



The Almagest staff writers take to task Vector Marketing for manipulating students.

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"ALL OUR DREAMS CAN COME TRUE IF WE HAVE THE COURAGE TO PURSUE THEM." - Walt Disney

U.S. Senate candidate to visit LSUS

Corey Drummond
PRINT EDITOR

U.S. Senate candidate Col. Rob Maness will visit LSU Shreveport on Wednesday, September 24 to discuss his platform with students.

The College Republicans, an LSUS student organization, contacted Maness and asked him to come to LSUS and discuss the race. John Griffin, interim-president of the College Republicans, junior, criminal justice, led the charge to bring Maness to LSUS.

"We reached out to his campaign, requesting that he visit our campus, to let students get an opportunity to hear first-hand from the republican candidates," Griffin said.

The College Republicans organization formed last semester in April. Their goal is to promote conservative political awareness at LSUS.

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Our main focus is on the issues, but when it comes to election time, we do promote the republican candidates in the race.

- John Griffin, Interim-President of the College Republicans



comes to election time, we do promote the republican candidates in the race," Griffin said.

Currently, Griffin serves as the interim-president of the organization. He has served this role since the College Republicans was formed last spring. Elections are underway to determine the official president, which will be held at the first meeting on Wednesday, September 10 at 11 in Bronson Hall, room 310.

The organization participates in political campaigning and hosts voter registration drives. They also plan to bring more speakers to LSUS in the future.

According to Griffin, Maness' views and positions fall in line with the College Republicans, and is the reason for wanting to bring him to our campus.

"Col. Maness is a true conservative, fiscally and socially, he believes in the fight for smaller government, defunding Obamacare, and many of the other conservative values that we as Republicans strongly believe in," Griffin said.

His focus in the race is to: protect and defend individual liberty and constitutional rights, protect 2nd Amendment rights, incentivize small businesses to create jobs, maintain a strong national security policy, and reform tax code.

Maness is running to represent Louisiana in the U.S. Senate, and runs opposite current senator Mary Landrieu and Bill Cassidy. His position places him as one of two Republican candidates running for the Louisiana senator spot. Senator Landrieu is a member of the Democratic party.

Now, Maness is in a battle over Landrieu's residency, out to prove that Landrieu is not currently a Louisiana citizen. He has unearthed alleged documents that proves her residency in Washington D.C. She has reportedly been subpoenaed to defend herself in court. The U.S. Congress will make the final verdict regarding her residency. The law states she only must prove residency on the day of the election. Students interested in becoming members must be

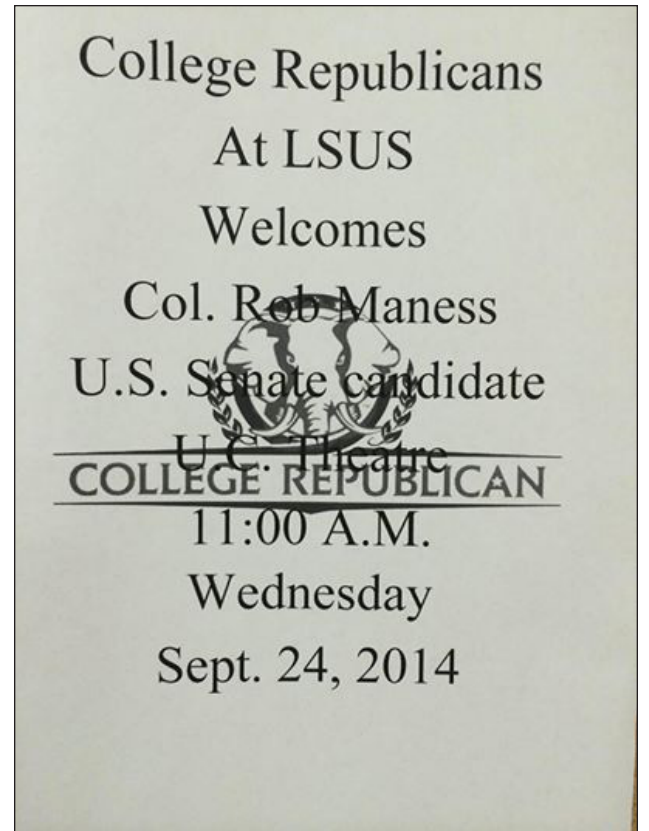


Photo by Hannah Sprawls

U.S. Senate candidate Col. Rob Maness will visit the UC Theatre Sept. 24

registered to vote as a Republican or Independent and must meet LSUS GPA requirements. The College Republicans are always accepting new members. Maness will be at the UC Theatre on Wednesday, September 24.

