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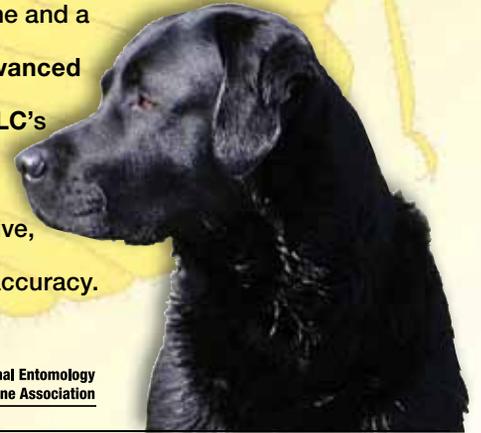
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Happy Musings by Sally Huss

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DEBBIE TRAVIS' HOUSE TO HOME



PANELS HIDE EQUIPMENT

BY DEBBIE TRAVIS

Recently I've been asked how I would solve an increasingly common dilemma. It seems that stationary bikes, treadmills, weights and other exercise equipment are intruding on the peaceful ambience of the bedroom. I have to agree: Waking up to the sight of metal contraptions meant to make you sweat is not my idea of bliss. But with today's smaller living spaces, what can you do?

In the same vein, but different scenario, a busy family home has the living room and den side by side, offering ample room for two distinct groups to gather. They each want privacy.

I envision the same solution for both questions. Retractable room dividers or sliding panels will block out the athletic equipment and allow the kids to play with their friends — heard but not seen. These panels slide along a sleek aluminum track that is mounted to the ceiling, and open and close easily.

Graber panels, www.graberblinds.com, are available in wood and fabric, so you can design your own look. The panels can also be exchanged to match your seasonal decorating.

If privacy is not the issue, but sunlight is, then the solar shade fabrics allow you to maintain your

exterior views while cutting glare on computer and TV screens. These panels can be installed anywhere, and you have the option of hiding the track with a cornice for a traditional fitted appearance.

Like a movable wall, they add a layer of texture and color — a good alternative when you want to divide a room or build in some privacy.

* * *

Dear Debbie: We are renovating our kitchen and would value your advice on the floor color. The cabinets are white, and the solid-surface counters are dark brown. We want laminate, but not a hardwood look, as there is real hardwood in the hall and dining room. Should we go light or dark? What about a slate pattern? — *Hazel*

Dear Hazel: I agree — choose something different that will not fight with the hardwood that is in place. Slate is a wonderful option in a greenish hue. But what about taking a peek at some of the laminates that have a contemporary feel with brighter colors, or ranges that give the illusion of metal floors? The new linoleums have fabulous choices — I would go with a warm copper tone.

Dear Debbie: I have just renovated

my kitchen with a bit of wall painting left to do. I love the idea of teal, but I'm afraid it will be too dark. The flooring is brown/blue/gold/slate, the lower cabinets are brown, the white uppers have glass fronts, and the backsplash mosaic is white with red, teal, blue, black, green and yellow accent tiles. Rather than solid paint, is there a technique that will dilute the teal so it's not overwhelming? — *Lisa*

Dear Lisa: I love the idea of teal. Here's an idea: Create a tone-on-tone oversize checkerboard effect. Apply light teal in two coats as a base coat. When dry, map out 12- or 14-inch squares and mask off. Paint alternate squares either in a slightly darker tone of teal or with a high-gloss varnish. This will take you a weekend; the measuring takes the longest, but if you cut a piece of cardboard or tile, you can measure around this. The look is sophisticated and fun.

(c) 2008 Debbie Travis

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Debbie Travis' House to Home column is produced by Debbie Travis and Barbara Dingle. Please e-mail your questions to house2home@debbietravis.com. For more ideas, look for Debbie's newest book, "Kitchens and Baths."



Sliding panels are a stylish way to divide living space to suit your needs.



VIEW FROM THE VET

BY HELOISE

Dear Heloise: I'm a veterinarian in a busy five-doctor practice. Here are a few hints to make it easier for pet owners and their pets, as well as the veterinary hospital staff, during your visit:

- Keep your retractable leash as short as it goes and locked. Do not unlock it and let your pet wander. Most pets will urinate on things, and dogs will jump on people. Your pet could come into contact with a sick, nervous or biting pet. Retractable leashes are for walking your dog outdoors. I have seen dogs wrap themselves around other customers' legs while the pet's owner is oblivious. Keep your pet sitting in your lap or by your side within two feet.

- Keep your child on your lap or in the chair next to you. Better yet, leave children under 12 at home with a sitter, or bring your pet to the vet while the kids are in school. Children's active nature and loudness upset many animals that aren't used to them and cause further stress on sick patients.

- Do not put your pet or its carrier on the reception counter. It takes up valuable space and could fall off.

- Do not set your child on the reception counter.

- Call ahead for your appointment. Tell the receptionist all the reasons you are coming in. Do not make an appointment for just vaccinations if other things need to be addressed also. The amount of time allotted to the appointment is based on what you tell the receptionist.

