

DEAR ABBY

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



Dear Abby: I am a mom of two boys, 8 and 12. They both have best friends whose moms I like and I would like to be friends with. My problem is, when we set up a play-date for the boys or make plans, when the time comes around and I text them about it, I don't hear back from them at all. I have even left phone messages a couple of times.

I'm bipolar, and I have social anxiety, so when I say yes to something, it is huge for me. When they don't respond, I feel as though I am annoying them or they're mad at me for some reason. The rejection is starting to upset me, and it's upsetting my children, especially my 8-year-old. My question: How do I deal with flaky moms without ruining my relationship with them?

—*Rejected in California*

Dear Rejected: Have these women EVER agreed to a playdate with your children? Flaky is not the way I would describe them. Rude bordering on cruel would be more accurate.

It's time to start cultivating relationships with other mothers. Do not personalize what has been happening because the way you have been treated has less to do with you than what it shows about them. In the future, rather than chase these moms, take your children to a park to play (if one is open) or enroll them in other activities.

Dear Abby: I have been divorced for eight years. After being divorced for a year, I became curious about dating and have been on and off the online dating sites. I have a rule about not meeting anyone with a status of "separated." Knowing myself, I knew I needed time to get over my divorce before welcoming someone in my life.

A man who listed himself divorced for 3 1/2 years and looking for a relationship was actively contacting me and invited me to look at his photos on Facebook. When I did, I noticed he still had his wedding photo posted. I thought it was odd, so I asked him about it. He said it was 20 years of his life, and he just cannot pretend it didn't happen. He said I was reading way too much into it.

My gut is telling me, "Thank you, but no thank you." What are your thoughts, Abby?

—*Photo Finished in New York*

Dear Photo Finished: Listen to your gut as you get to know him better. For someone who is divorced and looking for a relationship to leave up a wedding picture with his former spouse makes me wonder if he's lazy about removing pictures from his Facebook, or sabotaging himself because he's not quite as ready to move on to something new as he thinks he is.

Dear Abby: My late husband was of the Jewish faith. Our children and I are not. Through the years, kind and generous friends and neighbors have sent cards and gifts for Jewish holidays, which makes me very uncomfortable. What wording would you suggest I use to have this practice discontinued without seeming rude or unappreciative?

—*Non-Jewish in Illinois*

Dear Non-Jewish: You can get your point across to these thoughtful people by saying something like this: "I appreciate your thoughtfulness, but you should know that although my husband followed the Jewish religion, my children and I do not. We are _____." Frankly, you should have spoken up years ago.

Earth Day

Continued from A1

"This year we have moved our efforts to clean up land that has been abused by people who are driving illegally into areas of public land that have been designated as nonmotorized," said Keyser, a former Oregon deputy secretary of state. She is retired and has lived in Crooked River Ranch since 2000.

"There hasn't been adequate education, signage and control over the creation of illegal roads," she adds.

The Earth Day cleanup was just one phase of a larger effort to restore Steamboat Rock back to its natural condition. For years the area has been degraded not just with trash from illegal dumping and homeless camps, but also off-highway vehicles, which tear up the earth, ruining native grasses and plants that hold the soil in place.

The side of the road closer to the river is designated for nonmotorized use, but it's clear that plenty of vehicles enter the area. The Friends and Neighbors of the Deschutes Canyon Area group is working with the Bureau of Land Management to post more signs and close off roads with fences and boulders to protect the fragile ecosystem.

"The major trouble is camps leaving garbage behind, the illegal dumping and the use of motor vehicles, which is not authorized," said Nick Weber, outdoor recreation planner for the BLM. "Cutting off access to motorized (vehicles) will be the key to cleaning this area up."

That's important because just down the hill is a stretch of Deschutes River designated to protect it from degradation. Weber offered some advice to people who want to keep this land pristine.

"Take care of these areas. That is the message on Earth Day," said Weber. "Leave no trace, leave it better than you



Dean Guernsey/The Bulletin

Mounds of trash were collected during an Earth Day cleanup on BLM land near Terrebonne on Thursday.

found it for future generations."

Further along the trail, Keyser points out abandoned campfires, trees with limbs cut off for firewood, and haphazard roads that cut through the area. Off in the distance, the Deschutes River rushes past with Mount Jefferson forming a dramatic backdrop.

"This was part of the (camper) village. It's all weeds now," said Keyser, pointing out the spoiled land. "The trash was tossed off the rim, old mattresses, tents. It's going to take a long time to get it back, but you have to start somewhere."

