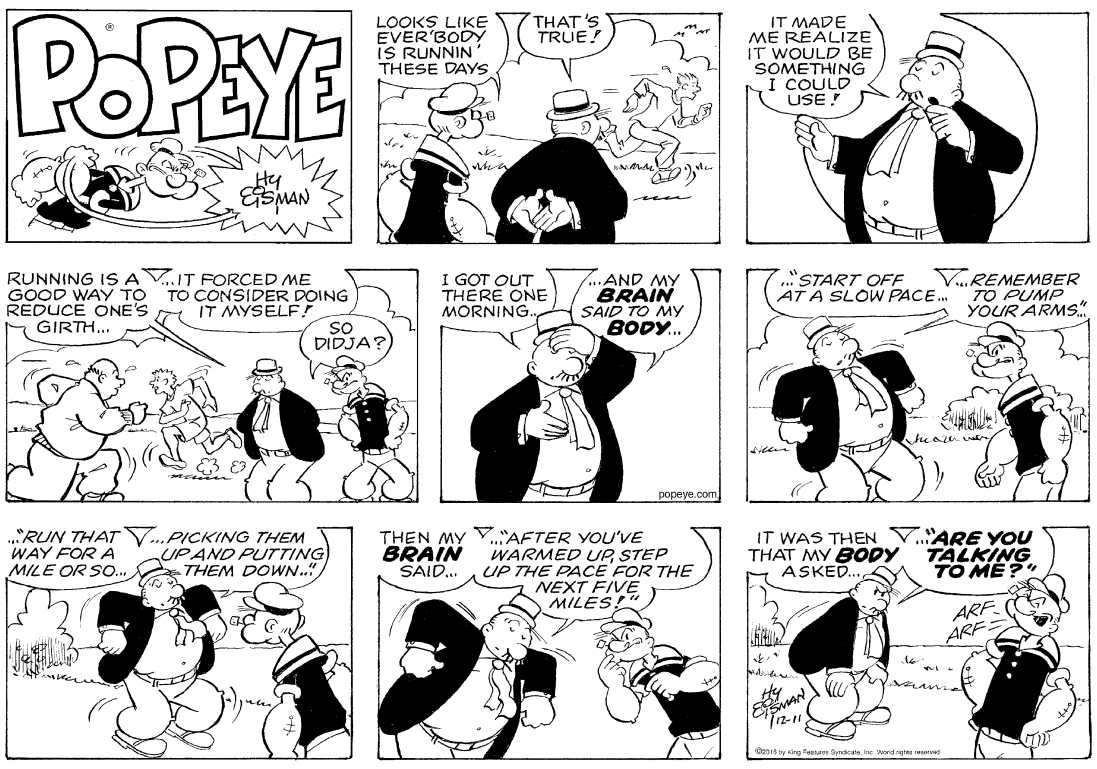
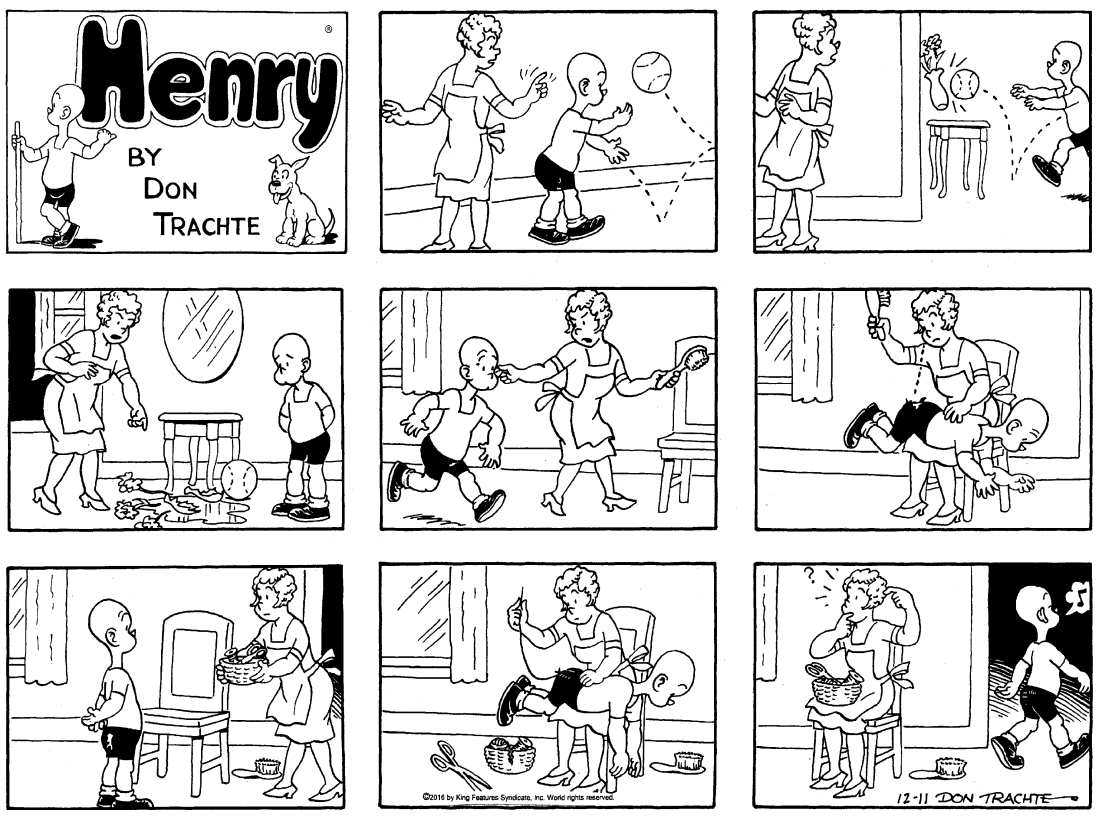