I hope some or all of these suggestions will help pet owners have a better relationship with their pet's health-care team as well as make things simpler and safer for visits. — *A Vet, via e-mail*

Thank you for this very good advice. — *Heloise*

KITTY WALKER

Dear Heloise: I'm a kitty walker. I discovered that my indoors-only kitten, Rosie, loves to ride in or on anything. I attached a pull rope to her wheeled pet carrier, and we had a little wagon. After pulling her around the house, we tested it outside, and she loved it.

Now we cruise the neighborhood and walk/ride local trails.

We meet interesting people and their dogs. I am smugly proud to be a kitty walker. An added benefit is that Rosie does not fear the carrier when it is vet time. — *Burdette Connell, Durham, N.C.*

PETS WITH A CHIP

Dear Heloise: I have both of my dogs, some of my cats and my horses microchipped. The dogs wear collars with only my cell-phone number and the word "microchipped." In the event that your animal has not been chipped, I strongly urge you to get it done. By putting the microchip tag on an animal's collar, that gives instant access to the animal's ID number, owner's name, etc. I love my animals and have taken steps to ensure that they remain mine. — *Brooke Dahart from Texas*

Brooke, our Cabbie (a silver mini schnauzer) agrees! Many a beloved pet has returned safely home because of that little chip! — *Heloise*

PET PAL

Dear Readers: Teresa Timmons of Fort Worth, Texas, sent a photo of her cat, Sweet-Tea, drinking iced tea from a glass sitting on the table. Teresa says, "Sweet-Tea got her name because she loves iced tea and will happily drink it up if a glass is left unattended." — *Heloise*

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TAKE THE SLOW BOAT FAST

BY MUHAMMAD COHEN

Take the slow boat to Tanjung Puting National Park, but take the fast route to see Borneo's orangutans.

Tanjung Puting is a 1,600-square-mile nature reserve on the southern coast of Borneo, 100 miles south of the equator in Indonesia's Central Kalimantan province.

The park's lowland peat and heath forest along the Sekonyer River is home to 220 species of birds, from tiny, sleek kingfishers to rhinoceros hornbills whose 3-foot wingspans seem inadequate to support their massive beaks.

Speaking of beaks, the most memorable denizens of Tanjung Puting aside from orangutans are proboscis monkeys, found only in Borneo. With pot bellies, white faces and long, flabby noses, they were dubbed monyet belanda — Dutch monkey — when colonists arrived.

The two dozen-plus species of large mammals in Tanjung Puting include bearded pig, sun bear, clouded leopard, gibbon and macaque. But orangutans are the stars, with hundreds of soulful-eyed, cuddly redheads swinging through the jungle canopy.

Tanjung Puting hosts three orangutan research camps. They run rehabilitation programs to reintroduce former captive or orphaned orangutans into the forest.

Once the hottest thing in species conservation, orangutan rehabilitation

is now partially discredited.

When orangutans get accustomed to human contact, they never lose their craving for it. Perhaps that's because orangutans share 97 percent of DNA with humans. More importantly, prolonged contact exposes orangutans to human diseases.

Rehabbing apes may build immunity but can carry diseases into wild populations with devastating results. Reintroduction is now restricted to habitats without native orangutan populations. Many rehabilitated apes spend their lives in the vicinity of their rehab camp.

Whatever that means for the species' future, more orangutans near research camps means many sighting opportunities. Camps conduct daily feedings at jungle platforms to supplement rehabbing orangutans' diets. Visitors can watch nursing mothers — orangutans care for their young for up to seven years — with an infant almost hidden in the fur swoop through the branches to enjoy helpings of bananas, milk, leaves or cassava. Each camp's daily feeding schedule is coordinated so visitors can witness at least two a day.

The slow boat — called klotok in Indonesian — is the best way to travel to and around Tanjung Puting. From the klotok fleet's Java Sea homeport of Kumai, it's a three-and-a-half-hour journey upriver to the orangutan zone.

The klotok follows the twisting Sekonyer's tawny waters with a put-putting inboard engine straight out of film's "The African Queen." Pandanus scrubs, looking like spiky haired stick figures, guard the shoreline. At the camps, it's just a short walk from the dock to feeding sites, brilliant blue butterflies leading the way. Camp rangers or your own guide can arrange longer treks to spot more wildlife and, in season, wild orchids.

But a klotok isn't just for cruising. For most visitors, it serves as a floating hotel or, more accurately, a mobile luxury campsite. After a day of game viewing, the captain moors in a secluded river bend, and your cook — a worthwhile klotok option, along with a guide — serves up a hot meal. Then the crew rolls down mosquito nets and lays out mattresses for sleeping on deck. The gently rippling river flow and night bird songs create a soothing lullaby. Throaty orangutan calls sound the alarm at dawn.

Move fast to visit Tanjung Puting, because orangutans are severely threatened with extinction. They once roamed throughout Southeast Asia but now remain on just two islands: Sumatra and Borneo. A century ago, orangutans could cross Borneo without ever touching ground. But a United Nations report last year forecast 98 percent of their rainforest habitat will be destroyed by 2022. Their time is running out.

