

# Shunned by siblings

**Dear Annie:** I am a middle child with two elder brothers, a younger sister and a younger brother. They all get together and have dinner and movie dates or hang out with one another. I am always excluded. No phone call or text. They have been rude and unwelcoming for more than 15 years now. No idea why. I have finally told them that I think they have treated me poorly and I don't consider them brothers. My parents are flabbergasted, as well. It has truly broken my heart. How do I let go? — *Pushed Away*

## DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane  
Creators  
Syndicate Inc.

good. The fact that your parents are flabbergasted leads me to believe that there is some serious communication issue at play here. Seek out the help of a professional family therapist who can resolve this sibling misunderstanding.

**Dear Annie:** Your column about the gossiping in-laws struck a chord with us. Some folks resort to backbiting and malicious gossip for vicarious excitement and because they don't have positive self-images. My sister-in-law falls into that category.

For many years, she seemed like a sister to me — only I eventually found out the ugly rumors she had spread, about me and many others. She even tried to break up my marriage (to her brother) by saying I'd had affairs all over the world while on business trips.

I avoided her (we live out of state) for several years but then confronted her directly in private during a fam-

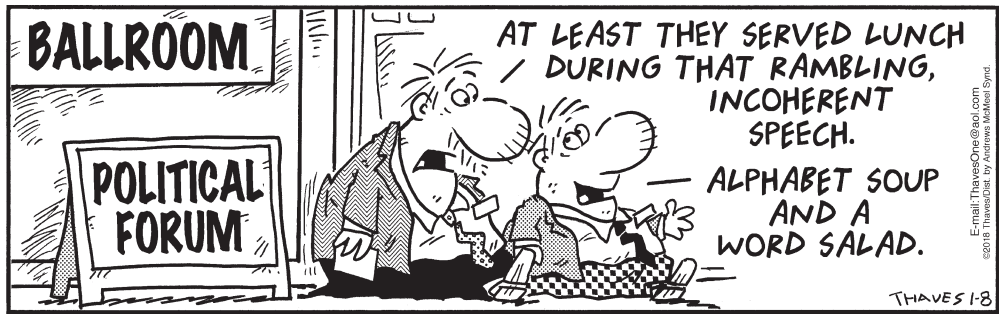
ily visit. She cried and cried, apologized and said she was ashamed. We will never be close, but because she has advanced cancer, I have forgiven her.

Malicious gossip is a stealthy type of bullying, as your target is unaware of the slander. I liked your advice to "Betrayed" (to have her husband talk to his relatives), Annie, but direct confrontation shames the individual and puts the power back where it belongs — with the victim. If other family members don't like it, so be it. We can pick our friends, but not family or in-laws. One would be better off without them all than walking on eggshells.

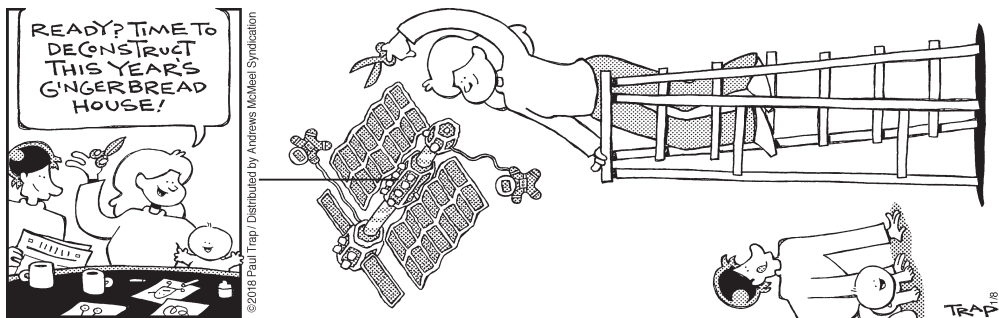
Your columns are great. Thanks for all you do. — *Florida Villages Reader*

**Dear Florida Villages Reader:** You make a great point. Perhaps it would be more effective for "Betrayed" to confront her in-laws than for her husband to talk to them. Bullies must be held accountable. Thank you for your insight.

