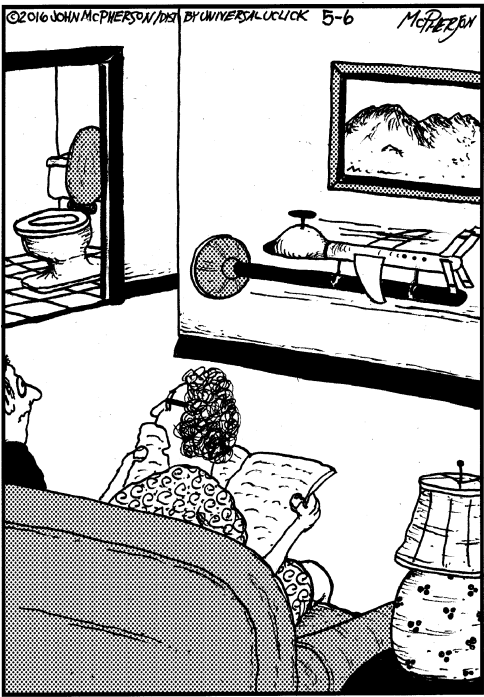
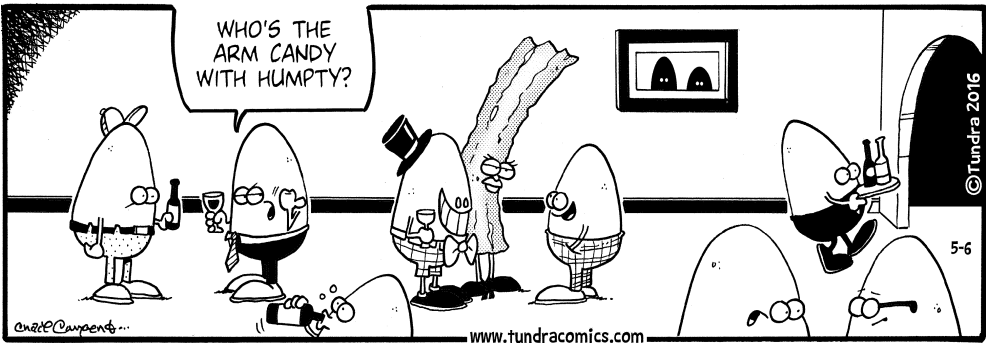


CLOSE TO HOME by John McPherson



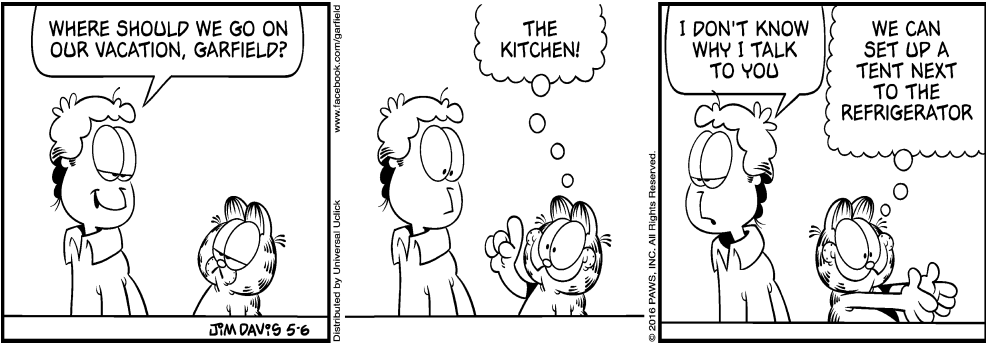
TUNDRA by Chad Carpenter



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE by Stephan Pastis



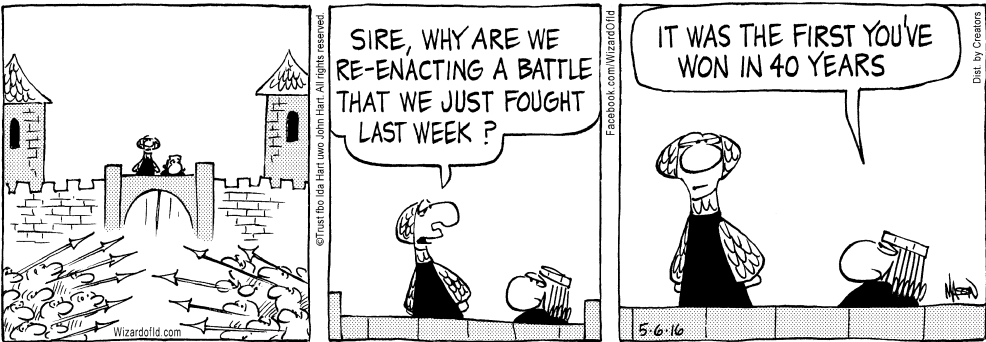
GARFIELD by Jim Davis



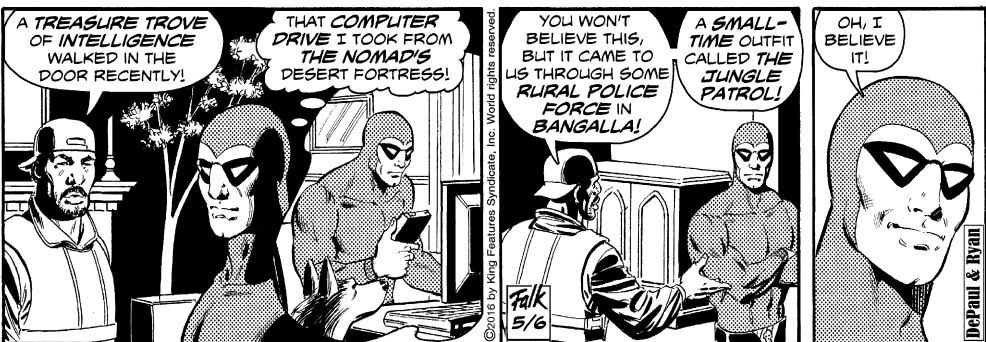
JEFF MACNELLY'S SHOE by Chris Cassatt and Gary Brookins



