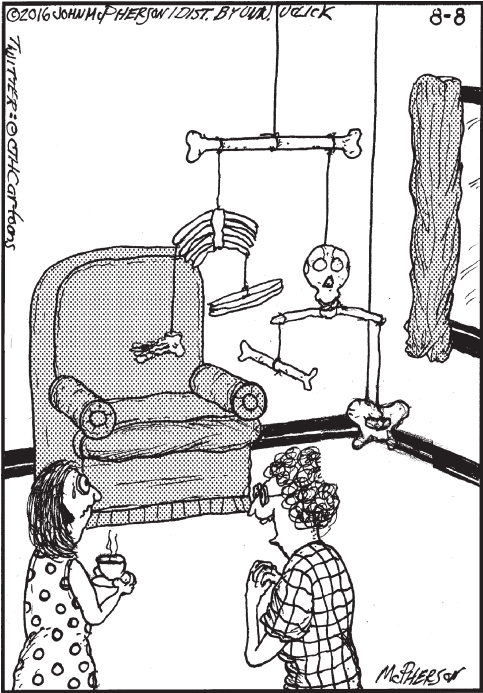


CLOSE TO HOME by John McPherson



“Isn't it neat? Wayne's chiropractor gave it to him for his birthday.”

Son won't stand up to disrespectful dad

**Dear Abby:** I have been with my boyfriend, “Jake,” for a year and a half. His dad does not like me. He has never thought I was good enough for his son, and he doesn't like the fact that I have a daughter from an earlier relationship. He thinks I'm interested in Jake only for his money.

When Jake and I attend family gatherings, his dad refuses to say hello to me. He does, however, make negative remarks about me to Jake. It's incredibly hurtful.

I have tried bringing it up to Jake, and he agrees. But he will not address it with his dad because “Dad won't change.” Can you help? — *Disliked in Massachusetts*



JEANNE PHILLIPS  
DEAR ABBY

**Dear Disliked:** I don't know how serious Jake is about you, but if he was in love with you and planned on marrying you, he would INSIST that, at the very least, his father treat you with respect. Dad won't change because his son isn't assertive enough to make plain that if he doesn't, he will be seeing less of the

both of you. I can only hope that your child isn't on the receiving end of this kind of treatment, because if that's happening I'm advising you to end the romance with Jake.

**Dear Abby:** I have been married to the love of my life for 21 years. He has helped me raise my two children to adulthood. Both have now moved away and have their own lives.

My problem started a year and a half ago, when my grandson was born. I live 750 miles from my daughter and her little boy, and have a standing invitation to see them as often as I want (every three to four months). It makes more sense for me to travel to see them than the reverse.

I have always invited my husband to come with me, but he refuses. He has now given me an ultimatum: I can see them no more than twice a year or he will divorce me. What do you say, Abby? — *Dumbstruck In Maine*

**Dear Dumbstruck:** I say you have three choices — either work this out with the help of a marriage counselor, see your daughter and grandson only twice a year or start talking to a lawyer. I have a strong hunch there's

more going on here than you have revealed in your letter — and whether or not your husband agrees to counseling, you should go.

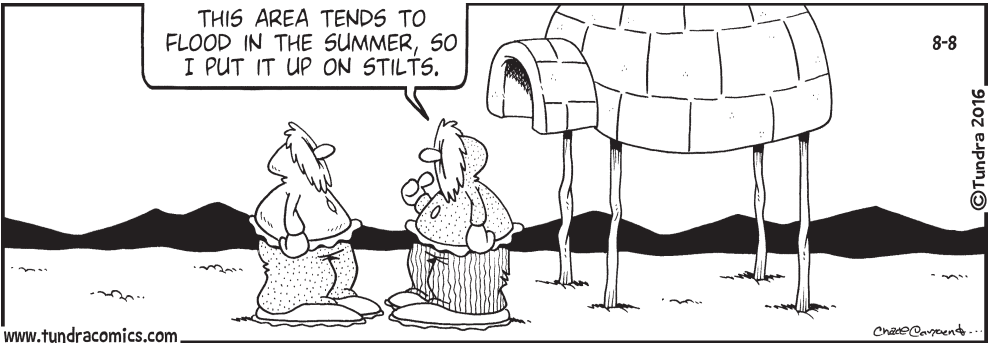
**Dear Abby:** I am an older woman who has been dating a very nice man for approximately seven months. I'm fashionable and take pride in my appearance. While my friend is clean and neat, he wears a baseball cap with all of his clothes — even his dress suits. I bought him a nice cap once and he was offended.

