

DEAR ABBY

Write to Dear Abby online at dearabby.com or by mail at P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069



Dear Abby: My husband is an amazing guy. We have a very nice life except for an older sort-of family member who is living with us.

"Nathan" has been living in the house for years, but he isn't a blood relative. He's my husband's late stepfather's brother.

Nathan is a several-times-divorced curmudgeon who was living in a shed. He was allowed to stay here to get on his feet and, partially, out of respect for the stepfather.

Nathan refuses to help out in any way. He comes and goes as he pleases and is living rent-free. We pay the mortgage and all the bills. Nathan buys food and stuff for himself, but then will eat the household food my mother-in-law buys.

I'm tired of the garbage he makes. He smokes in his room, and he's nasty, rude and demanding.

He needs to move out or pay up, but my husband doesn't want to do anything. Advice?

— *Unhappy Home*

Dear Unhappy: Just this. Realize that nothing will change until your husband is finally willing to put his foot down and insist on some changes, or the freeloader leaves this earthly plane for the next. I would have used the phrase "goes to heaven," but it appears Nathan is already experiencing heaven right here on Earth, so do not expect him to move on his own.

Dear Abby: I was recently informed that my best friend of 10 years, "Darlene," planned to ghost me as soon as she got pregnant. I'm shocked that she would say

such a thing or plan to do it. I always thought I was a good friend.

But now Darlene and her husband are getting a divorce, and she has been all chummy. I have a sour taste in my mouth.

Do I stay friends and get over it, or give her her wish and disappear?

— *Unfriended in the West*

Dear Unfriended: Are you sure the person who informed you about her plan is credible? Could they be jealous of the close friendship you have with Darlene? Frankly, it would be incredibly stupid for a person planning to ghost someone to tell a mutual friend who might leak it before the fact. Talk to Darlene! Do not end the friendship unless you are absolutely certain what you were told was the gospel.

Dear Abby: My 82-year-old mother made a special request of her visiting relatives on Christmas Day. She asked everyone to hand over their cellphones for the entire celebration upon entering or "don't come." She said she would return them as we left. Certain family members had major meltdowns because of her request. My mother, as always, provided hors d'oeuvres, dinner and gifts for all 23 people. Do you think this was a fair request?

— *Not a Big Deal*

Dear Not: Your mother wanted to encourage more than superficial communication. As she indicated, if anyone felt her request was too much of an imposition, they were free to refuse her invitation. The oldest rule of entertaining is: The host makes the rules. Of course it was a fair request!

GARDENING COLUMN

Streetscaping tips

The right plant in the right place

BY LIZ DOUVILLE
For The Bulletin

The observation of more people walking in my neighborhood and throughout the city brought to mind a subject I have never written about, "streetscaping."

Streetscaping involves the narrow strip of land between the street and sidewalk, usually between three- to six-foot wide and can be several times that in length.

The city of Bend has published a guidebook specifically regarding the use of that strip of land with regard to water consumption. The guide book is titled "WaterWise Tips, StreetscapeGuide.org" available on-line and at the City Hall.

At the time of publication, it was noted that approximately 60% of all residential water use in Bend occurs outdoors, most of which goes to landscape irrigation. Much of that irrigation is lost due to overwater through improper irrigation scheduling and to irrigation overspray resulting in run-off onto streets and driveways.

The book is a step-by-step guide to create a better looking and more water-efficient alternative to what you may have. The guide includes an initial design or landscape plan, a focus on soil preparation and grading, an efficient drip irrigation system and minimal routine maintenance.

There is a notation that some street strips in Bend are designed to collect and retain stormwater. These strips have been engineered for a specific purpose and should not be altered. Please call the city of Bend WaterWise Program (541-317-3000 option 2) if you have questions about your property. Property owners who are part of a Home Owners Association should check on the regulations in place with the association.

