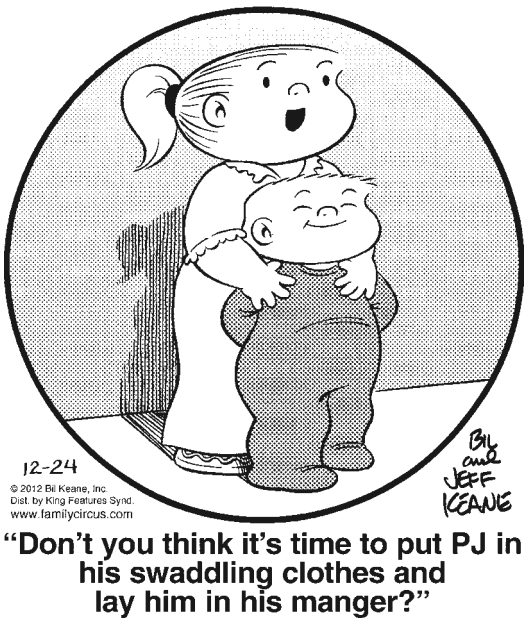


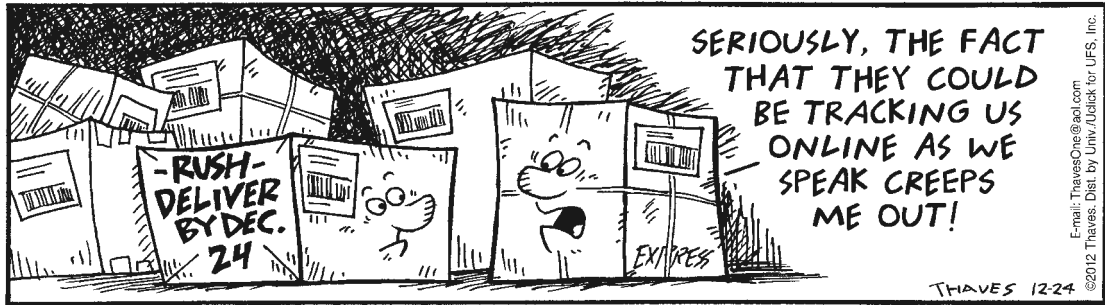
FAMILY CIRCUS | BIL KEANE



ZITS | JERRY SCOTT AND JIM BORGMAN



FRANK AND ERNEST | BOB THAVES



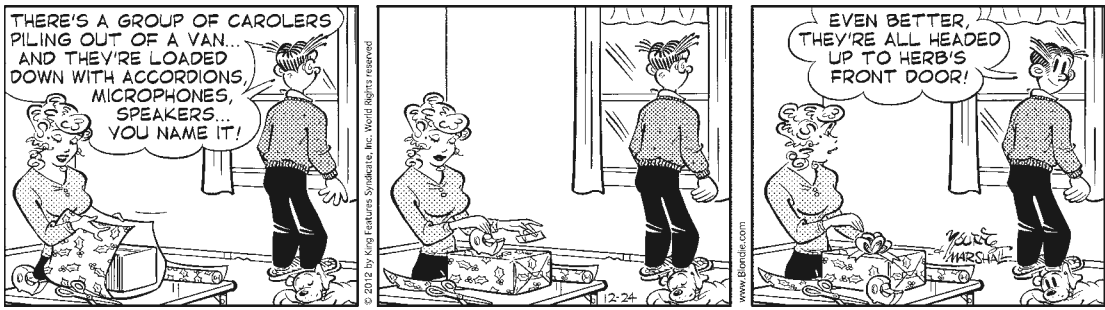
PEANUTS | CHARLES M. SCHULZ



DICK TRACY | JOE STATON AND MIKE CURTIS



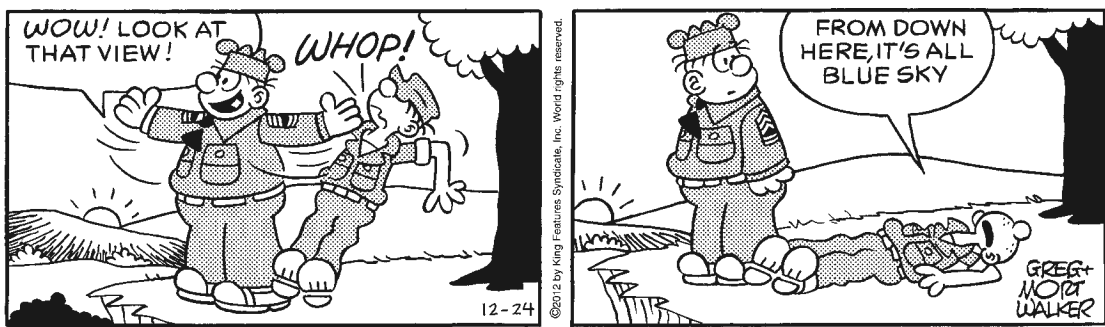
BLONDIE | YOUNG & DRAKE



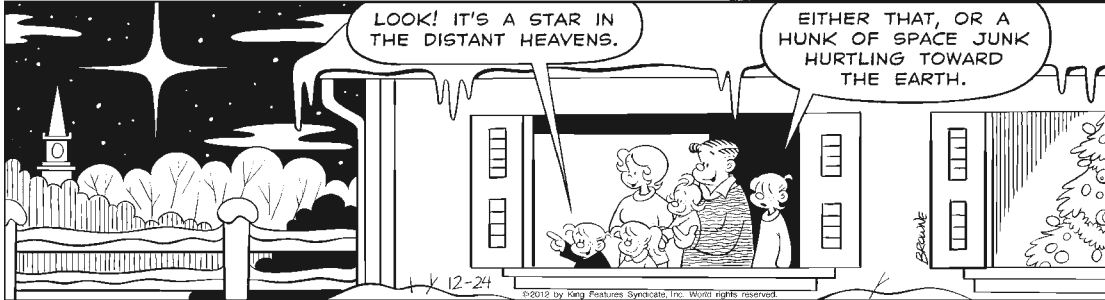
GARFIELD | JIM DAVIS



BEETLE BAILEY | MORT WALKER



HI AND LOIS | BRIAN AND GREG WALKER



THE BORN LOSER | ART SANSON



BIZARRO | DAN PIRARO



Parents Of High School Stars Miss Being In The Limelight

DEAR ABBY: For the last eight years I have been the mother of a star in our local high school. When one of my boys would graduate, the next would take over and be even more athletic or musically talented — and in my youngest son's case, both.

Now that they are gone I can't stand hearing other parents talk about their children's accomplishments. I also can't stop myself from making some comment about how my sons were better. I know it's wrong, but I still do it.

Sporting events make me sad and my husband depressed. Is this empty nest? We can't seem to figure out how to move on. Have you any suggestions? More children are out of the question. — SPOTLIGHTS DIMMED IN OHIO

DEAR S.D.: When people peer too long into a spotlight — whether directly or the reflected glare of someone nearby — it diminishes their vision for a period of time after the light is extinguished. What you may fail to see is that all parents are proud of their kids, and if you continue to compare other people's children unfavorably with your own, you will soon be as welcome as a polecat at a garden party.

This is why I urge you and your husband to take a little time, refocus your attention to children less fortunate than your own, and invest some of your energy in other youths who need the encouragement and support you can give. If you do, you will be rewarded many times over.

DEAR ABBY: My ex-husband — who had an affair — and I have been divorced for three years, but have been forced into a roommate situation due to health issues on my part and financial issues on his. We have two kids together that I have needed his help with. However, there is a potential "new guy" in my life who is uncomfortable that my ex still lives here.