If You Go

The closest airport to Tanjung Puting is Pangkalan Bun, with direct connections from Jakarta, Indonesia's capital, where Americans can get a 30-day visa on arrival for \$25. If you're already in Indonesia, find flights to Pangkalan Bun from Pontianak and Banjarmasin in Kalimantan, plus Semarang on Java. From Pangkalan Bun airport, it's a half-hour ride on a good road to Kumai, home of the klotok fleet.

Places to Stay and Eat

Tanjung Puting's best lodging option is in a klotok. Nothing beats sleeping out in the jungle air, with modern comforts including a Western toilet. Crews even heat water for showers. Include a cook in the crew, and plan a menu together. Either look for a klotok upon arrival in Kumai or use an agent such as Borneo Holidays (011-62-812-500-0508; borneoholidays@planetet-save.com). A klotok costs about \$85 a day, including a cook and guide, plus \$5 per person daily for meals. (Feed the crew, too.)

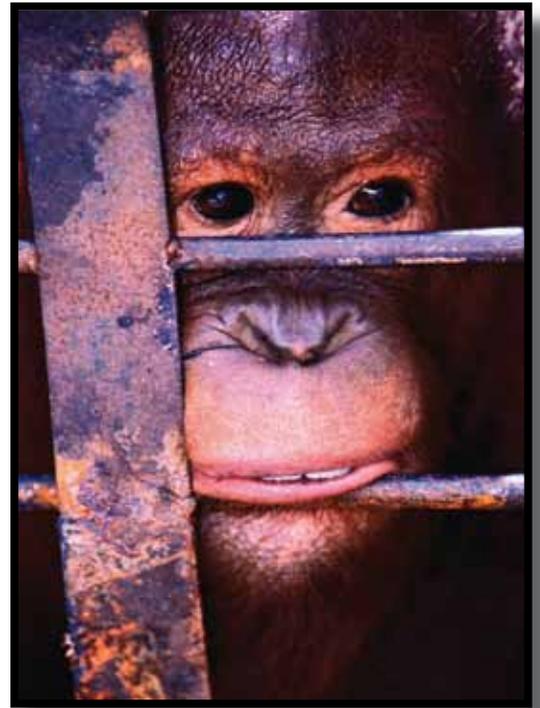
For a more cultural experience, Friends of the National Parks Foundation (www.fnpf.org) offers village homestay accommodations and volunteering opportunities in Tanjung Puting. If you must have a hotel, Rimba Lodge (www.rimbalodge.com; rooms \$50-\$100) offers uninspiring

accommodations and meals even by ecolodge standards, with air conditioning, the main attraction, only in the priciest rooms.

* * *

Muhammad Cohen, co-author of the Lonely Planet Guide to Borneo, also wrote "Hong Kong On Air," a novel set in 1997 about TV news, love, betrayal, high finance and cheap lingerie. "Travels With Lonely Planet" is coordinated by Commissioning Editor Nancy Ianni. You can e-mail her at nancy.ianni@lonelyplanet.com.au. For more travel information, visit LonelyPlanet.com.

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Gistok the Orangutan — Pondok Tanggui Rehabilitation Centre — Tanjung Puting National Park. Andrew Brownbill/Lonely Planet Images

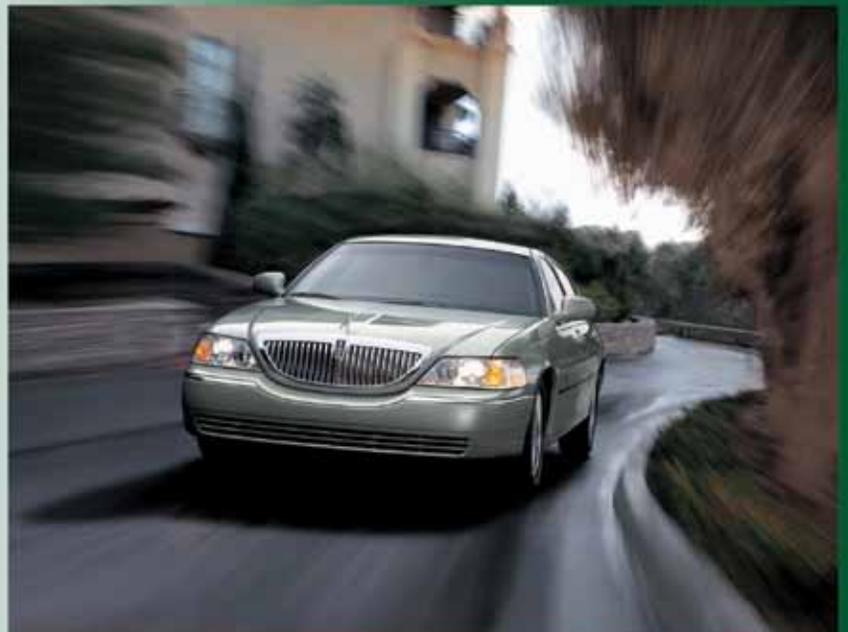


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NASCAR THIS WEEK

By Monte Dutton

Hendrick Motorsports, celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, is NASCAR's most successful contemporary team.

