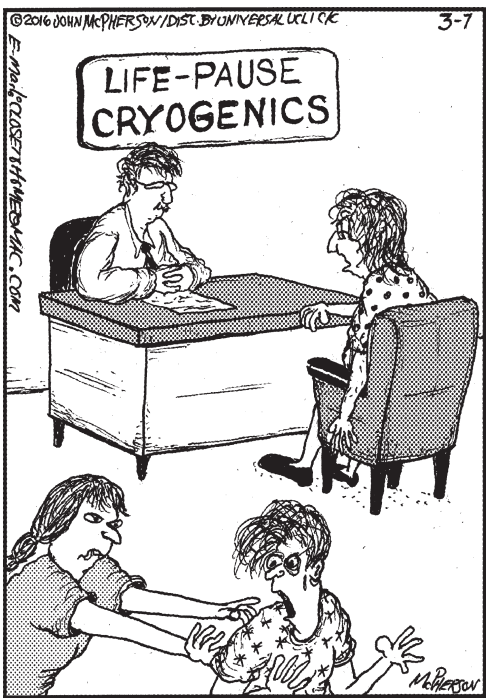


CLOSE TO HOME by John McPherson



Divergent interests make reader lonely

Dear Abby: My husband of 12 years and I have few common interests. I am earthy, nature-loving, people-loving and crave a rural lifestyle. He's an introvert, loves everything Western and watches a lot of television. He dislikes animals and is a sports fanatic.

I don't criticize his interests. My problem is, our dreams of the future can't be combined. It's depressing that we don't appreciate each other's interests, and doing all of our hobbies separately is lonely. How can I experience my dreams when they are not my husband's dreams? — *Hippie Jane in Provo, Utah*



JEANNE PHILLIPS
DEAR ABBY

Dear Hippie Jane: Try doing that by remembering what you had in common with your husband 13 years ago. Is the core of your relationship still a good one? Can't each of you enjoy your hobbies and interests separately?

However, if the answer is that you have grown increasingly apart in the last 12 years, the only way you can each experience your

dreams may be to do it alone or with other like-minded people.

Dear Abby: I am deathly afraid of snakes! My daughter, who lives in Canada, recently informed me that they had acquired one through a teacher at my grandsons' school. Of course, the three boys are thrilled.

My problem is, we are going to visit my daughter and her family in a few weeks. I am terrified to the point of losing sleep and breaking down crying just thinking about it. What should I do? Please help. — *Terrified in Cypress, Texas*

Dear Terrified: If you were planning to stay at your daughter's, scale back your plans and reserve a room at a nearby hotel or motel. This will give you eight or 10 hours a day nowhere near the reptile. If your daughter is unaware of your phobia, put her on notice that the snake is to be confined to its cage in a room with a firmly closed door while you are in the house — and further, you do not wish to make its acquaintance.

Talk to your doctor before you go and ask for enough anti-anxiety medication to calm

your nerves while you are there. Then go and have a good time.

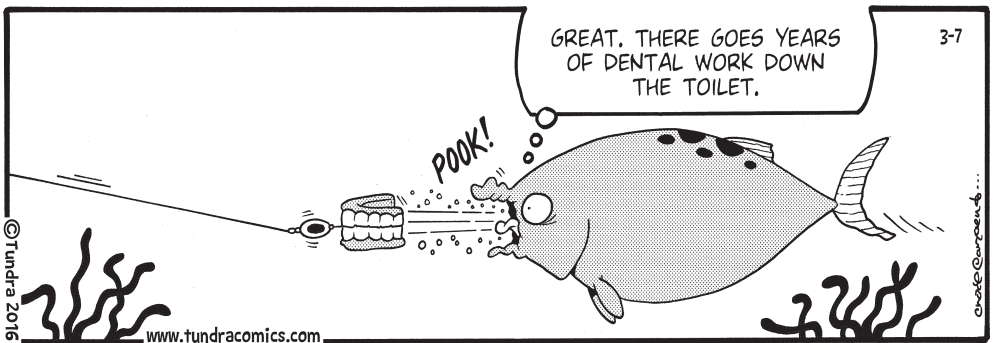
Dear Abby: We took my wealthy daughter, husband and their four children to dinner at a very nice restaurant. We insisted on paying. In fact, we even restricted what we ordered so they could each have an expensive dish that they only picked at.