Nearby, volunteer Susie Garland, a part-time Crooked River Ranch resident, was picking up trash amid the juniper trees with her husband, Jerry. Tires nearby had been collected in a pile.

"It's sad. We used to bike here, but then we stopped because it didn't look good. There was a lot of garbage, a lot of dead deer carcasses. It took away from the experience," said Garland. "But it's already looking better than it looked the last time."

The efforts by Friends and Neighbors of the Deschutes Canyon Area on Earth Day resulted in dozens of trash bags hauled away, plus the removal of larger items, including tires, a vacuum cleaner, a satellite dish, a microwave oven, a barbecue and wooden palettes. The volunteers also found a couch in a cave and buckets filled with human excrement.

"It's a shame that people treat our environment this way," said volunteer Mary Zabilski, a Redmond resident who volunteers every Earth Day. "You come to enjoy it, but how can you enjoy it when there is broken glass everywhere?"

Another volunteer, David Dalton, was blunter when asked how he felt about the condition of the area.

"Disgusted, angry," he said. "It's not too bad right here, but at times I have seen huge dumps."

A nearby sign that warns of a \$100,000 fine and one year in prison for dumping has largely been ignored.

Near the end of one of the

trash runs, a truck pulled up along the side of the road and out jumped local resident Rob Windlinx, clad in a flannel shirt and wide-brimmed hat. Windlinx, one of the original founders of the group, had earlier cleaned out the nearby cave, emptying it of the couch, a barbecue, and tires.

"There was a young osprey watching us. That made it enjoyable," said Windlinx. "We're bringing back the beauty of Central Oregon."

By the end of the day, the volunteers had loaded up enough garbage to fill up two transport trucks, said Jeff Scheetz, one of the organizers.

For the volunteers who put in the long hours in the sun, it was a chance to give back to their community and restore lands they and others want to enjoy while hiking, biking and horse riding.

"We like to use these lands and keep them clean," said Garland. "We didn't realize it was Earth Day, we just wanted to help clean up."

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ACLU

Continued from A1

In January, Michael Satcher, a member of the Central Oregon Peacekeepers, requested city records pertaining to events at Pilot Butte Neighborhood Park on Oct. 3, where Trump supporters and Black Lives Matter activists clashed, according to court documents. Satcher also requested any records that speak to the general relationship between the Bend Police Department and groups that antagonize social justice advocates, according to the ACLU.

The city sought \$3,600 from Satcher and the Peacekeepers to pay for the request, according to the ACLU. The city argues the fee is reasonable because the request was broad and took about 65 hours of staff time.

Satcher and the Peacekeepers asked for a public interest fee waiver. The city instead offered to reduce the fee by 25% and asked the racial justice group to narrow its request.

In February, Satcher filed an appeal with Deschutes County District Attorney John Hummel, who issued a decision that found the city's fee decision was unreasonable, according to court documents.

In March, the city filed a lawsuit against Satcher and the Peacekeepers, asking a judge to find that offering a 25% reduction in fees was reasonable. If the city wins, the Peacekeepers may have to pay roughly \$3,600

to the city. ACLU's counterclaim seeks the city pay its legal costs.

"We are just seeking the truth, and the city is coming after us for it," Luke Richter, founder of the Peacekeepers, wrote in a press release from the ACLU. "We can't fix our broken policing system if those in charge are willing to break the law and punish the truth seekers in order to hide its actions."

Kessler said this case highlights the larger issue of governments not providing adequate access to public records to everyone — not just organizations or lawyers with money and resources.

"In order to speak intelligently and make changes in democracy, the public needs to have information ... they need to have access to good information about what the government is doing," Kessler said Thursday.

The city is seeking what is called a declaratory judgment action — which in this case, means the city is asking the court to clarify what the law says when it comes to public records, said Mary Winters, the city's attorney. Amid the legal battle, the city has continued to release records to the group.

The city believes Hummel created a new standard for this and future fee-waiver requests that is contrary to state law, Winters said. The concern is setting a precedent of waiving fees for other large requests.

"Because we process requests in a non-discriminatory

manner, a new standard for fee waiver requests could mean City staff have to perform free work for other groups or individuals with very different political or social views from the Peacekeepers," Winters wrote in an email. "The issue of the standard is important enough to take to court and get a clear answer."

But Kessler, one of the attorneys representing the Peacekeepers, said the solution to the issue of the city not having enough resources to process this request is not to put the burden upon the person requesting the documents. The solution is for the city to adequately budget enough staff and money to process requests.

