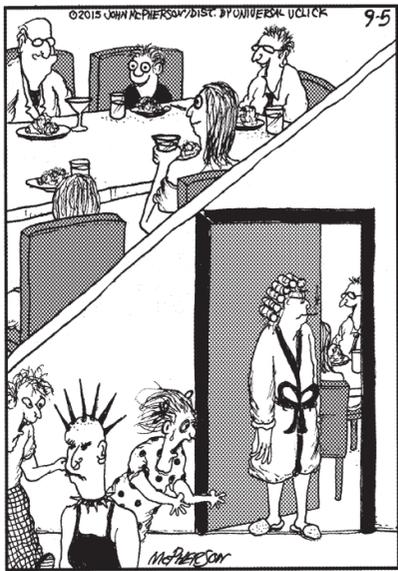


CLOSE TO HOME by John McPherson



With his boss coming to dinner, Phil wisely hired actors to play the part of his family.

Family seeks way to sidestep questions

Dear Abby: My beautiful 6-year-old granddaughter has clubfeet. Although she had several surgeries, her ongoing treatment requires her to wear her shoes on the opposite feet.

Every time we go out somewhere, well-intentioned people seem compelled to let us know she has her shoes on wrong. My granddaughter told me it bothers her and she gets embarrassed when we must explain the reason, and truthfully, I don't blame her. I worry about her self-esteem.

Have you any suggestions as to what we could say to these people without giving out personal information? — *Nanny in Pennsylvania*

Dear Nanny: If it were me, I would also assume that the person meant well and reply, "We're already aware of that, thank you." Period.

Dear Abby: I'm in fifth grade and I'm wondering: Which do you prefer — dogs or cats?



JEANNE PHILLIPS
DEAR ABBY

My friends and I often debate about this topic. — *Animal Lover in Oakland, Calif.*

Dear Animal Lover: I'm an animal lover, too, and I have met both dogs and cats that had wonderful personalities. However, when it comes to choosing between cats and dogs, I'm more of a dog person. My favorite breed is the German shepherd.

Dear Abby: My sister moved in with me after my husband died. I thought it would be good for both of us, and we could go places together and share household chores. At the time, we were both working.

When I discovered she would sleep all day on our days off and didn't help with the housework at all, I was very disappointed. She would clean her room only when I got upset with her.

Now she does almost nothing. She won't clean her room and she sleeps for months without changing her sheets. I am sickened by the smell of her and her room. She hasn't showered or brushed her teeth in almost two weeks, and it doesn't look like she's in any hurry to do so.

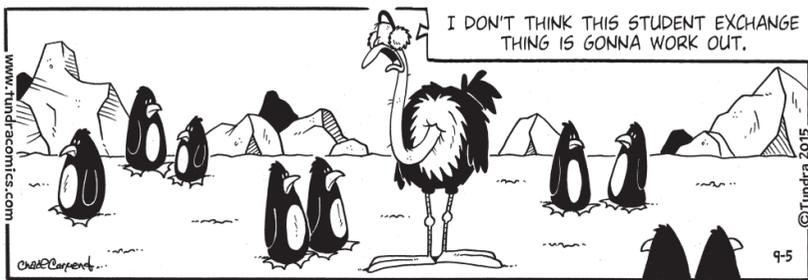
We are both retired now and could enjoy going places together, but she would rather stay up all night and sleep all day. I am at my wits' end. I have begged, threatened and shamed, but nothing works. I am a very clean person and like to have a clean house. Help! — *Wants My Clean House Back*

Dear Wants: Changes in behavior like those you describe should not be ignored. Was your sister always like this? If not, she needs to be examined by a doctor to determine if she's depressed or having some other kind of mental problem. She should also be seen by a dentist if her oral hygiene is as poor as you say it is, while she still has teeth.

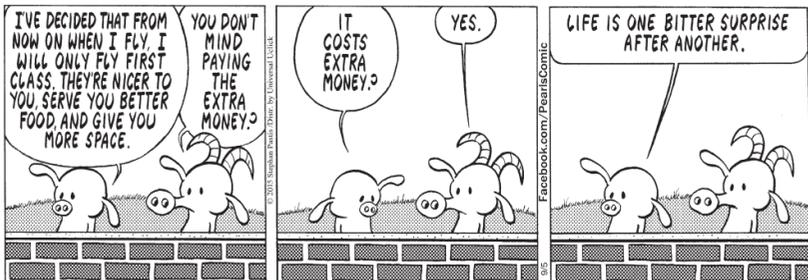
The living arrangement the two of you have doesn't appear to be healthy for either of you. Before this goes any further, consult an attorney for guidance. You may need help in getting her out after all this time — or help finding other safe living arrangements for your sister if she's unable or unwilling to do it for herself.

