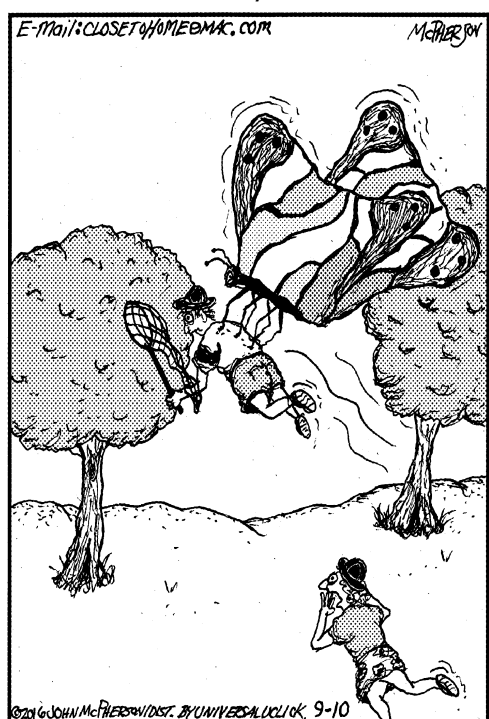


CLOSE TO HOME by John McPherson

"Catch him, Rodney! Catch him!"

Son becoming a woman seeks advice

Dear Abby: I'm a 26-year-old who is about to come out as transgender. I was born a male and will be transitioning into a female. My family doesn't know yet, and I have been debating for the past couple of years how to tell them.

My parents divorced when I was 2, and had a rocky relationship until recently. They both are now remarried and living happy lives. Can you please tell me how to tell them that I am a transgender woman? I would love to bring both of them together and talk, but I don't know if that would be the best option. What do I do? — *Transgender in Arizona*



JEANNE PHILLIPS
DEAR ABBY

Dear Transgender: Regardless of whether your parents have remarried, they are still your mom and dad. If you have something that needs to be discussed with them, you should absolutely bring them together to talk privately about it.

Because you're looking for the words to explain what you're planning to tell them,

contact PFLAG for suggestions. To contact it, go to pflag.org.

Dear Abby: I have an amazing grandmother who has five daughters, one son, and more than 30 grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

She has been widowed for 10 years. She lives on her own after a short second marriage that ended quickly in divorce. Her only companions now are her dog and her fellow residents in an independent living home for seniors.

Gran is able to drive, but chose not to buy a car, so on my only day off, I feel guilty if I don't take her to the places she needs to go for the week. She says I'm the only one in our large family she can rely on. Most of us live fairly close by, but I'm who she calls for emergencies, to take her to the hospital or simply the grocery store.

