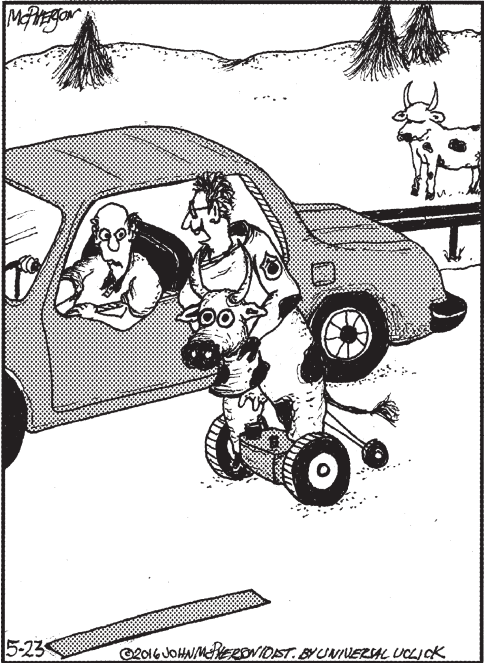


CLOSE TO HOME by John McPherson



"It's the latest in undercover police vehicles. I bet you were pretty surprised to see a cow bearing down on you at 85 mph, eh?!"

Couple should get counseling together

Dear Abby: My girlfriend and I have been together for three years and have a 1-year-old daughter. Unfortunately, our fights have become more frequent now. She suggested counseling, which I agree with. However, she insists I'm the one who is causing the problem and I should go first. Sometimes we fight about finances, since I work to support our family while she looks after our daughter. We are a mixed-race couple and sometimes race comes into play. She accuses me of making demands on her because of my ethnicity (e.g., "You want an obedient partner because you're Chinese"). To me, that's racist, and I have told her so. Of course she disagrees. Needless to say, that's my version of the story. Where can I find a good therapist? — *Robert in New York*

Dear Robert: I agree you and your girlfriend could use some counseling, but you



JEANNE PHILLIPS
DEAR ABBY

should get it TOGETHER. That your girlfriend drags race into your financial disagreements is unfair to you. Ask your physician if he or she knows a good counselor, check with your health insurance company for a referral, or visit the New York State Psychological Association website (nyspa.org) to find someone who is licensed to practice in your state.

Dear Abby: I am writing about all the letters you've printed that assume every relationship must end in marriage — or at least living together — in order to work. It isn't so. Robert Parker, noted author of the Spenser novels, and his wife lived on separate floors of a duplex for decades. I have been with my significant other for 20 years, and the only thing that keeps us together is living apart. In our case, we aren't married and we live in the same condo complex, a minute's walk apart. After we had spent about 10 years as a couple, the neighbors stopped asking me when we would be married. I'm a 59-year-old woman; he's a 64-year-old man. He needs absolute minimalism in his

home, as opposed to my need to have things out so I don't forget them. In short, we have different living styles. I have met many other women who envy my living situation. They love their husbands, but find living together to be too stressful. Comments, Abby? — *Cindy in Naples, Fla.*

Dear Cindy: My only comment would be that I'm glad you and your significant other have found a lifestyle that works for you and fosters your relationship. I hope you have many happy years together and apart.

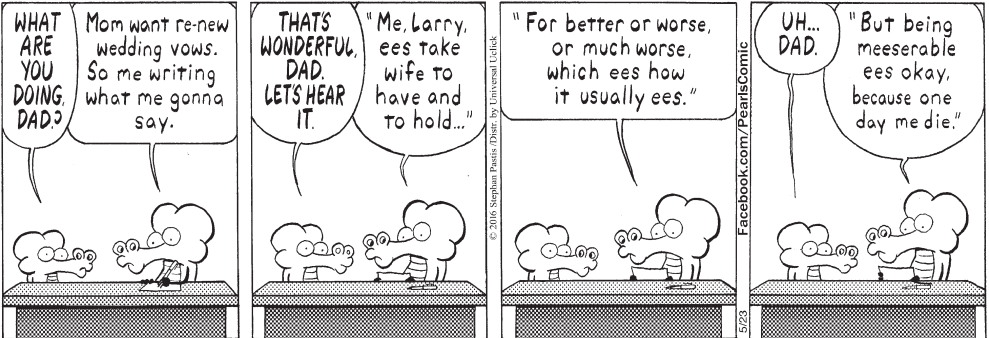
Dear Abby: If I take my wife out for a nice dinner, is it rude for her to excuse herself a couple of times during dinner to go outside and smoke a cigarette? — *Dinner For Two*

Dear D.F.T.: This isn't a question of rudeness. Your wife is severely addicted to nicotine. If she could make it through the meal without a fix, I'm sure she would. How sad! **Write Dear Abby at** www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

