

# Lamenting the state of the world

**Dear Annie:** I'm not writing in about any problem you can solve. This letter is about a much bigger problem — namely, the state of the world today. It's impossible to turn on the news without getting depressed, whether because of natural disasters or the bitter state of politics in our country. Addiction to alcohol, opioids and other drugs is rampant, and everyone is addicted to smartphones. No one can civilly disagree anymore. People are rudier than ever. And from the way things are going, it seems everything will just continue to get worse. It makes me glad I decided not to have children.

It seems as if the end of the world is imminent, and at this point, I'd welcome it. When did things start going so wrong? How is anyone supposed to care about anything these days? — *Realist, Not Pessimist*

**Dear Realist, Not Pessimist:** What's the use in scrutinizing the world's problems if

you have no intention of being part of the solutions? That attitude contributes nothing but stomach ulcers.

Volunteer with an organization you believe in; organize neighborhood cleanups.

If you're down in the dumps, try therapy. Even if you're not down in the dumps, try therapy. Go out and be the change you want to see in the world, or at least change the way you see the world. You can weed your garden by digging up every plant you don't want or by looking at the dandelions differently.

**Dear Annie:** I have been meaning to send you a follow-up note about a situation you helped me with a little over a year ago.

I initially wrote to you about my family's gift-giving tradition during the holidays and how it was, well, basically sending me to the poorhouse because of new additions to the family, such as new babies and significant others.

Your advice was spot on. You suggested that I speak with my siblings, as you had a feeling that I was not the only one affected by our growing family.

I was prepared to speak with my family at our next family gathering, and I was pleasantly surprised. Two of my sisters had had a conversation about this very thing and approached us all with a new gift-giving plan that worked out well for our entire family. So you were right. I was not the only one feeling the pinch.

I am happy to report that we have incorporated the new plan and, as a result, none of us is spending as much money as before. After all, the holidays should be for the gathering of family and being grateful for one another. We have been able to get back to that, and I wanted to thank you for your help. — *Not Broke Anymore*

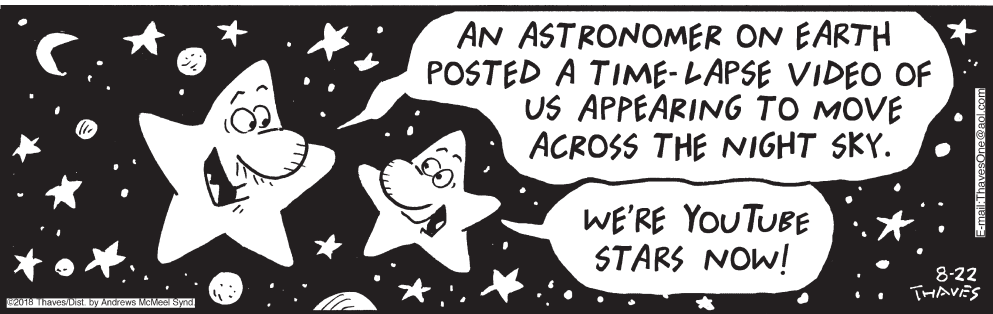
**Dear Not Broke Anymore:** I am so glad to hear that the situation solved itself and that you indeed were not the only one thinking it was time for a change.

## DEAR ANNIE

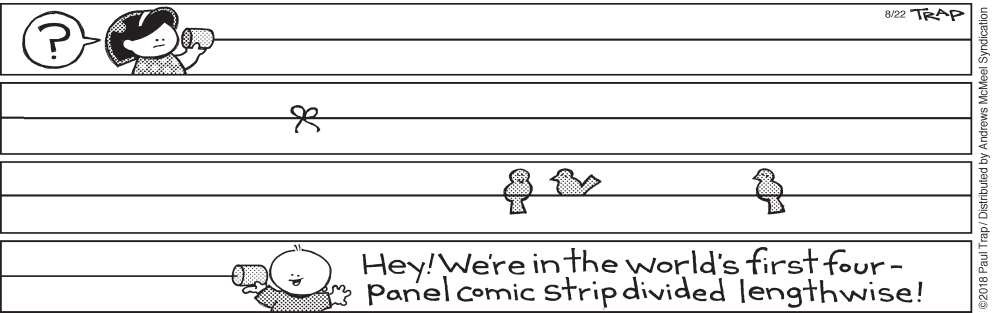


Annie Lane  
Creators  
Syndicate Inc.

