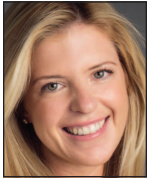


# Friend seems too controlling

**Dear Annie:** I have a problem with my neighbor. I don't know whether it's her or me. She is a great neighbor, has become a friend, is always helpful and is kindhearted. But the thing is that she seems too controlling. She pressures me to do things with her. Sometimes it works out well and I'm glad she pressured me to do an activity that I found out later I enjoyed. However, when my husband and I do join in, we find that we are expected to spend far too much time socializing — for example, when we go on camping trips. Other times, we are forced to abide by her schedule, participate in tightly controlled potlucks and shop for and take specific gifts to holiday gatherings.

## DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane  
Creators  
Syndicate Inc.

When I speak up, it seems she does not hear me — as if she only hears what she wants to hear. I've told her several times I do not want to join her and her family members in Las Vegas for a specific convention. I don't tell her my specific reasons for not wanting to participate, because I might hurt her feelings. I simply say, "Thank you, but I'm not interested." When she finally does hear me, she conveys bitter disap-

pointment with her facial expression or voice. What should I do? — *Needing to Be Heard*

**Dear Needing to Be Heard:** Her facial expressions and voice are mechanisms she is using to make you feel guilty. It sounds as if it's working. Caring about another's feelings is a good thing, of course, but not at the expense of your family's happiness. You might try to go on the offensive rather than play defense. Have fun with your friend, but only on your terms. If she insists on guilt-tripping you, better to cut ties.

**Dear Annie:** I have a problem I can't solve. My husband works in a small auto repair shop. He is one of two mechanics. Obviously, because there are only two of them, they have to alternate vacations. We have school-aged children, and the other worker's children are preschool-aged. Every year, the other guy gets the manager to put up the vacation calendar when my husband is not there and takes all the school breaks. My husband has the highest seniority in our state. Yet the manager lets the other guy take all the vacations first. We have not had a family vaca-

tion in almost two years because of this. The crowning glory is that this guy signs up for all these vacations and then, at the last moment, decides not to take them. Usually, he decides the week before or just shows up at work. By then, it's too late for us to make travel plans.

I'm so frustrated because my husband doesn't want to make "a big deal" out of it. He is close to retirement and doesn't want to make waves. His boss is too lazy to care. I'm so angry that I want to march down to his shop and tell both the guy and the manager what I think of them, which probably wouldn't be allowed in your column. There has to be some sort of law that prohibits this. Any ideas? I'm tired of seeing my children's disappointed faces. — *Frustrated and Angry*

**Dear Frustrated and Angry:** Simmer down, little teapot. Before you blow your lid on your husband's partner, you might want to have a conversation with your husband about being a little more proactive with his vacation requests. It sounds as if your husband's partner takes the initiative to get to his boss first, and it's time for your husband to beat him to the schedule. Try planning a vacation way in advance so he can get the time off approved.

## TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19).** Whatever world you'd like to join, you can do so in some small way from wherever you are. The internet and the library will be your ticket to connections that only a few decades ago would have been nearly impossible to reach.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** Loneliness is often worse for those who have people around whom they cannot or do not relate to. It's caused by a lack of communication and understanding. Loneliness is alleviated through listening, not talking.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** Life builds and breaks everyone in different ways. Assume nothing about the process. It could be that building makes us weak and breaking makes us strong or the other way around. Roll with it, and do your best with what comes.

**CANCER (June 22-July 22).** Unmet expectations are inevitable in a complex existence. Sensitive, intelligent creatures are bound to be disappointed by life from time to time. It's your resilience that will define you.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** A lot of what people need recognized by one another is information that's hard to share, perhaps because it goes against the rules of society or is just not commonly talked about. Regardless, those who open up will be comforted.

**VRIGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** Your complexity of mind comes with benefits and drawbacks. On the one hand, you're creative and can solve problems that others can't. But you're often met with incomprehension. Don't let that bother you. You're doing great.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** Don't you miss you? You're overdue for an uninterrupted, distraction-free stint — long enough for you to

get into a meaningful conversation with your own psyche.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** No, you're not imagining the signals: You're catching exactly what's being thrown out there. Someone finds you elegant, mysterious and alluring. The next move is yours.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** To ponder why things are the way they are is to go down a rabbit hole. There will be treasures to pick up along the way, but ultimately this is not progress. More helpful questions include "What's the best next move?"

