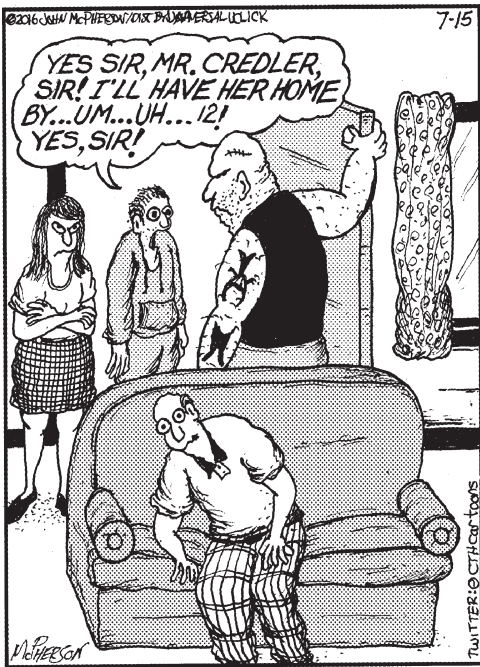


CLOSE TO HOME by John McPherson



To assure that his daughter was well taken care of on dates, Lenny hired a stand-in to greet the kid at the door.

Man plans to seek out his half-brother

Dear Abby: My husband, “Pete,” is an only child. His mom, who was married, had an affair with a married man, which resulted in his birth. His mother’s husband put his name on the birth certificate, but as a kid, Pete had contact from time to time with his biological father. Both dads have since passed away.

Pete has known for years that his biological father had an older son, but he doesn’t know if the son knows he exists. Pete now thinks he may have found his half-brother online and wants to reach out to see if he wants a relationship. How do we even begin to broach this with the half-brother? Is it worth it? — Family Matters in Texas

Dear F.M.: The decision about whether to contact a long-lost relative is a very personal one. For some people, the experience is a happy one, but not for others.

Because your husband and his (possible) half-brother are both adults, I can’t see how

reaching out would be harmful to the man. A way to do it would be for Pete to send him an email or a letter, explain who his biological father was and ask if there is any interest in further contact.

Dear Abby: My husband and I divorced 10 years ago. There were no children involved. After the divorce, we would occasionally get together for a meal. It was during those times that we managed to work through our issues and move forward with our separate lives.

Since then, we have remained in contact occasionally to say happy birthday or update the other on work. We are also friends on Facebook, but our contact does not involve discussion of love interests, family, etc.

Eight years ago, I met a wonderful man who accepts me for who I am. He also understands and supports the type of contact I have with my ex. My beau and I have finally decided to take the plunge and be married. What is the etiquette for letting my ex-husband know? — Second Time Around in Utah

Dear Second: Convey that information personally. Because you are on speaking terms,

call him and share the happy news. I think he will appreciate hearing it straight from you.

Dear Abby: There’s an ongoing debate among my group of friends about using the word “texted.” When I used it, I was corrected, chastised and told that it is NOT a word. Five years ago, when my daughter was a teenager, I started hearing it used frequently.

I realize that “text” is not a verb, however, many new words and expressions have been added to our vocabulary. Please settle this for us. — Busted By The Grammar Police

Dear Busted: The English language is constantly evolving, and with the rapid advances in technology, words are added to the lexicon every year. According to Dictionary.com, “texted” is, indeed, a word and you have been using it correctly. However, because a picture is worth a thousand words, rather than tell your friends you got the information from me, consider sending them a descriptive emoji from the both of us.

