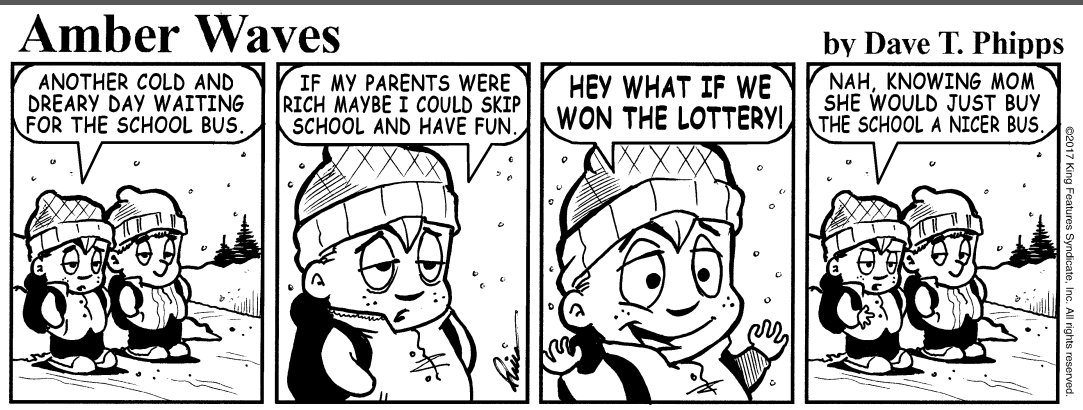
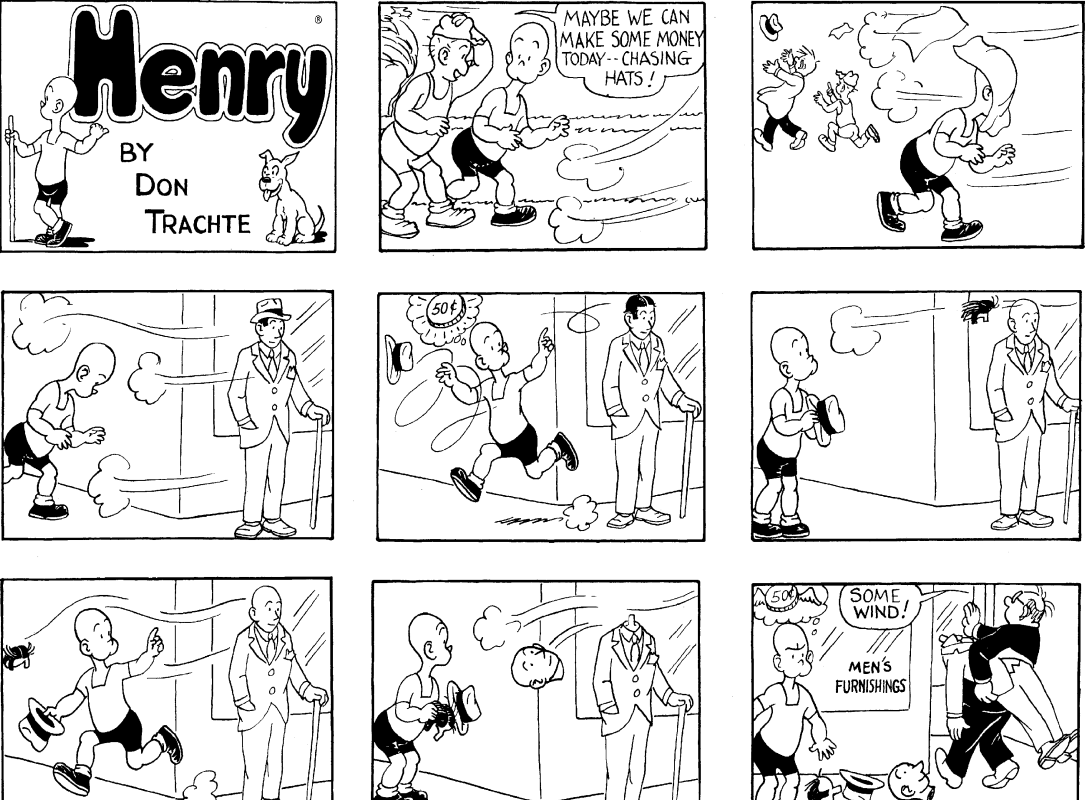
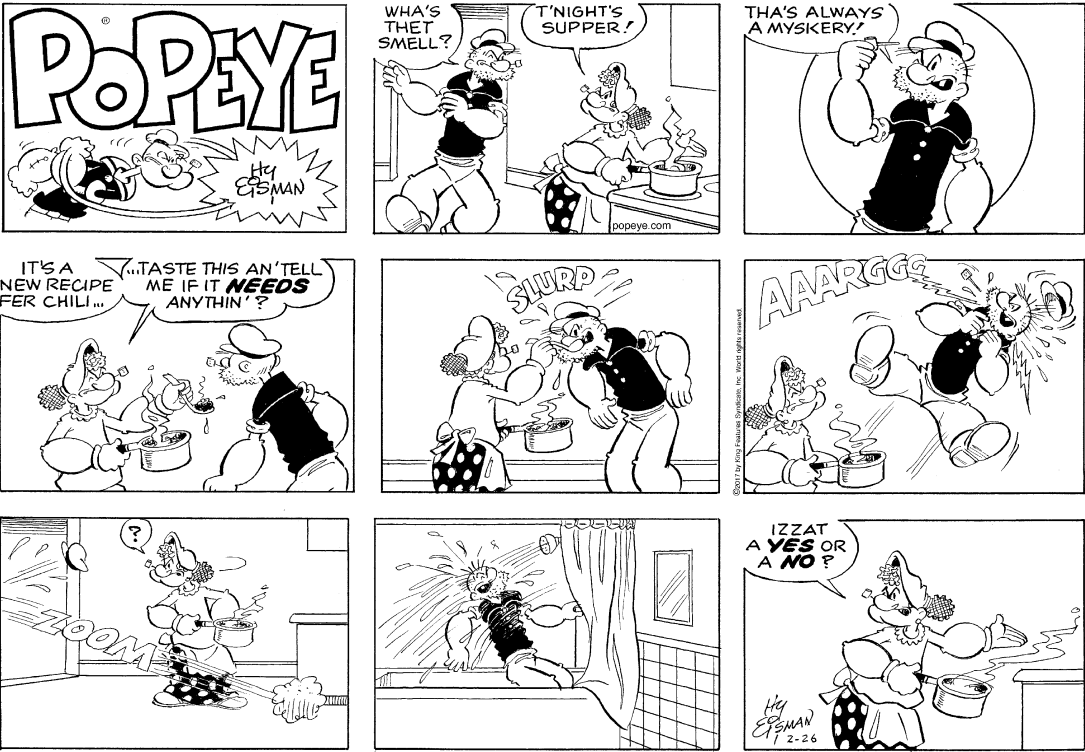


