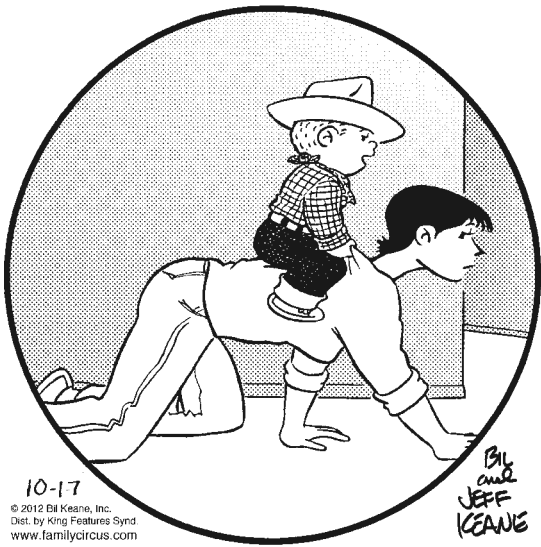
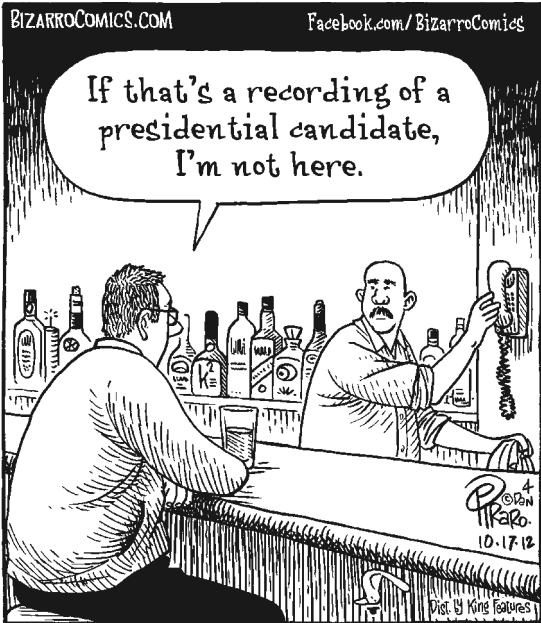


FAMILY CIRCUS | BIL KEANE



10-17
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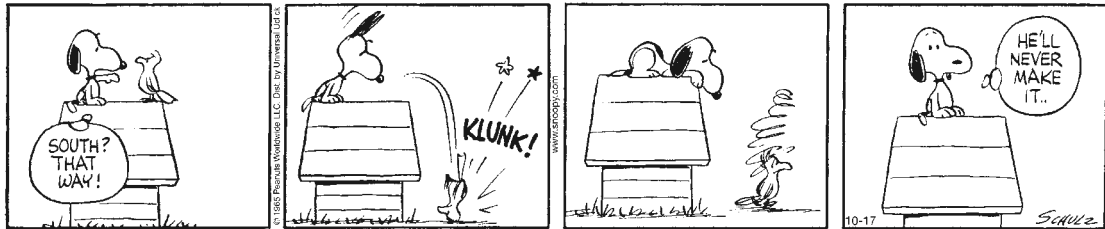
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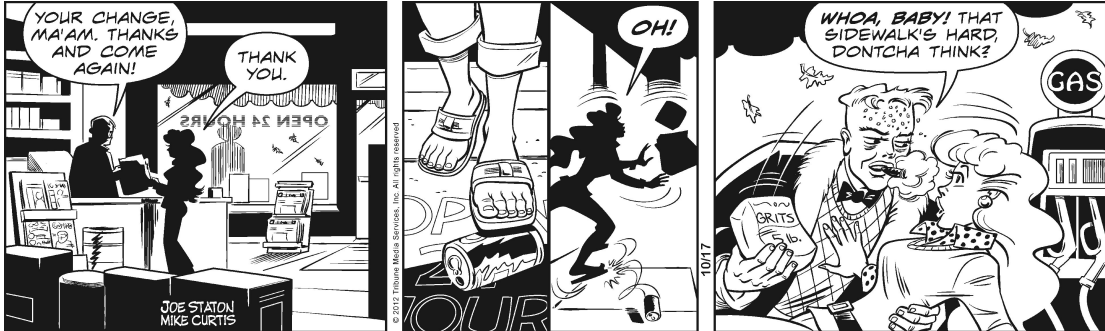
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Teen Having Unprotected Sex Causes Concern For Stepmom

