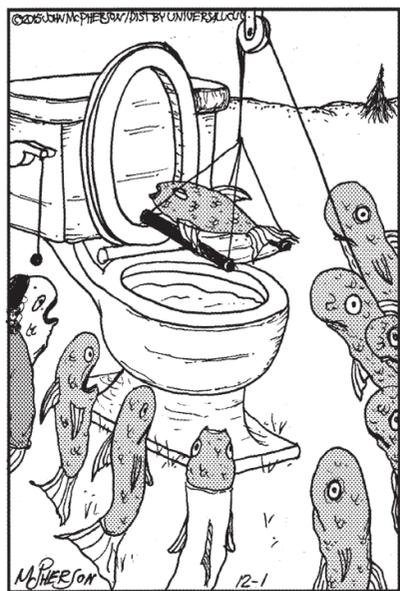


CLOSE TO HOME by John McPherson



Fish funerals

HIV status is very important to know

Dear Abby: Today, Dec. 1, is World AIDS Day. With effective treatment, people with HIV can live as long as those without HIV. Fear, shame and ignorance remain barriers to testing and treatment, which can be more deadly than HIV itself.

People with HIV who are in treatment need never develop advanced HIV (formerly full-blown AIDS). Please encourage your readers to get tested, and if positive, to get treatment. HIV can affect anyone. — *Mary in Frederick, Md.*

Dear Mary: I'm glad you wrote. Knowing one's HIV status is extremely important because, unlike in years past, the disease can be controlled. But in order to do that and not spread it to others, it is essential that sexually active individuals get tested.

Readers, you can be a healthy HIV-positive person and control it IF you know you have it AND get treatment. Ask your doctor about being tested, if you have one. If you don't have

a doctor, contact your county health department about how to find testing and treatment in your community, or visit www.freehivtest.net for information about free tests in many areas across the nation and abroad.

Dear Abby: I am retired, divorced and never had children. My two sisters have four adult children between them. Their kids are all married and have children themselves.

Every Christmas there is a gift exchange, which I don't attend because I stay in Florida during the winter. At this stage in my life, I dread the holiday because it is expected that I spend a minimum of \$50 per person for two dozen people.

I own some properties I am desperately trying to prepare for the market. At my age, I no longer need or want anything. It has reached a point where the "preferred" gift is money, which isn't the idea behind the Christmas holiday. How can I politely stop this habit? — *Mrs. Ebenezer Scrooge in New Hampshire*

Dear Mrs. Scrooge: You politely stop the habit by telling your sisters in advance that you are trying to prepare your properties for

sale and money is limited. Therefore, you will be buying Christmas gifts only for your younger grandnieces and -nephews from now on (if you choose). Be sure to send the adults lovely holiday cards, however, so they know they are remembered.

Dear Abby: Besides the usual snoring most wives tolerate, I have had to endure something worse. At least once a week for the last few years, my husband will make a fist while asleep and swing it across the bed, striking me. The last time, it caused a tooth to chip, and frankly, it scares me to death.

He is by no means violent when awake. Other than sleeping on the couch, what can I do? — *Black and Blue in New Jersey*

Dear B and B: Before your husband causes you any more physical harm, schedule an appointment for him with a sleep disorder specialist. For both your sakes, please don't put it off. Your doctor or medical insurance carrier should be able to refer you to one.

