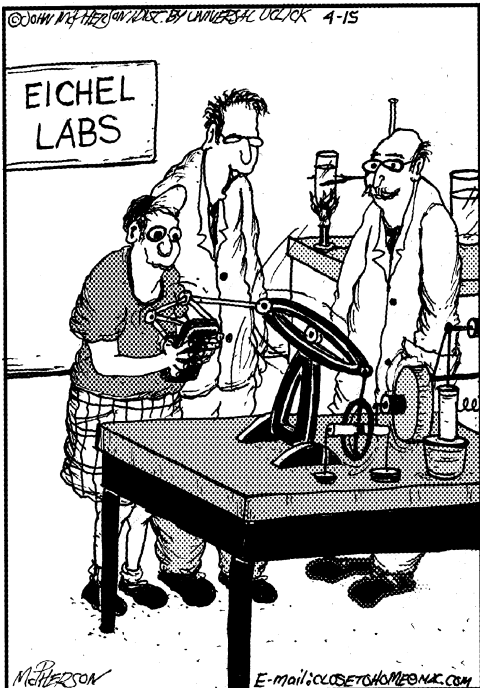


CLOSE TO HOME by John McPherson



"We've found a way to harness the energy of kids' thumb motions when they are texting!"

Teen's refuge becomes emotional prison

Dear Abby: I'm 17 and have been in a relationship since I was 13 with the same person on and off. I have been with him since my parents divorced, so you might say he's been my crutch for a long time.

He makes it clear that without him I am an emotional mess. I spend every day isolated from friends and family, while he spends his time with his friends. (I'm not allowed to be with them.) If I'm out with a friend, it is a huge issue.

I love him and I don't want to break up, but it feels like I'm alone even when I'm with him. I'm sick of letting a man make me feel like he's my reason for being alive.

I want better. I deserve better. I am so confused. Please help me. — *Deserves Better in New York*



JEANNE PHILLIPS
DEAR ABBY

Dear Deserves Better: I am crossing my fingers and hoping that you are still living with one of your parents. If you have been living with this person, I cannot stress strongly

enough how important it is for you to make other arrangements.

You acknowledge that he has been your "crutch." Well, unless someone is severely disabled — which you are not — crutches are meant to be temporary. Among the warning signs of an abuser is being controlling and preventing his victim from forming healthy relationships with other people. Another red flag is if the person chips away at his victim's self-esteem by saying she/he "can't survive without him."

That you want something better for yourself and know you deserve better is a sign that you still have some healthy self-esteem. So please act on it. End this relationship and don't look back.

Dear Abby: I am a postal worker. With wedding and graduation seasons fast approaching, please pass along some suggestions to your readers:

Before addressing envelopes, please make sure your address books are up to date. We do everything in our power to make sure all mail gets to where it is supposed to be, but you'd be shocked how often it's addressed to someone

who moved many years ago — or worse, is deceased.

Be sure to include the recipient's last name and try not to use nicknames. If the address is off by a little bit, a last name on the envelope is sometimes helpful.

You might think everyone knows Uncle Bob as "Moose." But as carriers, unless we know the recipient personally, we only know his or her proper name.

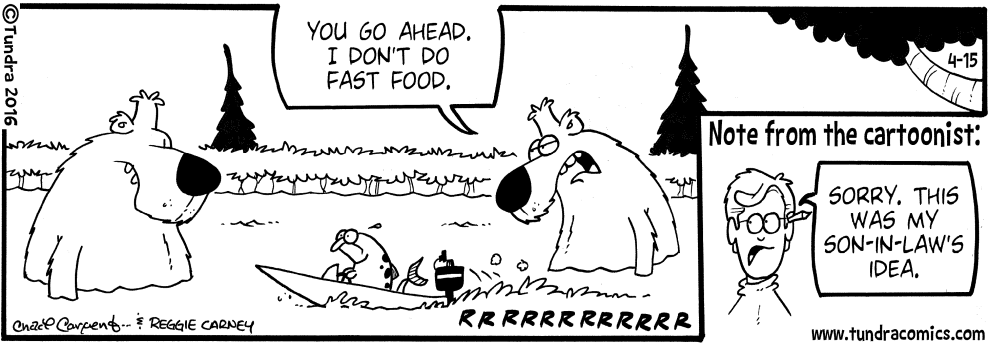
And don't forget to include your return address on the envelope so if it can't be delivered, you'll know the recipient didn't receive it. That way, you won't think that "Aunt Ann" didn't want to attend or have her think she wasn't invited.

And last but not least, be sure to have proper postage on the envelope! Often, due to the size or thickness of an invitation, extra postage is needed.