Owner Rick Hendrick, one of the nation's leading automobile dealers in addition to his racing success, will field four Sprint Cup teams this year, employing four drivers — Jimmie Johnson, Jeff Gordon, Dale Earnhardt Jr. and Mark Martin — who have combined for seven championships and 174 victories.

Though Hendrick is NASCAR's gold-standard team, the prevailing metal this year is silver. Employees lovingly restored a 1989 Chevy Lumina, made it a good deal slicker than an '89 Lumina ever was, gave it a silver sheen and presented owner Rick Hendrick with another valuable exhibit for his museum/gift shop.

Rick Hendrick founded the organization in 1984 with five employees and 5,000-square-feet of rented work space. Today, more than 500 people work on the more than 100-acre campus in Concord, N.C. Hendrick's teams have scored at least one win for 23 consecutive seasons. In its 25 years, Hendrick Motorsports has averaged 1.4 top-10 finishes per race and seven wins per season.

The operative word at Hendrick Motorsports is "self-assurance." Two years ago, its four drivers combined to win half the races. Johnson has won the past three championships.



Monte Dutton / NASCAR This Week

Two of Dale Earnhardt Jr.'s Chevrolets, one sponsored by the National Guard and another by Amp Energy Drink, occupy the foreground in a lineup of Hendrick Motorsports entries during the Sprint Media Tour, held last week in Concord, N.C.

Counting NASCAR's three major touring series, Hendrick has collected 12 championships in its history.

If you're keeping a score card at home, that's eight Cup (five Winston, two Nextel, one Sprint), three Craftsman (now Camping World) Truck and one Busch (now Nationwide).

In other words, with that kind of record, if they weren't smug, they'd be disingenuous.

* * *

Kevin Harvick and Casey Mears are both from Bakersfield, Calif. Now both drive stock cars at Richard Childress Racing.

They took separate paths, and Harvick, who is three years older than Mears, arrived in NASCAR much sooner. Mears, 30, first reached one of auto racing's major leagues as an open-wheel racer in CART, which no longer exists. Growing up, their paths crossed but not that often.

Bakersfield is a long way from L.A. in state of mind, if not distance.

"It's a well-supported racing town," said Harvick. "When we were growing up, there was a dirt track, a half-mile oval ... that's no longer there but a new one is being built now. There's a drag strip, and it's a place where the people are attuned to racing."

But, said Harvick, "It's really more like Oklahoma or Kansas, probably, than what people think of when they think California."

* * *

Different crossover — Motocross legend Ricky Carmichael, 29, is scheduled to run 14 Camping World Truck Series races for Kevin Harvick Inc.

Forget going from two wheels to four. Motocross racing is worlds apart from NASCAR in style, as well. At a motocross, where the top riders engage in in-your-face theatrics even while competing, the equivalent of a victory burnout would be the least outlandish means of celebrating.

Carmichael, though, is from Clearwater, Fla., and doesn't think he'll have to change much.

"I like what this is about," he said. "I'm a Southeastern boy. I can jell with these fans. ... Personally, I'm really not that flashy."

* * *

Musical chairs — Bobby Labonte left Petty Enterprises (now merged with GEM to form Richard Petty Motorsports) but landed the Hall of Fame Racing ride, which puts him in a Ford for the first time since early in his career.

Asked if he had been worried, Labonte said, "Yeah, but I was always pretty good at the Father's Day Olympics of trying to be the last one in the chair, so I had a little experience with it."

Bond Grill

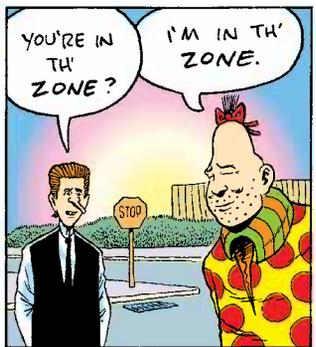
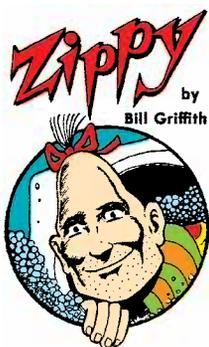
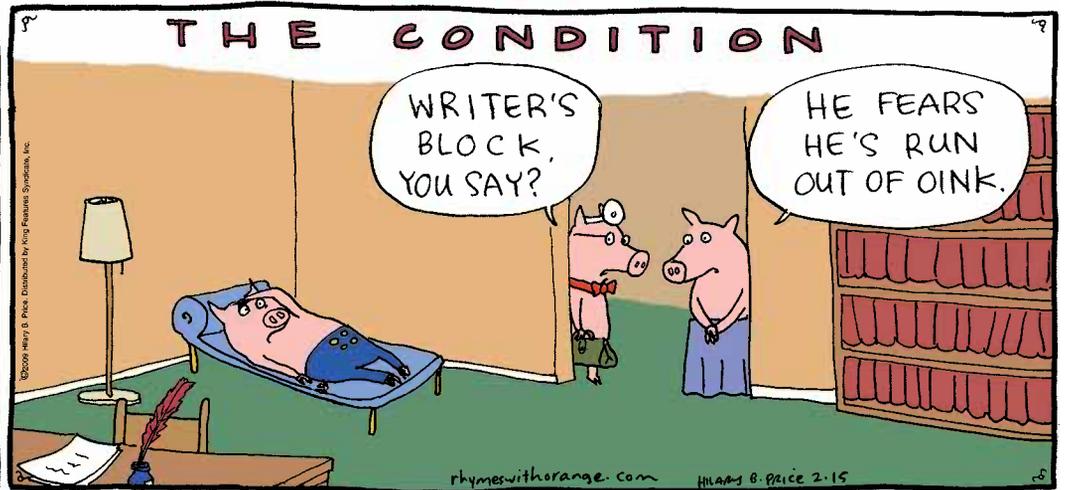
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Chicken Soup for the Soul