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

TUNDRA by Chad Carpenter



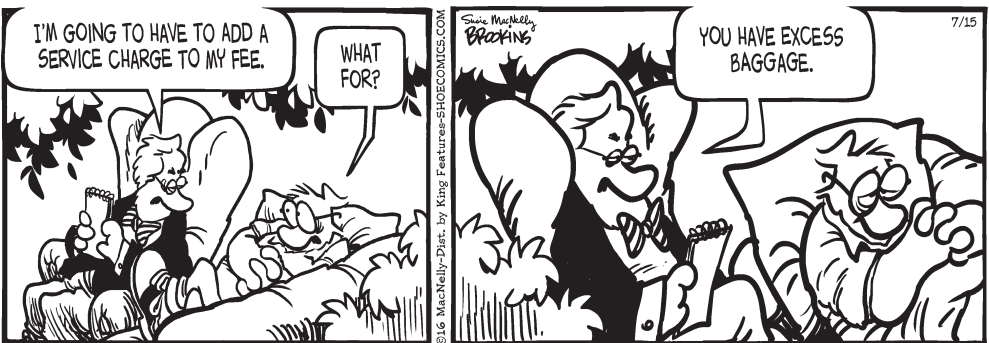
PEARLS BEFORE SWINE by Stephan Pastis



GARFIELD by Jim Davis



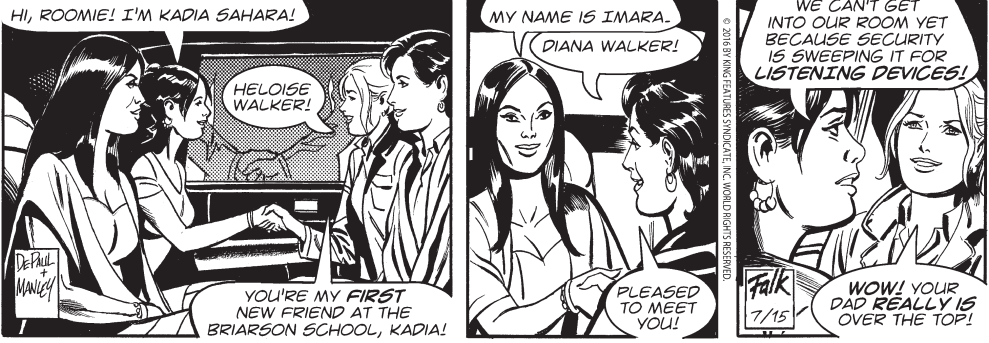
JEFF MACNELLY'S SHOE by Chris Cassatt and Gary Brookins



