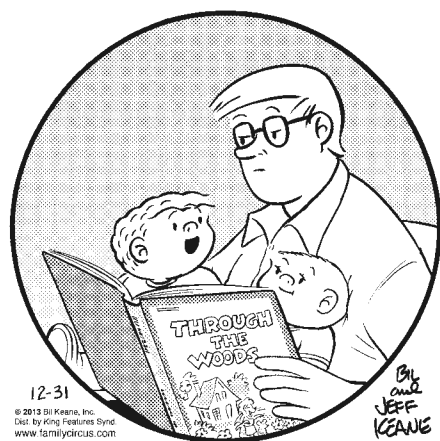


FAMILY CIRCUS | BIL KEANE



"Don't you think this story would sound better if we were eating a cookie?"

BIZARRO | DAN PIRARO



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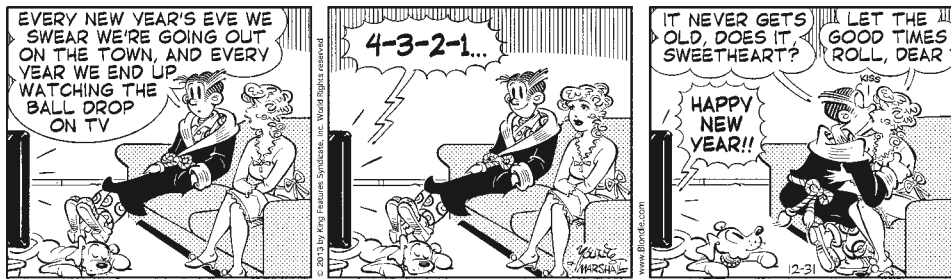
PEANUTS | CHARLES M. SCHULZ



DICK TRACY | JOE STATON AND MIKE CURTIS



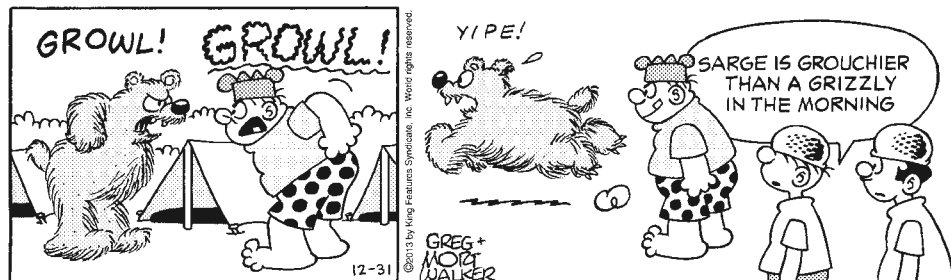
BLONDIE | YOUNG & DRAKE



GARFIELD | JIM DAVIS



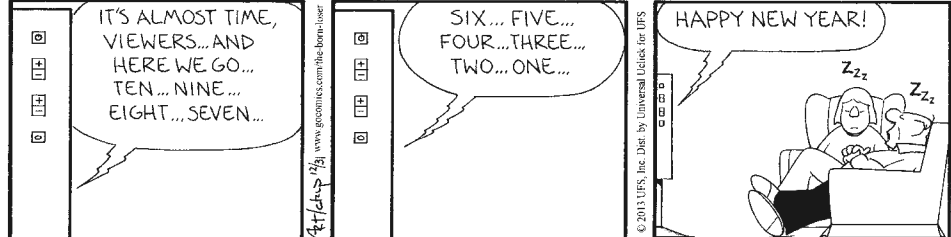
BEETLE BAILEY | MORT WALKER



HI AND LOIS | BRIAN AND GREG WALKER



THE BORN LOSER | ART SANSON



MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM | MIKE PETERS



Commuting And Email Traffic Bring Out Woman's Worst

DEAR ABBY: Have you any advice for how a person can handle mornings better? No matter what I do, I start off every work day irritated and grumpy.

I love the mornings, and even get up early so I can enjoy sitting with my coffee and relax before heading out the door. But as soon as I get out into traffic, I'm immediately in a bad mood. Then, sitting down at work and facing all the emails that come in from my global associates — usually about some emergency that is plopped in my lap — puts me in more of a foul mood.

I actually like my job, despite what it sounds like. I just hate starting off every day like this. Telecommuting is not an option for me. What can I do? — MS. GRUMP IN DENVER

DEAR MS. GRUMP: OK, so you're fine until you leave the house. Many people who find morning rush hour to be nerve-racking find it calming to listen to audio books or music during their commute. If that doesn't help you, and it is feasible, consider using another form of transportation that's less stressful.

And when you arrive at work, take a little time to decompress before turning on your computer, whether it is with meditation or deep-breathing exercises for the first 10 or 15 minutes. Both can do wonders for a person's outlook.

DEAR ABBY: A cute little girl lives up the street from my husband and me and attends the same church we do. A few years ago we taught her in a Sunday school class. At the time, she developed a crush on my husband. We both laughed about it then and thought it was sweet.

