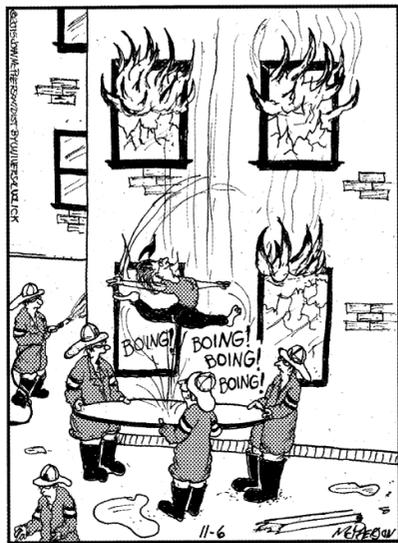


CLOSE TO HOME by John McPherson



"Yeah, yeah, we get it! You're very talented. But we've got seven other people waiting to jump so get off there!"

Family is insensitive to reader's feelings

Dear Abby: I am a 20-year-old woman. A few months ago, my boyfriend (my very first boyfriend) committed suicide. I feel absolutely destroyed.

The problem is, my family doesn't regard my feelings of grief seriously because our relationship was started and maintained online. While we never met in person, we talked every night and video-chatted many, many times.

I broke down when I heard the news, and I still hurt, but my family thinks I'm overreacting. They can't understand how a relationship with someone online can be serious. How can I make them recognize how much pain I'm in? The fact they refuse to recognize this loss hurts me so much more. What do I do? — *All Alone in Louisiana*



JEANNE PHILLIPS
DEAR ABBY

them and their level of sensitivity than the depth of your relationship with him. Many serious relationships have started online, and I understand you are left mourning all the things that might have been.

At 20, you are no longer a child. You can find emotional support elsewhere. Talk to your clergy person, if you have one, or look online for a grief support group you can join. There you will be able to safely vent about your feelings with others who understand what you are experiencing right now.

Dear Abby: My parents divorced four years ago. Mom currently lives with my husband and me. We have a great relationship with her, and she never speaks ill of my father. She has moved on, found a new direction in life and a new boyfriend we all like very much.

Dad moved in with the woman he cheated on Mom with, but their relationship fell apart. He has never stopped speaking ill of Mom. When things aren't going well for him, he causes trouble by showing up at Mom's workplace and making a scene. He'll also come over to our house unannounced to talk badly about her.

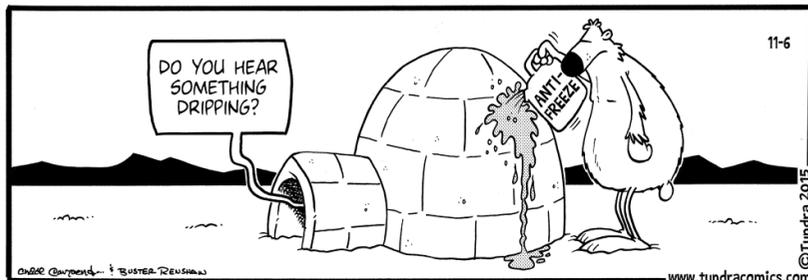
He was a great father until a few years ago when all this trouble started. I feel torn between trying to continue a relationship with him or cutting him out of my life like a bad daughter. What should I do? — *Caught in the Middle in California*

Dear Caught: Your father's behavior is sick. Depending upon how disruptive he is when he shows up at your mother's workplace, suggest she consider getting a restraining order preventing him from acting out that way. She must have a very understanding employer to have tolerated it, because that kind of disruption has been known to cost people their jobs.

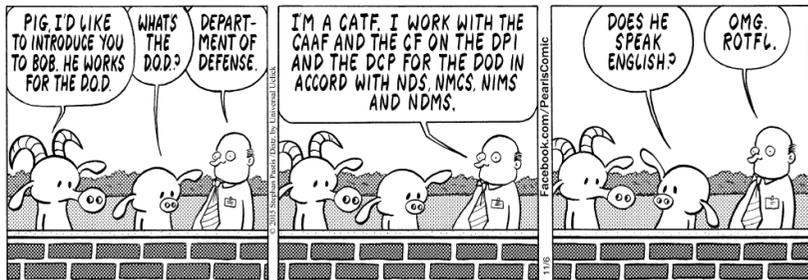
And when your dad shows up at your home unannounced, speak up. Tell him you and your husband don't like it. Make clear that his nasty comments about your mother aren't welcome, and neither will he be, unless he calls first to see if a visit is all right with everyone. His misbehavior continues because you have allowed it.

