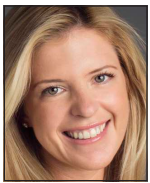


Not looking for anyone

Dear Annie: I am a woman in my mid-20s, and I have known I'm asexual for about five years. This fact doesn't play a major role in my day-to-day life, but it makes explaining my lack of romantic relationships to my family awkward. Every time I go home to visit, I get the usual questions of whether or not I've met anyone. My answer is always no. Though I don't feel my family members are overly pushy about my relationship status, I know it worries them, and I can see the confusion on their faces. It's clear they think that either there is something emotionally wrong with me or I'm a closet lesbian. Should I tell them I'm asexual? On one hand, it might help explain things to them and end the questions. On the other, it seems like an overshare of something that should be no one else's business. I also worry that if I were to disclose this information, I'd get the usual, unhelpful reaction of being told, "It's just a phase." "You haven't met the right man yet." "Have you

talked with a doctor about your hormone levels?" I will soon be going home again and could use some outside perspective on how much of my personal life to disclose. — *Not Interested*

DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

Dear Not Interested: Listen to your gut — which, based on your letter, seems to be telling you to come out to your family members. Yes, it's possible they'll brush it off as you fear. But that's their problem. All you can do is hope that in time they'll see you're serious about this and accept it. Right now, there seems to be a wall up that's preventing you from being close with them, and I get the feeling you won't feel fully yourself around them until that wall is down.

Dear Annie: Your recent column on the preferred way to wash dishes (the response to "Washing Well") prompts me to offer mine.

I use the biggest pot or bowl needing a wash. I put a little soap and a small amount of water in the bottom. I start with the silverware because it goes

into your mouth and needs to be cleanest. I wash it in the soapy water and then rinse it with hot water that goes into the wash bowl. Next, I wash glasses and rinse into the bowl, which is filling up with water. Next, I do plates and other containers. I do the pots last. This way, I use only one bowl of water. And if the water gets too dirty at any point, I dump it and start clean — but it's rare that I need to do this.

This is a method I have used through 40 years of camping. It uses minimal water, which is good if you have to boil water on a camp stove. I encourage everyone to use minimal soap. Soap left on dishes does more harm to your stomach than the occasional food scrap does. If you do use more soap, be sure to rinse well.

I think this method uses the best parts of the methods of the mother and son who wrote to you. And in drought areas, such as the Southwest, it is especially friendly to the environment and the pocketbook. — *Lynn in Moorhead, Minnesota*

Dear Lynn: I love learning tips from crafty campers. Very resourceful. Thanks for sharing.

TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). There may be legitimate reasons for futile pursuits. As impossible as the standard of perfection may be, there are excellent near-perfect findings along the way to make such a quest worthwhile.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Not every appetite is an indulgence. More often than not, what you crave will point you to what your body and soul know will nourish you. Follow an interest into the deeper and more nourishing levels.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Of course you stand for something: You stand for a lot of things, in fact. That being the case, there's no need to go out of your way to find new things to stand for. This is a day to relax and just be who you are.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). In the case where the boss is away, inept or nonexistent, someone has to lead. You'll be good at it. You'll call some key shots, in a manner that is necessary and beneficial to you and all involved.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You refuse to give a mood too much sway over your schedule. Moods come and go. You prefer to make decisions based on your overall vision of your life, not the moment-to-moment minutiae of feelings.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Repetition makes for ease ... that is until it makes for weariness and exhaustion. Practice until you get good — but then know when to quit. Recognize the point of diminishing returns.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). The competition isn't always coming at you from an opposing side. Often it's your nearest and dearest who are the most competitive with you, which adds complications to the scene today.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You want some-

thing that scares you. The prospect of having what you want is even more frightening than the possibility of never having it, but you're brave, so you'll go for it anyway.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You're a hard worker today, with deeper wells of self-discipline than usual. Take advantage of these focusing powers while they last. Also look for ways to apply more of your talents to the task at hand.

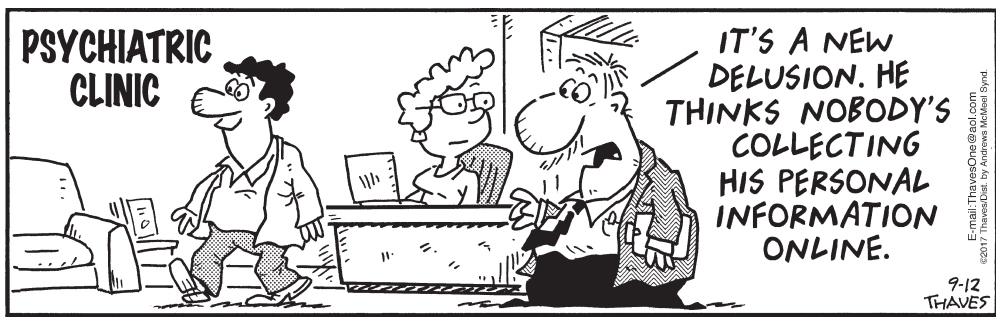
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). It will be important to separate your identity from your opinions. Your opinions — even your beliefs — may change as you come to understand more about the world. Who you are is much deeper than one world view.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). People connect in the soft parts of their hearts. Those are also the vulnerable parts. You cannot make that connection without leaving yourself somewhat vulnerable. On some level you have to agree to get hurt.