## FRANK AND ERNEST



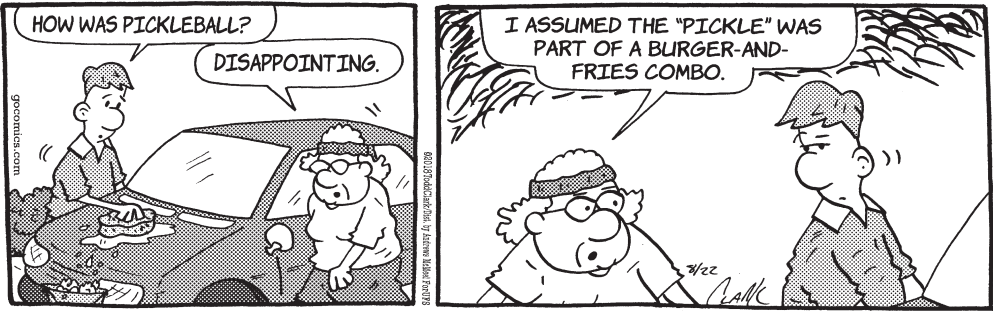
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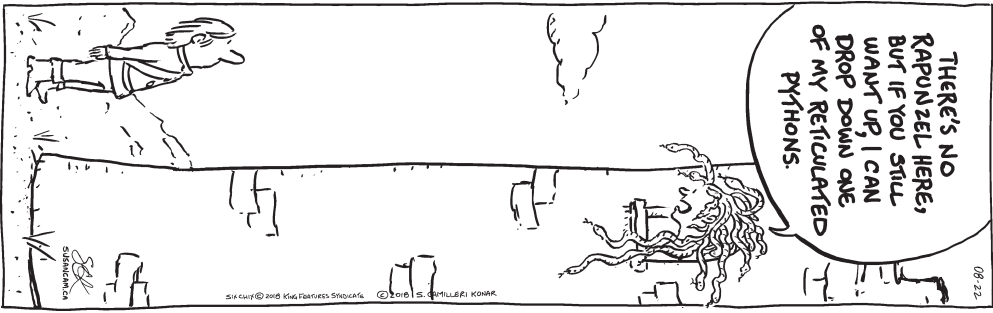
## PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN



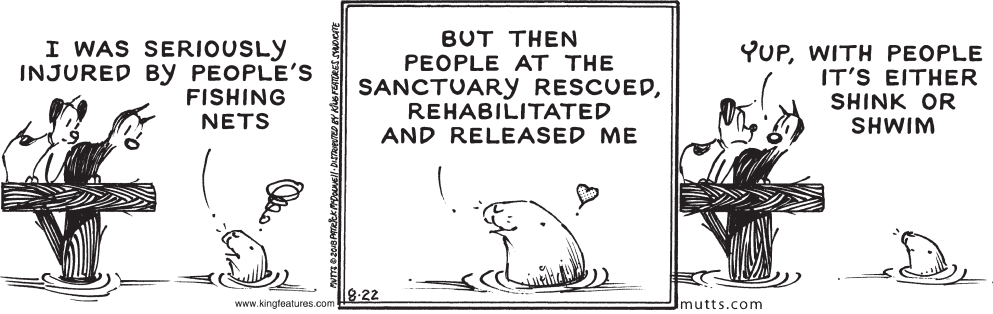
## LOLA



## SIX CHIX



## MUTTS



## BABY BLUES



## ZITS



## TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19).** You really want the best for the group. You leave your ego out of the decision-making process. You'll use the best idea — the one that will forward the interests of all. Whether or not that idea was generated by you won't matter.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** Light comes from the outside; appearance comes from inside. Everyone assembles it inside his or her own mind. That's why they each see it so differently. Right now, you're seeing more underlying emotion than the others.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** Do not give up on your difficult project. There is so much more you can do! One or two attempts are not nearly enough. As you approach your fifth or sixth try, the fates will favor your tenacity.

**CANCER (June 22-July 22).** It's weird to want something and then, inexplicably, run in the opposite direction of it. But fearing what you want is normal: What if you get it and it's not fulfilling? Today you won't have such a problem if you just stay put.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** Trying to impress your love won't work. Go the other way. Be comfortable. Do what it takes to get there. This won't unfold exactly as imagined, but some expectations will be met.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** Children do not know how to take responsibility until adults show them how. It is entirely possible that the one who isn't stepping up to the plate may not have been taught to do right.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** A universal complexity: People are who they are instead of who you'd like them to be. Well, it's something to accept and even embrace. You'd be so bored if they always did as you preferred.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** There's a season for everything, and each season gets to decide its own timing. The timing will get more surprising these days, on both the global and the personal level.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** When people act weird around you, it's because they don't want you to know all there is to know. That's fair. No one deserves to know everything. But it won't stop you from wondering.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** It might seem that there's more work needed to get work than there is to do the work. This is true. Marketing is real. Access to opportunity won't be cheap, but it will be worth the investment.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** Words are confusing. Intentions get muddled. History will go down not as a testament to intention but as a testament to action. Action always speaks loudest, clearest and with the most direct message.

