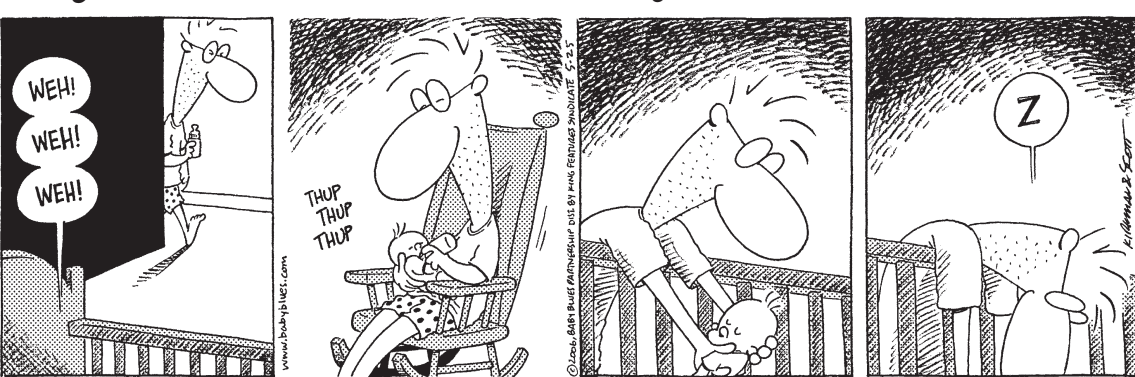


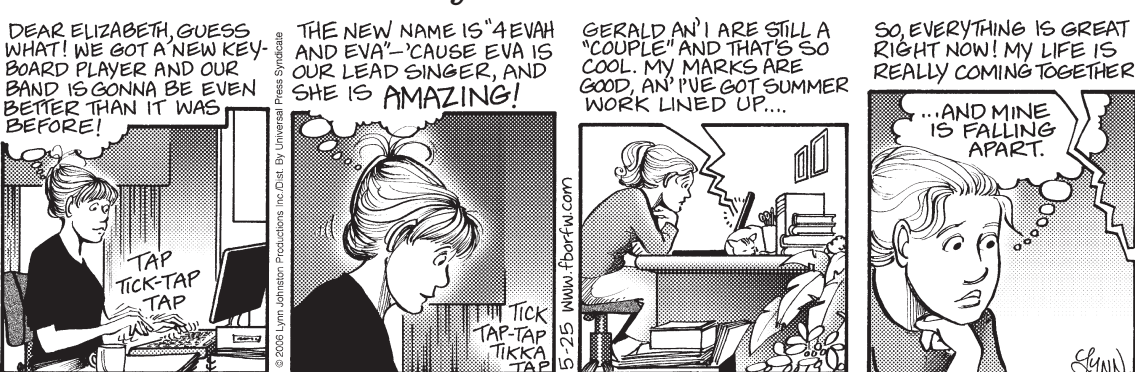
Retail • Norm Feuti (Sample)



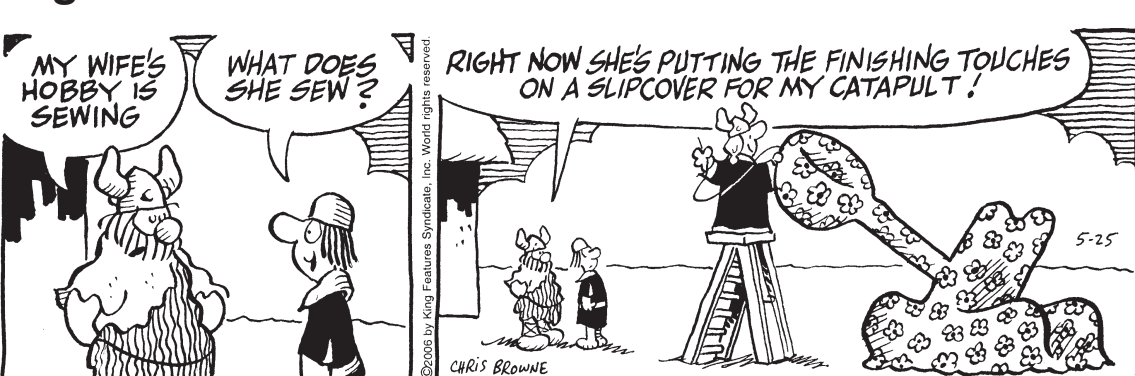
Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



