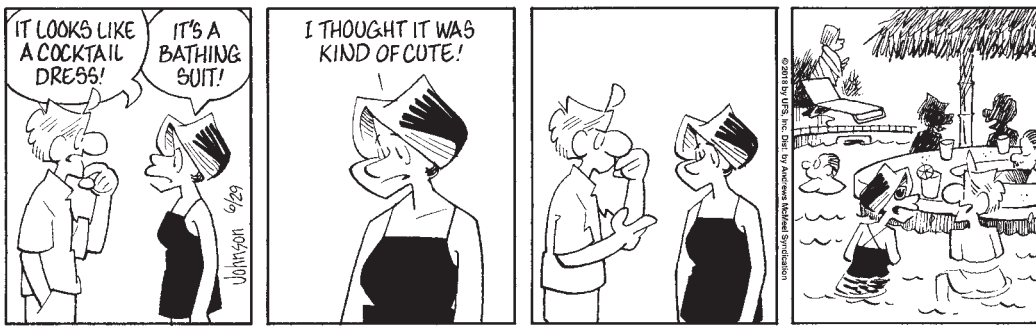
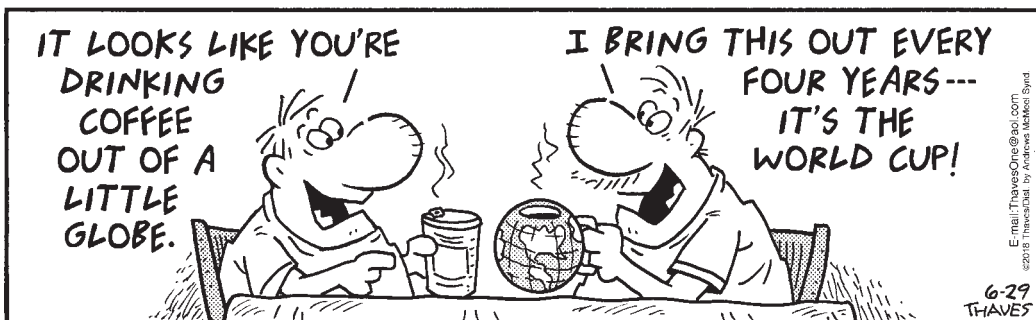


