

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 granddaughter just informed me she has decided she would be happier living as a boy, and she has gone so far as to legally change her name.

I want to be supportive, but I admit I'm having a lot of trouble accepting it, or at least figuring out how to deal with it.

She's my only grandchild and most likely the only one I'll ever have. I loved my granddaughter with all my heart, and I don't know how to shift gears to a grandson.

I keep stumbling when I try to use the new name. I would welcome any suggestions you could make, including information about support groups you might know of.

— *Grandma in Pain*

Dear Grandma: Gender reassignment is not something that someone does on a lark. There are many steps involved, and the journey, while liberating, can be challenging both physically and emotionally.

I am sure this is something your grandchild has given much thought to.

Yes, coming to terms with it can be as much of a journey for family as it is for the transgender person, and it can take time and understanding on all sides.

A group called PFLAG can help you through this. It has been mentioned in my column for decades. It has helped countless families to build bridges of understanding between themselves and their lesbian, gay and transgender loved ones.

Please don't wait to contact them. You will find PFLAG at pflag.org, and their phone

number is (202) 467-8180.

Dear Abby: I am a 50-year-old man. My whole life, my relationship with my father has been strained.

When I was in my teens and 20s, when he bought presents for my two siblings and not for me, he would say things to me like, "I forgot I had you."

In spite of this, I became very successful in life. I had a great career and am now retired.

My father recently announced to me that he had made only two mistakes in his life — marrying my mother, who has put up with him for more than 60 years, and having children.

My dilemma is, he is now 90 years old and has many health problems. He is in the hospital now for a heart problem.

I know he won't last much longer. I feel nothing for him, and I am not sad. When he dies, I know I won't care. Is this normal? I feel guilty for feeling this way.

— *Don't Care in Tennessee*

Dear Don't Care: Please don't feel guilty for feeling no regret at the prospect of "losing" a cruel and withholding parent who made it his business to make those around him feel "less than."

Do not be surprised if, rather than feel a sense of loss, you feel at peace, as though a weight has been lifted from your shoulders. You should not feel guilty for that, either. Comfort and emotionally support your mother as best you can when he dies, but don't be shocked if she, too, feels some relief. Their union could not have been the happiest.

MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL | OREGON STATE BEAVERS**Will OSU's Ethan Thompson finally be recognized for his statistical excellence?**

BY NICK DASCHEL
The Oregonian

Is this the year Oregon State's Ethan Thompson breaks through and earns Pac-12 all-conference recognition?

The senior guard has 116 starts during his OSU career. If Thompson starts the final four regular season games and the Pac-12 tournament, he'll break the school record of 120 held by Gary Payton.

Thompson has never missed a college game. He'll likely finish third in career minutes and assists. Thompson is among OSU's career top 10 in field goals, free throws and three-pointers made and attempted, and points.

Statistically, Thompson is one of the best players in Oregon State history.

Yet during his first three years at OSU, Thompson never earned as much as honorable mention all-conference. Not even a mention on the all-freshman team in 2018.

Heading into the penultimate week of regular season play when Oregon State plays at California and Stanford, there's reason to believe Thompson is worthy of post-season recognition.

The 6-foot-5 Thompson is averaging a career-high 16.2 points a game this season. He leads the Beavers in assists and steals. Thompson is among the Pac-12's top 15 in seven different statistical categories.

Good enough for some all-conference love?

Oregon State coach Wayne Tinkle points



Courtesy Oregon State Athletics

Oregon State's Ethan Thompson goes up for a dunk against Utah on Feb. 18. Thompson led all players in points (25) and assists (8) in the Beavers' 74-56 rout of the Utes.

to expectations. The Beavers were picked to finish last of 12 in the Pac-12 in the preseason poll. They're currently seventh with a chance to finish as high as fifth.

"You have to give him a lot of credit for that, his leadership, and what he brings de-

fensively and offensively," Tinkle said.

Thompson's shooting percentage is a little down from a year ago, but Tinkle says unlike last season, he's usually the focus of the opposing defense. But during the past month, Tinkle said Thompson now starts games by thinking playmaking first and scoring later.

"He really listened to coaching on the importance of setting the table for others and how that makes him that much more difficult to guard," Tinkle said.

