

## MEDIATE THIS !

## LOSING SLEEP OVER A NIGHT-OWL ROOMMATE'S ROUTINE

BY STEVEN P. DINKIN

## Dear Mediator:

My roommate and I have been good friends for years, and until recently, we got along great. Last fall, she switched careers from an office job to bartending. When she gets home from work around 2:30 a.m., she makes a lot of noise cooking and watching TV. Because our apartment is small, this wakes me up, and it's hard to get back to sleep. I know she's trying to be quiet, but any noise at that hour sounds loud. I'd hate to move out over this, but I might have to.

*Sleepless in Golden Hill*

## Dear Sleepless:

Shift work wreaks havoc with households of all stripes, so the two of you are not alone in grappling with this dilemma.

Finding a new roommate who works regular hours might seem like the easiest solution. But moving from one apartment to another is disruptive. And your next roommate, even if she's someone you know and like, might saddle you with a different set of vexations.

Mathematically, that's a good bet, because irritating roommates come in a multiplicity of varieties.

There are chronic slob and neat freaks, party animals and

moody loners, those who take your stuff without asking, those who accuse you of taking stuff they can't find, those with awful taste in music, and those who don't appreciate your great taste in music.

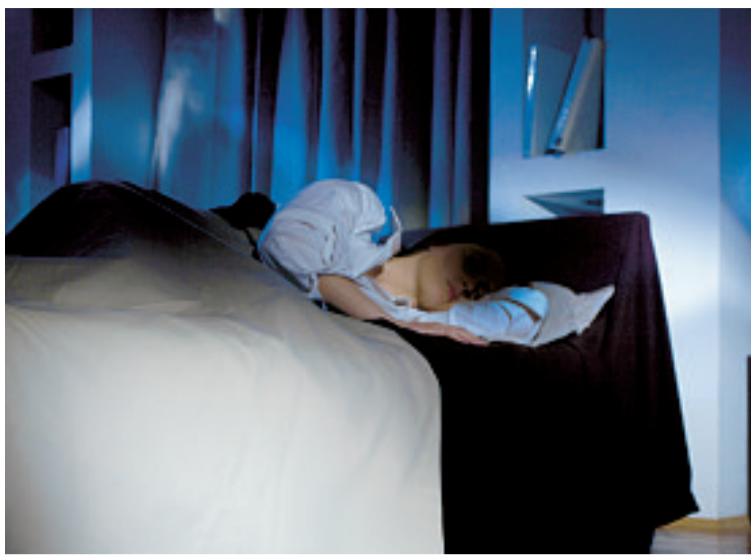
Not to mention roommates with aggressive dogs, peevish cats, pushy friends and romantic partners who pretty much move in.

This prospective roll of the dice is an incentive to resolve your split-shift conflict. But you have another more powerful motivation: a friendship that is genuine and enduring.

Most of the parties we see in mediation are so hostile they couldn't sit next to each other on a bus. You and your roommate are exceptional; you have a strong personal bond. Use it as your platform for constructing a better living arrangement.

Your best tool is the Osborn-Parnes Creative Problem-Solving Process, commonly known as "Osborn's method." This founding theory of modern brainstorming is the go-to system for opening up new avenues of conflict resolution.

Alex F. Osborn, the quintessential Mad Man advertising executive, published a revolutionary book in 1953 that is now in its 21st printing. Its title is "Applied



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**This week's query addresses a situation in which two roommates have two different working and sleeping schedules.**

Imagination: Principles and Procedures of Creative Problem-Solving," and it launched the belief that pooling ideas freely and constructively can generate breakthrough insights.

Here's how it works: Sit down together for a half-hour of quiet time. Think of all the ways you might solve this dilemma if you had unlimited means. Write the ideas on a sheet of paper. Then

keep thinking of more ideas.

The key word here is "unlimited." Osborn's genius was realizing that creativity thrives on oxygen and synergy. His four principles of problem-solving were:

— Quantity breeds quality. The more possibilities you list, the greater the overall yield.