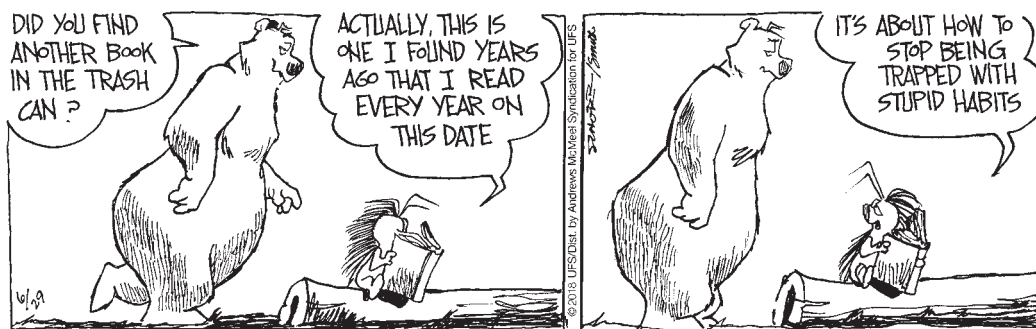
ARLO AND JANIS® by Jimmy Johnson



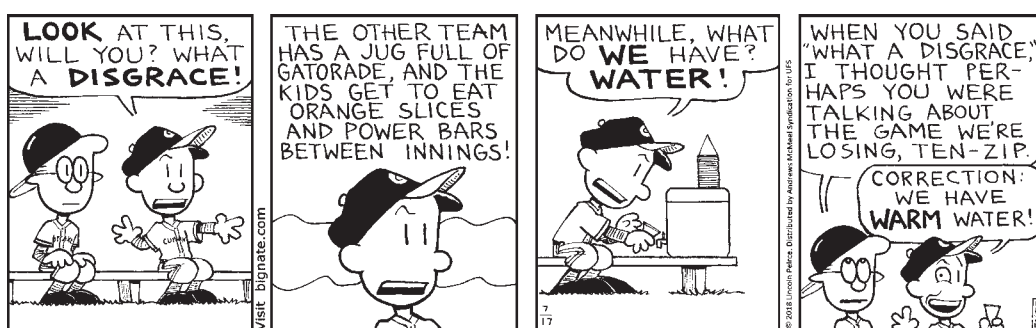
FRANK & ERNEST® by Bob Thaves



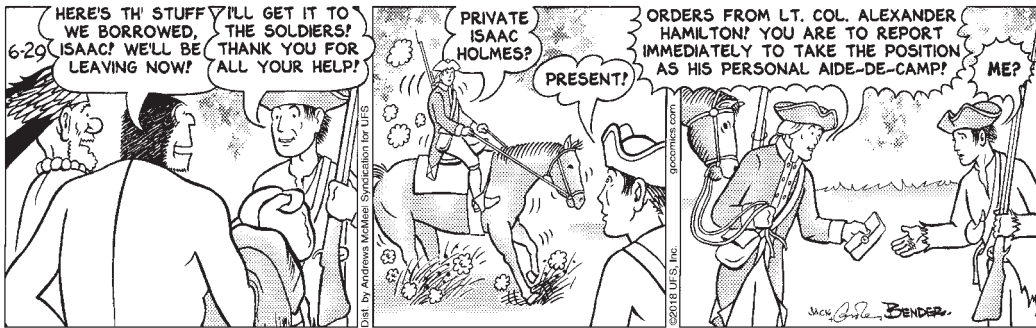
THE GRIZZWELLS® by Bill Schorr



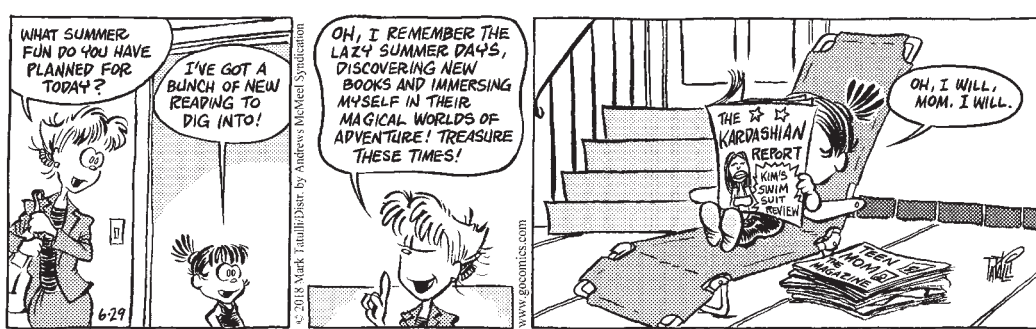
BIG NATE® by Lincoln Peirce



ALLEY OOP by Jack and Carole Bender



HEART OF THE CITY by Mark Tatulli



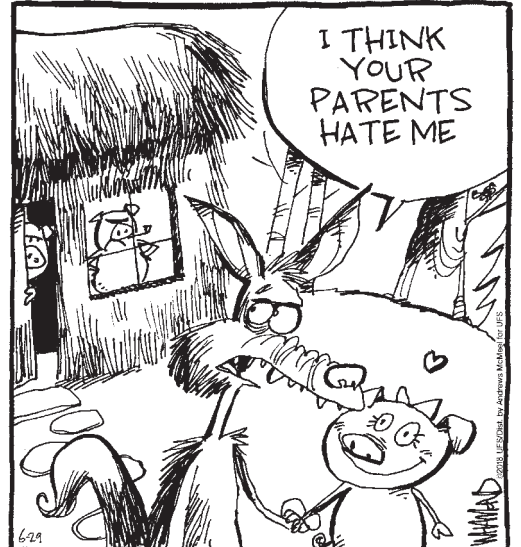
THE BORN LOSER™ by Art & Chip Sansom



HERMAN® by Jim Unger



REALITY CHECK® by Dave Whamond



AT THE MOVIES

'Leave No Trace' is an entrancing drama

(AP) — Like the pleasures of slow cooking, purposefully slow cinema can be a welcome respite from the craziness in both our world and multiplexes. And that is exactly what you'll get with filmmaker Debra Granik's "Leave No Trace," a poetic and low-key drama about a father and his teenage daughter whose attempt to live outside of society becomes increasingly impossible.

Granik, you might recall, is the co-writer and director the 2010 film "Winter's Bone," a stunning exercise in mood and setting that she made for a lean \$2 million. But that film is most remembered these days for putting star Jennifer Lawrence on the map (and a permanent Oscars track). Granik, meanwhile, faded into the background, and seemed in danger of becoming a footnote in Lawrence's incredible ascent — just another female casualty of a biased Hollywood system.