Facebook messenger policy invades privacy

An Almagest at LSUS Editorial

Corey Drummond
PRINT EDITOR

Last month, a storm of posts grabbed the media regarding the Facebook Messenger app, and the privacies it supposedly violates.

A majority of posts attacked the permissions that users of the app are required to agree to if they wanted to message friends on Facebook on their Android devices. Meanwhile, Facebook and some levelheaded crusaders jumped to the defense of this app, and wished to clarify how much access the app has over the user's phone.

Facebook Messenger has been around since 2011. Now, the app has become mandatory for all phones to message friends on Facebook, requiring all users to submit to Messenger's privacy policy.

The discussion about the access the app has over phones started from a blog entry on The Huffington Post by Sensei Marketing partner Sam Fiorella. He outlined how, on Android phones, the app allowed permission to "make calls without your intervention", "read your text messages", and "read sensitive log data". The post also mentions that the app can record audio, video, and take pictures using the phone's camera and microphone.

As the app became mandatory, the post exploded across the Internet and became the subject of much debate. Can the app really directly call phones, while possibly costing you money? Can it really read and modify your contacts?

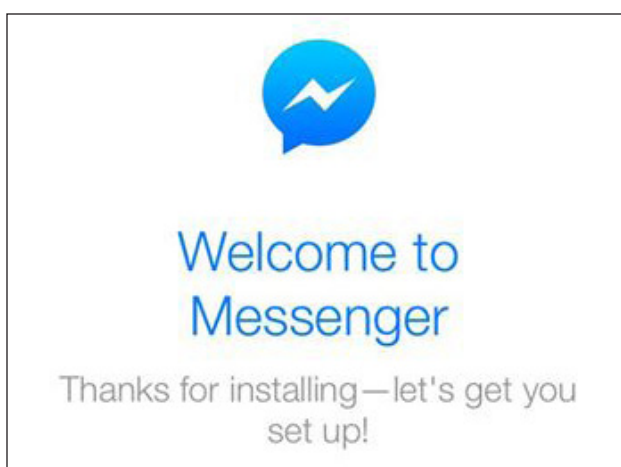


Photo by Corey Drummond

Facebook Messenger is now a required app to message friends on your phone

This led to many crying out against its invasion of privacy. Many people are upset to be forced to download and accept its terms to contact people over Facebook, when it used to be optional.

Facebook took the stance that phones only needed permissions to read contacts, access cameras and microphones, and call logs to use video chat features and allow users to add phone numbers to Messenger.

According to Facebook, the reason the permissions

sound incredibly invasive is due to Android's limited language when referring to features and permissions. Facebook has to follow Android's rigid wording. The phrasing doesn't translate literally.

For example, the "call phone numbers" permission actually means to allow users to call their contacts through the Messenger thread.

Apple products feature different permission phrasing due to its flexible language. This is where the backlash comes from for Android phones associated with the Messenger app.

Facebook also defends its position by explaining that all social media apps on phones require these permissions to allow access. Most people do not read these details, so it goes over most heads. However, the Huffington Post blog article brought the Messenger app into the spotlight.

While the app has faced a significant backlash, that hasn't stopped it from being the number one most downloaded app on iTunes in the week it became mandatory. Across all devices, Facebook Messenger was installed at an alarming rate. The negative reaction still asserts itself even in the wake of its popularity.

Facebook Messenger has near the lowest rating possible on the App Store. Users flocked to the "Reviews" tab to bash the app's existence. While many assumed the negative reaction would develop from most people's frustration at separating messages from the Facebook app, it seems to come from the permissions the app requires.



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Letters to the editor are encouraged. However, the staff reserves the right to edit letters for clarity, length, and content. Any letter submitted by a club or organization must be signed by all members of the group or by the group's president. Letters should be e-mailed or submitted to the Almagest office, BH 344, by 5 p.m. on the Friday preceding the Thursday publication date. Please type the letter and include your classification and major. *The Almagest* reserves the right not to publish submitted materials. Obscene, libelous and anonymous letters will not be printed.

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According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, a retraction is a public statement, either in print, or by verbal statement that is made to correct a previously made statement that was incorrect, invalid, or in error. The intent of a public retraction is to correct any incorrect information. *The Almagest* holds all rights if deemed necessary to retract such statements made, and shall, at will. Retraction notices should be made by e-mail or phone.



