

## Mom is on the hook for estranged son's college loan

**DEAR ABBY:** My son took out a couple of education loans, which I cosigned when he was starting college 10 years ago. A couple of years ago, I found out (from someone else) that he never finished college. When I confronted him, he mentioned that he "intends" to finish college and is working toward it. He did not mention how many credits he has completed, what made him quit or why he didn't consult me before dropping out. Shortly after that conversation, he stopped talking to or visiting me for a different reason. We haven't seen each other in two years.

Recently, I received a notice from a debt collector regarding the loan. I tried to contact my son to figure out what he plans to do about the payments, but to no avail. He has always had terrible money habits. Until he stopped talking to me, he relied on me to rescue him whenever he got into money trouble. I had to pay off another of his education loans when he started defaulting a few years back.

Because of all of this, he owes me a significant amount of money. I am at an age where



**Dear Abby**  
Abigail Van Buren

it is important that I build a retirement fund. If I have to pay off this loan, it will put a big dent into my savings. A few people have recommended I take legal action against him. I am, however, reluctant to do so for fear of severing my relationship with him forever. Is there a less aggressive way to have him take accountability for this loan?

-- MOM ON THE HOOK

**DEAR MOM:** Face it, Mom. The son you have bailed out repeatedly is a deadbeat. He is avoiding you because he has no intention of paying back the money for which you so caringly cosigned 10 years ago. Contact an attorney and see what your options may be. Doing that is not aggressive or punitive. It may give you a road map to pull yourself out of this hole.

**DEAR ABBY:** I recently

saw a TV commercial in which a family of four was sitting at a table in a restaurant. The two kids were watching their parents text on their phones instead of socializing with each other and making pleasant conversation. It made me furious. Why? I was taught that it's disrespectful not to give people your exclusive, undivided attention and that there is a time and a place for everything. I think it's one of the reasons why so many people today lack appropriate social skills. Do you agree?

-- PRESENT IN RHODE ISLAND

**DEAR PRESENT:** I agree with you 100%. What you saw in that commercial was a textbook example of lazy parenting. You cannot teach young people communication skills without modeling them. This has been a subject of concern for educators and behavioral specialists for at least 30 years. The result has been two generations of adults who have trouble making eye contact when trying to relate with others.

### HOUSEHOLD ADVICE

## Opening pill bottles with ease



**Hints from Heloise**  
Heloise

**Dear Heloise:** If you can't get the cap off a pill bottle on the first time, use something like a dull knife blade or a bottle cap opener to pry out the plastic insert inside the cap, and then replace the cap on the bottle. It's much easier to open.

-- Christa, in Huntingdon, Pennsylvania

Christa, if you ask the pharmacy, they'll remove childproof caps and put the easy-to-open caps on your pill bottles. Please, readers, keep all medications where children can't reach them. Over the years, we've heard too many sad tales of youngsters who get their hands on medication that looks like candy to them.

-- Heloise

### ADDRESS LABEL IN CARDS

**Dear Heloise:** When I take a card to a funeral or shower, I put a small return address label in the inside corner of the card somewhere. If the person wants to respond with a "thank you," they don't have to look up my address. When my late husband died, those who did this made it much easier for me to respond back to them.

-- Linda S., in Huntington Beach, California

### LOST AND FOUND

**Dear Heloise:** I love to golf, and in many clubhouses, they are golf clubs in the lost and found. But if all golfers put one of their return address labels (for envelopes) at the top of the club near the grip or on the bottom by the head of the club (in the back so that you don't see it in your swing setup), then people in the clubhouse could track them down and get the clubs back to them.

-- Paul D., in St. Louis

Paul, golf clubs are expensive, so I imagine getting a golf club to an avid golfer would be important. I liked your idea for another use of address labels.

-- Heloise

### DISH TOWEL WISDOM

**Dear Heloise:** I use a sensible kitchen towel guideline that my helpful mother-in-law taught me years ago: Use two separate towels! Use thirsty cotton terry cloth or gauze towels for hands and counters. Use white cotton flour-sack cloths only for dish drying. Do not mix! It's very clean and sanitary.

-- Patty M., in Glen Allen, Virginia

### SUDOKU

#### Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle.

