

FURTHER REVIEW

"Peanuts"
creator Charles
Schulz in 1956.

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WORKING FOR 'PEANUTS'

By Charles Apple | THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

Seventy-five years ago this fall, an obscure St. Paul, Minnesota, cartoonist named Charles M. Schulz came up with an amusing daily comic strip that made its debut in just seven newspapers.

By 2000, Schulz's strip and the award-winning TV specials that featured his work had turned "Peanuts" into a worldwide phenomenon.

Schulz died 25 years ago, and the next day — Feb. 13, 2000 — his final "Peanuts" strip was published.

GOOD GRIEF! THE BIRTH AND LIFE OF 'PEANUTS'

FEB. 22, 1937

The "Ripley's Believe It or Not!" comic panel runs an item of the Schulzes' family dog, Spike, who eats all sorts of strange items with no ill effects. The item is accompanied by a drawing by Charles "Sparky" Schulz, age 14. It's his first published work.

JUNE 1947

Now a World War II vet and an art school instructor, Schulz gets his first child-oriented comic panel published in the Minneapolis Star-Tribune. He calls it "Li'l Folks."

MAY 1948

Schulz has the first of 17 "Li'l Folks" cartoons published in the Saturday Evening Post.

SPRING 1950

Schulz signs a contract with United Feature Syndicate to distribute a daily comic strip. The title "Li'l Folks" is taken, so Schulz reluctantly agrees to the syndicate's idea to use the name "Peanuts."

OCT. 2, 1950

"Peanuts" makes its debut in seven newspapers: the Washington Post, the Chicago Tribune, the Minneapolis Star-Tribune, the Denver Post, the Seattle Times, the Allentown (Pa.) Call-Chronicle and the Bethlehem (Pa.) Globe-Times. Schulz is paid \$90 for his first month's worth of strips.

NOV. 15, 1951

Charlie Brown first unsuccessfully tries to kick a football — this will become an annual running gag. For this first time, however, the ball was held by Violet, not Lucy, who has yet to appear in the strip.

JAN. 6, 1952

The Sunday version of the "Peanuts" comic strip begins.

MARCH 3, 1952

Lucy Van Pelt, the "fussbudget," makes her first appearance.

MAY 25, 1952

Schulz has Snoopy's thoughts appear in a "thought balloon" for the first time.

SEPT. 19, 1952

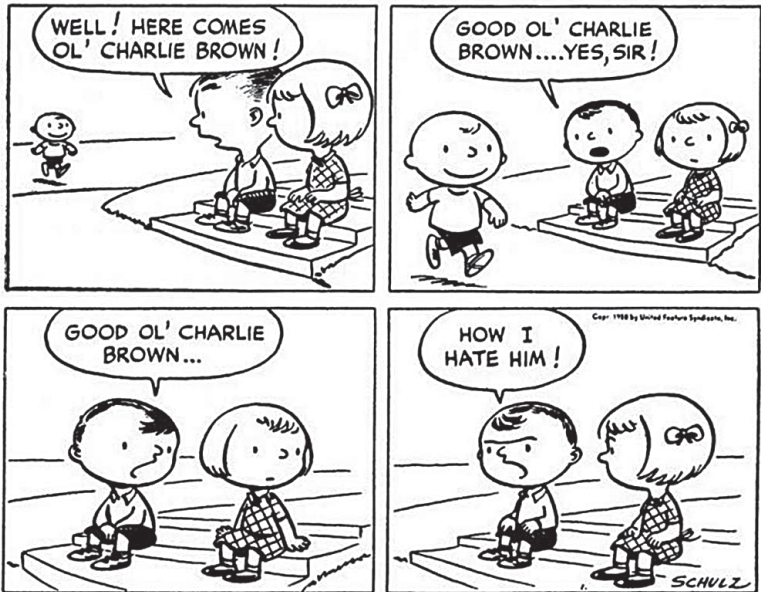
Lucy's thoughtful baby brother, Linus, makes his first appearance.

JUNE 1, 1954

Linus' security blanket makes its first appearance.

1955

Kodak becomes the first product to sponsor "Peanuts" characters.



The first "Peanuts" daily comic strip from Oct. 2, 1950.

NOV. 3, 1957

Schulz starts a second comic strip, a three-days-a-week, sports-oriented single-panel called "It's Only a Game." He hires an assistant to draw it for him. The strip appears in 30 newspapers but is canceled after 14 months.

JUNE 25, 1957

Schulz shows Snoopy walking on two legs for the first time.

1958

The first "Peanuts" toys — in the form of plastic dolls — go on sale.

1959

Ford Motor Co. signs a multi-year licensing deal for "Peanuts" characters to appear in advertisements for the Ford

Falcon. This would be the first appearance in animated form for Schulz's creations.

1960

Hallmark begins using "Peanuts" characters on its greeting cards, party decorations, books and ornaments.

APRIL 25, 1960

Lucy hugs Snoopy in the strip and says "Happiness is a Warm Puppy."

NOV. 19, 1961

Charlie Brown's huge crush — the Little Red-Haired Girl — is first mentioned.

1962

A book — "Happiness is a Warm Puppy" — is published. It spends 45 weeks on the

New York Times Best Seller list.

APRIL 1, 1965

"Peanuts" appears on the cover of Time magazine.

OCT. 10, 1965

Snoopy is shown for the first time as the World War I flying ace.