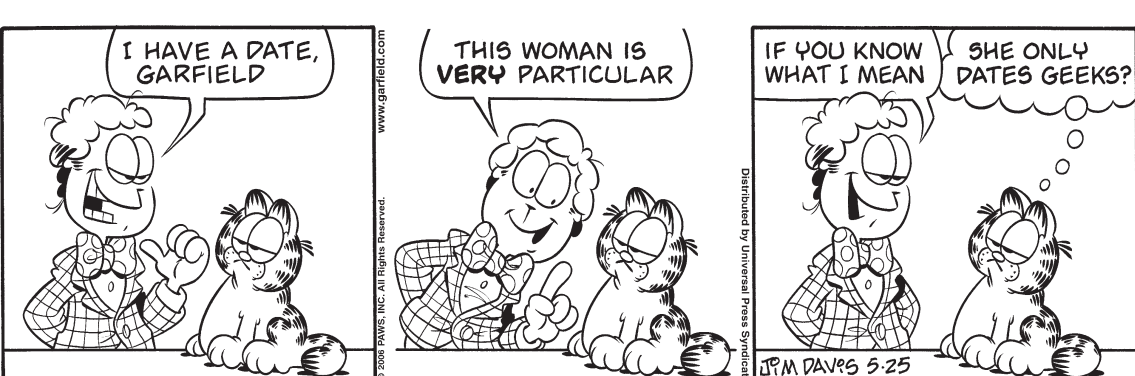
For Better or Worse • Lynn Johnston



Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



Garfield • Jim Davis



Blondie • Chic Young



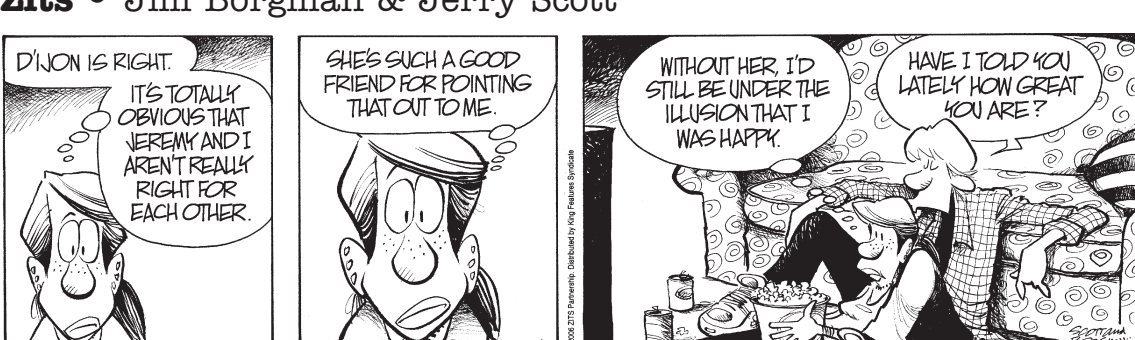
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Opposites can make a marriage work

DEAR ABBY: I have never written to you before, but after reading the letter from "Confused in Georgia," the 23-year-old young man saying that he is gay, I felt compelled to respond.



Abigail Van Buren

Dear Abby

Your advice to him was great, but I would like to offer some of my own.

Like "Confused," I am also a homosexual in south Georgia. Because he is having a difficult time with the church in which he was raised, my advice would be to run — don't walk — from this "house of worship." If attending church is important to him, then I suggest he visit the Episcopal Church, where I found solace and a warm and comforting family.

I have found it most interesting that in the Deep South, many Protestant churches are inclusive only if one meets their criteria, which is something akin to an exclusive country club.

