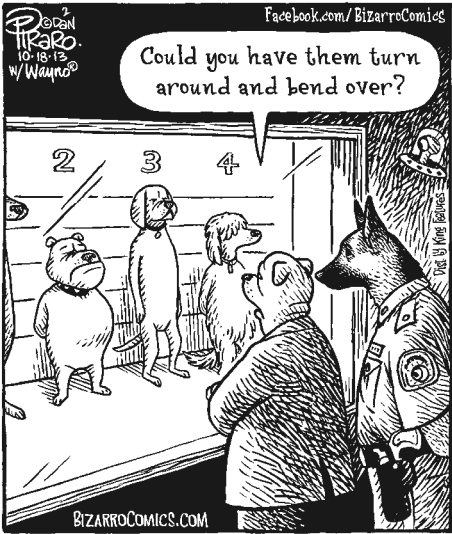


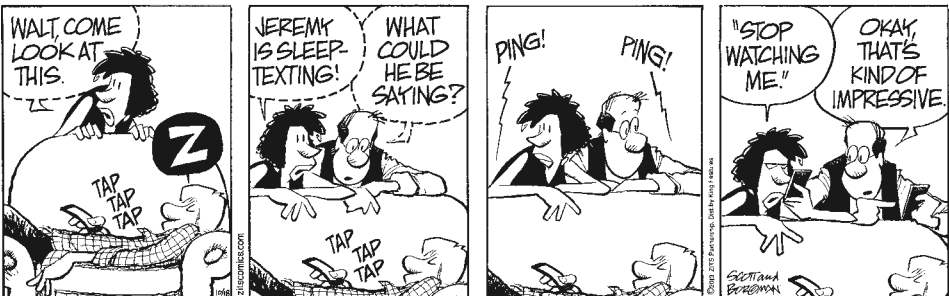
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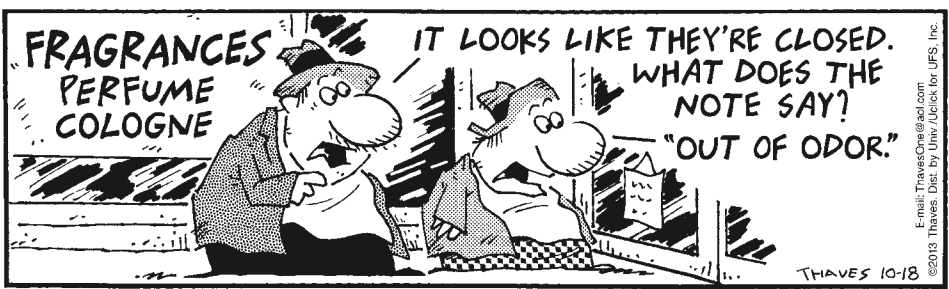
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ZITS | JERRY SCOTT AND JIM BORGMAN