When it was over and it was obvious that they weren't taking home any leftovers, I started to motion to our waitress to ask for take-home boxes so my wife and I could take all of their uneaten food. My wife shot me the "don't you dare!" look, so all of it wound up in a dumpster. Needless to say, it became an issue. Was I wrong to want to take home their uneaten meals? — *Peeved in Pennsylvania*

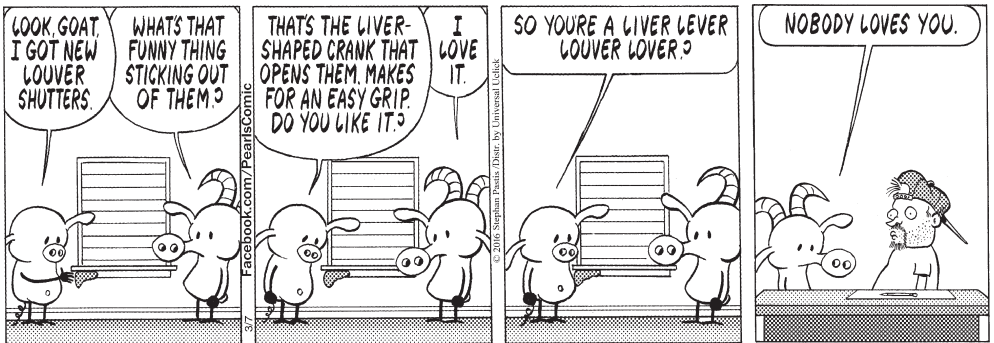
Dear Peeved: Not as far as I'm concerned. Because your daughter and her family didn't like what they ordered — and you were footing the bill — there was no breach of etiquette in asking for a box for the leftovers.

