

FAMILY CIRCUS | BIL KEANE



BIZARRO | DAN PIRARO



ZITS | JERRY SCOTT AND JIM BORGMAN



FRANK AND ERNEST | BOB THAVES



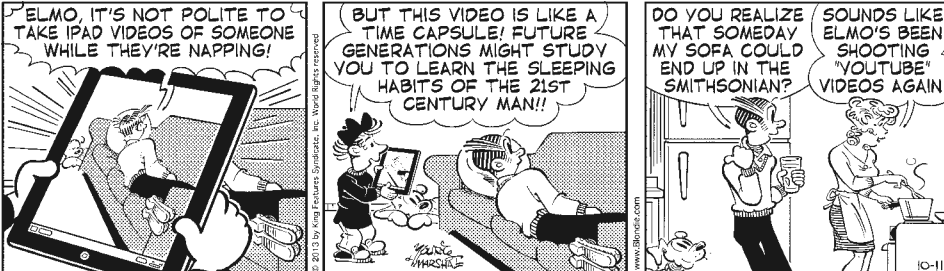
PEANUTS | CHARLES M. SCHULZ



DICK TRACY | JOE STATON AND MIKE CURTIS



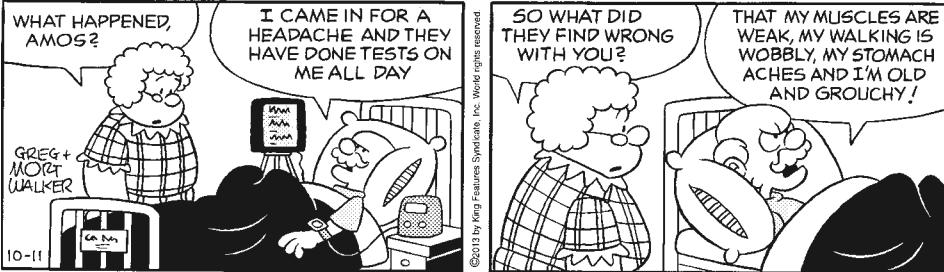
BLONDIE | YOUNG & DRAKE



GARFIELD | JIM DAVIS



BEETLE BAILEY | MORT WALKER



HI AND LOIS | BRIAN AND GREG WALKER



THE BORN LOSER | ART SANSOM



MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM | MIKE PETERS



Nice Young Man Won't Get Far In Life Without Table Manners

DEAR ABBY: I have acquired two teenage stepsons. They are good young men, mature, responsible, active in community service and good in school and sports.

My challenge is their table manners. They were never taught any! They use their utensils like shop tools, lifting food using fork and knife together to transfer huge bites from plate to mouth. They use a bread knife to cut a pancake as if it were a tough steak. They slouch over the table to get their faces as near the plate as possible, while leaning on the table with one or both elbows. They don't know where to place cutlery when setting the table, and have their napkins in their lap only if a restaurant server discreetly places it there.

Their mother shows no concern about their uncouth manners. I'm worried that when they eventually go out into the world, they'll be perceived as having no class when they are actually nice young men. Their ignorance of table manners could cost them relationships, jobs and promotions. What to do? — SAN ANTONIO STEPDAD

DEAR STEPDAD: Your wife may have felt she was teaching her sons more important lessons than table manners; things like character and responsibility. However, you have a point. People DO make negative judgments about people who have poor table manners — and it could be detrimental to them in the future.

That's why you should discuss this with their mother, if you haven't already, and enlist her help in talking to the boys in a non-confrontational way and explaining your concern. In the interest of your relationship with them, this must not seem like you are critical of them, nor should it turn into an adversarial situation or it could have a negative impact on your marriage. If it is to succeed, there must be cooperation from everyone.

DEAR ABBY: I am almost 30, and when we have family get-togethers several times a year, it seems like they make a point to leave me out of pictures. My mom and sister lost quite a bit of weight recently, and my brothers and cousin are attractive people. It seems like they're trying to keep the "fat one" out of the photo, and it hurts my feelings.

