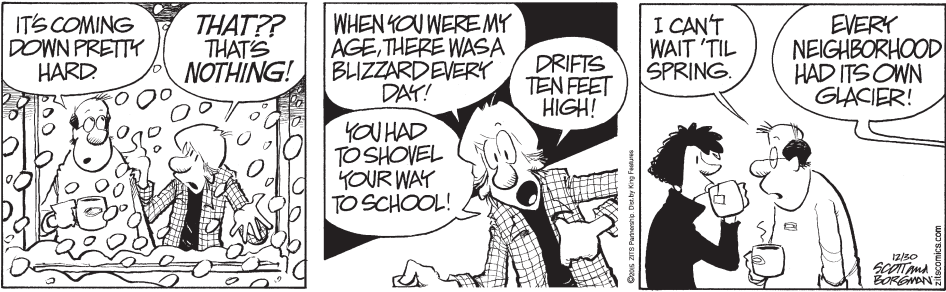


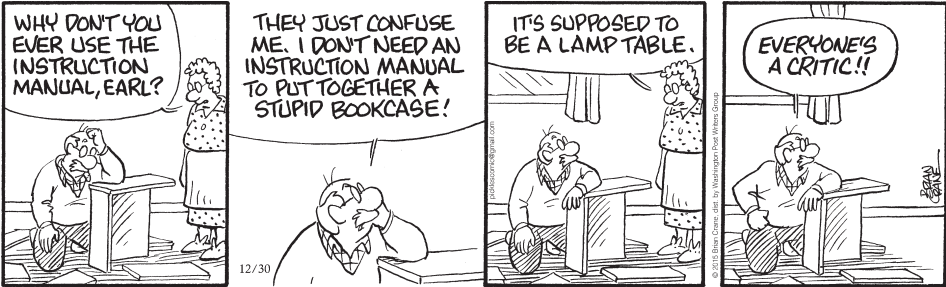
FAMILY CIRCUS | BILL KEANE



ZITS | JERRY SCOTT AND JIM BORGMAN



PICKLES | BRIAN CRANE



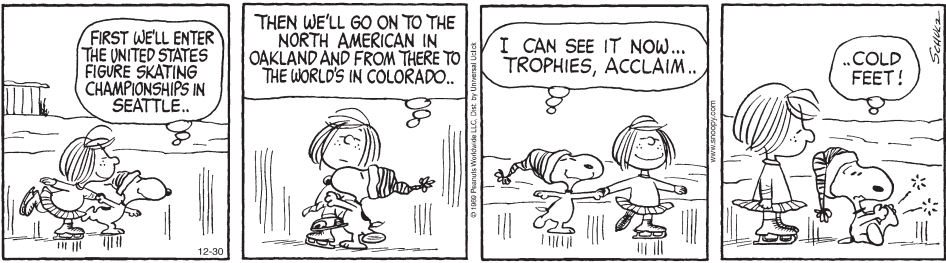
FRANK AND ERNEST | BOB THAVES



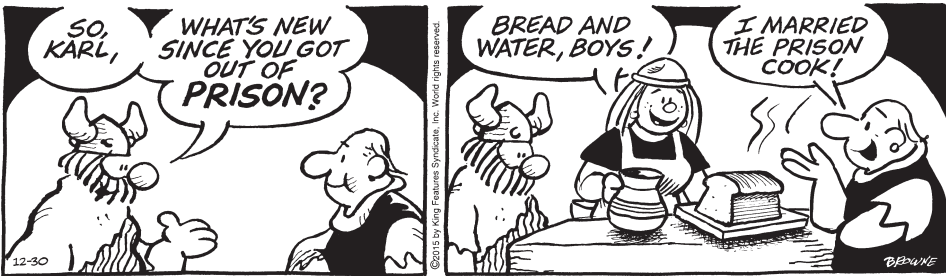
BORN LOSER | ART SAMSON



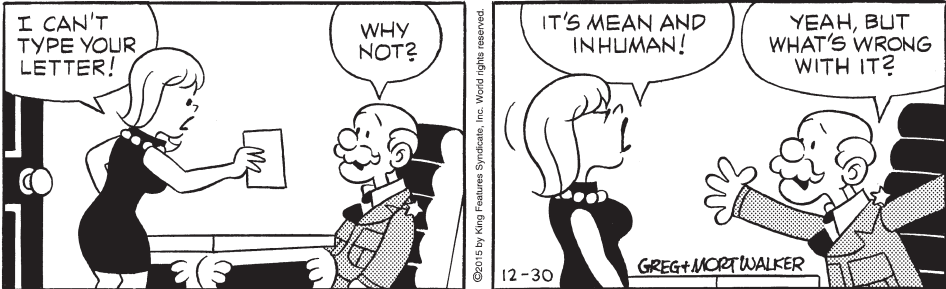
PEANUTS | CHARLES M. SCHULZ



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE | CHRIS BROWNE



BETLE BAILEY | MORT WALKER



HI AND LOIS | BRIAN AND GREG WALKER



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE | LYNN JOHNSTON



GARFIELD | JIM DAVIS



Catholic Hospitals Value Lives Of Mother And Child

DEAR ABBY: You printed a letter from a woman (Nov. 25) whose husband told her while she was pregnant that, if it came to a choice, he would choose the life of the baby over hers. Your response contained a piece of misinformation I would appreciate you correcting for your readers.

You asserted that it is Catholic policy to save the life of the baby over the mother in obstetrical emergencies. Abby, that is one of the oldest but most persistent pieces of misinformation out there! This inaccurate statement has been replayed even in movies in spite of repeated denials by Catholic hospitals and the professionals who render care in them.

The fact is: Catholic policy is abundantly clear on the dignity of both mother and baby, and makes no priority of one over the other. Catholic hospitals operate with the same standards of safety in maternity care and are inspected by the same organizations that inspect non-Catholic maternity programs such as the Joint Commission and the licensing agency of each state. Catholic hospitals must adhere to the same robust standards as every other maternity service in the country.

I would appreciate it if you could assure your readers that, while this makes for good movies and novels, it is not the Catholic position. The dignity of the life of both mother and baby are critically important to all those serving in Catholic health care. Thank you for your help with this. — SR. CAROL KEEHAN, PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, CATHOLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