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

TUNDRA by Chad Carpenter



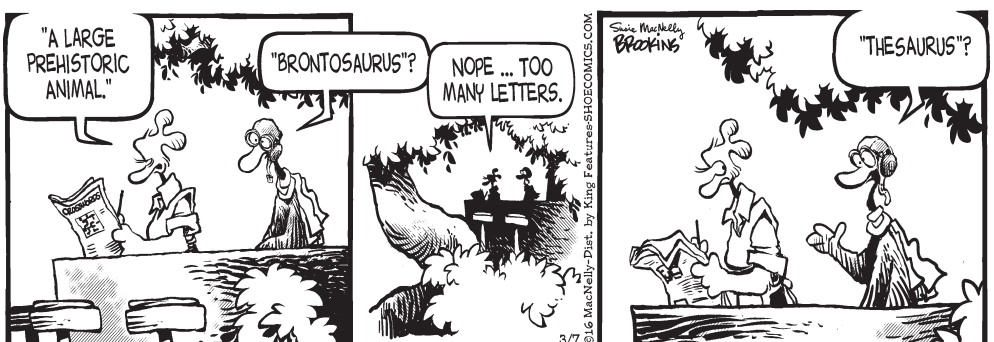
PEARLS BEFORE SWINE by Stephan Pastis



GARFIELD by Jim Davis



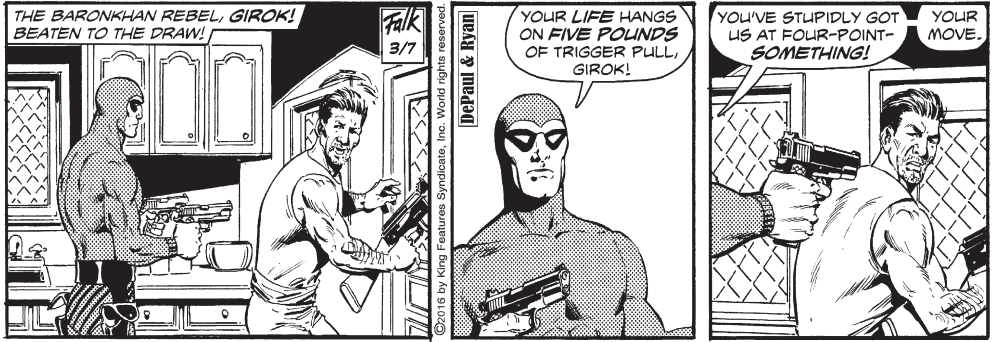
JEFF MACNELLY'S SHOE by Chris Cassatt and Gary Brookins



