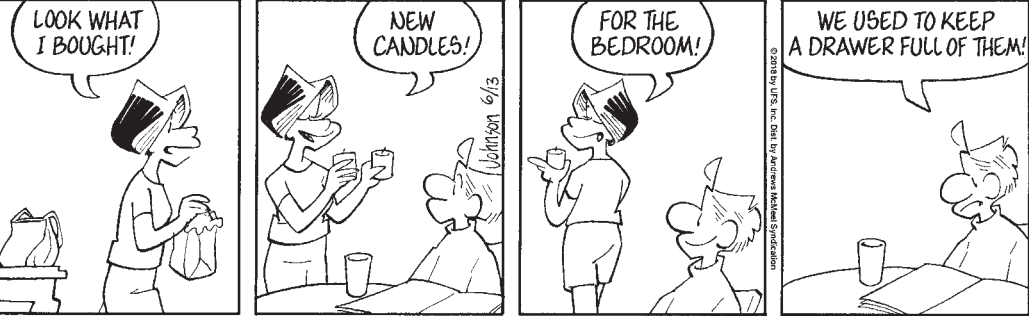
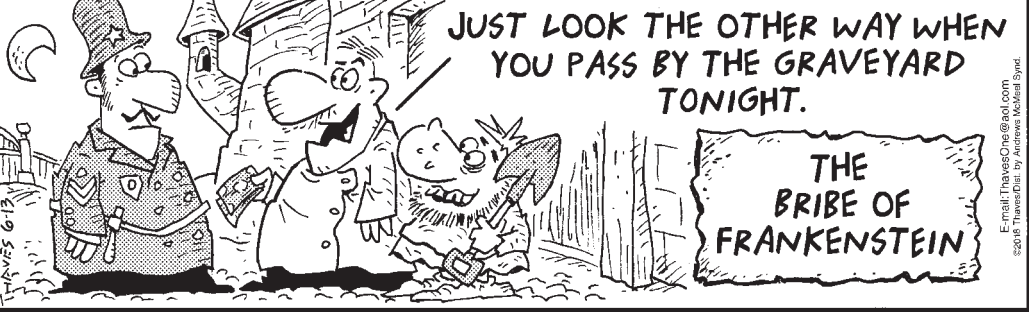


