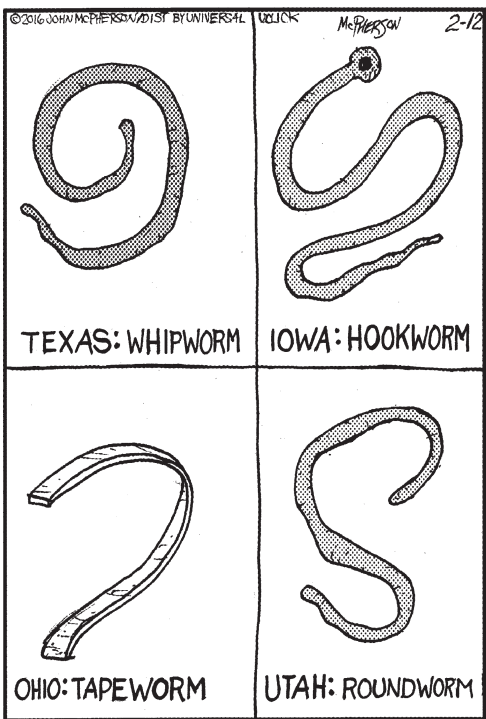


CLOSE TO HOME by John McPherson



The four most popular state worms.

Parenting at ex's house an issue for wife

Dear Abby: I am a divorced father who has recently remarried. I have parenting time with my children one weeknight and every other weekend.

My children have told me that during the week they prefer doing their homework at their mother's home. They say that by the time I pick them up, prepare dinner and they start their homework, it's already time to return to their mother's. They are at ages where homework assignments can take several hours.

My ex is OK with me spending time with them at her home. She uses the time to run errands and do other things she may not have time for during the week. When there's no school, I bring the kids to our house. All weekend parenting time takes place at my home.

The problem is, my present wife can't stand that I spend time with my children at my ex's home. She doesn't understand why I won't bring them here. I feel there's ample opportunity on the weekends for my kids to be at our



JEANNE PHILLIPS
DEAR ABBY

house and for her to build a relationship with them. Academics are crucial at this point in their lives.

So — do I disrupt their homework to accommodate my wife? Or should I continue the arrangement that my kids, my former wife and I have established? — *Parenting Time in Nebraska*

Dear Parenting Time: It appears you have married a woman who is insecure. Your children's reasons for wanting to stay at their mother's during the week seem valid. You didn't mention how long you and wife No. 2 have been married, but if it's a brand-new marriage, point out that during school breaks and summer vacation she will have the mid-week time to bond with your children that she's craving.

Dear Abby: My employer hosted a professional development workshop on workplace etiquette and conduct related to gender and personal identity. The facilitator told us to make sure we always use the gender pronoun preferred by the person we are talking to or about. But she didn't give any guidance about

how to know what those pronouns are if it's not clear from someone's outward appearance. Additionally, I have learned I'm not very good at guessing.

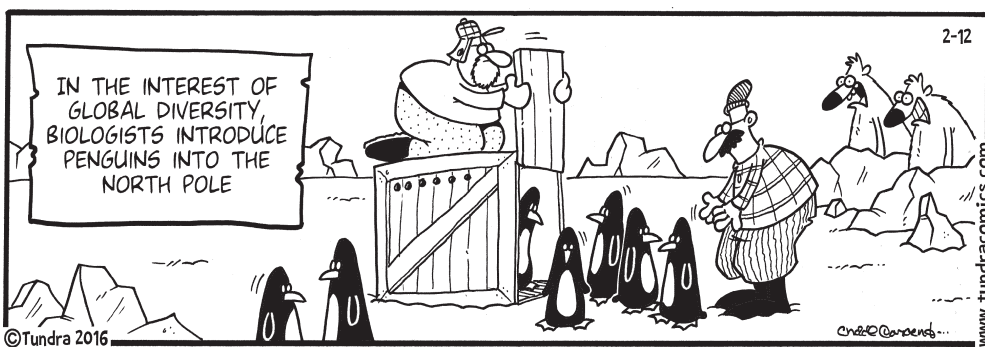
Is there a polite way to ask someone if they prefer to be called he or she? What about people who don't use either? It seems like there's a lot of opportunity to offend someone. I'd hate to upset anyone by using the wrong pronoun, but I also don't want to admit to the person that I can't tell if he or she is a man or woman. It's like walking in a minefield. — *What's Right?*

Dear What's Right: This is such new territory, it may take a while for the general public to adjust. However, the person's name should be a clue about which gender he or she identifies with.

