

CLOSE TO HOME by John McPherson



"My orthopedic surgeon worked it out so I can still golf."

Teen is uneasy about woman's behavior

Dear Abby: I'm 16, go to high school, play football and make good grades. At church every Sunday, a lady who is one of my mom's friends always makes a point of coming up to me to talk. She says things about me growing up to be a man, and asks me if I'm dating. She always gives me an extended hug. It's really uncomfortable for me, and embarrassing. I tried to talk to my mom about it, but she just said her friend is a very affectionate person. To me, the way she does it is creepy and scary. I don't want to be unfriendly to anybody, but this is different. Any suggestions? — *Enough Already in South Carolina*



JEANNE PHILLIPS
DEAR ABBY

Dear Enough: Yes. Listen to your gut. Tell your mother her friend is coming across as creepy and scary. Because her behavior makes you uncomfortable, avoid physical contact with her by stepping back when she tries to hug you. And if she brings up the subject of

whether you're dating, change the subject ("Lovely sermon, wasn't it, Mrs. Robinson?"). Then walk away.

Dear Abby: I've been living with my boyfriend for several years, and he has this habit of not locking the front door. Is this a guy thing? I have told him that I don't feel safe when he does this, yet every other morning I wake up and the front door is not locked! I feel like a broken record. His response is: "I'm here. Nothing is going to happen." He also doesn't lock the balcony door. Even though we are on the second floor, I still hate coming home to doors in the apartment that are unlocked. It makes me feel vulnerable. Am I overreacting? How can I talk to him about it without sounding like a nag? — *Amber in Texas*

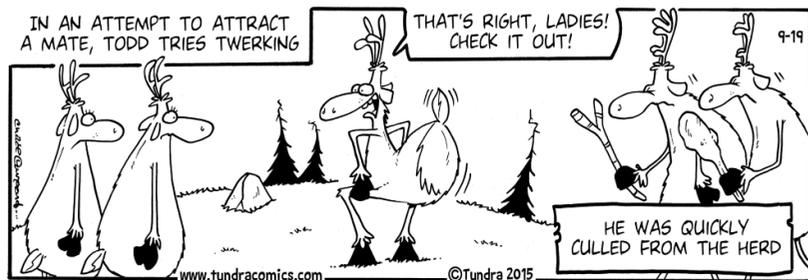
Because you haven't been able to convince him to change his ways, the solution to your problem is to lock the doors yourself.

Dear Abby: I bought several designer outfits for my infant niece. My sister was thrilled with the quality and brands until a friend told her that I had purchased them at a consignment shop. The clothes still have the original tags on them and were clearly never worn. My sister returned the clothes to me and told me that because they were from a consignment shop, she did not want them and they wouldn't be used. Is something wrong with gifting an item purchased at a consignment shop? — *Gift Giving in New York*

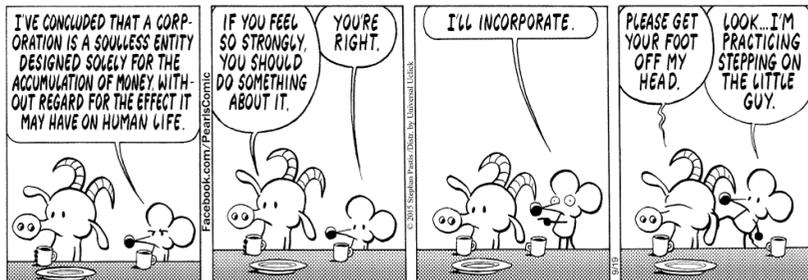
Dear Gift Giving: Of course not! Your sister was extremely rude to do what she did. And I have to wonder about the "friend" who felt compelled to tell her where the baby gifts had been purchased, in light of the fact that the price tags were still on the garments and they had never been worn.

