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# Comics&Advice

The Ottawa Herald

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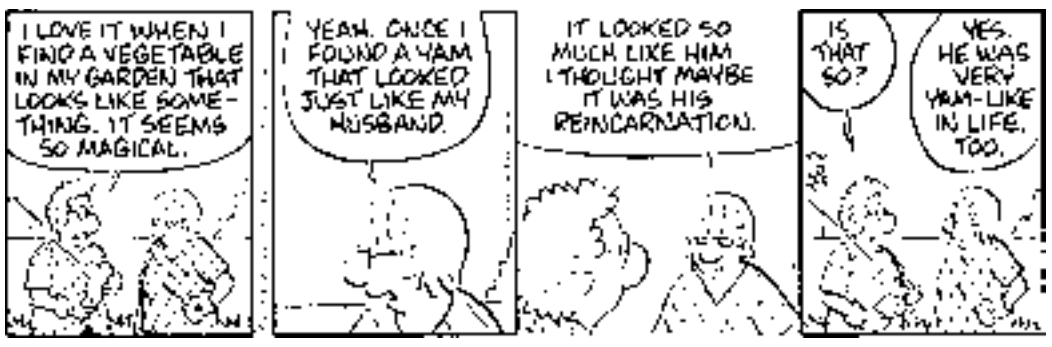
### Blondie

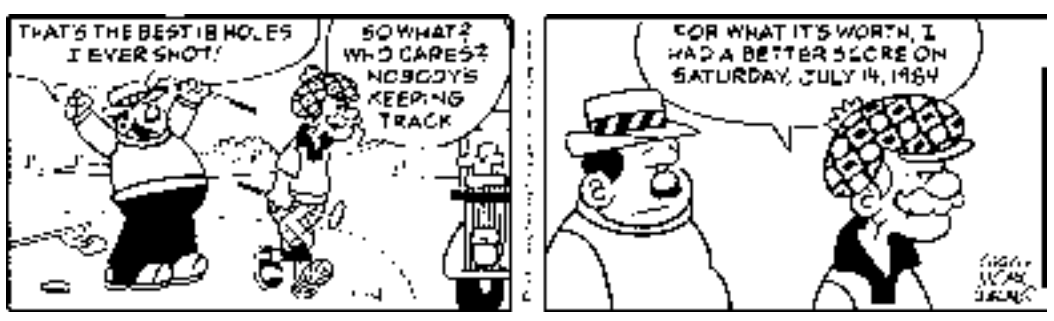
### Pickles




### Garfield

### Classic Peanuts

### Beetle Bailey

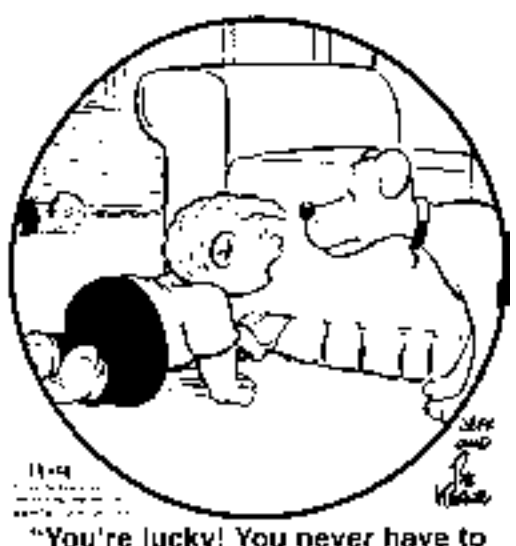



### Baby Blues

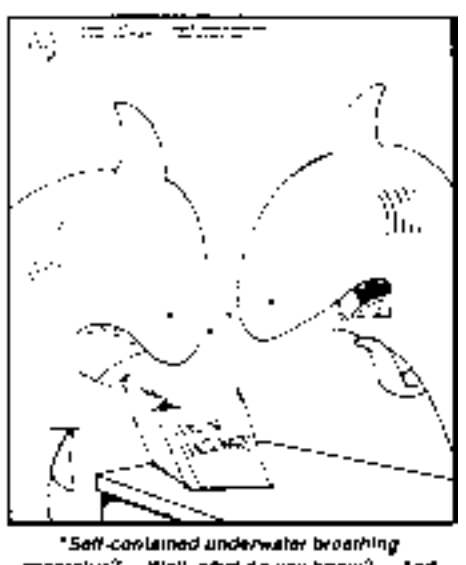
### For Better or for Worse

### Zits

### Family Circus




### Rubes




# Addiction drives wedge in family

**Dear Annie:** I'm 13 years old and have a younger brother. My dad is addicted to gambling. To make matters worse, he doesn't work much, either. Not that it matters. Even when he worked hard, he lost all of the money gambling.

