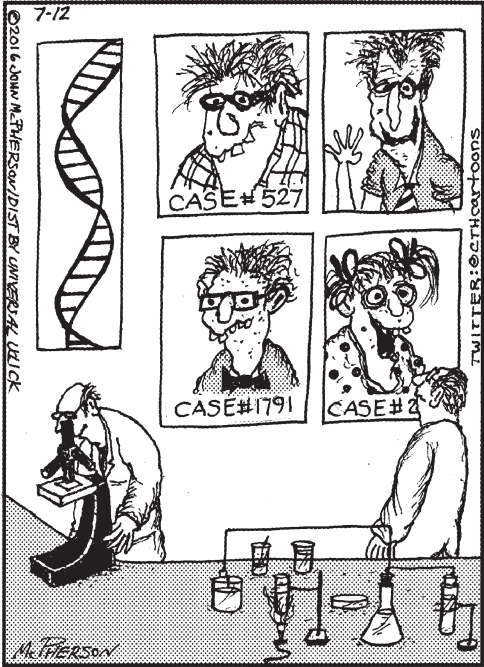


CLOSE TO HOME by John McPherson



Scientists at the Bolinder Institute work feverishly to try to isolate the gene that causes nerdism.

Man’s pattern indicates lack of empathy

Dear Abby: I’m a man in my mid-30s who has recently recognized a pattern in my romantic relationships. A few of them lasted for several years, before they ended for various reasons. In between, I’ve gone a couple of years before seeking out and starting a new relationship. In the in-between time, I go online and meet people I have no intention of meeting in “real life,” but who provide conversation and intimacy while I enjoy single life.

I’m about to repeat the pattern again. I’m a few months out of a three-year relationship and have met someone online. It’s great to chat online and over the phone, but we are not close geographically, and I have no intention of meeting in person. What’s your insight on this, and do you think this is healthy for me? Any ideas you can offer regarding this pattern? — *New Relationships*

Dear New: I wish you had told me more about the circumstances of your breakups.



JEANNE PHILLIPS
DEAR ABBY

Were they your idea or the other person’s? If they weren’t your idea, you may be using the in-between relationships as a safe form of entertainment while you are healing.

If you are upfront with the people you’re meeting online, and they realize you have no intention of letting these friendships go anywhere, then I suppose they are healthy for all concerned.

If not, then what you are doing shows not only a lack of character, but also a lack of sensitivity for the feelings of others, and it may be one of the reasons your long-term relationships aren’t lasting.

Dear Abby: My grandmother gets on my case all the time because I don’t clean the bathroom every day. She grew up in the ‘50s and ‘60s and was a stay-at-home mom to two boys.

However, I am a graduate student with a part-time job. I spend hours studying, and when I get some free time, I use it to do things I actually want to do.

My grandmother insists that everyone she knows/knew cleans their house every day, and when she talks about cleaning the bathroom, she doesn’t mean just picking things up; she

means spraying down all surfaces and getting out the bleach or foam spray to clean down the bathtub.

I don’t think she understands that no one I know — at least my age — cleans their house that way every single day, and that because I’m busy most days and often tired, I don’t want to come home and clean the whole house.

Am I lazy, or am I right in telling her that I will not deep-clean my bathroom/apartment every day? (I think deep-cleaning every two weeks is fine.)

