

DEAR ABBY

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



Dear Abby: When I stopped by my brother's house a couple of weeks ago, he mentioned that his 9-year-old son was grounded in his bedroom. He was being punished for snooping in his dad's vintage collection of porn.

At first I was upset with my brother and his wife, because it was their fault that the boy had access to it, and boys are naturally curious. But when I found out what his punishment was, I became enraged. Their "brilliant" idea was to make my nephew disgusted with porn by forcing him to look at the entire collection for three hours instead of playing outside.

Maybe this tactic works for cigarette smoking or chewing tobacco, but this seemed very wrong. I was so appalled, I overstepped; I went straight into my nephew's room and told him he was allowed to go outside and play. What do you think? Am I being ridiculous? What should I have done?

— *Appalled in Ohio*

Dear Appalled: The child's punishment was extreme and inappropriate. What you SHOULD have done was point out to your brother and sister-in-law that their punishment may have been counterproductive. Rather than working as aversion therapy, it could result in whetting their son's appetite for more. You might also have suggested they consult a child psychologist for suggestions on how to deal with their son's budding sexual curiosity, which is entirely normal, and urged that from now on they keep their collection under lock and key.

Dear Abby: I recently met a very nice woman online. During our first phone call, she told me about an injury she received a few months

ago that has left her with a disability. I'm not bothered by it, and I'd like to get to know her better.

From the way she responded to a few things, I got the impression that she is still coming to terms with what has happened, as anyone would be. I have no experience with a situation like this, and I have no idea if, from the perspective of dating, it is the right thing to engage someone who is going through this. Any thoughts?

— *Tentative in Indiana*

Dear Tentative: Yes, it's the right thing — but only if you can be supportive and patient during what has to be an extremely emotionally disruptive time in this woman's life. I am sure she could use a supportive male friend right now, as long as you two can continue to have an open and honest dialogue.

Dear Abby: My 30-year-old son lives with me for financial reasons, and I love him dearly. He helps with bills and works a full-time job. My only problem with him is he wears the same pair of pants for weeks without washing them and hasn't washed his sheets in months. I didn't raise him that way. He does take a shower every night.

He owns only one pair of pants, and I can't get him to buy another pair. I have complained to him several times about the bad smell. How can I get him to change his ways?

— *Fed-Up Mother in Texas*

Dear Fed-Up: At this point in his life, that may not be possible. The easiest solution to your problem might be for you to wash his bedding every few weeks. As to the fact that he has only one pair of pants, buy him a pair for his next birthday or for Christmas — whichever comes sooner.

MLB COMMENTARY | SEATTLE MARINERS

Parting with ex-president Mather was inevitable, now comes the hard part

BY LARRY STONE

The Seattle Times

It took roughly 24 hours from the first telltale tweet of trouble for the Mariners to make official a decision that was inevitable. That was the reality from the minute Kevin Mather's unconscionable Rotary Club remarks went public Sunday.

Mather's departure Monday as president and CEO of the ballclub was the only possible resolution as the fallout grew to hurricane force. That was evident Sunday and became clearer by the hour, as the backlash grew stronger in vitriol and larger in scope.

It was termed a resignation, but we know what that often means in situations such as this. One can only assume the radio silence Monday morning from the Mariners involved machinations of the ultimate terminology for his departure. Chairman John Stanton declined to say whether he would have fired Mather had he not stepped down — sidestepping an opportunity to put some force behind his attempts to distance the Mariners from Mather's comments.

That's semantics, however. The crux is that massive harm was done to the Mariners organization and its perception by any and all of its constituencies — the players Mather upset; the fans who are called upon to support the organization; the other Mariners executives who must work around Mather's outing of company secrets and other indiscretions; MLB officials no doubt fuming from the revelation of apparent service-time manipulation (among other dirty laundry aired by Mather); and the MLB Players Association, which now feels it has tangible evidence of how players are regarded by teams for probable use in the upcoming CBA negotiations.

Mather stepped in it as thoroughly and irrevocably as one can do in the course of what was designed as a friendly, 45-minute breakfast Zoom ap-

"We are going to have to continue to work at (repairing the damage done by former president and CEO Kevin Mather's recent comments) every day. I don't think trust has been completely eroded. ... You build trust over time, and you build that relationship by communicating honestly, consistently."

— John Stanton, Seattle Mariners' majority owner

pearance to drum up support for the upcoming season.

Instead, it became a jaw-dropping compendium of insensitivity, pettiness and casual airing of an attitude that seemed to have little regard for the players as anything but widgets to be exploited.

And so now the Mariners have taken the first step to repair the damage by removing the source. It would have been untenable to have Mather remain in charge of, well, basically the entire organization with authority exceeded only by Stanton, considering that his gravitas had been compromised at literally every turn.

The next steps will be much more difficult, however. The Mariners need to somehow win back all those aforementioned entities. The process of doing so made up the bulk of questioning during Stanton's half-hour Zoom media session Monday, with a lot of assurances but only vague details.

"We are going to have to continue to work at it every day," Stanton said. "I don't think trust has been completely eroded. ... You build trust over time, and you build that relationship by communicating honestly, consistently."

Frankly, I feel Stanton is underestimating the task facing him, because skepticism, ridicule and downright vitriol toward the organization were unleashed in torrents by this incident.

One of the most telling things Stanton said, I felt, was this: "The process of building a strong organization doesn't occur in one move or one night. Nor, in my opinion, can it be destroyed by one set of comments."

English (which also were totally off base). And no doubt to Japanese pitcher Yusei Kikuchi and coach (and former Mariners pitcher) Hisashi Iwakuma regarding Mather's comments about interpreters.

