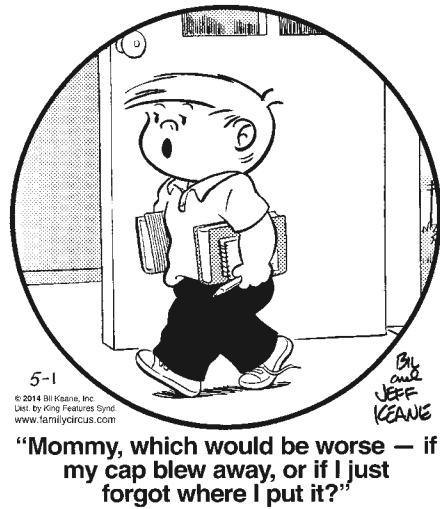
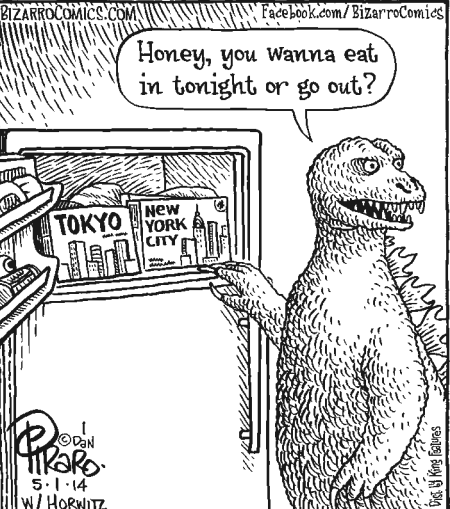


