

Living



Jeanne Phillips
Dear Abby

Mom not OK with living situation

Dear Abby: My 22-year-old son is involved with a 22-year-old girl who is married. He has moved in with her, her husband and their 4-year-old son. He says he's happy with the arrangement. I have tried to accept this even though I don't approve. I don't want to alienate my son, but I see no good coming from this lifestyle. Abby, please help. — *Disgusted Mom in Henderson, Nev.*

Dear Disgusted Mom: You do not have to "accept" the arrangement, and as your son's mother you are entitled to tell him you don't approve and why. But he is over 21, and some lessons have to be learned the hard way. So remain calm and bide your time because, sooner or later, the husband's tolerance will wear thin or your son will realize that he deserves to rate higher than No. 2.

Dear Abby: My wife and I were walking our terriers one evening when one had to answer nature's call. Being responsible dog owners, I picked up the "deposit" with a bag we carry for such occasions. It was garbage pickup day and the neighbors' trash cans were out at the curb, so at the next house I placed the bag in the trash can. My wife, family and co-workers all think this was not appropriate — that I should have carried it home and disposed of it in our trash can. Abby, we were 15 minutes from home, but given the choice, I would rather not carry that bag and figured a garbage bin is a garbage bin. I'll abide by your answer and admit I was wrong if you say so. — *Pooped Out in North Carolina*

Dear P.O.: As long as the bag was securely sealed, I don't think adding it to someone's trash bin was a social no-no. But I do have one suggestion: Keep your water cooler conversation at a higher level and you'll get less poop from your co-workers. Your wife is another story.

Dear Abby: I receive labels, free gifts and even money from charities asking for donations. Why aren't they using all that money for the charity? I thought I'd done the right thing by sending annual contributions to one charity. Then I get frequent appeals from them that they have run into extra expenses and want more! Americans are generous people, but these groups are bleeding us dry. I'm on the verge of not contributing to any of them. — *Turned Off in Topeka*

Dear Turned Off: Charities (and causes) hire specialized companies that analyze what kind of "appeals" generate the most money. They have figured out that people who receive "gifts" feel "obligated" to reciprocate — hence the labels, notepads, etc. As to being solicited more than once a year, this is done because many people can't remember exactly when they last donated and, in my opinion, it's a way of taking advantage. That said, with the economy in the shape it's in, many charities are genuinely suffering. The need is great — so please do not stop giving altogether.

Write Dear Abby at www.dearabby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Social Butterfly

By Jennifer Brett butterfly@ajc.com

Atlanta women recognized for community efforts

At its 13th annual Unsung Heroines luncheon, held Friday at the Hyatt Regency, the National Coalition of Black Women's metro Atlanta chapter recognized women making powerful changes in their communities.

"We don't see them on the evening news," chapter President Cynthia Williams said.

You'll see them here. Honorees were **Sharon Brown**, founder of Manifesting Dreams, which serves survivors of domestic violence; **Bernice B. Franklin**, who serves as president of the Cobb County Library Foundation, has mentored young women through the Capital Area Mosaic project and now serves on the board of Devereaux Georgia; **Lynn Hampton**, founder of Impact Athletics Association, which works with youths to combat childhood obesity; **Amisha Harding**, director of development and communications with Communities in Schools of Atlanta; and **Patia Odom-Mitchell**, an eighth-grade history teacher at Best Academy at Benjamin S. Carson and founder of Dreams, which provides cultural outings and volunteer opportunities for young people.

Teresa Hairston, founder and publisher of Gospel Today and the Gospel Heritage Foundation, was recognized with the Trailblazer award. The event was emceed by **Paul Goodloe** of The Weather Channel. Chapter board member **Patty Mouton**



The National Coalition of 100 Black Women's metro Atlanta chapter honored community leaders including Patia Odom-Mitchell (right), with chapter President Cynthia Williams. Jennifer Brett butterfly@ajc.com

and vice president of programs **Mary Vandiver** welcomed attendees. Honorary chairs escorting honorees included **Charmaine Ward** of Georgia Pacific, **Dennis Boyden** of AT&T, **Belinda Walker** of State Farm, **Brenda Reid** of Publix and **Cindy Follmer** of Aetna. Chaplain **Grace Dunn Ellis** led the invocation with a special recognition of the honorees: "You are special flowers in God's garden."

Two upcoming events to benefit research

Polo for Parkinson's, planned for Sunday afternoon at Chukkar Farm and Polo Club in Alpharetta, will feature a polo match, divot stomp and hat con-

test, along with food, beverages and a silent auction. The event is hosted by Wilkins Media Co. The company's founder, **Bill Wilkins**, was diagnosed with Parkinson's a few years ago and immediately got active with Team Fox, the grass-roots fundraising arm of the Michael J. Fox Foundation. Tickets start at \$10 for children and \$50 for adults. A reserved table for eight is \$400. Info: poloforparkinsons.com. Countrified Rock for Research, a dinner, silent auction and concert, will start at 6 p.m. Oct. 15 at Trilogy in east Cobb.

Producer and songwriter **Jeffrey Steele**, who has served as a judge on Country Music Tele-

vision's "Nashville Star," will perform. Tickets are \$100 each. Tables start at \$900 for six. Info: teamcantore.org.

Isn't he lovely? Drag pageant for charity

Keller Williams Realty Intown Atlanta agent **Bill Shoemaker** will do anything to sell a house. Even wear a dress.