Recently, a cousin came into town and made copies of two excellent pictures of my mom and sister and posted them online. Again, I was not included. What should I do? I am depressive anyway, and these obvious oversights are upsetting me. — LEFT OUT IN TENNESSEE

DEAR LEFT OUT: Talk with your mother and sister to confirm if what you suspect is happening is true. It's possible your mother and sister are so proud of their weight loss they want to show it off. (There are ways to pose family members in photographs so their weight isn't apparent.) As to the visiting cousin, there may be such a marked change in their appearance that he/she thought it was worth posting on the Internet.

A problem with depression is that quietly brooding solves nothing, and it often causes people to overeat. Because your depression is chronic, please consider discussing it with your health care provider because interventions are available.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)



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.

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 Capricorn all day.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR FRIDAY, OCT. 11, 2013:

This year you'll want to make changes on a deep and profound level. You might question what is too much and what serves a purpose. Others could become reactive if you always seem to go your own way. If you are single, you draw many people toward you. Be honest with yourself about who really knocks your socks off. If you are attached, you often feel as if you don't have enough to offer. You need to get past this insecurity. You are creative, and you have a lot of great qualities. Besides, your sweetie values you. CAPRICORN can be too serious for your taste.

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 preference might be to end the week on a positive note. When you finally achieve your goals, you could find out otherwise. Maintain a balanced perspective. Realize that disagreement has an important role in life. Respect others' differences. Tonight: Out on the town.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)

★★★★ Reach out to someone at a distance. You could decide to take most of the day off, as you might not be present in the moment. You seem to feel shut out by a close loved one. This situation could change quickly. Remember, you can only control yourself. Tonight: Off on a trip.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20)

★★★★ You see a situation differently from how a partner sees it. You easily could create a difficult situation if you're not careful. The alternative would be to compromise and respect these different ideas. Try to be considerate. Tonight: Spend some time with a dear friend or loved one.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)

★★★★ Defer to others. Trying to convince your normal supporters or a special person in your life that you are right will not happen today. Release the need for control, and trust that others will come to the same conclusion that you have come to. Tonight: Go along with a suggestion.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22)

★★★ You might need to spend some time cleaning your desk and putting the finishing touches on a project. You'll want to greet Monday

with a sense of rejuvenation. Approach a situation and your work in this manner. Tonight: Let the good times rock and roll. Still, make it an early night.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

★★★★ You can't seem to hide your enthusiasm about the coming weekend, nor should you. Attempt to carry out what has not yet been done this week. Wrap up or initiate a conversation, as it might be more important than you realize. Tonight: Be as spontaneous and happy as possible.

LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

★★★★ Be aware if what is dragging you down. You could be upset at the expense of proceeding in a certain direction. You might want to come to a new understanding with a family member. It seems that lately you have felt especially pushed by this person. Tonight: Head home early.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

★★★★ You have many creative ideas, yet you refuse to share them. Be honest with yourself about why you might be holding back. Are you trying to withhold some important information? That type of secrecy could backfire. Be careful! Tonight: Hang out with friends and loved ones.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

★★★ You might be too concerned with a money matter. Seek advice from a friend so that you can see how a problem developed and your role in it. Do not be so hard on yourself. Just accept what is, and try to avoid having a situation like this happen again. Tonight: Treat yourself well.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

★★★★ You'll beam, and someone else will respond in kind. It is clear that there is an innate mutuality between you. A friend seems a bit off and unwilling to share. Don't take his or her behavior personally; instead, loosen up. Tonight: Avoid crowds, but be with a loved one.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

★★★ Know when to pull back and say less. You might not agree with a boss or higher-up, but hold off on expressing how you feel right now; otherwise, it could cause you even more trouble. In the meantime, you'll hear some other views and information. Tonight: Play it low-key.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20)

★★★★ You have a keen sense of direction, and it will be confirmed in a meeting. Just the same, you still might not be able to see the bigger picture. Before launching into action, you will want to detach a little more. You'll need to hear others' perspectives. Tonight: Where the crowds are.

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BABY BLUES | RICK KIRKMAN AND JERRY SCOTT



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE | LYNN JOHNSTON

