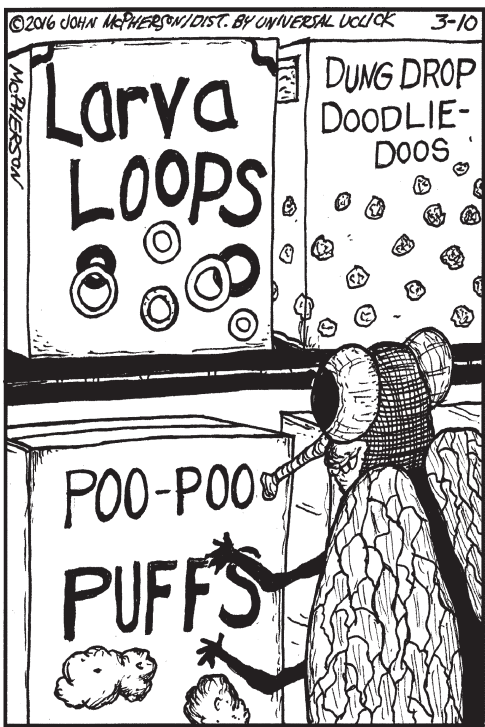


CLOSE TO HOME by John McPherson



Fly cereals.

Reader wants to continue estrangement

Dear Abby: I've been estranged from my three siblings, their spouses and their families for 35 years — my choice. There has been no correspondence, and I have seen them only at our parents' funerals.

Since we are all in our 80s, I anticipate there will be funerals for us in the next decade. If I go first, there is no problem. However, I'm considering not attending their funerals or those of their spouses. My grown children say I MUST attend because I'm their brother. I'm concerned that I might be a distraction or there could be a confrontation. Besides, I still remember what caused my estrangement and I just don't want to see them. I know I'm stubborn, but am I wrong? — *To Go Or Not To Go*



JEANNE PHILLIPS
DEAR ABBY

Dear Go Or No: I disagree with your children. People attend funerals to pay their respects to the deceased and/or comfort the family who has suffered the loss. If, after 35 years, you show up at the funeral, you could,

indeed, be a distraction — unless it has been so long that nobody recognizes you.

Dear Abby: Is it wrong to have no interest in grandchildren? My wife is five years older than I am and she's elated with our new grandchild. I'm only 42 and I feel I'm too young to be a "Gramps." I prefer to be free from kid activities and enjoy my adult pursuits.

I have raised children for the last 20-plus years and I think it's my stepdaughter's turn to be a parent. My wife is all gung ho to watch the grandchild anytime she's free, but I'm not interested at all.

Am I wrong for wanting my own time and space with my wife? — *Too Young For It in Oklahoma*

Dear Too Young: No law says you must baby-sit if you don't want to. Not everyone enjoys the company of small children. If your wife enjoys doing it, that's her privilege. However, if the baby-sitting is interfering with your marriage, then you're complaining to the wrong woman, and the two of you need to work out a compromise on which you can both agree.

Dear Abby: I have very long hair and I'm proud of it. I have worn my hair long ever since I was a little girl. My problem is when I go somewhere, other women come up to me and start touching it.

I understand that they like my hair because they always compliment me on it, but I hate it when strangers touch me. Apparently, people have forgotten the concept of "personal space."

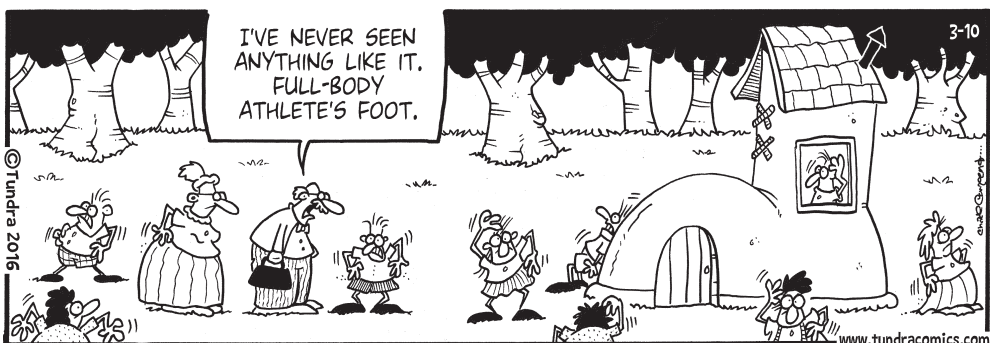
How can I tell someone — without sounding rude — to please not touch me? Or must I just keep quiet and tolerate it with a smile? — *Rapunzel in Dallas*

Dear Rapunzel: Not everyone enjoys being touched, particularly by strangers. If someone reaches out to pet you, smile, step back and say, "I'd prefer you not do that." You have a right to your personal space.

As long as you say it in a pleasant but firm tone, no one has the right to be offended. And if someone is, refrain from making it your problem.

