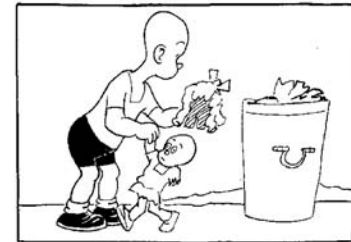
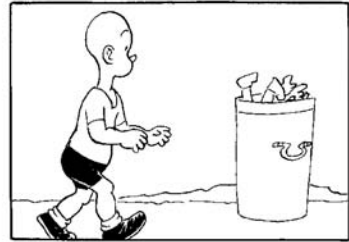
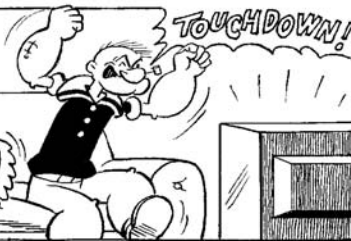
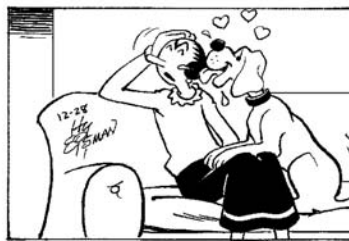
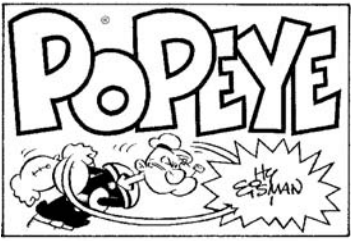


# SIDE SHOW



## Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



## Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



## TO YOUR GOOD HEALTH

### Pancreatitis means giving up alcohol

**DEAR DR. ROACH:** I went to the emergency ward with severe chest pains and bloating. I was sure I was having a heart attack. After tests, a CT scan revealed I had pancreatitis; also, my potassium was low and sodium was critically low. I am 62, 5 feet, 9 inches tall and weigh 210; I have Type 2 diabetes with an A1C of 6.7 and high blood pressure. I was discharged after four days with no restrictions other than to eat light and refrain from alcohol 100 percent for the rest of my life to avoid another occurrence.

I had never heard of pancreatitis, and it was devastating news to me. I make wine, and have for years. I do not drink anything except wine, and the thought of never being able to drink again is very disturbing. Is there a possibility that I may be able to

drink wine again in the future? The doctor's assessment seemed pretty harsh to me. — J.C.

**ANSWER:** Acute pancreatitis is an inflammation of the pancreas, an organ that makes digestive enzymes and insulin. Acute pancreatitis can be very severe, even life-threatening on occasion. There are many causes, but the most common in North America are gallstones and alcohol. The diagnosis is made from the history and physical exam, and an elevated pancreas enzyme level, usually amylase or lipase. These often are elevated into the thousand range. A CT scan also can help confirm the diagnosis.

Before concluding that alcohol is the cause of the pancreatitis, it's important to make sure there is nothing blocking the pancreatic and common bile duct, such as a stone or tumor. The CT scan is good, but if there is doubt, an endoscopy may need to be performed.

If your doctor determined that the cause is alcohol, then I'm afraid I have to agree that no amount of alcohol is safe. Drinking even modest amounts of wine, even months or years later, could bring about pancreatitis again. In addition to the pain and suffering

that go with an episode, the more episodes of acute pancreatitis you have, the more likely you are to develop chronic pancreatitis (with constant pain), pancreatic insufficiency (leading to inability to properly digest food) and worsen your diabetes.

**DEAR DR. ROACH:** I take the statin drug atorvastatin since my heart surgery. The sticker on the bottle reads, "Do not eat grapefruit or drink grapefruit juice at any time while taking this medicine." My cardiologist said this warning was based on rather thin clinical trials, and it was OK to continue eating one grapefruit in the morning and taking the statin at bedtime. Are there new developments on this topic?

**ANSWER:** Grapefruit juice indeed can affect the metabolism of atorvastatin (Lipitor) and many other medications. However, the amount of grapefruit needed in order to have a significant effect is quite high — the manufacturer recommends avoiding consumption of more than a quart (1.2 liters) of grapefruit juice a day.

I agree with your cardiologist that a grapefruit is a healthy way to begin the day and is not likely to cause any problems with atorvastatin.

## SALOME'S STARS

**ARIES** (March 21 to April 19) That lower-than-acceptable performance you're getting from others in your group might be the result of miscommunication. If so, correct it before serious problems arise later on.