DEC. 9, 1965

"A Charlie Brown Christmas" is broadcast on CBS-TV. It will go on to win both an Emmy Award and a Peabody Award.



1966

Schulz's art studio is destroyed by fire. Later that year, he'll have Snoopy's doghouse — said to be lavishly decorated inside with a library, a record collection, a pool table and a Van Gogh — burn down in his daily strip.

OCT. 27, 1966

The third animated "Peanuts" TV special, "It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown," is broadcast.

MARCH 7, 1967

Off-Broadway stage production of "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown" debuts.

JULY 31, 1968

Schulz adds his first Black character, Franklin, to the strip.

MAY 18, 1969

Apollo 10 launches with its command module named Charlie Brown and its lunar module named Snoopy.

DEC. 4, 1969

The first feature-length "Peanuts" film, "A Boy named Charlie Brown," opens in theaters.

NOV. 20, 1973

"A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving" is the 10th "Peanuts" animated special. It will win an Emmy Award.

MAY 30, 1983

The 26th animated special, "What Have We Learned, Charlie Brown?" focuses on World War I and II history. It will win a Peabody Award.

JUNE 28, 1996

Schulz receives a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

DEC. 14, 1999

Schulz, ailing from colon cancer, announces his retirement in his daily strip. At the time, "Peanuts" appears in more than 2,600 newspapers worldwide.

JAN. 3, 2000

The final daily "Peanuts" comic strip runs in newspapers. By this time, Schulz's health had deteriorated to the point where he could no longer print the lettering in his strip. He used a computer equipped with a font designed to mimic his handwriting. Although the daily strip ends on this date, he still has Sunday strips stockpiled to run over the next six weeks.

FEB. 12, 2000

Schulz dies in his sleep at age 77. The next day, his final new Sunday strip appears, in which Schulz says goodbye to his readers and thanks them for their support.

All of Schulz's "Peanuts" strips have now run, but "Peanuts" will continue to be rerun in newspapers.

AUG. 15, 2002

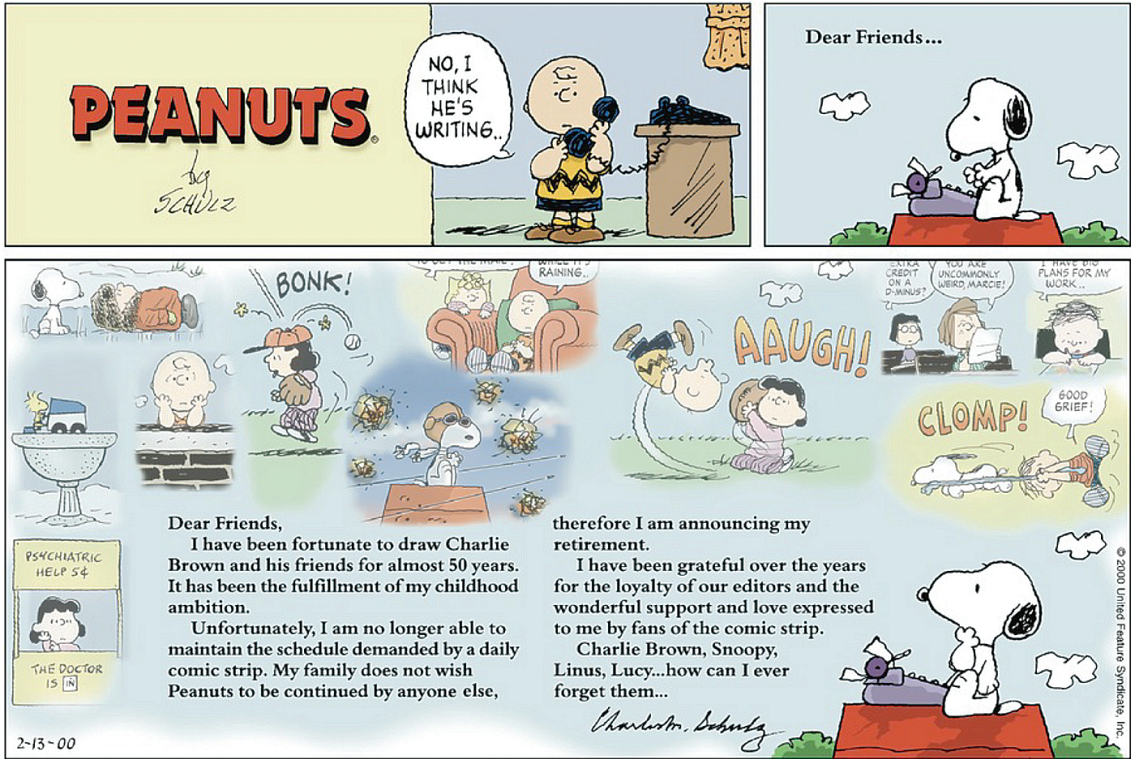
The Charles M. Schulz Museum and Research Center opens in Santa Rosa, California.

NOV. 6, 2015

The fifth feature-length "Peanuts" movie — "The Peanuts Movie" created in 3D animation — opens in theaters.

OCT. 16, 2017

Schulz's home in Santa Rosa, California, burns in a wildfire. His widow, Jean, was evacuated before the house is reduced to rubble.



The final "Peanuts" strip from Sunday, Feb. 13, 2000.