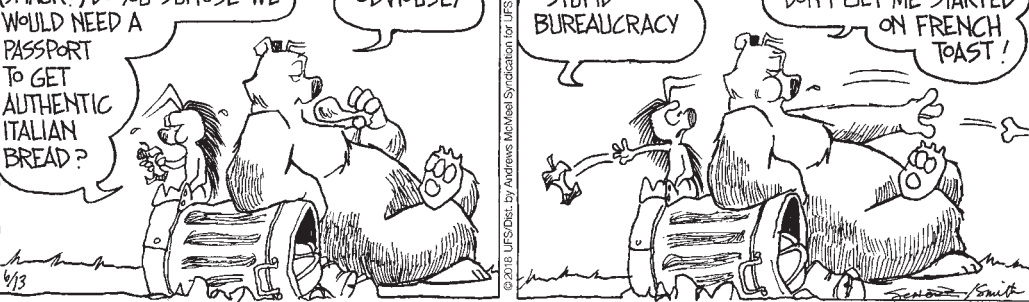
ARLO AND JANIS® by Jimmy Johnson



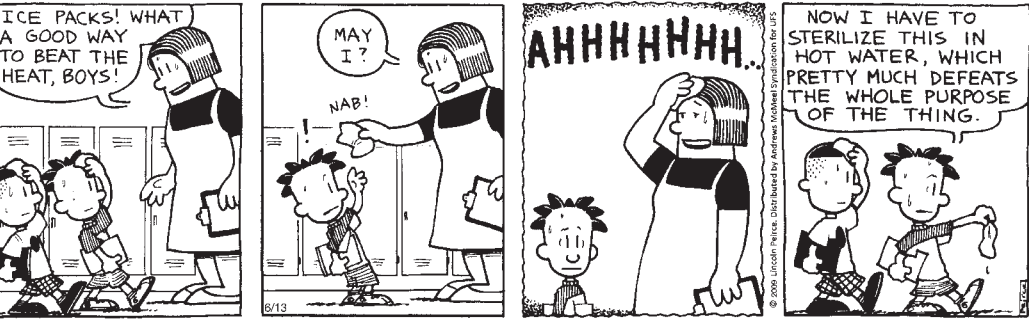
FRANK & ERNEST® by Bob Thaves



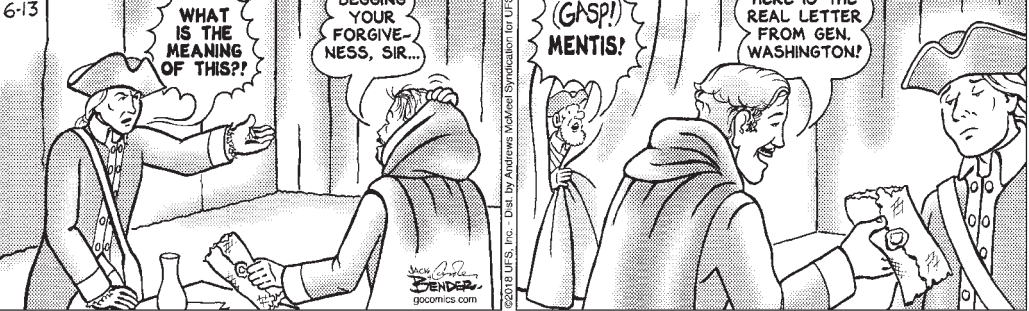
THE GRIZZWELLS® by Bill Schorr



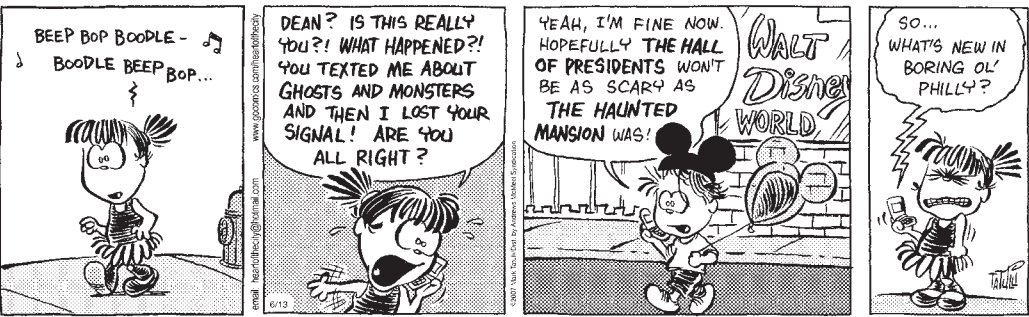
BIG NATE® by Lincoln Peirce



ALLEY OOP by Jack and Carole Bender



HEART OF THE CITY by Mark Tatulli



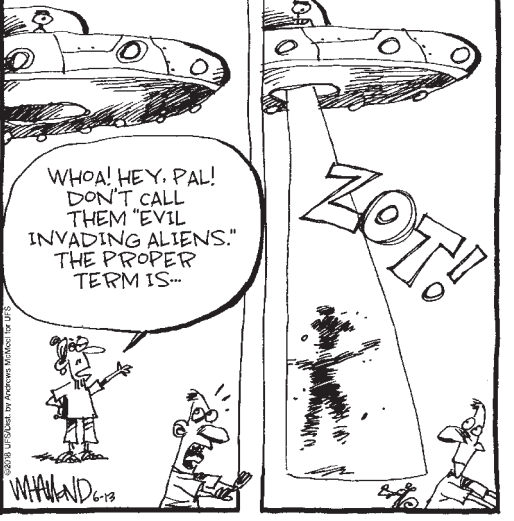
THE BORN LOSER™ by Art & Chip Sansom



HERMAN® by Jim Unger



REALITY CHECK® by Dave Whamond



SENSE AND SENSITIVITY  
By Harriette Cole

Modern relationships  
don't require a label

DEAR HARRIETTE: I have been seeing this guy for 10 months now. We get along great, and I have completely fallen in love with him. I think he feels the same way about me, but we have yet to say the words "I love you" to each other.