"Leave No Trace," starring Ben Foster as Will, and the entrancing newcomer Thomasin Harcourt McKenzie, as his 13-year-old daughter, Tom, is Granik's first narrative feature since "Winter's Bone." And, frankly, it's nice to have her unique sensibilities and quietly assured vision back. Who else would be confident enough to make a meditative two character drama that gets a tame PG rating? She's not concerned about flash, or edge or darkness for darkness sakes, just humanity.

Cinema is not lacking for stories about fathers whose antiestablishment lifestyles are threatened or questioned when their children reach a certain age. Think "Running on Empty" or "Captain Fantastic" or even "The Glass Castle." Usually the patriarch is larger than life — a charismatic screw-up, lovable alcoholic or just all-around eccentric character. In "Leave No Trace," however, Will is hardly more than a shell of a person, concerned only with his and his daughter's basic survival needs.

Adapted from Peter Rock's book "My Abandonment," Will and Tom live a kind of a magical life under a tarp in the dewy woods, playing chess, reading books, making their own fires and running drills to avoid intruders. Sometimes they go into town for supplies, where the stark

concrete landscapes and ear-piercing industrial noises assault their senses.

But the cracks are starting to show and you wonder how long they can stay in this remote Eden. Tom, a growing teen, is hungrier now than she used to be. When it's too damp for Will to start his own fire, she sighs and resorts to using the propane backup against her father's wishes. She even finds herself unexpectedly covetous of a necklace she finds in the woods. But she still plays by her father's rules — it's all she knows. Rebellion hasn't even occurred to her at this point, even if an itch is threatening below the surface.

And then one day everything is ruined when they're found out by the park rangers and taken in for questioning in a scene that will seem uncannily evocative of the family separation situation at the border.

Tom and Will end up in a pretty decent arrangement, considering. They're given

shelter in the guest house of a Christmas tree farmer, for whom Will is expected to work while Tom enrolls in school. Will reacts to these comforts like water and oil. Nothing could be more repugnant to him than material things and capitalistic expectations. He starts to quietly short circuit in the new surroundings and barely notices that Tom is not only fitting in, but enjoying being settled for once.

Their journey from here may not be all that surprising, but it's a testament to the actors and director that it remains riveting throughout.

Foster, who often plays the flashy, crazy wild card in any given movie, is quite good in a softer and more restrained role as a man haunted by his military past whose only tether to humanity is a daughter who is starting to become her own person. And McKenzie, who hails from New Zealand, is a breakout revelation who should have a long career ahead of her.

Subtlety does have its limits, however. When it came down to the inevitable big moment, my eyes were as dry as can be.

"Leave No Trace," a Bleecker Street release, is rated PG by the Motion Picture Association of America for "thematic elements throughout." Running time: 109 minutes.

CROSSWORDS

- ACROSS**
- 1 ER picture (hyph.)
 - 5 RV haven
 - 8 — breve
 - 12 Sand mandala builder
 - 13 Grounded bird
 - 14 — ex machina
 - 15 Type of ladder
 - 16 Dyes
 - 18 — de corps
 - 20 Capsize
 - 21 — a deal!
 - 22 Execs
 - 23 Nemo's creator
 - 26 Type of puzzle
 - 29 Wowed
 - 30 PlayStation brand
 - 31 Pocket watch chain
 - 33 Snooze
 - 34 Silvery fish
 - 35 Bogus
 - 36 Clergyman
 - 38 Care for
 - 39 Bounder
 - 40 Airport rental
 - 41 Xerox rival
 - 44 "The Gift of the Magi" author (2 wds.)
 - 47 Catch up
 - 49 Pro votes
 - 51 Penny
 - 52 "— Doubtfire"
 - 53 Roman historian
 - 54 They fly by night
 - 55 Butter serving
 - 56 Camelot lady
- DOWN**
- 1 Sweater sizes
 - 2 Tempo
 - 3 Town near Des Moines
 - 4 Canine noise
 - 5 French Legion caps
 - 6 Leave out
 - 7 Summer mo.
 - 8 Whizzes
 - 9 Hubble component
 - 10 Relative of a zither
 - 11 Aide. Abbr.
 - 17 Humid
 - 19 Road map no.

Answer to Previous Puzzle



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