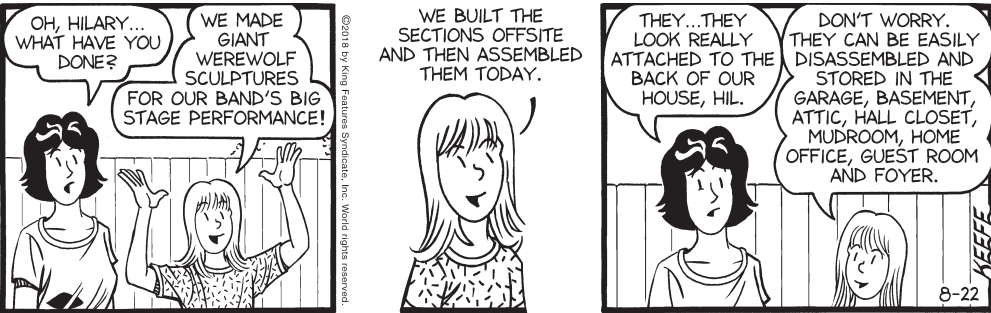
**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).** Your mind isn't working in the usual way, which makes you uniquely equipped for today's challenge. Hopefully, you'll accept the proposal posed by a kindred soul in need.

**TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Aug. 23).** This solar return brings you more attention than you're used to, but you'll know just what to do with it. You'll earn a reputation as someone who solves problems, makes life better for others and is generally fun to be around. How you show up to gatherings will favorably touch the financial and professional sector of life. Cancer and Scorpio adore you. Your lucky numbers are 4, 2, 21, 8 and 30.

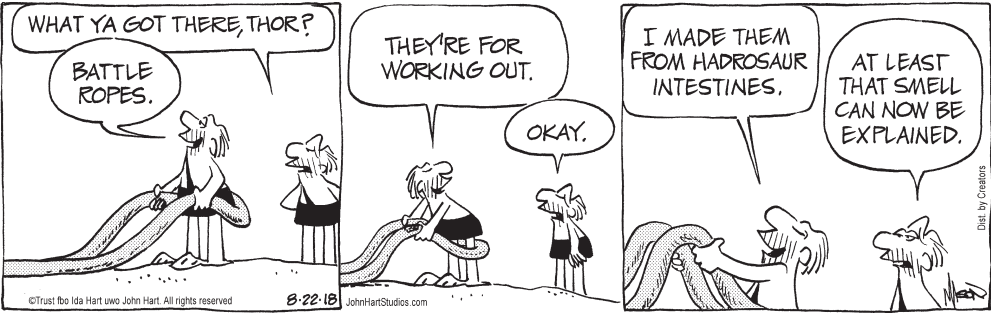
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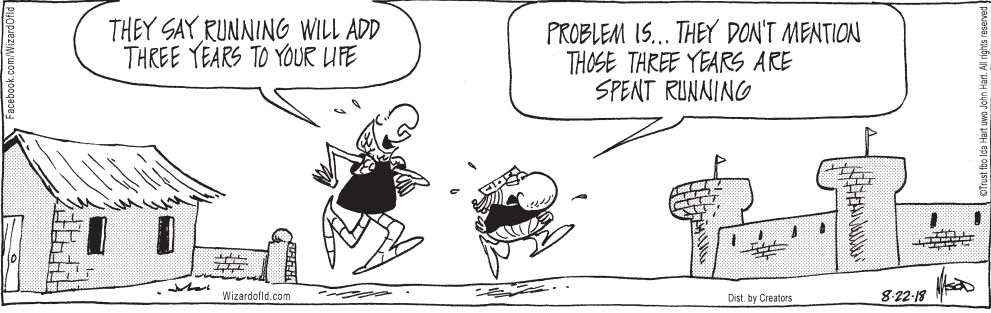
## BIZARRO



## NON SEQUITUR



## WIZARD OF ID



## ROSE IS ROSE