SIDE SHOW



TO YOUR GOOD HEALTH

Back Surgery Comes With No Guarantees

DEAR DR. ROACH: An MRI showed that I have severe stenosis of my C6 vertebrae. I have pins-and-needles sensations that often go down my right arm and in the neck area of my left shoulder. I saw an orthopedic surgeon, who stated that he could "cure" my stenosis with a laminectomy surgery. Based on his recommendation, I have completed a six-day pack of prednisone and four weeks of physical therapy, with little diminishment of my symptoms. I am now taking Celebrex daily. I have spent hours going through the various medical journals online, but could not locate any journal article that summarizes the prognosis of this surgery. Do you know of any research that discusses the post-surgery results, including the degree to which symptoms are reduced and what percent of patients require fur-

SALOME'S STARS

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Keep an open mind about a suggestion you see as unworkable. Give it a chance to prove itself one way or another. The results could surprise both supporters and detractors. TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) News about an upcoming venture causes you to make some last-minute adjustments in your plans. But the extra work will pay off, as you come to learn more about the potential benefits opening up. GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) A more positive aspect grows out of your determination to reach your immediate goals. Continue to keep your focus sharp and on target by steering clear of petty quarrels and other pesky problems. CANCER (June 21 to July 22) By act-

ther surgical interventions? It would be informative to know if there are any other options if PT has provided little benefit. -- J.N.U. ANSWER: As physicians, we like to practice evidence-based medicine, but the sad fact is that evidence to help guide us often is lacking, so we are left with our own education, training and clinical experience to make those decisions. In this situation, we have a few studies to help us. The most-cited one, an analysis of two randomized, controlled trials, showed a faster improvement from surgery, but no difference in symptoms one or three years after surgery in the operation group, compared with the medication and physical therapy group. Several more-recent observational trials have shown significant improvement in pain and movement after surgery. The real problem is that a population doesn't go to see a doctor about neck pain -- an individual does, and studies that examine population outcomes can't give precise information about outcomes. Further, these studies don't even apply to some people. For example, progressive weakness is a clear indication for surgery, and people with that complaint wouldn't be considered for the trials. You still