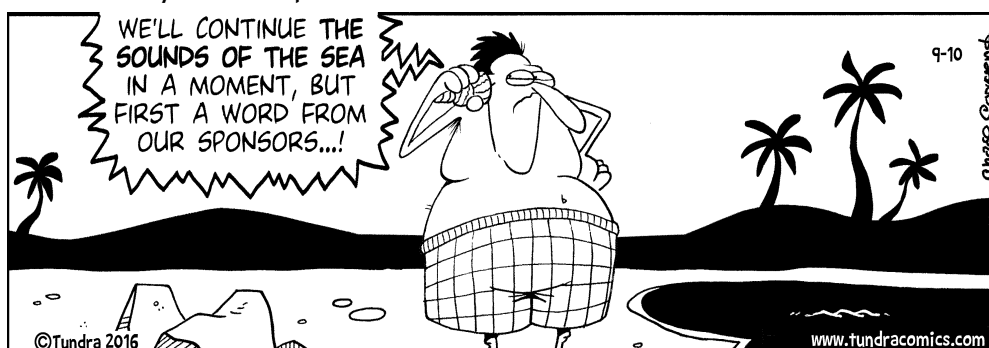
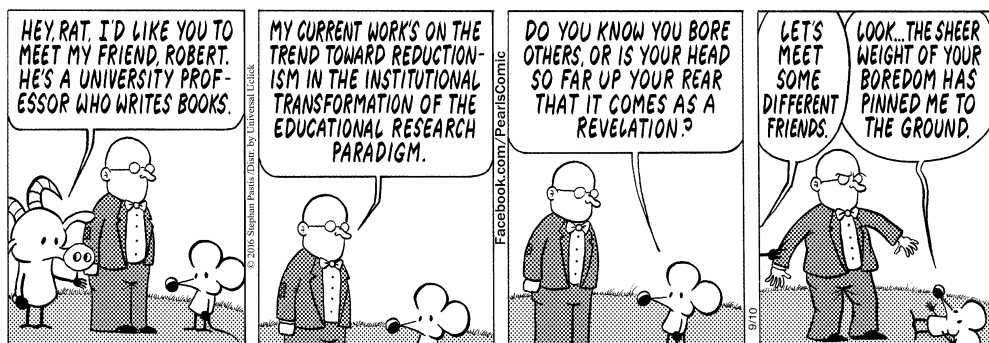
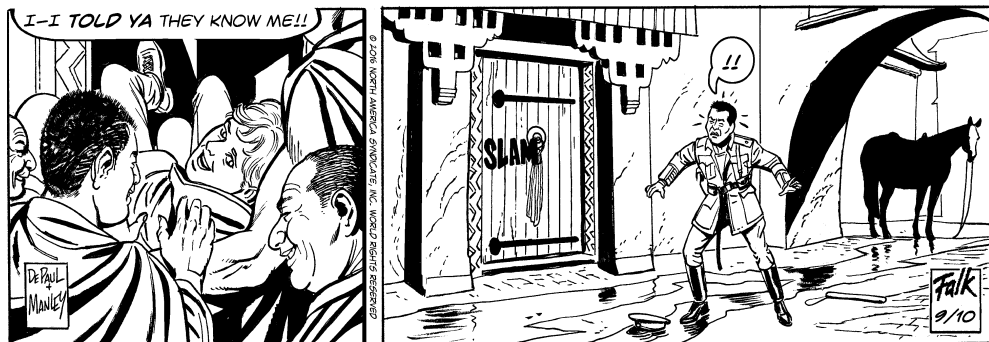
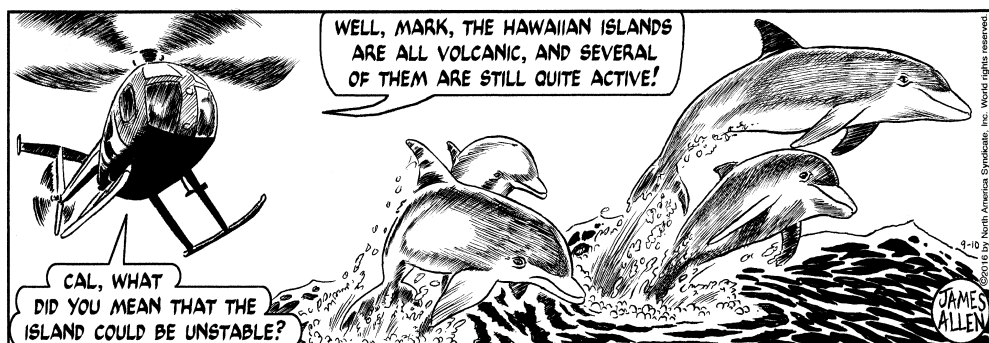
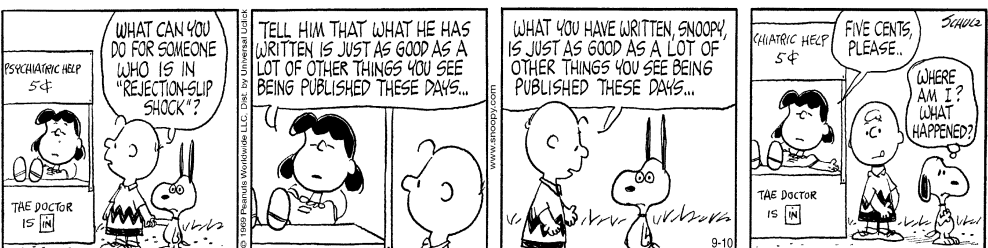
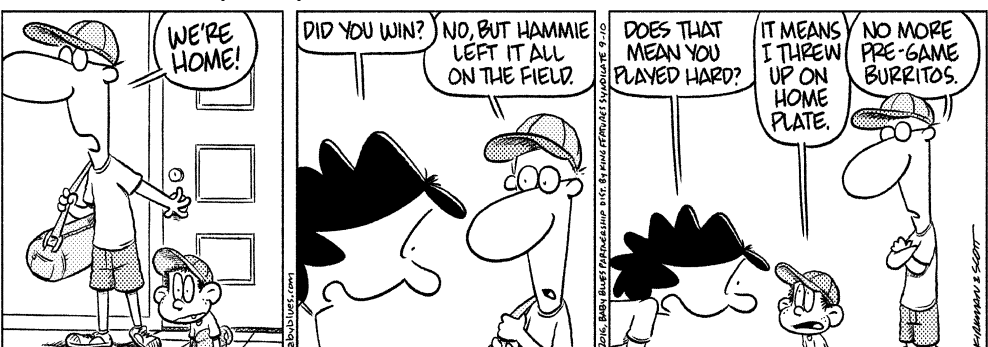
I love her and jump to help because I would hate to see anything happen to her. But what can I do, Abby? I feel like I'm having to make up for what others are not doing for their mother and grandmother. — *Caring Granddaughter in Kentucky*

