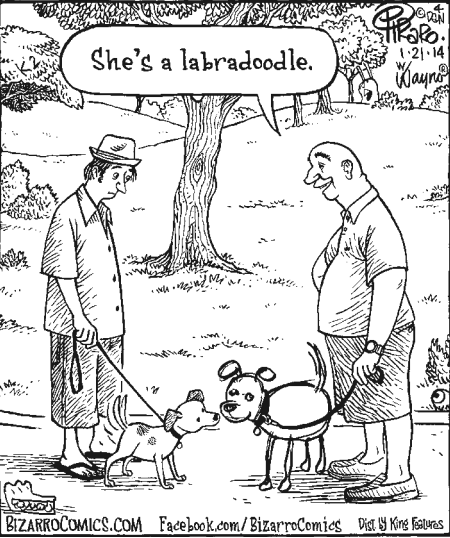


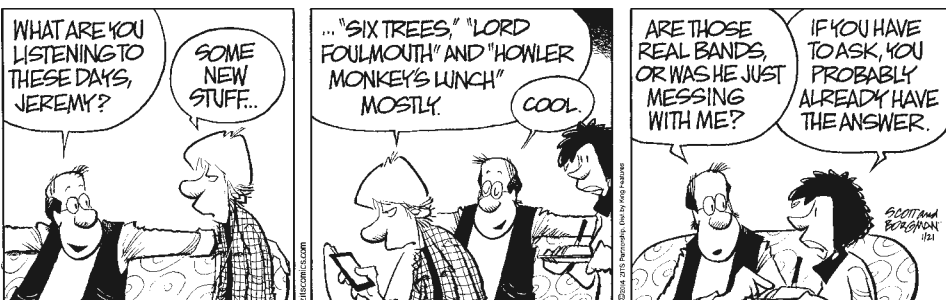
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BIZARRO | DAN PIRARO



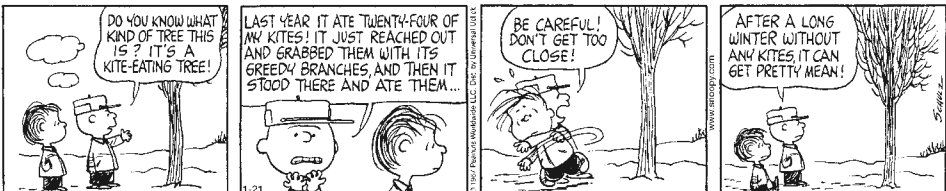
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FRANK AND ERNEST | BOB THAVES



PEANUTS | CHARLES M. SCHULZ



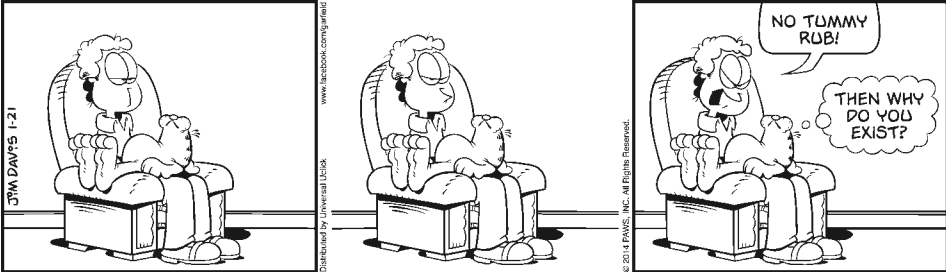
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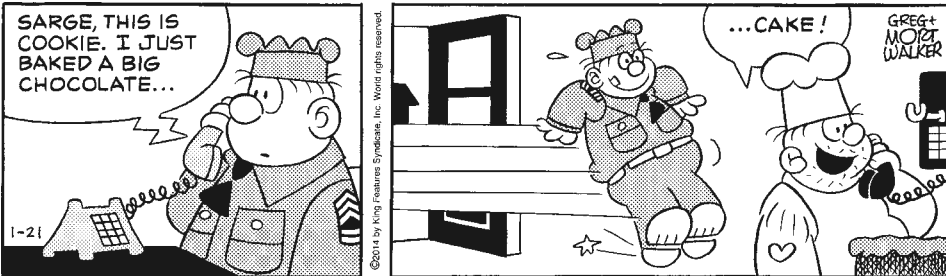
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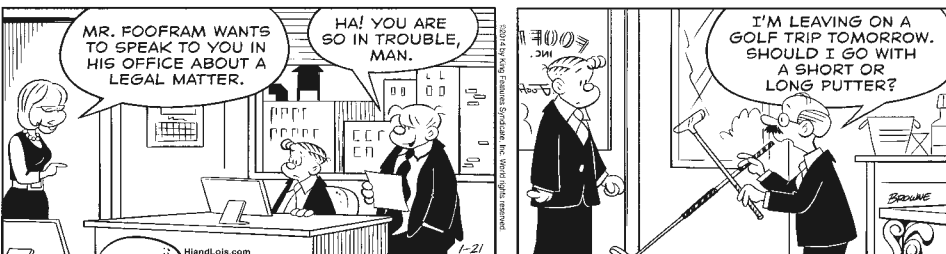
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BEEBLE BAILEY | MORT WALKER