Fast-forward three years, and it's not so sweet anymore. It's downright awkward. She runs up to my husband multiple times while we're at church, while ignoring me. Last Sunday, she turned to me as she did it and announced, "He's mine!" I stood there thinking, "Uh, no — he's MINE."

I know this jealous reaction may seem silly and I'm trying hard not to feel this way, but it

felt like I was fighting over my husband with an 8-year-old. He is aware of her crush and how I feel about it, but he doesn't want to hurt her feelings. Her mother knows about the crush, and we shared a laugh early on.

What can I do? Would speaking to the girl's mother help? What should I say? Or would it make things more awkward? — NO LONGER AMUSED IN OGDEN, UTAH

DEAR NO LONGER AMUSED: The cute little neighbor girl is no longer 5. Three years is a long time for a child to hang onto a crush.

Because her behavior bothers you, tell her mother you find it excessive at this point and ask her to tell her daughter she's getting too old to act that way. It's the truth, and your husband should back you up.



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.

DEAR ABBY: I thought I'd share my own New Year's resolution with you. For the past 25 years I have made the following resolution: Each day I will ask myself, "What is the kindest, most loving thing I can say or do at this particular moment?" I invite your readers to consider this. — WAYNE IN PUYALLUP, WASH.

DEAR WAYNE: I consider it a refreshingly positive way to start a day, and I'm sure others will agree and add it to their list of New Year's resolutions. Thank you for sharing it.

CONFIDENTIAL TO MY READERS: A word to the wise: If you plan to toast the New Year tonight, please appoint a designated driver. And on this night especially, designated drivers should remember to drive defensively. To one and all, a happy, healthy New Year! — LOVE, ABBY

Good advice for everyone — teens to seniors — is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

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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 Sagittarius if born before 10:01 a.m. (PST). Afterward, the Moon will be in Capricorn.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR TUESDAY, DEC. 31, 2013:

This year you demand depth in your self-expression and values. Demand this high-caliber communication from yourself before you request the same from others. Otherwise, you could get a lot of negative feedback. Whether you like it or not, you are entering a new phase in relating. If you are single, the people you choose to date could be very different from your present "type." If you are attached, you might throw your sweetie for quite a loop, as you seem to transform right in front of his or her eyes. Be understanding. A fellow CAPRICORN might be overly intense.

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 not want your priorities to change, but a situation will force you to adjust them. Anger could dress up as sarcasm. Be aware of that fact, whether you are on the receiving or giving end. Follow your instincts. Tonight: Others depend on you leading the celebrations.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)

★★★★ You'll relax as you take a look at the big picture. You could be overserious and not realize it. A quarrel could ensue if someone tries to lighten you up. In any case, avoid angry moments, and curb sarcasm. Tonight: Surround the New Year with great music.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20)

★★★ You could be very social, but a loved one will manage to rein you in. You might be quite angry at this person's actions, but try not to show your distaste. Trust that you are communicating your feelings nonverbally. Tonight: A problem could ensue around plans.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)

★★★★ You finally will relax enough to enjoy others, especially a close friend or loved one. This person's tone might be hard to hear, but behind his or her words and attitude are feelings. Remember to think before you speak. Tonight: Unexpected developments.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22)

★★★★ You might want to understand where someone is coming from. Your ability to look past

the obvious will emerge. You might be angry at someone without this person knowing why. He or she might not be on the same level as you. Tonight: Live for the moment.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

★★★★ Your creativity emerges with someone's sarcasm. You might decide to play dumb in order to defuse the moment. Be careful, as you put this person on a pedestal. Unexpected developments could encourage you to hit the "pause" button. Tonight: In the moment.

LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

★★★ Be more anchored than usual, if possible. You could fly off the handle out of the blue and cause quite a scene with someone. When you want to make peace, the other person might be too offended to forgive you. Give him or her some time to cool down. Tonight: At home.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

★★★★ If you have been suppressing hurt, which has evolved to anger, you might be more surprised than others at the rage in your voice. Seize the moment for an important discussion. Make expressing yourself one of your resolutions. Tonight: Make peace, not war.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

★★★★ You might want to treat a friend or loved one to lunch, only to get attitude from out of the blue. It is possible that you could be the recipient of someone else's anger or sarcasm, too. Give others the space to be moody. Meanwhile, go on your merry way. Tonight: Where the action is.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

★★★★ Deep thinking might be appropriate for the new year. Avoid getting into a tit-for-tat situation at all costs. You neither need nor really want the pettiness. Expect the unexpected, especially around your home and family. Tonight: Christen the new year in style.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

★★★ Take your time thinking through a decision. You might not appreciate some of the opinions that are being offered. Keep seeking out the right solution, yet try to detach and take in a bigger view. Tonight: Make it a private celebration.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20)

★★★★ Focus on the long term and on your desires. Making appropriate resolutions fits the moment. An angry partner could offend one of your close friends or family members. Use special caution with your finances. Tonight: Wherever you are, there is a great party going on.

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BABY BLUES | RICK KIRKMAN AND JERRY SCOTT



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE | LYNN JOHNSTON

