

DEAR ABBY | JEANNE PHILLIPS

Alcohol is mom's solace for life going nowhere

DEAR ABBY: My mother is in her early 40s. She has four children, including me. I am married and have two children of my own. Still living at home are my brother, 17, a sister, 14, and the 1-year-old baby, "Michelle." Michelle is from another guy.

Mom purposely got pregnant, knowing that "Tom" didn't want a child. Needless to say, they are no longer together, and Tom has nothing to do with Michelle. Mom is having problems with my brother and sister. They choose not to listen and have been in trouble with the law.

My mom is no longer working. She spends her days with the baby. She recently let slip that she wishes she could just die. She wants to commit suicide because she is just so depressed. No work, no child care, the kids don't listen, and she just isn't getting anywhere.

She said the only reason she won't do it is because she doesn't want to leave me with the burden of caring for her baby. I'm attending college, my husband works, and my girls are in school.

I didn't know what to say, and Mom has now turned to alcohol. She's a great mother; she just has her hands full. I don't know if she knows she has a drinking problem, and I don't want to say it because I

know she'll take offense. My little sister is not in any danger, but what can I do or say to help my mom? Oh, yes, I support my little sister already -- diapers, clothing and love. Please help me. -- DAUGHTER IN SANTA MARIA, CALIF.

DEAR DAUGHTER: When people start talking about ending their lives, that's the time to see they get medical and psychological attention. I don't know your mother, but she could be suffering from post-partum depression. (She could also simply be overwhelmed right now.) The first step in getting help for your mother is to get her to an internist or family practitioner. If she doesn't have one, then her OB/GYN would be a good place to start.

If she can't handle your brother, then perhaps he should stay with his father for a while, or some other older male in the family. If that's not feasible because he's already in trouble with the law, he may need to be made a ward of the court. Not pleasant -- but better than a life of crime begun as a teenager.

Once your mother's depression is under control, she may be less inclined to drink her troubles away. But if she continues drowning her sorrows, then Alcoholics Anonymous could help her. But only when

she's ready to admit she has a problem. (They're in the phone book.)

DEAR ABBY: I have been dating a wonderful woman for the last two years. We are trying to make it permanent, but we have one sticking point. She has several men friends, some from past relationships, that she still sees casually. She insists on spending weekends alone with them, either at their home or at her summer house in the country.

I feel this is inappropriate for someone in a serious relationship. She says "I don't trust her," and we cannot have a relationship unless I get over this attitude. Is she right? Am I being unreasonable? -- CONFUSED IN FLORIDA

DEAR CONFUSED: Not in my opinion. And I wonder how this "wonderful woman" would feel if the shoe was on the other foot.

While I see nothing wrong with old friends -- and even people who were once romantic -- sharing a meal together once in a while, I draw the line at weekends alone together. But then again, I'm not in favor of "open" relationships, either. My advice to you is to rethink making this relationship permanent.

YOUR HEALTH | DR. DONOHUE

Illness that struck Dudley Moore is recognized

DEAR DR. DONOHUE: Will you enlighten me on my husband's latest diagnosis -- progressive supranuclear palsy? Three years ago he was diagnosed with dementia. We recently changed to another neurologist, and he made this present diagnosis. Please address it. -- H.S.

ANSWER: Progressive supranuclear palsy -- PSP -- is being recognized with greater frequency. Dudley Moore, the star of the popular movie "Arthur," suffered from it, and he helped give it the recognition it deserves.

Frequently, PSP begins with a person losing his or her sense of balance. In addition, the eyes cannot turn downward, so the combination of balance loss and inability to see the ground make falls inevitable. Muscles become rigid, as they do in Parkinson's disease, for which it is often mistaken. Personality changes are common. Dementia symptoms such as apathy, poor judgment and slow thinking

are other parts of the PSP picture. Memory, however, is often unaffected.

