

FAMILY CIRCUS | BIL KEANE



12-26
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'It's okay to be naughty again. Santa's done watchin' for this year.'

BIZARRO | DAN PIRARO



I love these feel-good Christmas movies. In the old days, you had to go out and do something nice for someone to feel this way.

ZITS | JERRY SCOTT AND JIM BORGMAN



FRANK AND ERNEST | BOB THAVES



PEANUTS | CHARLES M. SCHULZ



DICK TRACY | JOE STATON AND MIKE CURTIS



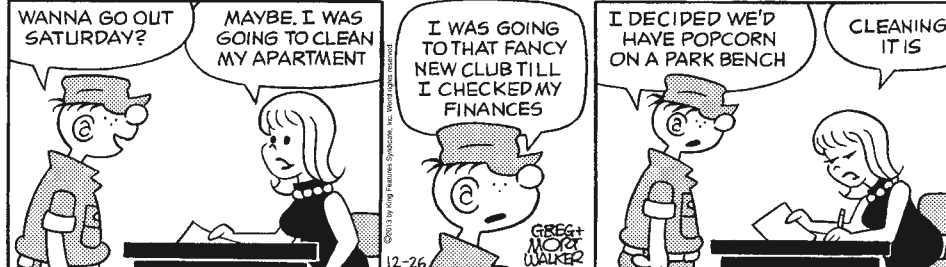
BLONDIE | YOUNG & DRAKE



GARFIELD | JIM DAVIS



BEETLE BAILEY | MORT WALKER



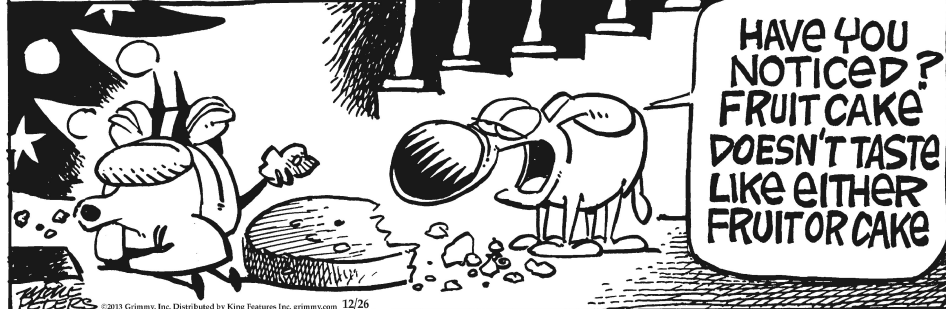
HI AND LOIS | BRIAN AND GREG WALKER



THE BORN LOSER | ART SANSON



MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM | MIKE PETERS



Mom's Promises To Kick Drug Habit Are Only Empty Words

DEAR ABBY: I am a 15-year-old girl and a caring person. I'm worried about my mother. She has been an addict for nine years. She always says she wants help, but she never follows through with getting the help she needs. I have asked her many times to go and get help, and have told her how bad her using makes me feel.

What do you think I can do to encourage her to follow through with treatment? I miss my mother. Any advice would be appreciated. — IN NEED OF HELP IN OLYMPIA, WASH.

DEAR IN NEED OF HELP: You are not only a caring young woman, you are also mature for your age and intelligent. If your mother has been an addict since you were 6, your entire childhood has been spent taking care of her and raising yourself. I am truly sorry for that.

Because nothing you say gets through to her, consider moving in with another relative if that's possible. You should also join a Narateen support group. It's a 12-step program for teenage friends and family members of addicts. There is one in your city called "Hope for Today." To find the location, check the Nar-Anon website, www.nar-anon.org.

DEAR ABBY: I am a grandmother, a former teacher and I have my master's in child psychology. I was also a school board member. I love children.

Please pass this along to parents and anyone else who cares for children: Quit force-feeding them! Again and again I see parents beg and coerce their kids to eat. There are too many obese people in the world. Kids will eat when they are hungry. Just don't give them any junk in between.

I know a dad who told me he forced his son to finish his food until the son went and threw up. He said he will never do that again. Remember, children have small stomachs. They don't need to eat much to feel full. Restaurants serve too much.

Let kids eat when they need to. Just give them healthy choices. — DIANE IN MILWAUKEE

DEAR DIANE: Unfortunately, babies don't come with written instructions. Many parents "encourage" their children to eat because they're afraid if they don't they're not doing their job. It's a reflection of their anxiety. Too often, mealtime turns into a power struggle, which is a big mistake.

What you have written is common sense. A pediatrician or health clinic can advise parents what and how much their child should eat. And I agree, restaurant portions are usually larger than customers should consume in one meal, which is why those who are watching their calories are advised to cut the portions in half before eating.

DEAR ABBY: I am a grown woman with a wonderful husband, two jobs and five beautiful children. I am a good person. My parents raised me to be respectful and accepting of all kinds of people.