Also, he is not alone. Homosexuals of all races and religions are born every single day. I have found it somewhat amusing that if the truth be known, there are probably more homosexuals in our churches than at any gay venue.

— VALDOSTA, GA., READER

DEAR READER: After that letter was published, I was inundated with mail from readers — gay and straight — from all over the country encouraging the writer to stop being afraid of rejection and to come out already. Read on for a sample from Georgia alone:

DEAR ABBY: No one should have to live with the isolation and fear that "Confused" is experiencing due to his sexual orientation. I live in Atlanta, and while I am not homosexual, "Confused" should

know that Atlanta is known for having a large, active gay community.

There are many support and networking groups here, gay-friendly neighborhoods and planned communities, and a number of churches of different denominations that welcome gay and lesbian members with open hearts and minds.

Georgia State, Emory and Georgia Tech are all based in Atlanta, as well as numerous community colleges.

"Confused" should come and visit. While parts of the South are extremely conservative, a whole new world of opportunity and happiness awaits him in his own home state.

Atlanta has the resources, as well as an empathetic community, to help him find happiness within himself.

— JESSICA IN ATLANTA

DEAR ABBY: The theatrical world, which has a large community of gay men, is a place where "Confused" will find many open minds and similar stories.

Getting involved in regional theater as a volunteer will help him find an emotionally "safe" activity with which to begin socializing again. We love our volunteers.

All he has to do is hand folks a program, and no one will ask questions. It will also put him in contact with many others who may have lived through exactly what

he's going through now and enable him to make friends who truly understand. Not everyone in this state is homophobic.

— SYMPATHETIC IN GEORGIA

DEAR ABBY: The letter from "Confused in Georgia" mirrors our grandson. If the only way we can communicate with him is through Dear Abby, then we will certainly try: Grandson, we love you very much and have felt for some time that you might be gay.

Does this change our love for you? No! If you decided to come out, you will always have our love and support. Please, make a decision so that you can move on with your life.

— YOUR LOVING GRANDPA AND GRANDMA IN ALBANY, GA.

DEAR ABBY: I have a family member I love dearly, as does the rest of the family.

This person has had an odor problem for many years — but it is seemingly getting worse. We feel it is not only body odor but also lack of bathing and laundry.

No one in the family wants to be responsible for telling this person about it for fear of hurting this person or making the person upset and resentful.

What should we do?

— UNSURE IN MISSOURI

DEAR UNSURE: You must speak to the person. By doing so, you will be helping, not hurting. What would be cruel would be to ignore the problem.

Editor's note: Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, Calif. 90069.

Bridge

South dealer.
North-South vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ 3
♥ K 10 8 2
♦ A J 8 5 2
♣ K 3 2

WEST
♠ A J 10 4
♥ J 9 6 4
♦ 6
♣ 8 7 5 4

EAST
♠ Q 9 6 2
♥ 7 5
♦ K 9 4 3
♣ J 10 9

SOUTH
♠ K 8 7 5
♥ A Q 3
♦ Q 10 7
♣ A Q 6

The bidding:
South 1 NT West Pass North 2 ♣ East Pass
2 ♠ Pass 3 NT
Opening lead — eight of clubs.

Right Out of the Book

The devoted student of the game has the play of certain card combinations firmly implanted in his memory banks, but seldom finds the opportunity to apply this knowledge in practice. Such plays are seen mostly in books and theoretical discussions, but rarely at the table. Nevertheless, when the circumstance for their use actually arises, the player is expected to rise to the occasion and find the winning course of action.

Take this case from a district final of the 1995 North American Open Pairs. North-South arrived at three notrump after a Stayman sequence revealed that South had four spades and North, by inference, had four hearts. West therefore led a club, which gave nothing away. Declarer won the club with the ace, led the diamond queen and finessed after West followed low. East won with the king and had to decide what to do next.

A spade shift was clearly indicated, but which spade to return was the key question. Most Easts in this situation would mechanically lead the deuce, leaving the defense helpless after declarer followed low. Indeed, if West did not cash the spade ace after winning the first spade with the ten, South would almost certainly have scored the rest of the tricks.