Defensively, Thompson is often assigned to the opponent's best guard. It's one reason Oregon State leads the Pac-12 and is among the country's top 20 in three-point shooting defense.

"He's much, much better on the ball defensively and understanding how to use his length and keep in front of guys," Tinkle said.

Thompson landed second-team honors on the preseason all-conference team. At a minimum, he's under consideration for a post-season Pac-12 honor.

There are a number of givens for the 10-man first team: Arizona State's Remy Martin, Stanford's Oscar da Silva, Utah's Timmy Allen, USC's Evan Mobley, Oregon's Chris Duarte.

Thompson is among a group of 10 to 12 players for the final five berths. Is the best player on a team that has exceeded preseason expectations worthy? The conference coaches will speak in a couple weeks.

Ducks

Continued from A5

"Fortunately we've had something to play for every year and so the guys have rallied around that and been unselfish and we've found ways to get a little better. I'm hoping this group will be the same.

"The difference this year is we're getting healthy at the right time. We hopefully won't have any more of those darn pauses that shuts down for 8-9 days and we can't practice. If we can finish the last four weeks of the season here and stay healthy, not have any more pauses, get Eric (Williams Jr.) healthy, then physically we're in the best shape that we've been and that will definitely help. Then hopefully the unselfishness and the team goals will be there."

It's also what made Monday's 72-58 loss at USC so hard to understand. Oregon entered the game riding a five-game win streak, though the prior three wins came by a combined nine points, and with Williams back on the court and playing significant minutes off the bench the Ducks the healthiest they've been all season.

A 15-0 Trojans run com-

"Obviously I'm sure everybody was disappointed; our staff was disappointed with the energy level that we showed Monday night in a big-time game that we needed to bring it and we sure didn't."

— *Dana Altman, Oregon men's basketball coach*

bined with 0 for 12 shooting by the Ducks to open the night effectively ended the game before it even began, and this was a marquee game, with USC reclaiming sole possession of first place without so much as a real threat from an Oregon team that was supposed to be seeking what would've been its best win of the season.

"Obviously I'm sure everybody was disappointed; our staff was disappointed with the energy level that we showed Monday night in a big-time game that we needed to bring it and we sure didn't," Altman said Wednesday.

"As a coaching staff we're disappointed that we didn't have our team better prepared, especially me. We knew how important the game was and we just didn't show. That hasn't been something that — our program has usually showed up for big ball games and we sure didn't show up the other night.

Motor sports

Continued from A5

None of the stereotypes Kamara had come to believe about NASCAR has proven true.

"I'm meeting fans, interacting with people, and I'm like, 'Oh, this is a safe space,'" Kamara said.

"This is not what I thought it was. I was pleasantly surprised."

There's been blowback toward NASCAR for drawing a firm line but it fits Phelps' vision for the sport. He has cited a recent brand tracking study that found 1,750 self-identified "avid NASCAR fans" overwhelmingly supported the sanctioning body's stance on social justice in 2020.

Banning the flag ultimately "opened up an aperture to a brand-new fan base," Phelps said.

It could be that those who typically would raise a Confederate flag at a race stayed home this year rather than comply with NASCAR's new world order. And maybe people really did stop watching.

Viewership for the Daytona 500 fell 34% from last year, and Sunday's road course race was on one hand the most-watched sports event of the weekend and NASCAR's most-watched road course race since 2014. But it also averaged 76,000 fewer viewers from the same slot last year, a February oval race at Las Vegas.

The drop in viewers could be benign.

over social justice, industry partners believe the progressive stance offsets all losses.

Toyota, for example, competes at every level of NASCAR and has long championed its diversity and inclusion programs alongside a "respect for people" company pillar. NASCAR has now aligned its core values with the corporate culture of one of its top stakeholders.

"It seems as if we are truly on the cusp of breaking through to a much broader and diverse audience," said David Wilson, president of Toyota Racing Development. "You know there are multicultural motorsports fans in this country, but a lot of them haven't felt comfortable or welcome in the NASCAR space. It's just difficult to articulate how critical this is for the growth of the sport."