My arms are partially tattooed with beautiful flowers. Family members openly express their dislike of it. They have a right to their thoughts and to say what they please. What can I say back that tells them how rude they are and how they hurt me? — INKED AND IRKED IN POCATELLO, IDAHO

DEAR INKED AND IRKED: You should say, "When you gave your opinion about my arms, I heard you the first time. For you to keep repeating it is insulting and hurtful, so please cut it out. I think my tattoos are beautiful and THAT'S what's important." And if your family members persist in making cruel comments, you have my permission to end the conversation.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$14 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)



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.

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 Libra.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR THURSDAY, DEC. 26, 2013:

This year your sixth sense kicks in frequently. If your intuition tells you to head in a certain direction, do. You often sense people's feelings even before they are able to recognize them. Relax, and be a good listener. If you are single, you could be meeting a lot of people. Stay unattached until you meet someone who knocks your socks off. This encounter could occur in the next nine months. If you are attached, the two of you seem to be instinctive with each other this year. You will benefit from scheduling more one-on-one time together. LIBRA knows how to draw others in and have them agree with his or her 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'll move forward with relief. You might need to deal with someone who has more than his or her share of clout. Your instincts will guide you in what you choose to say. A family member could be overly emotional. Tonight: The only answer is "yes."

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)

★★★★ You could be too busy handling remaining tasks from the holidays. Take care of all your thank-you cards today. You and a friend might come up with a plan to revamp this New Year's Eve celebration. Tonight: It is about to get hectic again, so get as much sleep as possible.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20)

★★★★★ Make an effort to let others know how you really feel, as they often might equate a lack of your time or attention with a lack of caring. You could have a difficult time convincing others that this is not the case. Understand where they are coming from. Tonight: Togetherness works.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)

★★★★ You might want to anchor in and get some extra R and R. You also might feel the need to take care of unfinished post-holiday tasks. Some of you might run out the door to catch a sale or two, only to decide later that it was a mistake. Tonight: Finally, some peace and quiet.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22)

★★★★ You are likely to express exactly what you think and feel. You might attempt to draw others into having a conversation. You could create a lot of chatter but little else at the moment. Take some time for yourself and relax. Tonight: Hang out with a few friends.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

★★★★ Kick back, catch a sale or two and start writing your thank-you notes. Don't make a big deal of any meal preparations; just nibble on any leftovers, or make a point of starting a new diet. Play it low-key. Tonight: Indulge yourself and relax.

LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

★★★★★ You are on a roll. Others seek you out, perhaps to give you a belated gift or to say "thank you." Indulge a loved one. The two of you could get into a fun hobby or pastime if you can't make it outside to enjoy the winter air. Tonight: Reach out to someone at a distance.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

★★★ You will want to maintain a low profile. Some of you could experience a Scrooge attack, whereas others simply might be exhausted. Use today for you, either to sleep or to do whatever you need to do in order to feel up to snuff. Tonight: Play it low-key.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

★★★★ You could be pushing your own limits, but you might not care. Get out with family and friends, and enjoy some of the post-holiday sales and events. Touch base with a friend whom you really care about. Tonight: Enjoy the moment.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

★★★ You might need to handle a problem or go into work, whether you want to or not. Others value your intuitive understanding and creativity. You are able to handle a problem with finesse and speed. Tonight: Sort through the many calls and invitations.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

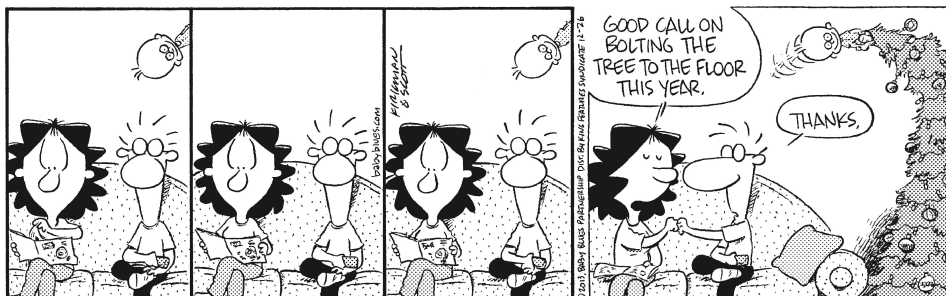
★★★★★ Take an overview and decide what the possibilities are surrounding a trip. Play around with travel fees and different methods of getting to your destination. Meanwhile, relax to a great piece of music. Tonight: Answer emails and return calls.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20)

★★★★ Reach out to the important people in your life whom you may have been too busy to visit on account of all the holiday celebrations. Everyone enjoys some quiet time, so head off to a movie or catch a late brunch. Tonight: Keep it on a one-on-one level.

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BABY BLUES | RICK KIRKMAN AND JERRY SCOTT



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE | LYNN JOHNSTON