Currently, the city only budgets two hours of time to answer public records requests, according to court documents.

"If the city weren't able to process all of its wastewater and sewage, it would fix that problem...it's a government function," he said. "In the same way, archiving and making available public records is a government function."

The city's request for the group to narrow the scope of its request is also problematic, given that the requestors of public records usually are not well funded enough to fight legal battles in court or pay large fees. It is also hard to know whether a city's request for a narrower search is specifically created to limit what someone can see, Kessler said.

"There is a huge power im-

balance," Kessler said.

Kessler said the city claiming it acted non discriminatorily is also questionable, arguing that the city at the same time it was charging the Peacekeepers \$71.06 per hour to review documents charged only \$30 per hour to someone else who submitted a public records request days before.

Winters said the city did not double the rate because who was requesting the records, and that the two requests are not comparable.

The first request was charged under one section of the fee resolution, which charges a \$30 flat fee for simple requests that are estimated to take an hour or less of time.

Satcher's request was charged under a different section of the city's fee resolution reserved for more time consuming requests, and charges requestors the actual cost of service and is billed by an hourly rate.

"We don't practice viewpoint or any other kind of discrimination. We haven't, at least in recent memory, had any requestor refuse to work with us on focusing a request, so we haven't had to charge this kind of fee before," Winters wrote in an email. "This issue is not about (the) content of records, but is a relatively straightforward and honest disagreement on the reasonableness of fees and whether the City has discretion to charge fees for a broad and expansive request in this case."

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YOUR HOROSCOPE By Madalyn Aslan

Stars show the kind of day you'll have

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

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR FRIDAY, APRIL 23, 2021: Determined, loving and modest, your steadfast character attracts an array of friends. This year, you prove your professional loyalty but still aspire to move up the ladder. Take that extra step and volunteer when needed. You will be noticed. Adhering to a budget provides extra funds when vacation time rolls around. If single, your soul mate could be within reach. If attached, romance is alive and well. LIBRA keeps the peace.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★ Teamwork leads to the completion of a time-consuming project. Begin a daily fitness routine. It could include going to the gym, running, bicycling or hiking. You will be energized and ready to conquer the world. Tonight: Do what makes you laugh.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★ Romantic thoughts make you impatient for the weekend to arrive. Plan an overnight where you can enjoy the outdoors. If that special someone is not in the picture, go with a friend who makes you feel good about yourself. Tonight: Aromatherapy.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★ Make an executive decision for your family. Discuss it afterward rather than the other way around. Sometimes you can't wait for the tribe to gather. Smooth things over if people disagree. They will ultimately stand behind you. Tonight: Gather with friends.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ Connect with siblings or relatives you haven't heard from lately. Arrange a visit sooner rather than later. Submit a piece you wrote to a publication or post it on social media. Take out anything that could be offensive. Tonight: Record a series.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ Be proud that you stuck to a budget and have extra cash to burn. Upgrade a device or buy a new one. Bring someone along who is savvy about new models and can help you get started. Tonight: Culinary delights.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★ Veer from your usual routine. Take a detour and pass by surroundings you don't usually view. Something captivating might catch your eye and will make you return to that location. Tonight: Prank someone who has a sense of humor.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ Don't feel guilty if you want to be alone with your own thoughts. Get them off your chest. Jot them down in a journal. Take a long walk. Sort out what is bothering you on your own terms. Tonight: Movie night.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★ Something you said to a friend could have been taken the wrong way. Take the high road and get ahead of lingering arguments. Apologize even if you were not at fault and move on. Tonight: Experiment with spicy ingredients.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★ Join a new team for a start-up project. Challenge yourself to go beyond your skill set. An intriguing message from a former boss or co-worker arouses your interest. Keep trying to connect if your lines cross. Tonight: Satisfy your sweet tooth.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★ You are always on the lookout for new learning experiences. Something could catch your eye that involves a structured program with tests and papers. Talk it over with family since you will need their support. Tonight: Accept a dinner invitation.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★ You will resolve a problem you've been working on nonstop. Get unserious and take your mind off of a pressure-filled week. Take a dance or Zumba class. The key is to think less and move more. Tonight: Catch up on email.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ Breathe a sigh of relief. You supported a close friend through a potential crisis. Remember that when you need the favor returned. A compliment comes from someone you didn't think noticed you. Keep doing what you've been doing. Tonight: Bubble bath.

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