HI AND LOIS | BRIAN AND GREG WALKER



THE BORN LOSER | ART SANSON



MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM | MIKE PETERS



# Vets Deserve Thanks Even When It Seems Unwelcome

DEAR ABBY: I just read the letter from "Twice Bitten in Washington" (Nov. 4), who had thanked veterans for their service to our country and received several negative responses. I'm a retired vet, dying from Agent Orange poisoning. I served two tours in Vietnam, and when I returned from Nam, I was called a baby killer, spat upon and refused taxi service because I was in uniform.

America has had a change in attitude since the Vietnam War. Today, many folks appreciate what the military is doing. I have been thanked several times while wearing my Vietnam Veterans hat and it makes me feel great, to the point my eyes water.

Tell "Twice Bitten" to continue thanking the military vets. It means a lot, especially to vets like me. Sure beats being called a baby killer. — VIETNAM VET

DEAR VIETNAM VET: I received many letters like yours from Vietnam vets who were also not thanked for their service when they returned home. Like you, they very much appreciate hearing a "delayed" thanks for their service. I would like to thank you and all the readers who responded to that column with such emotional and sometimes gut-wrenching stories. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: I would like to offer "Twice" an explanation for the reaction she received. I served two tours in Iraq and lost some good friends. When vets return home from war, home is a scary place. The life we lived and breathed is no longer. After spending so much time fearing the unknown and protecting ourselves physically and emotionally, we can't stop.

Many of us came home feeling guilty that we lived while others died — ashamed that we might not have done enough, that we should have been the one who was laid to rest, that maybe if we had looked harder, fought harder, we wouldn't have lost a soldier.

When I returned home, I reacted the way "Twice" described. I was resentful that someone would take the time to honor me, but not the friends I lost. It was a long time before I realized that by honoring me with their sincere thanks, they were honoring every soldier we

have ever lost. Now when I am thanked, I shake hands, I hug, and I thank them for their respect.

To "Twice": Never stop! Do not be afraid. We are not hateful or angry. We are scared and sad. Your expression of thanks means more than any parade, any medal or any award could ever mean. — BRANDON IN INDIANA

DEAR ABBY: As a soon-to-be-retired career Army officer, I am one of those who feel awkward when people thank us for doing our jobs. The Army was a career I chose, knowing the hardships and what would be asked of me. The military is filled with all kinds of people, and even though I may not always be in the mood for a stranger to approach me when I'm out and about, deep down inside it is refreshing to know that what I do is appreciated. — PHIL IN WASHINGTON STATE

DEAR ABBY: One day while walking in a cemetery, we saw an elderly gentleman leaning on the arm of his caregiver, and we realized he was looking at a veterans memorial. My wife approached and asked if he was a veteran. He looked at her and said "Yes," and she said, "Thank you very much for your service and your bravery." He immediately teared up and croaked out a "Thank you." His caregiver rolled her eyes.