— Suspend judgment. Fear of criticism blocks imagination. Every contribution has merit.

— Encourage wild thinking. Sometimes the most far-fetched suggestion helps break the impasse.

— Mix and match ideas to produce new combinations with compounded potential.

The obvious solutions to your cohabitating conflict would be measures to prevent her bustling from disturbing your sleep — noise-blocking ear plugs for you, TV-listening ear buds for her. A rearrangement of living space could place your bedroom away from common areas.

Your roommate could learn to move about more quietly. You could search for tips on sleeping more deeply.

When both of you approach this as a shared challenge instead of a collision of interests, and you use Osborn's brainstorming strategy to explore all options, you may be surprised at what you come up with.

Steven P. Dinkin is a professional mediator who has served as president of the San Diego-based National Conflict Resolution Center since 2003. Do you have a conflict that needs a resolution? Share your story with The Mediator via email at [mediatethis@ncrconline.com](mailto:mediatethis@ncrconline.com) or as an online submission by visiting [www.ncrconline.com/MediateThis](http://www.ncrconline.com/MediateThis). All submissions will be kept anonymous.

## NOTEBOOKS

From Union-Tribune reporting staff

## OUTDOORS: ERNIE COWAN

## Famed trail draws annual migration

Like clockwork the annual spring migration has begun. But it's not a journey of hawks, whales or butterflies.

This migration is thousands of hikers moving through the county's backcountry with high hopes of successfully traveling 2,650 miles from Mexico to Canada in six or seven months.

This is a quiet movement because most of the travelers will be unseen, clinging to a thin trail that meanders mostly in wilderness through three states. Many travel alone, or in small groups.

March and April are prime hiking season when more than 7,300 will jubilantly begin their journey on the Pacific Crest Trail.

Most won't make it. The trail might also claim lives. Jubilation can turn to discouragement or despair for some, while others are inspired by the experience and thrive on the challenge and victory. All will be changed.

At 109 miles along the Pacific Crest Trail, hikers come to a way station at Warner Springs. Here, across from the school and fire station, there is a place to get mail and supplies and a grassy field under oaks where hikers can camp, recharge, share stories and learn about trail conditions.

There are thousands of stories to be told about the PCT, but I met two hikers at Warner Springs who were willing to talk about their experience.

Braden Leach, 24, from Great Falls, Mont., and Julie Meinhardt, 21, from Chester, met in college in Montana.

Meinhardt had worked at a coffeehouse in Chester, which is about midway on the PCT. There she had often talked with hikers making the trek.

Meinhardt suggested they make the journey after they graduated.

"It was a transition point in our lives, and it seemed like something interesting," she said. "It wasn't some kind of epiphany or anything. We're just here to enjoy and challenge ourselves."

Leach will enter graduate school this fall, so now seemed like the perfect moment in their lives to take this much time away.

On March 25, they were dropped off at the U.S.-Mexico border at the southern terminus of the trail. Meinhardt was carrying a pack of 35 pounds, and Leach had 38.

When we met in Warner Springs, they had only been on the trail eight days, but the reality of the PCT was setting in.

They had already mailed home items that



ERNIE COWAN

**Braden Leach and Julie Meinhardt on the Pacific Crest Trail.**

added weight and seemed unnecessary. They had learned every ounce matters.

Were there any second thoughts now that they were on the trail?

"I've had second thoughts literally every day," Meinhardt said.

And there was the migraine headache the first day that she had to push through, and Leach was dealing with ankle issues.

But there have been high points as well.

They loved the free pie, ice cream and coffee offered to PCT hikers in Julian, and the breathtaking views from the Volcan Mountains. "The wildflowers and butterflies are just beautiful," Leach said.

The biggest surprise for both of them is the daily work involved. "This is like a job. Not nine to five, but more like seven to seven," Meinhardt said.

