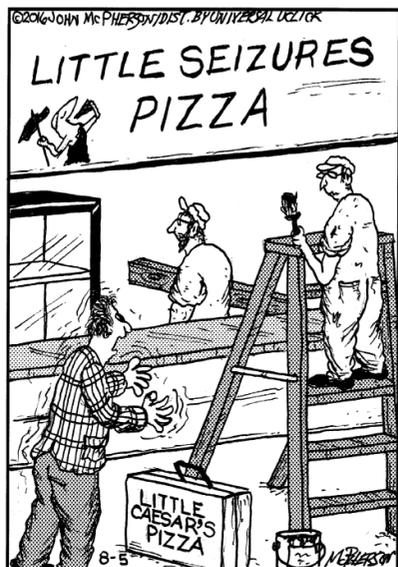


CLOSE TO HOME by John McPherson



"No, you IDIOT! CAESAR! Like the Roman emperor! CAESAR!!..."

Man's cold reaction adds to wife's pain

Dear Abby: My husband, "Rob," and I are at odds and your response may affect whether we stay together or not. I had a miscarriage a week ago. I was only seven weeks pregnant, but it was still something real for me.

My husband's niece's birthday was over the weekend. I made it clear that I didn't want to drive (three hours!) and be around people after what happened.

When he told me it didn't matter, that it was his niece's birthday, I lost it on him. After driving him to his sister's, I left and drove myself home.

He says I'm overreacting and said that I was OK with it earlier in the week.

I explained how hurt I was that he'd insist on going and also that he couldn't stand up for me and explain that I was too emotional and upset to attend her birthday. He can't grasp why I'm so hurt by this. Am I overreacting, and am I crazy for feeling the way I feel? — *Feeling Down in the South*



JEANNE PHILLIPS
DEAR ABBY

Dear Feeling Down: I'm sorry for your loss. You're not overreacting and you're not crazy.

However, some people are unable to grasp how deeply a miscarriage in the early months of a pregnancy can affect the mother-to-be psychologically and physically. Unfortunately, Rob appears to be one of them.

You didn't mention whether you told your sister-in-law why you didn't feel up to celebrating, but if you didn't, you should have because she probably would have understood and let you off the hook.

You also should have stayed home, not driven six hours round-trip to drop Rob off in your fragile condition.

If this continues to cause problems in your marriage, perhaps your clergyman (if you have one) or a marriage counselor can help you get the message across to your husband.

Dear Abby: When I invited a family member and her family for dinner, she asked what I was serving. When I told her, she said, "My kids won't eat that," so I ended up making a different meal that met with her approval.

It was annoying, and I thought she was very

rude. I can't imagine saying something like that to someone who is preparing food for me.

This is a family member, so I can't just write them off, but do you have any witty responses should this happen again? — *Disgusted in California*

Dear Disgusted: I agree it's rude for guests to ask a host what will be served, unless there are allergy issues to be considered. As far as what to say to your relative, I have a couple of suggestions. Neither one is "witty."

The first is: "Fine. Bring food your kids will eat or I'll thaw them some frozen pizza." Or, if you're feeling brave, say: "I'm serving (blank), so hire a baby sitter."

That way, the kids can have what they're used to and we'll have an enjoyable adult evening."

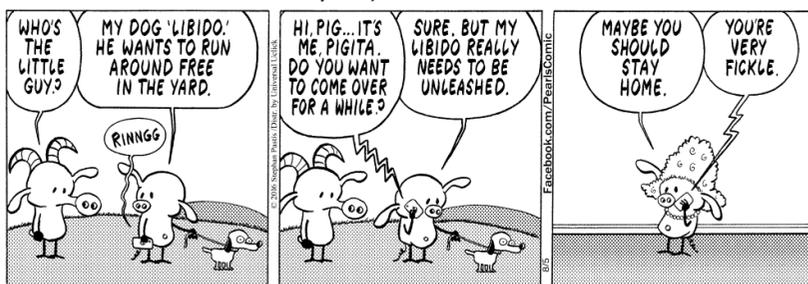
P.S. It is not child abuse for parents to introduce children to different foods by telling them to taste it because they might like it. And if they don't, they won't be forced to eat it. That's how they learn.

