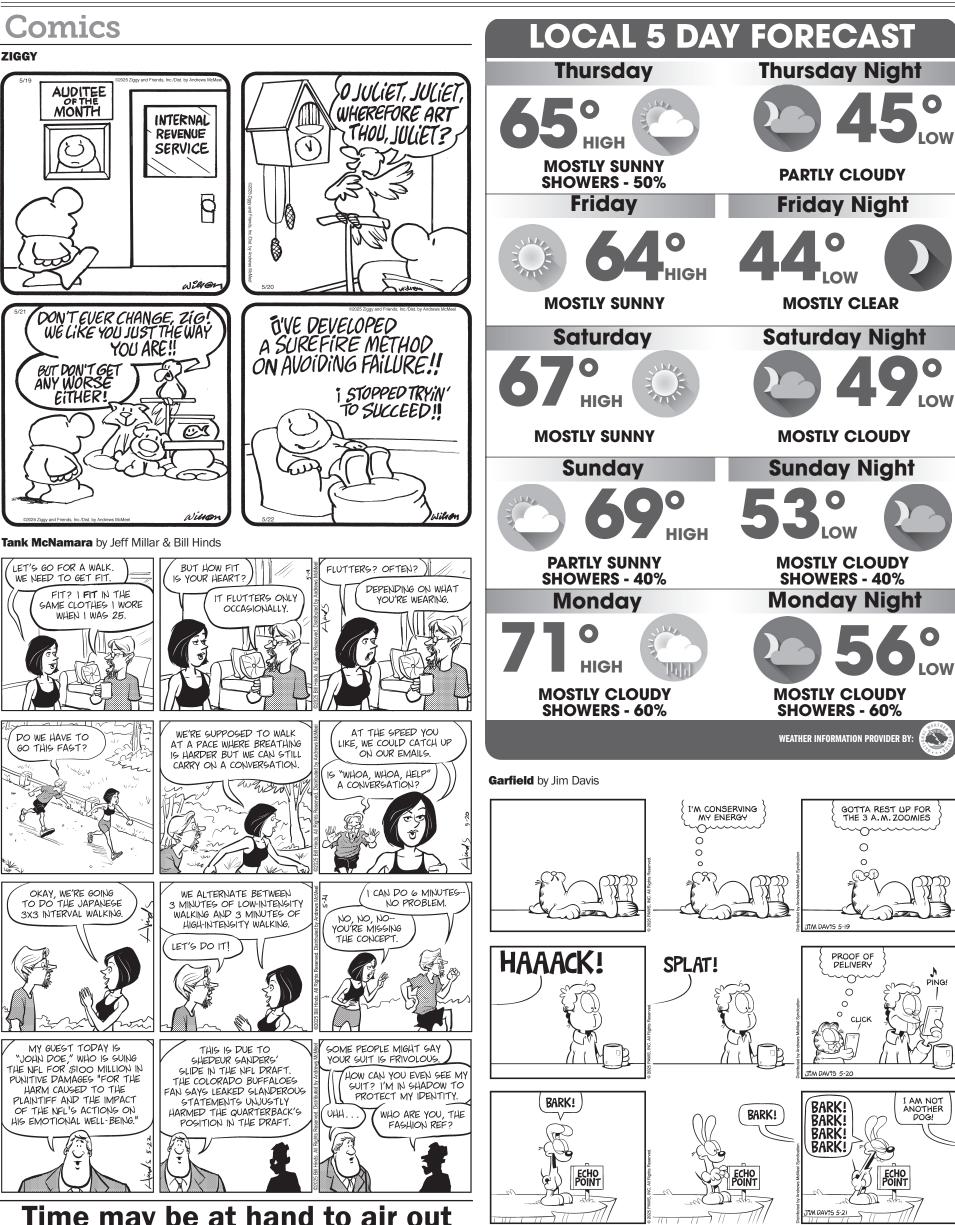
6B | WEDNESDAY, MAY 21, 2025

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Time may be at hand to air out family's dirty laundry

DEAR ABBY: My late husband and I were married 38 years when we finally went to marriage counseling. I found out then that he had slept with my sister early in our marriage. I had suspected he'd also had an affair with his uncle's wife. (They were very close in age.) This, too, was confirmed in counseling.

