

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 have a grandson (25) and granddaughter (22) who are both extremely overweight (300 pounds each). They not only have health issues, but also mental issues. Both work part time at the same company as their mom and dad — and still live at home. They don't date, don't drive and are very dependent on their parents because their parents encourage it. My granddaughter is being treated with meds; my grandson is not.

I'm very close to him, and he shares a lot with me. He has issues with both of his parents, but more so with his mom. They were raised in a VERY Christian home. There were always weight issues for the entire family because they eat most of their meals out and the house resembles a "Hoarders" home.

I have tried talking with my son and his wife but they have a convenient excuse for everything I bring up. During my last conversation with my grandson, he was so unhappy he mentioned suicide. PLEASE can you help me? — *Distraught Grandma in Texas*

Dear Grandma: Do your son and his wife know their son is depressed to the point of talking about suicide? If they are unaware, put them on notice. While you're at it, give him the number of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, 1-800-273-8255.

Because you have already tried talking to his parents and found them unresponsive, would you consider inviting your grandson to live with you for a while? It would be a way of teaching him healthier eating habits, and if he needs medication, you might be able to see that his doc-

tor prescribes it. Living apart from his parents might also be an incentive for him to become more independent in other ways.

Dear Abby: There is a trend happening these days. Young people live together for several years, get pregnant and go to the justice of the peace to get legally married. Then, a year or more later, they sometimes decide to have a formal wedding ceremony. Friends throw them a shower, and the wedding is often elaborate.

I thought a shower gift or wedding gift was to help the new couple to get their household set up. These couples already have everything in their house. I feel this is a slap in the face of tradition. What are your thoughts?

— *Old-Fashioned*

Dear Old-Fashioned: Yes, it's a break with tradition.

These changes have occurred because of changes in social mores, the economy and gender roles. The tradition used to involve a young woman going directly from her parents' house to that of her husband.

More recently, young people have postponed marriage, established themselves in the workplace and achieved economic independence before coupling up. This is a positive step because if the marriage fails or the spouse dies, the widowed spouse isn't left without the tools to support themselves and their family.

While you may think the couple "already has everything they need," take a peek at their bridal registry because it may be an eye-opener. And remember, if you cannot celebrate happily with the couple, no rule of etiquette dictates that you must attend the wedding.

MIXED MARTIAL ARTS

Olympic medalist, boxing champ Shields to make PFL debut

BY DAN GELSTON
Associated Press

Claressa Shields has narrowed her walkout music for her MMA debut down to three songs. She needs a tune she can dance to on the way to the cage, though the gold gladiator costume and her customary entrance theatrics will be left behind with her boxing gloves.

"I actually need to make more TikTok videos," she said, laughing. "I dance all the time. At the gym. In between rounds of sparring. I'm always doing some kind of dancing. When I walk out and I'm dancing and singing, that's how I feel calm. I can't walk out all serious."

Her mood switched inside the boxing ring. Shields was fierce, focused, and carried that Flint, Michigan chip with her all the way to two Olympic gold medals and championships in three professional weight classes.

She was undefeated, unchallenged and conquered boxing as the self-proclaimed GWOAT. Yes, the Greatest Woman Of All Time.

On Thursday, the 26-year-old Shields begins another attempt at greatness — just six months after she started mixed martial arts training — when she makes her pro debut in a 155-pound fight against Brittny Elkin in the Professional Fighters League.

Shields says bring on the haters who doubt her skills will translate to MMA.

"What if your MMA debut goes all wrong and you lose? How are you going to feel," she says, mocking some reporters' questions. "Why would you ask me something stupid like that? Who thinks about losing?"

Certainly not Shields, who went 11-0 over five years and became the fastest fighter in boxing history — male or female — to become a three-division world champion. She took time out of her boxing prime and trained with former UFC champions Jon Jones and Holly Holm, most of her days since December were spent at the Jackson Wink MMA Academy in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

"I let the coaches know right off the bat, I'm an aggressive



Carlos Osorio/AP file

Claressa Shields, left, hits Marie-Eve Dicaire with a left during the fifth round of a boxing bout for the women's super welterweight title in Flint, Michigan, in March. Shields makes her pro debut for Professional Fighters League on Thursday night in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

person," she said in an interview with The Associated Press. "Whatever somebody dishes at me, I can dish it back and I can take it. Once they realized that, it was a game changer for us in camp."