MISS BENJAMIN

By Miriam Hill

My sleep was fitful, punctuated with the hospital sounds of muffled conversations and carts squeaking down the hall. It was almost morning. In my drowsiness, the unwelcome thoughts returned again ... I don't want to die! I'm only 16! I long for proms, and boyfriends and ... life!

A week before, my doctor had discovered another large tumor in my head. I was snatched by my parents and driven to specialists at a university hospital in Michigan, more than a thousand miles from my home in Florida. The experts ordered medical tests to help them determine how to save my life. Could they?

I didn't hear the door to my hospital room open, but in the darkness I sensed a presence at my bedside. When she spoke, her voice was as sweet as slow, dark molasses.

"Sorry to wake you so early, Sugar, but I need to take your temperature," she announced, as she stuck a cold thermometer under my tongue. Then, with a touch as smooth as black velvet, she found the pulse in my pale wrist. When I peered up at her, the white nurse's uniform was a stark contrast to the dark skin of the pretty woman standing next to my bed.

"What's your name?" I asked sleepily.

"Miss Benjamin."

It was the early 1960s, and I lived in the South. I didn't know many African Americans, but I instantly bonded with Miss Benjamin.

My parents rented a room from a family across the street from the hospital and befriended them. They had a son in his late teens named Don. He and his friend, Tommy, worked at the hospital. Many early mornings they came before visiting hours to see me. Miss Benjamin cooperated with their illegal intrusions and allowed them to stay and lift my spirits.

After the doctors conferred, the news was grim. The massive tumor between my brain and my eyes would be removed immediately, but the risky operation could leave me blind. I felt there was little hope.

"The good Lord is going to take care of you," Miss Benjamin assured me the morning of my surgery. Then her soft voice promised, "I'm scheduled to have the afternoon off, but I'm going to stay on duty and look after you." Knowing she would be there eased my fear.

I survived the surgery and was relieved to see Miss Benjamin when I woke up. Yes, I could see her!

But the days of recovery were brutal. My face was wrapped in a beehive of gauze. The pain was intense when Miss Benjamin carefully changed the bandages. I felt scarred and ugly. I didn't want the boys to see me. "Tell them not to come in," I cried.

Early one morning I thought I heard pebbles hit my window.

"What's that noise?" Miss Benjamin asked as she breezed through the door with a thermometer in her hand. Then she walked to the window, golden with dawn.

"Lord have mercy! I think you have visitors! Let me help you walk over here!"

I could see two heads poking over the edge of the roof a few feet above my window. Don and Tommy found a way to visit me, without making me self-conscious about my bandages. We talked, between the rooftop and the open window, that day and many more.

Miss Benjamin was a real sport about our teenage antics, and she supported our clandestine encounters. Each morning, she walked me to the window, tugged it open, then tiptoed back as I greeted my friends. My hospital confinement was often excruciating, but the rooftop visits took my mind off my recovery and made my days exciting.

On the morning I was to be dismissed from the hospital and head home to Florida, I awoke early to the sound of pebbles hitting glass. I leaned out over the windowsill and looked up at the two handsome smiles beaming down from the roof. Miss Benjamin came into the room and put her arm around me. It would be the last time my special nurse and the two boys crouched on the roof would be part of my life.

"Since you're checking out today," Tommy announced with a twinkle in his eye, "Don and I made something for you. Something that will remind you about what you loved most here."

My two faithful visitors carefully lowered their gift.

I stared in disbelief at the papier-mache likeness the boys had crafted. The face was brown with beautiful, gentle features. A black wig adorned the top of the head.

"We know how much you love Miss Benjamin," Don called down from the rooftop. "Now she will always be with you."