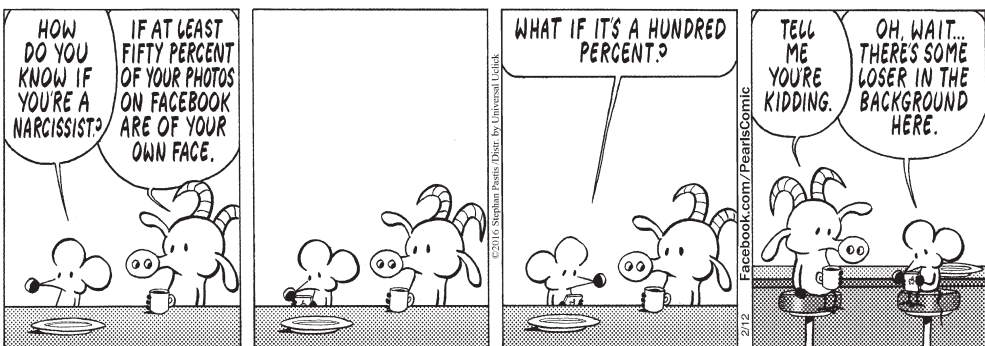
While I wouldn't recommend asking what gender the person is, it wouldn't be inappropriate to use the word "they" when speaking about the person because that pronoun is being used more in the singular.

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

TUNDRA by Chad Carpenter



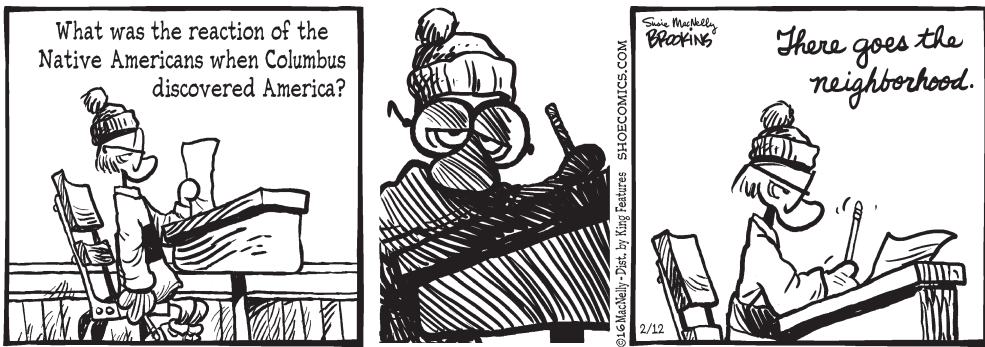
PEARLS BEFORE SWINE by Stephan Pastis



GARFIELD by Jim Davis



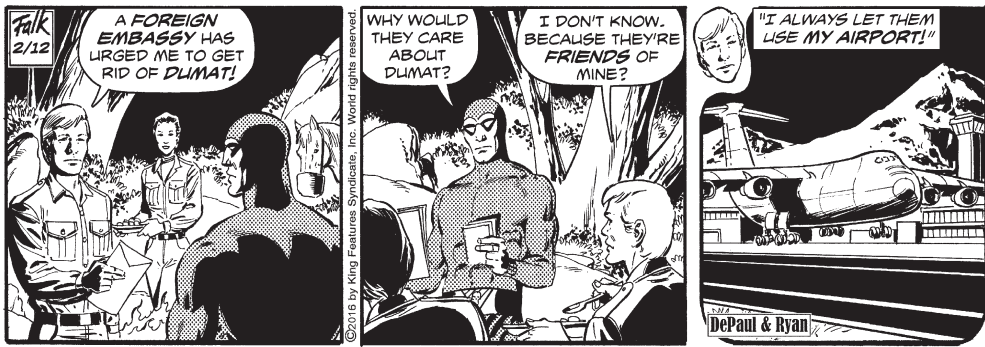
JEFF MACNELLY'S SHOE by Chris Cassatt and Gary Brookins