DEAR ABBY

Jeanne Phillips

■ Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

My friends tell me I'm too nice to have let him stay here for so long. I feel it's the charitable thing to do because he has nowhere to go. I'm also afraid my kids will think I'm being hateful if I kick their father

out. Oh my God, Abby, what do I do? — IN TRANSITION IN TENNESSEE

DEAR IN TRANSITION: If you want to stay "stuck" in your predicament, allow your former husband to continue living there. If you would like to go on with your life, then recognize that very few men would want to date a woman who has another man living with her.

By allowing your ex to stay with you, you have allowed your children to think your marriage could be repaired. If that is not the case — and search your heart before answering that question — then set a time limit for him to leave.

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I went to a restaurant last night. We were enjoying our meal when a couple came in and sat at a table close to ours. Soon, a bad body odor wafted over to where we were sitting. It was so strong I couldn't finish my dinner.

When we got up to pay our bill, we told the manager about it and asked what could be done. He said that was a tough question and he didn't know the answer. I told him I was going to write to Dear Abby and ask. He said if I got an answer to be sure to let him know. What would you suggest? — CHOKING IN IOWA

DEAR CHOKING: It was not the responsibility of the restaurant staff to "do" anything about your problem. The thing to do was change to a table in another section. If you were questioned about it — which I doubt you would be — the polite response would be that you preferred a table in a different location.

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JACQUELINE BIGAR'S STARS

EDITOR'S NOTE: Bigar's Stars is based on the degree of your sun at birth. The sign name is simply a label astrologers put on a set of degrees for convenience. For best results, readers should refer to the dates following each sign.

