

Relatives intrude on our party

Dear Annie: Every year, my husband and I have immediate family and some friends over for Halloween. We make food, have beverages and take turns giving out candy. A niece of ours and her family always show up uninvited, even when we said one year we just wanted our kids and grandkids. They stay the whole time and never bring anything. They also have horrible personal hygiene, and our niece is especially outspoken and obnoxious. How do I tell her in a civil way they are not welcome? — *Not-a-Fan Auntie*

DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

Dear Not-a-Fan Auntie: Time for these ghouls to go haunt somewhere else. Tell them in terms that are polite but leave no room for ambiguity: "This is important quality time with the grandkids, and we're going to keep it to just us and the kids next year."

Dear Annie: My wife and I enjoy getting together with another couple we met a few years ago, usually dinner and drinks at a local restaurant. After some small talk and ordering drinks, the husband finds a way to tell a new joke. It's usually funny, and we all laugh. The problem is that by the time we're all

ready to go home, he will have told about 10 jokes. Again, they are usually funny, but at the same time, by the end of the evening, we feel as if we've been to a comedy club to watch a stand-up comedian's show. What can we say or do to get him to limit his act without upsetting him? — *Too Many Jokes in Venice, Fla.*

Dear Too Many Jokes: Usually, clowns and comedians are on a mission to make people laugh and enjoy life — and appreciate their wit and talent. As a result, they may not be aware of how many jokes they are telling or when to stop. You could either prep yourself for a comedy show when you go to dinner with them (you did mention that the jokes are funny) or try to steer the conversation into a topic that you would like to talk about over dinner and drinks. If absolutely necessary, you could tell him that though he's very funny, you would like him to limit his jokes so you can have a conversation.

Dear Annie: It's that time of year again. Would you please reprint the letter reminding your readers that not every child is for-

fortunate enough to have a costume and that some children are very mature-looking for their age? It would mean so much to so many kids. — *Heather*

Dear Heather: I'm happy to reprint the call for compassion. Thank you for reminding me of it.

Dear Annie: I'm writing in reply to "Halloweary," who complained about trick-or-treaters being too old, not in costume or out after 8 p.m. I grew up in the inner city, where parents worked multiple jobs and took multiple buses to get home. The understanding was that Halloween doorbell ringing ended at 9 p.m.

Some kids are too poor for costumes. Some have parents who don't care or aren't really around for them because of addiction.

As for the age aspect, I have known kids who looked like adults at age 9. My brother had a friend who had to have an adult desk in kindergarten because he didn't fit in the type that the other kids had.

Any child learns soon enough that he has to give up being a child. Let children remain children as long as possible, and take pity on those who are less fortunate. Your kindness may be their fondest childhood memory. — *Be Kind*

TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). The best people to be around aren't the ones who nag you to be different; they are the ones who make you want to be better by modeling a different way of being.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Sometimes you're the apprentice, and sometimes you're the master. To help another person give life to their dreams is a gift to you as well, and vice versa. The roles are interchangeable and equal.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). What you learn today will light your way. Tomorrow will be better because of it. If there's some waiting around or a little stress, it's par for the course. Life is on track. Things are getting better.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Many appreciate what you do. Not everyone. The ones who get it really get it. Those are the ones you're aiming your best efforts toward. Keep company with those who uplift.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You'll solve the problem by thinking less and feeling more. Imagine yourself as a coral-like receptor, with the ocean flowing around and through you. As you move in response, how can it be anything but right?

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). There are a few dynamics at play that are no longer ideal for you, to say the least. You can always make a change. That's an option you have; you just have to decide to take it.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). To have an awareness of your shadow side is a start. But to know that your shadow is actually just the flip side of the best that's in you is the golden ticket to success.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Don't underestimate the detrimental impact of too much seriousness. A deficit of fun is a drain on vitality. It may not be noticeable at first, but letting the levels get too low puts all that's good in jeopardy.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You won't forget your manners. You almost never do, and that is among the reasons you'll be chosen for today's task, which calls for someone who can be reliably polite.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). There are a few options on the table, one of which seems particularly appealing if not for the fact that it will take a very long time to realize. Don't let that deter you. The time will pass no matter what you're doing.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Nothing develops a person quite like traveling. And you needn't go far. Even a visit inside the next-door neighbor's house will fortify you. The important part is that you learn about others. Ask questions.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). If silliness is a skill, it's an important one. People need silliness. It takes a certain amount of confidence to risk being seen as foolish. And it involves an instinct for guessing what will make the other person laugh.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Nov. 1). You've weathered storms of all sorts, and now it's time to revel in emotional sunshine. Not one to let life overwhelm you, you'll make an exception in matters of love. Developments in your personal life inspire special events, travel and the integration of other families and friend groups. Libra and Leo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 18, 3, 33, 28 and 50.