4		7	1		5			
2	5							8
				3				
		8		2		5		
				7		6	1	3
1								
5								9
6	4				7			
				3	8			1

Level: Advanced

1	9	4	8	3	5	2	6	7
2	5	8	7	1	6	3	4	9
6	7	3	2	9	4	1	8	5
7	8	2	6	5	3	4	9	1
3	1	9	4	7	8	5	2	6
4	6	5	1	2	9	8	7	3
5	4	7	3	6	2	9	1	8
8	3	1	9	4	7	6	5	2
2	6	9	5	8	1	7	3	4

### CROSSWORD

#### NEA Crossword Puzzle

- ACROSS**
- 1 Eat late
  - 4 Soft drinks state
  - 9 Deli order
  - 12 Climbing plant
  - 13 Flavoring used in cordials
  - 14 Regret
  - 15 — Lingus
  - 16 Entice
  - 17 — Arbor, Michigan
  - 18 Renowned conductor
  - 20 "Last — in Paris"
  - 22 Certain vote
  - 23 Auto part
  - 24 Peak
  - 26 Trumpet sound
  - 28 Charge for service
  - 29 Mojito liquor
  - 30 Traveled
  - 34 Something assigned
  - 36 Common verb
  - 37 Fib
  - 38 "The — Gun"
  - 40 Phi — Kappa

- DOWN**
- 1 "The King and I" setting
  - 2 Eye part
  - 3 European mountain range
  - 4 Malicious thing
  - 6 Stretched car
  - 7 Venomous snake
  - 41 Striation
  - 44 Spigot
  - 45 Uncertain state
  - 46 Certain sibling
  - 50 "The — of Aquarius"
  - 51 Merchandise
  - 53 Altar constellation
  - 54 Canine
  - 55 Bring down
  - 56 — de plume
  - 57 Stat. in baseball
  - 58 Caffe —
  - 59 Recipe meas.

#### Answer to Previous Puzzle

H	U	M		M	O	S	S		R	A	R	A
A	N	Y		I	D	E	A		E	L	A	N
I	T	S		S	D	A	K		C	E	N	T
L	O	T	U	S		E	J	E	C	T	S	
		I	N	A		R	E	D				
D	E	F	I	L	E	D		F	E	R	A	L
A	R	I		L	E	A	F		A	G	E	
T	I	E		S	K	E	W		T	U	N	
E	N	D	U	P		R	E	P	U	T	E	D
			R	I	O				U	R	L	
D	E	I	G	N	S			S	N	E	A	K
A	P	S	E		C	A	S	H		O	R	E
R	E	T	I	N		A	L	O	E		F	I
T	E	S	T			R	I	N	D		F	A

1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8		9	10	11
				13							14	
				16							17	
			19				20	21				
		22				23						
	24	25			26	27						
				29				30	31	32	33	
			35							37		
			38	39						40		
								44				
											48	49
				51	52						53	
											56	
												59

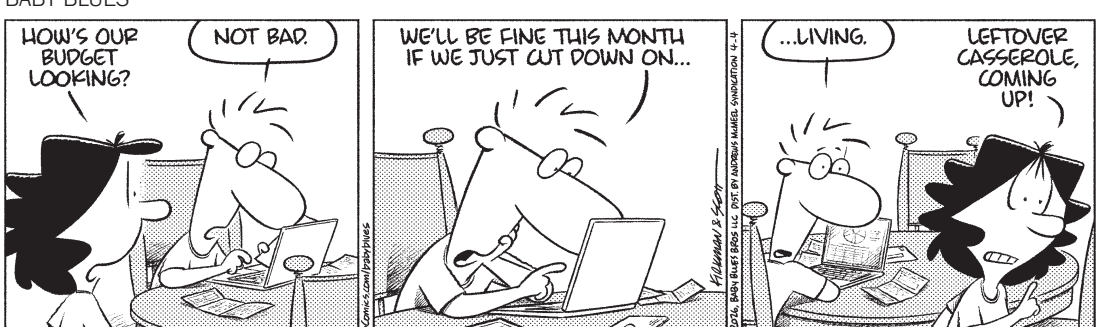
1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8		9	10	11
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	24	25			26	27						
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			35							37		
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				51	52						53	
											56	
												59