## FRANK AND ERNEST



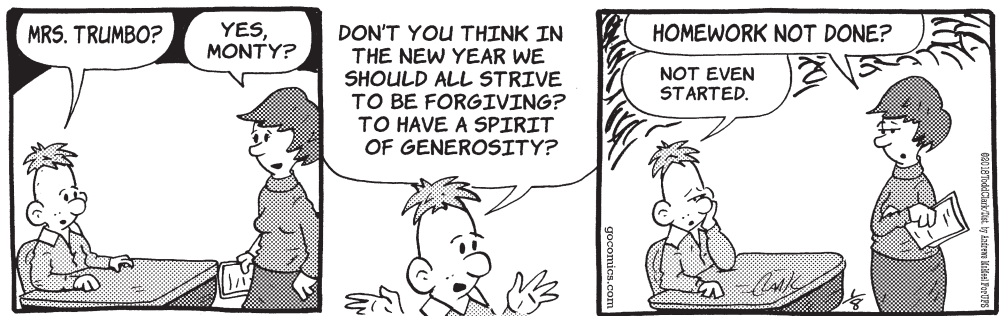
## THATABABY



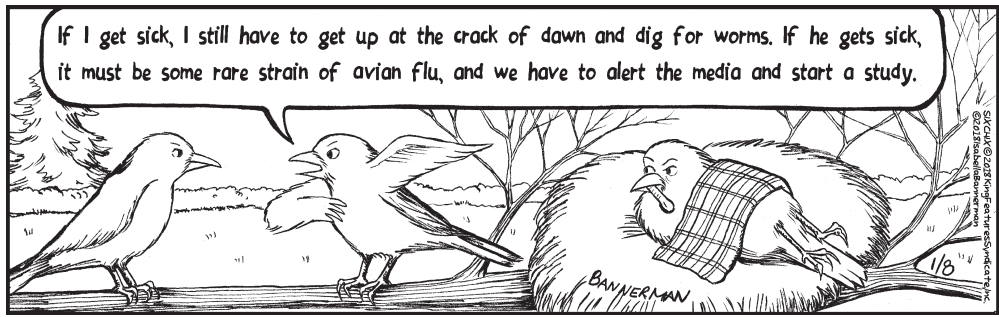
## PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN



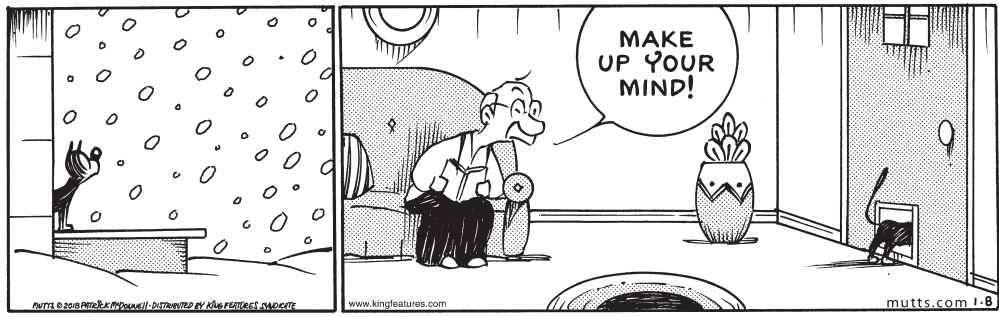
## LOLA



## SIX CHIX



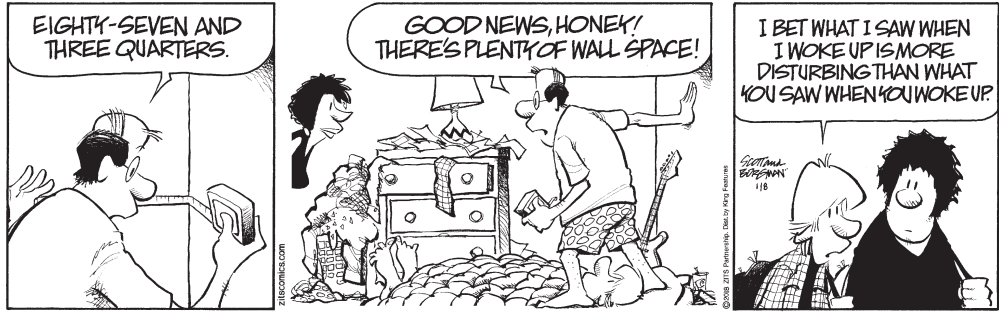
## MUTTS



## BABY BLUES



## ZITS



## TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19).** You won't have everyone's approval, and frankly it would be weird if you did. You so have the blessing of all who matter in this, though — even if it's only you.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** You are wise. Wisdom can be practical — but often isn't. Wisdom can point to the popular choice — but often doesn't. Wisdom can provide comfort — but it also tolerates the very uncomfortable and uncertain realities of life.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** It's been a while since you fantasized about the future. You used to do this often and well! It's time to get back to that rich imagination of yours and apply it creating some magic for yourself in the weeks to come.