They are breaking camp by 6:45 a.m. to get as many miles as they can before the hottest part of the day. Their breakfast is an energy bar as they start walking by 7:30 a.m.

"This is not as romanticized as the movies. There's no sleeping in, and it's more real," Meinhardt said.

Their longest day has been 17.8 miles and the shortest was 13.4.

They recognize that the record Sierra snowpack could be a problem, so they plan to leave the hike briefly in June so Leach can make housing arrangements for school in Berkeley. They plan to return to the trail and hike as far as they can before he has to leave for school in August.

Understanding they might not complete the hike this year, their hope is to return another time.

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## THE READERS' REPRESENTATIVE: ADRIAN VORE

## Suicides are generally not reported

U-T Writer John Wilkens wrote an "In-Depth" last month on the efforts to stop people from taking their lives by jumping off the Coronado bridge. The piece appeared on A1, Sunday, March 24.

This paragraph caught the attention of reader Eric Taylor of Hillcrest: "Momentum has been building to get something done as the annual number of suicides off the bridge moves steadily upward. It's averaged about 16 every year since 2014."

Taylor emailed the readers' rep with this question: "As a daily reader, I cannot recall that many mentions of bridge suicides in the U-T over the years. Are some simply not reported?"

The story reported on 4-inch-tall metal bird spikes that were installed on the bridge in March in an attempt to stop the suicides. The article added that "a week ago, shortly after the \$420,000 project was completed, three people committed suicide off the bridge over a period of about 24 hours."

Those deaths were not reported.

In answer to Taylor's query, yes, most suicides are not reported. Public safety editor Dana Littlefield explained that several conditions are considered in reporting suicides. Generally, though, a suicide is not reported if it occurs in private or does not cause a public disruption, such as SWAT standoff or freeway backups. Other factors include the prominence of the person, the immediate circumstances of the fatality, the effect on the community, the context and connections to issues of social significance.

When a suicide is reported the stories are usually brief.

For example, on B2 Feb. 20 a small item reported on a man who tried to take his life by jumping from the Balboa Avenue bridge over state Route 163. The CHP shut down the freeway in response to the call. The man survived, according to the item.

Littlefield also recalled a recent item in which a person took his life in a backyard. That would not normally result in a story, but the suicide caused a large police response, including a helicopter, because neighbors reported hearing a gunshot.

Names will rarely be printed in items reporting suicide. It could occur if the person is prominent, such as in the case of Junior Seau.

If a story on a suicide were to be a longer piece or if follow-up stories were written about the death, it would be appropriate to include information on suicide prevention, as

recommended by suicide prevention groups.

Wilkens' "In-Depth" included phone numbers and websites for suicide prevention organizations and a list of suicide warning signs.

## Which school name was first?

Accuracy is at the heart of journalism. But finding what is correct can be tough sometimes.

In this case a disagreement started, like it does so many times, with a superlative. The "Someone San Diego Should Know" feature on B1 March 25 about retired Army Col. and Mr. Scripps Ranch Robert Dingeman mentioned Robert E. Dingeman Elementary School. The story added the school, which opened in 1995, marked the first time a San Diego Unified school was named after person still living. The source of the information was a San Diego Unified spokesperson.

Not so, emailed Lynn Spafford of Serra Mesa. It was Correia Middle School, named after artist Stephen Correia in 1984.

Spafford is a credible source, herself. She taught music and was an arts administrator from 1976-2015.

Wait a minute. It was Jerabek Elementary, a caller said. The school was named after horticulturist Chauncy I. Jerabek. In 1978 Jerabek made his last trip back to Scripps Ranch for the opening of the new school that would bear his name, the school's website reads.

Blanca Gonzalez, the op-ed editor who also handles the "Someone" feature written by members of the U-T's Community Advisory board, followed with calls to the school district's media relations office.

It took some digging, as S.D. Unified's communications director Maureen Magee pointed out, because the district has more than 180 schools. In the end, the first district school named after a living person was determined to be Sherman Elementary School.