The cause has not been ascertained. Its name comes about because the part of the brain that controls eye movement is affected. That section of the brain lies in nuclei that have a direct input into eye-muscle function. Nuclei are nests of nerve cells that have a distinctive job. The area of brain above those nuclei, the "supranuclear" area, greatly affects the eye-movement nuclei, so a disturbance there influences eye movement.

There is no specific medicine for PSP. Drugs used in Parkinson's disease are often prescribed. If eye movement is majorly impaired, glasses with prisms permit downward vision even if the eyes won't move in that direction. Upward eye movement also becomes affected in time.

Your husband and all PSP patients should contact The Society for Progressive

Supranuclear Palsy for timely information and help. You can reach the society at 1-800-457-4777. Canadians must dial 1-866-457-4777. The Web site is www.psp.org.

DEAR DR. DONOHUE: In preparation for the hurricane season, everyone stocks a large supply of batteries and stores them in the refrigerator.

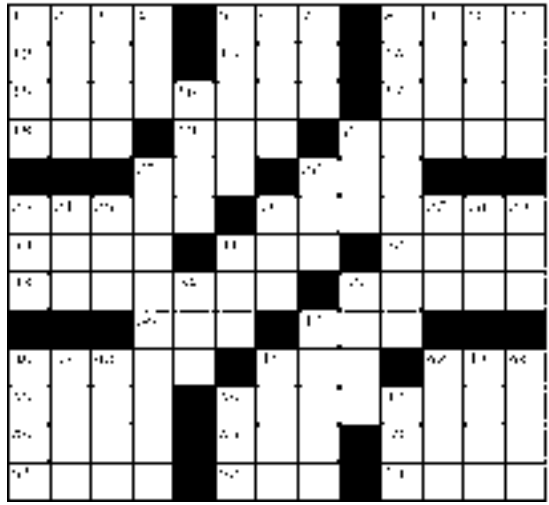
Can this practice have an adverse effect on food and one's health? -- B.M.

ANSWER: Not that I know of. I keep batteries in the refrigerator even though I have been told it doesn't prolong their life. At least I can find them.

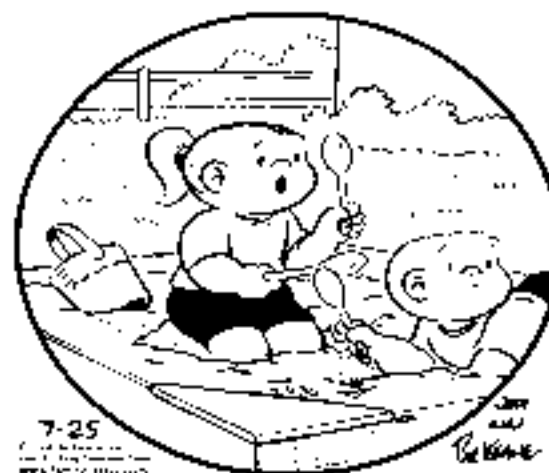
Dr. Donohue regrets that he is unable to answer individual letters, but he will incorporate them in his column whenever possible. Readers may write him or request an order form of available health newsletters at P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475

CROSSWORD | EUGENE SHEFFER

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| ACROSS | DOWN | DOWN | DOWN |
| 1. Dignity | 35. Polar explorer | 1. Contemptible | 21. Enslaved |
| 5. Artifice | 36. Directly | 2. Galls | 22. News pack |
| 8. Just away | 37. Spelt down | 3. Huber | 23. Theatrical |
| 12. Melancholy | 38. Ficcione | 4. Librarian | 24. Main |
| 13. Lament | 41. Disbapt | 5. Get | 25. Darned |
| 14. Weep | 42. Charming | 6. Frivolous | 26. Ooze |
| 15. Lament | 45. Modern | 7. Become | 27. Man |
| 17. Found | 46. Dury | 8. Temporarily | 28. Make up |
| 18. Career | 48. James | 9. Rice | 29. Balm |
| 19. Peace | 49. Town | 10. Ganges | 31. Amey |
| 20. Mar | 50. Pre-empt | 11. October | 32. Golly |
| 21. Halcyon | 51. Tackle | 12. Chivalry | 33. Golly |
| 22. Spout | 52. Small | 13. Chivalry | 34. Golly |
| 23. Dish | 53. Box | 14. Chivalry | 35. Golly |
| 24. Party | 54. Tackle | 15. Chivalry | 36. Golly |
| 25. Party | 55. Tackle | 16. Chivalry | 37. Golly |
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| 68. Party | 98. Tackle | 59. Chivalry | 80. Golly |
| 69. Party | 99. Tackle | 60. Chivalry | 81. Golly |
| 70. Party | 100. Tackle | 61. Chivalry | 82. Golly |



FAMILY CIRCUS | BILL KEANE



"But you hardly ever use these silver spoons, 'cept on special occasions."

PEANUTS | CHARLES SHULZ



HOROSCOPE | JACQUELINE BIGAR

- FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY, JULY 26, 2006**
- ARIES (March 21-April 19) ★★★★★** Listen to your imagination, no matter what project you take on. Tap into this creative source with conversations, interactions and anything else you feel is relative. A key person hears you and chimes in. Let others in. Tonight: Midweek break.
- TAURUS (April 20-May 20) ★★★** Stay centered. Your creativity flows as a result. A key associate or partner might make different choices than he or she has in a while. You become optimistic and happy, especially concerning family and personal matters. Others react to your positive vibes. Tonight: Out and about.
- GEMINI (May 21-June 20) ★★★★★** Reach out to others, especially if you feel a haze around your actions. You will want feedback; others will want feedback as well. By being supportive, you gain an ally. Discussions, obviously, are important. Tonight: Chat up a storm.
- CANCER (June 21-July 22) ★★★★★** Expenses seem to run away. You might want to relax. Revamp your plans, and you will feel better. Someone clearly cares a lot about you. Romance will flourish if you relax. Children respond to your efforts. What you do works. Tonight: Curb risk-taking.
- LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) ★★★★★** Your personality draws a lot of attention. Your creativity and high energy point you in a new direction. Allow greater wildness into your life. Your emotional instincts guide you. A hunch could prove to be a winner. Tonight: A big smile.
- VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) ★★★** Take your time with a decision. Friendship plays a big role in what occurs. You might want to think twice about what happens, especially if it means revamping your plans. You are anchored. Tonight: In the limelight.
- LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) ★★★★★** Revamp plans with an eye to zeroing in on what you want. Think carefully about a person you put on a pedestal. You might want to rethink a decision that affects your finances and perceptions. Success heads in your direction. Tonight: Follow the crowd.
- SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) ★★★★★** Take a stand, if need be, remaining confident despite what might be happening. Your ability to adjust to different situations proves to be your greatest asset. Good news heads in your direction. Be sensitive to a loved one. Tonight: Out late.
- SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) ★★★★★** You easily could take some twists and turns in the next few days. You might want to gain an overview. Your instincts about a very special person are right-on. Help this person feel more secure. Confirm meetings and appointments. Tonight: Touch base with someone at a distance.
- CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) ★★★★★** Others work with you and help create more of what you want. Be positive about opportunities and what is heading in your direction. Friendships could enlighten and help you. Good news heads your way. Tonight: Curb your spending.
- AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) ★★★★★** Your perspective could be off, yet you find it very pleasing. You'll get what you want by changing directions and adjusting. Your work and nurturing help pry loose what you want. Be more aware of your professional image. Tonight: Follow another's lead.
- PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) ★★★** Plunge into a task with all your energy. Curb a tendency to overthink or cause yourself a problem. A positive attitude breeds good news. Your imagination allows greater creativity. Go for new opportunities. Tonight: Know when to stop.

7-25 CRYPTOQUIP

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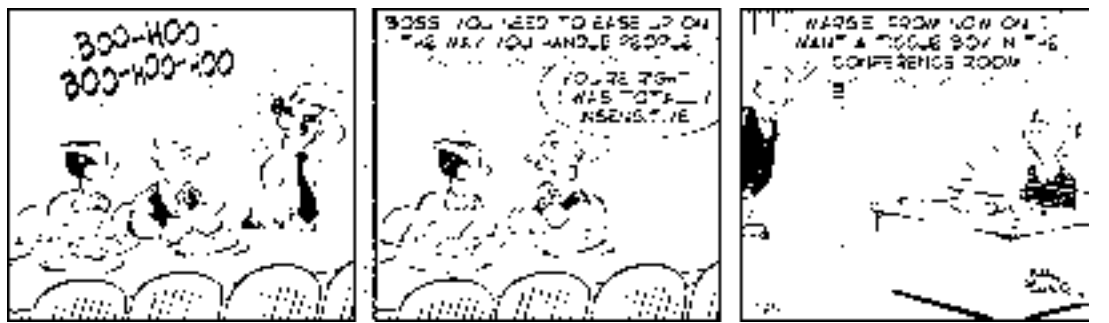
Saturday's Cryptopuzzle: TWO WORDS BY A GROUP OF BIGWIGS FOR A PROMINENT ATLANTA UNIVERSITY IS AN EMORY BOARD

Today's Cryptopuzzle Clue: Y equals M

BEETLE BAILEY | MORT WALKER



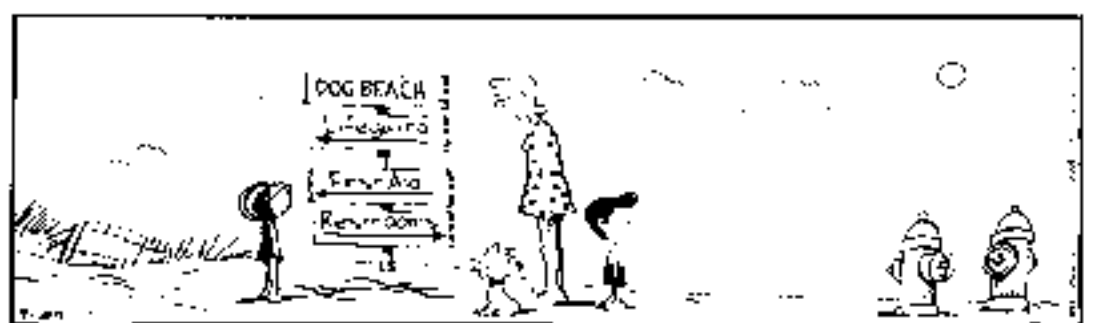
BLONDIE | YOUNG & DRAKE



GARFIELD | JIM DAVIS



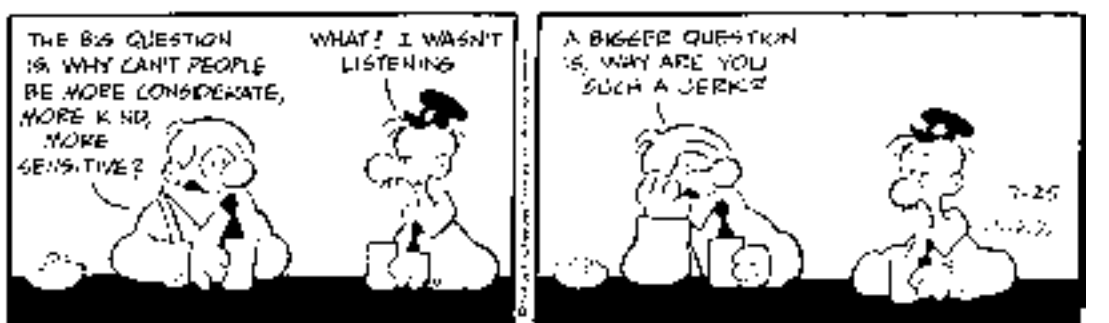
GRAND AVENUE | STEVE BREEN



MARVIN | TOM ARMSTRONG



SAM AND SILO | DUMAS



SNUFFY SMITH | FRED LASSWELL



ZITS | BORGMAN & SCOTT