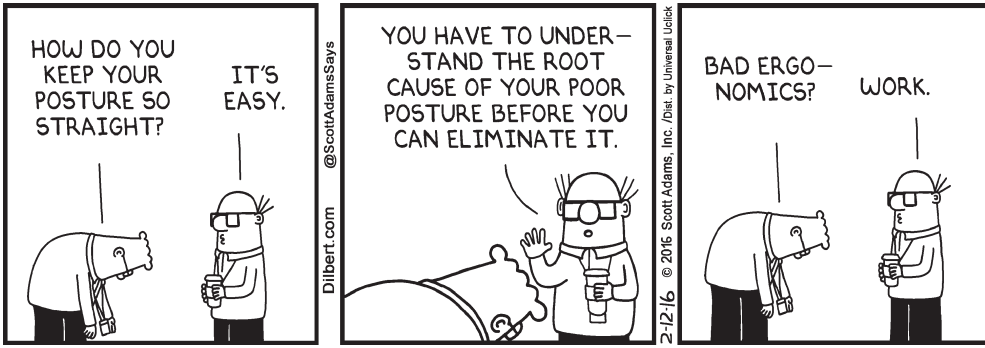
WIZARD OF ID by Brant Parker



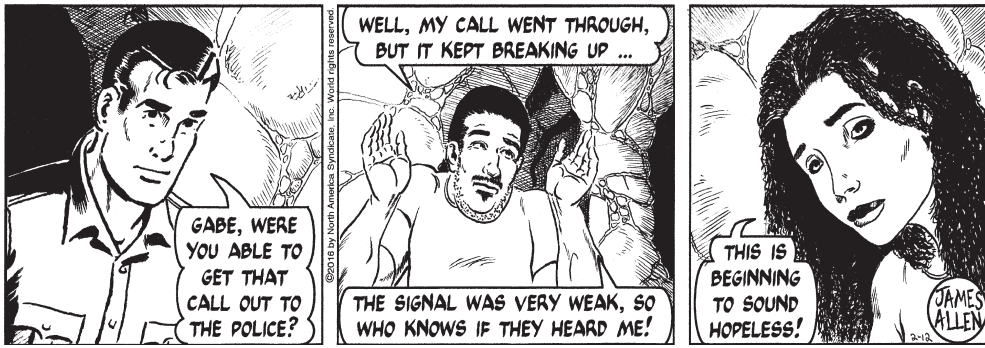
THE PHANTOM by Lee Falk



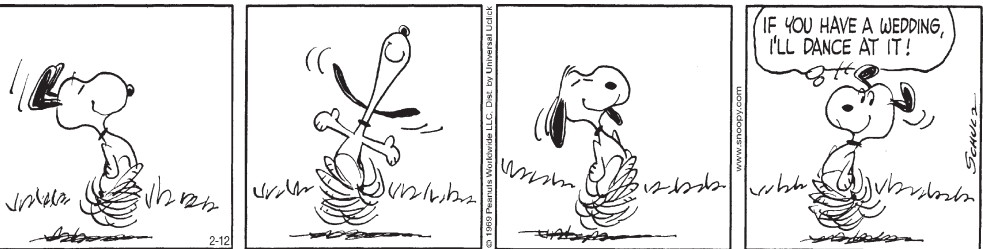
DILBERT by Scott Adams



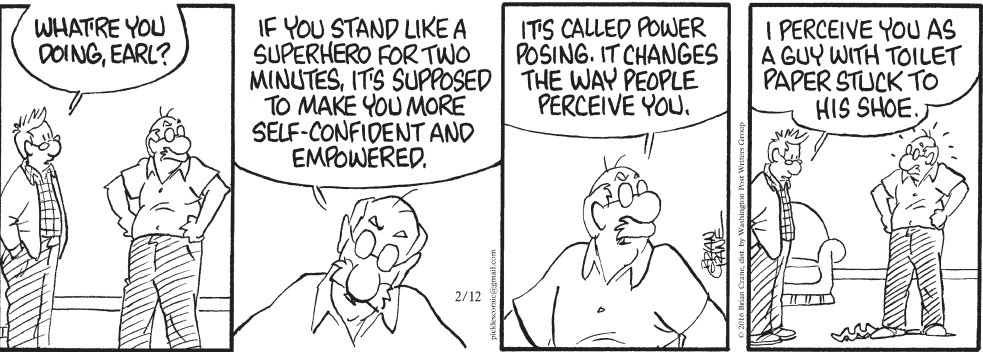
MARK TRAIL by James Allen



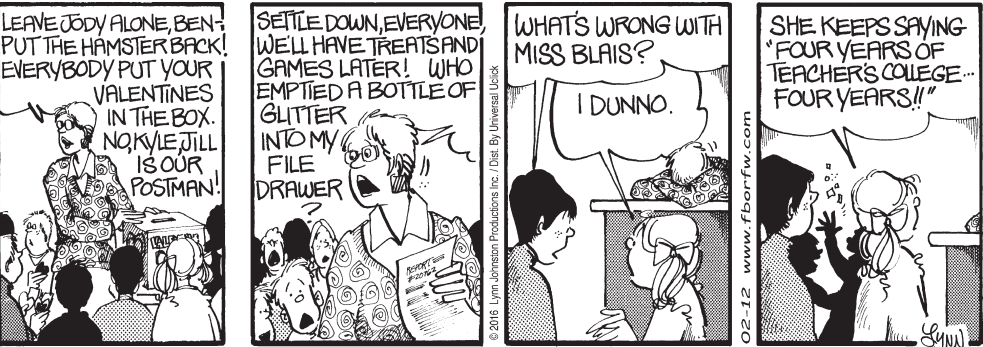
PEANUTS by Charles Schulz



PICKLES by Brian Crane



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE by Lynn Johnston



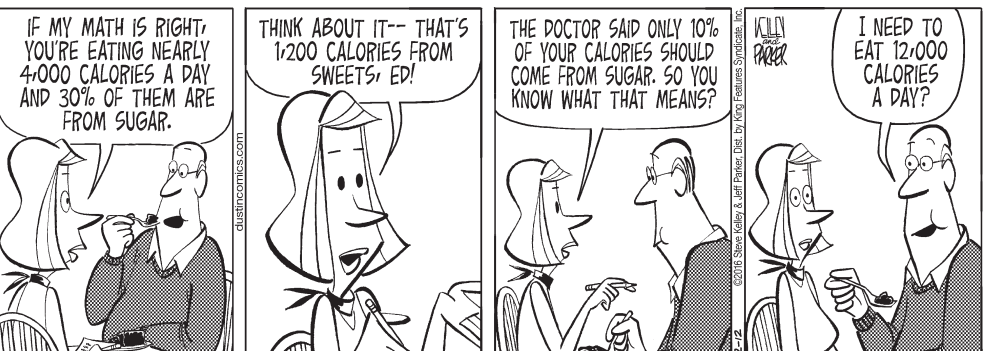
BABY BLUES by Jerry Scott & Rick Kirkman



ZITS by Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



DUSTIN by Steve Kelley and Jeff Parker



Daily Horoscope

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Happiness is operating with the full use of your powers. Of course, you don't really know what that means until you are issued the challenge of taking on more than you think you are capable of.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). It all comes back to the question of what is within your power and what isn't. It's important that you do not count what was in your power yesterday. Focus on today. What could you change today if you felt so inclined?

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). When your body needs a workout, you move yourself around the block. When your brain needs a workout, you read. Today it's your heart that needs the exercise. You'll strengthen it by loving under difficult circumstances.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). There's a reason why you are attracted to things that, when taken in certain quantities, are dangerous. The thing you say will be your ruin will actually be your salvation, too. Everything in moderation!

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). The instinct to duck and hide is a healthy one to some extent; however, it simply won't be enough to save you from the responsibilities of tomorrow. Your best bet is to face the music, or possibly to renegotiate.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Some people think they have a right to judge the things you do. Those people are deluded. The only way they have

power over you is if you give it to them. Don't give it to them.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). The directive is to "work like a dog," even though a lot of the "dogs" you know sleep about 80 percent of the day and all of the night. Hopefully the confusing message will be invitation enough to entice you to get more sleep.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Whatever you can do to avoid worry, stress and tension today will be something positive for your health, even if that activity wouldn't classically be, say, recommended by a doctor.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You'll get back more than you give. This isn't what you were going for, and in fact it may not please you much, even as it causes you to give more and more.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Take the pressure off. Lower the stakes. Change the way you're thinking about the challenge. It is when you're not overly concerned with failing or succeeding that you will do your very best.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You may think that people aren't being helpful to you, but that's where you're wrong. They are actually much more helpful in their unhelpfulness than they ever could be by giving you the assistance you asked for.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). The teacher will show you an example and then step back in full belief that you will rise to the occasion. You will; you know. Maybe not the first time, or the second, but eventually.



HOLIDAY MATHIS