FAMILY CIRCUS | BIL KEANE



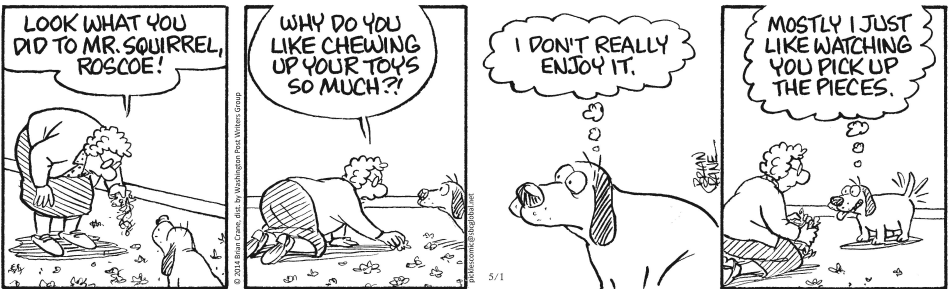
BIZARRO | DAN PIRARO



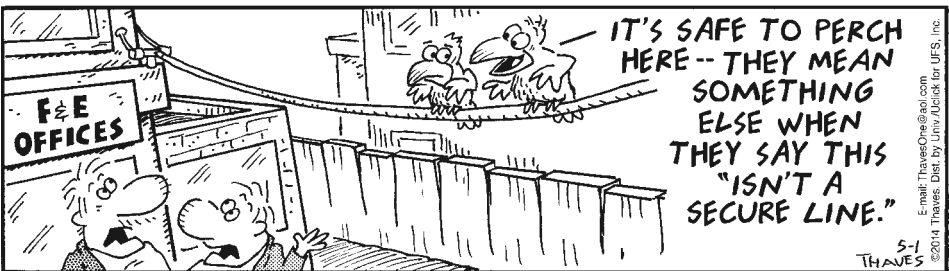
ZITS | JERRY SCOTT AND JIM BORGMAN



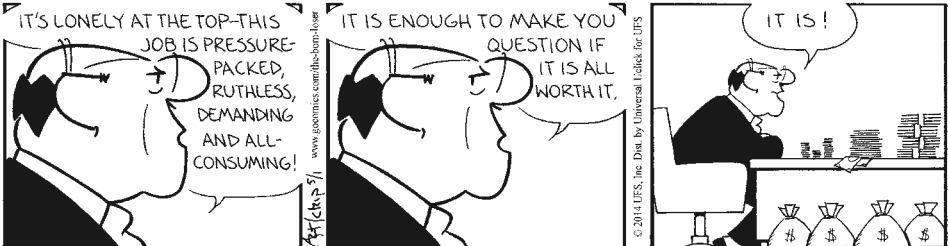
PICKLES | BRIAN CRANE



FRANK AND ERNEST | BOB THAVES



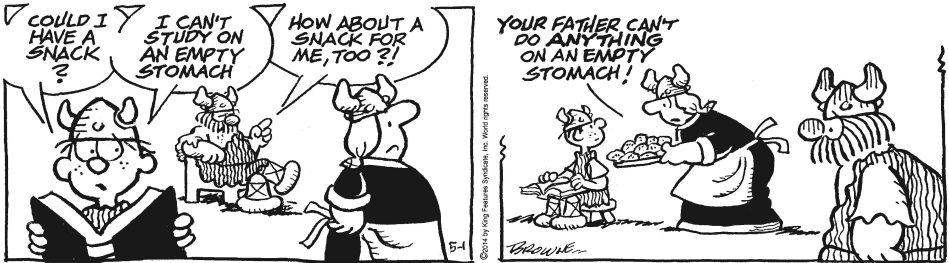
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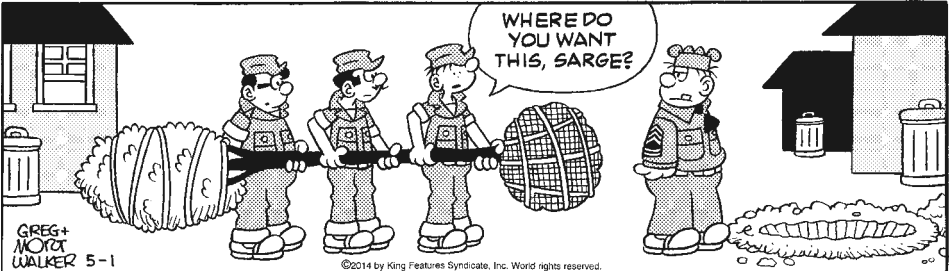
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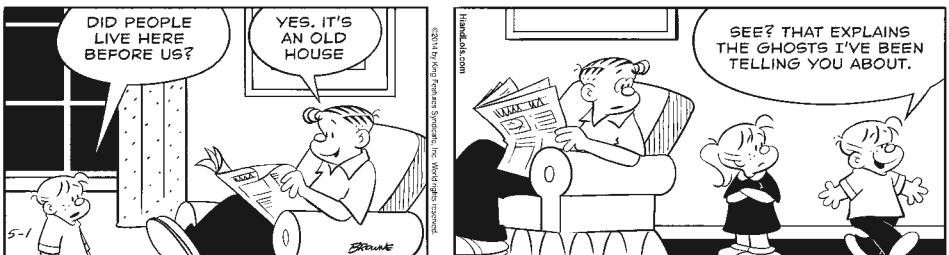
HÄGAR THE HORRIBLE | CHRIS BROWNE



