

COLUMNIST | LAURETTA HANNON

Buckle your seatbelt

EMPATHY WITH AN EDGE

Not your granny's advice column

Q: My mother-in-law is an obsession I cannot get past. I find myself blaming her for where I am because of the way she raised my husband. She has spent his whole life making him "perfect," holding him accountable for nothing, making up things that he does not do, and making excuses for his mistakes. In my opinion they have an odd, unhealthy relationship. He even limps like her when he comes home from visits at her house. Needless to say, as a result of all this, we are mostly living as roommates and not husband and wife.



Hannon

A: Your question cries out for some tough love from this columnist, so buckle your seatbelt.

♦ Where you are has zilch to do with your mother-in-law. You are the sole owner of your situation. There should be no transfer of blame.

♦ You state that she holds him "accountable for nothing," just as you abdicate any responsibility for your own marital problems. You and your mother-in-law have a lot in common when it comes to making excuses and taking the cop-out.

♦ Regarding the odd nature of their relationship, it was you who made the decision to wed Norman Bates.

♦ Finally, you're living like roommates because you both have a heap of work to do in the marriage. The mother-in-law might be an ancillary influence, but the core issues rest with you and your spouse. You're miserable and ascribing the fault where it does not belong. That makes for a truly dreadful, helpless-feeling existence. I hope you'll have the courage to admit. But first you'll have to admit that you possess the choices and the power.

Despite my sharp response, my heart goes out to you. I'd bet that you've been collecting unresolved hurts since the beginning of your life, long before the marriage. And I fear this has been your habit of being. Your mind is in static mode. You give your attention to distractions, and this holds you in a state of self-deception. Life will be so much sweeter if you'll begin to take risks in the direction of growth.

Q: I would very much like your take on the super-loud music that some people play in their cars. The music coming from the inside of their vehicles is so loud it disturbs everyone around them. The other day I was in my vehicle, and someone pulled up behind me. The music was so loud you couldn't even hear a thing if you needed to. Who are these people and why do they do such a thing?

A: I haven't the foggiest idea of the reasons other than the obvious ones: they are attention seekers, and they are making a statement (albeit one that indicates rudeness, obnoxiousness, and tragically poor taste in music).

On a serious note, these individuals actually suffer from a little-known condition that afflicts millions. This disease is called ABE. In layman's terms it means that they just "Ain't Been Taught" any better. Bless their hearts—and their ears. Invest now in the hearing aid business, as they'll be a boon to that industry later down the road.

As to who the folks are, refer to the above paragraph and draw your own conclusions. In the meantime, here's a tip from Comedian Sinbad: when the bass-thumpers pull up near your vehicle, ignore them completely. They desperately want to get a rise out of you. Don't ever let 'em see your hackles.

Send your questions and comments to notyourgrannysadvice@gmail.com. Laretta Hannon, a resident of Powder Springs, is the bestselling author of *The Cracker Queen—A Memoir of a Jagged, Joyful Life* and a keynote speaker. Southern Living has named her "the funniest woman in Georgia." See more at thecrackerqueen.com.

ENTERTAINMENT | 'TARZAN'



Pebblebrook High School's performing arts student James Fobes, who is co-starring in the lead role of the man-ape in 'Tarzan,' performs with his fellow students during a dress rehearsal Monday. 'Tarzan' opens tonight at 8 p.m. at the Jennie T. Anderson Theater at the Cobb Civic Center. / Staff/Kelly J. Huff



Above: Pebblebrook High School's performing arts students Cansler McGhee, who is co-starring in the lead role of the man-ape Tarzan, swings away with Jane, played by fellow student Jordan Wilkes, in the school's production of the Disney classic Tarzan. **Below:** Commodore Primous, as Terk, leads the Pebblebrook High School cast in the opening number of 'Tarzan.'