The guide offers four planting options all of which are water efficient, functional and aesthetically pleasing. The transformation isn't as simple as just digging out what you have and replanting. There are site preparation and grading which will include soil or



Trees line a quiet streetscape in the St. Nicholas Historic District, also known as Strivers Row, in the Harlem section of New York. File photo

sod excavation and a switch from overhead sprinklers to a dripline irrigation system.

Remember the Golden Rule of gardening — "plant the right plant in the right place." Be aware of the maximum growth width of the plant, especially shrubs. The plant may look great for a year or two and then extends growth into the sidewalk impeding walkers and bike traffic. Label the plants for the benefit of walkers who might be encouraged to follow your example. What could be a better way to build community than in your front yard?

The publication is a great in-

spiration to help correct some of our old beliefs that there will always be enough water. Maybe we should be thinking more seriously now rather than later. Remember that basically, we are living in a desert and not in the lush Midwest. In years to come who knows the problems others might encounter as well.

In addition to the "WaterWise Streetscaping Guide," the City has also published "WaterWise Tips, Landscape Guide and WaterWise Tips, Irrigation Guide." "Water-wise Gardening in Central Oregon," an Oregon State University extension publication is also available online.

MLB

Continued from A5

Players underwent a five-day at-home quarantine before reporting, with exceptions for essential activities and approved outdoor workouts and exercise.

They'll need to stay in their living quarters throughout spring training except for baseball activities, medical care, grocery shopping, takeout food pickups and outdoor physical activity. Outdoor dining will only be allowed if they get permission beforehand.

"Between the players' union and MLB, the agreement I think is pretty rock-solid when it comes to player safety, staff safety," Chicago White Sox pitcher Lucas Giolito said Tuesday. "There's going to be a few things that are a little more, what's the word for it, given more importance. I think some of the workouts are going to be in smaller groups, a lot more on point with mask wearing and things like that. I don't think it will affect our work too much. We'll certainly be able to get done what we need to get done."

But the restrictions will make it more challenging to get ready for the season.

Catcher James McCann faces hurdles this spring trying to bond with an entirely new pitching staff after signing a \$40 million, four-year deal with New York Mets. Normally, the veteran backstop would invite pitchers to dinner, set up play dates for their kids, go out and grab a drink — anything to help develop those relationships.

Forget the off-field meetings. Under MLB's protocols, even getting together at the team's Florida complex is more difficult. Gathering in places like the video room — usually a convenient spot for 3-4 players to meet — is a no-no.

"Nobody likes to wear a mask and sit and talk 6 feet away from each other," McCann said. "A lot of different things I guess we took for granted."

MLB is hoping to have a full season after playing a 60-game schedule last year that included no fans in the stands until the postseason. The Miami Marlins and St. Louis Cardinals both dealt with COVID-19 outbreaks that resulted in multiple postponements.

"We're the lucky sport to have 162 games, but with that obviously comes a lot of thoughtfulness and dedication and commitment," new Marlins general manager Kim Ng said. "To play this game, you have to be absolutely committed, especially this team with them going through what they went through last year. People understand how it can decimate."

Cardinals pitcher Carlos Martinez battled COVID-19 last summer and says he wasn't the same the rest of the season.



Kathy Willens/AP file

New York Yankees' manager Aaron Boone yells at home plate umpire Brennan Miller during the second inning of the first game of a double-header against the Tampa Bay Rays in New York in 2019.

"After that, I was not comfortable with my body," said Martinez, who added that he feels great now.

Two players were added to the COVID-19-related injured list Wednesday: Boston Red Sox catcher Kevin Plawecki and Chicago Cubs left-hander Kyle Ryan.

One of the first things Cardinals president John Mozeliak did upon arriving in Jupiter, Florida, was to request a list from the medical staff of players and coaches who tested positive for COVID-19 antibodies.

Mozeliak believes knowing which players already have at least some measure of protection from the coronavirus can help in preventing an outbreak during spring training.

