

# Politics disrupt dinner

Dear Annie: Politics took over as the main topic at our holiday dinner. I don't mind open debate among parties with differing views, as long as those debating have logical and fact-supported positions. Our dinner usually goes smoothly, as everyone gets along and, despite differing opinions, we all can adequately defend our positions. Dinner will come and go, and all are happy.

this? — *Hoping for a Better Family Dinner*

Dear Hoping: As Mark Twain said, "never argue with a fool; onlookers may not be able to tell the difference." Try to bring that quotation to mind the next time your uncle tries dragging you down into the mud for a fight.

Dear Annie: A while ago, you polled readers on whether or not they'd have children if they had it to do all over again. I wanted to share my story.

When I was in first grade, our teacher asked us what we wanted to be when we grew up. I said a mother and a teacher. Well, motherhood came first. Three years after I married, I started having children, two boys and two girls in five years. I enjoyed it. But there were hard times, too. The worst thing that happened was losing a child. My eldest son died of cancer in my arms when he was 17.

Now to fulfilling my first-grade dream in another way. A year after he died, I went to college and became a third-grade teacher when I graduated. I loved teaching this grade, with the children's eagerness to learn and their love of their teachers. I taught for 20 years and retired when the new principal and state laws had us only teaching to the tests and it was no longer any fun for the students or me.

Now my three living children are grown. I have six grown grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. After my husband left me, I bought a small farm, and my living son remodeled the pathetic old house for me and bought 8 acres next to me, where he now lives.

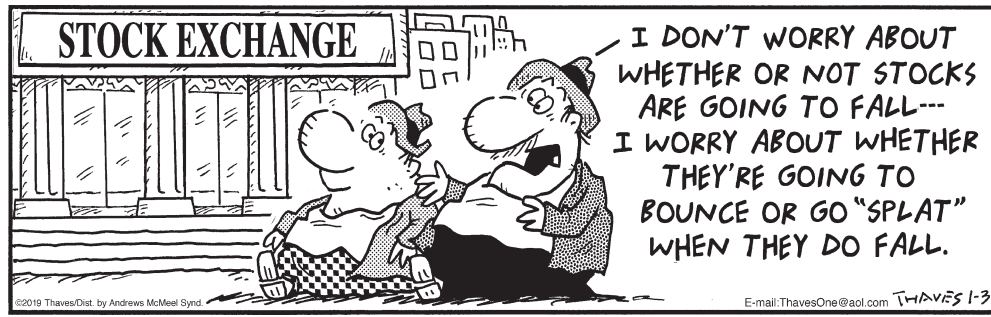
So yes, I'm happy to have had children, and even dealing with the death of one, I still have my memories of what a special son he was — a musician, magician, poet and reader with a sense of humor. — *80-Year-Old Happy Grandmother*

## DEAR ANNIE

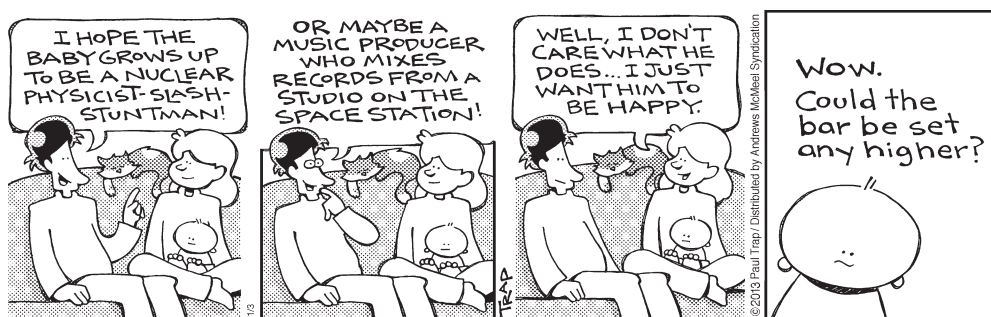


ANNIE LANE  
Creators  
Syndicate Inc.

