



SENSE & SENSITIVITY

By Harriette Cole

In-Office Worker Wants A Raise

DEAR HARRIETTE: I started my current job during the COVID-19 pandemic, and at that time, everyone was working from home. This year, my employer has asked that we all begin working in the office again full-time. I live over an hour away from the office, and the commute is excessive. The cost of gas continues to rise, but my salary has not changed. My supervisor is usually accommodating, but the company as a whole has suffered a bit in terms of sales revenue this year. I want to ask for a raise, or at least to be compensated for my gas now that a commute is required, but am I being insensitive to the company's current state? -- Need a Raise

DEAR NEED A RAISE: This may not be the best time to make your pitch, but you, too, are suffering. You can always ask. Request a private meeting with your supervisor, ask if it is possible for you to have a gas allowance. Make sure you go in with facts: Calculate how much you'll be spending weekly on gas, and ask for a stipend to cover that amount. That type of request will likely be more welcome than asking for a raise at this time, but if other team members are also commuting long distances, your pitch may not work. Another option might be to ask for a hybrid arrangement where you work from home a couple of days each week. To help your case, remind your boss of the ways in which you support the team and go beyond expectations whenever asked.

DEAR HARRIETTE: My daughter's childhood babysitter has stayed in touch with the family over the years, though we haven't talked recently. While she was working with our family and long after, she really considered my daughter to be like her own flesh and blood. My daughter is getting married next year, and I'm sure her former babysitter will expect to be invited to the wedding. When my daughter was graduating from middle school, we made the mistake of not inviting this person to any of the celebrations, and she was crushed. I don't want to forget her again. The caveat is that my daughter and her fiancé are planning a destination wedding in another country. I don't believe our former babysitter is able to afford such a large trip. Should I pay to accommodate her travel so that she can participate? -- Part of the Family

DEAR PART OF THE FAMILY: By all means, you should invite the former babysitter to your daughter's wedding. If you can afford it, offer to pay for her travel and accommodations. If your budget allows for only partial coverage, let her know what you can take on to offset her expenses. If you can't cover anything, be honest about it, but still invite her. Also, be sure to include her in any local pre-wedding celebrations, such as an engagement party, bridal shower, etc. You may even consider planning a gathering where the babysitter can meet your daughter's fiancé.

People who play the roles of taking care of children are special. They treat our children like precious angels, and we should do anything we can to honor them.

(Harriette Cole is a lifestyle list and founder of DREAMLEAPERS, an initiative to help people access and activate their dreams. You can send questions to askharriette@harriettecole.com or c/o Andrews McMeel Syndication, 1130 Walnut St., Kansas City, MO 64106.)

Writers' Group Forming

Have you ever thought about writing a story, a poem, a family history for your grandchildren, maybe even a book? Writing is something some people enjoy while others are intimidated, but many people are interested in writing it down, in some form or another. Sometimes, you just need a place to begin, other people to hear your ideas and an encouraging

atmosphere where you can share your efforts. Or, if you are already a writer, perhaps you would enjoy gathering with likeminded people to discuss what you are working on and where you're going next.

This is not intended to be a "how-to" group, but rather a creative and encouraging environment where you can express yourself and get started or

keep going. Later on, if we need them, we can find resources to help us, perhaps as guest speakers, but for now, we'd just like to see if there is any interest in getting together to explore possibilities and have fun.

Please join us on Monday, July 28 at 3:30 p.m. at Your Forte, 415 Chestnut Street. We hope to meet monthly. There is no charge. Bring along some-

thing you're working on or just bring your curiosity. Coffee and snacks will be provided. If this date does not work for you, but you'd like to participate in the future, just let us know and we will add you to the interest list.

For more information, contact Glenda at 712-249-0749 or Your Forte 243-2074.

News Notes

What to do if your home is damaged in a storm



Natural disasters and severe storms can leave a trail of devastation in their wake. When such events occur, people are left to pick up the pieces, and that may involve assessing damage to their homes.

The aftermath of a storm is a difficult time for individuals whose homes were damaged or lost. Knowing what to do in the aftermath of a storm that damaged or destroyed their homes can start victims on the road to recovery that much sooner.

