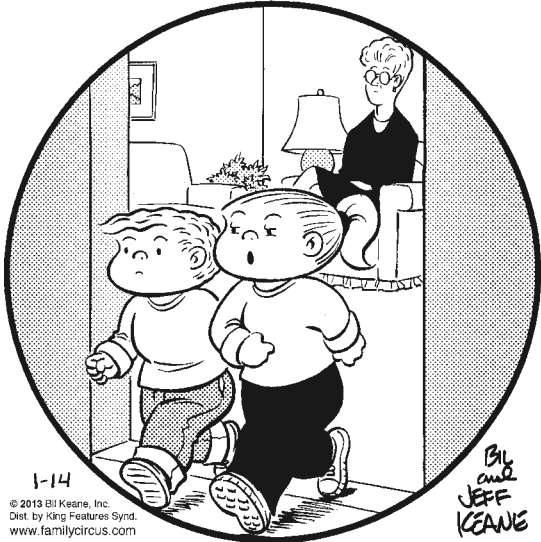


FAMILY CIRCUS | BIL KEANE



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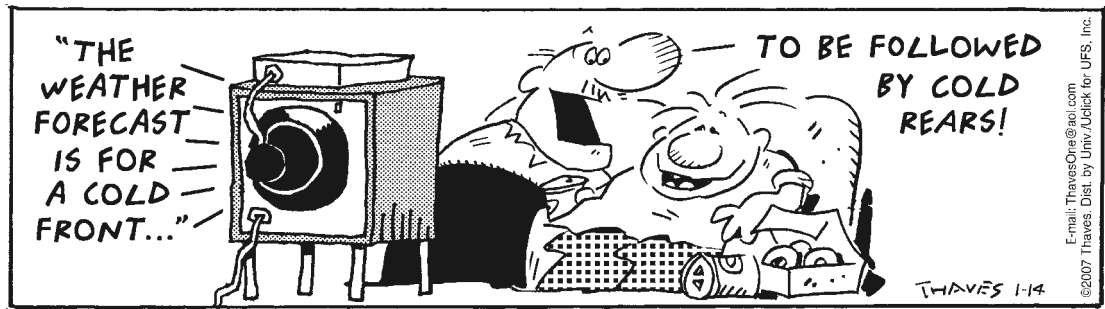


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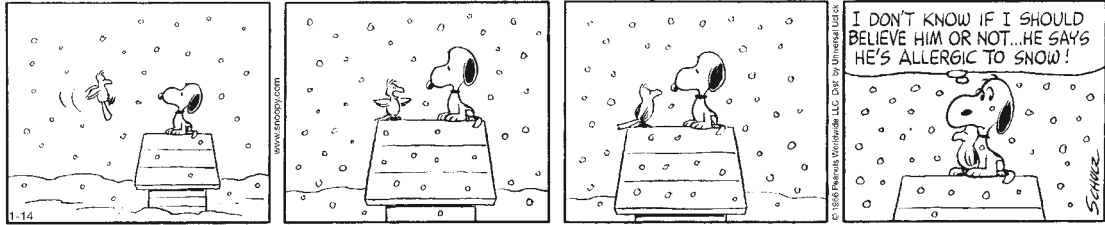
ZITS | JERRY SCOTT AND JIM BORGMAN



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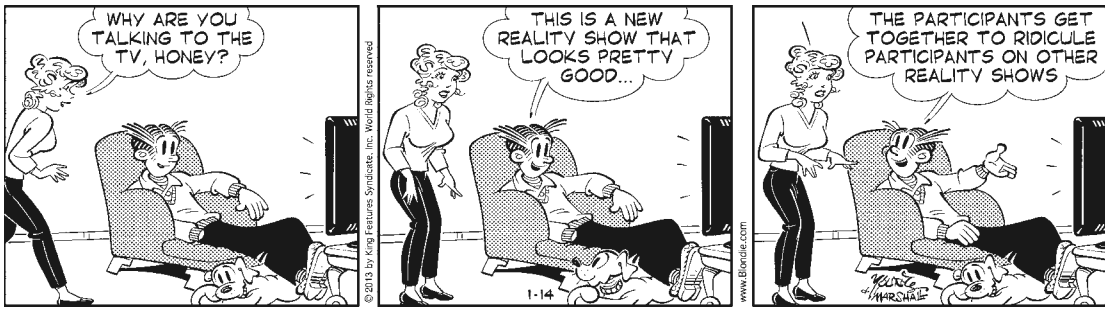
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Asking Son's Playmate To Go Home Is No Fun For Mother

DEAR ABBY: My son "Timmy" has a playmate from down the street I'll call "Bobby." I'm happy that Timmy has someone to play with, but Bobby's parents haven't taught him good manners. Even though Bobby is only 6, he does not have a curfew. He has stayed at our house as late as 10:30 at night without his parents coming after him or calling to ask me to send him home.

Also, Abby, I did not invite Bobby to my 4-year-old daughter's birthday party because it was for her and her little friends. Well, Bobby, his older sister and a friend of hers showed up anyway! I didn't have enough favors for the extra children. I was able to stretch the food, but I was aggravated that his parents didn't have enough respect for me to stop their children from crashing my daughter's birthday.

I was brought up to leave my friends' homes when it was dinner-time, but these children don't want to go home even when I ask them to leave so we can have our dinner. They beg to stay and eat with us.