TUNDRA by Chad Carpenter



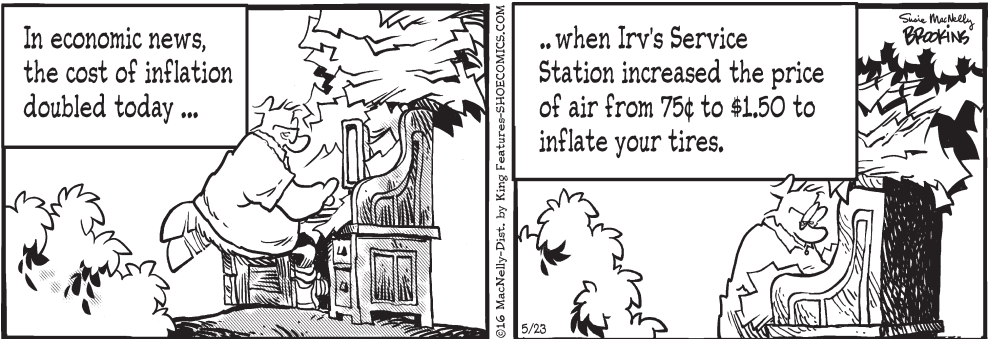
PEARLS BEFORE SWINE by Stephan Pastis



GARFIELD by Jim Davis



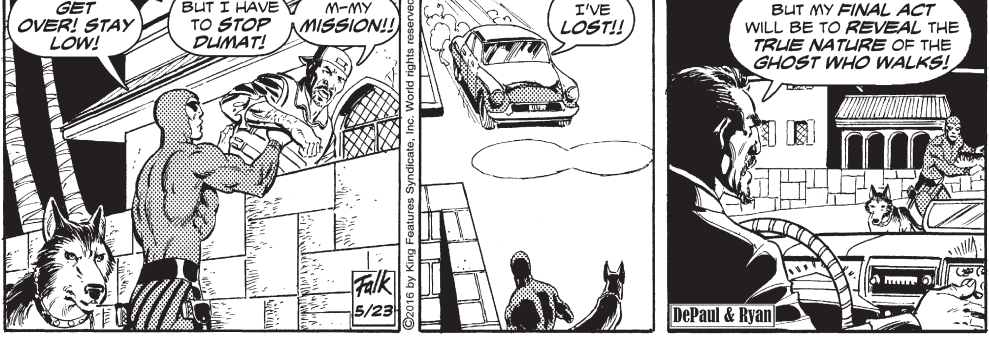
JEFF MACNELLY'S SHOE by Chris Cassatt and Gary Brookins



