

# Left out of her brother's group

Dear Annie: My elder brother, his girlfriend and I have always been very close. Let's call them "Ryan" and "Beth."

We used to text and call one another often and even hang out a lot. But a few months ago, I introduced my friend "Donna" to Beth. And for the past few months, they've been hanging out more and more. Now they are the ones who hang out and talk a lot, leaving me out of the picture. Ryan and Beth always tell me that I'm still their best friend and that Donna isn't even really that close to them. They say she has been so rude and hurt them so much.

I just don't understand why I've been left out after they promised I would be their best friend or why I've been replaced with someone who has supposedly been mean and rude to them — and someone who was my friend to begin with. — *Feeling Replaced*

Dear Feeling Replaced: I gather you're in high school, because that's when most people experience something like this.

Your best friend suddenly finds a better friend; or two friends start dating, and you go from third amigo to third wheel; or you get to your crew's lunch table and find there's not a seat for you; or, perhaps more apt these days, you find out a new group text has been made, and you're not included.

Though the experience is pretty much universal, I know that doesn't make it any less lonely to go through. But you need to stop worrying so much about Donna, Beth and Ryan. Focus instead on expanding your horizons by making new friends. The bigger your world the smaller your problems will seem. And by the way, Ryan isn't going anywhere. He'll always be your big brother, a built-in best friend.

Dear Annie: I was interested to read the comments from the woman who volunteered for a crisis hotline. She said, "If you want independent children, help them to learn to solve their own problems." I agree, but now there is an umbilical cord that reaches from Mom to her adult children

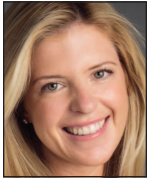
all around the world. It's called a cellphone.

Had an argument with your spouse? Call Mom. Hard day at work? Call Mom. Feeling sick at 11 p.m.? Call Mom. It never ends. Problems that, for the adult children, end up being solved in a day or two must worry moms indefinitely. I feel sorry for them. We have independent sons, but even so, our cellphone is off except when we need it. — *A Free Mom*

Dear Free Mom: I don't think there's anything wrong with a child's talking to his or her mother after a hard day, no matter whether the child is 15 or 50. It's only if this relationship becomes codependent that it's regressive and unhealthy. But I do hope your letter inspires some other parents out there to turn their phones off and not feel guilty for needing space.

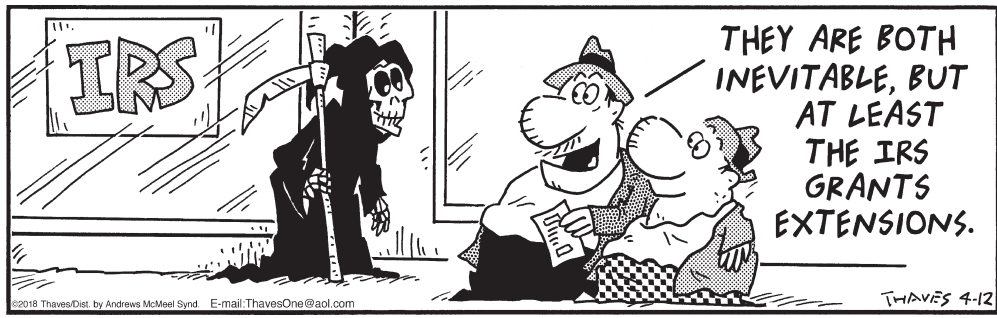
Additionally, I agree that routinely venting to your parents about marital problems is unwise, not just because it might make them resent your spouse but also because it prevents you from talking out those problems with the person you should be talking to: your spouse.