Dear Granddaughter: Your feelings are accurate; what's happening is unfair to you. I suggest that you discuss this with your parents, aunts, uncle and cousins and see if each family unit would be willing to help your grandmother with these errands on a rotational basis — say a week a month. There are so many of you that it wouldn't be onerous.

Dear Abby: Please help me. I have a friend who douses herself with perfume. I am extremely allergic to the smell of perfume. The last time she got into my car, I nearly passed out. Without throwing her out of my car, what is the right approach? — *Nauseated Up North*

Dear Nauseated: The right approach would be to head this friend off at the pass. The next time you know you will be providing the transportation, explain IN ADVANCE how perfume affects you and ask her not to wear any. And if she "forgets," tell her the minute you get a whiff that she'll have to call a taxi.

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). To invite your favorite people to events you think will be fun is a no-brainer: The super-brainy move is to invite them to events that have the potential to be boring. With good company, any situation can be a party.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Because you encourage experimentation and exploration, your team will enrich you with their discoveries. You'll soon be the best informed and the most cutting edge in all the land.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Do you dare tell the other person what you really crave, desire and need? That will make you vulnerable. Then again, partnerships will only be as productive and fulfilling as they are honest.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You look past a person's role, profession and superficial image to see deeply into the intriguing and surprising character underneath. People feel profoundly seen by you and thus will be deeply attached to you.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). It may seem that nothing ends, that time runs in cycles and it's only a matter of counting the moments before patterns repeat. This is true in some ways, though not in all ways. You get to pick and choose what ends and what repeats.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Though you are a straight-A student of culture and you understand the rules perfectly, ultimately you are gov-

erned by your passions. If the rules can't support you in this, you will not support the rules.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Some of the most respected intellectuals around admit to being open to the idea that there are otherworldly apparitions that overlap in this existence. Whether you believe in ghosts or not, there's a thought that's haunting you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Maybe it's manipulation, but your intentions are good. You'll plant an idea in someone's head then back off and let it take root. When your prospect takes ownership of the idea, it will be a lot less work for you.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). The logical choice, as intelligent as it may be in its rationale, doesn't always please. This is why, once in a while (like now!), you should go off script and follow your impulse.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You'll provide what another person has been missing and tap into a feeling that goes way, way back. Perhaps you are healing a childhood wound! Go tenderly.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Accept the generosity of others in small amounts. If you receive too much, it makes you feel too beholden to the giver. For today, only accept gifts in a range you could easily pay back.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). A memory will stay with you. Your satisfaction over the resolution will have little bearing on the matter: The past will permeate your present either way, so you may as well decide to be at peace with it.



HOLIDAY MATHIS