My parents recently got a divorce. Dad is practically broke, so he still lives in our tiny apartment with us. He's not the best father in the world. He never comes to any of our school events and missed my brother's grade-school graduation. He asks his own children for gas money. He blames all his problems on my mother. Because of him, we are struggling financially. Dad ruined Mom's excellent credit and took a lot of her money.

Dad always promises to do better, but never does. He used to pretend to go to work when he really went to gamble at a casino. Now he mostly stays home, watching TV, being lazy. My mom is going to kick him out because she thinks he is hopeless. I love my dad a lot, but I'm starting to agree with her.

**ANNIE'S MAILBOX**

Your Problems

Is there anything that can help? — Worried Daughter

**Dear Worried:** This must be a difficult time for everyone in your household, including your father.

He has a serious addiction, and it is hard to overcome. However your parents decide to handle it, you are not responsible for what happens, and you shouldn't feel stuck in the middle.

Please talk to your school guidance counselor about this and suggest your mother contact Gam-Anon (gam-anon.org), an organization for those who are affected by a compulsive gambler. The address is P.O. Box 157, Whitestone, NY 11357.

**Aloha Annie:** You have printed a few letters recently about people in debt. Please let your readers know about Debtors Anonymous (debtorsanonymous.org). Compulsive debt is like any other compulsive disease. Trying to fix the symptoms (credit counseling, etc.) is only a short-term solution.

Our Web site lists the 12 signs of compulsive debting. The first is being unclear about your financial situation — not knowing account balances or monthly expenses. And, like other 12-step programs, DA has no dues or fees and the only requirement is a desire to stop going into debt. Mahalo. — Jerry in Hawaii

**Dear Jerry:** Many thanks for the useful information.

*Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to anniesmailbox@comcast.net, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, P.O. Box 118190, Chicago, IL 60611.*

# Don't forget treats for the troops

**Dear Heloise:** Our church group has decided to start sending baked goods as care packages to military personnel in Iraq. We brainstormed several ideas, such as shoe boxes, etc., but found that the best way to send a cake to anyone overseas is to bake the cake in a small, metal coffee can. After baking, remove the cake to cool. Then repack it in the can, put on the plastic lid the coffee came with and pack the can in a postal box. Soldiers tell us that they love getting cakes this way for two reasons:

1. The cake arrives in one piece

**HELOISE**

Hints

2. The cake can be stored easily, with an airtight lid, if it's not eaten all at once. — Gwen, via e-mail

How wonderful to hear that your group is sending home-baked goodies to our troops! Nothing beats a treat from the heart and kitchen!

Your group deserves a big Heloise hug, and I know the troops who receive the goodies are appreciative, too.

I'd love to hear hints from other readers who send treats to troops. — Heloise

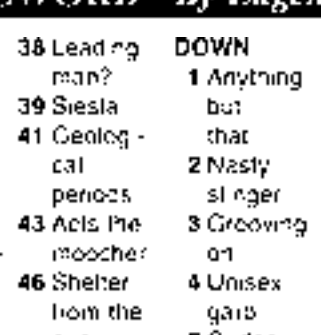
*Send a money-saving or timesaving hint to Heloise, P.O. Box 795000, San Antonio, TX 78279-5000, or you can fax it to (210) 435-6473 or e-mail it to Heloise@Heloise.com. I can't answer your letter personally but will use the best hints received in my column.*

