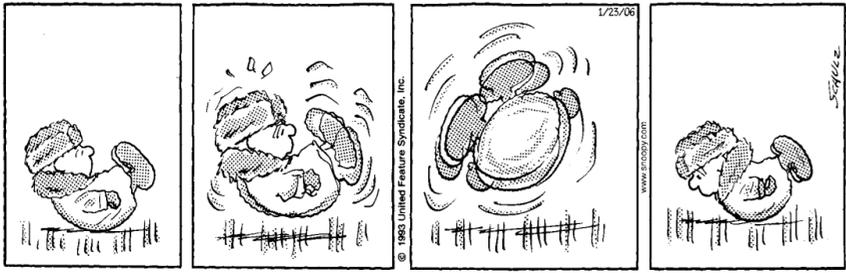


GARFIELD



PEANUTS



ALLEY OOP



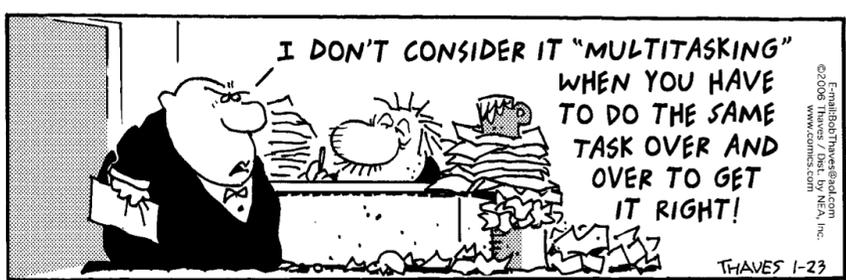
SOUP TO NUTS



THE BORN LOSER



FRANK AND ERNEST



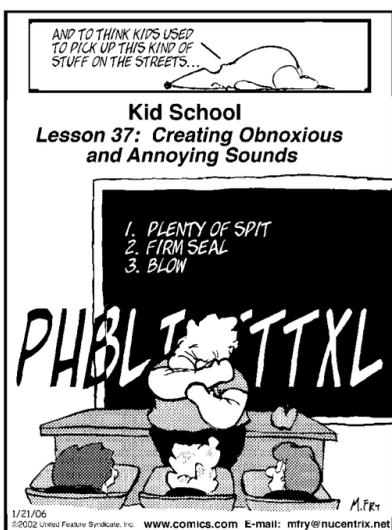
ARLO AND JANIS



DILBERT



COMMITTED



THE FAMILY CIRCUS



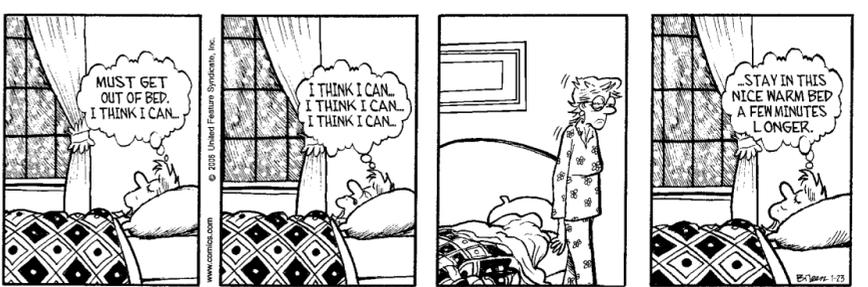
HERMAN



GET FUZZY



GRAND AVENUE



ASTROGRAPH

Your birthday:

Monday, Jan. 23, 2006

In the year ahead, if you put a lot more imagination into satisfying your personal ambitions, these extra efforts will be the ingredients which can bring you the success you're seeking. Without them, things will remain as status quo.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19)

Your peers will have a number of unfavorable things to say about you if you try to take too much credit for something many others played a big part in accomplishing. Humility wins acceptance.

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20)

Everyone is entitled to his or her opinion, but it is not necessarily smart to voice it. Keep this in mind today so you don't overreact when someone expresses a volatile viewpoint contrary to yours.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

Move very cautiously today in your business dealings. What looks like a winner early on could turn out to be anything but due to a number of mistakes that may go undetected.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

Make it a point today not to associate with anyone who doesn't understand the value of teamwork, no matter how much someone may appear to be able to offer. It could be all show.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

Just when you think it is full steam ahead today, neglected, distasteful chores which you've failed to do may rear force you to put aside your plans.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

Do not allow yourself to get involved with groups today that contain a few individuals who make you feel ill at ease.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

It is rarely wise to let an outsider become too involved in your family's personal affairs, and today will be no different. Confine your discussions to those involved or pay the consequences.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

No matter how tempted you are today to level a few choice words at a certain individual who is bugging you, it's best to leave unsaid any harsh comments that could cause a commotion.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23)