She knew how to use her hands and mostly used pads to work on her kicks. She learned the intricacies of MMA, like how to defend, get off the cage and rebound from takedowns. Hitting the mat isn't necessarily the death knell it can be in boxing, and Shields had developed her own specific techniques to stand back up from the often inevitable ground fighting.

"I just had to get comfortable with being there," she said. "One I got comfortable being there, it was no longer a fear of being taken down. I know how to get up."

Make no mistake, Shields has not quit boxing and still has challengers she'd like to fight. She wants a rematch with middleweight champion Savannah Marshall, the last person to beat her in an amateur bout in 2012. Shields defeated Franchón Crews-Dezurn in her pro debut in 2016 but wants another bout now that the French fighter holds the super middleweight crown.

Beyond that, not much else appeals to Shields.

"What would be the difference between being a 12-time world champ and a 20-time world champ in women's boxing? It's nothing," she said. "It's no different. I was already at the cap of where I could make money. I was at the cap of what the networks would give me, what they would allow."

"Where's my pay-per-view opportunity? Where is my \$1 million payday? Women's boxing doesn't give you the opportunity."

Shields saved her money but never commanded even a high six-figure payout for a title fight — she says she never made more than \$350,000 for one fight, a professional pittance to the kind of cash earned on the men's side by, say, a YouTuber in an exhibition bout.

Over the past decade MMA has been much kinder to women earning main event spots and richer paydays. Kayla Harrison, a two-time Olympic judo gold medalist, has emerged as the face of PFL and has a 9-0 record. Ronda Rousey, Amanda Nunes, and Rose Namajunas are among the women that blossomed into main event stars in UFC, with popularity and pay that rivaled or surpassed many male fighters.

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— **Claressa Shields**

Shields said she's already reaped the benefits of the MMA jump, including an endorsement deal with a major headphone company and got an all-access docu-series on ESPN+. She also signed for acting roles in two upcoming movies and is involved in a planned movie about her life that has been delayed by the pandemic.

"I haven't even fought yet and all this stuff is coming to me," she said. "And there's going to be more the more successful I am. When you're successful, people want to invest in you."

The PFL opportunity includes a main event spot in Atlantic City, New Jersey against Elkin (3-6) on the ESPN2 main card that starts at 10 p.m. EDT.

"It's going to be awesome for my personal experience and journey," Elkin said. "I've been fighting for 12 years and this is definitely the biggest match I've been in."

Shields hoped to have one more MMA fight in August and wants to "squeeze in" two boxing matches this year before deciding if she'll attempt to win the PFL title in 2022.

YOUR HOROSCOPE *By Georgia Nicols*

Stars show the kind of day you'll have

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

MOON ALERT: Caution! Avoid shopping or making important decisions after 10:30 a.m. Pacific. The Moon is in Gemini.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR THURSDAY, JUNE 10, 2021: You are mentally sharp and creative, and you love music. You are independent and persistent. You are also generous. You are entering a busy, fast-paced year full of many different kinds of activities. You will enjoy the company of others and vice versa. You might join forces with someone you have not seen in a while.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★ This is a confusing day, so don't beat yourself up if you feel lazy or you want to spend a lot of time daydreaming. Nevertheless, jot down any creative ideas that you might have, because you can think outside the box today. Einstein said, "Imagination is more important than knowledge." Tonight: An intense conversation.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ Everything to do with finances, shopping and earning money is subject to confusion today. Therefore, tread carefully! Postpone important financial decisions. Do not shop except for food or gas. (See above.) Tonight: Money discussions.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★ The Moon is still in your sign today, but now it's at odds with fuzzy Neptune, which will encourage daydreams. This is why it's a poor day to make important decisions. (Use caution against things that cloud your judgment.) Tonight: You need to talk.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ Today you might seek a dreamy escape because you want to "get away from all this." This is a poor day to embark on something new that requires clear thinking. It's also a poor day to make important decisions. But you will be interested in studying supernatural phenomena or secrets. Tonight: Dig deep.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★ A conversation with a friend might be confusing. For starters, you might idealize this person in an unrealistic way. Or perhaps the conversation between the two of you will be like two ships passing in the night. Many interactions are confusing today. (Yikes!) Tonight: Keep things light.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★ Conversations with partners and close friends, as well as bosses and parents, are subject to misunderstandings today. Your best defense is to clarify anything that's important. Make sure others know what you are saying. Make sure you know what they are saying. Tonight: Listen carefully.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ You might be interested in ancient subjects, philosophies and fables, especially stories that hearken back to the times of Arthur and Merlin. Today your curiosity is aroused because you are more sensitive to everything around you, which puts a new possibility on everything. Tonight: Enjoy fantasies.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★ Although you might be focused on shared property, taxes, debt and insurance matters or anything that you hold jointly with someone else, this is a poor day to make decisions regarding these matters. For one thing, most of this day is a Moon Alert; in addition to which, it's a foggy day all day anyhow. Oy! Tonight: A passionate discussion.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★ Be extra clear in all your communications with family members and partners, because there's a lot of room for confusion today. If you feel offended by what someone says, wait a minute, because you can probably chalk this up to a confused communication. Tonight: Busy conversation.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★ It's important to know that information concerning your health might be mistaken today or confused. Therefore, this is the classic time to get a second opinion on another day. You also might have an issue with a pet, particularly with poison or food that is bad. Tonight: Get organized.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★ You will spend a lot of time daydreaming today; however, for those who work in the arts, some of these daydreams might be creative possibilities. Make notes, but don't act on them today during the Moon Alert. Parents should know where their children are. Tonight: Be creative.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★ A family conversation could be confusing today, especially if substance abuse is involved. Or perhaps you will resort to some childhood attitudes, which ultimately will mislead you. This can happen. Hey, you're an adult now. Tonight: Family discussions.

