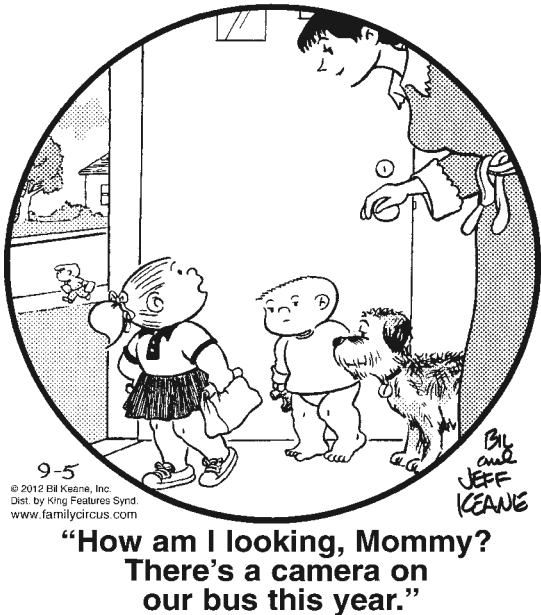
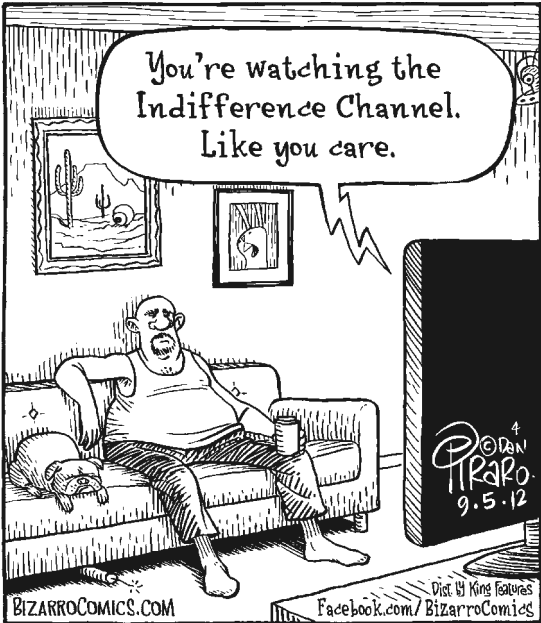