Be honest with yourself concerning your financial affairs and do not let anybody talk you into buying something you really can't afford at this time just to make yourself look good.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22)

If you recognize that a close associate is not too satisfied with the way the relationship is going, do all that you can today to establish harmony and accord.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21)

There's a chance that someone might make your day far more difficult for you than is necessary and force you to take measures to either ban this person or cover up for his or her incompetence.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

Be extremely tender when dealing with a touchy friend today, even if you think this person is being overly sensitive or that catering to him or her should be unnecessary. It'll make you look good.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

- 1 Gives in the middle
5 Kickback
8 Literary collection
11 Bona fide
12 Green veggies
14 Popular pet
15 Adventure tale
16 Bend gracefully
17 London lav
18 Warning floats
20 Salting away
22 Dream acronym
23 Applies makeup
24 Gather
27 Timely blessing
29 Brief craze
30 Algae
34 Keeps happening
37 Circus crowd noise
38 Yearn for
39 Tack
41 Modern-speed unit
43 UK part
44 No-goodnik (2 wds.)
46 Furies
49 RR terminal
50 Lira successor
52 Business VIP
54 Long-handled implement
55 Meg or Nolan
56 Mimicked
57 Explosive letters
58 CIA employee
59 Looks sleepy

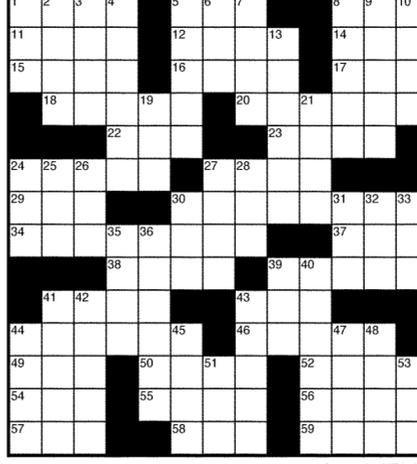
DOWN

- 1 Pigpen frequenter
2 Mosque
3 Expert
4 Latin gentlemen
5 Twitch
6 Above, to Tennyson
7 Snow boots
8 Unrehearsed (hyph.)
9 Midnight opposites
10 Enthralled
13 Follow closely
19 Proposal response
21 Windmill blade
24 Kenya's loc.
25 Busch of old movies
26 Big fuss
27 Broken-off glacier
28 W. Hemisphere pact
30 Nearest star
31 Aurora, to Plato
32 Tiny speck
33 Not he
35 Detective's find
36 Geezer
39 Bikini half
40 Greek sea
41 Majorette's need
42 Get used to
43 Sarcasm
44 Cellar, briefly
45 Fellows
47 World's fair
48 Nursery buy
51 Seance sound
53 Music media

Answer to Previous Puzzle



PUZZLE ENTHUSIASTS: Get more puzzles in "Random House Crossword MegaOmnibus" Vols. 1 & 2.



'Dear Abby' by Pauline Phillips and Jeanne Phillips

Face shoved in cake leaves boy in tears, guests mad

DEAR ABBY: Not long ago, I attended a birthday party for a 5-year-old boy. After the cake was brought out and the birthday song had been sung, the child's face was shoved into his beautiful birthday cake.

The boy cried piteously amidst the roaring laughter of the children and the adults in the crowd.

I, and a few of the other adults, displayed shock, disgust and sympathy for the birthday boy. As if that wasn't enough, his 3-year-old brother was also smeared with the cake and frosting. He, too, burst into tears.

Please give me your thoughts on this. There are other children's birthday parties I will be attending. — DISMAYED GRANDMOTHER, LAREDO, TEXAS

DEAR DISMAYED: I have never found humor at the expense of others funny. I consider it to be cruel, hostile, and a form of bullying.

That a parent would tolerate, much less participate in, the humiliation of his or her child is an appalling breach of trust.

If you truly believe you will be seeing a repeat performance at another birthday party, I wouldn't blame you for not attending, and clearly stating the reason why.

DEAR ABBY: I have been dating "Neil" for two years. My problem is Neil is still in possession of the bridal gown that belonged to his former fiancée. They broke up more than five years ago. She has since married and gone on with her life.

Last March, I finally felt I had a right to ask him to dispose of it, but he still has it. He tells me he is "trying" to get rid of it, but I have seen no real effort. (He said he has offered it for sale but has had no takers.)

Abby, I feel Neil is holding on to a past that's not there. I know he loves me and not her. But I'd feel better if that "reminder" was gone already. Am I wrong? — DESPERATE GIRLFRIEND

DEAR DESPERATE: If I were you, I'd drop the subject for now because you are needlessly turning this into a power struggle. You might succeed in bullying him into getting rid of this sad memento, but what I think you really resent is the emotional investment it represents.

Dear Abby is written by Pauline Phillips and her daughter Jeanne Phillips. Write to Dear Abby at P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.