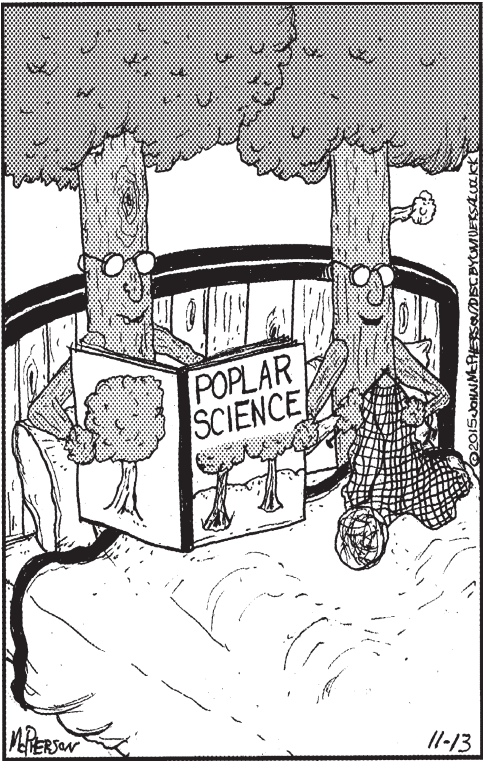


CLOSE TO HOME by John McPherson



Mom can't bear girl sleeping elsewhere

Dear Abby: When my husband and I bought our house, having children wasn't yet on our minds.

The master bedroom is at one end of the house; the other two bedrooms are at the opposite end.

Two years into our marriage we got a surprise blessing — a baby girl.

She's now 3 and still sleeping in our room in her own toddler bed. She has great sleeping habits, and I don't think it would affect her to sleep in another room.

I am the problem. I can't bear to have her at the other end of the house.

All I can think about are horror stories of babies and small children being snatched from their beds (from the window) while the parents sleep.

What if something happens and I don't wake up? This may seem ridiculous to some, but it's a real fear for me.

Can you offer some advice? — *Paranoid Mommy in South Carolina*



JEANNE PHILLIPS
DEAR ABBY

Dear Mommy: Baby monitors (and cameras) were invented to allay the fears of parents who sleep apart from their little ones.

If that isn't reassurance enough, consider changing all the sleeping arrangements until your daughter is a bit older.

Put her in one of the bedrooms at the other end of the house, and you and your husband take the one next to hers.

Have the baby monitor next to your bed so you can hear her if she stirs during the night.

You might also consider getting a dog, who would certainly alert you should anyone attempt to enter your home after you and your husband are asleep.

Dear Abby: I have a daughter who is now 40 years old. Until she was 17, I didn't know she existed.

She lives in another state, but we talk often. I consider us close.

Abby, I have been diagnosed with cancer and may not have much time left. I'm only 56. I was 16 when I was involved with her mother, homeless at the time and very naive.

My problem is, although I have wracked my

brain over the years I cannot remember actually having sex with her mother.

Nevertheless, I love this person very much and it would break my heart (and hers) if she wasn't mine.

Should I tell her in case she might want to track down who her father is, if it's not me? I don't know how I'd approach her for a DNA test. — *Urgent Dad in the USA*

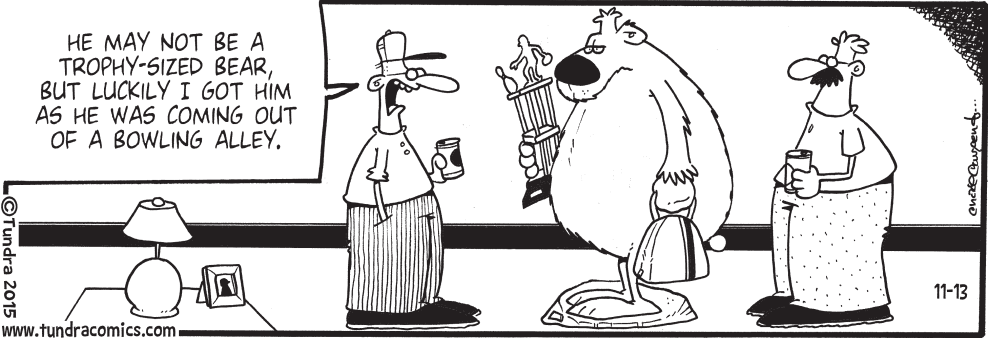
Dear Urgent: I'm so sorry to hear your prognosis. A gentle way to discuss this would be to explain that you have been diagnosed with cancer and may not have long to live.