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### DUSTIN



### BABY BLUES



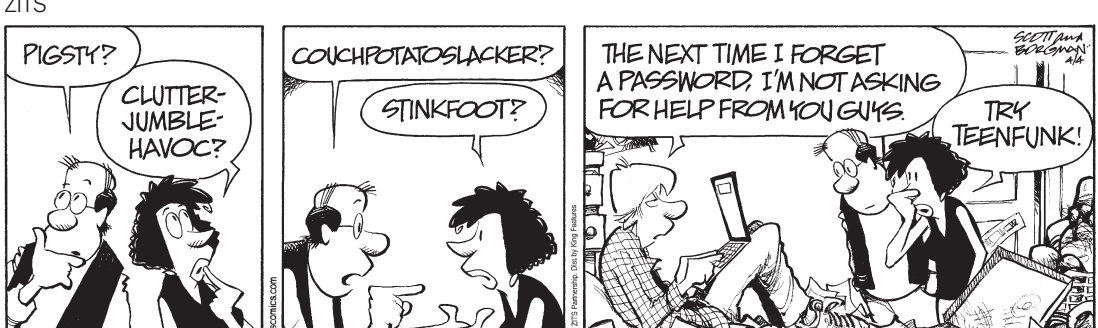
### RHYMES WITH ORANGE



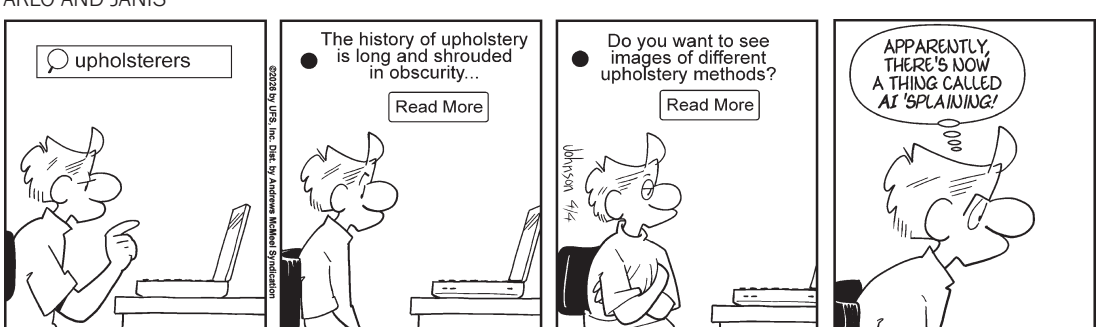
### CRANKSHAFT



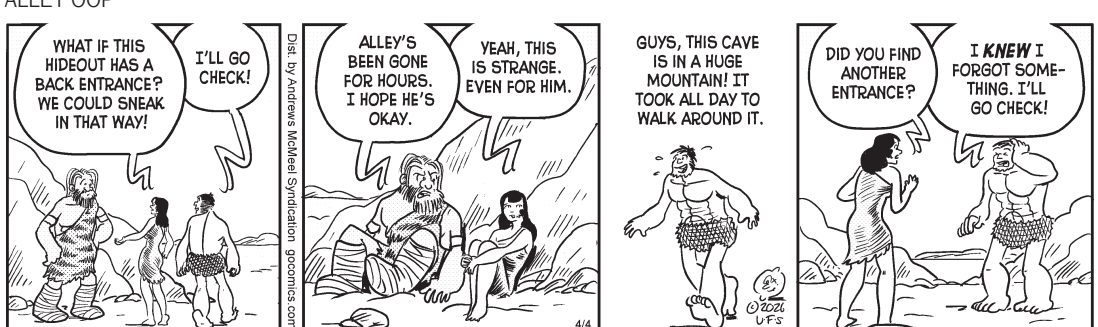
### ZITS



### ARLO AND JANIS



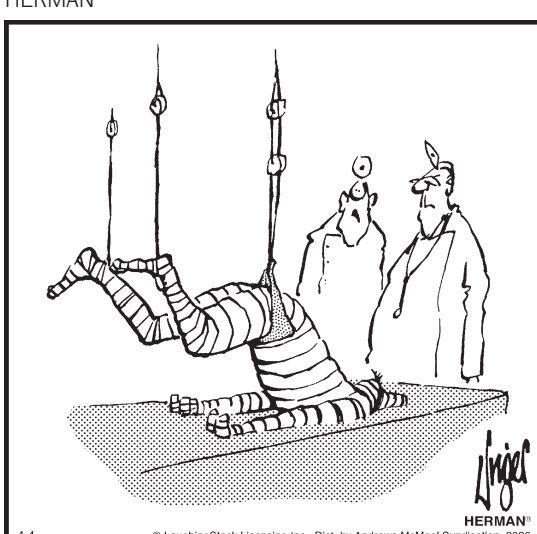
### ALLEY OOP



### FRANK & ERNEST

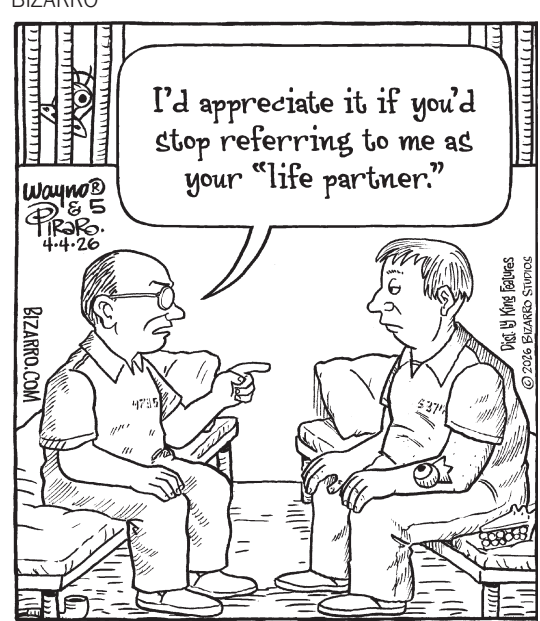


### HERMAN



"He says bullfighting is the only thing he's good at."

### BIZARRO



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