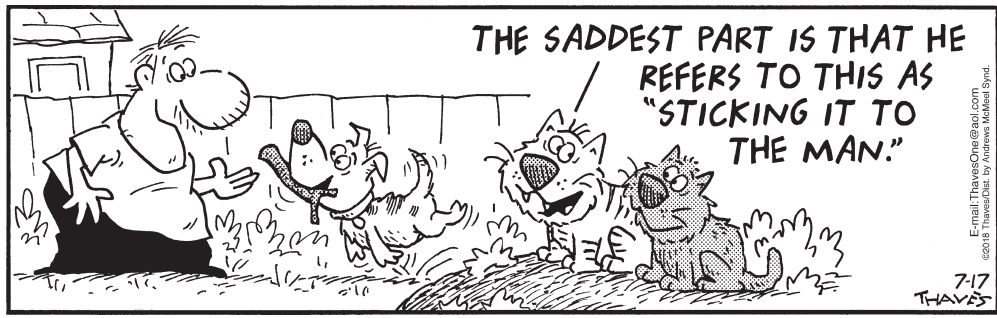
**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** Hold on to a sincere and ambitious view of what life could be. You're in a good club. You're in great company. You're part of a long and grand tradition.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** When you think odd or contrary thoughts, you might be the only one around thinking them at that moment, but you're not the only one on earth ever to go down that road.

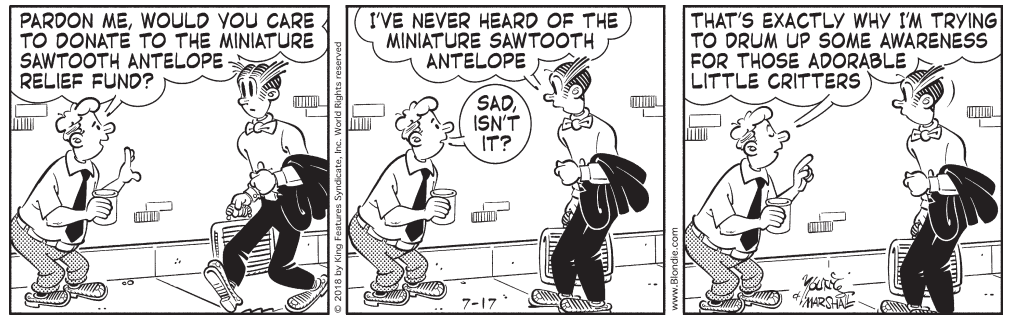
**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).** Send out messages from your heart, and then don't expect anyone to understand right away. Someone will, eventually. But for now it's important to honor your feelings sincerely without bending them toward validation.

**TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (July 18).** Attitude is everything this year, and yours will be predominantly optimistic and tenacious. August shows you taming wilder instincts and buckling down to get a big project finished. The later part of 2018 shows you handling things for your family. Past debts will be settled in January; you'll be paid in many forms, including money. Capricorn and Aries adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 1, 11, 4, 30 and 15.

