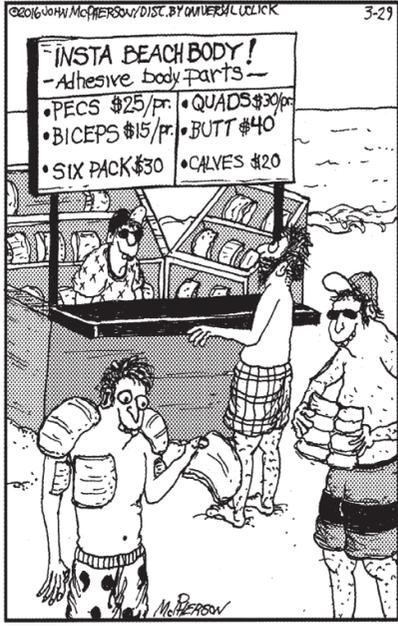


CLOSE TO HOME by John McPherson



Man's sudden death prompts preparation

Dear Abby: My 29-year-old brother died suddenly last month. It was completely unexpected. He left behind a wife and 1-year-old son.

Although they lived across the country, she allowed us to bring him home for his funeral and burial. I took care of a lot of the arrangements on this end, while she took care of things there and made travel arrangements.

At 26, I never expected to be planning a funeral! But it has made me realize how unprepared I was for any unforeseen event. Please remind your young readers that it's never too early to take care of some basic plans, including a will. As a single mother, I know how unprepared I was if something should happen to me.

While it's not a pleasant thought, it's tougher on the survivors if nothing is in place. When it comes to mortality, it's better to be practical and prepared. — *Still Grieving, But Now Prepared*



JEANNE PHILLIPS
DEAR ABBY

Dear Still Grieving: Please accept my sympathy for the untimely loss of your brother. I can only imagine how shocking this has been for your family.

Mortality isn't a subject that younger people usually dwell on. But if they want what they have to be distributed according to their wishes, or if there are children involved, it's important to put their wishes in writing regardless of their age.

Readers: This includes what you would or would not like done if you can't speak for yourself.

Do you want to be on artificial life support if there is no hope for your recovery? How do you feel about becoming an organ donor? Put it in writing!

Dear Abby: "Don" and I have been married for 44 years, and our marriage has had its ups and downs. We are now both retired. The problem is that Don does not get along with our 43-year-old son, "Chris." (He gets along fine with our two daughters.)

Don and Chris have very different personalities and little in common. Chris lives abroad but visits frequently and stays with us. During

his most recent visit, his father was distant and rude to him. It has happened before and is hurtful to Chris and to me.

I have tried speaking with my husband about it, but he never has a good reason for his behavior. When my mother heard what happened, she got angry and said if I don't divorce Don, she doesn't want to see either of us again.

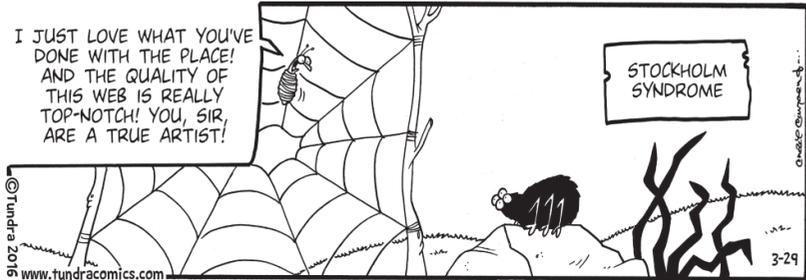
Please help me. I don't know what to do. — *Hurt Badly in Oregon*

Dear Hurt Badly: After 40 years of marriage, you should have learned by now not to confide your problems in your mother. That your husband seems incapable of tolerating his son because of "personality differences" is regrettable, but hardly a cause for divorce at this point.

If Chris stayed in a hotel during his visits rather than your home, it would provide less opportunity for confrontation, and you both might enjoy the visits more. I hope you will consider it.