The school took the name of Civil War veteran and San Diego pioneer and land owner Matthew Sherman. According to the school's website, "to entice families to settle here, Sherman donated land for a big new school, which opened September 1889."

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## FROM THE ARCHIVES

## CITY WELCOMES PRINCE OF WALES IN 1920

In 1920, Edward, Prince of Wales, visited the city aboard the battleship "Renown." Contrary to the romantic rumor, the 25-year-old heir to the British throne who would become Edward VIII did not meet Wallis Warfield, the woman for whom he would abdicate the throne, while visiting San Diego, although she was living in Coronado at the time.

Warfield met Edward, Prince of Wales, in the English countryside in 1931 when she was married to her second husband, Ernest Aldrich Simpson.

*From the Evening Tribune, Wednesday, April 7, 1920:*

## SAN DIEGO WELCOMES PRINCE

## BIG WELCOME WAITS PRINCE OF WALES ON VISIT THIS AFTERNOON

San Diego, chosen city of the state and nation, is entertaining royalty today in the person of H.R.H., the Prince of Wales, heir to the British throne, and is overjoyed in the opportunity. The nation and state, through their representatives, are aiding, and it is hoped the city will have made the visit of this youth, who is destined to rule the vast British empire, as pleasurable to him as is the honor felt in his election of this city as the single one at which to call. The day is proclaimed a holiday by the mayor.

## RENOWN ARRIVES ON TIME

H.M.S. Renown, bearing the royal visitor, arrived upon scheduled time off port at 10 o'clock this morning, under escort of squadrons of destroyers and sea and air planes of the United States Navy from the naval base

and the naval air station, and was saluted by the U.S.S. New Mexico, flagship of the Pacific fleet, dispatched here to pay respects of the United States Navy.

Except for naval officers, representatives of the national, state and city governments and members of the executive committee on reception, who went out to the Renown this forenoon, first sight of H.R.H., the Prince of Wales, was scheduled for 2:30 o'clock, when he sets foot in San Diego, at the municipal pier, foot of Broadway.

Reception at the pier, however was not to be participated in by the general public, owing to the great reception planned for the stadium, where, at 4 o'clock, it is expected there will be between 20,000 and 50,000 people gathered to greet his royal personage and hear him speak.



## 100 MEN COME ASHORE

Preceding the prince ashore, junior officers and men of H.M.S. Renown to the number of about 100 landed at the municipal pier and were taken in charge by committees for entertainment of which there are day and night events arranged in their behalf.

Reception by British subjects and the general committee of the prince upon landing at the municipal pier at 2:30 o'clock was expected to have a British atmosphere. British service men in uniform and Scotchmen in kilts were early in evidence on the streets today, awaiting the appointed hour when they were to assemble. Members of the Sons of St. George Order gathered at their ball early this afternoon, while the Scots gathered at the court house, all marching to the pier with bagpipers at their head.

At 2 o'clock the prince of Wales and staff and official guests of the city were to be taken from the pier in automobiles for a scenic sightseeing trip which would end at the stadium in a circuit of the amphitheatre and afford the crowds assembled there a good view of the prince, prior to his appearance on the speakers platform.

Here, Robert Woods Bliss, Gov. Stephens and Mayor Wiled, for the nation, state and city, are to voice the welcome, to which H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, will reply. General Chairman Duncan MacKinnon is to make the introductions. As did President Wilson, the prince will speak to the vast throng through the magnavox, which will carry his voice distinctly to every part of the stadium.

HISTORICAL PHOTOS AND ARTICLES FROM THE SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE ARCHIVES ARE COMPILED BY MERRIE.MONTEAGUDO@SDUNIONTRIBUNE.COM. SEARCH THE U-T HISTORIC ARCHIVES AT [NEWSLIBRARY.COM/SITES/SDUB](http://NEWSLIBRARY.COM/SITES/SDUB).