NCAA

Continued from A5

Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.), who has sponsored with Booker the sweeping College Athlete Bill of Rights, said he would block any federal NIL bill that is less permissive than Connecticut's.

"We need to listen to the athletes," Blumenthal said. "They are the ones who are all too frequently outnumbered in this conversation."

There were no athletes among the witnesses who testified at the fifth NIL-related hearing in Congress over the past year, but chairwoman Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.) said there was a plan to hear from a panel of athletes in the future.

College sports leaders have warned a patchwork of state laws will make it impossible for schools that compete against each other to do so on a level playing field.

"The impact would be enormous," Gonzaga men's basketball coach Mark Few told the committee. "You'd be at a huge competitive disadvantage, both when student-athletes are coming out of high school and when they have the opportunity to transfer."

Sen. Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.) scolded Emmert and the NCAA for not taking care of the NIL issue sooner.

"This is why the states have taken it upon themselves to do what the NCAA has proven incapable of doing," said Blackburn, who also took direct aim at Emmert. "Don't you think it is time to call your leadership of the organization into question?"

Emmert said that was a question for the university leaders who sit on the NCAA Board of Governors. The board approved a contract extension for Emmert in April.

Emmert reiterated the NCAA wants a national NIL law that would preempt state

laws, keep college athletes from being employees of their schools and provide limited antitrust protection from future litigation.

The NCAA's NIL proposal would place so-called guardrails around deals athletes could make to protect against third-party payments being used as recruiting inducements or pay-for-play.

Most of the state laws that have been passed also place some limitations on the types of NIL deals athletes can do.

ESPN college football analyst and former Stanford football player Rod Gilmore, who also holds a law degree, said guardrails benefit the NCAA more than athletes.

"Players have been treated like second-class citizens," he said.

Sen. Ben Ray Lujan (D-N.M.) ended the hearing by asking each of the panelists if they thought college athletes should be able to profit from their names, images and likenesses.

After each answered, yes, Lujan asked: "So why is this taking so long?"

What's next?

Sen. Chris Murphy (D-Conn.), who did not participate in the hearing, is one of the most vocal critics of the NCAA in Washington. He agrees with Booker that college sports needs broad reform, not just an NIL law. Murphy and Rep. Lori Trahan (D-Mass.) recently introduced a bill that if passed would allow college athletes to organize and collectively.

Murphy said complicating this issue in Congress is overlapping jurisdiction. The judiciary and education committees can also weigh in. He said a solution is not coming as quickly as the NCAA would like.

"I can make an educated guess that there is no way something's passing by August," said Murphy, who has put forth one of six NIL-related bills that have been introduced in the House and Senate since December.

"The NCAA's argument is that the sky's going to fall if all these state laws become operative," Murphy said. "Why not test that theory? Why not let these state laws come on the books and see if the result is a nasty, hard-to-manage competitive imbalance?"

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