FRANK AND ERNEST



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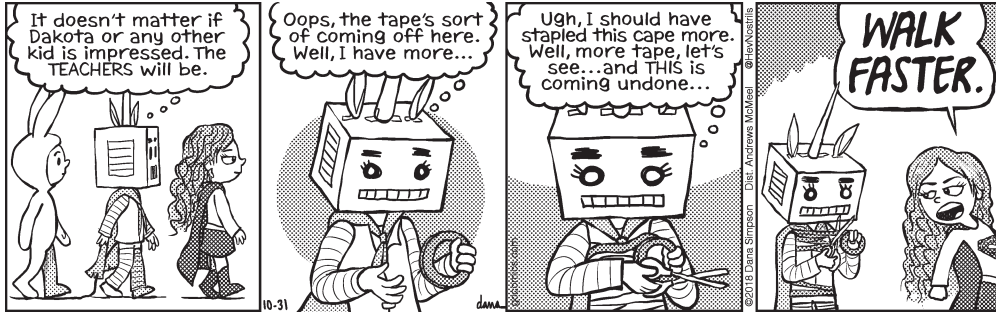
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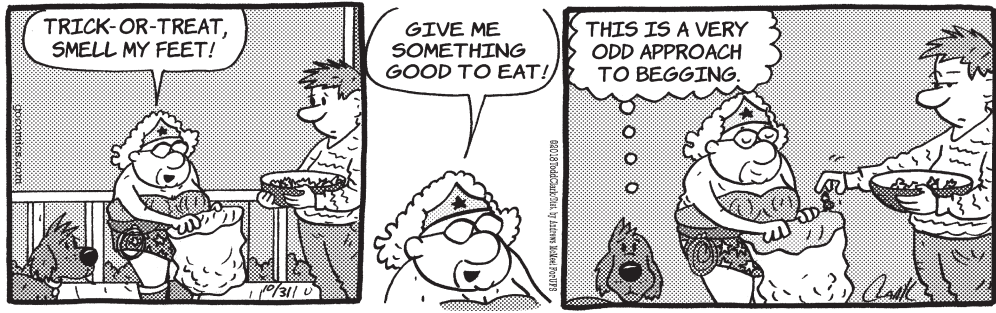
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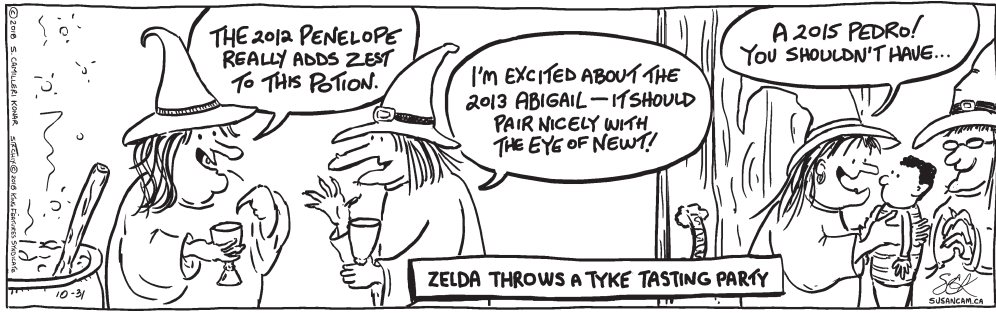
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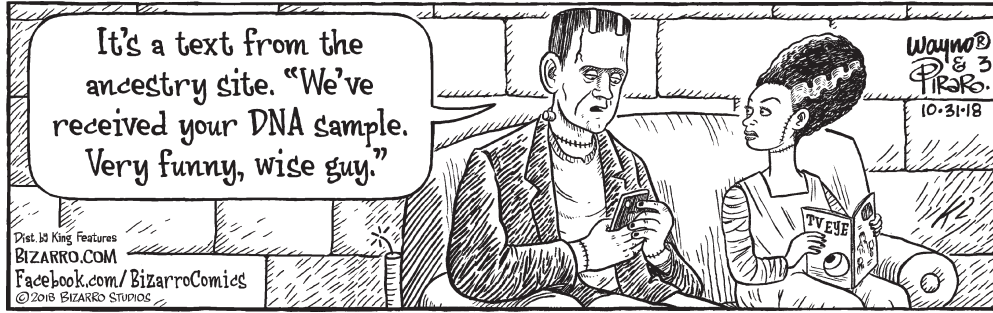
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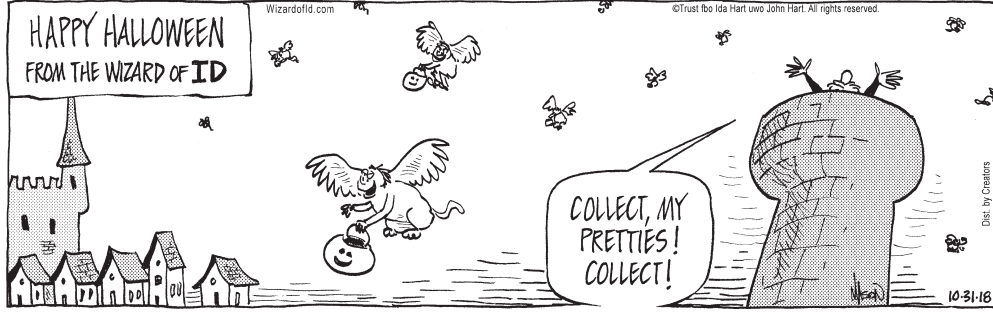
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