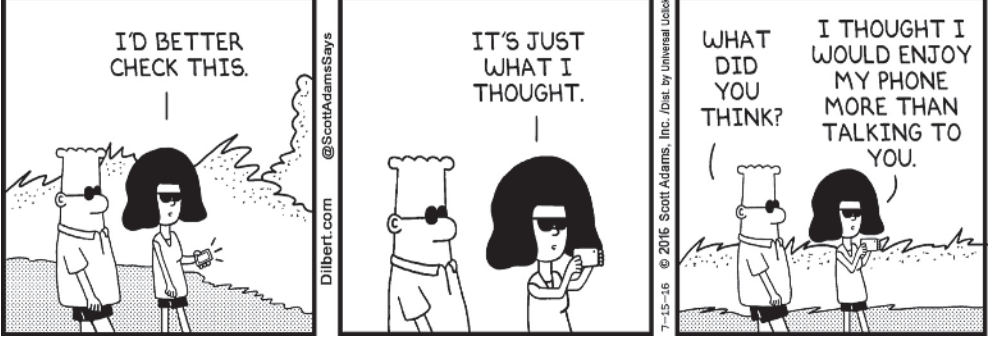
WIZARD OF ID by Brant Parker



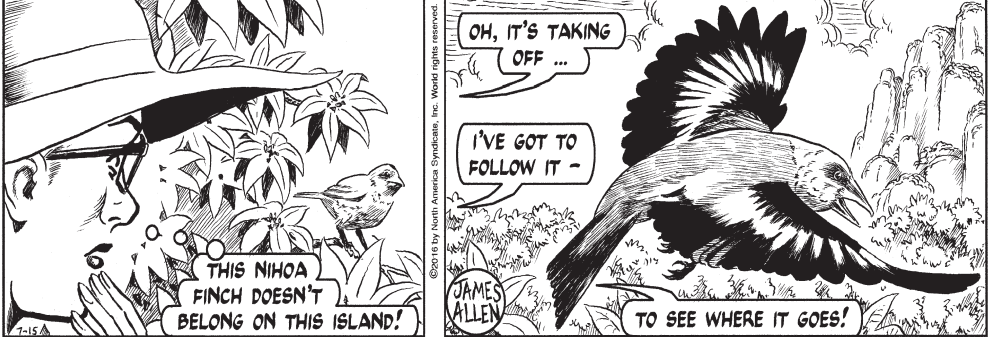
THE PHANTOM by Lee Falk



DILBERT by Scott Adams



MARK TRAIL by James Allen



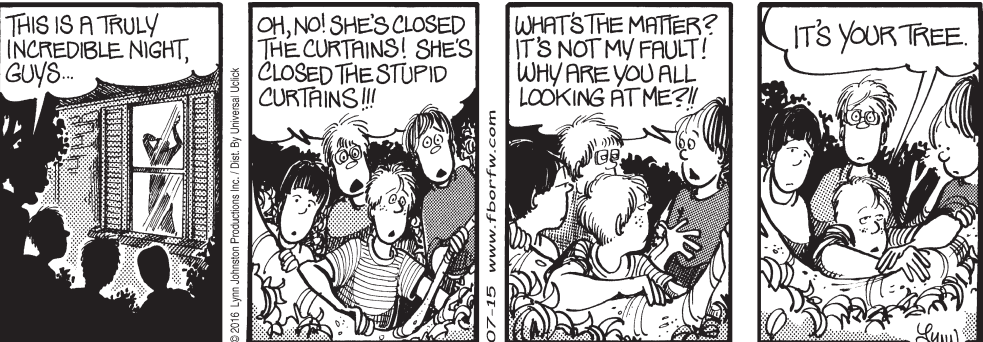
PEANUTS by Charles Schulz



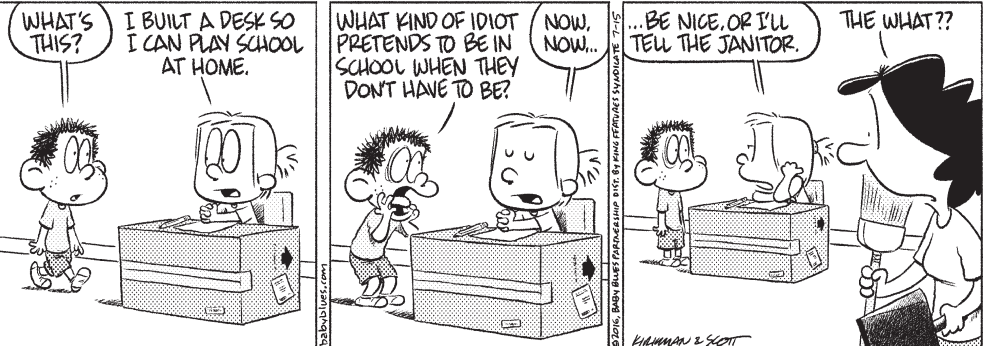
PICKLES by Brian Crane



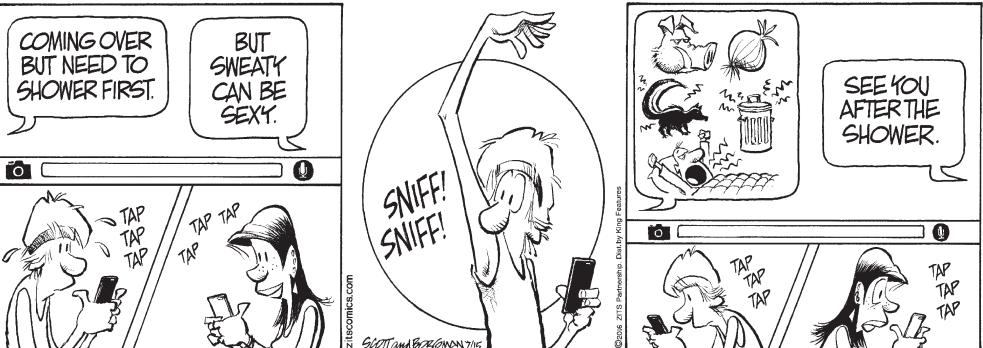
FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE by Lynn Johnston