## DEAR ANNIE

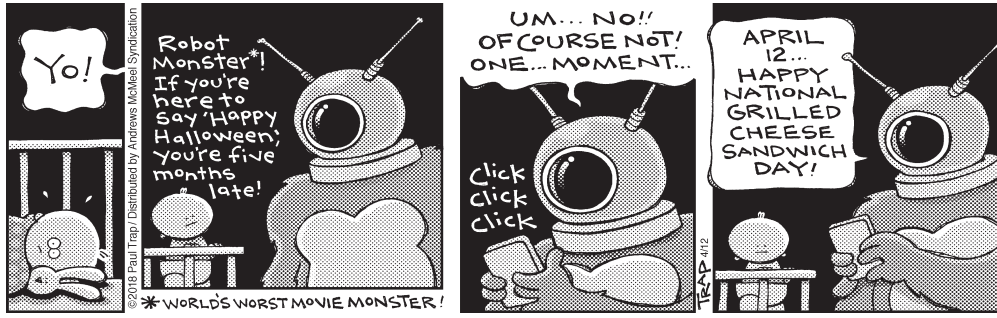


Annie Lane  
Creators  
Syndicate Inc.

## FRANK AND ERNEST



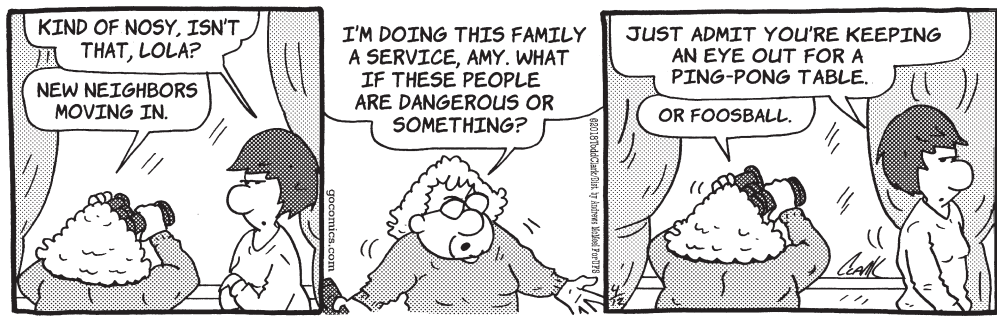
## THATABABY



## PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN



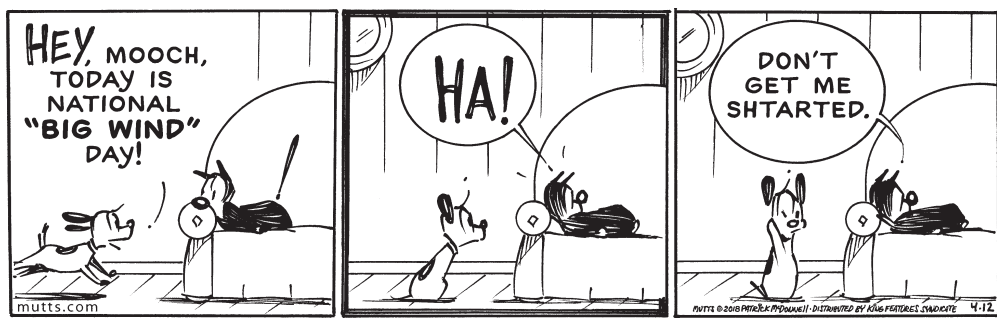
## LOLA



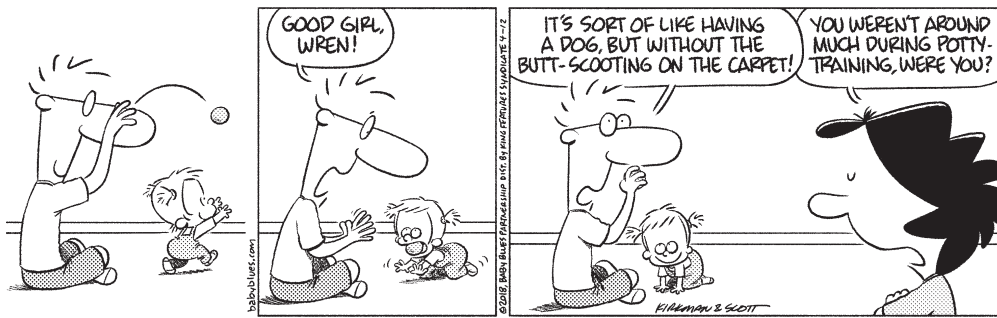
## SIX CHIX



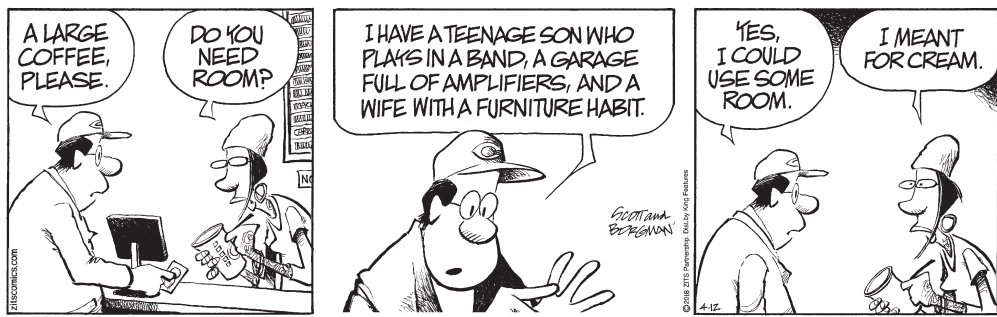
## MUTTS



## BABY BLUES



## ZITS



## TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19).** While the big dogs seem to have a clear advantage today, the words of Dwight D. Eisenhower are also true: "What counts is not necessarily the size of the dog in the fight. It's the size of the fight in the dog."

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** What is misery, really, other than a conflict between what is and what we would have it be? Avoiding misery is not easy, but it's so simple. The acceptance of reality doesn't give misery an inch. **GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** Anyone who has waited tables before can tell you that hungry people can be mean. Being a nicer human today will be a function of getting what you need before it becomes a pang.

**CANCER (June 22-July 22).** Curiosity can be a very attractive quality, especially when directed toward the people around you. Today your curiosity will lead you to delightful and enlightening interactions.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** For some, getting ready for a party is more fun than the party itself. Hopefully that won't be the case, but since it's a possibility, you might as well have as much fun with the preparations as you possibly can.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** Feelings may be generally mutual, but they are not specifically the same. It will take time to understand how another person thinks of you, though you'll never understand it fully.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** Though you take great pleasure in fantasizing about what will happen on that distant day when the tables turn, your plans come together and your hard work pays off, do be mindful not to wear out the day before it gets here.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** It's one thing to know what you need and quite another to be bold enough to ask for it. You win on both accounts, and though your courage may not net the thing you want right away, it will impress.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** Socializing is like a group dance. When the solo comes up, the rest of the company shouldn't go limp and lifeless. They should serve as support, either in movement or stillness, poised to frame the big picture.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** Your next move is one to consider carefully. How will it affect the others? Who will agree? Who will object? Should you inform all beforehand? Sometimes it's better to ask forgiveness than permission.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** You may not fully understand your feelings for another, and you would be hard-pressed to define the relationship. Right now it's how you treat one another that really matters.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).** With a person who will only give 10 percent to the relationship, 90 percent will be required of you. Are you willing? Is it worth it? Consider the big picture. The answer isn't as obvious as it seems.

**TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (April 13).** Knowing that it's the sensory experiences that will be remembered for years to come, you'll travel, take in different foods and make an effort to meet new people during this vivid, fast-paced solar return. Relatedly, you'll be extremely creative. You'll apply that creativity to pursuits spanning the personal and financial. Aquarius and Virgo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 17, 32, 48, 3 and 8.