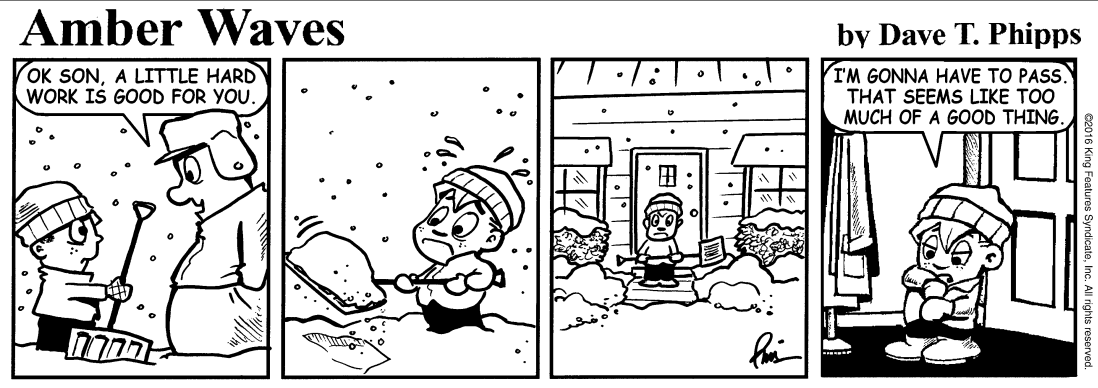
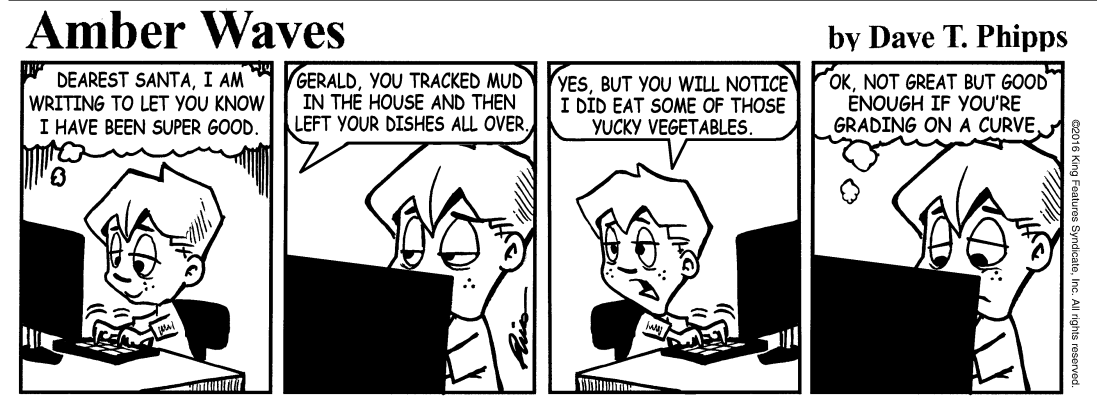
SIDE SHOW