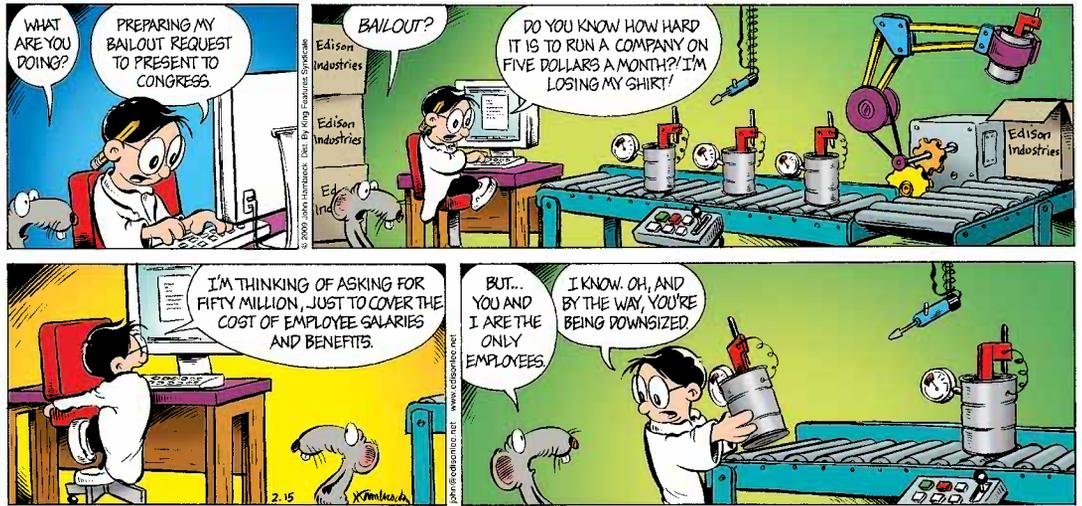
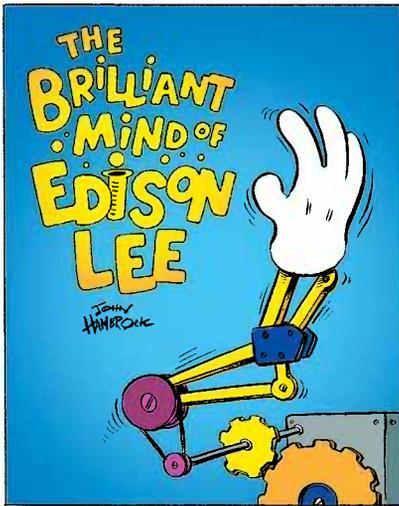
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By Ralph and Terry Kovel

VALENTINE TRADITIONS

The custom of sending valentine cards is not new. It goes back to the 17th century. The English author Samuel Pepys mentioned valentines in his diary on Valentine's Day in 1667. In those days, a valentine was homemade. By the 1750s, the handwritten note could be put on gilt-edged paper found in markets. A few commercial valentines could be found between about 1800 to the late 1830s, but it was England's 1839 Penny Postage Act that made store-bought valentines popular. Each card could have a matching envelope and, in the United States in the 1840s, needed 5 cents postage. Elaborate, often hand-assembled cards were sold, and all sorts of unusual 3-D and mechanical cards were also made. But it was at the beginning of the 20th century that valentine postcards became so popular they were preferred to the earlier lacy styles. Chromolithographed cards were made by the millions in Germany and England. Raphael Tuck & Sons of England and, later, New York made many of them. Cards were sent to friends, relatives and, of course, sweethearts. "Vinegars" or "penny dreadfuls" were sent to disagreeable people who seemed to deserve them. Collectors today want all types of old cards. Save the most interesting new ones, too. Cards with cartoon figures, trains, cars, planes, phones or any modern item that in the future will help date the cards will be valuable. So will cards related to a political event or a war. But best will always be a card that expresses the valentine theme of love.

Q: I have a mahogany secretary labeled "Maddox Colonial Reproduction." It's about 6 1/2 feet high with two glass doors on top and four large drawers at the bottom. Inside the slant-front desk there are more than 15 small cubbyholes. When

was it made and how much is it worth?

A: Your secretary was made by the Maddox Table Co. of Jamestown, N.Y. Because the firm was in business for nearly a century, from 1898 into the 1980s, it's impossible to tell you when your secretary was made. However, we have seen Maddox secretaries sell for \$600 to \$900.

Q: I have several old silver serving pieces marked "Homan Plate on Nickel Silver, W.M. Mounts, Made in U.S." They are in desperate need of cleaning, but regular silver polish has not made a bit of difference. What else can I try?

A: Homan Manufacturing Co. or one of its predecessors made your serving pieces. The company was established as

Homan & Co. in 1847. Its name changed to Homan Silver Plate Co. in the 1890s and then to Homan Manufacturing Co. in the early 1900s. It closed in 1941. "W.M. Mounts" is not a maker's name. It stands for "white metal mounts." Your pieces are silver plate, not sterling. Nothing will make the pieces look clean because the plating has worn off. The only thing that will help is to have a professional re-plate your pieces. You can find silver repair services in your local telephone company's Yellow Pages or on our Web site, Kovels.com. Click on "Free Resources," then on "Antiques & Collectibles Directory."

Q: I purchased a small Kutani bowl many years ago. It's marked "Kutani" and "Japan." What can you tell me about this maker?

A: Kutani is an area in Japan, not the name of a maker. The name means "Nine Valleys." Several potters made porcelain marked "Kutani" after the mid-1600s. Pieces found today were usually made in the 19th century or later. Collectors often use the term "Kutani" to refer to just the later, colorful pieces decorated with red, gold and black pictures of warriors, animals and birds. Porcelain marked "Kutani" is still being made. The word "Japan" in the mark on your bowl suggests that it was made after 1920.

TIP: The surface of marbled Niloak pottery is porous. Oil from your skin, glue residue from sticky labels and any other type of oil will leave permanent marks.

Terry Kovel answers as many questions as possible through the column. By sending a letter with a question, you give full permission for use in the column or any other Kovel forum. Names, addresses or e-mail addresses will not be published. Write to Kovels, King Features Syndicate, 300 W. 57th St., New York, NY 10019.



This Raphael Tuck valentine postcard printed about 1900 is one of a set of 12 cards, each based on a sign of the zodiac. July's sign is Leo, but the card mentions a stork, not a lion. The set brought \$58 at an Alderfer Auction sale of postcards in Hatfield, Pa.



A Step in Time

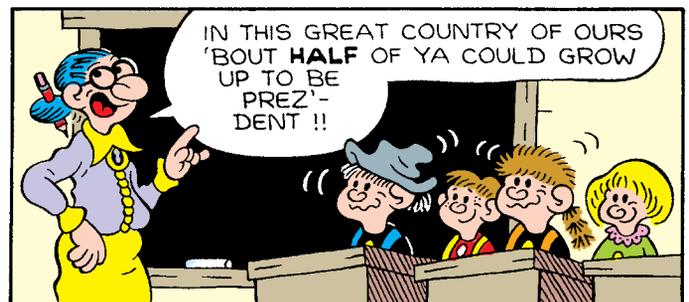
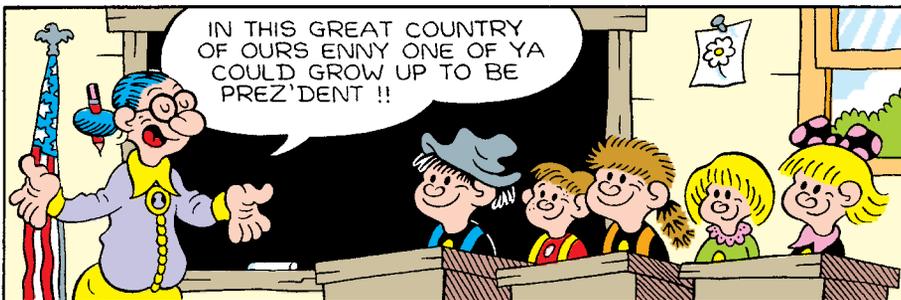
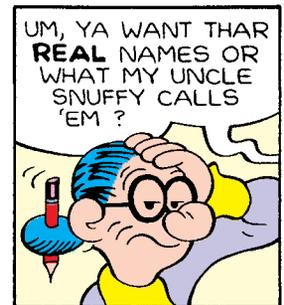
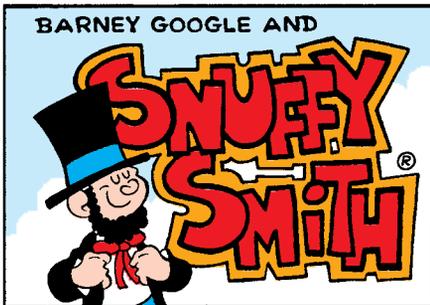
Christine Drake, owner

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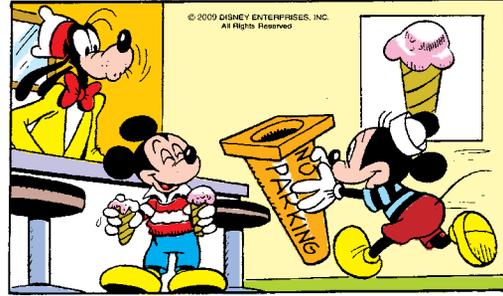
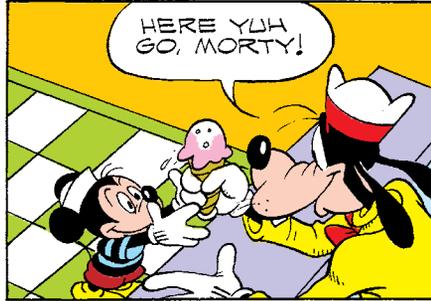
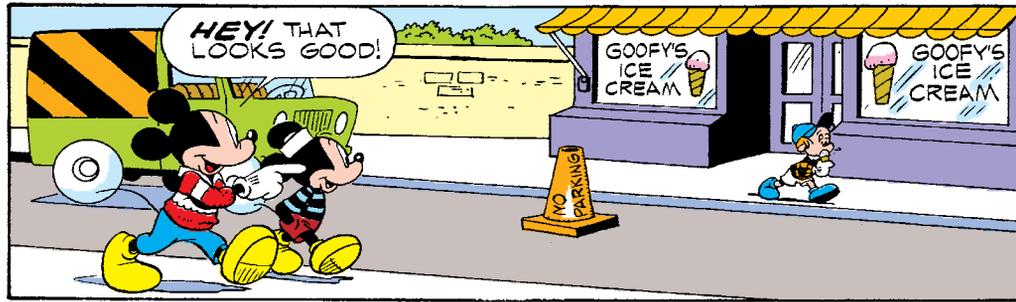


