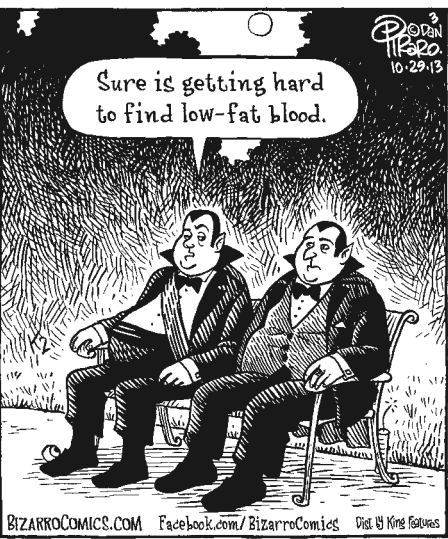


FAMILY CIRCUS | BIL KEANE



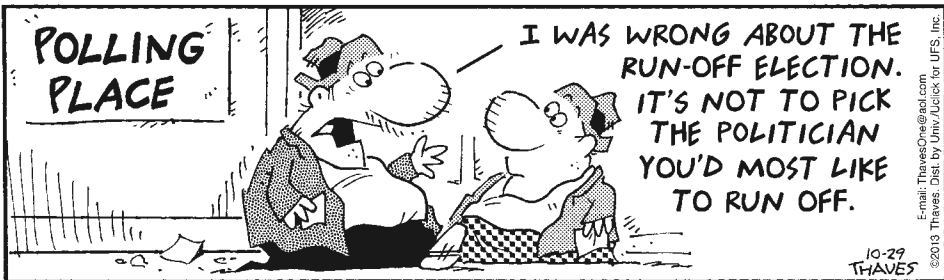
BIZARRO | DAN PIRARO



ZITS | JERRY SCOTT AND JIM BORGMAN



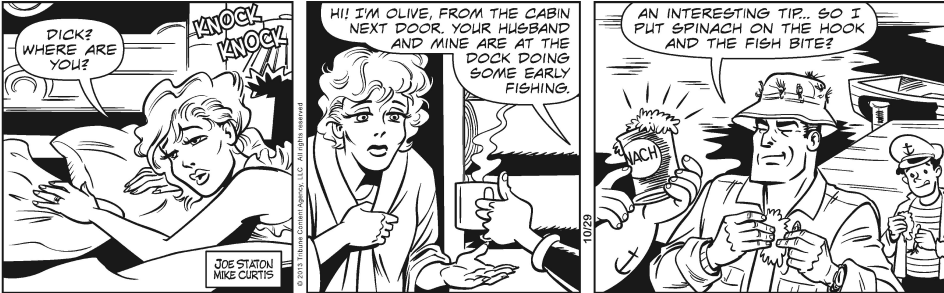
FRANK AND ERNEST | BOB THAVES



PEANUTS | CHARLES M. SCHULZ



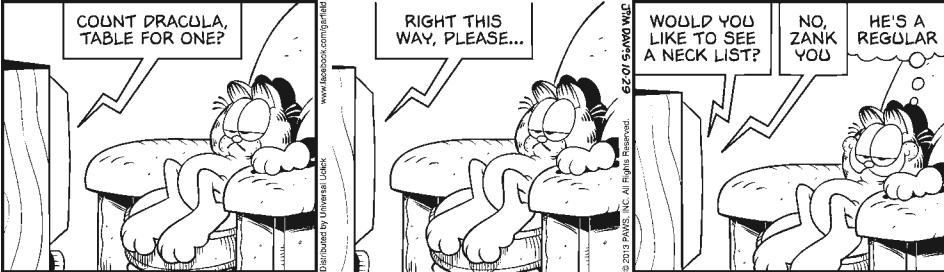
DICK TRACY | JOE STATON AND MIKE CURTIS



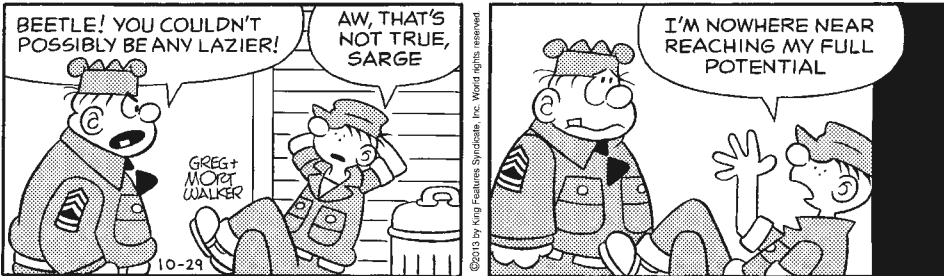
BLONDIE | YOUNG & DRAKE



GARFIELD | JIM DAVIS



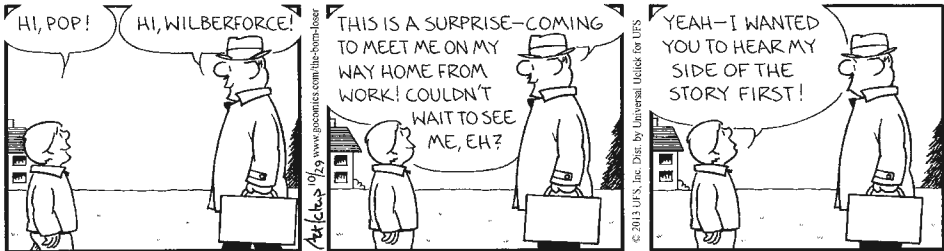
BEETLE BAILEY | MORT WALKER



HI AND LOIS | BRIAN AND GREG WALKER



THE BORN LOSER | ART SANSOM



MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM | MIKE PETERS



Retailers Share Their Advice In Dealing With Unruly Kids

DEAR ABBY: I managed a retail store for 10 years, and I can relate to the shop owner who signed herself "Had It With Overindulged Kids" (June 28). She could turn things around by creating a designated play area and market to the children by taking any opened items and placing them there for a children's testing ground.

I had a "play table" with toys to keep them busy while their moms shopped. I put a gated area around it and a dad's bench in front of it so they could watch the children.

They are your customers. So cater to them and be thankful the parents shop in your store. Learn the children's names and suggest new age-appropriate products. If you don't have the time, hire someone who loves children and has the patience to play with them in a controlled environment.

— JOYCE FROM MICHIGAN
DEAR JOYCE: Thank you for the helpful advice. Customers and retailers alike shared their experiences. Many of them questioned whether the children always misbehaved this badly in public and blamed their behavior on today's parenting skills — or lack thereof. Here's a sampling:

DEAR ABBY: I shopped at a local store for years, but gave up when the place seemed overrun by unruly children and distracted parents. Out of desperation, I took a job there and vowed to find a way to make the parents rein in their youngsters.

One: I posted a sign that read, "IF YOU BREAK IT, YOU BOUGHT IT." If they refused, I didn't push the issue, but I did gesture upward. They would always look up, and when they did, I'd thank them for smiling at our cameras.

Two: Any child found unaccompanied would be escorted to our customer service area and the parents paged repeatedly until they showed up.

Since I instituted these policies, the condition of the store has improved, the morale of the employees has improved, sales have risen, and old customers who left due to the old cir-

cumstances are returning. — SURVIVOR OF RETAIL HELL

DEAR ABBY: I was in a shop where a sign behind the counter read: "Unattended Children Will Be Sold!" It was enough to get most parents' (and kids') attention while eliciting smiles at the same time. — NONNA OF FIVE

DEAR ABBY: You mentioned posting a sign at the cash register. No, Abby, it should be at the entrance, so parents see it at the time they walk in.

Or how about a different sign: "Well-Behaved Children Will Win a Prize," then rewarding such children with a small gift? It would be worth the expense of small tokens of appreciation compared to the cost of broken merchandise.

I sympathize with "Had It." Parents often take kids on outings, believing they're spending quality time with them. But I see parents ignore their children and spend their time on electronic gadgets, leaving the unsupervised youngsters to run amok. Too bad for the children. — GLORIA IN LAFAYETTE, CALIF.