Letter from the Editors

Hannah Sprawls
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Corey Drummond
PRINT EDITOR

Kaylynn Henry
VIDEO PRODUCER

Chris Rebouche
DIGITAL MEDIA DIRECTOR

First and foremost: Welcome back, Pilots! We are all so excited to be back on campus as we settle into the groove of things for fall. We hope you've all managed to work through those first week surprises (you know, that moment where you find out you do need to buy that one textbook after all).

As we kick off this sixteen-week chapter of the Almagest, we'd like to acquaint you with a few changes to the student news here on campus.

Some of these have been in the works for a while, but the timing wasn't quite right.

A new chancellor, new colors, and renewed vigor amongst faculty, staff, and students has given the Almagest the perfect opportunity to join with the rest of campus in entering this new season as a unified student body.

This semester, we have big things in mind. First and foremost, we aim to bring you bigger and more hard-hitting stories that truly affect you, the student body. In the past, we've focused mainly on campus events and nice, warm fluffy pieces. This semester, we're going to be tackling some bigger issues, such as our school's budget woes and the shift to a fresh new campus free of tobacco and enlivened by the presence of a new chancellor.

Our purpose at the Almagest has always been to connect students to the campus and vice versa. The Mass Communications Department, where we draw the bulk of our staff from, is full of talented journalists whose work we are proud of.

That being said, we'd like to extend the invitation to contribute to the rest of campus. We have a wealth of interesting people on campus, and we're convinced that everyone has an inner journalist with a story to share. We would love for students of all majors to feel free to submit their news stories.

If you aren't sure how to go about writing a news story, don't stress. The Almagest room is on the third floor of Bronson Hall in BH 344. We'd be more than happy to help you develop an idea and give you a crash course on the how-tos of journalism.

We also would love to integrate work from other departments into our print publication. It would be great to display work from studio art and graphic design majors in the Almagest.

The print publication now has a dedicated "Comics" page, where we post comic strips and political cartoons. Art students, or students interested in art outside of their curriculum, could

contribute to this page if interested to publish your work.

Outside of this addition, the Almagest is also attempting a greater integration of the print and video publications. We hope to provide different perspectives on the events and changes on campus that matter to students.

Our next big goal is to overhaul our social media presence. We've created an Instagram and we'd ask that you follow us @lsusalmagest. We also plan on keeping you updated more often via our Facebook page, Almagest at LSUS. You can also find us on Twitter @almagestlsus.

Much of this is an overhauled focus on reaching out to students and faculty. We want get the Almagest out to everyone, and give you a reason to come to us. Hopefully, as the staff finds its footing, and we hit our stride, the Almagest can become a focal point of LSUS news.

We are very excited about the new direction we're taking this semester, and we hope you are too. Our goal is to produce ethical, credible, and interesting stories centered on campus and the students. We're looking forward to this semester and seeing all of you around campus!

Have a strong opinion?
Got an itch that needs to be scratched?

Get your message out to the student body by emailing us with your rants and raves at almagest@lsus.edu

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Mayor Glover should matter to students

An Almagest at LSUS Editorial

Corey Drummond
PRINT EDITOR

How many students are aware of Shreveport Mayor Glover's legislative endeavors? How many students are aware of Glover's party affiliation? How many even knew Cedric Glover was our mayor?

Well, aside from him being the mayor of Shreveport, I didn't know the two former points. I didn't even start thinking about it until recently. What did I know about Glover? On the eve of the next mayoral election, why not find out.

Glover, member of the Democratic Party, is the first African American mayor Shreveport has ever had. Finishing up his second term as mayor, he cannot race again. His history in politics has yielded some interesting results.

The Innocence Compensation Bill passed in 2005. This bill, which Glover authored, compensates exonerated criminals for the years they

served under wrongful imprisonment.

The bill used to provide \$15,000 per year served, capping at \$150,000 and educational benefits, until it was later increased to \$25,000 per year, capping off at \$330,000.

According to Glover, he was inspired to push this bill through Louisiana legislation after the cases involving Calvin Willis and Michael Williams. In both cases, they were imprisoned for 21 and 18 years respectively, and exonerated later by the Innocence Project.

Glover's mayoral terms haven't been all entirely positive news.

Cynthia Keith on behalf of the Shreveport Dog Park Alliance sued Glover last year. While the City Council passed legislation to allow the establishment of Shreveport's first dog park in Hamel Memorial, along the banks of the Red River, Glover used his power to veto the endeavor. However, the veto was overridden, but Glover refused to sign the agreement that offered dog park

funding.