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. 25, 2021: Giving, intuitive and powerful, you lead an active unconscious life — thus sleep is very important to you, including dream time. This year, you manifest a dream you have, and it is tremendously successful. Trust yourself. If single, vibrant feelings of passion and a creative spirit lead you to your mate. If attached, astounding spiritual insights develop with your partner this year. You decide to work together. PISCES is deeply psychic.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★ Today encourages you to splurge or take a gamble. Do enjoy some special goodies or luxuries in moderation, but don't go to extremes. You'll realize that there is so much to appreciate and be thankful for. Tonight: Catch up with an old lover.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★ Work out anger issues with family members. Compromise is the solution to domestic conflicts. Your residence might need some maintenance. Patiently work out differences and make much needed repairs. Shop for the best prices. Tonight: A long and arduous family dinner.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★ Relationships with siblings and neighbors can be demanding. Be patient. Undercurrents and extenuating circumstances are afoot. As the day ends, facts come to light. You'll be glad that you were understanding and tolerant. Tonight: Allow others to grow and explore.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★ Old financial obligations or debts are becoming more manageable. You are entering a more promising security cycle. Learn more about financial management. Do not repeat patterns and habits that led to previous disappointments. Tonight: Conversations about monetary matters are enlightening.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ Today is wonderful for study and analysis of all kinds. Social prospects are especially bright. Adorn yourself. Assemble an especially wonderful costume. Much can be accomplished. There is a deeper understanding of your own psyche. Tonight: Any confusion will clear.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★ Today is a time for rest and reverie, with the Moon in your sector of solitude and subconscious yearnings. Take note of dreams. Answers come from within. Allow nature and wildlife to draw nigh. The natural world offers peace and comfort. Tonight: Quiet time.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ Competitors provide inspiration, but take time to relax and regroup if you start to feel pressured. Community involvement will be rewarding. A mission to make the world a better place has appeal. Tonight: Enjoying a renewed appreciation for your cherished friendships.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★ Career prospects are both interesting and challenging. Innovate; be creative. Combine business with pleasure. Listen carefully to others. Today indicates that valuable information is offered during social situations and at Zoom meetings. Tonight: Sincerity is the best form of communication.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★ A deep awareness is present. Your intuition is wonderful. Heed those inner voices, and you'll be guided toward success. Your energy level will be high, but do quell irritation. It's especially easy to overreact now. Tonight: Friends are willing to give your career a boost.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★ Your priorities and desires are in flux. It will be a wild but interesting day. Decide what it is that you really want and pursue it. There are endings and beginnings in process. Fate intervenes in plans, so be flexible and observant. Tonight: Relax.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

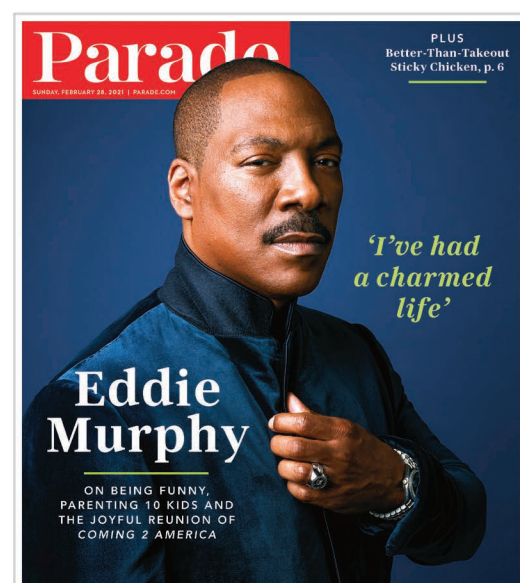
★★★★ Talented and powerful people are drawing closer to you. The promise of partnerships is very real. You discover much about others and how they feel toward you. Tonight: Keep an open mind and seek the truth, then all will be well.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ Your work is rewarding and interesting today. You'll be thinking of how best to manage your time and resources. Needed materials and supplies become available. Communication with the very young or the elderly is excellent. Tonight: Be aware of how old habits come into play.

DON'T MISS

THIS WEEKEND'S
ISSUE



PLUS
Better-Than-Takeout
Sticky Chicken, p. 6

*'I've had
a charmed
life'*

**Eddie
Murphy**

ON BEING FUNNY,
PARENTING 10 KIDS AND
THE JOYFUL REBORN OF
COMING 2 AMERICA