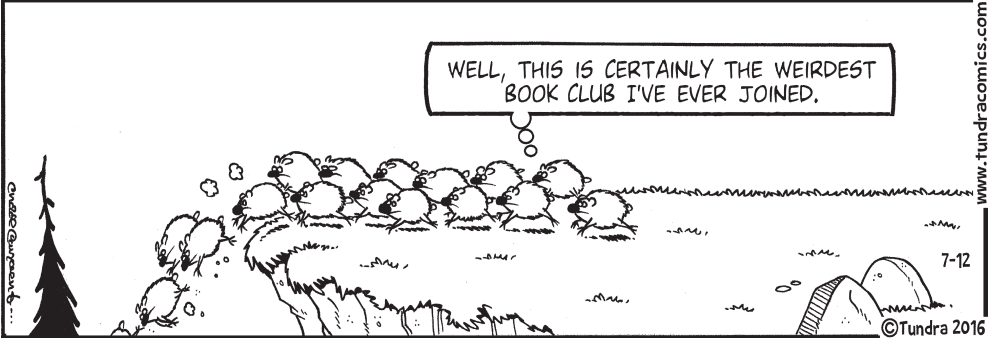
The free time I have is precious. How often is appropriate? — *Southern Marie*

Dear Southern Marie: If you haven’t been able to convince your grandmother by now that your circumstances are different, the chances of it happening are slim to none.

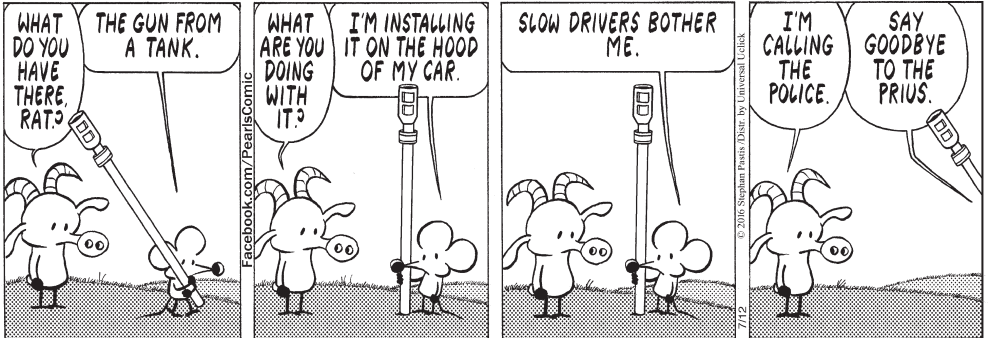
Under normal circumstances, deep-cleaning your bathroom once a week is fine and should keep it sparkling. If you’re smart, you’ll avoid arguing with her about this, because it’s a waste of breath.

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



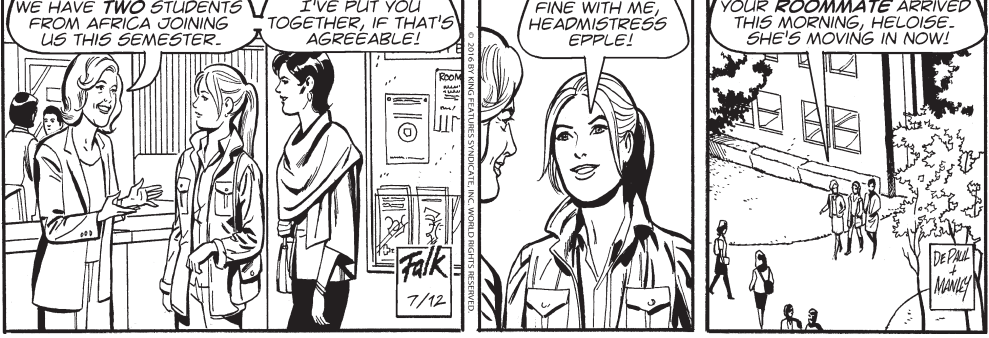
JEFF MACNELLY'S SHOE by Chris Cassatt and Gary Brookins