**CANCER (June 22-July 22).** Everything feels better when you have a plan. It doesn't have to be a good plan. Even a janky, under-researched, unfeasible plan will give you the measure of purpose and confidence necessary to go one step further.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** You want to make an improvement, and here's what will help. Plan the "ifs" and "thens": If this happens, then I'll do that. If that happens, then I'll do this. Decide in advance and set yourself up for success.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** While you've been known to do excellent work in phases, you've neither the patience nor the time for that today. You'll throw it all down in the white-hot heat of one long frenzy.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** When you muster up the courage to take a chance, that's something in and of itself. You needn't couple your

daring with the added pressure of demanding that you succeed. Give yourself credit for starting. Starting is for the brave.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** The best answer just might be "I don't know." That's the answer that lets many things be possibilities. A connection made in the afternoon will take a surprising and delightful direction.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** You're in a community of people who are making the world a better place. You'll love your role in this. The group isn't always in agreement as to the best methods, but you'll come to a consensus today.

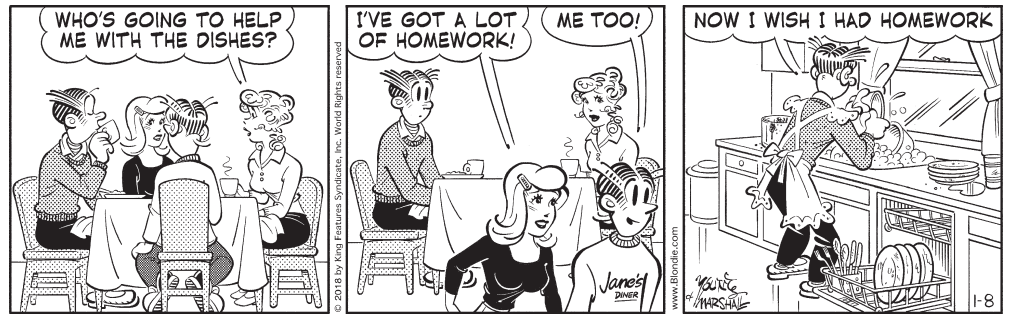
**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** Remodels and reorganization efforts can be funny this way: You often have to make a mess before you can make an improvement. When things get crazy, push through to the "after" picture.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** You face life with a thoroughly optimistic outlook even when the circumstances do not obviously favor you and yours. Your calm, measured approach allows for smooth dealings all around.

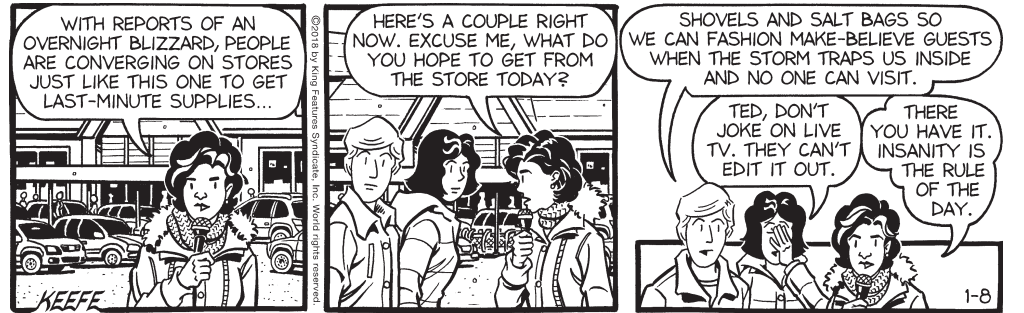
**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).** Hesitation isn't always fear. Sometimes it's a function of prudence, intuition or wisdom. Maybe you sense you're not ready, and there's no shame in that.

**TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Jan. 9).** This solar return is an uptick in love and abundance. Winning teams will be part of the fun. What happens to your group in February will lift you all. You'll get to make your own schedule in April, and this will be a game-changer. The spring lets you create, innovate and play while getting paid. Sagittarius and Cancer adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 40, 20, 12 and 33.