He does not refer to me as his girlfriend, and I do not refer to him as my boyfriend. My friends and family think this is very abnormal because of how long we've been an item. What is your take on my situation? Is this a huge red flag?

and I enjoyed baby-sitting. My employers paid me in cash.

This morning, when I checked the amount, I realized they underpaid me for the amount of time I was there. I'm a little confused, because we went over my rate prior to last night. How do I bring up the uncomfortable topic of money to people I just met?

-- Underpaid Worker, Southampton, New York

DEAR UNDERPAID WORKER: I'm sure you already know that the biggest mistake you made was to leave without counting your money first. This was a business transaction, and it's normal that you would check your fee before walking out the door. Since you didn't do that, the situation is more awkward than necessary.

The best approach now is an innocent -- but direct -- one. Contact the family immediately, and tell them that when you got home and counted the money, you realized that they had not paid you the full amount that you had agreed upon. Say that perhaps they miscounted. Then remind them of the hourly rate that you agreed upon and how many hours you worked. Apologize for not counting the money when they gave it to you. Hopefully they will apologize and give you the balance right away. If not, you will have to decide if you want to work for them again. If you do, be crystal clear about the fee before you begin.

(Harriette Cole is a stylist and founder of DREAMLEAPERS, an initiative to help people access and activate their dreams. You can send questions to askharriette@harriettecole.com or c/o Andrews McMeel Syndication, 1130 Walnut St., Kansas City, MO 64106.)

DEAR HARRIETTE: I baby-sat for a family last night for the first time. A couple of weeks ago, I met the parents to discuss my hourly salary and the kids' schedule. Everything went well,

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS

1 Merger or buyout

5 Cart

10 Open to all

12 Harm

13 Moonshot mission

14 Lets loose

15 Comedian Jay

16 "Sister Act" role

18 Make after taxes

19 Type of movie

23 Devotee's suffix

26 Stooze with bangs

27 Prez's second

30 Working cat

32 Excuse

34 Inventor's quest

35 Maria

36 Northern Iraqi

37 African antelope

38 Off-road wheels

39 Tycoons' homes

42 Bilko's rank

45 Teahouse attire

46 Woods insect

50 "The Rocky — Picture Show"

53 Knitting tool

55 Familiarize

56 Breme or trirame

57 Office subs

58 Coral formation

DOWN

1 Mislead

2 Poet's black

3 Let

4 Mae West role

5 Whey-faced

6 Oz. or lb.

7 Profit

8 Pointed arch

9 Bird shelter

10 Buddy

11 Fraternize

Answer to Previous Puzzle

TUBER

AKITAS

BECA

LPN

PIC

ASHES

ANA

SUBZER

TRIOS

PHANTOM

RENO

OLAF

YDS

SCARF

SWISS

WARM

CACHES

ALCOTT

PET

LAD

VENI

WINGS

IRRA

LAY

MLB

EERIER

DRESSY

SAUCE

View from an oasis

17 Sporty truck

20 Revises

21 Insulation meas. (hyph.)

22 Orchid-loving Wolfe

23 Brat

24 Saturate

25 Dance wear

28 — St. Vincent Millay

29 Hitching —

31 Desiccated

32 Huffing and puffing

33 Autumn mo.

37 Shoot the breeze

40 Civil wrong

41 Stone pillar

42 Attempt

43 Skirt panel

44 Lace or ribbons

47 Inactive

48 Sheet-music symbol

49 Low island

51 Workout unit

52 Switch positions

54 Corn unit

Want more puzzles? Check out the "Just Right Crossword Puzzles" books at QuillDriverBooks.com

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