- Check to confirm everyone is alright. The first step anyone can take after their home is damaged is to confirm everyone is safe. That includes residents of the home as well as neighbors. Check to ensure elderly residents and neighbors or those with mobility issues made it through the storm safely. A 2011 study published in the journal Medical Anthropology found that the greatest mortality during and immediately after Hurricane Katrina in 2005 was among the elderly. The study noted individuals over age 60 accounted for 75 percent of the bodies found immediately after the storm.

- Assess and document the damage. Once everyone is safe, assess the damage from a reasonable distance. It's necessary to keep your distance because the property may still be vulnerable to further damage, including collapse. If it's safe to do so, you can then begin to document the damage, utilizing a smartphone to take photos and videos of the property. If it's safe to enter the property, take as many photos and videos of the interior of the home as possible, making sure to upload them to cloud storage soon thereafter. Photos and videos taken immediately after a storm can facilitate the claims process with your insurance provider.

- Contact your insurance provider. If conditions allowed for safe assessment and documentation of the damage, contact your insurance provider to report it and begin the claims process. Chances are many others will be contacting the same provider, so it's best to begin the claims process as soon as possible. It also helps to recognize patience will be necessary. Many insurance providers now allow policy holders to file claims through apps on their mobile phones, and doing so can be in-

valuable if tablets, laptops and other devices were damaged or destroyed during the storm.

- Ask your provider what you can do. Insurance policies may only cover damage that occurred during the storm. Post-storm damage, such as water issues that arise because windows or doors were damaged during the storm, may not be covered. That's why it's a good idea for homeowners and others to call their insurance providers and ask what to do to prevent further, potentially uncovered damage.

- Recognize criminals pose a new threat. The Federal Emergency Management Agency encourages survivors to be cognizant of fraudulent schemes that often arise in the aftermath of a storm. Examples of scams include housing inspectors claiming to represent FEMA, fake offers of local or federal aid and fraudulent building contractors. Always ask for identification and do not work with anyone asking for cash in return for assistance.

100th Birthday Bash



A 100th Birthday Bash will be held for Thelma Loree Carlisle Hamilton on July 12 from 2 to 5 p.m. at the Oakland Community Center. Hamilton is originally from Elliott and worked at the ASCS office for 40 years.



Do Just One Thing

Forgot your reusable coffee thermos, so you grabbed a paper cup instead? It happens! But is it OK to reuse that paper cup? Turns out, it's not. Single-use paper cups are designed for just one use. They're lined with a thin layer of plastic -- typically polyethylene -- which can begin to break down each time it comes into contact with hot liquids. This breakdown may lead to microplastics and chemicals leaching into your

drink. Additionally, the cup itself weakens with each use, increasing the risk of leaks by the second or third time you pour in a hot beverage.

Your ad could be here!

Call us at 243-2624 for more details!

Keast Daylily Gardens

Open Gardens July 4th to July 19th
9am to 2pm daily

Free daylily to each garden visitor

412 S. Parker Rd Oakland, IA
www.keastdaylilygardens.com

Call 712-355-1393 for other dates and times

Legal Notice

Notice of Public Hearing

Notice is hereby given that the Southwest Iowa Planning Council (SWIPCO) located at 1501 SW 7th Street, Atlantic, IA will hold a public hearing. The hearing is at 1:30 PM at **1501 SW 7th Street, Atlantic, IA 50022** on Thursday July 24, 2025. The purpose of this hearing is to discuss the following proposed fare increases:

Student fares- \$.25 fare increase to \$1.75
Taxi fare- \$.50 fare increase to \$2.50 or \$3
Medical trips--\$ 5.00 per hour increase to \$35/hr
Special trips--\$5.00 per hour increase to \$45/hr
Charter trips---\$20.00 per hour increase to \$75/hr

This proposal will not have a significant detrimental environmental effect on the area and no persons or business will be displaced by these activities. The projects are in conformance with the Transportation Improvement Program prepared by SWIPCO.

Any interested person or agency is invited to attend this hearing and speak for or against these proposed fare increases. Written comments will be accepted at the above address through the date and time of the hearing specified above. For additional information call Mark Lander Transit Director at 712-243-4196 between 7am to 4pm , M-F. **If you need further assistance to participate in this public hearing then please inform SWIPCO 72 hours in advance of the meeting so accommodations can be made.*