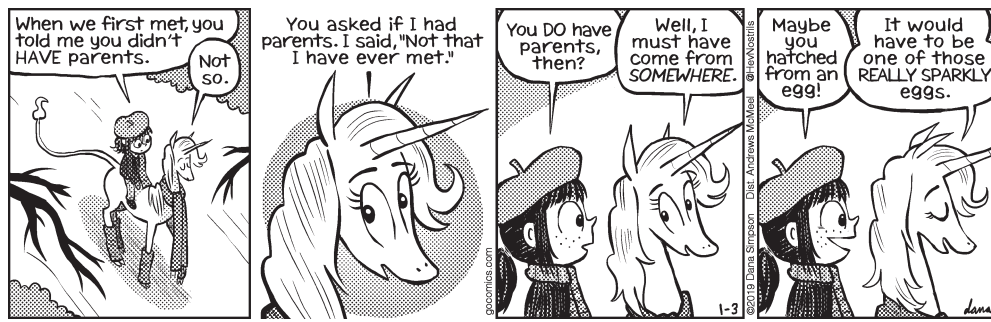
## FRANK AND ERNEST



## THATABABY



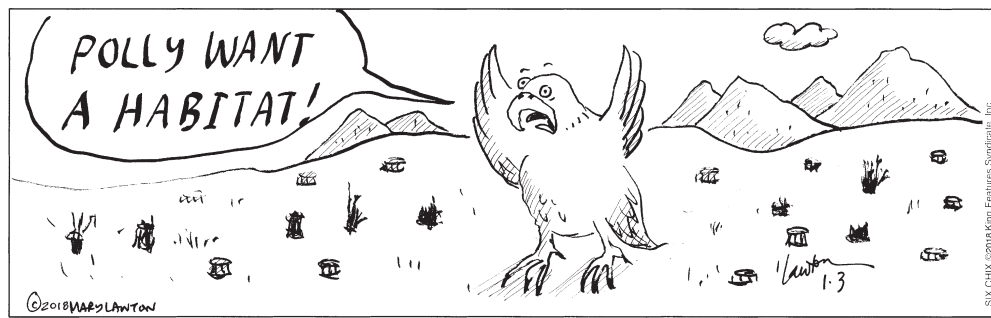
## PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN



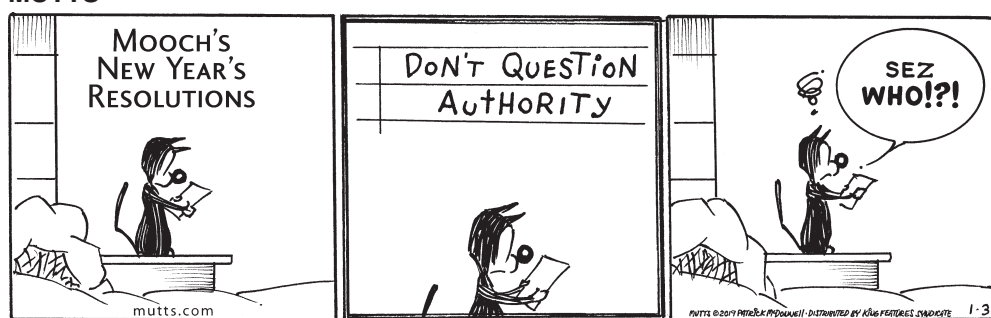
## LOLA



## SIX CHIX



## MUTTS



## BABY BLUES



## ZITS



## TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19).** Is your opinion causing controversy? You could be utterly wrong — or utterly right. Either way, the winning move is to take a breath and hear the others out. All benefit from the civil airing of ideas.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** You find inspiration everywhere you go — in the grasses underfoot, the clouds overhead, the hand of the person next to you. Scenery feeds your imagination, love even more so.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** The dance of love is a push, pull affair. The tango is on. The trickiest part is keeping the distance between you at the optimum ratio to create strong tension and still maintain freedom of motion.

**CANCER (June 22-July 22).** Your approval rating is going up. Try not to pay too much attention to that though, just as you didn't give it too much attention when it was going down. It's not their job to like you. That job falls squarely to you.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** You're not searching for yourself anymore. You know who exactly who you are, and furthermore you reserve the right to change your mind or even your personality, at any time because who you are goes much deeper than those things.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** When your brain is firing on all cylinders, you feel brightly alive. And when your brain is a din of unhelpful chatter, you feel far less so. Rigorous exercise will work wonders to reset your mental energy.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** Try not to make up reasons why something won't work before you've even tried it. This is just fear talking because your mind doesn't like uncertainty. That's OK. Let it talk, but walk forward anyway.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** When you feel secure in your relationship, you're more likely to take risks in other areas, especially in regard to professional advancement. To know you're loved is a beautiful thing to fall back on.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** While necessity may be the mother of invention, too much need and hardship can keep a person's mind from working at peak performance. Seek a gentle pace. Take care of yourself.