FRANK AND ERNEST | BOB THAVES



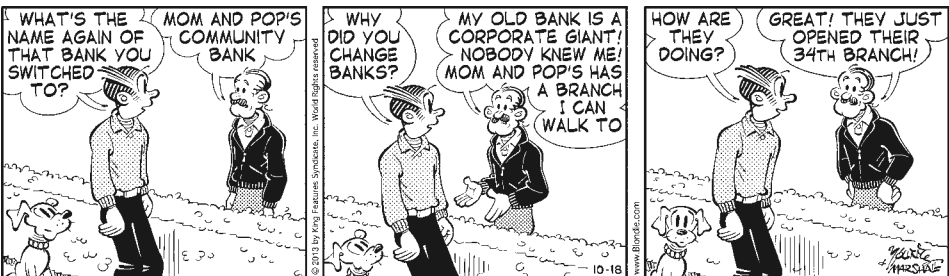
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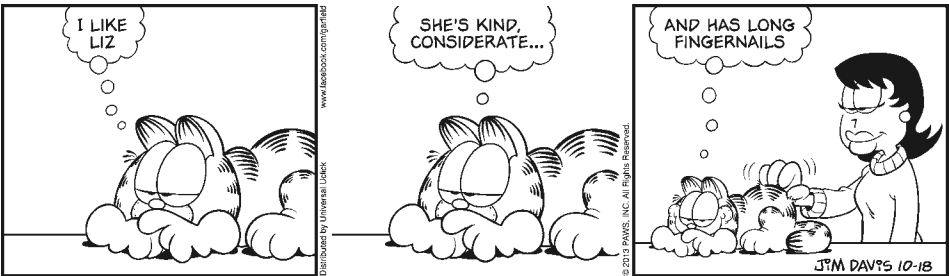
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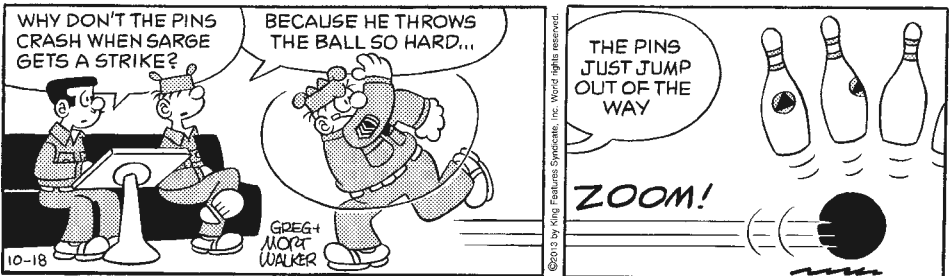
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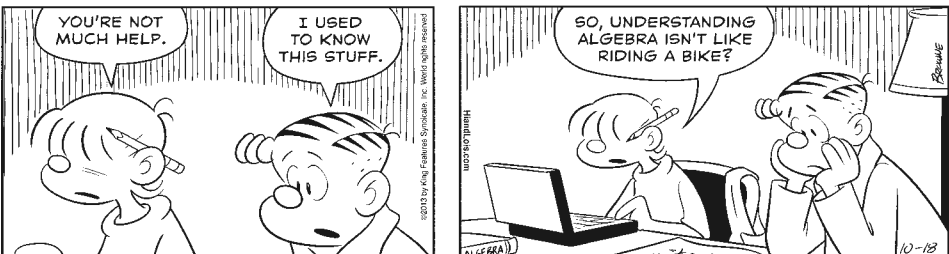
GARFIELD | JIM DAVIS



BEETLE BAILEY | MORT WALKER



HI AND LOIS | BRIAN AND GREG WALKER



THE BORN LOSER | ART SANSOM



MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM | MIKE PETERS



Siblings Hurt By Discovery That Grandpa Plays Favorites

DEAR ABBY: My sisters and I just realized after comparing notes that our grandfather, who has been giving us an allowance for many years, gives each of us a different amount. We don't understand why he would do that unless he is playing favorites. Mom says it's because he's allowed to give each of us a certain amount per year for tax purposes, but it still doesn't explain why the amounts are all different.

We are a year apart in age, and the differences are substantial. Mom said Grandpa does this with her brothers and sisters, too.

Why wouldn't he give each of us the same amount so that it doesn't cause hard feelings? I know it's his money to do with as he pleases and we're lucky to get any at all, but knowing this has caused hurt feelings. We don't feel comfortable asking him, but we'd like to understand. What can we do? — LACKING "WHY"

DEAR LACKING "WHY": Having never met your grandfather, I can't speculate about what his motives might be. While it's not a good idea to look a gift-grandpa in the mouth, the only way you're going to get the answers you and your sisters are looking for would be to ask him. However, if you do, make sure to phrase the question in a non-confrontational way — and be prepared for whatever his answer might be.

DEAR ABBY: I am the 49-year-old single dad of an incredible 7-year-old daughter. I have been separated from her mother for four years. Since that time my ex has had a few relationships, one of which produced another child.

Three months ago she met a new man and has decided to get married, even though their courtship has been brief. I'm trying to minimize the impact on our daughter, but everything I say to my ex comes across as toxic. Any suggestions? — CONFLICTED FATHER IN NORTHERN VIRGINIA

DEAR CONFLICTED FATHER: There is nothing you can do to control your ex's behavior. But you are right to try to minimize the impact

on your little girl. Do not allow her to be caught in the crossfire of your anger and her mom's defensiveness. While I, too, question your ex's judgment in marrying someone she has known for only a short time, there is nothing to be gained by "spewing toxin."

In your interactions with your ex, think before you speak, count to 10 to mellow your tone and focus on the fact that YOU are the stabilizing force in your child's life. It's your job to remain strong and steady.