'Tarzan' swinging to stage

Pebblebrook brings Disney musical to life

From staff reports

The Cobb County Center for Excellence in the Performing Arts at Pebblebrook High School plans to have audiences going wild for "Tarzan," the stage musical based on the Disney film, today through Sunday at Jennie T. Anderson Theatre at the Cobb Civic Center. Shows will be today, Friday and Saturday at 8 p.m. and Sunday at 3 p.m.

Washed up on the shores of West Africa, an infant boy is taken in and raised by gorillas who name him Tarzan. Apart from striving for acceptance from his ape father, Tarzan's life is mostly monkey business until a human expedition treks into his tribe's territory and he encounters creatures like himself for the first time. Tarzan struggles to navigate a jungle, thick with emotion as he discovers his animal upbringing clashing with his human instincts. The show is appropriate for all ages.

The talented cast includes more than 50 students at Pebblebrook who are part of the performing arts magnet program. The cast includes James Fobes and Cansler McGhee both as Tarzan, Jake Kessloff as young Tarzan, Jordan Wilkes as Jane, Kristian Hamilton as Kerchak, Lalique Nelson as Kala, Commodore Primous as Terk, Noah Schindler as Clayton, Matthew Welch as Proctor, Joey Merindino as father and Alexandria McMath as mother.

The Cobb County Center for Excellence in the Performing Arts at Pebblebrook High School is a premier training program for future Broadway stars.

Tickets are \$20 if purchased through the Jennie T. Anderson box office and \$26 through Ticketmaster. To purchase tickets at the Anderson Theatre box office, call (770) 528-8490.

COLUMNIST | SALLY LITCHFIELD

Chamber dinner attracts star citizens

The Cobb Galleria Centre was all a chatter on Saturday evening for the Cobb Chamber of Commerce 72nd Annual Dinner. People simply don't get enough time to talk—and networking really is what these things are all about. The evening began with a cocktail reception that moved to the ballroom for the evening agenda.



Litchfield

MDJ publisher Otis Brumby III presented the Citizens of the Year Award to Elf on the Shelf creators and gracious award recipients Carol Aebersold, Chanda Bell and Christa Pitts.

Different Cobb Countians who made outstanding contributions to the county and the Cobb Chamber were recognized such as outgoing chair Ben Mathis of Freeman, Mathis, & Gary who turned over the baton of leadership to WellStar's Kim Menefee along with Rob Garcia of Bank of North Georgia who received the Mack

Henderson Public Service Award; Justin O'Dell, of O'Dell and O'Neal Attorneys who received the Chairman's Award; Max Lenker of RaceTrac and Todd Helms of Genuine Parts who received the Len Gilbert Award; Kennesaw State University President, Dr. Dan Papp who received the Leadership Award; and David Connell, president and CEO of the Cobb Chamber who received the Robert A. Lipson Award. Yacht Rock Schooner entertained.

Centerstage North presents Bonneville Love by Ray Fast on Feb. 13 to 28 at the Art Place Mountain View in Marietta.

No matter how bad things may seem, they can always get worse. But love conquers all—if you're clever enough to make it look like an accident. Set in 1967, Bonneville Love is a dark comedy written by local playwright Raymond Fast with tongue in cheek, in a style reminiscent of the period, and is appropriate for the entire family.

The Art Place Mountain View, 3330

Sandy Plains Road, Marietta. For more information and to order tickets, visit www.centerstagenorth.com.

Those living with type 2 diabetes can register today for the YMCA's free diabetes workshop series to help manage challenges like knowing how and when to eat, living your life so you can avoid complications, and getting support from family and friends.

Workshops are open to anyone 18 years and older who is living with type 2 diabetes. The workshop meets once a week for six weeks in small groups at Whole Foods Market, 1311 Johnson Ferry Road, Marietta.

The workshop is Thursdays, beginning Feb. 12 to March 19 from 6:15 to 8:45 p.m.

Sally Litchfield is a longtime Marietta resident. She formerly practiced law in Marietta and now stays home to raise her two children. Send Sally news at sallyl@bellsouth.net. Call Sally at (770) 425-6106.