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

TUNDRA by Chad Carpenter



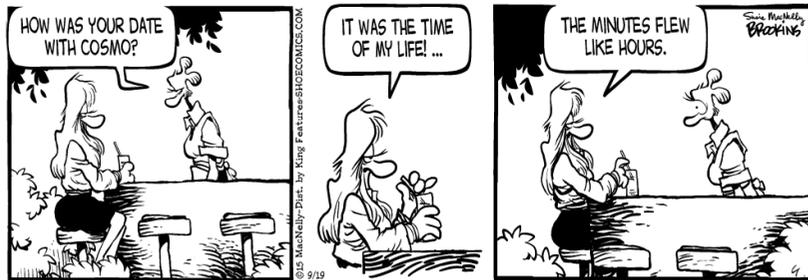
PEARLS BEFORE SWINE by Stephan Pastis



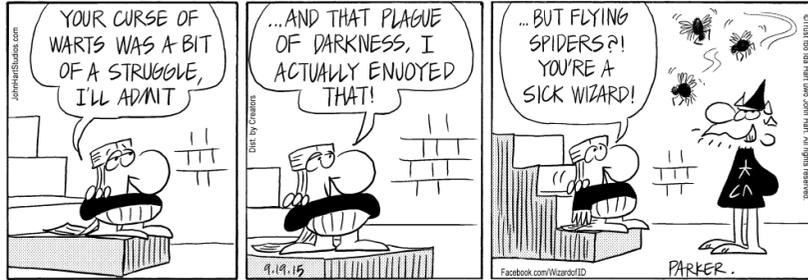
GARFIELD by Jim Davis



JEFF MACNELLY'S SHOE by Chris Cassatt and Gary Brookins



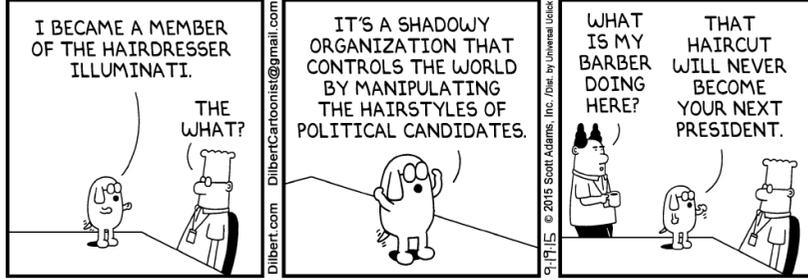
WIZARD OF ID by Brant Parker



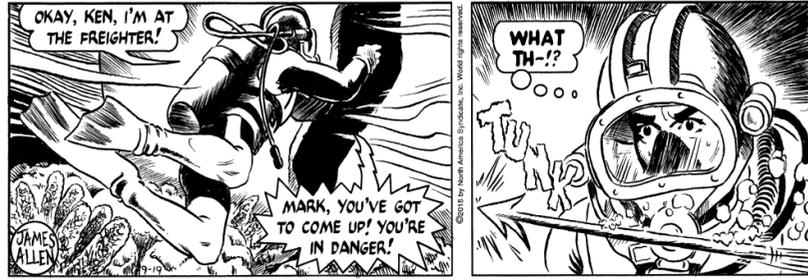
THE PHANTOM by Lee Falk



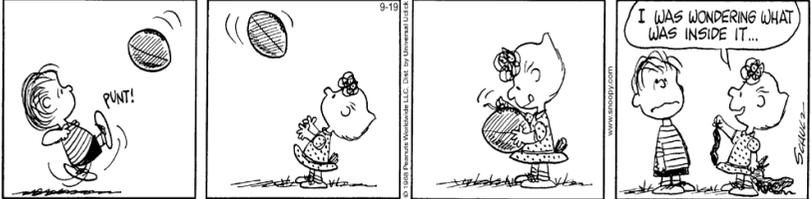
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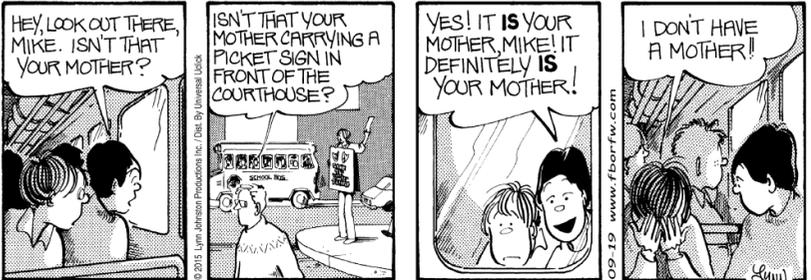
PEANUTS by Charles Schulz