DEAR ABBY: I like the sign a friend of mine put up in her store: "Unattended children will be given espresso and a puppy and re-

turned to their parents." — MARJORY IN BLOWING ROCK, N.C.

DEAR ABBY: I owned a small business with designated play areas for many years. One mom came in repeatedly with her two small sons, who were completely unruly and disruptive. I spoke to her several times, but I was wasting my breath. Here's how I solved the problem:

When Mom checked out, I added the items the terrible twosome destroyed to her bill. When I told her how much she owed, she insisted it must be a mistake. I said, "No mistake; these items belong to your kids." She paid the bill and remained a customer, but the kids were never with her again. — HAD ENOUGH, GAINESVILLE, FLA.

© 2013, Universal Press Syndicate

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 Scorpio and a Moon in Virgo.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR TUESDAY, OCT. 29, 2013:

This year you often come up with unusual ideas that seem creative and workable to others. Realize that you are more solemn than you might think you are. Be aware that this attitude could be why others often react strangely to you. If you are single, there is no question that you will attract many people. Look to the person who is interested in getting to know the real you. If you are attached, your sweetie will try his or her best to help you get through life's bumps and keep you smiling. You sometimes act like newlyweds, which delights those around you. VIRGO verbalizes a lot of what you are thinking.

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 want to meld with others in order to accomplish a particular task. Sometimes this type of interpersonal cooperation can be difficult, as you are a very independent sign. You still manage to project a leadership profile, even when being docile. Tonight: Work off some tension.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)

★★★★★ Open up to a more dynamic approach to a situation in your life. You might like the idea of this change, but to manifest it will prove to be more difficult. Thinking is important, but you will get nowhere unless you act. You have little to lose. Tonight: So what if it is only Tuesday?

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20)

★★★★ You have a desire not to be the town crier. You might be up for playing the role of re-cluse for a few days. Excuse yourself from commitments, and know where you are heading. Be smart, and refrain from speaking until you are sure of yourself. Tonight: All smiles.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)

★★★★ Make the first move. You will get far more done than you thought was even possible, once you feel unburdened and free from a personal issue. A call could make all the difference in the outcome of your day. Tonight: Accept an invitation to join someone for munchies.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22)

★★★ Be aware of the problems around you, and be direct in how you approach a situation, es-

pecially if it involves your finances. You can't be too careful in how you approach this matter. Recognize that someone could be angry. Work this through with him or her. Tonight: Your treat.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

★★★★ Assess whether it is a good idea to proceed as you have been. Listen to someone's opinion, but know that you might need some more time to reflect on the main issue. Postpone signing off on agreements, at least for today. Tonight: Act as if you do not have a care in your world.

LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

★★★ Your words make more of an impression than you might realize. At the same time, withholding your thoughts will have a similar effect. Others question themselves, especially when you become quiet. Use caution with any money arrangements. Tonight: No need to be afraid.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

★★★★ Meetings take high priority, whether you like it or not. They also might help you initiate a new or different plan of action. Recognize where someone else's anger is coming from, even if he or she can't. Say very little about your perceptions for now. Tonight: Where your friends are.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

★★★ You respond positively to pressure, especially if you feel as if you will be acknowledged for your efforts. An intense conflict exists within you between work and a domestic matter. You will need to channel your high energy and use it more positively. Tonight: Happy at home.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

★★★★ Allow greater give-and-take between you and others. A friend could have difficulty opening up. Know that his or her attitude could have little to do with you. Your willingness to adapt to various situations points you to the winners' circle. Tonight: Tap into your imagination.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

★★★★ Deal with a specific family member directly. You could feel pushed to your limit by a loved one whom you care a lot about. How you view situations could change radically as a result of an experience surrounding today's events. Tonight: Chat and visit with a close friend.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20)

★★★ You could be inspired by one other person to tackle a new goal or to move to a new level of accomplishment. You sometimes get confused by this person, yet at other times his or her influence gives you more confidence. Tonight: Whatever you do, just don't be alone.

© 2013, King Feature Syndicate

BABY BLUES | RICK KIRKMAN AND JERRY SCOTT



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE | LYNN JOHNSTON