TO YOUR GOOD HEALTH

Few Children Outgrow Tree-Nut Allergy

DEAR DR. ROACH: Can you tell me if there is any hope of a cure for tree-nut allergy, particularly for a child? -- X.M.

ANSWER: Tree-nut allergies, like all allergies, vary in severity from mild to life-threatening. Allergies to tree nuts (these include walnuts, cashews, almonds and others) are common, are more likely to be severe, and tend to persist throughout lifetime. People with one tree-nut allergy may have others, and about 30 percent to 40 percent also may be allergic to peanuts (despite their being legumes, they share enough characteristics for co-allergic reactions). Peanut and tree-nut allergies appear to be increasing in prevalence over time.

The mainstay of treatment is avoiding the allergen, which requires constant vigilance, careful reading of nutritional labels and a plan for treatment in case of ingestion, such as an epinephrine auto-injector.

Only about 15 to 20 percent of younger children will develop tolerance to ("outgrow") their allergy; an allergy that develops later in life usually is life-long. Your allergist can do skin testing to see if the allergy is resolving.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I'm a retired ob-gyn and am married to a practicing MD. I'm writing you today about autism and its use as a diagnosis. My view is that each individual is unique, mentally and physically. While autism may be one way to describe a personality, each person must deal with the world on its terms, not because of a diagnosis.

I personally believe I am a variant of Asperger's, but who knows? I don't qualify as an Asperger's if given a test prepared by psychologists/psychiatrists. Yet, I have had many life experiences that are best explained by an Asperger's diagnosis. What are your thoughts on Asperger's syndrome? -- A.G.

ANSWER: Since I recently published a letter by an adult who believed he was autistic despite never having received a diagnosis, I have had several letters like this.

Autism, including its variant Asperger syndrome, is a spectrum of illnesses that share deficits in social interaction, communication and stereotyped, repetitive behaviors. In Asperger syndrome, there is no clinically significant delay in language and intellectual development.

I certainly agree with you that each person is unique and that the label of a psychiatric condition, such as autism, bipolar or a personality disorder, has only limited usefulness. In the best case, it can give a person a way to start learning how to overcome challenges that similar people have faced. At worst, a label predisposes others to look at the person through a certain lens and to expect certain behaviors.

I have had many patients with psychiatric diagnoses ask me not to put that into their medical record, after having built up enough trust to share the diagnosis with me. People have had such negative experiences based on their diagnosis, their label, that I don't blame them for wanting to avoid being stereotyped. There is so much variation in all of these conditions -- even in those of us considered neurologically typical -- that we need to recognize the good and the bad side of making such a diagnosis.

SALOME'S STARS

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) With the new year's opportunities almost within reach, the Arian's courageous aspects are raring to go. And don't be surprised if a lot of people follow the zodiac's most trusted leader.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Change lies ahead for the brave Bovine who is ready to shuck off the tried and true to try something new. But appearances can be deceptive. Check it all out before you charge into anything.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) This week promises a peek into what the new year holds for the Gemini Twins, both in love and careers. Family matters continue to be a factor in decisions you're going to be facing.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) As you move into the new year, your travel aspects grow stronger, and you might find yourself making decisions about a destination and a traveling companion sooner than you'd expected.