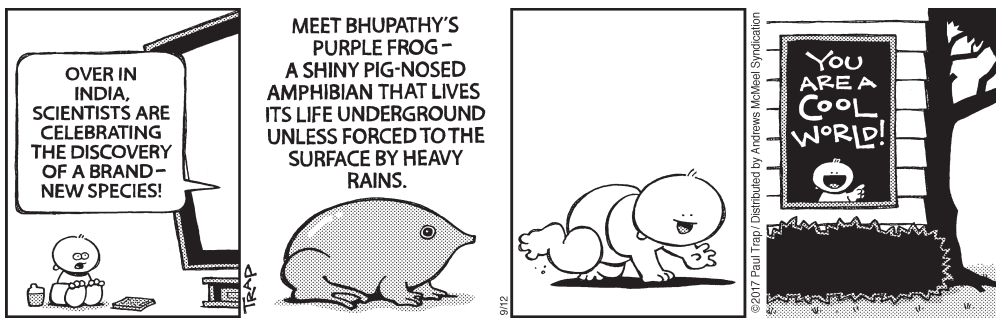
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). If relationships were emotional weather, some would be a gentle wind through the mind and others would put you on tornado watch. Then again, you can be a bit of a storm chaser these days. It's one way to fight the ennui.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Sept. 13). If this year were a musical score, it would have the soaring melodies of a John Williams action/adventure piece. You'll make friends who up your game. The financial infusion next month will be well-invested in education or travel. The end of the year will bring a merging of families. May is the most romantic month. Pisces and Libra adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 10, 36, 2, 28 and 31.