DEAR ABBY: My 15-year-old stepson, "Justin," doesn't drink or do drugs. For the most part, he stays out of trouble. The problem is, he has been caught for the third time having unprotected sex.

My anger isn't at Justin so much as at his parents, obviously his father. Justin has lied repeatedly about this. His father lets him get away with many things, for the most part minor. But this is different. A 15-year-old boy can't take care of a baby, and having sex with multiple partners means exposing everyone involved to STDs.

My husband is a smart man, but for some reason he seems to think this will end well. I worry about his son becoming a father too soon and missing out on his full potential. My husband and his ex have dealt with this by trying to ignore it, and for the most part I haven't involved myself. But the more I think about it, the more I see the danger of Justin's life being changed forever because his parents don't want to make him unhappy for a minute.

I love my husband and stepson. Allowing this to continue isn't the right path for anyone. Am I overreacting? If not, what can I do that won't cause a huge blowup with my husband? — ALARMED IN CHICAGO

DEAR ALARMED: You're not overreacting. Your husband is doing his son no favors by enabling his irresponsible behavior instead of asserting himself and acting like a parent. Justin may think that fathering a child will make him a "real man." But unless your husband can get through to him that REAL men take care of themselves and their partners, and REAL men don't risk bringing children into the world they can't take care of, then face it: He's letting his son play baby roulette, and it's only a matter of time until he'll be a grandpa.

DEAR ABBY: My son has a wonderful girlfriend, "Michelle." They live with my ex-husband and visit my husband, "Daryl," and me twice a month and on special occasions. Michelle is sweet, caring, smart and funny. The problem is, she doesn't wear a bra. Ever.

Relatives have commented about it to us at family gatherings because she's not flat-chested. We already know. It's obvious. Daryl feels a woman should go without a bra only in the privacy of her own home, and I agree. He thinks I should buy Michelle a bra as a "subtle hint." I don't think that's wise, and I don't want to offend her.

Because it doesn't seem to matter to my son, should we continue to keep our opinions to ourselves? — SEES A NEED FOR SUPPORT IN FLORIDA

DEAR SEES A NEED: Because people are talking, it would be a kindness to say something to Michelle — but DELICATELY, so she doesn't think you are criticizing her. If you have a good relationship with her, invite her to join you for lunch and, while you're on the subject of the last gathering, mention that some of the relatives noticed her bralessness. Then tell her that you need to go lingerie shopping and invite her along. Ask her to help you

pick out a few pretty things for yourself, and then offer to treat her to some things she likes. She just may take you up on it.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$14 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Cookbooklet Set, 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 Libra and a Moon in Sagittarius if born after 5:25 p.m. (PDT). Before that time, the Moon is in Libra.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR WEDNESDAY, OCT. 17, 2012:

This year you'll be able to make a long-term dream a reality. You might consider writing down your dreams, as that also could lead you to what you want. Be aware of a heightened sensitivity involving your intuition, and note any premonitions you get as a result. If you are single, you could meet someone in your day-to-day travels. Know that you don't need to play "cat and mouse" with this person. If you are attached, the two of you like to spend time indulging in a favorite pastime or two. SCORPIO has an intensity that draws you in.

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 others. Those who are wise seek feedback in order to test out an idea. During this process, an even better idea might pop up. Do not allow your ego to get involved if someone has sounder concepts than you; instead, welcome them. Brainstorm away! Tonight: Your instincts could mislead you.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)

★★★★★ Relate to others directly, and know what it is that you desire. Friends and/or loved ones might think they know what they want, but in reality, their ideas come across garbled. If they allow it, you will need to help these individuals organize their thoughts in a way that makes more sense. Tonight: The only answer is "yes."