## CROSSWORD *By Eugene Sheffer*

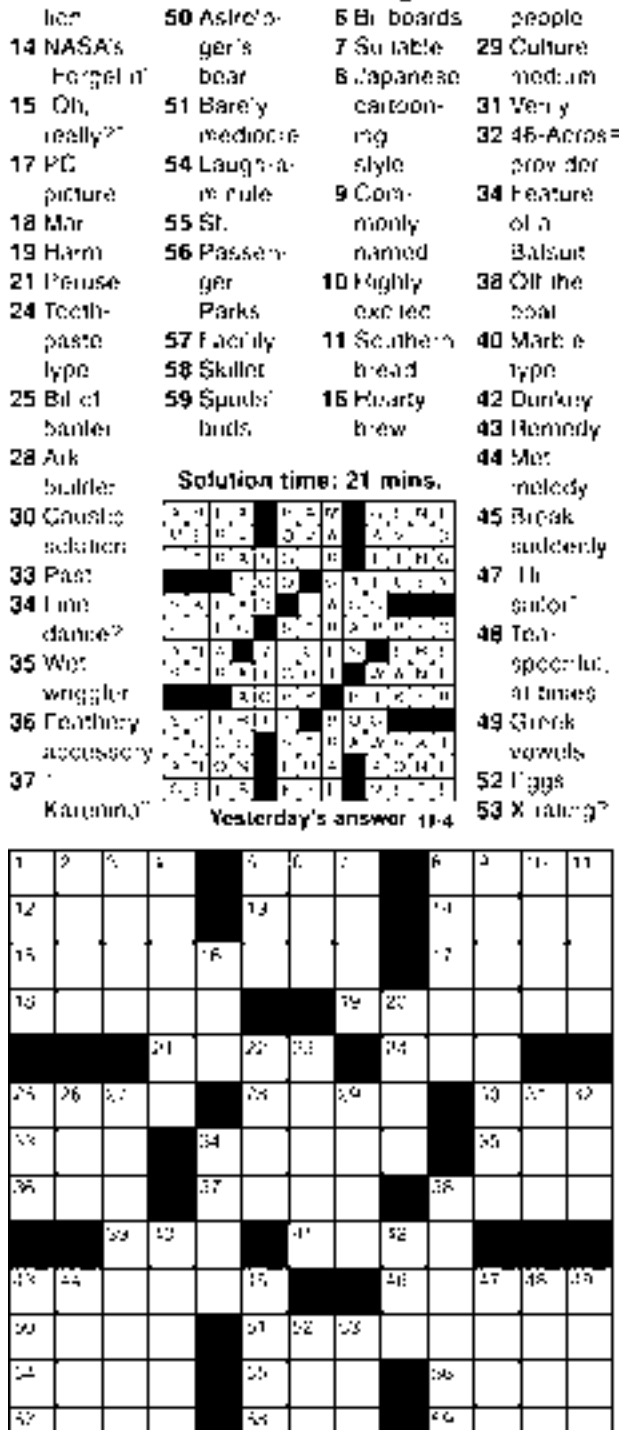
**ACROSS**
1 Foolish son
5 Satchel
8 Without delay acronym
12 A Katzenjammer kid
13 Commotion
14 NASA's Angelo
15 "Oh, really?"
17 PC picture
18 Mar
19 Harm
21 Peruse
24 Toothpaste type
25 Bullet baster
28 Ark builder
30 Crucible solution
33 Past
34 Line dance?
35 Wet wriggler
36 Feathery accessory
37 "___ Kangaroo"
38 Leading man?
39 Siesta
41 Geological periods
43 Acts the moocher
46 Shelter from the sun
50 Astrologer's bear
51 Barely mediocre
54 Laugh-a-minute
55 St.
56 Passenger Parks
57 Facility
58 Skillet
59 Spuds' buds

**DOWN**
1 Anything but that
2 Nasty slinger
3 Grooving on
4 Unisex garb
5 Cudge
6 Billboards
7 Suitable
8 Japanese cartooning style
9 Commonly named
10 Highly excited
11 Southern bread
16 Hearty brew
20 Mideast VIP
22 Shortly
23 "Death Be Not Proud" poet
25 Poke
26 Strain
27 Unspecified people
29 Culture medium
31 Very
32 46-Across provider
34 Feature of a Balsuit
38 Off the boat
40 Marble type
42 Donkey
43 Remedy
44 Met melody
45 Break suddenly
47 "In Sailor"
48 Tear-specific, at times
49 Greek vowels
52 Eggs
53 X rating?

Solution time: 21 mins.



Yesterday's answer 11-4



Coming Up This Week

Vickie Moss
Thursday
*Are We Done Yet?*

Tommy Felts
Thursday
*Voices from the News*

Suzie Eads
Thursday
*Ask the Ebay Queen*

Linda Brown
Thursday
*First Look*

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