ing as a voice of reason, you can avoid adding to an already turbulent situation. You might have to shout over the tumult, but your words ultimately will be heard and heeded. LEO (July 23 to August 22) The possibility of a new acquisition always makes those Leonine eyes light up. But be careful that what you see is what you want. Appearances often can be deceiving. VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) No matter how much you might feel that you're in the right, resist saying anything that could reignite a still-unresolved situation. Let the matter drop, and move on. LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) Help with a personal problem comes from an unexpected source. You also find workplace pressures easing. Use this period of calm to restore your spent energies. SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) You might have to share the credit for that project you're working on. But there'll be enough credit to go around,

require an experienced surgeon to give you the best information he or she can about your condition. It stands to reason that the more severe the pain and restrictions on activity, the more likely surgery is to help. Back surgery really should be contemplated only by people with moderate to severe symptoms, and those who recognize that, despite the best care, sometimes surgery does not help and, rarely, can make things worse. DEAR DR. ROACH: I have heard of a number of different things to help acid reflux. Does raising the head of your bed fit into that category, and if so, by how much? -- T.E.D. ANSWER: Yes, raising the head of the bed can reduce symptoms of acid reflux. The traditional method is a brick or two under the head of the bed, but a wedge-shaped pillow works too. Using lots of regular pillows usually does not. When we sleep, any acid that gets passed backward (refluxed) from the stomach into the esophagus stays there for a long time, since neither gravity nor the swallow reflex helps it down. With the head elevated, there is some gravity acting against reflux and getting it back into the stomach.

and your efforts will be recognized and rewarded. SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) Details need to be dealt with before you can move on to another area. Make sure you don't leave any loose ends that could later cause everything to unravel. CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) News about a change in the workplace carries with it a challenge you could find difficult to resist. Check it out. It could be what you've been waiting for. AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) Allowing your artistic nature full expression will help restore your spirits and will put you in the mood to take on that new career challenge. A Libra creates excitement. PISCES (February 19 to March 20) Expect to happily plunge right into a hectic social whirl starting at week's end. Your aspects favor new friendships as well as the strengthening of old relationships.

King Crossword

ACROSS

1 Do as you're told

5 A cont.

8 Old fogey

12 Geometry measure

13 Born

14 Divisible by two

15 Soared

17 Choose the best

18 Japanese pond carp

19 With resolution

21 Twelve

24 Highway division

25 Saharan

26 Demonstrated, as when on strike

30 Chaps

31 Chess wins

32 Consumed

33 Sank a billiard ball

35 Caspian feeder

36 Addict

37 William Tell's target

38 Formosa, today

41 Annoy

42 — Major

43 Fined for speeding, e.g.

48 Indonesian island

49 High-arc shot

50 Basin accessory

51 Help in a crime

52 "Tasty!"

53 Annoyingly slow

DOWN

1 Rowing tool

2 Sis' counterpart

3 Common

4 Talked on and on

5 Opposed

6 Lawyer's payment

7 Clearly

8 Edict

9 Egg

10 Farmer's home?

11 Sans siblings

16 A billion years

20 Tattoo-parlor supply

21 Moist

22 Sandwich cookie

23 Brass component

24 Metric measure

26 Obviously

27 Rainout cover

28 Common Latin abbr.

29 Strike from

31 Smaller plateau

34 Persian Gulf nation

35 Maintenance

37 Noah's boat

38 Big brass instrument

39 Bedouin

40 — of Capri

41 Cold War weapon (Abbr.)

44 Debt notice

45 Pair

46 "A mouse!"

47 Parched

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King Crossword

Answers

Solution time: 21 mins.

OBEY AFR DODO
AREA NEE EVEN
ROCKETED CULL
KOI FIRMLY
DOZEN LANE
ARID PICKETED
MEN MATES ATE
POCKETED URAL
USER APPLE
TAIWAN IRK
URSA TICKETED
BALI LOB EWER
ABET YUM POKY

Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps

YOU NEED SOME GOOD SHIRTS. TO THE NORMAL WORLD GOOD SHIRTS DON'T HAVE TOUR DATES ON THEM.

Siuslaw News

READ IT TODAY!