Eventually, Glover motioned to find another location other than Hamel Memorial for the dog park. The park became a reality in January 2014, when it was decided to locate the dog park on Stoner Avenue, adjacent from the Skate Park and boat launch. Glover and the City Council approved the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement.

Glover has been a part of several major additions to Shreveport and Louisiana even before his terms as mayor. Many students likely don't follow much of his legislative pursuits.

In this year's mayoral race, we are now down to six candidates. This morning, The Times reported that candidate James Crowley has just dropped out of the race due to health issues. Anna Marie Arpino, Victoria Provenza, Sam Jenkins, Patrick Williams, Ollie Tyler, and Melvin Gerard Slack Jr. are the current running candidates. The election will be on November 4.



VOLUME LXV, ISSUE

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Cutting the grapevine of Vector Marketing

Alleged scam promises students high wages, no experience necessary

Malvya Chintakindi
STAFF WRITER

Vector Marketing posters seen around the LSU Shreveport campus pose potential harm to job thirsty students as its business practices are yet to be justified.

Vector Marketing admitted to fraud in settlements with the Australian Consumer and Competition Commission, Wisconsin Consumer Protection Dept. and the Arizona Attorney General. While Vector marketing offers \$18 per hour to their workers, employees were asked to invest in purchasing the Cutco knives kit in order to proceed with their job.

Many posters along with contact information are put up all around the LSUS campus while it is unknown if any student has approached them yet.

Some experienced students who left job at Vector marketing explain that they were given old phones plugged into Magic Jack devices that were connected into a computer. Pre-written scripts to read for different suitable situations depending on the caller were also provided to ensure if the caller is convinced to join the firm though complaints of harassment were often reported.

With what is called “multi-level marketing” or “pyramid selling”, Vector marketing offers positions for sales representatives and independent contractors who make their own hours. They also offer deals where in

workers are told that they can make money off of the number of people recruited who in return are directed towards drawings to win expensive gadgets like a free iPad, MacBook Pro, or plasma screen TV.

A few previous employees support the firm and its ways of work as they feel that it is a great way to make huge money. But, high-school teachers around Houston and Texas area are making an effort through posting in various websites like “Indeed” to prevent students from following this path.

A series of YouTube videos and testimonials uploaded by ex-employees and employees of Vector marketing have risen in number since 2007. Many of them explain how they were roped in to become a part of the firm and how they have been harassed through stealing contact information of their friends from their phones and Facebook pages. They reveal details about the hour-long presentations they had to sit through, how they’ve been misguided about their income, the hardships they had to face, etc.

At the light of the beginning of fall semester at LSUS, new students and potential victims of Vector marketing need to be aware through thorough researching and background checks. One option would be to refer with Students Against Vector Exploitation for more information about Vector Marketing scams.



Photo by Corey Drummond

Vector Marketing puts up more posters around the LSUS campus with one tag ripped off to feign student interest.

Katherine Lejeune
STAFF WRITER

At LSU Shreveport, posters are displayed all over the campus informing students that the company Vector Marketing is offering positions to students 17+, with flexibility to schedules, great pay, and even potential scholarships.

Vector Marketing, accredited by the Better Business Bureau in 1990, is actually a front-line company for Cutco, a culinary knife corporation. Vector offers independent sales positions to young students nationwide that are seeking employment, flexibility, and capital.

Cody G., a former Vector Toronto employee, was required to pay \$145.00, like all new hires, for his set of demonstration knives. Cody was encouraged to sell the Cutco Knives to his family and friends, but not walk door to door. Since Vector is a tiered marketing group, all employees are considered to be independent consultants, meaning no reimbursements for their transportation, time, or money spent.

According to the blog of another former Vector employee, he was interviewed by Vector and noticed in his interview that a retired marine looking for work was dismissed before the interview even began. Vector appeared to be looking for only young inexperienced individuals, not a retired Military man with experience in multiple areas.

The Cutco knives that Vector Marketing recruits to sell range from \$200 to \$2000 dollars and are made with 440a Steel. 440a Steel has more carbon than other steels, the more carbon the less tough the steel actually is. Cutco buyers are essentially paying \$200 for a knife set that could have been purchased at Walmart for \$39.99. According

to the BBB, Vector’s top national complaint were problems with their product or service.