Actually, the annual Miss Intown Atlanta drag pageant he organizes every year is all for charity. Planned for 6:30 to 10:30 p.m. Thursday at Center Stage, the event benefits Ahimsa House, a nonprofit organization that helps people and animals affected by domestic violence (www.ahimsahouse.org); the Atlanta Community ToolBank, which provides more than \$500,000 of tools for charitable organization use (www.atlanta.toolbank.org); the Atlanta Step-Up Society, an organization founded and primarily run by former transients, which offers a comprehensive approach to help others overcome substance abuse and homelessness (www.atlantastep-upsociety.org); and Joining Hearts, a volunteer-based, nonprofit that provides housing support to people with HIV and AIDS in Atlanta (www.joininghearts.org).

"The money we raise not only supports these local organizations, it literally saves lives," Shoemaker said. "We have a blast doing it."

Last year's pageant raised \$18,000, and this year's goal is \$30,000. Tickets are \$40. See www.missintownatlanta.com or call 404-541-3500.

BOX OFFICE

Kids' story overwhelms adult stars

Reuters

"Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs," a new 3D animated feature based on a popular children's book, shone brightest at the weekend box office in North America Sunday, overshadowing flops starring Matt Damon, Jennifer Aniston and Megan Fox.

"Meatballs" earned an estimated \$30.1 million since it opened Friday, said Sony Pictures Animation.

The film is based on the 1978 book in which a nerdy outcast invents a device that sends hamburgers, pizzas and pancakes dropping from the heavens.

Meanwhile, Damon and Aniston suffered their worst openings in years with "The Informant!" and "Love Happens," respectively. "Jennifer's Body," the headlining debut of "Transformers" hottie Fox, was dead on arrival.

Following are the top 10 films at the North American box office for the three-day weekend beginning Friday, according to studio estimates compiled Sunday by Reuters.

1. **Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs** \$30.1 million
2. **The Informant!** \$10.5 million
3. **I Can Do Bad All By Myself** \$10.1 million
4. **Love Happens** \$8.5 million
5. **Jennifer's Body** \$6.8 million
6. **9** \$5.5 million
7. **Inglourious Basterds** \$3.6 million
8. **All About Steve** \$3.4 million
9. **Sorority Row** \$2.5 million
10. **The Final Destination** \$2.4 million

Neutrals not safe choice

Design

continued from D1

posed of bright pinks and oranges; dark spaces such as powder rooms wallpapered in black vinyl; vivid rooms punctuated with global influences from zuzanis and ikat fabrics; and the continuation of the green movement with natural and earthy materials, he said.

And of course, neutrals continue to reign supreme. Drucker considers the layering of neutral tones with metallic accents to be distinctly Atlantan in its sophistication.

We caught up with Drucker to chat about the latest and why it's OK to be beige.

Q: Purple has been the darling of decor for the past two years. What's the new "it" color?

A: I don't like predicting colors because I think it's so personal. You can see that fashion influences colors in decorating... Who would have ever thought we'd see so many black rooms? I've seen three in the past month... That said, I think we'll see more purple-blues.

Q: What do you say about the belief that neutrals are the safe choice?

A: I don't think people should be made to feel guilty about the colors they like. I don't think using neutrals for your home is playing it safe, either. You have to live with something you'll like for a long time. Neutrals will grow with you. People should never apologize for painting a room taupe.

Q: How have this economy and these times changed the way we revere and adorn our homes?

A: I think it's made people appreciate their homes more. More people are painting and people are buying accessories, like pillows, vases, sheets. There's a saying in decorating: "It's not the first thousand that makes a room, it's the last hundred." It's the little things that give it spirit.

He considers the layering of neutral tones with metallic accents to be distinctly Atlantan in its sophistication.

'Mad Men,' '30 Rock' win again

Emmys

continued from D1

like him."

Glenn Close's performance as a ruthless attorney on "Damages" and Bryan Cranston's turn as a meth-making, cancer-stricken teacher on "Breaking Bad" were honored with the top drama series acting Emmys, the second consecutive trophies for both.

"Oh my goodness," exclaimed Cranston. "I'm a poor kid from the valley. I don't know what I'm doing up here. I feel like Cinderella."

Close called it a "huge privilege" to be part of entertainment community, then tweaked her show's writers.

Her role is "maybe the character of my lifetime,

depending on what they do this season," Close said.

Michael Emerson, who plays the cruelly devious Ben on "Lost," and Cherry Jones, the stalwart U.S. president on "24," were honored as best supporting actors in drama series.

"Wowza," Jones said. Emerson accepted his award for what he called "the role of my lifetime."

Toni Collette of Showtime's "United States of Tara" was honored as best lead actress in a comedy series for her role as a mother with multiple personalities.

"Wow, this is insanely confronting," said a beaming Collette. She thanked series creator Diablo Cody, the Oscar-winning screenwriter of "Juno."

Collette's victory deprived Fey of "30 Rock" of winning a second consecutive award in the category. But Fey took the stage a few moments later to acknowledge a guest actor award she received for her Sarah Palin impersonation on "Saturday Night Live." Kristin Chenoweth of

"Pushing Daisies" and Jon Cryer of "Two and a Half Men" won supporting acting Emmys for their comedies and proved that acceptance speeches can be entertaining.

"I'm not employed now so I'd like to be on 'Mad Men.' I also like 'The Office' and '24,'" said Chenoweth, alternating between tears and smiles as she accepted for her canceled ABC series. "Thank you so much to the academy for recognizing a show that's no longer on the air."

Backstage, the Tony Award-winning Chenoweth noted that she is appearing on an upcoming episode of Fox's show "Glee," has shot two movies and is doing a series of concerts.

Cryer, whose series is the most-watched comedy on TV, brought a wry tone to his speech.

"I used to think that awards were just shallow tokens of momentary popularity, but now I realize they are the only true measure of a person's worth as a human being," Cryer said.

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