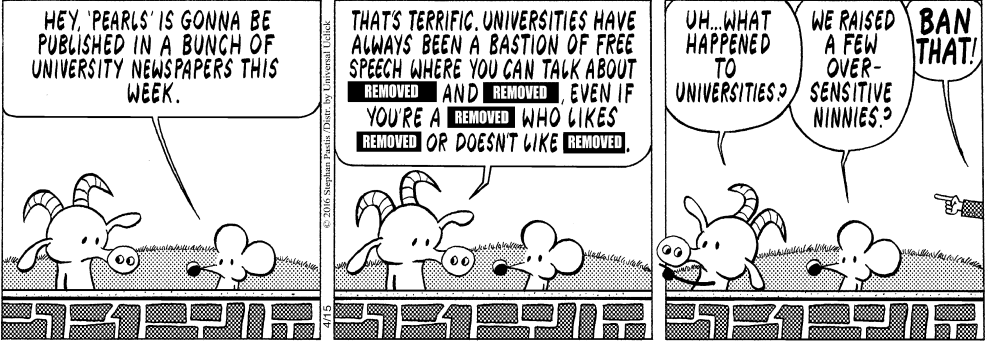
I hope this will help your readers. — *Michigan Mail Carrier*

Dear Mail Carrier: So do I!
Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

TUNDRA by Chad Carpenter



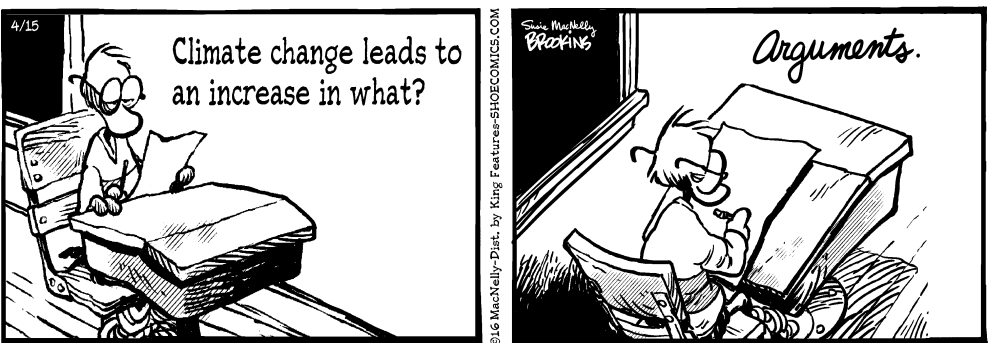
PEARLS BEFORE SWINE by Stephan Pastis



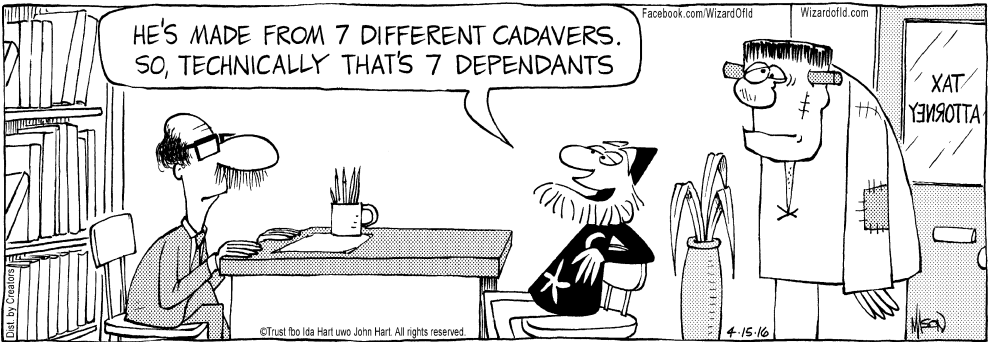
GARFIELD by Jim Davis



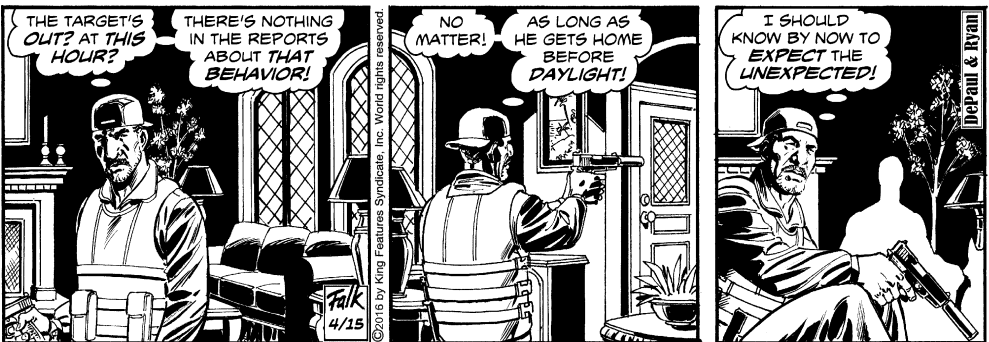
JEFF MACNELLY'S SHOE by Chris Cassatt and Gary Brookins