DEAR SISTER CAROL: Since printing that letter, I have received a crash course in ethics at Catholic hospitals. I apologize to you and to my Catholic readers for saying what I did. In the interest of educating my readers, I am sharing some of the enlightening letters I received. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: In the days before blood banks and antibiotics, very few women survived C-sections. Obstetrical complications (now solved by surgical delivery) created a dilemma: Either allow a dysfunctional labor to continue until the child died and could be forcibly dragged or dissected through the birth canal, or perform the surgery that would cause the mother's death.

About the only time such an issue could arise in contemporary America would be in the rare case of a pregnant woman who is discovered to have an aggressive cancer, and has to decide whether to start chemo or radiation therapy that could abort or harm the fetus, or delay until after delivery, which could allow the tumor to grow or metastasize. — ROBIN T., RICHMOND, CALIF.

DEAR ABBY: Devout Catholics are pro-life in every instance, and, of course, efforts to save both mother and infant are always the rule. But the value of the life of a newborn never surpasses the value of the life of the mother. Never! — CATHOLIC DOCTOR IN OHIO

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.

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable — and most frequently requested — poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby — Keepers 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 Virgo.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR WEDNESDAY, DEC. 30, 2015:

This year you can and often will detach and take an overview of what is going on around you. You will revise your thoughts accordingly, which often plays into your attitude, actions and commitments. Your home life continues to have an unpredictable quality to it. Be careful with investments around your home or in real estate. If you are single, through travel or perhaps a workshop of sorts, you could meet someone very unique. You might be slow to commit, as you will want to make sure you can accept a different type of lifestyle. If you are attached, the two of you start to enjoy your differences and often laugh at them. You could travel more than you expect this year. VIRGO helps you see the big picture.