"I believe we had about 15 or 18 people with antibodies in this camp," Mozeliak said, "so that was encouraging."

"We've all gone through a year of this, of living through this. And so I think we're a little, much better equipped of how to handle ourselves, how to conduct ourselves, how to make good use of our time."

— Aaron Boone, New York Yankees manager

country, there are people more deserving of that opportunity than this group. But clearly if you were vaccinated, it would ease up a lot of the protocols we have in a sense of where you can go and where you can't.

For now, players say they are ready to follow the protocols while looking forward to the day they're playing in full stadiums again.

"Thankful it's going to be, not quite normal, but closer to it," Arizona Diamondbacks pitcher Madison Bumgarner said. "I think we're on the path back to that, so hopefully it all happens sooner rather than later."

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DON'T MISS
THIS WEEKEND'S
ISSUE

YOUR HOROSCOPE *By Madalyn Aslan*

Stars show the kind of day you'll have

★★★★★ DYNAMIC | ★★★★★ POSITIVE | ★★★ AVERAGE | ★★ SO-SO | ★ DIFFICULT

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR THURSDAY, FEB. 18, 2021: Magnetic, philosophical and empathic, you follow the beat of your own drum. This year, however, you embark on a project with others that proves very successful. Hire a manager to look after the mundane details of life, and you'll be enriched. If single, you feel cut off from others, and this year it's not likely you'll commit. If attached, utter bliss, as you've found your twin. CANCER is as sensitive.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★ You'll be thinking about security and stability. Purchase supplies for projects. You find arts and crafts or other items you make or build a source of pleasure and profit. A true transformation begins today. Tonight: No need to worry; just don't be careless.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ You'll attract a great deal of attention today. Push yourself forward; believe in yourself. This is the time when almost anything could happen. Your warmth and confidence will lead to a new opportunity coming up. Tonight: What you make of your potential.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★ You'll be more reserved than usual. Control worries. Be aware of how your mind-set creates the world you live in. Holistic healing is helpful if someone close to you has a health problem. Tonight: The well-being of family members is the focus.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ You will have new insights into friendships and will see how the people you're attached to are growing and changing. You will get in touch with personal goals and wishes, deciding on which priorities are really important. Tonight: A profound night.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ You can turn a tense situation into a chance to shine and strengthen your position if you study it carefully. Everyone seems to be noticing you. Make the most of this by projecting a polished, dignified image in all situations. Tonight: Relax.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★ The pace quickens. You get some new opportunities and lucky breaks today through friends, and possibly through a foreign-born friend. You'll be confident and courageous about exploring new ideas as well as new surroundings. Tonight: You could do some (remote) public speaking.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★ Today tempts you to overindulge. Try not to stray too far from your diet or budget. Complete errands or really important work before relaxing. It's easy to procrastinate a bit. That's fine if you don't go to extremes. Tonight: Your determination and confidence are renewed.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★ You can settle any legal matters amicably. Be aware of how others are advising you, and balance their advice with your own insights. File documents; complete paperwork and forms. An oddly satisfying day. Tonight: Go out on a real date!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★ You will pursue work and will expect a great deal of yourself and of your associates. Communication is essential in helping them materialize. Don't overload your schedule. A little recreation will actually improve your performance. Tonight: Get some extra sleep.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★ There can be a sudden romantic attraction. Maintain balance and get to know the new friend a bit better. You'll be adventurous and can gain experience following some type of speculation or risk-taking. Tonight: Young people make you aware of your priorities.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★ A family member who has been out of touch calls, writes or visits. Analyze habits and patterns for insights into domestic decisions. It's a good day to add beauty to your surroundings. There is a sense of déjà vu with relatives. Tonight: New home furnishings.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ You won't enjoy solitude today, preferring action to tranquility. You'll be more confident, goal-oriented and doing some extra neighborhood trips. Others see you as a role model. Your vitality is high, and you can accomplish a great deal. Tonight: Catch up with a sibling or neighbor.