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

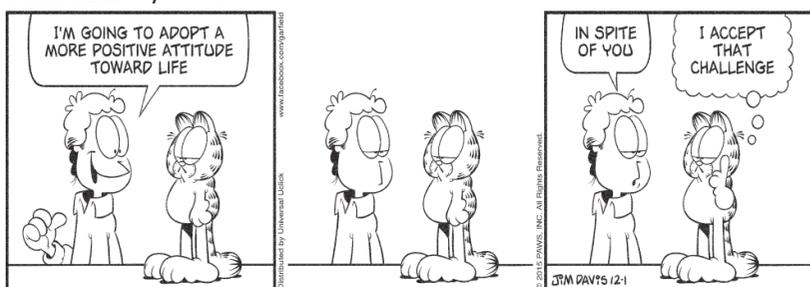
TUNDRA by Chad Carpenter



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE by Stephan Pastis



GARFIELD by Jim Davis



JEFF MACNELLY'S SHOE by Chris Cassatt and Gary Brookins



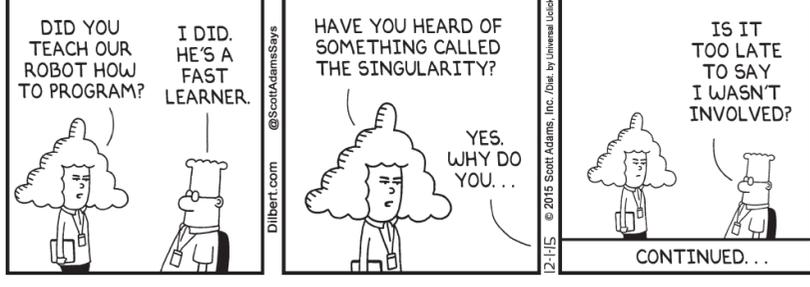
WIZARD OF ID by Brant Parker



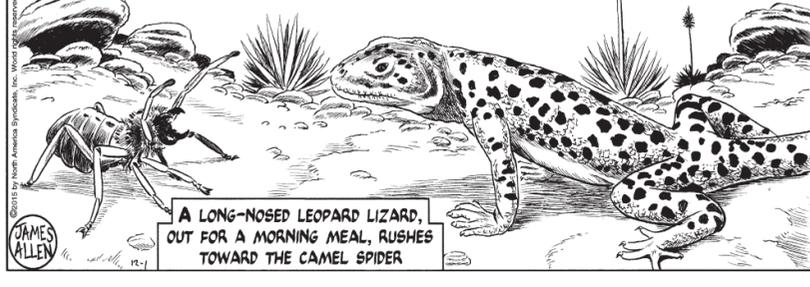
THE PHANTOM by Lee Falk



DILBERT by Scott Adams



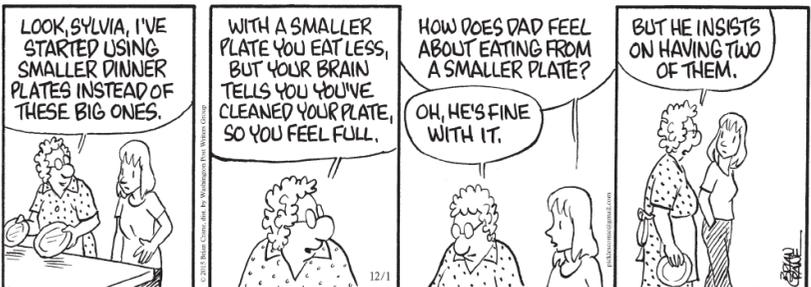
MARK TRAIL by James Allen



PEANUTS by Charles Schulz



PICKLES by Brian Crane



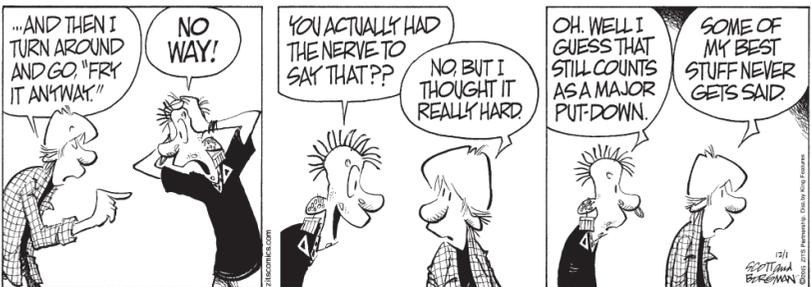
FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE by Lynn Johnston



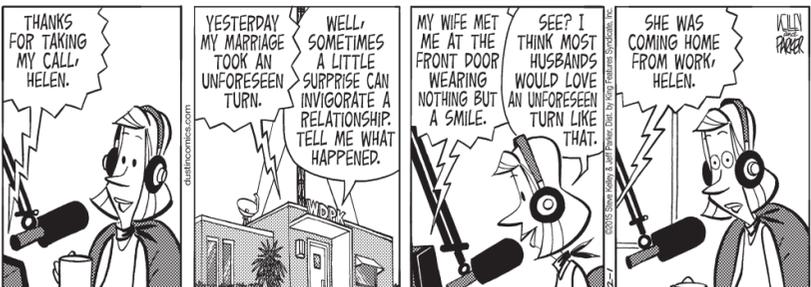
BABY BLUES by Jerry Scott & Rick Kirkman



ZITS by Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



DUSTIN by Steve Kelley and Jeff Parker



Daily Horoscope

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You believe something you've been told, and this will tease you into action today, searching for a kind of missing treasure. Maybe you won't find the stuff of legend, but what you will find has value.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You like routine — your sign thrives on it — and yet even methodical Taurus fears falling into a rut. That's why you'll obey your inner rebel, take an unexpected turn and enjoy the surprising results.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). A person's energy can't help but get imprinted on anything and everything that a person touches, and you'll feel this as you pick up a project where the last person left off.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). It's easy to be bold when you're with the majority. You won't be today, so it will take more courage to state your view. By sharing in a calm manner, you could sway public opinion.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). If you can stay a bit detached, many things will be easier for you. You'll see that though the situation is imperfect, everyone is trying hard to contribute to the very best of his or her ability.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You'll go fast when you're alone, but do try and slow down when you're in the group because, for starters, many will have a difficult time keeping up with you. Also, you'll enjoy the slower pace.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). It was likely a wise (-cracking) Venus-ruled individual who once said, "Chocolate, men, coffee — some things are better rich." With your opulent appetites lately, you can relate to the sentiment.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). The day's events require you to be more patient, respectful and forgiving toward a loved one than usual, which will come naturally to you. You'll be similarly received should you ever need such mercy.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). The "frenemy" situation you have on your hands will prove to be a healthy and productive force in your life. The tension between you may be occurring because you two are more alike than either of you cares to admit.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). The more you learn the more you realize that your previous way of thinking was too narrowly focused to realize all you could gain from a situation. New insights inspire your move in an unforeseen direction.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Once upon a time you found financial balance by learning how to want less and earn more. You've also found it by wanting more and figuring out a way to make enough to afford it. Either way will work.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). The respect of your peers when you think you've earned it, but you don't require approval to keep going. The plan you're improving won't make sense to everyone, but if it makes sense to you, that will be enough.



HOLIDAY MATHIS