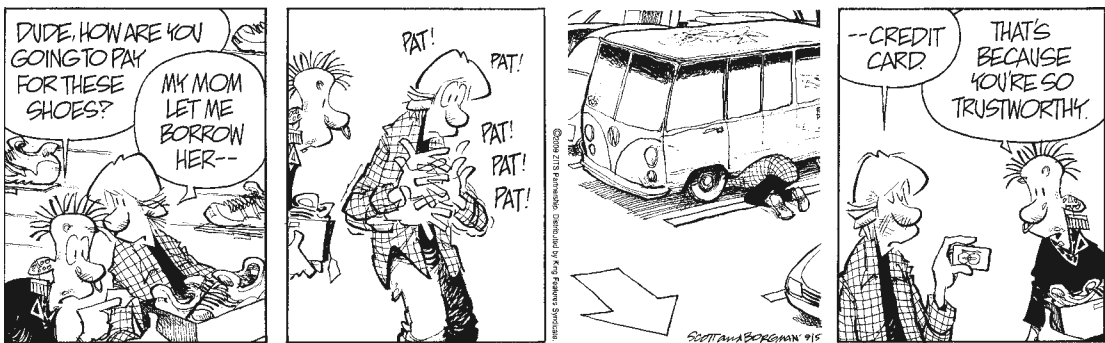
FAMILY CIRCUS | BIL KEANE



BIZARRO | DAN PIRARO



ZITS | JERRY SCOTT AND JIM BORGMAN



FRANK AND ERNEST | BOB THAVES



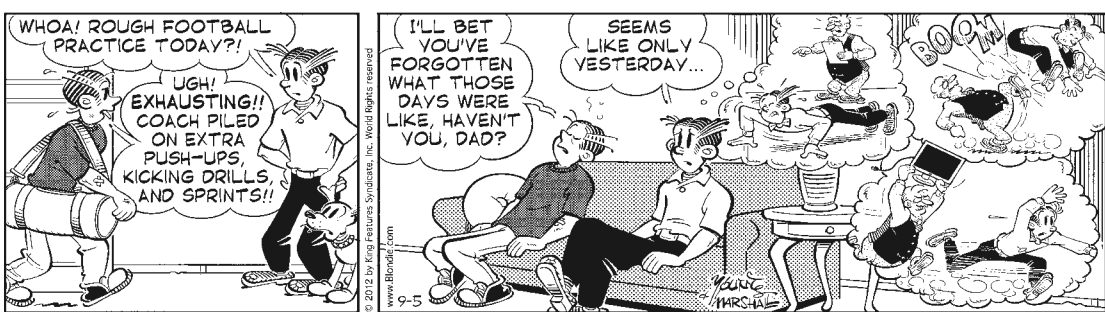
PEANUTS | CHARLES M. SCHULZ



DICK TRACY | JOE STATON AND MIKE CURTIS



BLONDIE | YOUNG & DRAKE



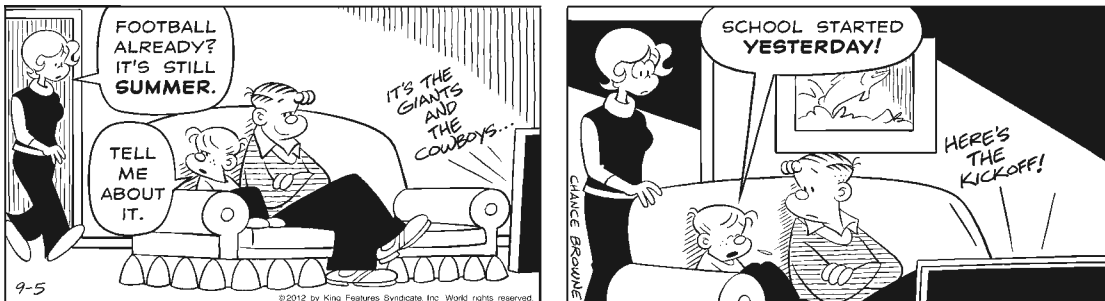
GARFIELD | JIM DAVIS



BEEBLE BAILEY | MORT WALKER



HI AND LOIS | BRIAN AND GREG WALKER



THE BORN LOSER | ART SANSON



Father's Idea Of Cuddling Is Too Close For Comfort

DEAR ABBY: My mom's boyfriend wants to spend time with my 16-year-old sister and take her places all the time. He wants to cuddle with both of us whenever we sit on the couch and gets really upset when we don't want to. He's my biological father, but I have known him only for a year because he left my mom when she was pregnant with me.

Now he wants to play "dad" when I already have had a dad all my life. (Mom was married for 11 years to another man.) I'm 14.

He yells and swears all the time and takes things away from us if we don't do what he wants. He isn't physically abusive yet, but the cuddling freaks me out and I don't think it's right. I told my school counselor. She said to get over it, that it wasn't a big deal.

Abby, what can I do? I think he is grooming my sister for sex since he told us he likes young girls and was used to them before Mom. Mom has problems with depression and reality and won't listen to us. Help us, please. Where can I go? — HELPLESS IN THE MIDWEST

DEAR HELPLESS: Because your father's overtures make you uncomfortable, and he "punishes" you if you don't accept them — it IS a "big deal." Before this goes any further, you should call Childhelp and describe what's happening. The toll-free number is 800-422-4453. The person who answers the phone can refer you to help in your state. Please don't wait. Your safety and that of your sister could depend on it.

DEAR ABBY: I am romantically attracted to a girl, "Jade." We have known each other ever since we were in diapers. She's bubbly, vivacious and beautiful. We flirted with puppy love about 10 years ago, but it never went beyond writing love letters and

ended quickly. It was so disappointingly brief that I have never regarded it as a true relationship. I consider her my first love.

Jade goes through boyfriends like a chain-smoker goes through cigarettes. It seems as if every time I ask her, "So, how is your current boyfriend?" that she has a new one. Her mother is the same way, truth be told, and never found a good father figure for Jade. The men her mother dated were abusive. Consequently, Jade isn't the best judge of men, either.

