

Still can't forget about her

Dear Annie: My family relocated the year I was entering ninth grade, and on the third day at my new school, as I was walking home, a girl I'll call Ann ran up to my side, introduced herself and insisted on carrying my books to my home, some three blocks away. The next morning, Ann and three other girls waited on the sidewalk outside my house so they could walk to school with me. This went on for the entire school year. In 10th grade, Ann was in very few of my classes but would show up in unusual places where I might be in the evenings, and I would then walk her home, though we never even held hands. In the spring of our senior year, the school held a sports banquet, and as I was departing and in line to shake hands with the baseball coach, I glanced to my right, and some 30 feet away stood Ann. She was alone and seemed to be staring at me. I came very close to doing a U-turn to see what was bothering her but kept going, and I haven't seen her since that moment. Recently, at a class reunion some 60 years later, her name came up in a trivia quiz, and I haven't been able to

forget about my last contact with her since. The image of her seemingly staring at me shows up in my feeble mind way too often. I have had a wonderful life shared with my lovely wife for 54 years and don't have any yearnings for Ann, but how does an old goat forget about her? — *Losing My Mind* **Dear LMM:** Taking a stroll down memory lane can actually be a healthy mental exercise, according to researchers at the University of Southampton. They have found that nostalgia can increase positive self-regard and decrease boredom, loneliness and anxiety. Relatedly, geropsychologist Geoffrey W. Lane has observed and written at length about the "anti-depressant effect of reminiscence in older adults." That said, it sounds as if your preoccupation with Ann is bordering on unhealthy. At the very least, it's bothering you enough that you wrote to me. Rather than attempt to put the memory out of your mind, analyze it. Try to discern what emotional nutrient it's offering, and then work toward finding a source for that in the present. Memory lane is

a nice place to visit, but it's no place to live. **Dear Annie:** I am wondering whether you know of any organization that helps people who are dealing with addiction — whether it be themselves or someone they love — but doesn't have anything to do with religion. I am agnostic, and I have many friends who are, too. But every rehab center and help source we have found requires one to hand things over to this higher power that we are not sure exists. How are we supposed to trust that? Is there a way for us to get help? — *Don't Buy It in Colorado* **Dear Don't Buy It:** For what it's worth, it is possible for agnostics and atheists to go through 12-step programs, as the only requirement when choosing your "higher power" is that it be something bigger than yourself. Still, people who are uncomfortable with the spiritual nature of such programs shouldn't despair. There are other options. One is SMART Recovery. As stated on its website, "participants learn tools for addiction recovery based on the latest scientific research." Find a meeting at <https://www.smartrecovery.org>. You might also consider LifeRing Secular Recovery. For more information, visit <https://lifering.org>.

TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

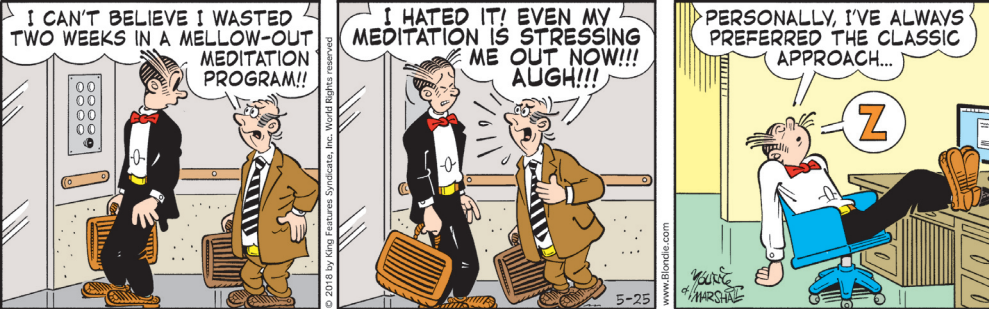
ARIES (March 21-April 19). If you can swing it, the right time to repair an item will be the minute it's broken. Otherwise, an accumulation starts to take place that's bound to weigh you down. Broken things are bad feng shui. **TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** It is in a moment when cracking a joke might seem most inappropriate or potentially offensive that you are likely to find out the positive force of humor — necessary and relieving. **GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** What's the point in having joy if you're not able to enjoy it? And shouldn't you be proud of your pride? Wherever you are emotionally, let it be. Sink into it. Play it for all it's worth. **CANCER (June 22-July 22).** The change you want to see in others (perhaps one "other" in particular) is the change you'll request of yourself. It is in leading by example that you will alter the course of a relationship. **LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** You may not be sure how high to set the bar. You want candidates to choose from, after all. If none are forthcoming, it's impossibly high. And don't worry: It's easy to tell when it's too low. Your stomach will tell you. **VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** Those who take pleasure in the success of others have no trouble finding, joining or running in circles of excellence. It's why you find yourself at a table of winners today. **LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** Love is complicated, if not now, then sooner or later; that much is unavoidable. However, don't confuse "complicated" with "creepy," which is something else, something that has nothing to do with love.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You work hard, and then it's time to rest. That's not a step you can skip without consequence. If you don't make time for rest, rest will happen anyway and without regard to your other plans. **SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** Focusing on others won't always bring happiness, but obsessive self-focus is a dependable route to unhappiness. You'll strike a mighty fine balance, the reward for which will be long stretches of contentment. **CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** You started out with natural talent, but you're getting even better as you go. It's like you were meant for this. It's what you're good at. And because of this you don't need a whole lot of external validation. You know. **AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** Plan ahead. Where are you leaving yourself vulnerable to interruption? The stops and starts will cost you, but with a little forethought, this and other obstacles to success will be preventable. **PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).** Dating isn't a game, though it's been turned into one by television networks and board game manufacturers. Both people should be winning. No one should be considered "the prize." This is about a relationship, not an acquisition. **TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (MAY 26).** The bonds of love strengthen. Stay versatile. There will be times to step up and be that stable person who takes care of the situation and other times when you should let people care for you, because that grows the bond too. Epic fun in June and September. Business gets serious and exciting in July and December. Leo and Sagittarius adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 2, 24, 40, 1 and 15.