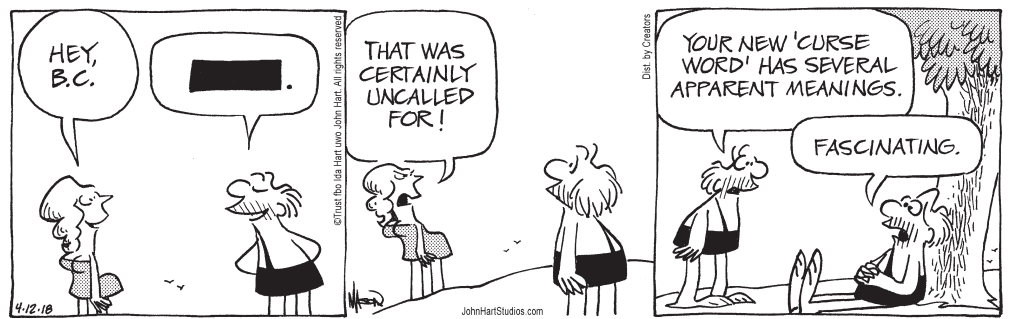
## BLONDIE



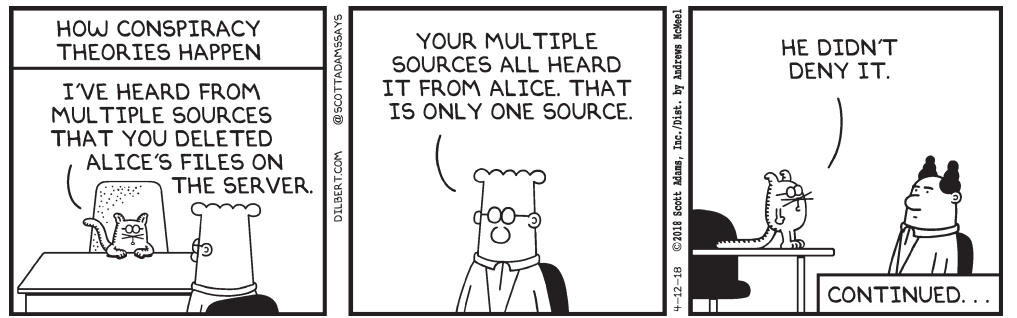
## SALLY FORTH



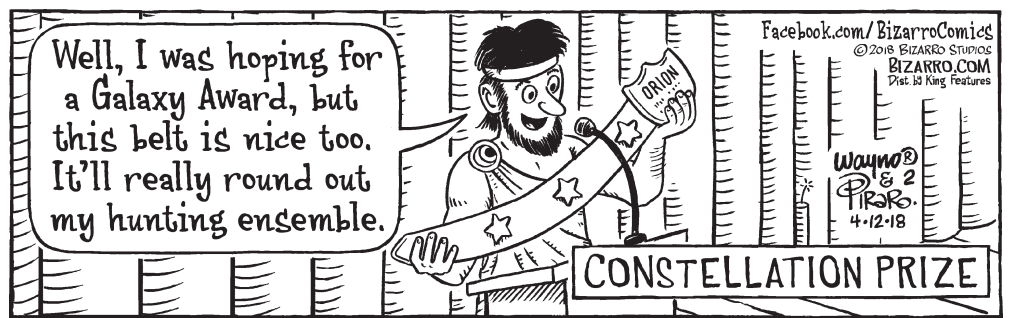
## B.C.



## DILBERT



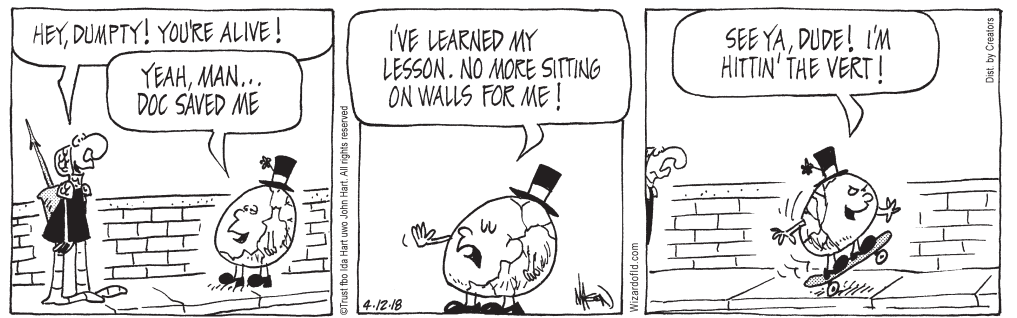
## BIZARRO



## NON SEQUITUR



## WIZARD OF ID



## ROSE IS ROSE