DEAR ABBY: I recently broke up with a man I had dated for more than two years. While we were together he gave me many gifts of jewelry.

Yesterday when I was dressing to go out, I started to put on a necklace that went with my outfit, then hesitated because it had been a gift from him. I knew I'd be seeing him that evening and that I would be meeting his new girlfriend.

Would it have been OK to wear the necklace? Most of the things he gave me were animal-related because he knew I love animals. If someone asks me where I got it, as they often do, what should I say? I don't want to jeopardize the friendship we have or my potential friendship with his girlfriend. — MIXED UP IN THE SOUTH

DEAR MIXED UP: An appropriate answer would be, "It was given to me by a friend." Your question implies that you decided against wearing the necklace that day, and I think you used good judgment.

Good advice for everyone — teens to seniors — is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger 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 Libra and a Moon in Aries.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR FRIDAY, OCT. 18, 2013:

This year you often will have to decide between doing what you think will work and doing what you want to do. You will discover that your emotional voice has more power, as it reflects an inner depth and caring. If you are single, relating could be far from easy. You could experiment with being docile, verbal, non-combative, etc. If you are attached, as a couple, you often are on opposite ends of an issue. Try to reach a compromise so that each of you will have a chance to make a final decision. Respect your differences, and you will be on cruise control. ARIES is strong and domineering.

The Stars Show the Kind of Day You'll Have: 5-Dynamic; 4-Positive; 3-Average; 2-So-so; 1-Difficult

ARIES (MARCH 20-APRIL 19)

★★★★ You are a sign that is likely to feel the eclipse today. In any case, you most definitely will if you were born around April 18. For many of you, it could create a sudden change in the next month — for the better. Do not resist that which you cannot change. Tonight: Do your thing.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)

★★★★ You will be full of get-up-and-go today, but there seems to be a problem that is subconscious. Keep searching within yourself to see if there is an unaddressed issue. Take your time before making any statements or commitments now. Tonight: Get some extra R and R.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20)

★★★ You want to have more fun in your life. In pursuit of this goal, a friend could be distancing him- or herself more quickly than you realize. This person might not want to take part in this adventure. Be open to different types of entertainment with this person. Tonight: TGIF!

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)

★★ Pressure keeps building between a personal matter and a financial or business issue. You do not need to make a choice right now; you simply need to prioritize and go with the flow. Nothing will be resolved today. Just hang in there or call it an early day. Tonight: A force to behold.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22)

★★★★ Follow your gut today. Emotions could run high, and a true representation of where you

are coming from can be understood only from this level. Take a walk, listen to music and/or detach from your daily routine with another preferred method. Tonight: Relax to good music.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

★★★★ Dealing with investment sources might put you in a tizzy. Right now, don't do anything with today's active eclipse. You only will be causing yourself a problem. Give yourself at least a week. Tonight: Intrigue a loved one with a seductive clue or a statement of intention.

LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

★★★★ An eclipse in your opposite sign could find you exhausted and tired. What might be best is not to get into the moment, and detach from it instead. Others are even more volatile than usual. Strap on your seat belt. Tonight: Say "yes" to an innocuous invitation.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

★★★ Be ready for a change in your daily schedule. A situation could evolve that you cannot and should not say "no" to. Don't be surprised if others express their disappointment in not getting together. Be flattered, and don't become triggered. Tonight: Take care of yourself first.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

★★★★ Your creativity flourishes, entertains others and permits unusual ideas to pop up. Emotionally, you might want to be contrary or controlling. Understand that you will not get anywhere with that type of behavior. Tonight: Be naughty and nice.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

★★★★ You could be slightly more challenging than you think. You are determined to have a domestic situation go a certain way. The other person involved is determined to have things his or her way. Let go of any must-haves for now. Tonight: Others need your time and attention.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

★★★★ You actually might use too many words in an explanation. When you present something in this way, it makes it seem as if you are feeling guilty or covering up. In your case, neither assumption would be right. Remember, the less said, the better. Tonight: Deep into a conversation.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20)

★★★★ If you must take a money risk, make it small. That way, if you lose, there will be no lasting pain. You could encounter a difficulty with a friend or loved one about a financial situation. Why let it happen? Tonight: Play the role of peacekeeper. Keep your wallet hidden.

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BABY BLUES | RICK KIRKMAN AND JERRY SCOTT



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE | LYNN JOHNSTON