The Washington Post interviewed an employee of the Wisconsin Consumer protection Department who reported a survey in which 940 students recruited by Vector either lost all their money, or made nothing at all. The study reported further data showing that \$3.00 a day was the average daily income for Vector recruits.

This is not the first time that a question of ethics has been reported regarding the Vector Marketing Company. They have been sued numerous times since their accreditation in 1990. Each time Vector Marketing settles in court with a future promise to obtain from misleading students.

Vector Marketing has caught the attention of campuses nationwide; it appears to be pessimistic feedback. SAVE, or Students Against Vector Exploitation was formed in June of 2003 by former Vector employees who felt that they were victims of a scam. Many students struggle to financially afford the cost of a college education, while also struggling to find employment with flexibility to one’s academic schedules.

There are many questions that have been raised on the legitimacy and ethical behavior of the company. Many students struggle to financially afford the cost of a college education, while also struggling to find employment with flexibility to one’s academic schedules.

Posters displayed at nearly every student-based location are pursuing students that are seeking employment. Vector Marketing occasionally generates positive reactions; however it does appear illogical to target students who are most likely unable to commit \$145.00 and time, with no promise of a consistent income.

Emily Wright
STAFF WRITER

College students at LSU Shreveport are voicing their frustration toward Vector, a job aimed at people their age.

Students at LSUS are noticing flyers advertising flexible working hours, great pay, and even the possibility of scholarships that have been placed on campus.

Dr. Linda Webster, chair and professor of mass communication said that these flyers were hung on every floor in Bronson Hall, as well as some areas of the Business and Education building. She suggested that perhaps the flyer distributors know that Bronson Hall is the general education building and is hoping the flyers will be seen by as many students as possible.

The green and white advertisements boast of national locations and states that all majors are considered for the job. The company also provides training for employees even if they lack customer sales experience.

The Vector Marketing Corporation, founded in 1981 and based in Olean, New York, sells CUTCO knives and is targeting young people to work for their company. Employees are to set appointments with clients, visit them in their homes, and sell cutlery. According to their website, 85 percent of its sales force is students around the college age.

In May, Vector was mailing invitations to students in the area about the job opportunity. In the letter Joel Koncinsky, district manager of a Shreveport marketing office, stated that summer jobs were available because Vector was encountering prosperity and success.

Koncinsky encouraged students to apply regardless of any work schedule, school schedule, school major, or work experience, and said that the company was currently filling positions in Shreveport, Bossier City, Minden, Mansfield, Springhill, and Benton.

However, students at LSUS and the surrounding area are not the only ones being targeted for this too-good-to-be-true job. This issue is occurring over many college campuses, including Brookdale Community College in New Jersey.

Daniel Natale, a writer for The Stall, a student newspaper of Brookdale, addressed

this concern in his article concerning Vector and whether or not the job was a waste of time or an opportunity for student work.

Natale talked with two separate students, Meghan Rooney and Ash Natarajin, science and chemical engineering majors, respectively, both spoke negatively about their experiences with Vector.

Rooney was dissatisfied with the misrepresentation of the flyers stating that students would make hourly wages when they received \$18 per appointment only. Natarajin spoke about her frustration of wasting her time seeking people who would actually buy the CUTCO knives. Both students said that their training was unpaid and lasted for three days.

However, Natale also spoke with Ana Ventura, business administration major, who has worked for Vector for three years and enjoys her job. She actually pays her tuition to Brookdale with the money she earns from Vector. Ventura said the job has helped her with her people skills and personal confidence.

But the article goes on to say that a sales development specialist for Vector, Stephanie Weisner, said that college students are not mature enough to handle the intensity of the job. She went on to say that Vector is a large company and cannot please everyone, as is the case with many other companies.

If students cannot handle the job, why does Vector advertise to students on their school campuses?

To answer this question, Ty, a teenage writer, posted a short article on the website Teen Speak where he explains that he believes the reason Vector targets young students is because students are easily manipulated and may not research the company before applying and working for the job.

Vector employees are so frustrated with the company that they have created a group called SAVE, Students Against Vector Exploitation. One can actually join the group on Yahoo! Groups as it is open to the public. The group has 1,224 members and was started in 2003. SAVE describes itself as a network made up of the current and former employees of Vector that is trying to create awareness of the company’s disreputable behavior.

Carly Dean
STAFF WRITER

Vector Marketing may seem like a miracle to a financially challenged college student, but the reality of the company may come as a shock.

For many years Vector has been recruiting high school and college students boasting flexible hours and great pay, but neglects to give any details about the actual job.