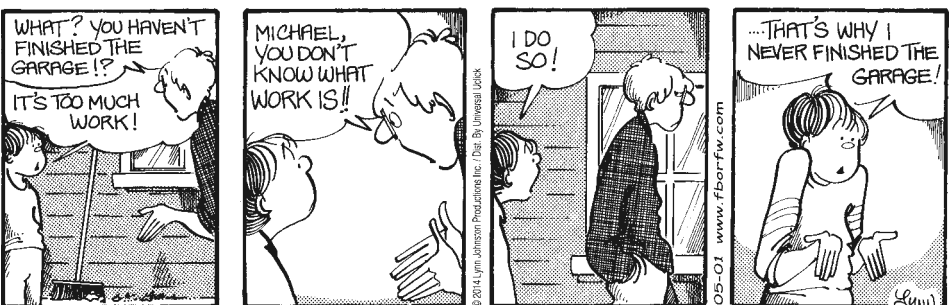
BEETLE BAILEY | MORT WALKER



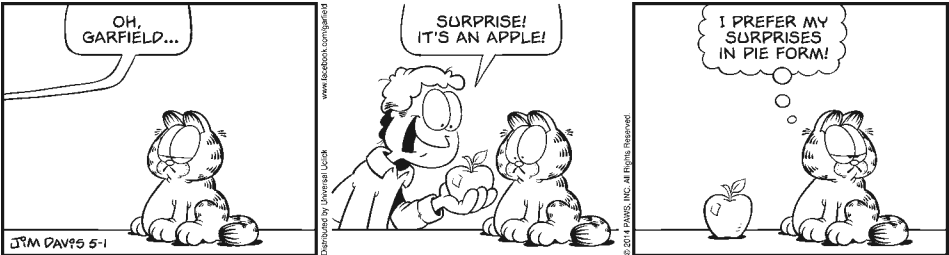
HI AND LOIS | BRIAN AND GREG WALKER



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE | LYNN JOHNSTON



GARFIELD | JIM DAVIS



Couples Find Common Ground On Different Spiritual Paths

DEAR ABBY: I'm writing to support "Feeling Coerced in San Diego" (Feb. 14), who is uncomfortable attending church with her husband. I understand her feelings because I, too, am an atheist in a relationship with a religious man.

There is another option besides abstaining from church or attending only on major holidays, and that would be for "Coerced" and her husband to try a different church. One religion that embraces atheist church members is Unitarian Universalism.

UU congregations are often made up of people from different backgrounds — Christian, Jewish, atheist and more. The focus of the sermons is on living a good life, treating other people and our planet with respect, and following one's own path to spiritual enlightenment. It's likely that "Coerced" and her husband could both feel at home in such a congregation. — CHELSEA IN WICHITA

DEAR CHELSEA: Thank you for your suggestion — it's one that was echoed by many other readers. I have mentioned the Unitarian Universalist denomination and its website (uua.org) before in my column. Readers' comments were enlightening.

DEAR ABBY: I, too, am in a "mixed marriage." I'm religious and my husband is an atheist. We agree to disagree on the matter. Religion (or lack of it) is a very personal thing, and however we feel, we owe each other respect for our different views.

"Coerced" is great for trying to accommodate her husband, but now that they see it didn't work, he should stop pressuring her. She can refrain from going to services, but should consider attending the church's social events. This solution worked well for us. My husband and my church friends get along well.

Of course, this depends on the nature of the church. Mine happens to be one of the more progressive. It's worth a try. — KATHRYN IN OTTAWA, CANADA

DEAR ABBY: I knew my husband was atheist when we married. Our spiritual journeys

are different, and we're not going to change each other.

We agreed I would raise our kids Catholic. I never expect him to be at church with us on Sundays, but on important sacraments (baptism, first communion, confirmation), he is there with the whole family because he realizes these events are important for his kids and me. He has become friendly with some of my clergy and fellow congregants, who accept him for the wonderful person he is.

Maybe in the future "Coerced" could attend an event like a church spaghetti dinner, something outside of services, and get to know the people her husband spends time with on Sunday. And he could spend a weekend doing a silent hiking retreat with his wife and her friends.

Respecting each other's spiritual path is a first step toward appreciating each other's differences and growing together. — BLESSED IN OREGON

DEAR ABBY: "Coerced" is lucky to have a man who attends church and wants her to go, too. She might consider helping in the nursery. That way, she's there with him but doesn't have to listen to the message. Churches are always looking for help so parents can actually attend the service. — LAURA IN CONNECTICUT

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.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Wedding 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 Taurus and a Moon in Gemini.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR THURSDAY, MAY 1, 2014:

This year you are able to create a lot of what you want, especially where your finances are concerned. You have the energy and the desire to do whatever you need to do in order to get where you want. If you are single, the possibility of meeting someone is high. Relating to you could be difficult, as you tend to go from being grounded one minute to being whimsical the next. You'll want someone in your life who accepts all facets of your personality. If you are attached, your sweetie adores your silly side. The two of you share many happy moments during the next 12 months. GEMINI intrigues you. 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'll demonstrate a good deal of knowledge when in a conversation with a close associate. Know that there is always more to learn. Try to stay focused. A boss might feel awkward asking for a favor. Do what you can to help. Tonight: Brainstorm away.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)

★★★★ You might decide that the time is right for a discussion about money. Recognize that you could view the situation differently from how others do. You also can be stubborn. Unless someone is used to working with you, he or she is likely to feel frustrated. Tonight: Your treat.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20)

★★★★ Much is going on behind the scenes right now. How you project yourself and what you say could be very different from reality. You might feel uneasy around a loved one who seems to be quite irritated. Relate to others on an individual level. Tonight: Beam in what you want.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)

★★★ Know when to stop yourself from continuing on the same path. Understand what is happening with a child or loved one. This person might need some attention or companionship. An unexpected event could force some thought. Tonight: Reach out to a close friend.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22)

★★★★ You will draw others into your way of thinking. A meeting could allow associates to vent and express their ideas. Let them clear the air. You

might find that a different approach works better with an irate person who does not want to calm down. Tonight: All smiles.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

★★★ Tension builds, especially around an older person or boss. A loved one might need your time and attention. Be direct when telling this person your availability for helping to deal with his or her issues. A partner or friend could make heavy demands. Tonight: Work late.

LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

★★★★ Reach out for another opinion, especially if you are perplexed by a situation. You need to detach before you respond. Your temper easily could be unleashed if you don't use some restraint. A key person in your life will do the unexpected. Tonight: Have a good time.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

★★★★ Defer to someone you trust to handle many of the demands of your day. You might be sitting on some anger, and it would be wise to release some of your frustration or share your feelings before you suddenly explode. Tonight: Be with a favorite person.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

★★★ Keep your priorities in mind. What you think might be a great idea will need to be tested. You'll have a lot of energy with a certain situation. A friend might need to express his or her strong ideas. Consider what would be best under the circumstances. Tonight: Say "yes."

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

★★★ Pace yourself, and you will get a lot done quickly. Your dynamic ideas could trigger a strong reaction from a supervisor, perhaps because he or she was not the source of them. The unexpected might occur with a family member or around the home. Tonight: Get some exercise.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

★★★★ You'll be very playful compared to those around you. Your lightness actually might offend someone. You could be uncomfortable around a child or loved one who seems brash and stubborn. This feeling on your part is just a passage. Tonight: Get into weekend mode.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20)

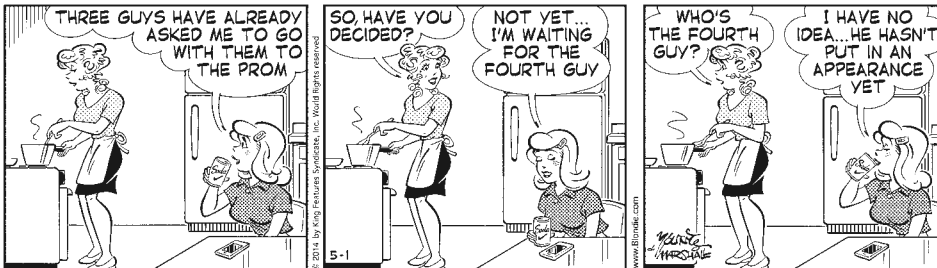
★★★★ Remain anchored in knowing what needs to be done with a difficult associate. You likely won't have an easy time talking this person down. A meeting could change your mind about what is happening. Regroup, and speak to a friend who can remain neutral. Tonight: Head home.

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BABY BLUES | RICK KIRKMAN AND JERRY SCOTT



BLONDIE | YOUNG & DRAKE



MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM | MIKE PETERS

