Language barrier leaves girlfriend out in the cold

DEAR ABBY

DEAR ABBY: I recently started dating one of my graduate school classmates. We come from different cultures, but we get along great and I really like him.

My problem is he's very close to his family, who seem to like me very much, but I always feel left out around them. An example: The nine of us went out to dinner and the whole time they were speaking to each other in their native tongue while I just sat there. Then, after dinner, his parents asked why I was so quiet.

The family speaks English fluently and are otherwise nice to me. When I confronted my boyfriend about it, he said it would be disrespectful for him to speak to his elders in English.

I want a future with this man, but I know it won't work out if I can't be included in his family. Am I wrong to think they should involve me in the conversation? — **OUTSIDER IN NEW YORK**

DEAR OUTSIDER: In light of the fact that everyone knows you don't speak the language, their behavior does seem inconsiderate -- particularly if it's happening often. Perhaps you should speak to them about it and ask to be included in the conversation. An alternative would be to take a crash course in their native tongue so you'll have some idea about what's being said. (And won't they be surprised when you respond!)

One thing about your letter does concern me, however, because it raises a potential red flag. Does your boyfriend's unwillingness to stand up for you foretell a pattern of always deferring to his parents? If that's the case, it could be a source of frustration and conflict for you in the future. Please think about it.

DEAR ABBY: I have been in a steady, committed relationship with my boyfriend, "Carey," for four years. We have discussed our future and have agreed that we want to get married and start a family soon.

As a child, I always dreamed of a big, fancy wedding. Carey, on the other hand, says he doesn't want one. He feels it would be a waste of money. After a lot of discussion, we decided to compromise and have a courthouse wedding followed by a small, simple reception.

My biggest issue is he insists we don't need rings, and he refuses to get me one. Although I have explained that a ring would symbolize our love and life together, and it would mean a great deal to me personally, he won't budge. Now I'm beginning to doubt whether I want to marry him.

What should I do? Am I being superficial? — **CONFUSED ABOUT MARRIAGE**

DEAR CONFUSED: I don't think that wanting a wedding ring is superficial. It's normal. Furthermore, if you have any doubts about marrying this young man, you should put the wedding on hold until the two of you have had premarital counseling. Arguments about how money should be spent have ruined marriages, and it appears the two of you are planets apart on this important issue.

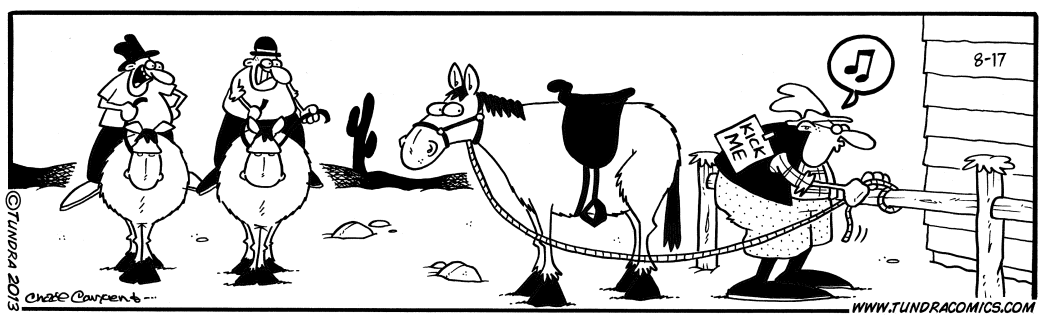
DEAR ABBY: What is proper when opening gift cards with money enclosed? My family has made it a habit for the nieces to open their cards in front of everyone. I feel it should be done in private. — **UNCOMFORTABLE IN PENNSYLVANIA**

DEAR UNCOMFORTABLE: Opening the card is fine. Reading the sentiments inside is also perfectly acceptable. But to reveal the amount of the check or money enclosed is a no-no.