Since he is good in so many ways, should I ignore this one quirk? I'd love to see him without the baseball cap when we go out. — *Fashionable in Pennsylvania*

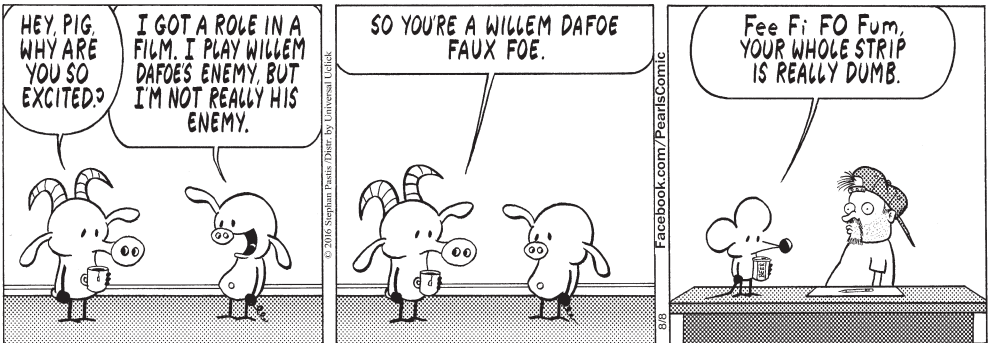
**Dear Fashionable:** Have you tried asking him WHY he does this? Your friend may wear baseball caps with every outfit because he's bald or has thinning hair and is self-conscious about it. (Many men are.) If this gentleman has only one quirk that bothers you, you might be wise to consider that his attire is a reflection only on himself and not you.

**Write Dear Abby at [www.DearAbby.com](http://www.DearAbby.com) or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.**