WIZARD OF ID by Brant Parker



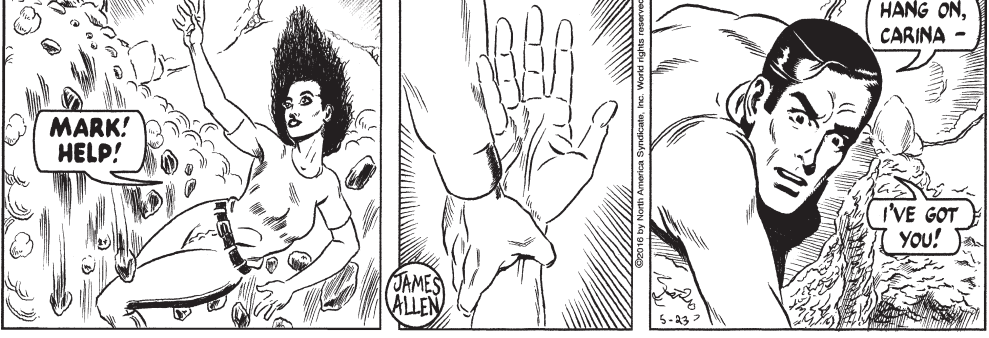
THE PHANTOM by Lee Falk



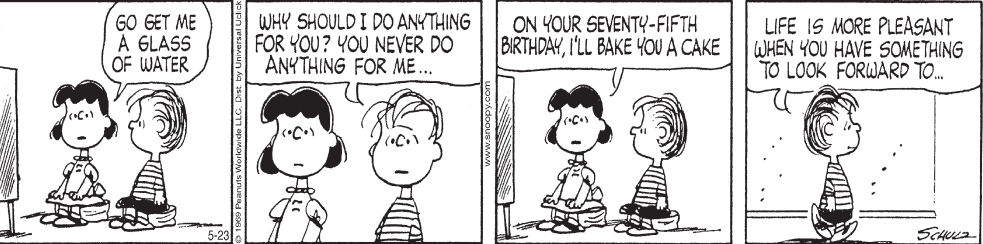
DILBERT by Scott Adams



MARK TRAIL by James Allen



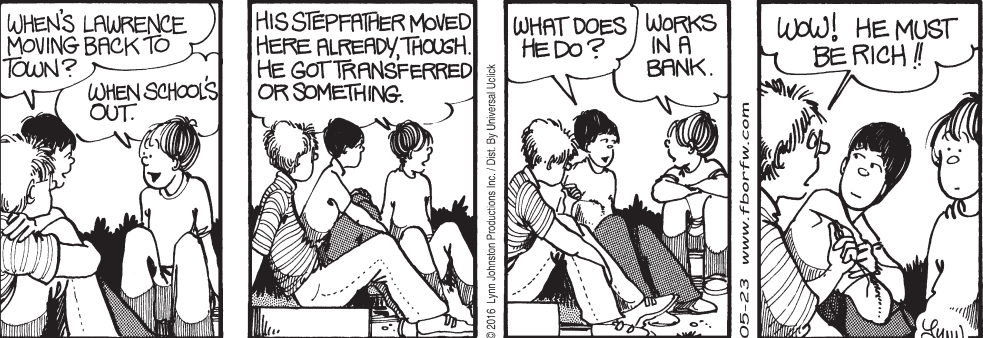
PEANUTS by Charles Schulz



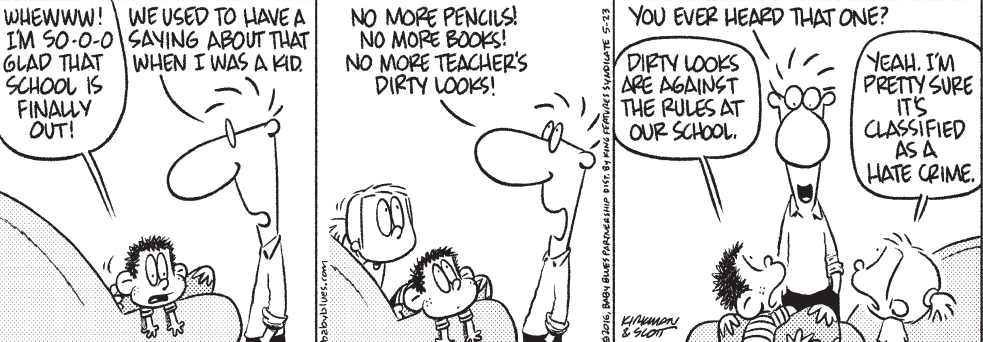
PICKLES by Brian Crane



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE by Lynn Johnston



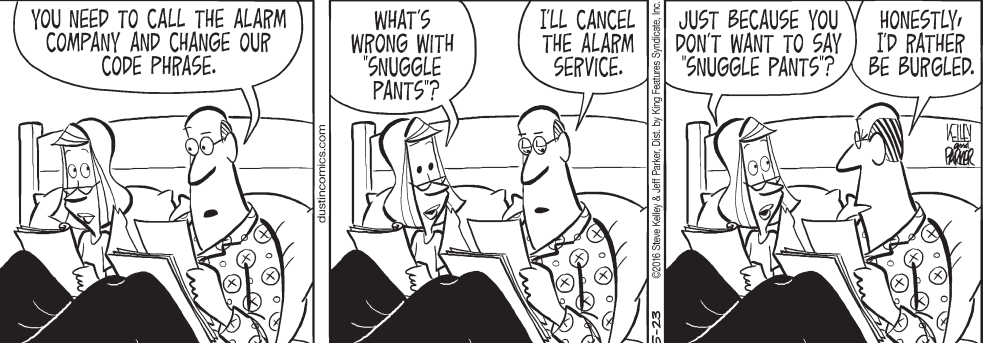
BABY BLUES by Jerry Scott & Rick Kirkman



ZITS by Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



DUSTIN by Steve Kelley and Jeff Parker



Daily Horoscope

ARIES (March 21-April 19). It's pretty simple to impress the higher-ups at work. Figure out what's needed and wanted and then deliver it in a timely manner. These simple practices will put smiles on the faces of everyone you interact with.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). The chain of behaviors that served you so well a few weeks ago no longer works quite as well today. Has everything changed that much? The short answer is: Yes. Adapt now, while it's easy.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You have an excellent sense of where your true talents lie. Don't let the people around you try to convince you that you'd be better at doing their bidding than your own.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). There's nothing inherently good or bad about any of the options available to you today, only varying degrees of comfort in the fit. When someone chooses or passes on your offerings, keep in mind this also has to do with fit.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Just because you're not entirely sure where you are, it doesn't mean that you're lost. This is where your attention has taken you. And when you place your attention back on home, it will take you there, too.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). There are certain things that have to happen for you to do your job properly, but perhaps not quite as many as you

think. Going forward, regardless of obstacle or lack, will bring unexpected resources to hand.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You won't sign up until you know the prize — the higher the stakes the better. Ultimately, the energy rush is the real bonus here. Competition will make you sharp and bold.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Should you be making a living doing something other than what you're doing? Or are you doing something for free that you would be wise to charge money for? These are the questions on your mind now.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You'll be enlisting someone's help, and you can afford to be a bit choosy in this. What you're offering is rarer than you might have guessed and will be interesting to many.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). While most are rushing about this business of trying to stay alive, sheltered and fed, you've an entirely different agenda — one that has less to do with security and more to do with putting something lovely into the world.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). The ones who neurotically over-think things have a certain charm. They wouldn't be so deeply involved if they didn't care. And at least they are paying attention. So many aren't! Besides, you benefit from their vigilance.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). The force field around you is in danger of being compromised by a first-class energy vampire. You know the one. The fix is pretty easy. Protect yourself. Lock the gate; seal the openings. This is best for now.



HOLIDAY MATHIS