A baby born today has a Sun in Capricorn and a Moon in Taurus.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR MONDAY, DEC. 24, 2012:

This year you are grounded. You make strong financial decisions; however, sometimes you will need to seek out others for ideas. Your creativity is most present when you are brainstorming and focused, and your environment affects your thinking. After mid-June, your libido energies bubble up more easily. If you are single, during this period, Cupid's arrow is nearby. A romance could develop into more. If you are attached, the two of you have worked hard to get where you are. Come June, you'll enjoy and celebrate this. TAURUS often heads down the conventional route, so don't look to him or her for dynamic ideas. The Stars Show the Kind of Day You'll Have: 5-Dynamic; 4-Positive; 3-Average; 2-So-so; 1-Difficult

ARIES (MARCH 21-APRIL 19)

★★★ You might be too concerned with making sure that you have dotted your "i"s and crossed your "t"s." Stop for a moment, and try to remember the true nature of this holiday. Consider all of the special people around you. Tonight: A midnight revival.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)

★★★★ You beam this Christmas Eve. You will be surrounded by loved ones who are full of caring, and the joy of this togetherness feels like a Christmas gift. A call from someone at a distance brings this person closer into your thoughts. Tonight: Follow family traditions.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20)

★★★ You might feel as if you are at the end of a diving board, about to jump. Understand that anxiety is normal, especially during an important holiday like Christmas. Take a nap or do something specifically for yourself. Tonight: Just wait to the wee hours; you will feel great!

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)

★★★★★ You are moving full steam ahead, trying to do as much as you possibly can. Stop and look around. Enjoy the friends and loved ones who surround you. If you need help with a last-minute detail, just ask. Others will be only too happy to pitch in! Tonight: Where the fun is.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22)

★★★★ Others seem to have a difficult time right now.

They could be distracted or completely panicked at the thought of what they have left to do. Remind them of the true meaning of Christmas. Your warm, generous style will help everyone relax. Tonight: Enjoy every moment.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

★★★★ You'll be touched by someone's caring gesture, and this person will be quite pleased with your reaction. Call a friend or loved one at a distance, and discuss plans to get together in the near future. Tonight: Make it OK to daydream a little.

LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

★★★★★ Let a key person get closer to you. You have one life to live -- live it well! A family member could be upset and not understand the cause. Help this person move through his or her feelings, if possible. Tonight: Make midnight calls to loved ones at a distance.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

★★★ Defer to others, as they want control. As a result, you will have less to do. Enjoy being a little lazy and relaxed, as you don't have to be the leader for once. Deal with a difficult person rather than avoid him or her. Tonight: Go with the flow, but do drop by the mistletoe.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

★★★★ Finish up last-minute details. Get your errands done. Once you pull everything together, you will be able to relax with a friend or a loved one. You won't be able to predict what the next 24 hours will bring. Tonight: Come midnight, you'll touch base with loved ones.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

★★★★ You could be pushing someone very hard. Know that you will not be able to convince this person of the rightness of your ways. Give it up, and you might be surprised by what happens in the next few weeks. Tonight: Celebrate, but make it a point to get to bed early.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

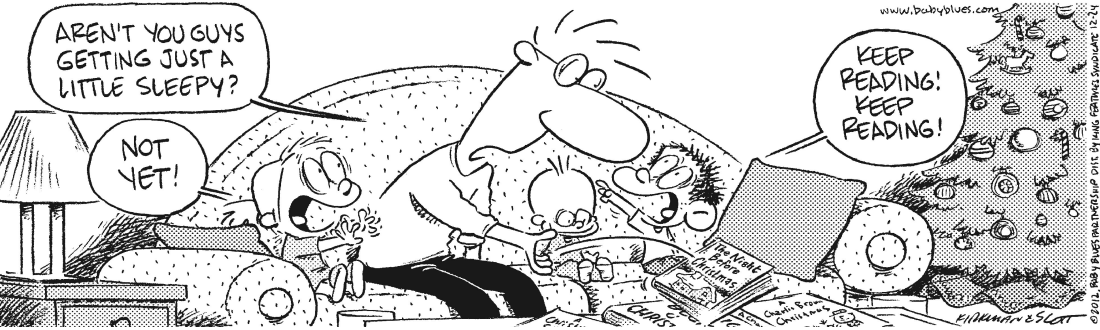
★★★★ Your instincts tell you to stay close to home. Between incoming calls and people dropping by, you might end up hosting an impromptu party. If any sign can get into the moment, it is you. A child dominates the scene ... to no one's surprise. Tonight: The fun begins in the wee hours.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20)

★★★★ Make calls, finish errands and drop off a gift or two at a loved one's place. You might be pushed by a group of friends who want you to join them at the last minute. Remember, there might not be a repeat of this cast of characters in the future. Tonight: Don't make it too late!

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BABY BLUES | RICK KIRKMAN AND JERRY SCOTT



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE | LYNN JOHNSTON



MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM | MIKE PETERS