My wife got into her face and said, "You have a hero on your arm, so show him some respect!" The veteran cried harder, grabbed my wife's hand and said, "No one has ever said that to me, ESPECIALLY my caregiver." — KIMIT IN THE MIDWEST

DEAR READERS: May I suggest some other ways to thank vets and those currently in the military? Volunteer at a veterans hospital and bring flowers and toiletries. If you live near a base, volunteer to support the USO at your local airport to make travel more comfortable for our servicemen and women. Donate to Wounded Warriors or similar organizations, or the Veterans of Foreign Wars or Disabled American Veterans.

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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 Aquarius and a Moon in Virgo if born before 4:43 a.m. (PST). Afterward, the Moon will be in Libra.

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR TUESDAY, JAN. 21, 2014:

This year opportunities stem from your ability to know what you want from a situation. Sharing some of your wilder schemes will be better received than you might think. Others find your imagination fun and invigorating. If you are single, you could meet someone very gentle and kind. You might want to pinch yourself, as this person will seem to be unbelievable. If you are attached, the two of you thrive off the unexpected. LIBRA admires your imagination, and entices your romantic side.

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 will feel great, and a partner might appear to be in the same mood -- at least until a hot issue is broached. Then, you could find out otherwise. Your ability to draw out others emerges. You know the right move to make. Tonight: Say "yes" to an offer.

### TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)

★★★ Your efforts make a difference, yet an associate could have a negative attitude. Fortunately, this person does not rule the world. A friend might share his or her thoughts. Listen carefully, as he or she will be coming from an intuitive level. Tonight: Get some exercise.

### GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20)

★★★★ You will find a situation provocative. You might feel as if a boss is making assumptions that may not be grounded. Know that you don't have to respond to this person's projections. Be willing to blaze a new trail, and you'll feel better about your choices. Tonight: Up late.

### CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)

★★★★ Opt to be with a close friend or associate. Get to the bottom of a problem that might be bothering you. You will know whether the information you are given is correct. How you feel could change dramatically. Tonight: Go along with someone else's suggestion.

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

★★★★ You'll want to have a friendly chat with a difficult roommate, close friend or loved one. You could find that this person tends to disengage

when you start to talk. As a result, you might wonder whether this discussion should be postponed. Tonight: Hang out with a friend.

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

★★★ You will jump into a situation without hesitation. Sometimes it is best to allow others to find out what works; they need to go through a similar process to what you did. A partner could be very distracted, which will make it difficult to communicate. Tonight: Relax.

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

★★★★ You are energized. A child or loved one adores you wild, creative imagination. This person would be delighted to see this facet of your personality emerge. Keep it light. Be aware of the costs of pursuing what appears to be a fun plan. Tonight: Act as if there were no tomorrow.

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

★★★ You could feel tense, as others seem to demand that rules be loosened up some. You might feel somewhat vulnerable and choose to withdraw within. You can't control others, nor should you try. A psychic thought will come your way. Tonight: Early to bed.

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

★★★ You will be focused on a key matter revolving around a friend or a significant meeting. How you handle it and the end results could color your thinking about the whole situation. Emphasize what you want, and speak your mind. Tonight: Where the gang is.

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

★★★★ You might want to get to know someone in power better. You both have very different approaches that are effective. A family matter or a domestic issue could trigger unexpected happenings. Go with the flow. Tonight: Burn the candle at both ends.

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

★★★★ You might feel more in harmony with someone at distance than you do with many other people. You can't deny what exists between you. You are intuitive with this person, as is he or she with you. An unexpected call makes you smile. Tonight: Catch up on a friend's news.

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

★★★★ You succeed best when you work closely with someone else. You know what is workable and what needs to happen. Though you tend to come up with ideas from out of left field, this person sees value in them. Tonight: Visit with a favorite person over dinner.

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BABY BLUES | RICK KIRKMAN AND JERRY SCOTT



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE | LYNN JOHNSTON