Tell her you love her, that in your heart she will always be your daughter, but that you are not 100 percent sure it is biologically true.

Explain that you are saying it not to hurt or reject her, but only so that if she is not your child she may be able to locate the person who is, and she won't be fatherless when you are gone.

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

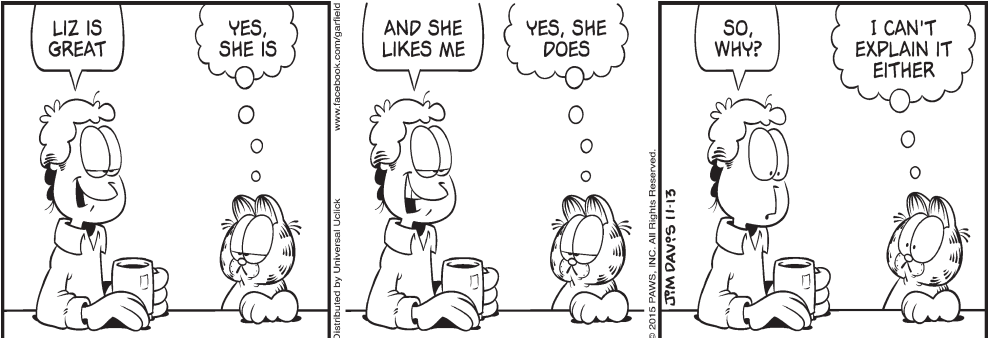
TUNDRA by Chad Carpenter



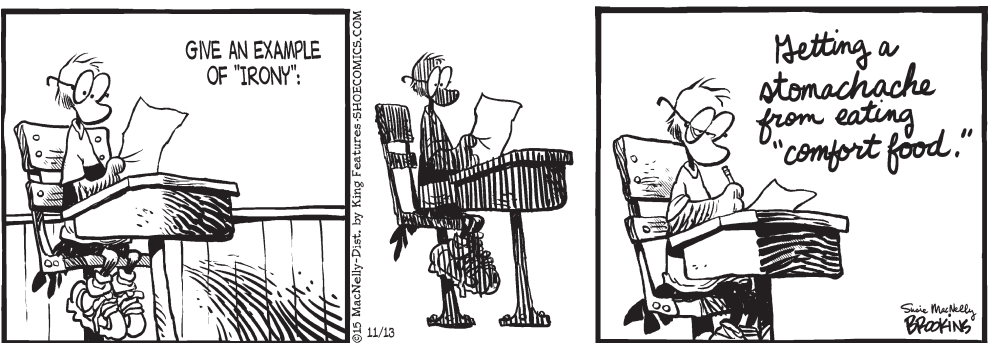
PEARLS BEFORE SWINE by Stephan Pastis



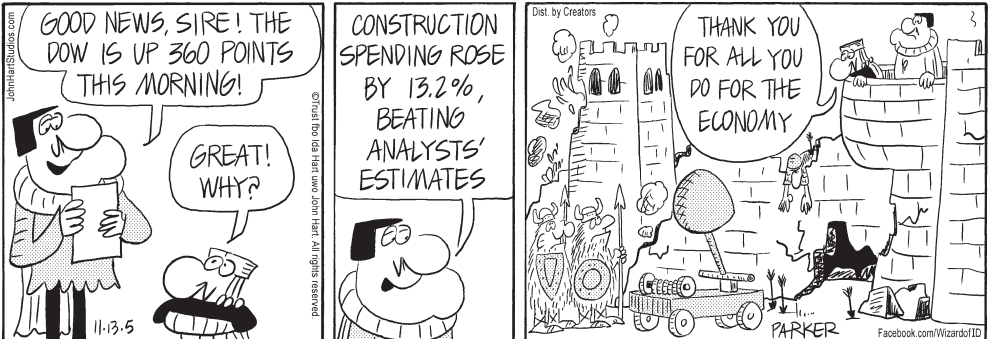
GARFIELD by Jim Davis



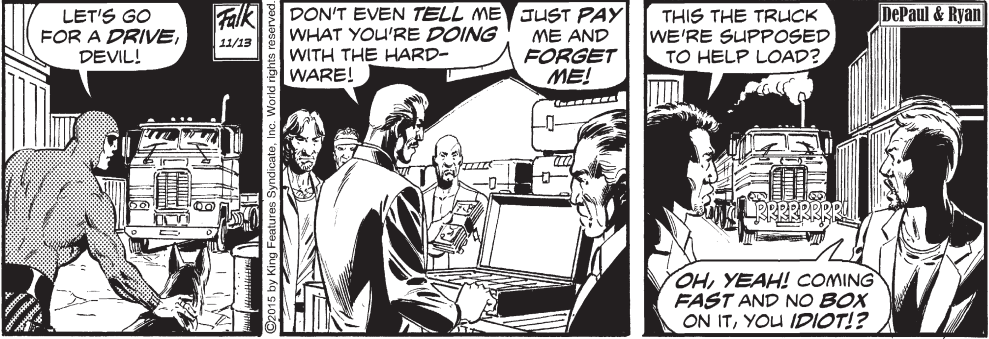
JEFF MACNELLY'S SHOE by Chris Cassatt and Gary Brookins



