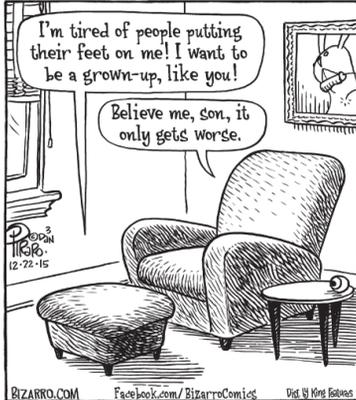


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12-22  
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"Twas the night before the night before the night before Christmas..."  
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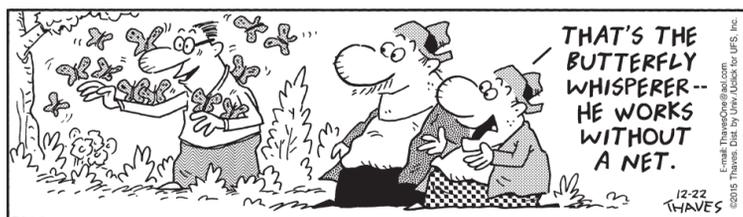
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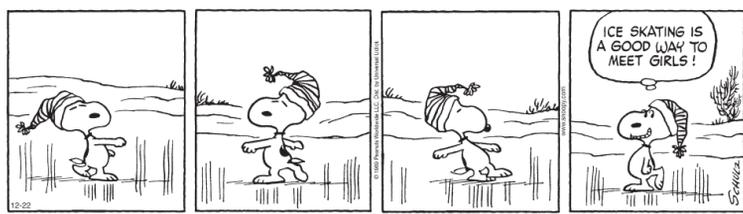
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# Hospital Visitors Should Practice Simple Courtesy

**DEAR ABBY:** I have been a nurse for 35 years, and over time, I have noticed a decline in simple courtesy from people who visit friends or relatives in the hospital. Several things visitors should keep in mind:

Patients are in hospitals because they need intensive treatment and REST. Creating a party atmosphere in which the patient is expected to entertain numerous "guests" is physically and emotionally draining and a danger to the person's health.

1. If you don't know what room the patient has been assigned, ASK. Don't wander in and out of rooms until you find the right one.

2. Be prepared to give the first and last names of the patient when asking for directions.

3. Abide by the visiting hours and the number of persons allowed into a patient's room at one time. Remember, patients need dedicated time for treatments and procedures.

4. Do not bring small children to the hospital unless they are visiting their parent or sibling. You needlessly place them at risk by exposing them to infections.

5. Make sure any food you bring to the patient is allowed by the physician.

6. Never question the staff for information regarding the patient's diagnosis or condition. It is against the law for a health care provider to divulge patient information to an unauthorized individual. Ask the patient.

7. Get permission before plugging in your cellphone charger.

8. When taking the elevator, use public elevators. And when the doors open, stand back and allow the occupants to safely step out before entering. — PATIENT-CENTERED NURSE IN CALIFORNIA

**DEAR NURSE:** If readers take to heart your suggestions in the spirit they were given, everyone will benefit. That visitors would charge into hospital elevators, wander the halls, barge into patients' rooms, and drag small children into sickrooms is an indication that there has been not only a decline in courtesy but also common sense.



**DEAR ABBY**  
Jeanne Phillips

**DEAR ABBY:** My ex-husband, "Charles," is dying, and we have decided to get remarried before he dies so he won't be alone at the end. (And also so I can receive his VA benefits when he's gone.) Is this morally wrong? I do take care of him, but not all the time because Charles likes living with his uncle and will remain there after we marry. I guess I just have a little guilt trip going on. — GUILT TRIP IN TEXAS

**DEAR GUILT TRIP:** Charles earned his benefits. I see nothing morally wrong with people providing for someone they care for after their death. Unless Charles was coerced into his generosity, I can't see why you should feel guilty.

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

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Teen 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 Taurus if born before 9:31 p.m. (EST). Afterward, the Moon will be in Gemini.

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR TUESDAY, DEC. 22, 2015:

This year you will greet some positive changes in your life. You'll need to learn to look at the big picture more often. Your ability to learn comes out as you adapt to new ideas, cultures and perhaps new developments in your chosen field. If you are single, you might connect with someone who is very different from the type of suitor you have chosen in the past. This experience will be a real eye-opener for you. If you are attached, you find that more acceptance and trust builds between the two of you. Your in-laws could play a significant role in your life. GEMINI might wear you down with his or her constant chatter.

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 have an unusually grounded way of handling a parent. You know how to tell this person to chill out. Your efforts play a bigger role in others' lives than you realize. A partner could become timid. Try not to fall victim to the pressure of the holidays. Tonight: Hang in there.

### TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)

★★★★ You will draw someone in a lot closer than you'd thought possible. Your imagination will provide you with ideas for last-minute gifts. Remember, what pleases you might not please someone else. Walk in each person's shoes. Tonight: Forget tomorrow and find the mistletoe.

### GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20)

★★ You might be slow to get started, but you'll be a force to be dealt with once you get moving. You are able to make a big difference in a partner's life just by offering a helping hand. Your creativity soars, and you'll manage to achieve what you desire. Tonight: You make the call.

### CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)

★★★ Allow others to demonstrate how much they care by letting them do what they want to do. You like to take control of holiday events, especially if they are at your home or involve cooking. However, let someone else take over this year. Tonight: Play it low-key.

### LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22)

★★ Take care of your responsibilities first.

Some of you might choose to visit with a friend who lives out of town but is around for the holidays. You could be overwhelmed -- not by what you have to do, but by what you want to do! Prioritize! Tonight: Where you want to be.

### VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

★★★★ Make calls and check your email once more before making plans. You could be taken aback by everything you want to get done. Take responsibility for making your schedule work. Clear out as much as you can before you go to holiday happenings. Tonight: A must appearance.

### LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

★★★★ Deal with a friend or loved one on a one-on-one level, especially if you see a misunderstanding brewing. Try to clear up a problem quickly. Make plans that involve someone at a distance, or go listen to some holiday music. Tonight: Favorite place, favorite people.

### SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

★★★★ Defer to a loved one who seems to be able to accomplish much more than you can. You might feel as if you are leaning heavily on this person. Nearly everyone you know wants some time with you. Allow yourself to be flattered. Tonight: You will be happier if you're not around crowds.

### SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

★★★ Handle what is happening in a matter-of-fact kind of way. Relax, and you will be much more productive. You could be delighted by a call or an unexpected visit. A friend might drive a hard bargain, but he or she just wants to be with you. Tonight: Go along with a suggestion.

### CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

★★★★ A situation with a loved one will change. Do not interfere with this person's natural flow. Focus on a last-minute project and perhaps some calls that need to be returned. You could be surprised by what comes down the path. Tonight: Do not push yourself too hard.

### AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

★★★★ Try not to dig in your heels over a problematic matter; otherwise, you might have to backtrack later and revoke a statement. A child or new friend seems to want to spend time with you. Balancing everything that is happening will take some skill. Tonight: Get into the holiday spirit.

### PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20)

★★★★ Return calls and keep to your schedule. Do what you need to do, and curb socializing. You won't want to promise to get together with someone only to cancel later. Keep your plans as loose and easy as possible until you have a better sense of time. Tonight: Invite a friend over.

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## BABY BLUES | RICK KIRKMAN AND JERRY SCOTT



## BLONDIE | YOUNG & DRAKE



## MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM | MIKE PETERS