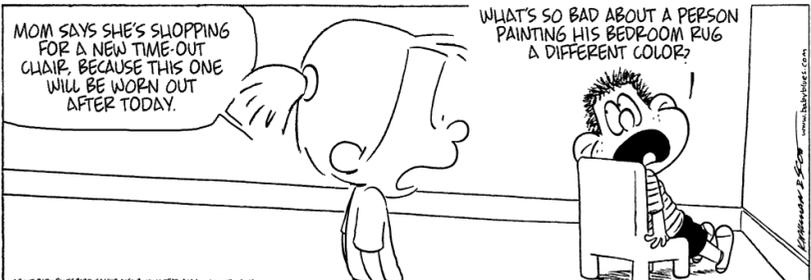
PICKLES by Brian Crane



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE by Lynn Johnston



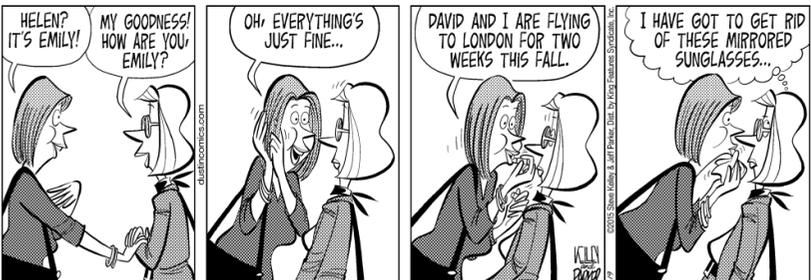
BABY BLUES by Jerry Scott & Rick Kirkman



ZITS by Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



DUSTIN by Steve Kelley and Jeff Parker



Daily Horoscope

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You'll win the game, stomp the competition and claim victory in the battle. Knowing this, do you still want to take it on? Consider what the benefit to you will be beyond the momentary glory of winning.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). There's a reason you never catch up with the one to whom you keep saying, "Let's catch up." The vibe is off, the match is a miss — and yet still, insincere niceties prevent discomfort.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). If you want to know who cares the most, exit and see who follows, leave the job unfinished and see who shows up to finish it, or fly away and see who sprouts wings.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Your wide-ranging interests pay off as you connect with many different types of people. The weird things you talk about with your intimates will lead to brilliant (and far less weird) conversation with acquaintances.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You have many identities and roles. When one isn't going so well, expand yourself in another. For instance, if one relationship is bumming you out, losing yourself in a project or spending time with other friends will help.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You'll be inspired by learning about a variety of industries, cultures and subcultures. The lingo and ideas you pick up

are not only fun for you, but they also up your attractive quotient and make it easier for you to influence others.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). There are too many options. You'll spin your wheels if you consider each one. Give a quick glance and ask: Helpful or not helpful? Potential doesn't count. Only things that are directly and immediately helpful count.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Did you lock the door? When was the last time you checked the tires? It's safety-rundown time, and the old adage rings true: Better safe than sued!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). The ones you love may not support all of your endeavors, but the support you do get is still valuable. Of course, the question was never "Is it valuable?" It was, "Is it enough?"

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). There are many highly intelligent people who extol the virtues of idleness, loafing, loitering, lollygagging and let's not forget napping. Might they be right? Test the theory.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). It should not be assumed that people do what they do because they like it. Other possible reasons: it's easy, it's there, it's what they know, it's comfortable. You can use this knowledge to affect change.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Because you're certain to make an impression, the question becomes: Precisely what kind of impression would you like to make? If you want to have fun in the short-term, you can afford to be assertive.



HOLIDAY MATHIS