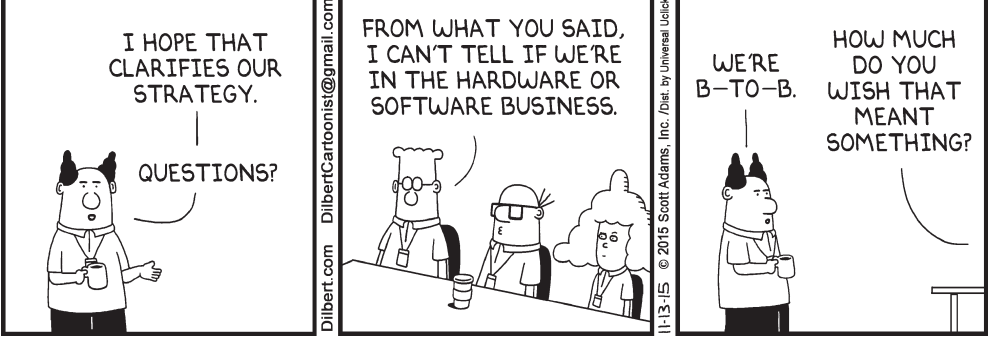
WIZARD OF ID by Brant Parker



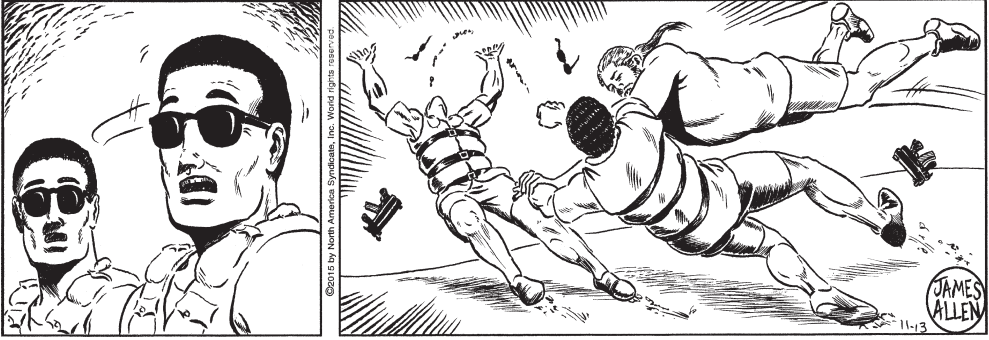
THE PHANTOM by Lee Falk



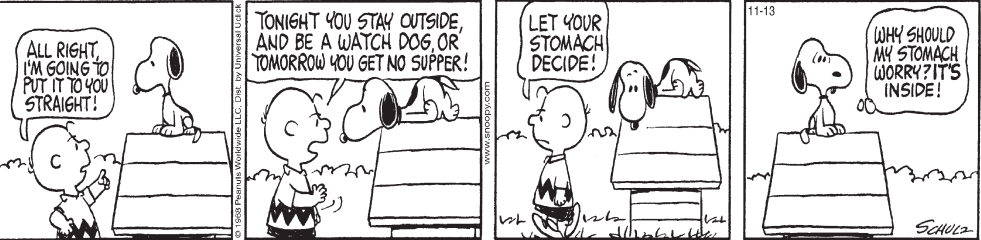
DILBERT by Scott Adams



MARK TRAIL by James Allen



PEANUTS by Charles Schulz



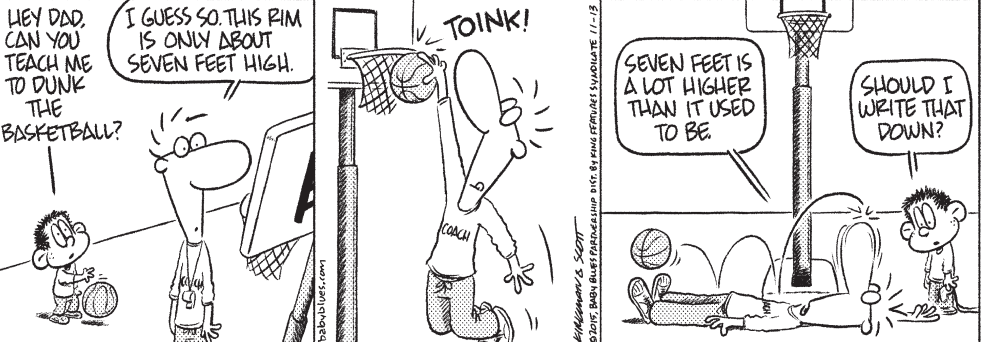
PICKLES by Brian Crane



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). Finding one answer will open the door for many new questions. For this reason, it's very important that you send your curiosity down a path you truly want to be involved with for the long haul.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). While today's circumstance isn't the best you could have hoped for, it's also not the worst you've known. The next step is to determine what is necessary, do that and only that. Moderate action will bring success.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). The fear of rejection is practically universal. That's why people admire those who are willing to put themselves on the line. That's the kind of person you are today.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). The two things you most need from today's endeavors — joy and challenge — may come from the same activity. Go where you feel encouraged to work and play harder than usual.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). What you can do yourself you will do yourself. It's the fast, efficient, empowering way. It's not right for every day, but your confidence and energy are high so make the most of it.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). There's no reason to approach relationships the same way you did yesterday. Put a twist in it. You've already proven you can be consistent. Prove you can be fun.



HOLIDAY MATHIS

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Here's a way to stay stress-free: Plan for mistakes. Leave early in case the directions are wrong. Make a contingency kit in case the others don't show up with all the supplies they are supposed to. Preparation will make life easier.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You'll play off the energy of others — that is, as long as you're around people with the kind of energy that makes you playful. And if you're not, why is that?

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Some questions lead to quick fixes, errands accomplished, problems solved. Other questions are rabbit-hole portals to entire alternate universes. Alice was never trying to go to Wonderland; she just landed there.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). When your friend is excited about something, you try to find something in it that you can be excited about, too, even if the subject isn't initially that interesting to you. That's the kind of friend you are.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Before you try to fit in with a group, make sure you know why they are a group in the first place. What are their common bonds and values, and do you share them? If not, do you want to?

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You want to share creativity, laughter and love, so go where the social energy is warm, if a little off-kilter. You could cause a stir in a fun group of misfits.