My parents have suggested that she may view me as a friend because I'm the only decent guy in her life, and she's afraid we wouldn't be friends if our romantic relationship ended. I want to tell her that I'd like to date her the next time her current relationship ends. At the same time, I want her to know I'd rather have her as a friend than nothing at all. Thanks to the wonder of social media, I will know when her next relationship ends. Should I wait till then? If not, how long? — FIRST LOVE IN THE SOUTH

DEAR FIRST LOVE: You seem to have a lot of insight about Jade. Because she was raised by a mother who was involved in one abusive relationship after another, she may feel that unless there is pain and drama, that what she's experiencing is boring and not really "love." Until she realizes that the criteria she's using in choosing men are flawed, and is willing to get help to straighten out her thinking, her pattern will continue to repeat itself.

As you hover over your keyboard waiting for news of her next romantic failure, I suggest that rather than "pounce," you keep her as a friend until she's ready for a mature relationship. If you don't, you will only suffer more disappointment.

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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 Virgo and a Moon in Taurus all day.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 5, 2012:

This year you express your mellow and reasonable personality to many. Others clearly are drawn to you, no matter what segment of your life you are dealing with; however, your temper becomes explosive and can be triggered easily. To some people, you actually might seem scary. Express your intense feelings in a way that doesn't portray you like a madman or -woman. If you are single, you hook up with someone significant to your life history this year. If you are attached, the two of you gain by leaving town together. You will recharge and enjoy each other's personalities and insights. Plan a longer getaway together. TAURUS demands quality and could cost you a pretty penny.

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 tend to tell it like it is, but you could go overboard as to how you verbalize your feelings. Note if someone seems to be staggering backward after hearing your words. Perhaps your self-expression might be too dramatic for this person. Tonight: Out on the town.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)

★★★★ Your high energy might challenge someone. This person generally exhibits a lot of vitality, too. The two of you might be extremely explosive together. A little diplomacy or even steering clear of each other could work wonders. Tonight: All smiles.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20)

★★★ Zero in on what makes different situations work so well. You know what is needed to make the impression you want. Use self-discipline and think carefully before you say anything, despite someone's steamy words or hostility. Tonight: Get some extra Z's

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)

★★★★ You need to head in a new direction and change the tune you have been singing. Note what is not working. Tap into your creativity with the knowledge that things will get better if you make the correct choices. Tonight: Celebrate your free will.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22)

★★★★ You like to be acknowledged. The flip side of wanting this approval is that some people might feel free

to tell you what you do wrong. It's possible that you'll encounter some negativity. Some people would like more quality time with you and less limelight. Tonight: Be diplomatic.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

★★★★ You could be overwhelmed by all the options that surround you. Listen to news with more of an open mind. You, like many people, sometimes automatically close down at the mention of new, adventurous ideas. Decide not to. Tonight: Take a stand.

LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

★★★★ Work with a key person in your life, and you'll gain results quickly and efficiently. You could revise your thinking as a result. Listen and make sure you are on the same page with plans as well as with the vibes of the moment. Tonight: Just do not be alone.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

★★★★ You are full of get-up-and-go. You see life from a fixed point of view. This trait could be positive in many ways, yet it could cause a collision with someone you deal with daily. Is this disagreement necessary? Tonight: Go with a suggestion.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

★★★ Focus on individual tasks instead of getting caught up in someone's story or even your own tales. By detaching, you will see new paths to the same end, given some peace and quiet. A friend or associate does everything he or she can to get your attention. Tonight: Play it low-key.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

★★★★ Your creativity saves the day, be it for yourself or others. A friend might push you beyond your patience and endurance. Though you could react harshly, this person might need to have your limits clarified in a meaningful way. Tonight: Finally having fun.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

★★★ Pressure builds within your immediate circle. You could be taken aback by someone's temper, which could impact you emotionally. Communication soars to a new level. Realize what you are asking -- not just the words, but the emotional commitment as well. Tonight: Happy at home.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20)

★★★★ You could be affected by a lot of disruption. You know when enough is enough, but sitting on chaos could be hard. Your ability to work with others emerges once more. You might want to rethink a decision. Tonight: Accept an invitation that will help you relax.

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BABY BLUES | RICK KIRKMAN AND JERRY SCOTT



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE | LYNN JOHNSTON



MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM | MIKE PETERS