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)

★★★★ Reach out to someone you care about; you know you can make a big difference in this person's life. Follow your instincts when discussing how much to share about an investment. Your efforts will pay off in prestige and leverage. Tonight: Try something new.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)

★★★★★ A friend might be deceptive, and a loved one will call this person's integrity into question. You might have difficulty listening to this conversation and seeing what is obvious to the other party. Listen to your instincts, but use logic. Tonight: Loosen up with the moment.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20)

★★★★ Understand what is happening within a situation on the homefront. Your ability to relate on a one-on-one level attracts someone else's attention. Could this person be slightly envious of your style? The unexpected occurs when dealing with a specific friend. Tonight: A must show.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)

★★★★ You might want to understand what is going on around you. How you deal with someone could change quickly. Your sense of direction will point toward a new path. Defer to those who can carry out an idea more effectively. Tonight: The unexpected sets a new tone.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22)

★★★★ Your ability to change direction

emerges. Use care with the words you choose. Know what is needed in order to continue, and decide if it is worth the effort. Be aware of the costs of continuing as you have been. Creativity could be stalled if good decisions are not made. Tonight: Ever flexible.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

★★★★ Move forward in a more creative way. Others are highly responsive to you. Seize the moment, as an associate loosens up a situation with his or her unexpected actions. You could be surprised by how quickly the ball falls in your court. Tonight: Go for what you want.

LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

★★★ Within your immediate circle lie many positive changes, yet you might feel as if you can't handle them all. Recognize the positive vibes you're receiving from others. You will be OK, as long as you can transform certain rigid viewpoints. Tonight: Know when to vanish.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

★★★★ You will have the unique opportunity of seeing a friend's transformation occur. Reach out to this person and make a kind gesture, despite the fact that it isn't natural to you to be someone else's cheerleader. Embrace the role for now. Tonight: Meet up with friends and hang out.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

★★★★ You'll feel as if someone really cares. This person has a way of letting this be known, which makes you smile. It could be just a simple expression of support, but that seems to make all the difference. Use caution with your finances. Tonight: In the limelight.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

★★★★★ Reach out to someone at a distance. Fatigue plays a role in your decisions. You have the ability to adjust and transform more quickly than in the recent past. Listen carefully to news. You'll find that a burst of energy pushes you toward your goal. Tonight: Reach between the lines.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

★★★★ One-on-one relating will evoke strong results where you least expect it to. A friend could disappoint you with his or her lack of responsiveness. If you are not pleased with what you see, recognize that there still are alternatives. Tonight: Not among the crowds.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20)

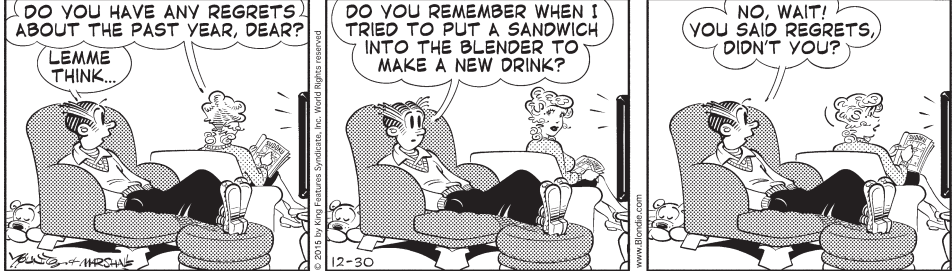
★★★★ Listen to news with an open mind. The unexpected is likely to occur. You can't seem to make a loved one happy, no matter how hard you try. Be more forthright in how you handle your interactions with this person. Assess your finances. Tonight: Avoid a risk, even if it seems good.

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BABY BLUES | RICK KIRKMAN AND JERRY SCOTT



BLONDIE | YOUNG & DRAKE



MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM | MIKE PETERS

