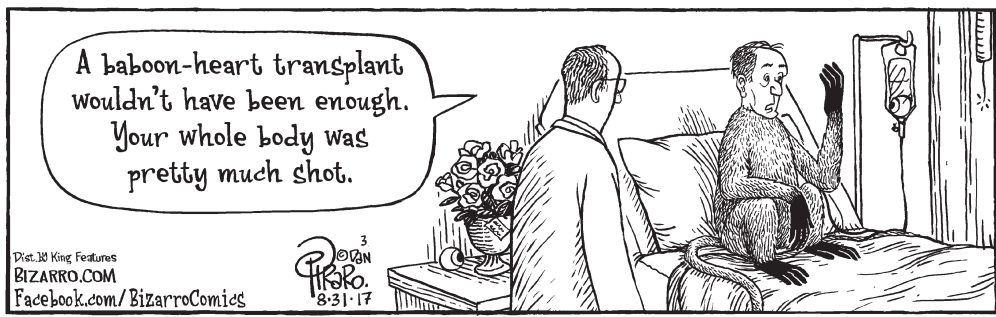
## B.C.



## DILBERT



## BIZARRO



## NON SEQUITUR



## WIZARD OF ID



## ROSE IS ROSE