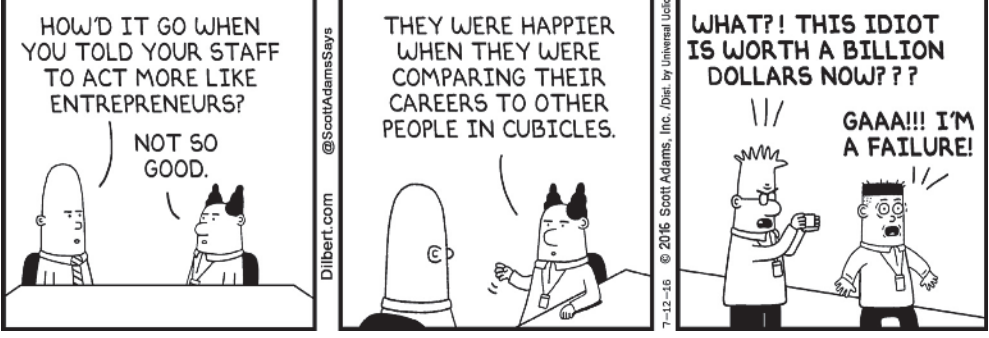
WIZARD OF ID by Brant Parker



THE PHANTOM by Lee Falk



DILBERT by Scott Adams



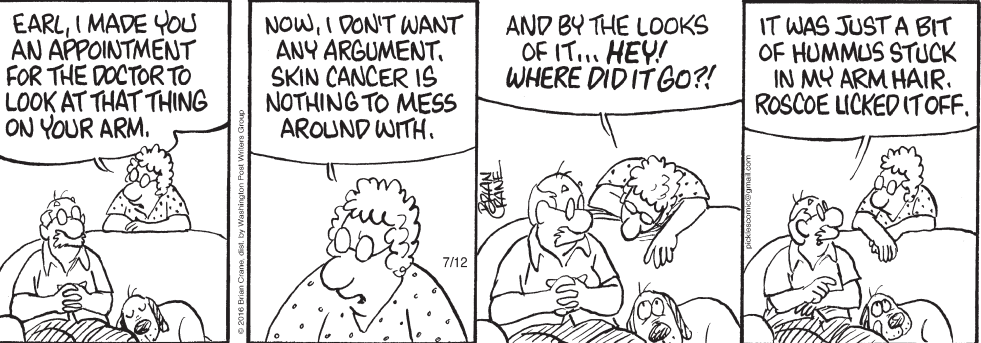
MARK TRAIL by James Allen



PEANUTS by Charles Schulz



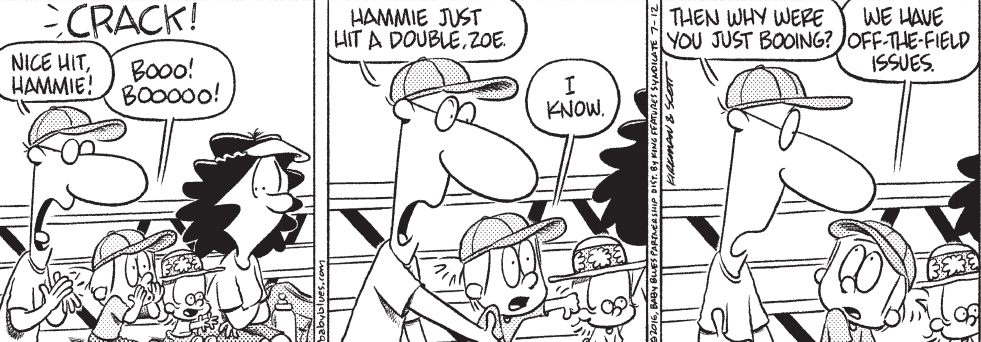
PICKLES by Brian Crane



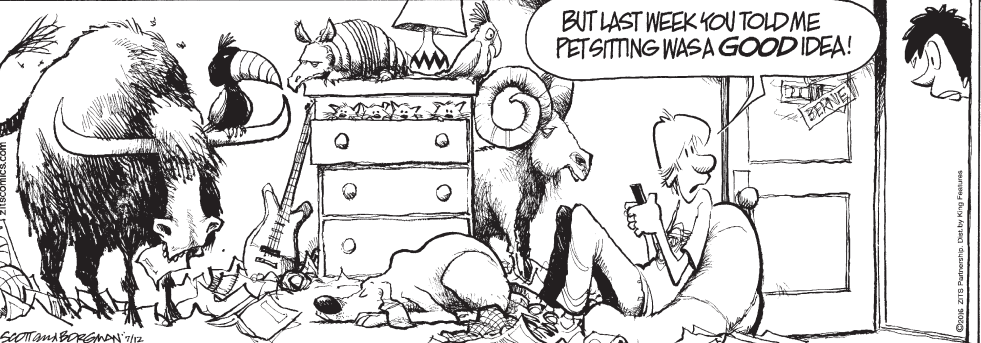
FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE by Lynn Johnston



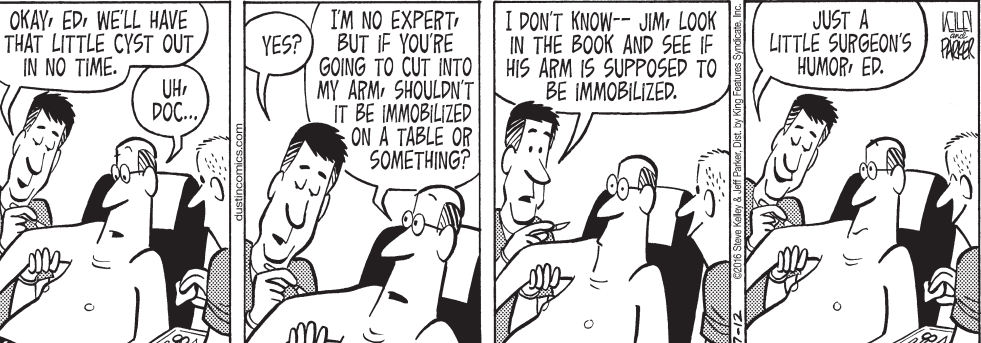
BABY BLUES by Jerry Scott & Rick Kirkman



ZITS by Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



DUSTIN by Steve Kelley and Jeff Parker



Daily Horoscope

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Simplicity and economy will get you in shape for the battle ahead. In other words, it's time to get lean and mean with your project so you'll have the strength and resources to do well.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Is this a time of want or a time of plenty? The fact is that you do have plenty, but it's not plenty of what you really want. Shed what you don't need and rid yourself of dependencies.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You are socially susceptible in the best possible way. When you see a person doing good, you immediately adopt the same behavior: When you encounter a fault in another, you immediately examine and eradicate your own.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You had one way to accomplish things, and now the bigger, better tools give you several ways. Is your work going to be better because of this? It's doubtful, at least at first. But as you learn, things will get better. Be patient.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). There's a reason you're in the place where you are. The people around you need you. You won't be able to help or see all whom you wish to connect with, but don't let that discourage you from touching the ones you can reach.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). There is no way to be perfect at the job you're doing, but there are a million ways to be good at it. Stop worrying so

much, and commit to doing your best with each small task.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). This is a day when it behooves you to quietly maintain your own privacy. Reveal nothing, be cautious in what you say and don't even think about posting pictures to social media of your whereabouts or your meals.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). It is amazing how many will take a pious stand, judging the others for not believing or behaving as they do, meanwhile not even bothering to uphold the basic values of honesty, decency and common sense.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You're so ambitious right now that there is simply no way you'll have the time, energy or resources to do everything you want to. Make a list and prioritize it. Planning will be the key to your success.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Of course winning is important to you, but try not to lose sight of what really matters — the usefulness and help you provide others. If you make even one person's life easier today, you've won.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). There are those who naturally fall within the bell curve of normal behavior; and there are those who have to work hard to fit in. Be kind to those in the second category, as you'll be their guide and solace today.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You've an open mind and a lot of compassion for the quiet thinkers around you. You're in this category, too, today, doing the invisible work that is every bit as hard as the work that makes one sweat.



HOLIDAY MATHIS