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



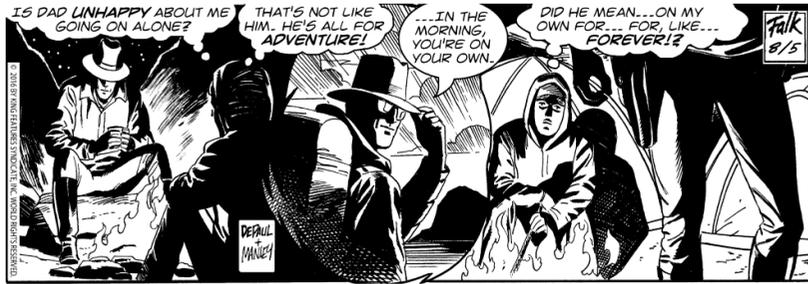
JEFF MACNELLY'S SHOE by Chris Cassatt and Gary Brookins



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



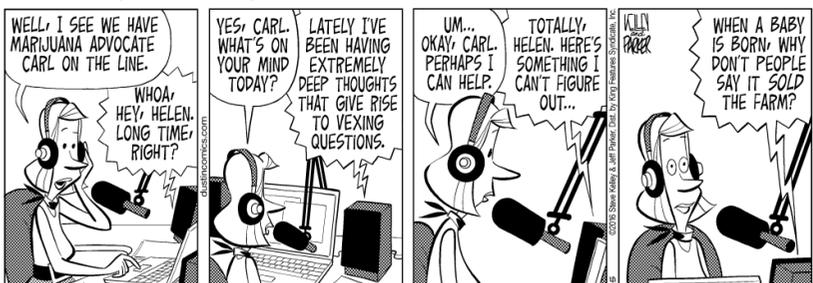
BABY BLUES by Jerry Scott & Rick Kirkman



ZITS by Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



DUSTIN by Steve Kelley and Jeff Parker



Daily Horoscope

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Pursue what you need if you know what that is. If not, let your feelings teach you as they pull you in surprising ways. They are trying to clue you in to what might lead to joy and fulfillment.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You have experience in controlled chaos and will be the one in charge of looking out for your people while they try to complete a mission, have a little fun and/or get inspired. Your awareness will make all the difference.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Your beliefs are essential to your daily actions, habits, attitudes. Have you figured out which one is getting in your way? Poke around in your own systems and thoughts. Bring your beliefs into question. One needs to go.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Review the last four weeks. What worked and what didn't? There's a chance to quickly and easily step out of an arrangement that's simply not going to get you where you want to be.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). If you can travel, do it. If you can't, then reading, movies or high-quality conversations with people who've lived in places foreign to you will work almost as well to ignite your passion.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). When you understand your own feelings, you understand the feelings of others. Taking a moment to ponder your own emotions this evening will help you be a good friend later this month.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). The people you know expect you to behave in a particular way, but you're in a mood to try something new. This will be much easier to pull off in a crowd that doesn't know you yet.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You've given a super-star performance, and you're ready for a break. When the attention is diverted from you, you'll consider it a pleasant change and a chance to relax.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You see no harm in making another person feel good, even if it means laying it on a bit thick with compliments that aren't exactly well-deserved. Of course, the closer you can stick to the truth, the better.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). A lot of workers never get thanked for their contributions. So when you turn this around by acknowledging those who help you, you build confidence, morale and loyalty at once.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Empathy is the first step. Then again, what's the point of knowing how another person is feeling if you don't know what to do about it? Don't worry. You'll learn from others today and gain emotional intelligence points.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You're in an action-oriented mood so you'll set goals and look for ways to keep doing better. You're committed to taking initiative. You have no idea how inspiring you are to those around you.



HOLIDAY MATHIS