

OPINION

A few minutes' rest

When you become a parent, the term restroom takes on new meaning.

No longer is the lavatory a mere utility for doing what nature requires; it's a sanctuary where you can steal a few minutes to yourself. I'd venture to guess I'm not the only parent who has found myself spending more time there since having a child at home.

When that child is almost a year old and mobile, that may mean your better half is left holding down the fort while you're being lazy on the loo — but they can't really com-



plain, because they do it too, and they know it.

Hey, it's not like parents haven't earned those precious moments to themselves. Parenting isn't for the faint of heart, after all.

Kids complicate everything.

A meal with a baby in the house isn't a matter of simply cooking food and eating it; pasta night makes Cookie Monster's eating habits look dainty.

Bedtime is a constant question mark. Will the baby nod off in a few minutes or stare down sleep

like it's the enemy?

If you're going anywhere, it'll take three times as long as you expect, and spending the weekend at a relative's cabin up north might as well be moving to new home — you'd only need a couple more suitcases.

And don't get me started on road trips.

Last weekend we took my daughter on her first real road trip, heading to Michigan for a family member's wedding shower. When it's just my wife and I, we plan a 12-hour trek, including gas stops and the inevitable Chica-

go traffic. With a baby, we had to schedule two days of travel each way, leaving only one full day with family.

And that was before we knew the baby gets car-sick.

Let's just say rest stops were our friends and it was a long night behind the wheel on the way home.

Despite the challenges, parenting is full of beautiful moments. I wouldn't trade for anything the cries of joy when my daughter sees a dog, or the excitement when she learns a new word, or the

tender bond when she gives me a slobbery kiss unprompted.

I know how precious these moments are, because I didn't get them with her older brother, who was born prematurely and died after 10 days in the NICU. How I wish I had more sleepless nights with him.

So I do my best to treasure every moment with my daughter, even the difficult ones, knowing they will go by fast.

But I'm still taking those extra minutes to myself in the restroom.

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Nathan

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might want to read a July 21 column by a veteran Boston Globe reporter, who writes: "I just learned I have only months to live. This is what I want to say." It's here: bit.ly/2WcebsE.

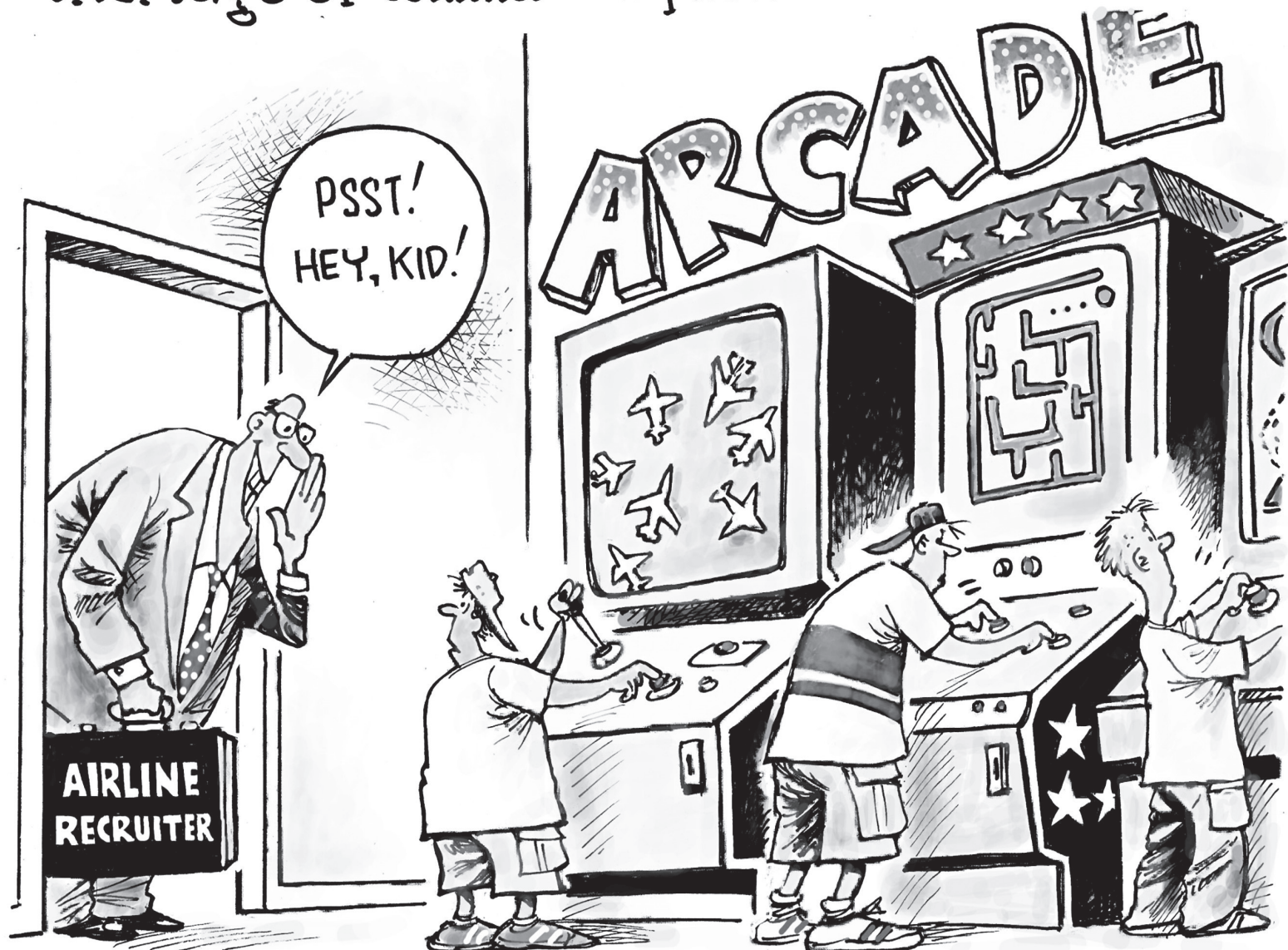
Though none of us will be here forever, I try to follow what Francis of Assisi has been quoted as saying: "Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible."

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