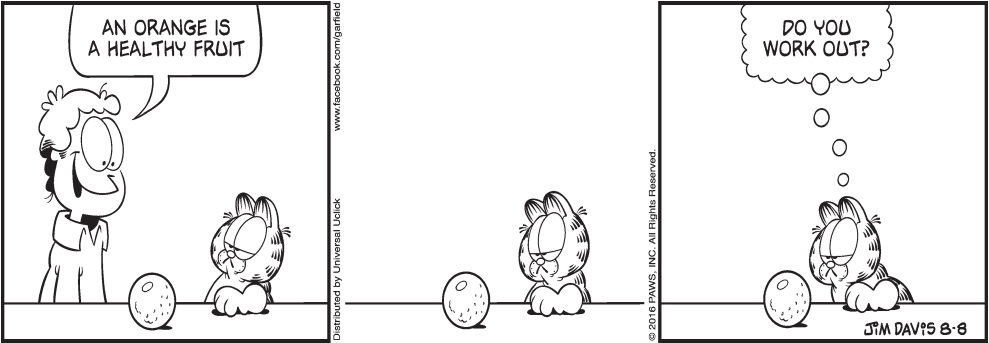
TUNDRA by Chad Carpenter



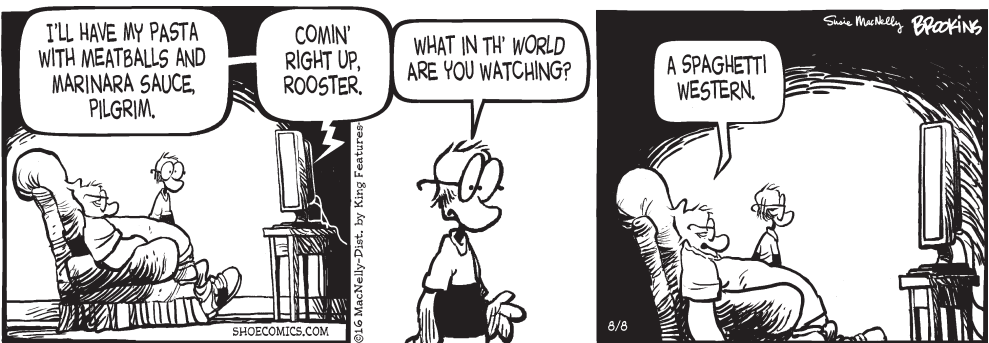
PEARLS BEFORE SWINE by Stephan Pastis



GARFIELD by Jim Davis



JEFF MACNELLY'S SHOE by Chris Cassatt and Gary Brookins



WIZARD OF ID by Brant Parker



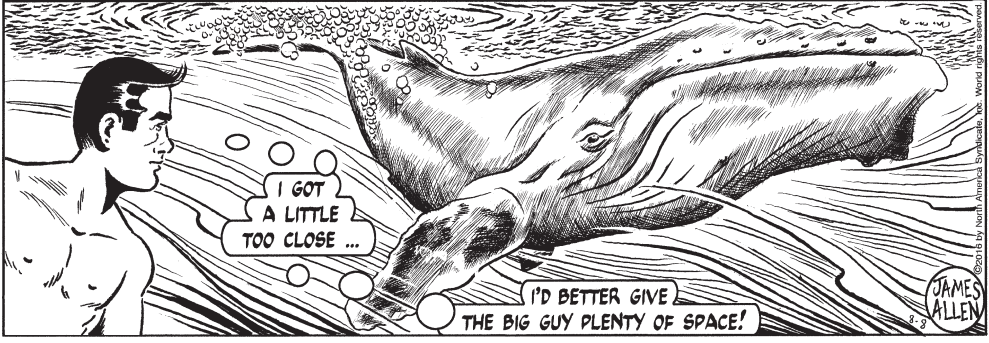
THE PHANTOM by Lee Falk



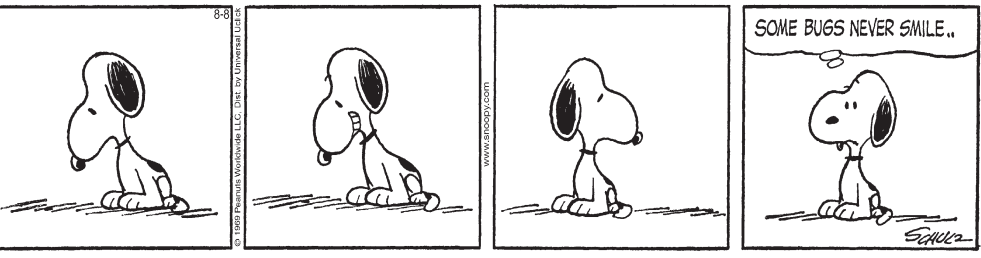
DILBERT by Scott Adams



MARK TRAIL by James Allen



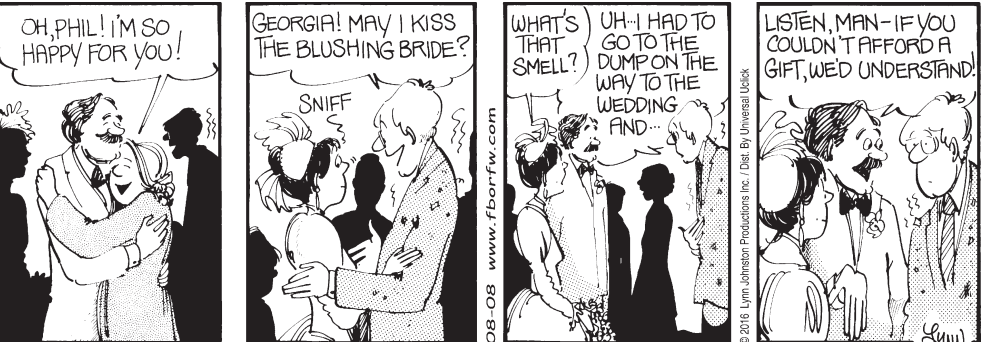
PEANUTS by Charles Schulz



PICKLES by Brian Crane



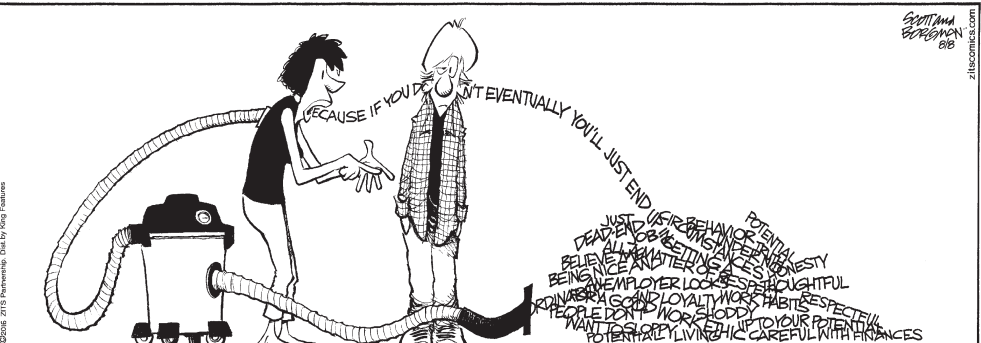
FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE by Lynn Johnston



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).** Happiness is knowing your way out before you get stuck. With an exit strategy in place you can relax and enjoy your environment, knowing you're not trapped. It's your choice to be there.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** Does it seem like you're crumbling into a stress wad? Take a walk. Oxygen levels go up, synapses fire, and then the endorphins kick in, too. It will become a completely different day because of your better brain.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** It's safe to assume that everyone is rooting for you. After all, most of the people around you serve to gain something if you succeed. And the others — well, they gain something from pretending to be supportive.

**CANCER (June 22-July 22).** So much of human interaction happens at a basic and tribal level. This is how we've survived as a species for thousands of years, so don't blame yourself for joining in the group think now.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** Don't saddle yourself with presumptive responsibility or animosity. Let your brain reside in the evidence that's happening in real time instead of leaping forward to make up stories based on probabilities you've made up in your head.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** Holding a person's interest will have more to do with holding back than showing up strong. No one will be



HOLIDAY MATHIS

more interesting than the person who isn't even there. Use the element of mystery responsibly.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** On some level you want to feel that you are continuously earning what you've got, every step of the way, otherwise you won't value it as much. This is why you suddenly feel animated, creative and witty around the person who's walking away.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** It's weak to be closed off to the competition. It makes you seem overly worried about losing. Relax. Remember that “the competition,” in some other scenario, could become your colleague and/or ally.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** You're getting pretty good about getting around the questions you don't want to answer. And by the way, there are very few, if any, people in the world to whom you actually owe an explanation.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** Gateways aren't just about drugs. They're also about heaven, beautiful parks, magnificent homes and success in general. Make life easier by posting figurative gateways that open to the wonders you want to experience.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** If you're wondering if you're good enough for a situation, it's either a sign that you're not ready for it, or it's an opportunity to rise to the occasion and become who you've always wanted to be.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).** What you need is a kind of performance coach — someone who can tell you how to improve your work. Perhaps the most important question to ask now is: “Is this the right kind of work for this crowd?”