

More volunteers needed

Dear Annie: I am an officer in an old but still active community cemetery with graves dating back to at least the 1800s and with plenty of available space.

We have the usual slate of officers and board of directors. We advertise our public meetings, as directed in our bylaws, but they are poorly attended. The handful of interested parties who attend these meetings are saddled with the issues of insurance, locating graves, hiring gravediggers, finding and awarding mowing contracts, driveway upkeep, tree trimming, brush removal along our borders, upkeep of our small meeting building, and whatever other needs arise.

A few years ago, when a burial was scheduled and our hilly driveway was very washed-out, two of us — women in our 60s — gathered rocks by hand to fill in the big ruts and then sat on the ground to put those rocks in some of the ruts in our driveway.

Very few folks seem to appreciate and support our volunteer efforts. Most lot owners never

attend meetings and never send a donation. These are the folks who do not hesitate to call us or write to us with their complaints.

We didn't ask for these responsibilities. We inherited our feeling of responsibility and respect from our parents, grandparents and beyond. We would welcome a helping hand with paperwork, contracts and decisions.

Like the case with all volunteer organizations, donations would be welcome, but more important is our need for help. Fortunately, we are able to pay someone to mow, but even that brings complaints when the grassy hillside is wet and too slippery to mow.

How can we spur the interest of these folks? — *Who's Going to Do It When We're Gone?*

Dear Who's: Most obviously — and most importantly — you need to ask, and ask often. Few people share your innate sense of responsibility and service. Most people need to be reminded that there are opportunities out there for them to make their commu-

nities better places.

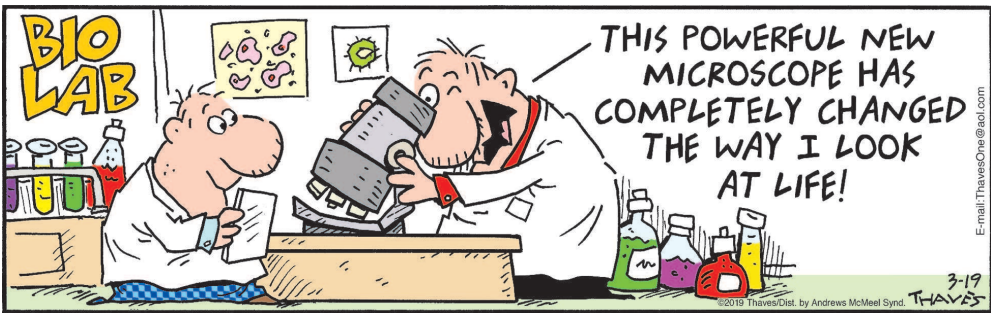
And that is how you should frame volunteering — as an opportunity, not a chore. One way to make volunteers feel like the valuable parts of your organization that they are is to give them titles. Come up with names for various positions that you need. The specificity will help people better understand what they'd be doing and offer more of a sense of purpose.

Lastly, I want to commend you and your fellow volunteers for all the hard work you've put into caring for this resting place. Thank you. It's selflessness such as yours that lights up the world.

Dear Annie: The woman who complained about her husband's agreeing to a wedding in their backyard has potentially more to worry about than stranger guests using their home's restrooms. She should check her city's ordinances about noise and consider what the reception will entail. Also, she should insist that her husband contact the company with which he has homeowner's insurance to be sure he is covered for possible injury on the property. — *Jane in Vacaville*