FRANK AND ERNEST



THATABABY



PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN



LOLA



SIX CHIX



MUTTS



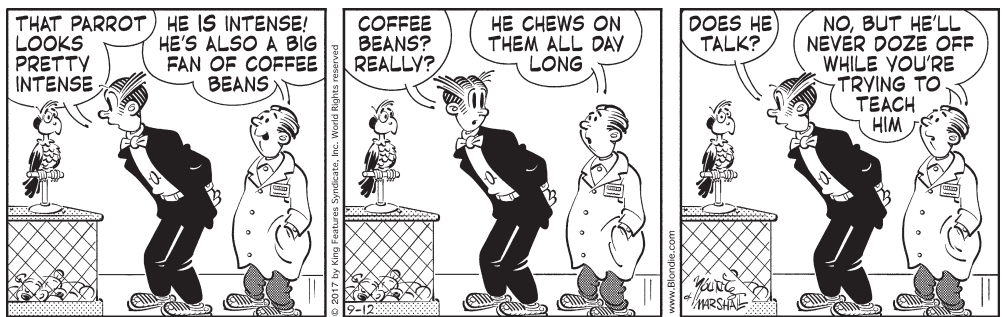
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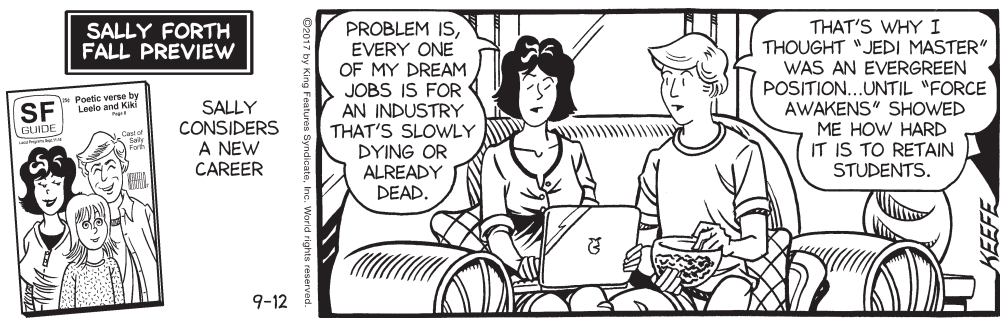
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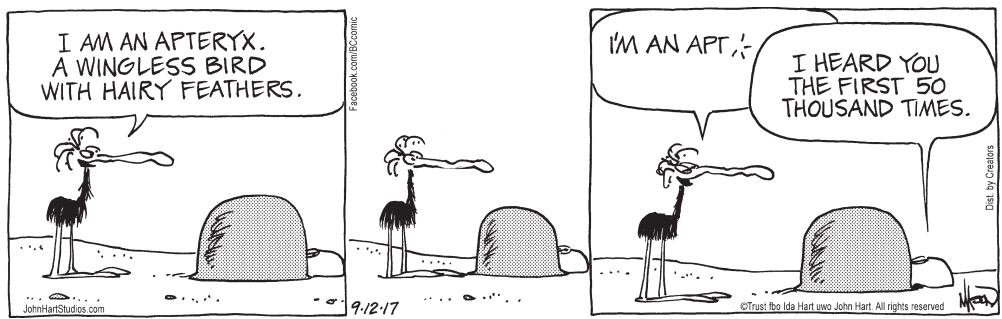
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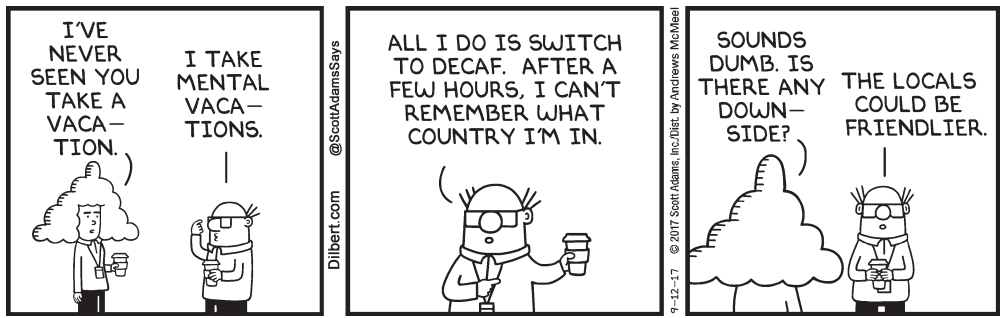
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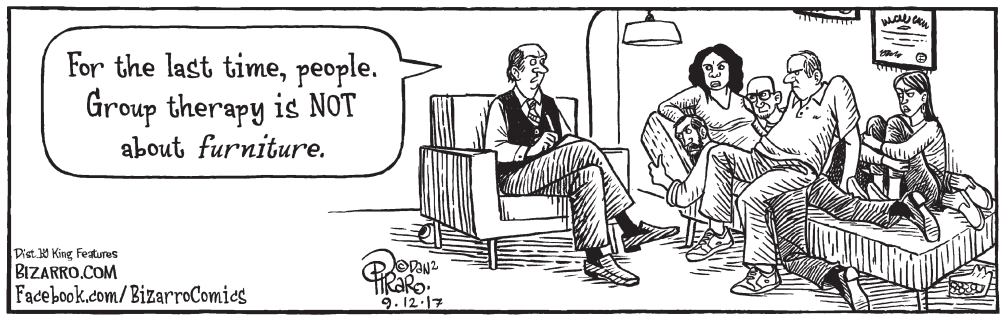
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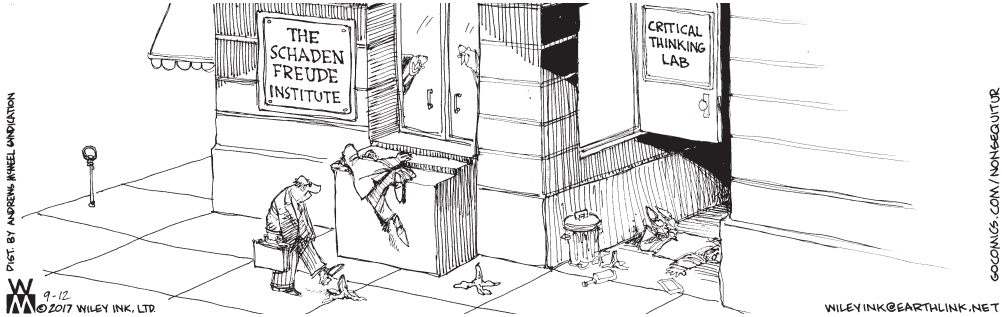
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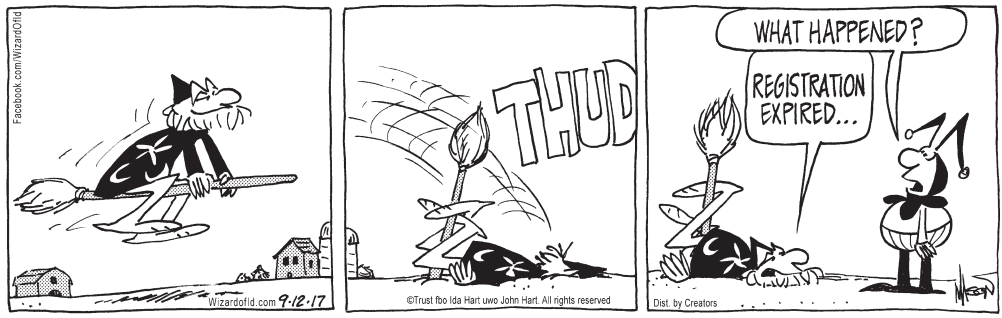
BIZARRO



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ROSE IS ROSE

