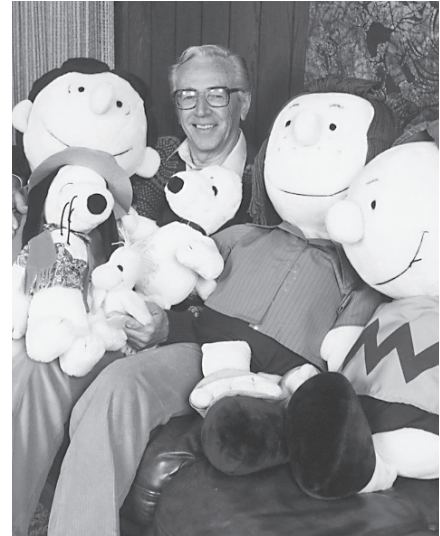




With a *Li'l Folks* strip, circa 1949



Schulz and the *Peanuts* Gang, circa 1985

## CHARLES M. SCHULZ BIOGRAPHY (1922–2000)

Born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, on November 26, 1922, Charles M. Schulz always wanted to be a cartoonist, but he never dreamed that he would create a comic character named Snoopy who would go to the moon or that “happiness is a warm puppy” would prompt hundreds of definitions or that he would coin the term “security blanket.” He just wanted to contribute to a profession that he loved all his life.

When Schulz was just two days old, an uncle dubbed him “Sparky” after a horse in a popular comic strip of the time, *Barney Google*. The nickname stuck with Schulz his whole life. Later, in kindergarten a teacher allowed Schulz to draw whatever he wanted. He happily drew a man shoveling snow. His teacher looked at his picture and said, “Someday, Charles, you are going to be an artist.”

Schulz’s father, Carl, was a barber (like Charlie Brown’s father) who loved comic strips. Schulz and his father shared a Sunday morning ritual throughout his youth of reading the funnies. During Schulz’s senior year in high school, his mother showed him an ad for the Art Instructions Schools, Inc., the correspondence school then known as Federal Schools in Minneapolis. He was drawn to the course’s focus on cartooning and signed up.

But during WWII in 1943, Schulz had to put his drawing ambitions on hold and enter the military. While he was away, his mother, Dena Schulz, died of cancer. “The three years I spent in the army in World War II taught me all I needed to know about loneliness, and my sympathy for the loneliness that all of us experience has dropped heavily upon poor Charlie Brown,” Schulz wrote.

After the war, Schulz returned to Art Instructions School where he became an instructor. He was continually sending out his comics while he was teaching and from 1948 to 1950 he submitted cartoons regularly to the *Saturday Evening Post*, and sold 15 of them. Later, Schulz created a group of sample comics and sold them as a weekly feature called *Li'l Folks* to the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*.

In 1950 Schulz signed with United Media and the comic was renamed *Peanuts*. *Peanuts* debuted in seven newspapers on October 2, 1950 and featured Charlie Brown as a flippant little guy who, over the years, progressed into an eternally hopeful, despondent, and neurotic character. As Charlie Brown developed, so did other characters such as Lucy, Schroeder, and Linus. Snoopy took more time to develop, but when he began walking around on two feet it became hard to keep him from dominating the comic. By 1965, the National Cartoonists Society had honored Schulz twice with the Reuben Award, and *Peanuts* was an international success.

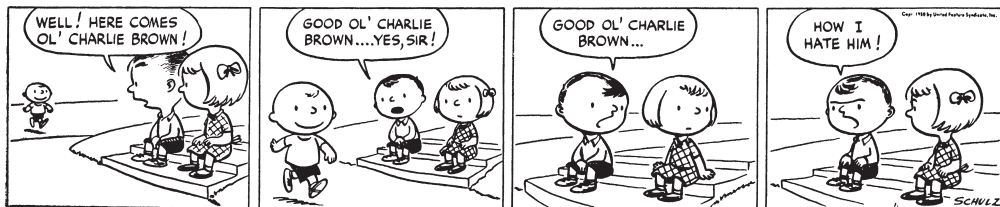
In 1999, when Schulz announced his retirement because of his declining health, *Peanuts* was published in more than 2,600 newspapers worldwide; he died shortly thereafter, on Saturday, February 12, 2000, just hours before the final *Peanuts* Sunday strip appeared in newspapers. Yet, the *Peanuts* Gang continues to delight readers everyday by bringing a concentrated dose of humanity into hearts around the world. The Charles M. Schulz Museum and Research Center in Santa Rosa, California opened in 2002 to preserve, display, and interpret the art of this legendary cartoonist.

## CHARLES M. SCHULZ AND PEANUTS FUN FACTS

For more information and a complete look at the life and career of Charles M. Schulz, please visit the timeline on the Schulz Museum's website: <https://schulzmuseum.org/timeline/>

CHARLES SCHULZ DREW 17,897 COMIC STRIPS THROUGHOUT HIS CAREER.

- The first *Peanuts* strip ran in seven newspapers on October 2, 1950 and featured Charlie Brown, Shermie, and Patty. By 1958, *Peanuts* appeared in 355 U.S. and 40 foreign newspapers.



First Peanuts comic strip, October 2, 1950

- Schulz moved from his birthplace of Minnesota to Sebastopol, California, in 1958.
- Schulz was first published in Ripley's newspaper feature, *Believe it or Not!*, in 1937. Schulz was 15 years old and the drawing published was of the family dog.
- From birth, comics played a large role in Schulz's life. At just two days old, an uncle nicknamed Schulz "Sparky" after the horse Spark Plug from the *Barney Google* comic strip.
- In the 1930s, Schulz had a black-and-white dog who later became the inspiration for Snoopy—the same dog that Schulz drew for Ripley's *Believe It or Not!*; the dog's name was Spike.
- *Peanuts* is not the name Schulz chose for his strip; in fact, he didn't even like the title. In 1950, when Schulz sold his strip, originally titled *Li'l Folks*, to United Feature Syndicate, they renamed it *Peanuts*.
- The first *Peanuts* animated special, *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, aired in 1965 and won both a Peabody Award and an Emmy for outstanding children's programming.
- Charles Schulz earned a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in 1996.
- The final *Peanuts* strip ran on February 13, 2000.
- *Peanuts* qualified for a place in the Guinness Book of World Records after being sold to the 2,000th newspaper in 1984. Today, *Peanuts* is still circulated in approximately 1,700 newspapers.



Art from *A Charlie Brown Christmas*



Ripley's *Believe It or Not!* featuring Schulz-drawn Spike.