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

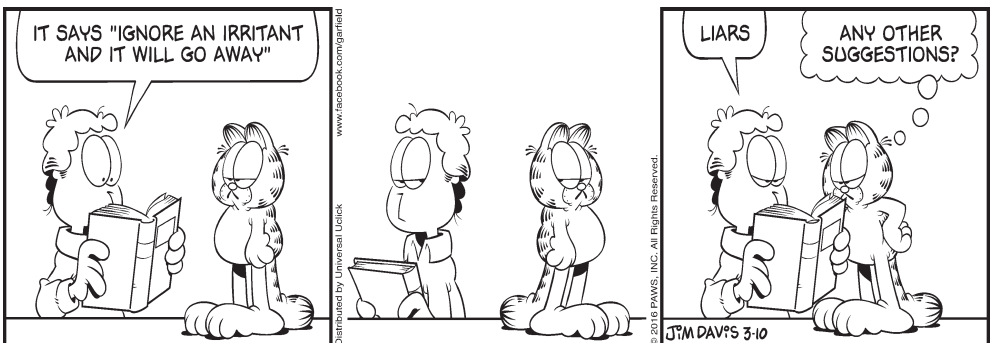
TUNDRA by Chad Carpenter



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE by Stephan Pastis



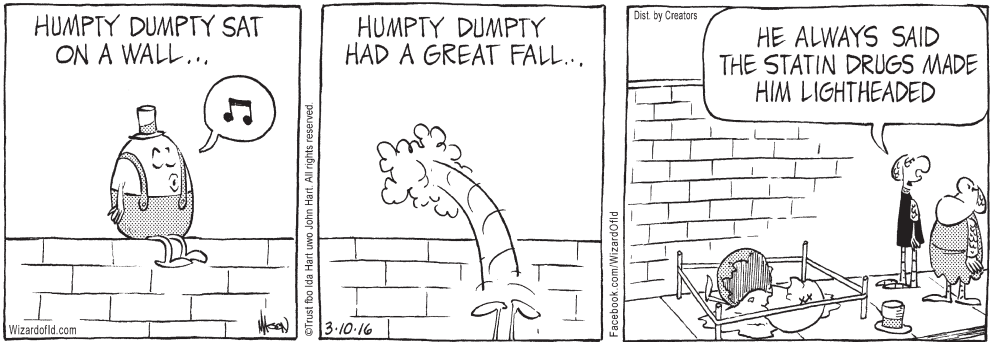
GARFIELD by Jim Davis



JEFF MACNELLY'S SHOE by Chris Cassatt and Gary Brookins



WIZARD OF ID by Brant Parker



THE PHANTOM by Lee Falk



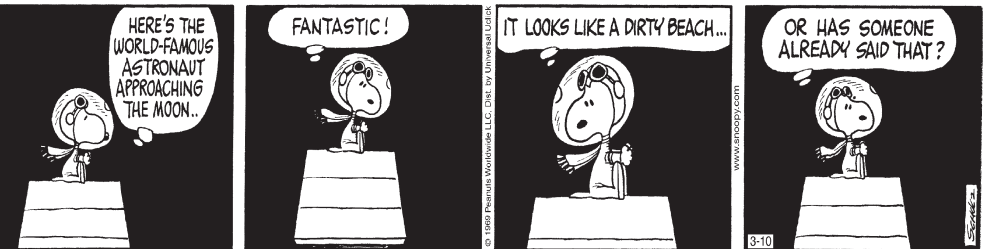
DILBERT by Scott Adams



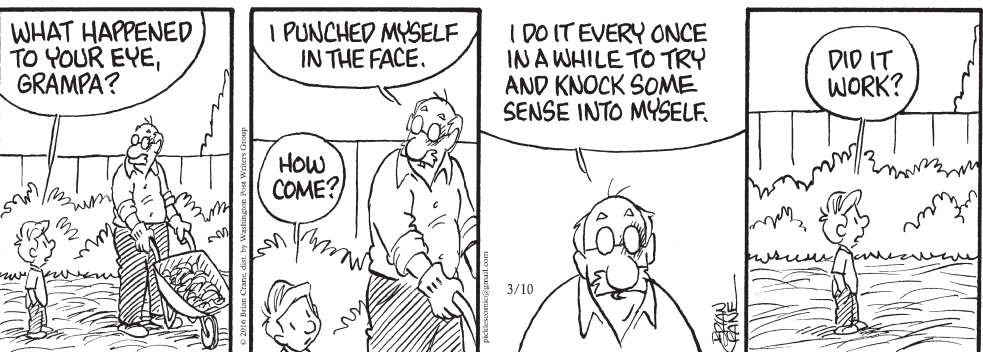
MARK TRAIL by James Allen



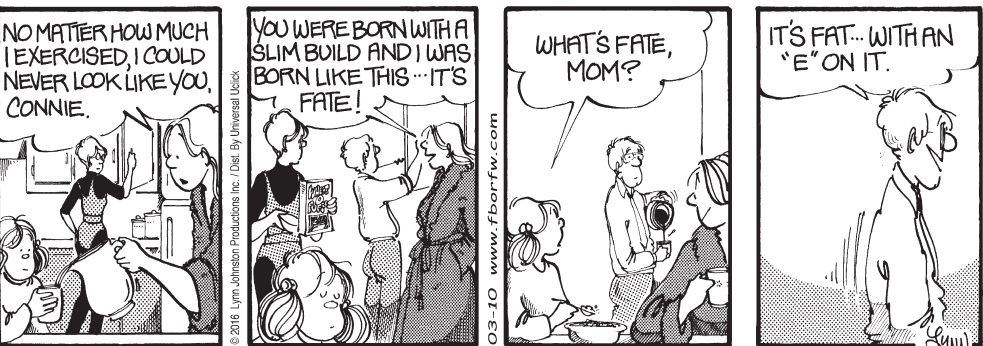
PEANUTS by Charles Schulz



PICKLES by Brian Crane



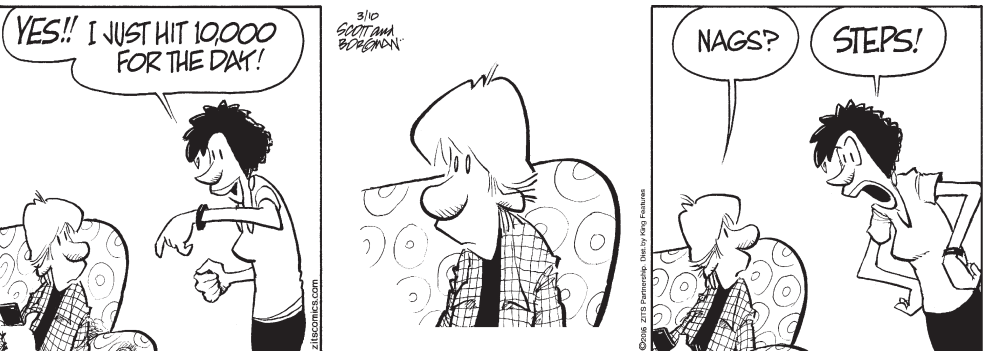
FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE by Lynn Johnston



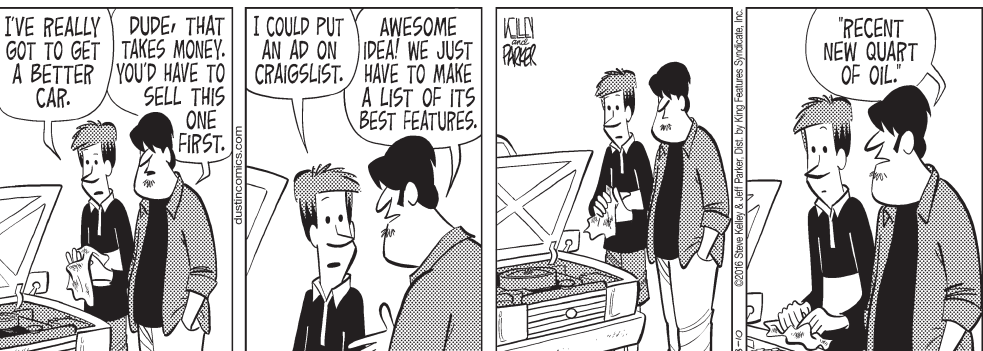
BABY BLUES by Jerry Scott & Rick Kirkman



ZITS by Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



DUSTIN by Steve Kelley and Jeff Parker



Daily Horoscope

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Yesterday you felt determined; today the motivation wanes, which is actually a good thing! It will help you move to the next ideas, which will be packed with potential energy.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). No one is better at being you than you are. It's funny how people will try to be, though. Today they'll tell you what you should do, how you should feel and whom you should love. It's ridiculous really. Your best move? Ignore them.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). It feels like the doors of the banquet of life have been opened to you on what just happens to be the first day of your new diet. It may be satisfying to take in the visual promise without "eating," for now.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). When sweet nothings are whispered between lovers, don't forget that it's the "nothings" that make the sweetness possible. You'll enjoy the buoyancy of anchor-less relationships. Love levitates.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Extremely creative people such as you have been known to find it difficult to stick to one idea and see it through to the end. That's why teaming with a Taurus, Virgo or Capricorn will be a very wise move today.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You're now ready to explore territory that's been previously off-limits or unknown. The boldness you feel will ebb and flow through this process, so make the most of today's surge!

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). The person who dares to poke at that little piece of insecurity you've had hidden away is in for a big response. Most likely, that response will be laughter! Even if it's uncomfortable at first, it feels good to be seen more completely.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You and a certain someone used to be an item and now you're hardly even a thing. That's the natural path of some relationships. You'll work extra hard now to make sure one special tie doesn't wind up in the same category.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You're in unknown territory, but don't let this stop you from moving. The only way to learn this area is to travel through it. If you have to go slowly, it's fine — as long as you go.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). If you can prove your superiority over your former self, this makes you very happy. That's why, whatever is asked of you, you'll give more and you'll give better than you did before.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Truly, your abilities are developing beyond your expectations. You will tend to get most things right from the start today. Don't let this spoil you, though. It's not a fluke, but it's better if you treat it as if it were one.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Over the years you've built protective layers around your heart, which is only smart, wise and prudent. However, it's also inconvenient — that is, unless you also build a door, give it a lock and give someone else the key.