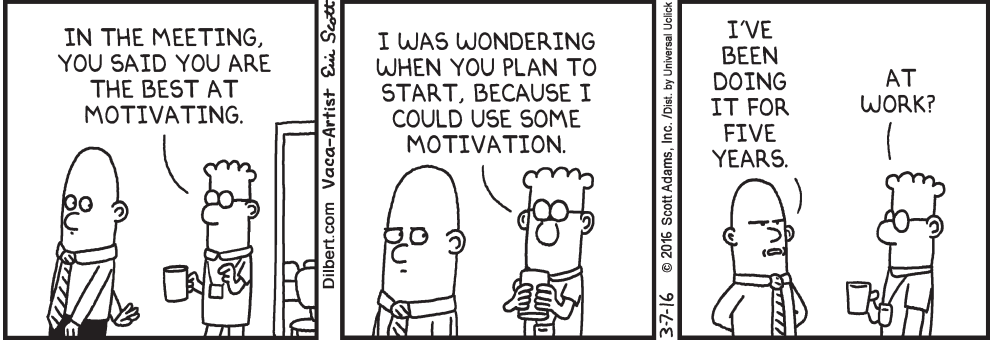
WIZARD OF ID by Brant Parker



THE PHANTOM by Lee Falk



DILBERT by Scott Adams



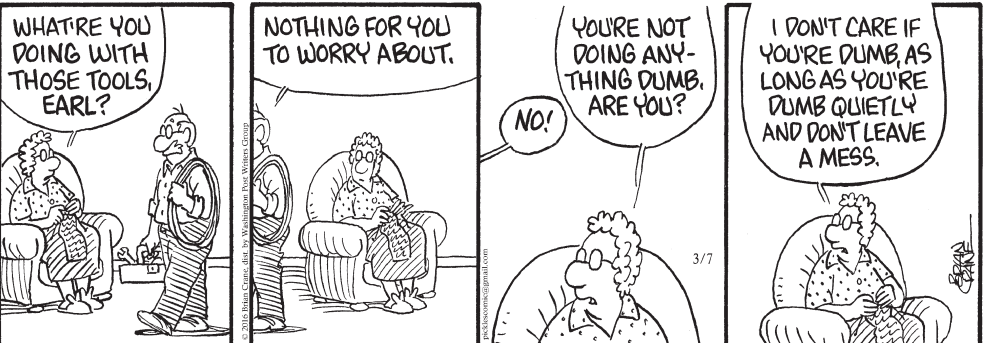
MARK TRAIL by James Allen



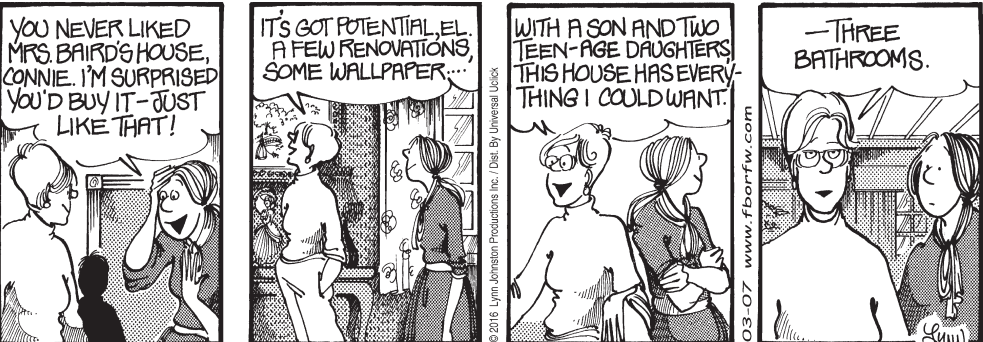
PEANUTS by Charles Schulz



PICKLES by Brian Crane



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE by Lynn Johnston



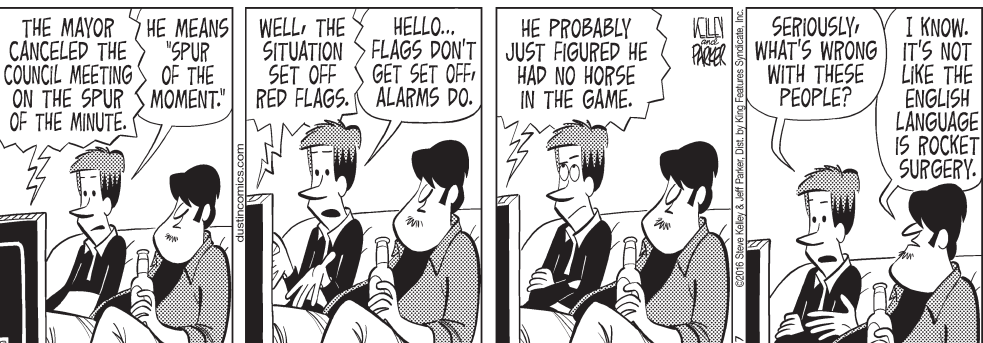
BABY BLUES by Jerry Scott & Rick Kirkman



ZITS by Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



DUSTIN by Steve Kelley and Jeff Parker



Daily Horoscope

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You're easy to love, and someone close to you is finding it extremely convenient to do so. If anything, you may have to work on being a little less accessible so they don't take advantage.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You're likely to be held back by mechanical problems or technical difficulties. This is an opportunity to look at the bigger picture and reassess: Is this really the most efficient trajectory?

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). The theories and opinions may not make sense. They may not ring true. That just means it's time to back off, reassess and try something else on for size. Flexibility of thought will be your most remarkable strength today.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You may investigate what others are doing, check out the competition or see what else is on the menu. That doesn't mean you won't choose your original idea in the end. You always remain loyal to what you love and value.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). The same things that were "in" a decade or more ago are circling back for another look. Mostly this has to do with fashion; however, it could also have something to do with an ex.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Oddly, even though you put yourself "out there" and were extremely well received, there is still a moment of instability that comes with the experience.

Good! Only the strongest allow themselves to be vulnerable!

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Others may need to lock down their choices, but you still want to stay open to all that's out there. What's the big hurry to commit? In fact, the impermanence of a situation is what makes it appealing to you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You are not in the mood to hedge your bets or compromise yourself by siding with the majority or sticking with a situation that's a poor fit. Wages? You'll make them, just like anyone who jumps into the water does.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Make sure you're a good match for the people around you. If you're not being utilized, it doesn't matter what other kinds of perks are happening — you're not going to feel good about it.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). The masculine energy is zinging around and you may feel more aggressive as those around you jockey for position. Is the status order really so important? If it's important to one person, it will be important to everyone.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). The day will bring formidable opponents and obstacles, the likes of which will challenge you but not harm you. If taken head-on, the situation has potential for surprising growth.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). What's slowing you down is not a physical barrier but an emotional impediment. Once you reconcile conflicted feelings you'll find that nothing stands between you and what you really want.



HOLIDAY MATHIS