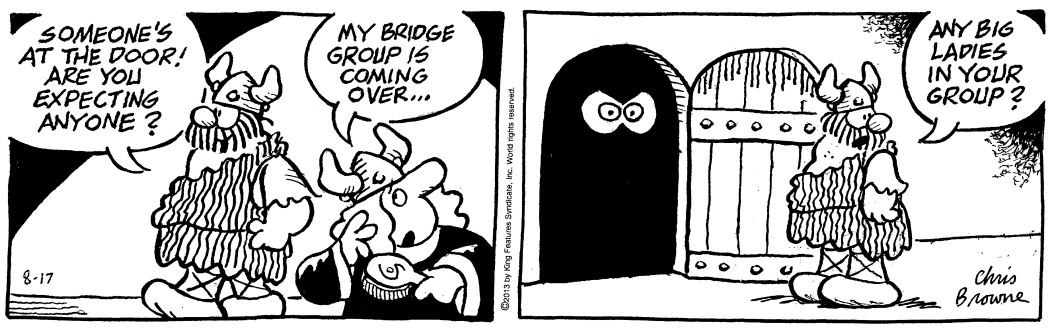
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

COMICS

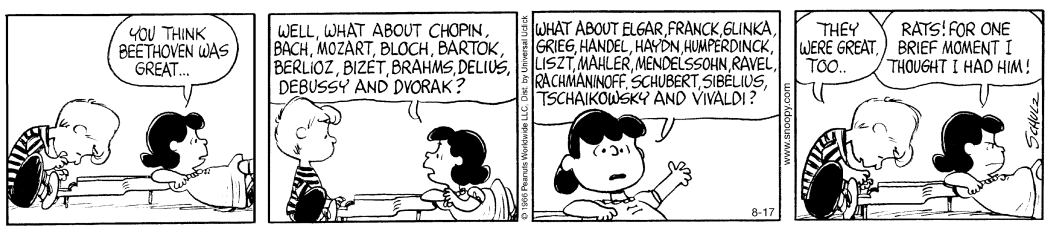
Tundra



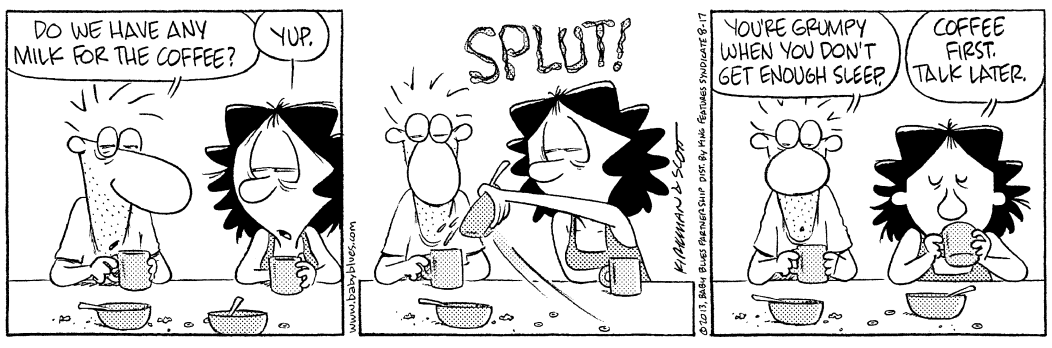
Hagar the Horrible



Peanuts



Baby Blues



Dilbert

HOROSCOPES

ARIES - Mar 21/Apr 20

Now is a great time to explore new culinary horizons, Aries. You just may find a new type of cuisine that you never would have anticipated liking.

TAURUS - Apr 21/May 21

Taurus, if you feel like there haven't been too many opportunities to socialize with friends, host your own gathering of friends and family. Start planning now.

GEMINI - May 22/Jun 21

Gemini, sometimes forgetting responsibilities and acting like a child for a day can be good for the spirit. Take a mental health day and don't let worries get you down for a few hours.

CANCER - Jun 22/Jul 22

Cancer, make travel plans before the summer passes you by. There has never been a better time to get out for a road trip or book a weekend jaunt to somewhere special.

LEO - Jul 23/Aug 23

Leo, it can be difficult to upstage you, but someone else steps into the spotlight at work and it has you reeling for a little while. Be the bigger person and offer congrats.

VIRGO - Aug 24/Sept 22

Virgo, you might be ultra careful when choosing friends, but keep in mind those closest to you have been there through thick and thin. Remember that this week.

LIBRA - Sept 23/Oct 23

Libra, despite the many changes you have made, you still don't feel completely satisfied. You can't put your finger on what is off, but you will get to it eventually.