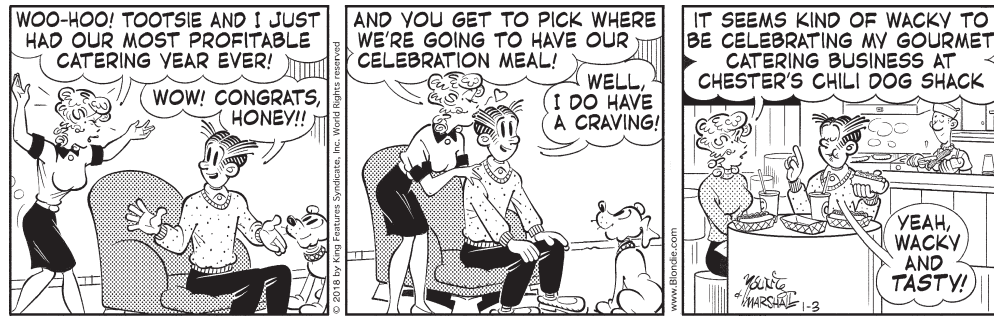
**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** Maybe life can be easy and still satisfy your need for a challenge. The mountain to climb has more to do with creativity than hardship. It's about finding the stimulus to push your imagination.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** There's a saying that one pound of learning requires 10 pounds of common sense to use it. Truly, theoretical knowledge will pale next to even the most minimal practical experience, so wherever possible, go in person.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).** Your self-control will be in strong supply, and that's why you may find yourself mentally bickering with someone instead of actually bickering, which would be a regrettable move since, ultimately, those details are petty.

**TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Jan. 4).** The Mercury change on your birthday is a harbinger of empowerment as well as clarity of deed and expression. Never doubt the power of a carefully worded intention. Your work to build a relationship will bring a release of past baggage and a new breath of sweetness to daily life. There's a move in May. Aquarius and Virgo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 16, 42, 9, 30 and 1.

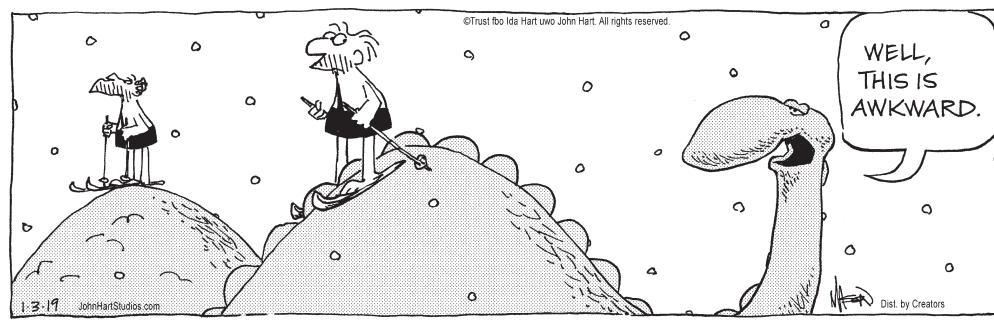
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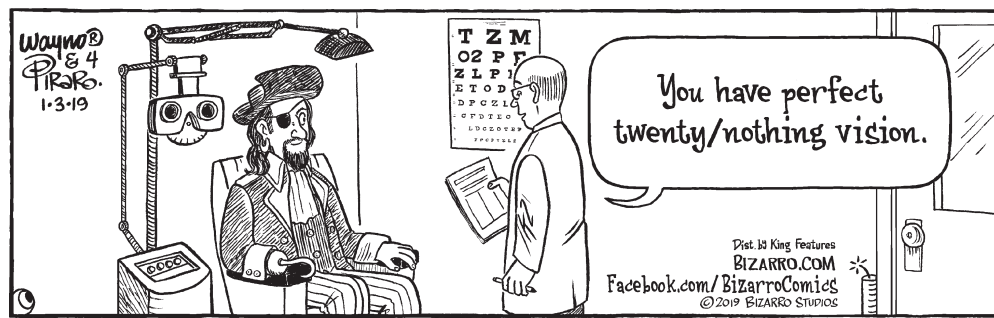
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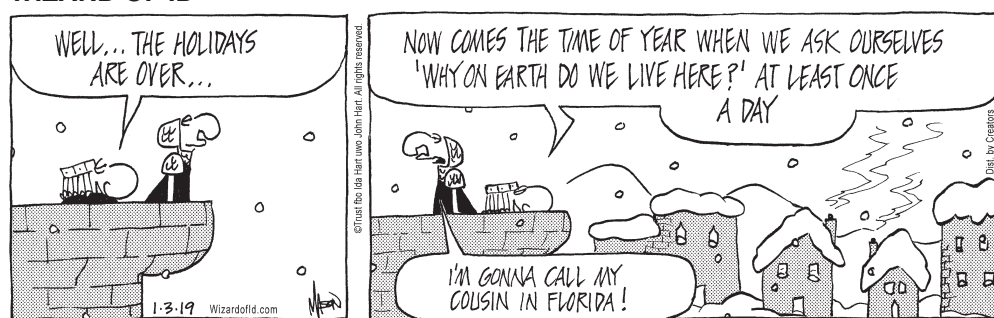
## BIZARRO



## NON SEQUITUR



## WIZARD OF ID



## ROSE IS ROSE