How can parents be so inconsiderate as to allow their children to come over anytime and stay as long as they like? I want it to stop, but I don't want to cause hard feelings. How do I handle this? — IMPOSED UPON IN OKLAHOMA

DEAR IMPOSED UPON: There is usually a good reason why children don't want to go home. Has it occurred to you that Bobby's parent(s) may be drunk, stoned or absent?

If a parent is reachable, explain to him or her that at your house you have a regular dinner hour and that it is family time. Guests must go home then, unless they have been specifically invited to stay. Also, after-dinner playtime is over at 8:30 p.m. and guests must go home by then — but not walk alone after dark.

It may turn out that your son's playmate is a latchkey kid or being neglected. If the latter is true, then Child Protective Services should be notified.



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 am a woman who is more than 50 pounds overweight. It didn't happen overnight, and I completely understand that I am the only person to blame for it. I gained the weight because of years of unhealthy eating, lack of exercise and the birth of my two daughters over a period of six years.

Recently I decided to do something about it. I took the initiative, adopted a sensible diet and have started walking two to three miles a day with my friend, "Shannon."

Abby, on almost every occasion, Shannon and I are made fun of as we walk. It's embarrassing and extremely discouraging. We realize we are overweight. We don't need people calling attention to us or making fun of the "fat girls."

Won't you please let your readers know that struggling with weight loss is hard enough without adding the fear and anxiety of being made a laughingstock while exercising? — LOSING SLOWLY IN OHIO

DEAR LOSING SLOWLY: I applaud you for recognizing you had a challenge and rising (literally) to meet it. When I see someone who's carrying extra weight walking or working out at a gym, what comes to mind is, "There's a person who is doing something positive about his or her problem."

Because a jackass brays doesn't mean you have to take it to heart. The individuals making those unkind remarks are trying to make themselves feel superior by putting you down. Please don't let it discourage you. You're on the right track.

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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 Aquarius if born before 2:49 a.m. (PST). Afterward, the Moon will be in Pisces.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR MONDAY, JAN. 14, 2013:

This year many opportunities appear; however, with them come many reasons not to take advantage of them. If you want the end results, trust yourself and the path you must take. You will hop over several obstacles; you will get there. If you are single, come summer 2013, your love life will become very lively. You will either have a ball dating, or you'll find yourself in a meaningful relationship. If you are attached, the two of you need to plan several getaways together in order to stoke the embers of romance. AQUARIUS is quirky, yet he or she understands you well.

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)

★★★ Your dreams will be inspirational, and they could set you on a path of soul searching. As a result, you'll be calm and centered. Others approach you with a willingness to share and be more vulnerable. You might rethink your impression of an associate. Tonight: Do your thing.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)

★★★★ Zero in on what is important to you. Your perspective about a cohort could be transforming, as you open up to each other more and more. Still, this person might be withdrawn. Curb a tendency to be excessive. Tonight: Your friends are.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20)

★★★ Your take-charge attitude might emerge. Tap into your creativity, and manifest much more of what you want. Let someone be a little more involved with your decision-making process. Transform a difficult situation into a shared experience. Tonight: In the limelight.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)

★★★★ Keep reaching out to someone at a distance whom you trust, and who often provides diverse and sometimes opposing viewpoints. A child might act closed off. This attitude could be necessary, as he or she seems to be going through a phase. Tonight: Feed your mind.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22)

★★★★ Deal with a partner or associate directly. This

person might be unusually plugged into his or her imagination. It could be difficult to communicate at times. Try a very anchored and solid approach, and he or she will respond. Tonight: Go with someone's suggestion.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

★★★★ Others seem to have everything under control and are not willing to let go. Do your own thing rather than feel left out. Of course, someone might be looking for you. This person's search could be a problem if it involves work. Do not cut off communication. Tonight: Do not be alone.

LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

★★★ You have a lot of ground to cover, and you'll get it all done unless you start worrying about a problem and/or a financial matter. Be willing to revise your boundaries for a day and see what happens. You might want to make a conscious change. Tonight: Burn the midnight oil.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

★★★★ You have a tremendous amount of self-discipline, should you decide to use it. Your imagination seems to be an endless source of ideas, though they might not necessarily be related to what is going on around you. Work on staying present. Tonight: Spice up the moment.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

★★★ You might have a hard time getting started, which could be for the better. If you can work from home, do. You also might need to work on some other project that you do not have time for normally. If you run into a roadblock, back off. Tonight: Do not push yourself.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

★★★★ Your words have far more impact than you realize. You might not see their effect immediately. You could cause a major transformation with just a few sentences. No fighting is necessary — just your voice and mind. Tonight: Head home after visiting with several friends.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

★★★ You might want to do what you feel. Think about it, as sometimes taking care of oneself requires some indulgence. Your perspective about an older friend, relative or boss is changing. Try not to be reactive to this person. Step back, if you must. Tonight: Treat yourself.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20)

★★★★ Follow your intuition as well as your intellect, because both elements of your personality target what you want, just in different ways. Someone at a distance could be acting cold toward you. A meeting with friends or associates will be pivotal. Tonight: As you like.

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BABY BLUES | RICK KIRKMAN AND JERRY SCOTT



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE | LYNN JOHNSTON



MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM | MIKE PETERS