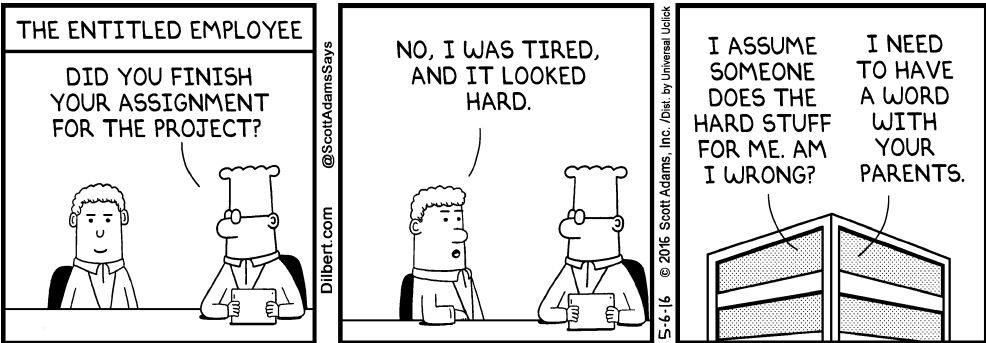
WIZARD OF ID by Brant Parker



THE PHANTOM by Lee Falk



DILBERT by Scott Adams



MARK TRAIL by James Allen



# Funerals may be awkward for gay man

**Dear Abby:** I'm a gay man in my early 60s. I have been fortunate to live pretty openly, despite being stuck in a small, conservative Southern town.

Many guys I have gotten to know over the years are not so lucky, due to being married, afraid for their careers, etc.

As a result, many of them lead double lives with their true orientation known only to other gays.

When one of these acquaintances passes away, should I attend the funeral services to pay my respects, even though I might not have known anyone else in the family?

Or should I stay away to keep tongues from wagging and asking, "How did Sam know THAT GUY?" — *Circumspect in the South*

**Dear Circumspect:** Not everyone who attends a funeral is an intimate friend of

the deceased. Some of them are people who knew the person from a distance and admired what he or she accomplished in life.

If you feel the need to go to the funeral, by all means do.

But have an answer prepared in case you are asked questions because "How did you know Bob?" is a common and innocent one.

**Dear Abby:** A couple of months after moving in with my boyfriend, I have realized that his mattress is not a good fit for me. He says that it's 12 years old and it still has 10 to 15 years left in it.

Every day I wake up with an aching, stiff back. I have a job that keeps me standing all day, so my back pain is starting to affect my performance.

I like living with him, but how can I get him to replace the mattress? It seems he has chosen the mattress over me, so I guess I'll start sleeping on the floor. — *Sleepy in St. Louis*

**Dear Sleepy:** According to the website of one of the top mattress manufacturers, the average lifespan of a quality mattress is between eight and 10 years.

Mattresses older than that can suffer from deteriorating comfort features and diminished support capabilities.

Many consumers wait too long to replace their mattresses.

If you wake up in the morning not feeling refreshed and rejuvenated, or feeling pain or discomfort, then it's time to replace this one.

So talk with your boyfriend again. If he's not willing to invest in a replacement, suggest buying a firm mattress topper or even splitting the cost for a new mattress.

A restful night's sleep is essential for good health.

If you are unable to convince him, then you may have moved in with him too quickly.

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

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'll need one or two more assessments of the situation before you can properly relax. So dive in, make your notes, surmise the outcome and then put the whole thing to rest so you can finally have some fun.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** "No help whatsoever," "more trouble than it's worth," "diminishing returns": These phrases being bandied about don't reflect your feelings at all. You see potential where others see only risk and loss. You'll prove them wrong.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** You are fair-minded and interested in the opinions of others. You'll go to extra lengths to make sure everyone who wants to chime in on a subject has the opportunity to be heard. Don't forget to add your own voice to the mix.

**CANCER (June 22-July 22).** The money that makes your life easier is the kind you earn fair and square, free and clear. Then there's money that makes your life harder: It's borrowed or given with strings attached. Avoid that kind now.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** Don't let things get boring. Reversals will delight you, especially those pertaining to familial roles. You'll find charm in the way children act like adults and adults play like children.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** What you once struggled with is now so effortlessly accomplished

you hardly remember you're doing it. Details you got hung up on don't matter to you anymore — all signs that you're on to bigger and better things.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** If you're going someplace that no one has gone before, you're going to have to clear your own road. This is only worth it if the destination is a place your soul feels called to find.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** You don't have to know much about gravity to follow its rules. The compliance of everything around is a perk that comes with being a force of nature. Guess what? You're a force of nature, too.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** Try not to get too caught up in the long-term implication of a decision. Focus on whether or not it feels, in this moment, like the highest and best for you and everyone involved.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** That little pot of trouble brewing on the back burner needs some attention. If you ignore it, it's sure to boil over. If you stir it, you'll only be stuck doing that the whole time it cooks. Turn off the heat. It's the only way.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** Your "live and let live" policy usually serves you well, but not today. Bottom line: If you don't speak up in today's situation the other will assume you're a passive bystander.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).** You may jump toward the sun, but you are not trying to land there or anything. It's just that having brilliant goals makes getting off the ground a lot more fun.