**TAURUS** (April 20 to May 20) An unexpected situation could call for a change of plans. If so, you might feel that this is unfair. But it's best to make the needed adjustments now. There'll be time later for rescheduling.

**GEMINI** (May 21 to June 20) The new year brings opportunities you might want to look into. Some might be more interesting than others. But take time to look at all of them before you make any decisions.

**CANCER** (June 21 to July 22) It's a good idea to be careful about expenses until you've worked out that pesky

financial problem. You might find it advisable to get some solid advice on how to proceed.

**LEO** (July 23 to August 22) Romance looms large over the Leonine aspect. Single Lions looking for love should find Cupid very cooperative. Paired Cats can expect a renewed closeness in their relationships.

**VIRGO** (August 23 to September 22) Making contact with a former colleague might not be high on your list of priorities. But it could pay off personally as well as professionally. Avoid bringing up any negatives about the past.

**LIBRA** (September 23 to October 22) A personal relationship could face added stress because of a situation involving someone close to both of you. Be supportive and, above all, try to avoid playing the blame game.

**SCORPIO** (October 23 to November 21) You might well find some lingering uncertainties about a decision. If so, take that as a warning that you might not be ready to make

that move yet. More study would be in order.

**SAGITTARIUS** (November 22 to December 21) Music is a dominant theme for Sagittarians right now, and it should remind you to make a greater effort to restore some much-needed harmony in that very special relationship.

**CAPRICORN** (December 22 to January 19) Although family matters might demand much of the Sea Goat's attention this week, you'll want to try to make time to handle those all-important workplace situations as well.

**AQUARIUS** (January 20 to February 18) A recurring unresolved issue might need to be revisited before you can move forward. Consider asking someone familiar with the situation to act as an impartial counselor.

**PISCES** (February 19 to March 20) Ignore pressure to make a decision. Keeping your options open is still the wisest course, at least until you're sure you've learned all you need to know about the matter at hand.

## King Crossword

### ACROSS

- 1 Coconut tree
- 5 Auto fuel
- 8 Bat a fly
- 12 Hodgepodge
- 13 Web address
- 14 Apiece
- 15 Panty raid site
- 17 1492 vessel
- 18 Shirt shape
- 19 Donkey
- 20 — mignon
- 21 See 36-Across
- 22 Court
- 23 Two-faced god
- 26 Takes temporarily
- 30 Greatly
- 31 Diving bird
- 32 Concept
- 33 Laundry task
- 35 Trusty horse
- 36 With 21-Across, senescence
- 37 Handyman's abbr.
- 38 Store staffer
- 41 Baseball great Hodges
- 42 Tease
- 45 Mischievous Norse god
- 46 More than half
- 48 Aid and —

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12				13			14			
15				16			17			
18			19			20				
		21				22				
23	24	25			26			27	28	29
30				31			32			
33				34			35			
38	39	40			41			42	43	44
45					46			47		
48					49			50		
51					52			53		

- 49 In times past
- 50 Actor Clive
- 51 Too inquisitive
- 10 Teen's woe
- 11 Just one of those things?
- 16 Tatters
- 20 Supporting
- 21 Expert
- 22 Oriental
- 52-Across
- 23 Mandible
- 24 — carte
- 25 Ph. bk. info
- 26 Insect
- 27 Rhyming tribute
- 28 Small
- 29 Blue
- 31 Moreover
- 34 Sort
- 35 Missile shelter
- 37 Mustard city
- 38 Family
- 39 Timber wolf
- 40 Scratches (out)
- 41 Totally smitten
- 42 New Zealander
- 43 Particular
- 44 Unit of force
- 46 Navigation aid
- 47 Computer acronym

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## King Crossword

### Answers

Solution time: 21 mins.

P	A	L	M	G	A	S	S	W	A	T
O	L	I	O	U	R	L	E	A	C	H
S	O	R	O	R	I	T	Y	N	I	N
T	E	E	A	S	S	F	I	L	E	T
		A	G	E	W	O				
J	A	N	U	S	B	O	R	R	O	W
A	L	O	T	A	U	K	I	D	E	A
W	A	S	H	I	N	G	S	T	E	E
				O	L	D	I	Y		
C	L	E	R	K	G	I	L	K	I	D
L	O	K	I	M	A	J	O	R	I	T
A	B	E	T	A	G	O	W	E	N	
N	O	S	Y	P	A	N	M	I	M	E

Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps

