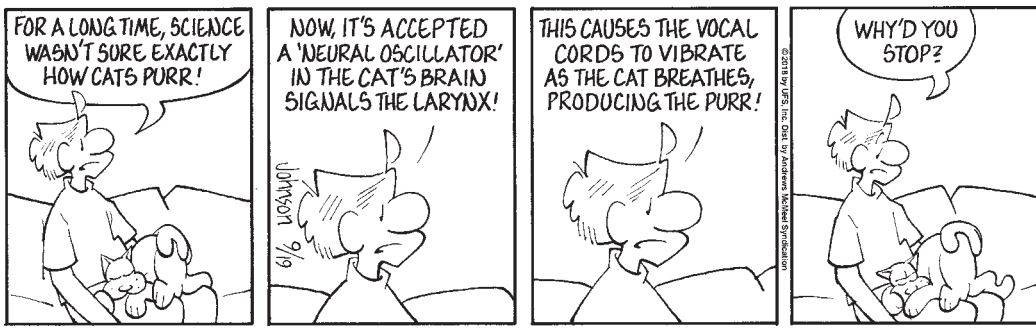


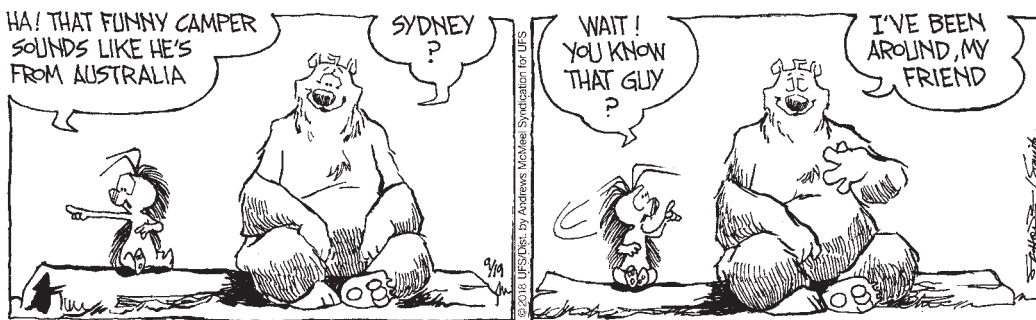
ARLO AND JANIS® by Jimmy Johnson



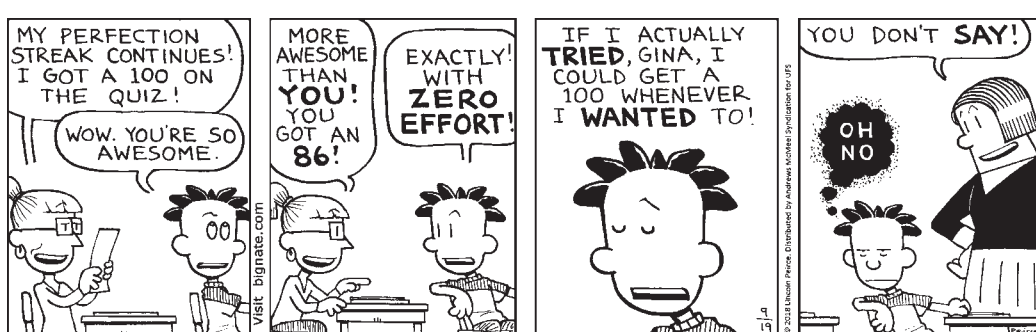
FRANK & ERNEST® by Bob Thaves



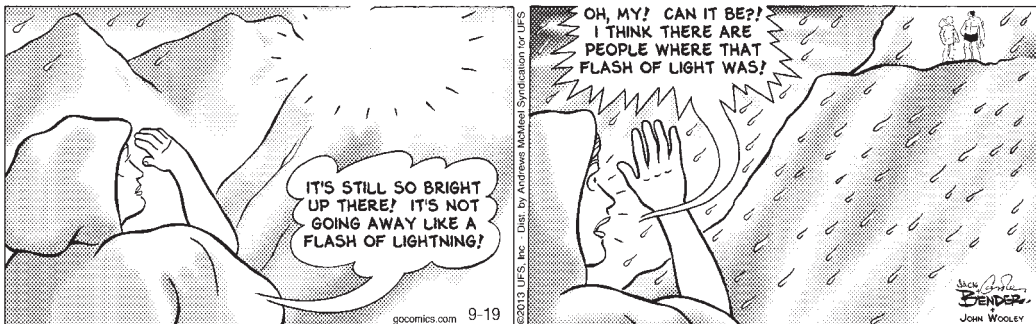
THE GRIZZWELLS® by Bill Schorr



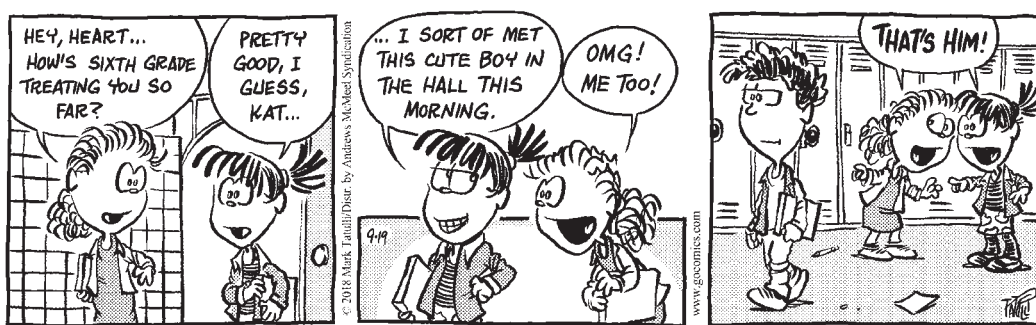
BIG NATE® by Lincoln Peirce



ALLEY OOP by Jack and Carole Bender



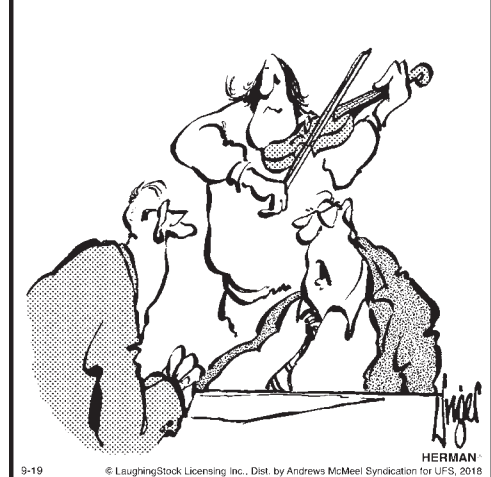
HEART OF THE CITY by Mark Tatulli



THE BORN LOSER™ by Art & Chip Sansom



HERMAN® by Jim Unger



REALITY CHECK® by Dave Whamond



SENSE AND SENSITIVITY

By Harriette Cole

Mother worries for sheltered daughter

DEAR HARRIETTE: I am worried about my daughter. She is headed to high school -- a large school compared to the one she attended for the last eight years. She has largely been sheltered, even though we do talk about what goes on in the world and how she should take care of herself.

My daughter just told me that a friend of hers from camp was at a party hosted by a close friend of my daughter's, and she was given a spiked drink. She had asked for seltzer and thought that's what she was given (it was a clear drink). She didn't identify a strange taste, but she ended up being rushed to the hospital and having her stomach pumped. She had consumed something that made her sick. I often tell my daughter not to take drinks from strange people, but this happened at her good friend's home. Can you provide better precautions that I can suggest to my daughter? I know I have to let her become a bit independent, but I want to keep her safe.

— No Alcohol Zone, Jackson, Mississippi

DEAR NO ALCOHOL ZONE: As a parent, you must remember that every challenging moment can become a teaching moment. Sadly, your daughter's friend's experience presents as one of those moments. What I teach my 14-year-old daughter is that when she is at a party -- even when it's at a friend's home -- she should not drink anything that she did not pour. She should open her own cans. When she puts a drink down on a counter and walks away, that drink is no longer hers. Vigilance is required for safety now, even among friends.

You should also tell your daughter that it is not worth it to experiment with alcohol -- or drugs. Too many of her peers have been harmed as a result of what started as an innocent exploration.

DEAR HARRIETTE: I have a new colleague who started off being friendly but has ended up being unbearably. She lives in my neighborhood, so before I figured out that she was too much for me to manage as a friend, I took exercise walks with her. We sometimes went to the gym together. We talk on the phone, and it's always interesting, but she is pretty negative. She dreams about projects she wants to pursue, but right after discussing that, she complains about everything else in her life. I am a peaceful person and realize that I don't want to hear all of the complaints, especially first thing in the morning. I don't want to cut her out of my life altogether, but I do need to limit our interaction. How can I do that without hurting her feelings?

— Limited Engagement, Boston

DEAR LIMITED ENGAGEMENT: Without feeling guilty, you can curb your morning fitness routines with this woman. Just tell her that now that fall has arrived, you want to go back to your core routine, which is solo and contemplative, so you want to go alone.

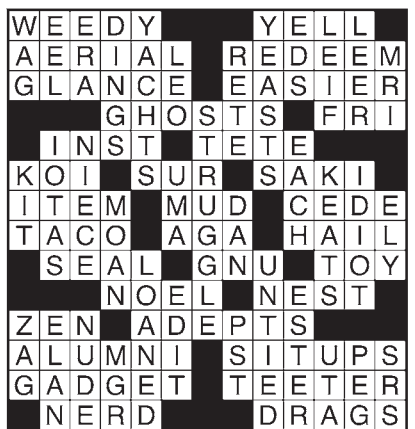
Choose specific time periods that work for you to spend time with this woman. This doesn't have to be weekly. It can be as you feel comfortable. You can also stop her when she starts going down a negative path. You can literally ask her to refrain from going to that dark place. Tell her you enjoy her company, but when she goes negative, it makes you uncomfortable.

(Harriette Cole is a lifestyleist 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.)

CROSSWORDS

- ACROSS**
- Elbow
 - Chest muscles
 - Comic-strip bark
 - Horrid-tasting
 - Villain's work
 - Neptune's kingdom
 - Affirm
 - Took away
 - Sweet drinks
 - Churns up
 - Med. plan
 - Smog monitor
 - Not real
 - Theater walkways
 - Golfer — Alcott
 - Planted
 - Pie-cooling place
 - DEA operative
 - Dregs
 - Brisk knock
 - Cured
 - Stays fresh
 - Petrol
 - Fragrant tree
 - Earnings
 - Addles
 - Become insufficient (2 wds.)
 - Cheeky
 - Rollover subj.
 - Buffalo's lake
 - Salver
 - Edge a doily
 - Parakeet treat
 - Congel
- DOWN**
- Jazz jargon
 - Baldwin of "30 Rock"
 - Ship bunks
 - Director
 - Almodovar
 - Festive nights
 - Spanish hero
 - EI —

Answer to Previous Puzzle



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