SCORPIO - Oct 24/Nov 22

Scorpio, you have heard the saying that you catch more flies with honey. Be prepared to lay the honey on especially thick this week. Have fun with it.

SAGITTARIUS - Nov 23/Dec 21

Sagittarius, it's hard to smile when you are feeling upset. This is not the week to let your true feelings show, though. Get through your obligations first.

CAPRICORN - Dec 22/Jan 20

Carpricorn, if you have been thinking about getting active to shed a few pounds, then try something fun like playing a sport. Exercise doesn't have to mean time in the gym.

AQUARIUS - Jan 21/Feb 18

Certain aspects of your life are a work in progress, Aquarius. Other things you have under control. This week, focus on the things that may be holding you back.

PISCES - Feb 19/Mar 20

Pisces, while creative pursuits tickle your fancy this week, some more mundane tasks require your immediate attention.

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

AUGUST 18
Edward Norton, Actor (44)

AUGUST 19
John Stamos, Actor (50)

AUGUST 20
Robert Plant, Singer (65)

AUGUST 21
Hayden Panettiere, Actress (24)

AUGUST 22
Tori Amos, Singer (50)

AUGUST 23
Ray Park, Actor (39)

AUGUST 24
Anze Kopitar, Athlete (26)

su|do|ku

© Puzzles by Pappocom

9					1	6		
6			8	7	5		9	
	5	3		2				
	2	4		9	3		5	
3		7				8		6
	1		2	8		3	4	
				3		1	8	
	7		4	6	9			2
		5	7					4

Instructions for play: Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9.

That's all there is to it. There's no math involved. The grid has numbers, but nothing has to add up to anything else. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic. It's fun. It's challenging. It's addictive!

Solving time is typically from 10 to 30 minutes, depending on your skill and experience. The solution for today's puzzle will be published in Saturday's paper. Or you can go to www.sudoku.com to find the solution.

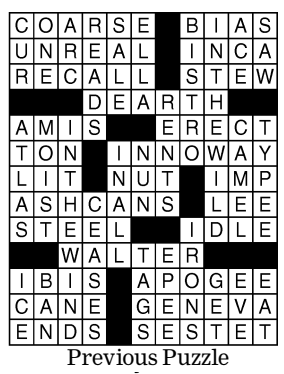
5	3	2	8	9	7	4	6	1
4	8	9	2	6	1	7	3	5
1	7	6	5	4	3	8	2	9
3	2	8	9	5	4	6	1	7
9	4	1	7	2	6	5	8	3
6	5	7	1	3	8	9	4	2
8	6	5	3	1	9	2	7	4
2	1	4	6	7	5	3	9	8
7	9	3	4	8	2	1	5	6

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

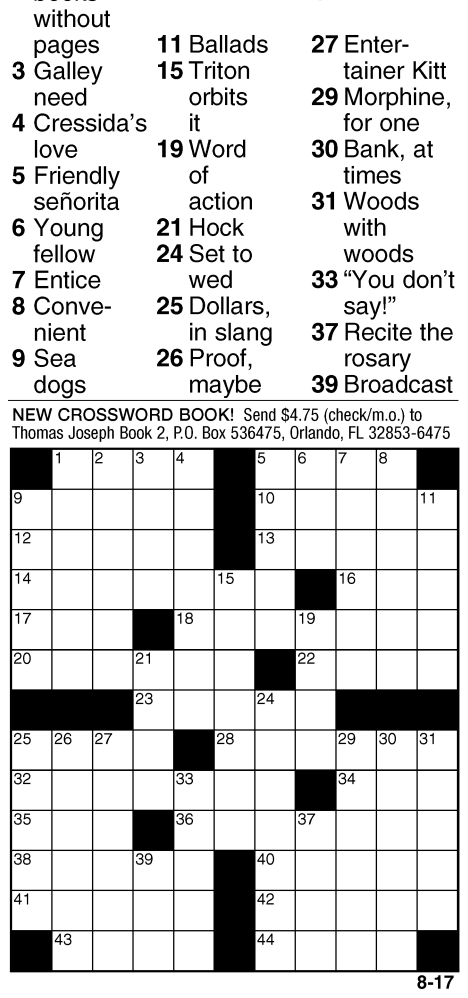
ACROSS
1 Pirate's take
5 Emmy-winning Alan
9 Navigating system
10 Emporia
12 Minute Maid Park player
13 Where the Salmon flows
14 Car option
16 Pale
17 Pointer
18 On one's way out
20 Barker's come-on
22 Some linemen
23 Showy flower
25 Rowing team
28 Open, as a deadlock
32 Tendency
34 Architect I.M.
35 Airport sched. abbr.
36 What a jeté involves
38 Rock genre
40 A, for one
41 Sir, in India
42 Restaurant patron
43 Be bold
44 Fabric worker