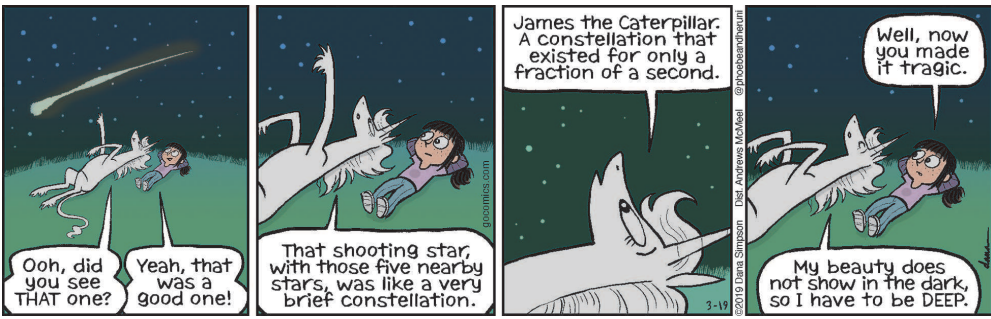
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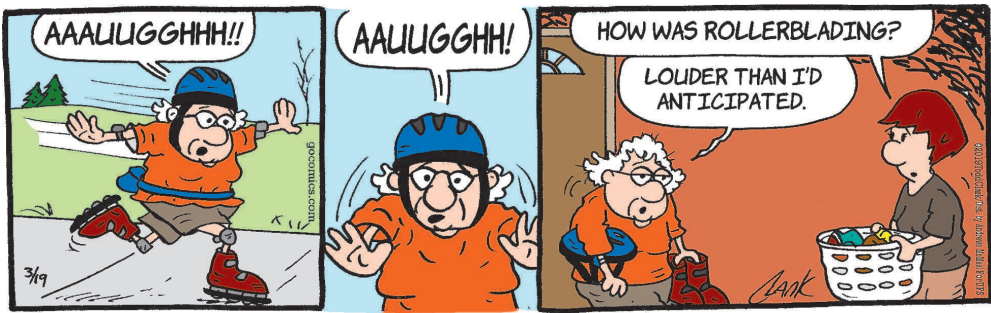
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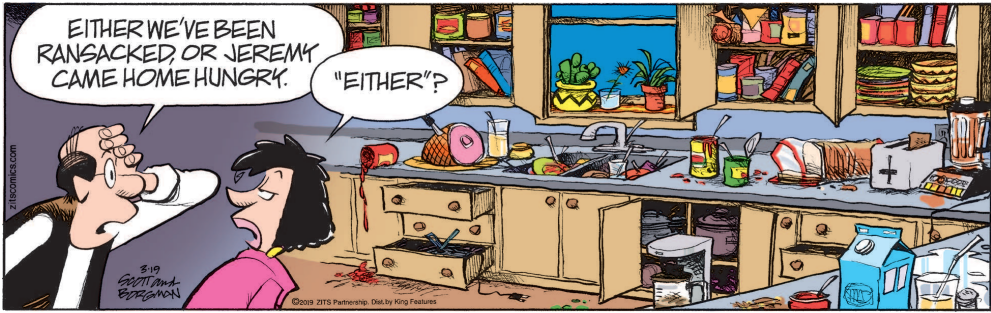
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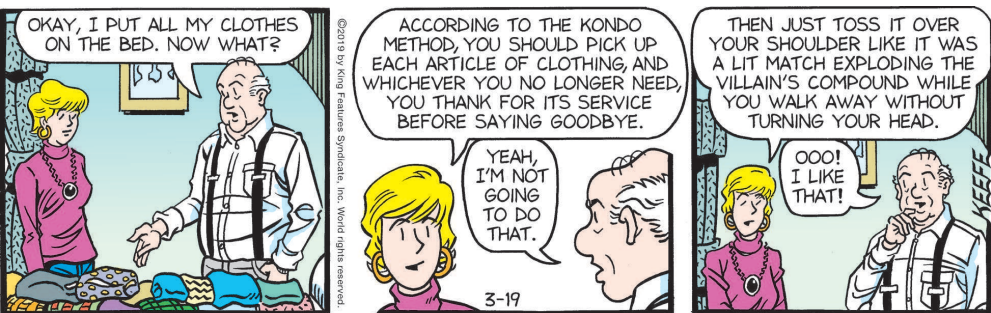
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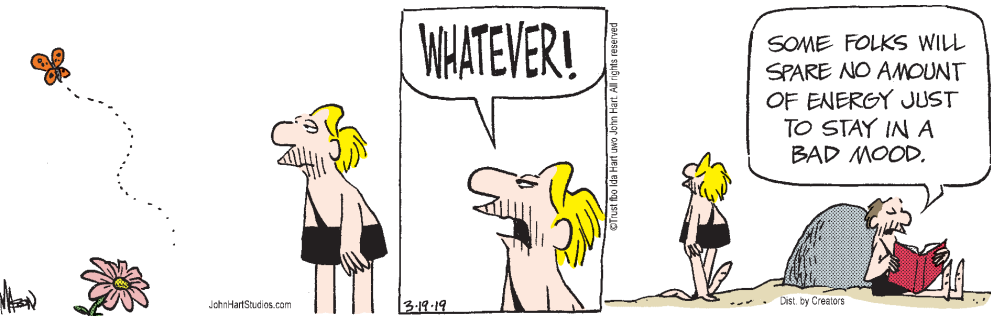
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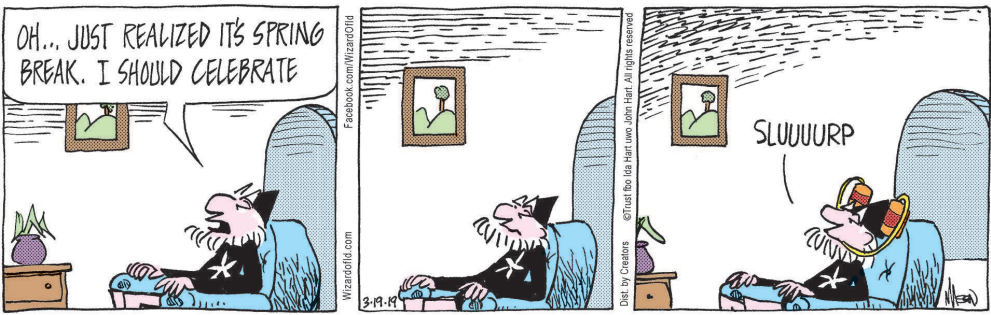
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