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

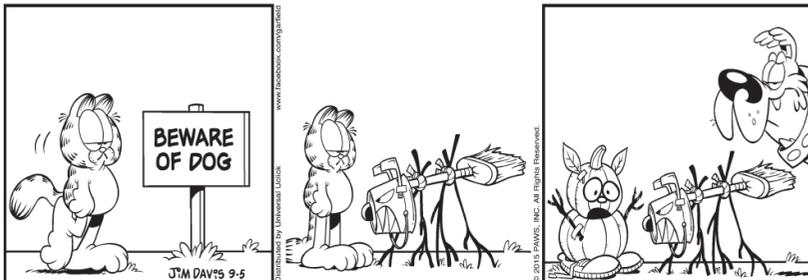
TUNDRA by Chad Carpenter



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



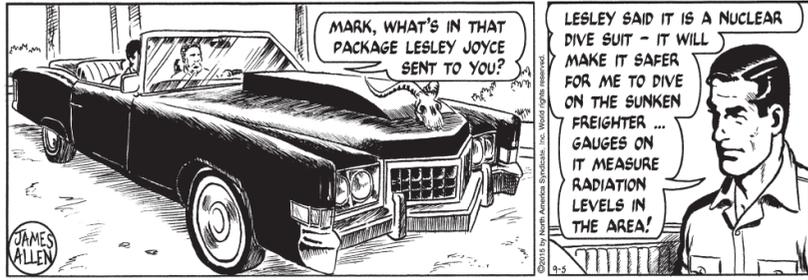
THE PHANTOM by Lee Falk



DILBERT by Scott Adams



MARK TRAIL by James Allen



PEANUTS by Charles Schulz



PICKLES by Brian Crane



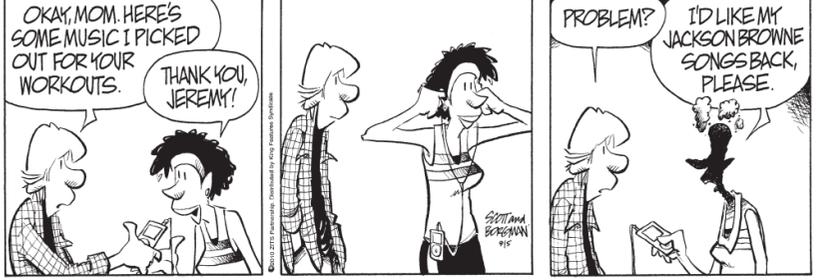
FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE by Lynn Johnston



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). Envisioning the future is a creative act that comes naturally to you. Because of this vision, you are the perfect person to lead a group of people with similar goals and interests.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Your friends love you, and yet you should know that they do not want you to change in the ways that you want to change. Why? Because that will change your friendship, too.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Good fortune won't exactly fall into your lap, but when you go out of your way to be useful, the lucky opportunities start to pour in. Also, this is a day of major shopping juju. You'll find pieces that seem designed just for you.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). The quick fix you'll hear about is actually a lie in both the "quick" and the "fix" departments. Your best results will come from the old-fashioned methods that have been working for years.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You're still not sure whether your idea is good or bad, but if there's one rule to apply, it's this: Good ideas are always resisted. The amount of resistance you're getting is a testament to the idea.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You feel like a tiny ship of order floating on a vast sea of chaos. Rest assured, your influence stretches beyond what you know. Keep doing what you're doing.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). There are some people who try to be nice and kind to you but don't quite know you well enough to strike the right chord. It's not their fault. They are doing their best with the limited knowledge they have.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). The difference between a team and a tribe goes deep. The ideology you share with a tribe is as complicated of a matchup as DNA. It's why you'll spend so much time with your tribe today.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). If you could rescind certain actions, you would. Even though this is not possible, you can overshadow the past by doing something wonderful in the present.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Established boundaries are what keep chaos from reigning supreme. To avoid the leadership of chaos, mend the fences of those boundaries.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You're interested in doing what will enhance social learning and shared experiences, but you're also keen on keeping your eyes open. There is quite a lot to be chucked into the bin of "stupid advice that doesn't apply to you."

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You may not realize it, but you are establishing yourself as a community leader. People are paying attention to what you do. You're on the verge of the major breakout you used to fantasize about.



HOLIDAY MATHIS