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

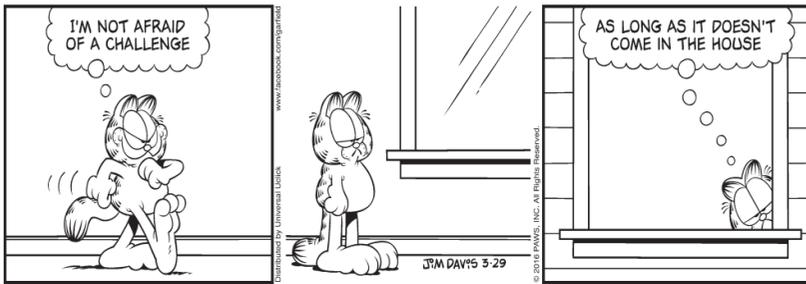
TUNDRA by Chad Carpenter



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE by Stephan Pastis



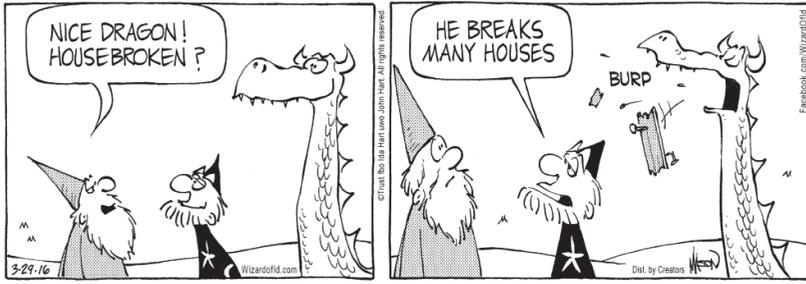
GARFIELD by Jim Davis



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



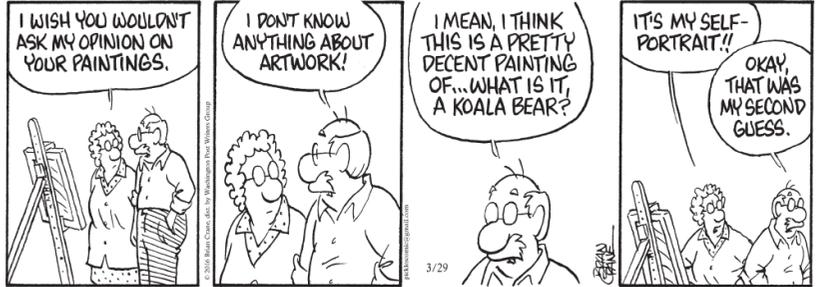
MARK TRAIL by James Allen



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). Brilliance in any area of life usually comes off as effortless to those who don't know any better — but you're not fooled. You know the work that goes into navigating complexities.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). There are planners, and then there are "pantsers," who prefer to throw themselves in and sort things out as they go. Such people will frighten you today.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Mental pursuits ignite your energy. Today these pursuits will be byproducts of your social agenda, which will center on getting the undivided attention of a certain someone.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Even the most exciting, jet-fueled relationships must touch down to earth once in a while to refuel. Don't take the slowed pace as a personal slight, because it's actually necessary to the overall momentum of the relationship.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You will simultaneously succeed at more than one important endeavor, making you the envy of your friends and colleagues. In fact, to avoid unwanted complication, you may want to keep your successes to yourself.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You will privately send your respect, affection and admiration to perfect strangers and this will boomerang back

to you, as usual. The way you think about others is the way you think about yourself.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Of course you prefer to deal with the trustworthy, but sometimes that's not an option and you have to go forward anyhow. Not today. Today you can't afford to bother with those who inspire doubt in you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Usually you connect with like-minded people, but because your interests and values are shifting, you will have to take a more deliberate, conscious approach to finding the people you wish to circulate among.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Grudges harm most the one who holds them. For this reason you'll let your grievances go. You're way too busy today to waste time remembering what you're supposed to be bothered about.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You'll be asked to speak for the group, so be sure you know what the group wants to say. You'll be given full access to a public forum in which to communicate your ideas and start a ball rolling.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You find your path to happiness by following the spark of curiosity that ignites in you this morning. Given that pursuit, and your keen awareness of everyday beauty, this day will bring smiles by the dozens.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). The friend who helps you see yourself the way others do is a treasure. If this person also possesses a kind, gentle way of delivering information, cherish this relationship, which is more valuable than gold.



HOLIDAY MATHIS