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

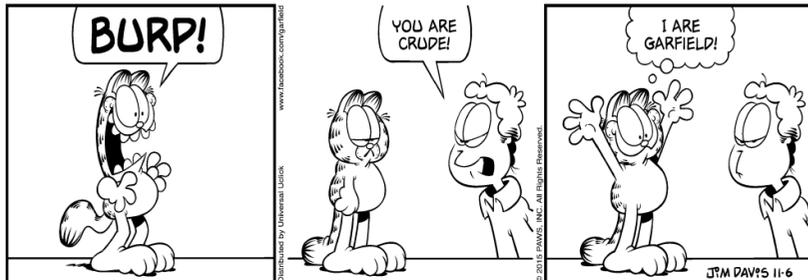
TUNDRA by Chad Carpenter



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE by Stephan Pastis



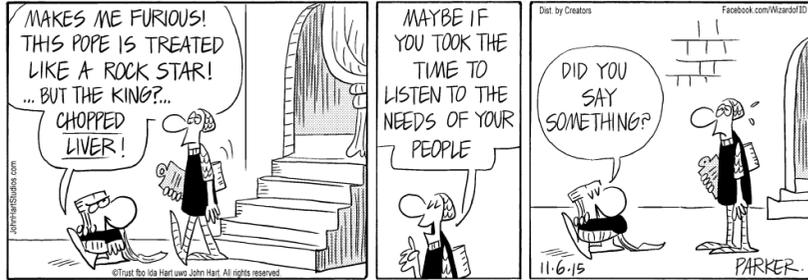
GARFIELD by Jim Davis



JEFF MACNELLY'S SHOE by Chris Cassatt and Gary Brookins



WIZARD OF ID by Brant Parker



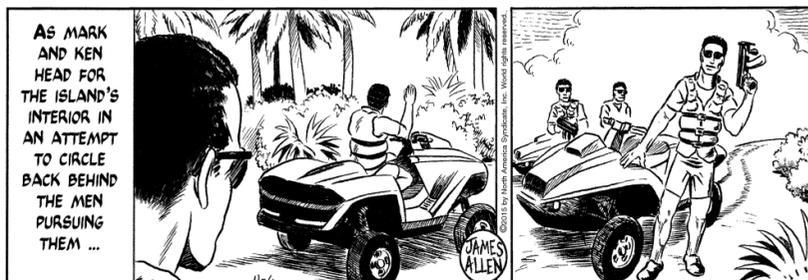
THE PHANTOM by Lee Falk



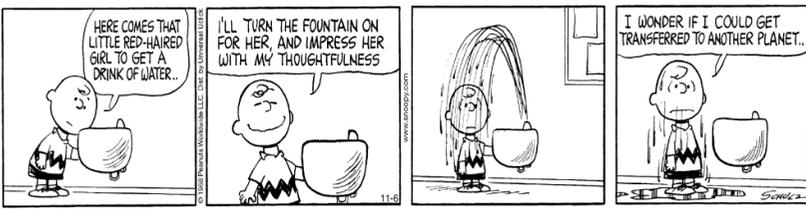
DILBERT by Scott Adams



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PEANUTS by Charles Schulz



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FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE by Lynn Johnston



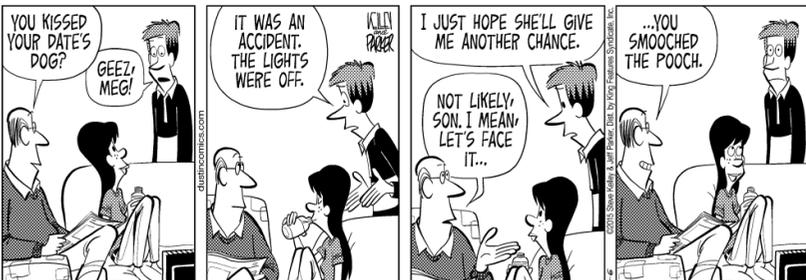
BABY BLUES by Jerry Scott & Rick Kirkman



ZITS by Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



DUSTIN by Steve Kelley and Jeff Parker



Daily Horoscope

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You need to relax, but not completely. Right now one eye needs to stay wide-awake, focused on your next move. Otherwise, you'll miss a rather rare opportunity.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). If you have many hobbies it's easier to find ways of distracting yourself from negativity. That's why, even though there is little negativity in this day, it's still a fine time for cultivating new hobbies.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You need a bigger team. This is the bottom line, the top line, and everything in between today. Get more people. You support so many! You deserve your own cheering section, too.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Your fantasy life is rich now, but instead of planning your escape to a paradise island, use the augmented powers of imagination that are currently available to you to see some magic and wonder in your current scene.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). There's something you used to love, follow or ritualize that no longer seems to have a natural place in your life. It happens. You're different, it's different — things change. This is a good day for moving on.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Your mind will drift to things you said and did long ago. For better or worse, these things cannot be changed. When

a loved one needs you in the moment, you'll snap right back to the now.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Venture out alone and you'll succeed. Listen up and you'll hear the powerful and knowing voice of your own instinct. There's another voice around you now, as misguided as it is prolific. Block that one out.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You'll get more than one chance to make a deal, though you should know that it is more favorable to act on the first one. Fresh enthusiasm will create momentum.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Relationships are your gold. You're like an artist creating a masterpiece of personal connection. Tonight, new ideas will pop over your head like bubbles in a glass of champagne.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). In those moments when you feel lost, try to remember that even the most confident people are not certain all of the time. Pause for a breath. It won't be long before you realize that you know more than you thought.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You expect something else from life than others are hoping for — nothing better, just different. Regardless of these differences, your interests will coincide nicely with the interests of those around you.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Only time will tell whether today's move will bring you closer to the goal, but it won't matter. Either you believed in it or you didn't. You won't do anything until you're absolutely sure you can stand behind it.



HOLIDAY MATHS