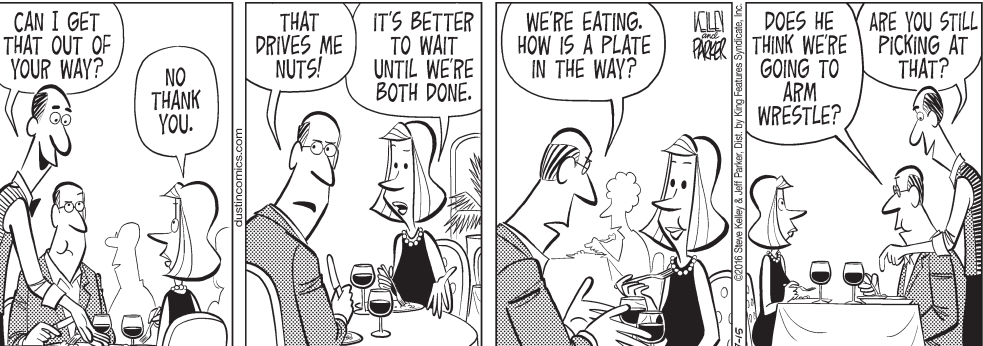
BABY BLUES by Jerry Scott & Rick Kirkman



ZITS by Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



DUSTIN by Steve Kelley and Jeff Parker



Daily Horoscope

ARIES (March 21-April 19). It’s a day to be assertive. If you don’t ask, you won’t get. If you don’t leave a voicemail, they won’t call back. Make the first gesture and then make the next one.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Like a feral creature you meet in the wilderness, a surprise powerful force is coming into your life. This wildcat has a gift in its mouth. Tame the lion and the gift is yours.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Just because the words sound smart or zip with wit or ring with loveliness doesn’t mean they are true. Honesty will come in unassuming tones today. Sensational results will come from acting on quiet truths.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Things feel different on the other side of a goal. Success changes opinions. Expect this when people you know get in a winning position. Expect this of yourself after your victory.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Laughter is medicine. As it is with all medicine, too much of what makes you feel better will make you feel worse. Contemplation, meditation and a gentle look at the state of things are what’s called for — no spin necessary.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Life is going fast. In the blur of events, important details could get lost. Stop a moment to calm down. Also, remem-

bering the lessons of the past will give you more power going forward.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). The universe will be like a chiropractor to your soul, quickly twisting and pushing to snap you back into the proper alignment. Everything will fall into place with a crackle and pop.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Have you noticed how they keep coming to you with their problems? It’s because you keep handling everything. Stop cultivating their helplessness or you’ll soon be exhausted by the drain of it.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). The fun will involve a level of physical risk. If it doesn’t get you breathing deeply and sweating some, it won’t be as much of a thrill. The less you hold back, the more you’ll smile.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). The one who helps you also hurts you. You’re the only one who can decide if the way this weighs out makes it worthwhile to you in the end. For now, just be aware with your scale on the ready.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Many heroes are drawn to help others and know how to do it well because they themselves have been, at one time or another, victims. And if you feel like more of a victim than a hero right now, this will soon turn around.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). The other generations need you. You bring a joy to their lives that can’t be duplicated by anyone else. The time you spend with someone older or younger will be received as the precious gift it is.



JEANNE PHILLIPS
DEAR ABBY



HOLIDAY MATHIS