The bright posters claiming no experience is needed may come in guise of an opportunity to a naive student. Former employees of Vector are reporting the opposite, even calling it a scam.

The Reflector interviewed Shabniz Hirji, a former Vector employee, who told the publication that her experience with the company was terrible. Hirji did not even know Vector sold knives until she showed up for the interview. She says there was no proper office, there was no training given, and no support to help with her sales. She was only given a small booklet that described the knives she would be selling.

Gregor Wilke, another former Vector salesman, went to YouTube to report similar conditions. Vector claims to offer students a flexible schedule, but employees were expected to be at the office every other day for team meetings that consisted of the employees calling friends on their cellphones to set up demos. The office had none of its own

phones for the sales representatives to use.

The conditions described by Wilke and Hirji contradict Vector’s goals that are posted on the company’s website like providing a good work environment and to promote good customer service.

Justin Stokes was a receptionist for Vector who says a lot about the company’s shady practices.

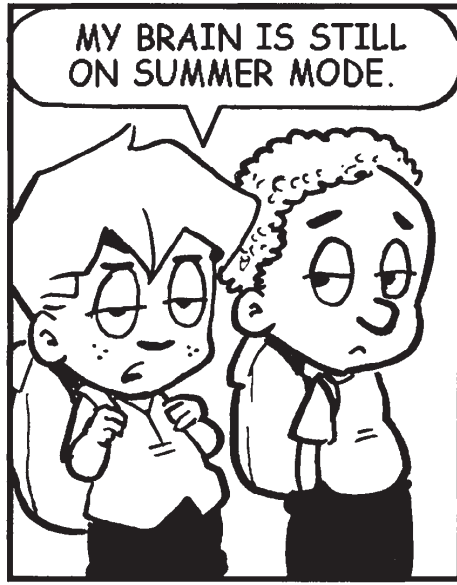
Stokes says the receptionists are actually recruiters who spend all day calling a list of numbers given to the company by recent recruits. The receivers of the calls would often be upset and feel harassed. Stokes could only pick a reply from the script he was given.

The Statesman Journal reported several actions taken against the company. In 1994 a Marion County court in Oregon ordered Vector to stop deceptive recruiting practices. Today, Vector claims on its website to value integrity and ethical business practices, yet they still ask new sales representatives to “practice” on their families who are sure to buy the expensive knives.

While Vector is a legitimate company, its practices raise eyebrows. Their vague promises of opportunity and great pay have lured thousands of desperate young people into this near-pyramid scheme. Shoddy offices, a lack of training, and a low success rate leave employees feeling scammed, and totally contradicts the values Vector claims to have.

Amber Waves

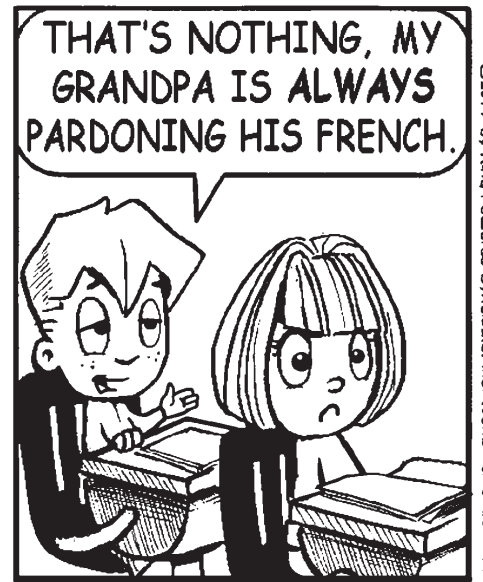
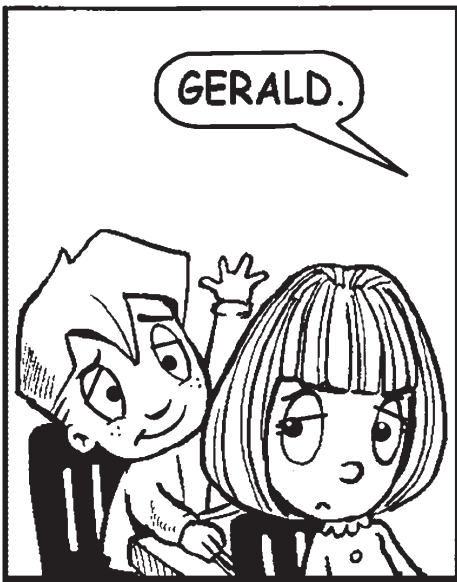
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