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20)

★★★★ Defer to others, and make it a point to let them know that you trust them to make good choices. Then step back and observe. You might be clearing up a disagreement or power play now that they can see what it is like to run the show. Tonight: Say "yes" to someone.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)

★★★★ All work and no play is not a healthy lifestyle. More than other signs, you have a tendency to swing from one emotional extreme to the other. You need to maintain a healthy amount of physical activity, as that is the key to keeping your stress level down. You might feel uneasy about an upcoming trip or a call coming in. Tonight: Work on getting physical.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22)

★★★★ You often exude confidence, yet right now, you are working on a faulty premise for which you do not have all

the facts. It is likely that you could be hearing only what you want to hear without realizing it. Center yourself, and go back over an important decision in your mind. Tonight: Happy at home.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

★★★★ Listen to news from someone who has easy access to you. You'll want to rethink a decision involving a partner. You might not be seeing the whole picture or the people involved clearly. You can only come from your own perspective. Let a friend play devil's advocate. Tonight: Hang out with your pals.

LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

★★★ News heads your way that involves your finances or an offer pertaining to money. Though the other person might have good intentions, there could be a last-minute hassle or problem that arises. Do not spend funds before you get them. Tonight: Do your thing.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

★★★ You enjoy the dreamlike mood you are in, yet you might not be as realistic as you would like to be. Consider the possibility that a risk could backfire and leave you feeling unhappy. Use your dreams as a starting point to build from, but use logic to guide you. Tonight: Treat yourself on the way home.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

★★★★ Use your energy in the most effective way you can. The Moon highlights you, which makes nearly anything possible. You would be well advised to try to deal with everything except a domestic or property-related matter. You could have a last-minute problem. Tonight: Do absolutely what you want.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

★★★ Allow yourself to loosen up more. If you have an idea or a wish that has been floating around in your mind, bring it forth now. Come up with a plan for how you can make it a reality. Talk to a trusted friend who might be unusually resourceful. Tonight: You might want some downtime.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

★★★★ Emphasize what you want. A meeting could be particularly important in completing a project. You might have more supportive friends than you realize. Look around and ask for some feedback. Use caution with your money, and refuse to make any agreements today. Tonight: Where the crowds are.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20)

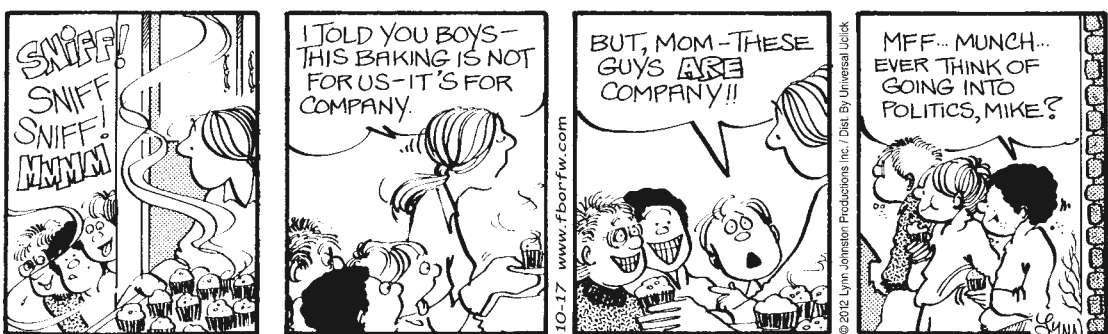
★★★ Be discreet, especially if you are confused right now. How you handle a difficult situation could change given some time. Nevertheless, you have to take the lead on a project, like it or not. Do not make any over-the-top comments involving commitment. Tonight: Into the wee hours.

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BABY BLUES | RICK KIRKMAN AND JERRY SCOTT



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE | LYNN JOHNSTON



MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM | MIKE PETERS