WIZARD OF ID by Brant Parker



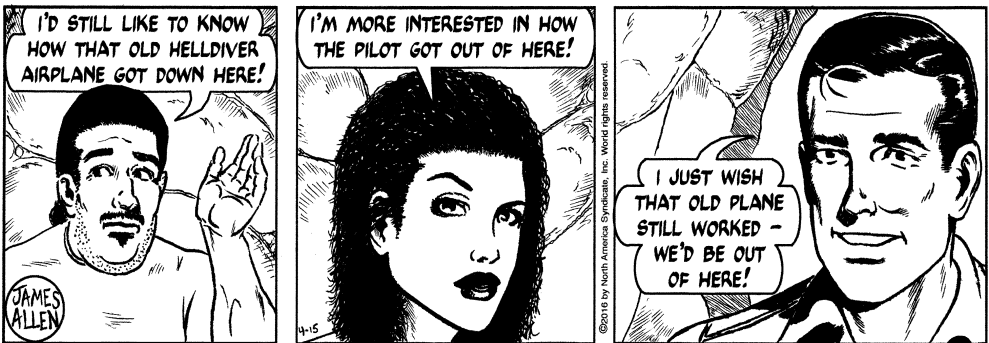
THE PHANTOM by Lee Falk



DILBERT by Scott Adams



MARK TRAIL by James Allen



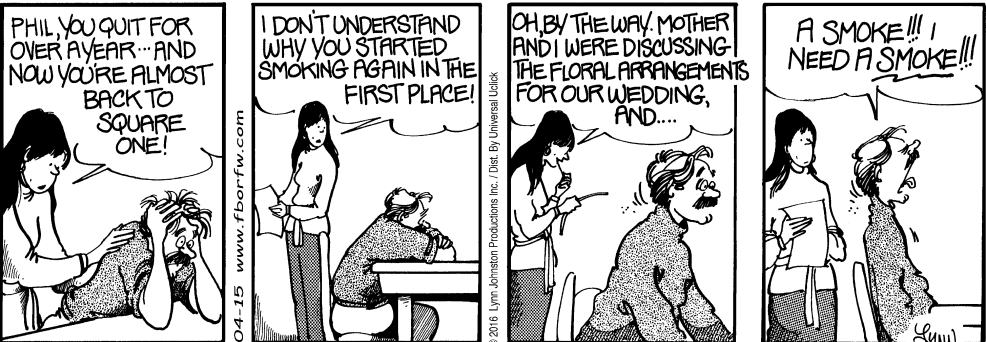
PEANUTS by Charles Schulz



PICKLES by Brian Crane



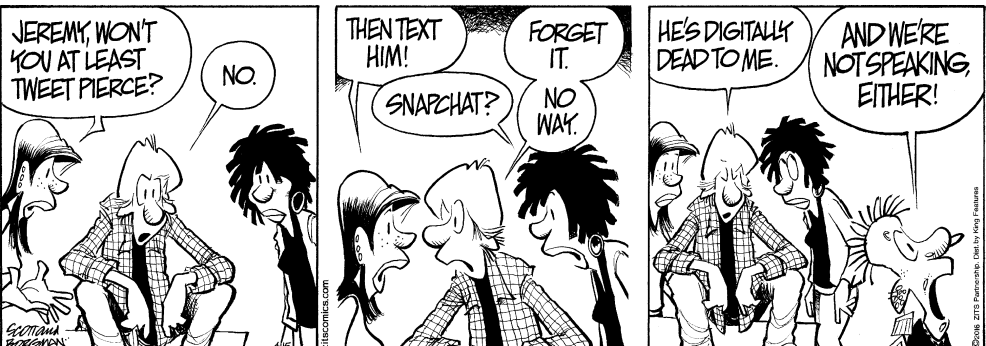
FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE by Lynn Johnston



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 know yourself pretty well, and yet you are also open to the possibility that you haven't yet become who you really are. You don't mind trying on different personas to find the perfect fit.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). "This is the short and the long of it," wrote Shakespeare. Today's short version of the story will tell just as much, if not more, than the longer version.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Those who are excited to be in a particular environment will help you understand what's good about it. The company you keep will matter much to your experience of the day.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You've meditative powers, activated by your appreciation of beauty. It will be as though your mind is its own kind of deep space — an expanse of awareness you'll touch for brief, utterly renewing moments.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Embody what you value. Turn it into a verb — an action you can take to become the very thing you'd like to see more of in the world. Right now that has to do with creativity, novelty and whimsy.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). When the cure won't stick, perhaps it's not really a cure at all — or even a Band-Aid, as most of those are at least sticky enough to cover up the wound a

while. Back to the drawing board to find what's really needed for your healing.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). There won't be any great space between what you say you'll do and what you'll actually do. You will quite simply declare and deliver, gaining the trust and awe of those you help along the way.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Someone has to provide the entertainment and color! You're inclined toward it, so go for it, even if it means appearing foolish. You'll be doing your entire scene a favor.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You were in a different mind-set when you started this journey. This is the time to check in: Are you still on board with this?

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You value respect from others but do not require it. In fact, you may decide to go without this for the sake of moving forward. The ones you're having trouble with will catch up later.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Focus on what you can do instead of what you can't do. Your natural gift for humor is something you can act on right away, to good effect. In fact, making another person laugh will be some of your most important work.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Through the ages, people have built the most sacred of temples in once-obiterated places. You've done this in your life and it will be from that monument of sacred beauty that you help another.



HOLIDAY MATHIS