LEO (July 23 to August 22) The new year holds both glitter and gold. This means Leos and Leonas should begin getting the facts they'll need to separate the real thing from the sham in order to make important decisions next year.

VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) A good way to start the new year might be to arrange for a visit to someone you haven't seen in a long time. You also might want to pick up that project you put off a while back.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) As you contemplate the new year's potential, you might want to talk things over with people who are or have been where you want to go. Their experience and advice can be helpful.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) Someone close to you might feel like you have no more room for him or her in your life. This calls for immediate reassurance of your love so you can start the new year on a high note.

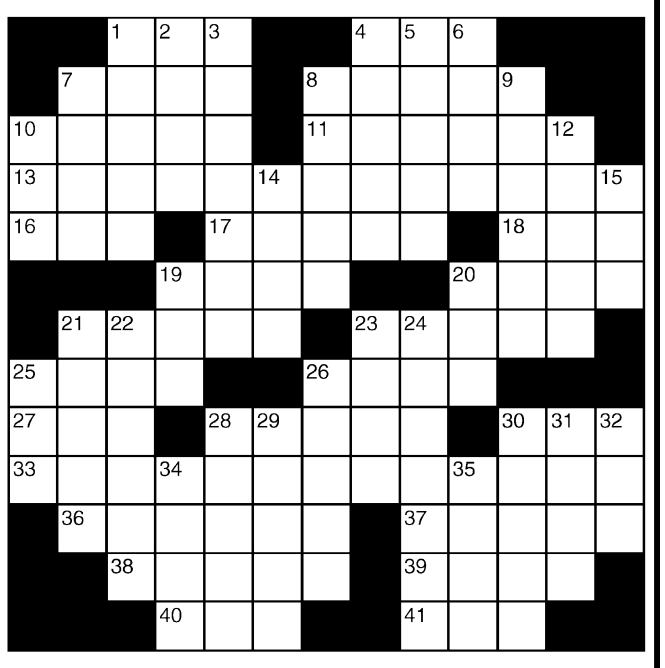
SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) The coming year will bring more people into your life. Some situations might not work out as well as others. But overall, everyone earns something, and that's always a good thing.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) The new year could find you indulging in one or more of the hobbies you've always wanted to take up. And don't be surprised if they ultimately direct you toward a new career.

AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) The artistic Aquarian should find more opportunities in the new year. You might even make some potentially helpful contacts as you gather to ring in the year 2012.

PISCES (February 19 to March 20) The new year offers challenges for Pisceans who want to make better use of the skills they now have and learn new ones. Personal relationships show stronger positive aspects.

King Crossword



ACROSS
1 More, to Manuel
4 Humorous one
7 St. consisting of two peninsulas
8 Infants
10 Raccoon relative
11 Expiated
13 Executive, often
16 Island garland
17 Mill input
18 Pair
19 Sorts
20 Huffed and puffed
21 Many Christmas trees
23 Portobello alternative
25 Actor Gregory
26 Volcanic outflow
27 Exist
28 Persistent attack
30 Bashful
33 Cabal member
36 Mexican entree
37 Neighborhoods
38 Rind-removing tool
39 Taleteller
40 Trawler need
41 Young fellow

DOWN
1 Florida city
2 Start of a play
3 Roof component
4 Bulb measures
5 End abruptly, NASA-style
6 Actress Rowlands
7 Fashion
8 Foundation
9 Put down roots
10 Western st.
12 Wooden peg
14 Annoys
15 Ply oars
19 Squid squirt
20 Underwear with underwire
21 1990s presidential candidate
22 Polar feature
23 Creche trio
24 Generally
25 Campaign fundraising grp.
26 Shunned one
28 Trap
29 Archipelago component
30 Lieu
31 Frost
32 Decade parts (Abbr.)
34 Muscat's land
35 Met melody

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King Crossword Answers

Solution time: 25 mins.

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

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