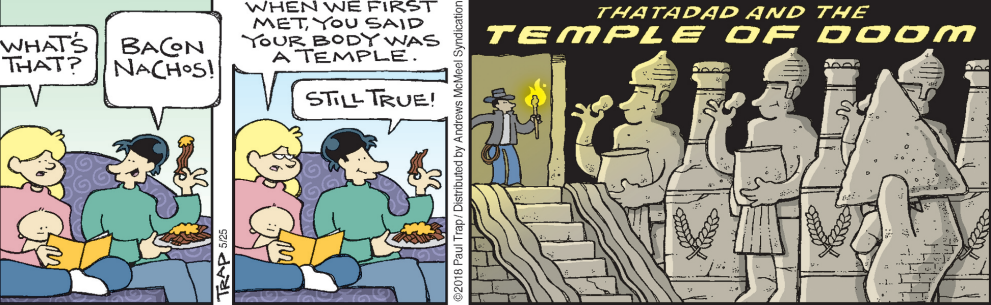
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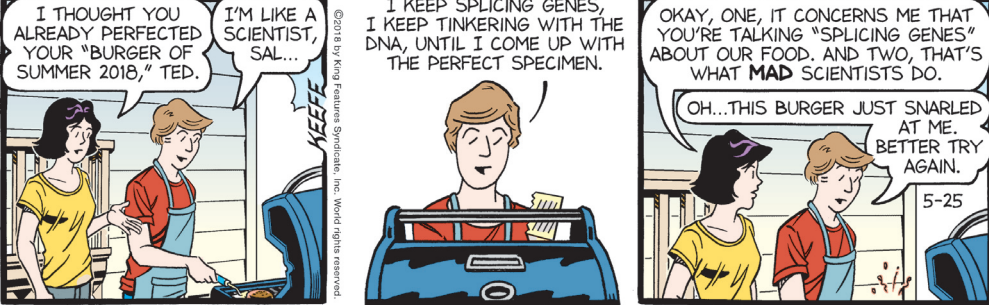
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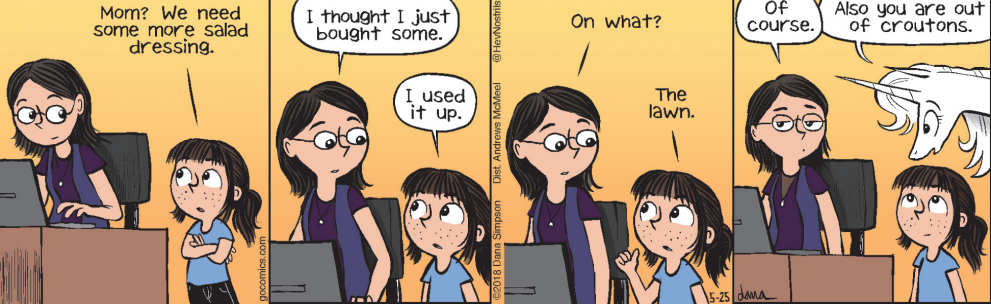
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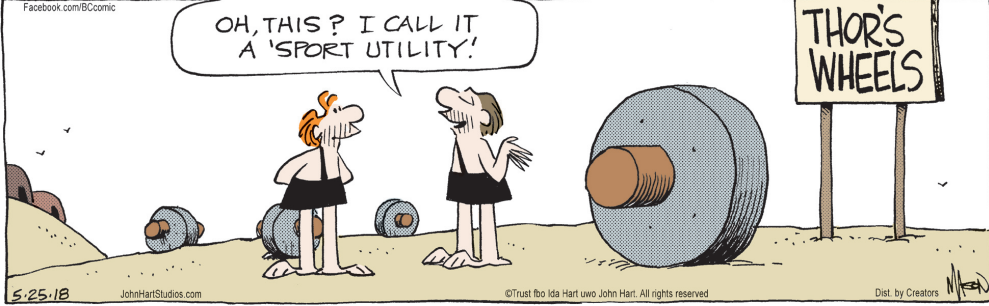
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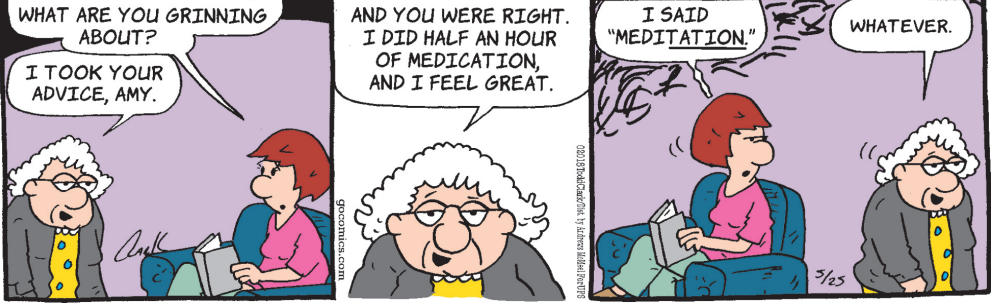
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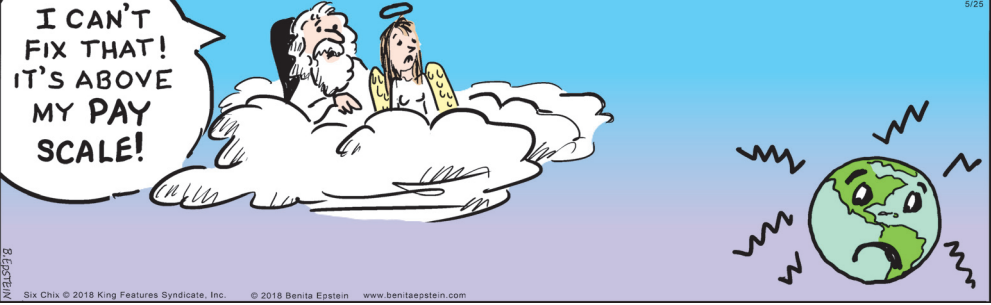