DOWN
1 Blow one's top
2 Like some books without pages
3 Galley need
4 Cressida's love
5 Friendly señorita
6 Young fellow
7 Entice
8 Convenient
9 Sea dogs
11 Ballads
15 Triton orbits it
19 Word of action
21 Hock
24 Set to wed
25 Dollars, in slang
26 Proof, maybe
27 Entertainer Kitt
29 Morphine, for one
30 Bank, at times
31 Woods with woods
33 "You don't say!"
37 Recite the rosary
39 Broadcast



Previous Puzzle

NEW CROSSWORD BOOK! Send $4.75 (check/m.o.) to Thomas Joseph Book 2, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475



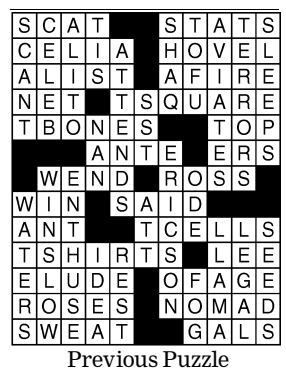
8-17

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS
1 Librarian's stamp
6 Thin board
10 Start of a Caesar quote
11 Singer Jones
13 Funny fellow
14 Visibly stunned
15 Greek vowel
16 Brit. fliers
18 Storage spot
19 Poverty
22 Start of a count
23 Indy event
24 Attacks
27 Sub system
28 Rara —
29 Debtor's letters
30 Amends
35 Tiny worker
36 Afternoon break
37 Compass dir.
38 Composer's creation
40 Walking aids
42 Mister, in Madrid
43 Deal maker
44 Dispatched
45 Uncool group

DOWN
1 Chopped into cubes
2 Keen
3 Slangy farewells
4 Aussie bird
5 Book copy
6 Big mixup
7 Ship record
8 Swift horse
9 Pudding choice
12 Marilu of "Taxi"
17 Had lunch
20 Club sandwich base
21 Lake swimmer
24 Pester
25 Broad streets
26 Rome's — Chapel
27 Warhol subject
29 Call — day
31 Like xenon
32 Central
33 Without letup
34 Bird abodes
39 Great weight
41 Candle count



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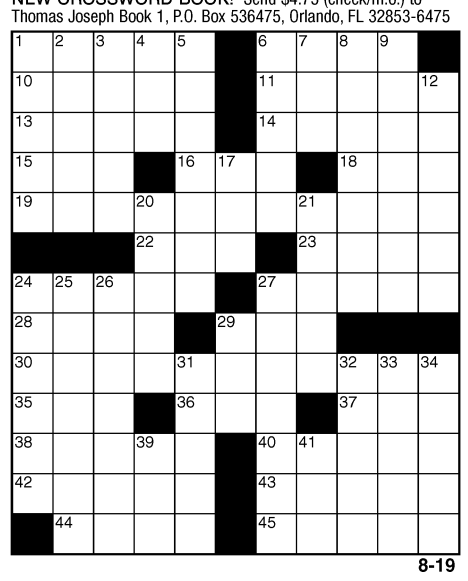

8-19

Daily Cryptoquote – Here's how to work it:

A X Y D L B A A X R
is L O N G F E L L O W

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

8-17 CRYPTOQUOTE

R V O C P V O N L T Z S D X K O D L T C

E Z , A E V Q C Z V D P V D L U C L U

Q N V O H D S N W X . — D L V O R L X

A P D L U V

Previous Cryptoquote: LOVE IS MUCH LIKE A WILD ROSE, BEAUTIFUL AND CALM, BUT WILLING TO DRAW BLOOD IN ITS DEFENSE. – Mark Overby