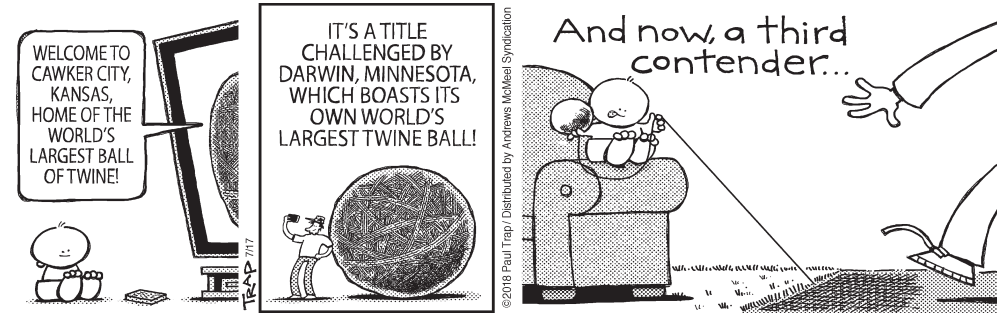
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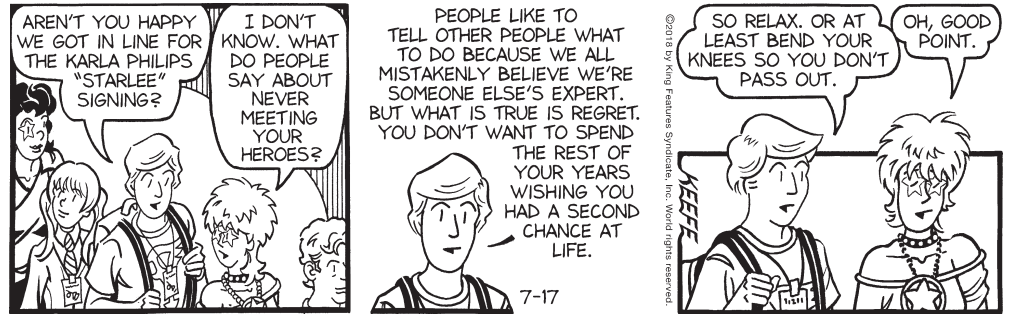
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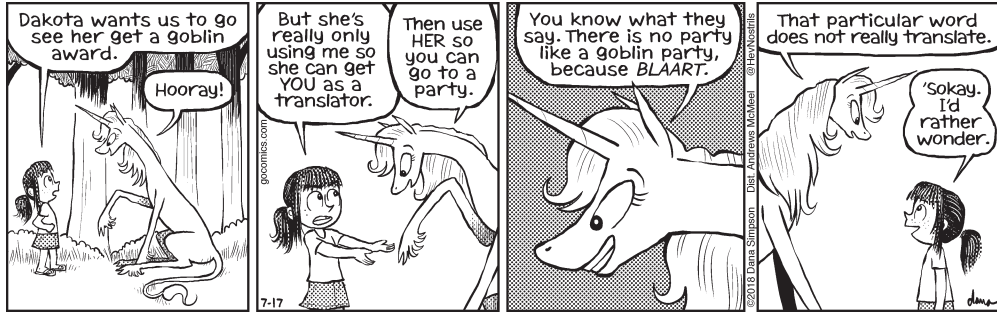
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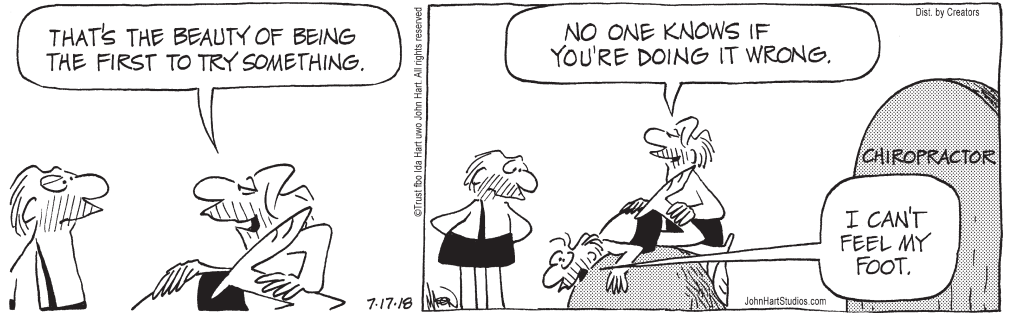
## SALLY FORTH



## PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN



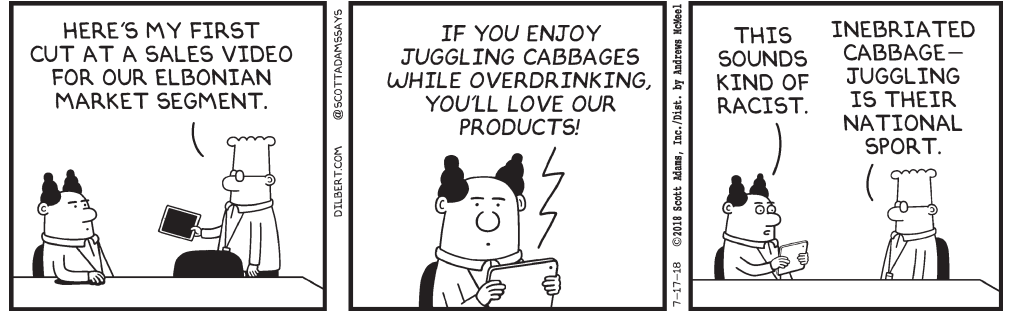
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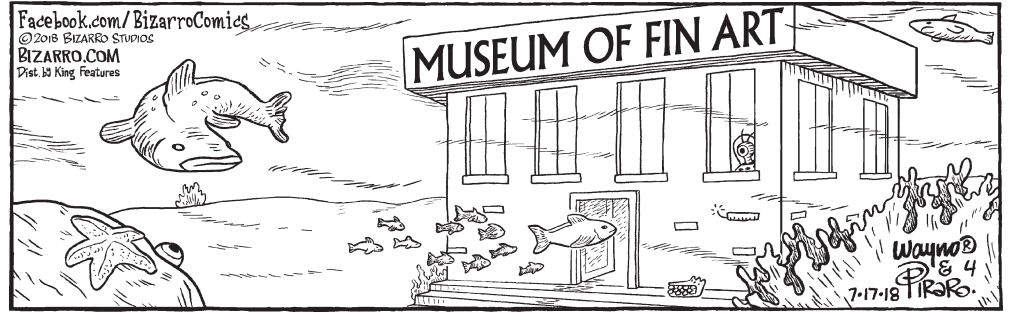
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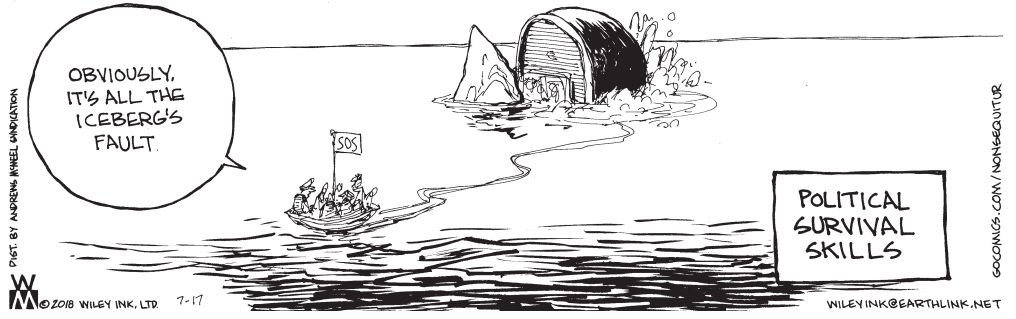
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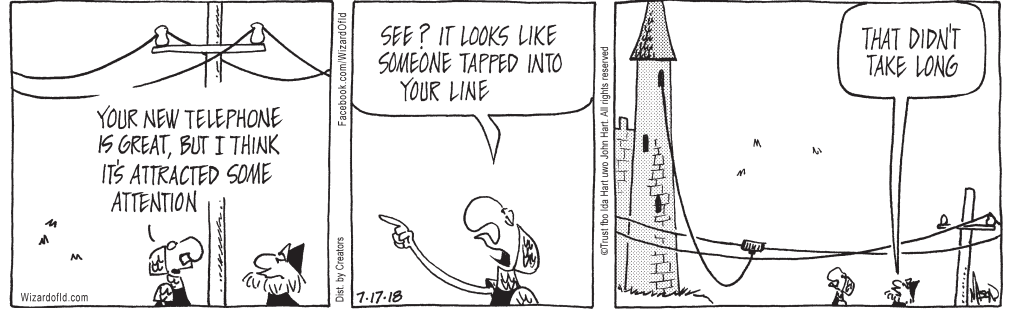
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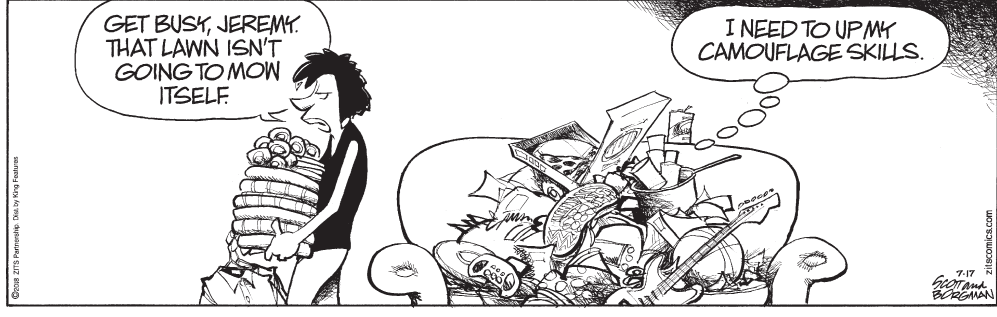
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## WIZARD OF ID



## ZITS



## ROSE IS ROSE