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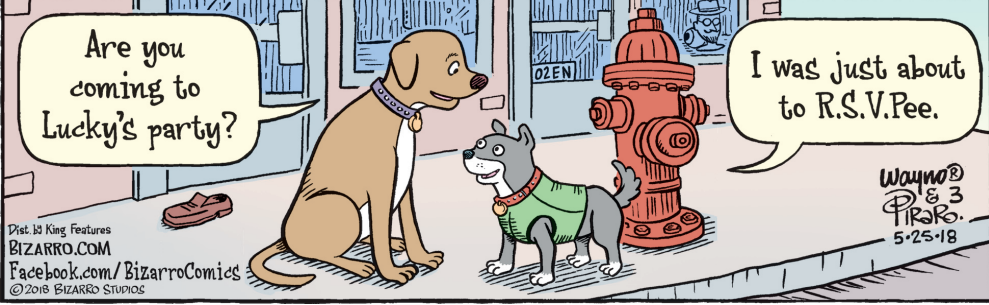
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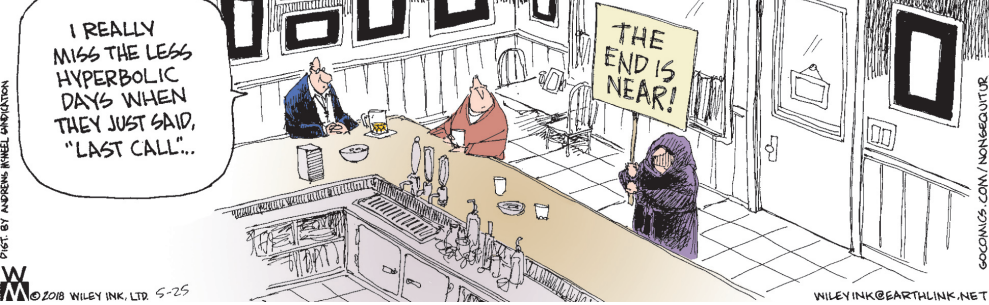
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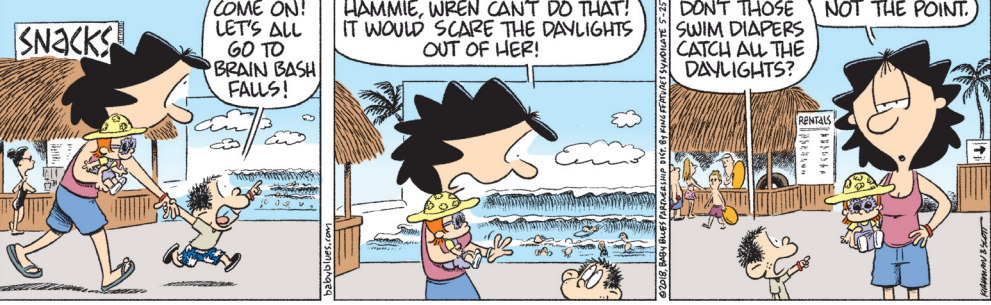
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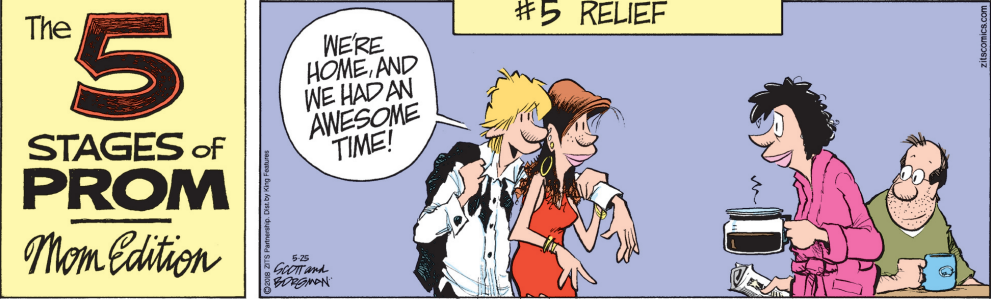
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