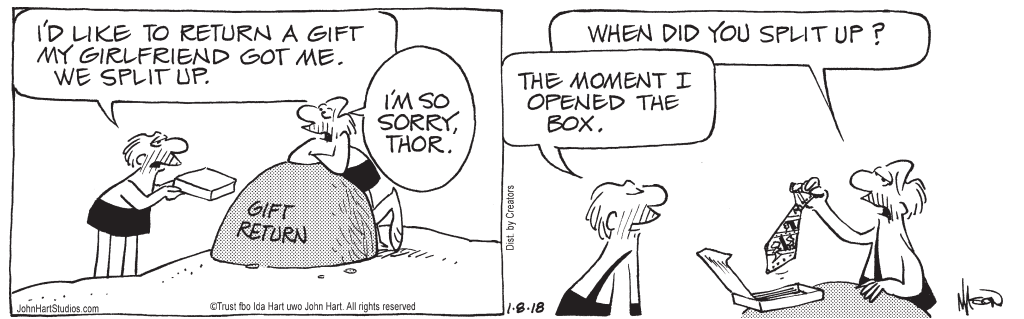
## BLONDIE



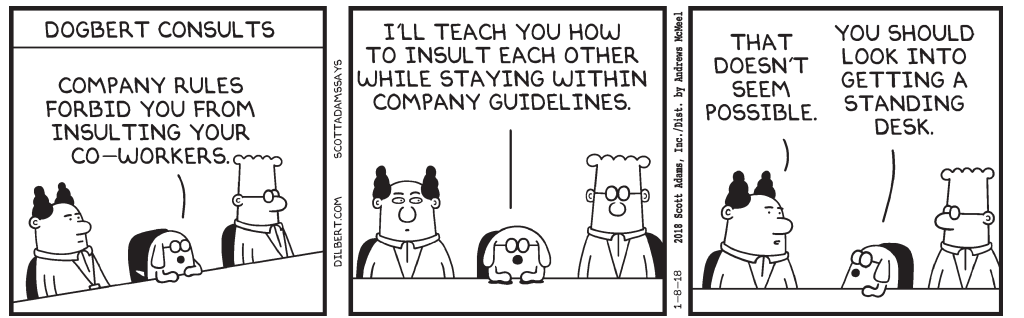
## SALLY FORTH



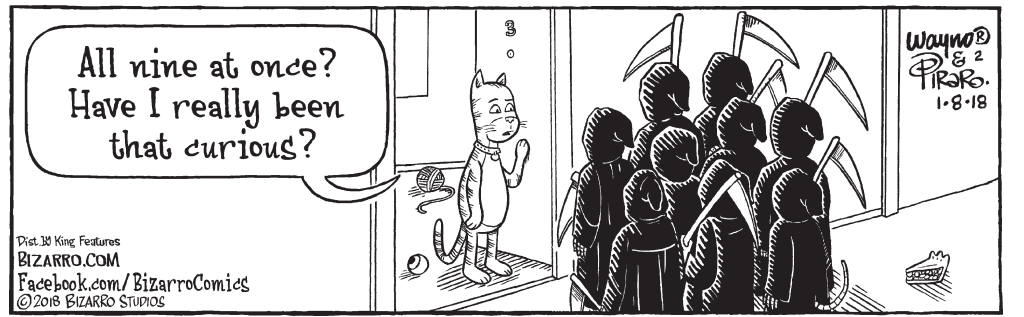
## B.C.



## DILBERT



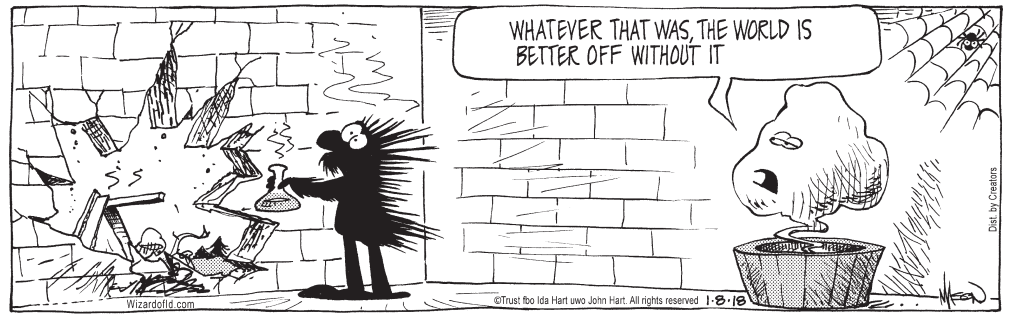
## BIZARRO



## NON SEQUITUR



## WIZARD OF ID



## ROSE IS ROSE