My sister was recently home

because of our mom's health, and it was a struggle to be in the same hospital room with her. As far as the other gal, there are a few occasional family get-togethers, which I avoid because of her

I need help. How do I deal with this after all these years?

NOT OVER IT YET

DEAR NOT OVER IT: Take back your life. You have nothing to be embarrassed about. Tell your sister and the other woman that you know they slept with your husband. And at the next family get-together, tell the rest of your relatives why you avoided all those previous get-togethers so they don't think they were the reason.

DEAR ABBY: I see a psychiatrist and psychologist for generalized anxiety disorder, major depression disorder and borderline personality disorder. According to my doctors, my psychiatric disorders are a result of the 44 years of abuse I received from my mother, as well as the abuse she allowed others to inflict on me

Her physical abuse stopped when I fought back at 17. When I was 18, it was the last time her precious prince of a son raised his fist to me because I told him I'd press charges and have him arrested. The sexual abuse had stopped when I was 12, and I realized she'd known what had been happening the whole time. It also ended my wanting a relationship with my mother, but her emotional abuse continued until she died in 2013.

I am being told that, because she's dead, I should just let it go. My siblings backed her because they wanted to be in Mommy's good graces. After years of hatred and abuse, I believed the only family I had were my own two children, but even they are cold to me now. They scold me -- "Your mother's dead. Get over it." How do I explain that when abuse starts before a child can walk, you DON'T just "get over it"?

BLEEDING HEART IN OHIO DEAR BLEEDING HEART: I am so sorry for the unrelenting trauma you experienced. Your children may mean well, but they are clueless about what the effects of physical, emotional and sexual abuse can be. I'm not sure your children will ever fully understand why you can't forgive



Dear Abby

what your mother and siblings did to you without the help of a family therapist, if you can convince your children to accompany you.

DEAR ABBY: I am the youngest of four sisters. I lost one of them, "Rachel," to cancer several years ago. She and Abigail Van Buren • Columnist I were considered the "failures" of the family because we

had to work hard to take care of our families, whereas our other two sisters married into money. Rachel didn't take part in many family get-togethers because, I'm guessing, she felt out of place. I didn't understand it then, but I do now that she's gone because I feel the same way.

It's aggravating for me now when my sisters come to town. They don't understand how hard we have to work to get by. They think we and our children, who are out working hard too, can take time off anytime to get together with them when they come on short notice. It's aggravating, and I'm unsure how to approach this. Please help.

'FAILURE' IN FLORIDA DEAR 'FAILURE': Your "successful" sisters appear to be annoyingly obtuse. The next time you receive an invitation on short notice, patiently explain to them the difference in your lifestyle and theirs and point out that it precludes you changing your schedule at the drop of a hat. Then tell them the amount of time you need to prepare. (Why you would want to get together with anyone who makes you feel "less than" puzzles me.)

DEAR ABBY: I dated this lady for three months. She wanted to wait to commit to a relationship before having sex. We had limited time to see each other -- Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. We would go out and return to her place and be very passionate, although we didn't have sex because of her religious beliefs.

She has now decided not to pursue a relationship with me because she didn't feel the "flame" of a connection with me. After all this kissing, hugging and getting close to sex at times, how could she feel this way? Was I played?

TOTALLY CONFUSED IN TEXAS DEAR CONFUSED: Give the lady marks for being honest if she couldn't return your ardor. Depending upon what she was getting from the relationship in addition to kissing, hugging and passion, whether you were played is a question only you can answer.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips.

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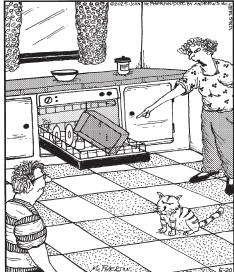




Close to Home by John McPherson



'Everyone get out! Ha ha! There's a leak in the ... ha ha ... laughing gas line! Ah ha ha! Get out of here, you rascals! It's dangerous! Ha ha ha ha!"



"Are you out of your MIND?! What kind of a maniac tries to clean a litter box in the dishwasher?!"





"I found my ball. Can you hand me my 5-iron?"