Alternatively, some Easts might return the spade queen at trick three, which would limit declarer to nine tricks after he ducked the queen and also played low on the next spade. But at one of the tables, East was Charles Coon, well-known New England expert who had seen this situation both in theory and in practice many times before. After winning the diamond king, Coon unerringly returned the nine of spades, leaving declarer with no recourse.

If South covered the nine with the king, he would go down immediately, while if he ducked the nine, Coon would next lead the queen to produce the same result. South was a goner either way, and he could only rue his ill fortune in having drawn Coon as his opponent on this deal.

Cryptoquip

I V M E P Y E Z Y N M U Y G V

G T E O V G X T M U V Z X G M E T A V

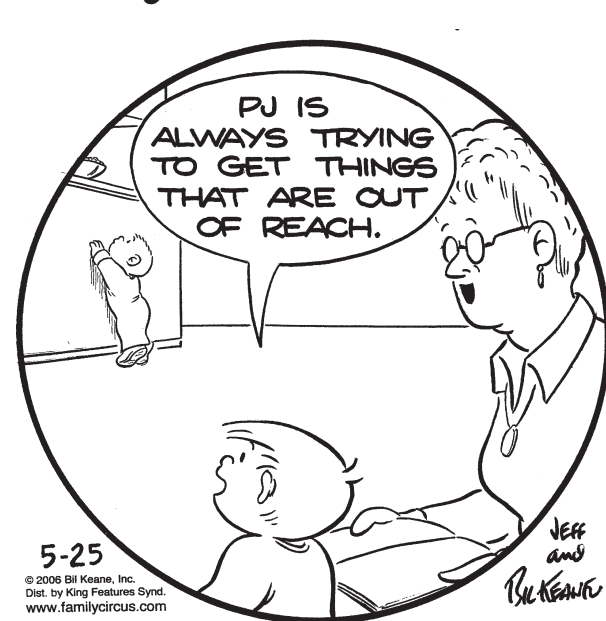
L E O X T I L X G A U X V N . Y U

R V P P , H Y E G R X P P H V H Y E G !

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A PERSON FORMULATES A METHOD TO COLOR HAIR, YOU COULD CALL IT A "DYE-IT PLAN."

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: U equals H

Family Circus • Bil Keane



"We all do that, Billy."

Crossword

ACROSS
1 Plug of tobacco
5 Satchel
8 Help
12 "That smarts!"
13 "When We Were Kings" subject
14 Scruff
15 Curved molding
16 N.J. neighbor
17 Notion
18 Crafty
20 Spry
22 Wye follower
23 Actor
24 Rubik's baffler
27 1964 Supremes chart-topper
32 — pro nobis
33 La-la leader
34 "— the ramparts ..."
35 Backed

DOWN
1 Talks lovingly
2 Grant or Downs
3 Maple genus
4 Breathe with difficulty
5 They're written off as uncol- lect-ible
6 Pub request
7 Country singer
8 Critter
9 Bitterness
10 Duel tool
11 Sartorial problem
19 Lindbergh book
21 Wall climber
24 Miller Sebastian
25 Grecian container
26 Criticize severely
28 Exist
29 South Dakota national park
30 Be idle (Sl.)
31 Before
36 A gazillion
37 Actor Stephen
38 Glossy paint
41 Dorothy's auntie
42 Show-room sample
43 Medley
44 Attract
46 Wild and crazy
47 Garfield's pal
48 "— De-classified School Survival Guide"
51 Computer language

Solution time: 25 mins.

ROSS ASS AMEN
IVAN HAT LODE
PAGOPAGO INGA
ALERT PLAYER
TACTISM
EBBS AHHEM OBI
GOO BRIAN NET
OAR APES DYES
AILFEAR
WOBBLE MARCH
AMOS MAH MAH I
DIRE ICE AKIN
STAN TEN SENT

Yesterday's answer 5-25