Stanton needs to have a particularly deft touch in soothing the feelings of Rodriguez and fellow prospect extraordinaire Jarrod Kelenic, whom the Mariners hope will be cornerstone of their future. Stanton denied that Mather's outlining of a strategy that can only be construed as service-time manipulation reflected the organizational stance, but that's a dubious assertion. As team president, Mather oversaw baseball operations, and to think that he wasn't privy to their MO regarding two players whose service time could well mean the difference of tens of millions of dollars down the road is hard to swallow.

Indeed, there will be myriad fires for Stanton put out — too many to delineate here. Manager Scott Servais, who will address the team Tuesday, and general manager Jerry Dipoto obviously will have a part in that, too. Mather made their jobs exponentially more difficult in the span of those same 24 hours.

But the biggest reparations will have to be done with Mariners fans. This was a massive body blow to a group that desperately wants to have a team to rally behind — and often feels that the Mariners thwart them at every turn.

Until the team reaches the stage of serious, perennial contention — which is the best salve of all — the Mariners, as their top priority, need to demonstrate that at all turns that they will do the right thing. That's at once a gross simplification and the whole matter in a nutshell. It's something that's impossible to define, but you know it when you see it.

Much more to the point, you know it when you don't see it.

YOUR HOROSCOPE *By Madalyn Aslan*

Stars show the kind of day you'll have

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

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR WEDNESDAY, FEB. 24, 2021:

Self-sacrificing, open and accepting, you give your all. This year, efficiency and clarity allow you to be extremely successful with a project of your own making. Do not listen to others' opinions. If single, love becomes the be-all, end-all of existence this year, and you're ready to commit. If attached, share your love from a position of strength rather than weakness. Your partner adores you. SCORPIO runs very deep.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★★ Today brightens your personal life. Your sense of style and people skills are also excellent. Network. Nurture a promising new relationship. Your artistic talents are in top form. Practice playing an instrument or create a drawing. Tonight: Speak your mind.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★ There can be some stress involving family members. A residential move or change to your workspace is possible. Differences are resolved through discussion or emails. Take sensible precautions and all will be well. Tonight: An elderly relative might need your assistance.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★★ Expect some interesting conversations. New ideas are suggested and business joins gracefully with pleasure. Your energy level is enhanced. Romantic urges are pronounced, and you will express your love. Tonight: Natural magic will work quickly to intensify the relationship.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★★ Imaginative plans increase your income. A hunch as well as new developments in your field lead to worthwhile new opportunities. Be careful not to discard memorabilia and keepsakes impulsively. Tonight: Tense family situations from the past are resolved.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★★ Today augurs a fresh start and brings a cycle of higher energy leading to much accomplishment. Frustrations will melt away. Direct irritation into constructive venues, and the world will be at your feet. Tonight: Focus on what you want. Go for close and intimate.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★★ Consider consequences and options first. Quiet the mind through meditation. Psychic communication with wild creatures will be especially lucid. Your creative talents shine. Use your imagination. A child or new friend inspires you. Tonight: You might just want to luxuriate and take a nap.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★★ Today brings the gift of friendship. Get involved with groups; cultivate those whom you would enjoy as friends. Politics and community issues can be a catalyst for association. Enjoy life and put plans in motion for future dreams. Tonight: Take the night off.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★★ Today highlights public recognition and your career. Be alert to changes in your field. Very keen competition is present. Dispel confusion by double-checking for precision and accuracy. Be diplomatic during discussions. Tonight: An uncharitable comment made would come back to haunt you.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★★ Your natural cleverness is enhanced. It's a perfect day to begin writing a book, assembling artistic creations or selecting educational goals. Work incorporating music and art from faraway lands can elevate your spirit. Interactions with a child will be especially happy and comforting. Tonight: Relax.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★ Financial obligations relating to others can be resolved. Sincerity is the best way to process and release old resentments. Get in tune with how you really feel and let others know. You overcome competition or other obstacles with aplomb. Tonight: A partner's perspective is grounded.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★★ Cooperation and tolerance are essential today. You'll be aware of the importance of upholding justice and maintaining balance. A deep awareness is present. Your intuition is wonderful. Heed those inner voices, and you'll be guided toward success. Tonight: Fun date night.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★★ The quiet and cool hours will have a rejuvenating power. A health challenge can be overcome. Adopt a live-and-let-live attitude toward others. Make few demands and seek no favors. Negotiate to avoid conflict. Tonight: An online meeting opens new doors.

Cowgirls

Continued from A5

"They are the ones who are taking it on the chin."

Stewart said that volleyball likely will not happen this year at Madras, as the option to move the season later in the year is not possible due to the White Buffaloes being one of the few teams locally and within their conference to not be able to play. They would not have anyone to play in a later season.

Culver is in the same position as Madras, facing the prospect of not having a volleyball season.

"We can't do anything right now, our hands are tied," said Culver athletic director Shea Little. "It is devastating news for our volleyball players. We

are still hoping for a little bit of a season."

For Madras volleyball players, the options are either try a different sport like soccer or cross-county, or hope for the county to move down to high risk and maybe play a season that will be less than a month long.

"We will figure it out and give kids options on what we can do and hope for the best," Stewart said. "If they want to try something different we will open that door for them."

At Culver, moving the season to later in the year is also not an option, as the athletic department has decided not to let other sports interfere with traditional spring sports, after those sports had their seasons canceled in 2020.

"We don't want to sacrifice

our spring sports," Little said, adding that even if volleyball gets only one week to compete, the team will try to do it.

Madras and Culver are currently conducting in-person learning and can have up to 25 students in a classroom. Yet after school, that number is reduced to six athletes allowed

in the gym at a time. Stewart thinks there is a disconnect between the education and athletic guidelines.

"We are one of the few schools that are fully back," he said, "and yet we are extreme and we can't play volleyball."

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