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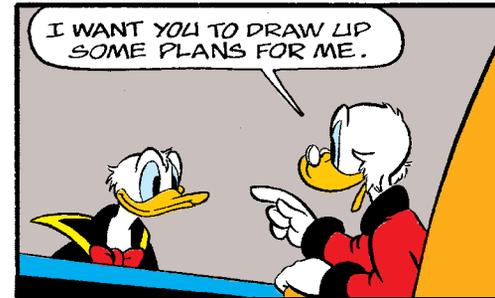
JOHN ROSE

2-15

Walt Disney's
MICKEY MOUSE

Walt Disney's
DONALD DUCK

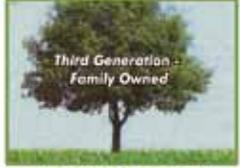


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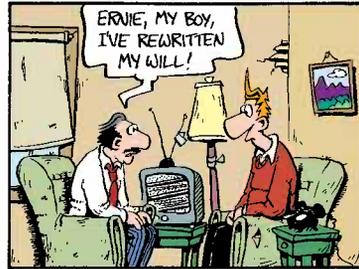
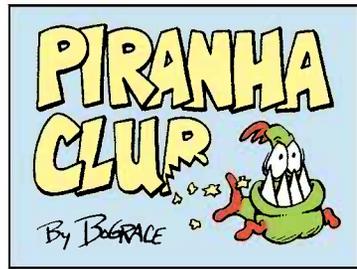
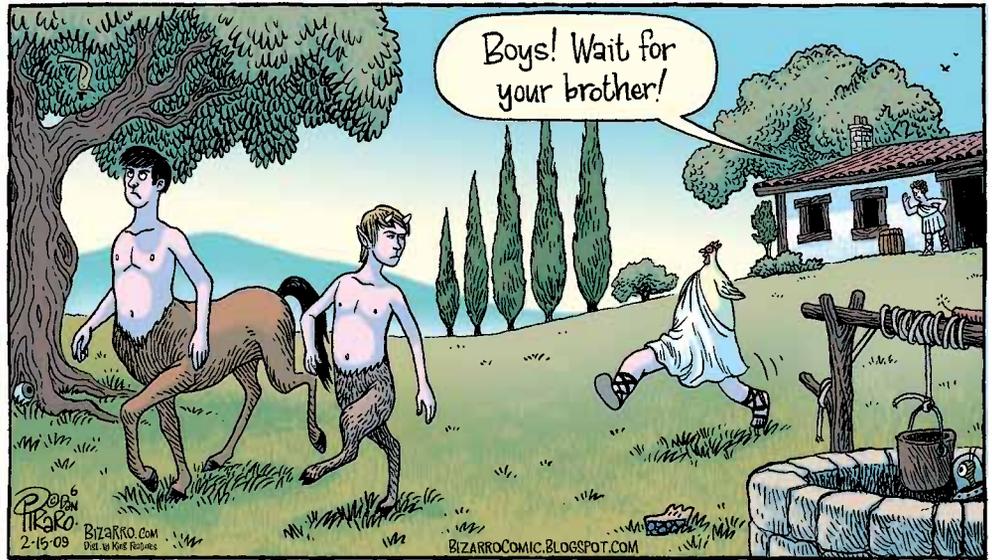
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MUTTS

by
PATRICK
MC
DONNELL



THE SUPER HANDYMAN



BY AL AND KELLY CARRELL
SPRING CLEANING

Is it too early to talk about spring cleaning? We think it's never too early. Most people think of spring cleaning as washing the windows and cleaning the carpet. Well, we have some other things you need to add to your spring-cleaning list.

Clean your dryer vents. Even if you empty the lint traps, you still can get a buildup of lint in your vents. There is a super device you can purchase that will help you get all of the buildup out of your vents. It's a flexible pole with a bristle brush on the end. Your clothes will dry faster, and this will save you money.

Clean the coils on the back of or underneath the refrigerator. Use your vacuum cleaner and a long hose to get all of the dust bunnies off the coils. Your refrigerator will work more efficiently.

Clean your air-conditioning compressor. Turn the breaker off while you are working. Clean the fan and the fins around the outside of the unit. Make sure to get rid of wasps and ants if they are inside. Your compressor will run more efficiently.

You also can clean the blower in the other part of your cooling system. Turn the breaker off while working there as well. Clean the fan and coils. Put it all back together and seal up the unit. Check ducts for leaks, and seal them as well.

Clean your household sewer line. Run a snake into each clean-out plug on your home. This will get rid of any buildup in your pipes that will cause problems later on in the year.

Clean the sediment from your water heater. Hook a hose up to the front and drain off water until it comes out clean. This will

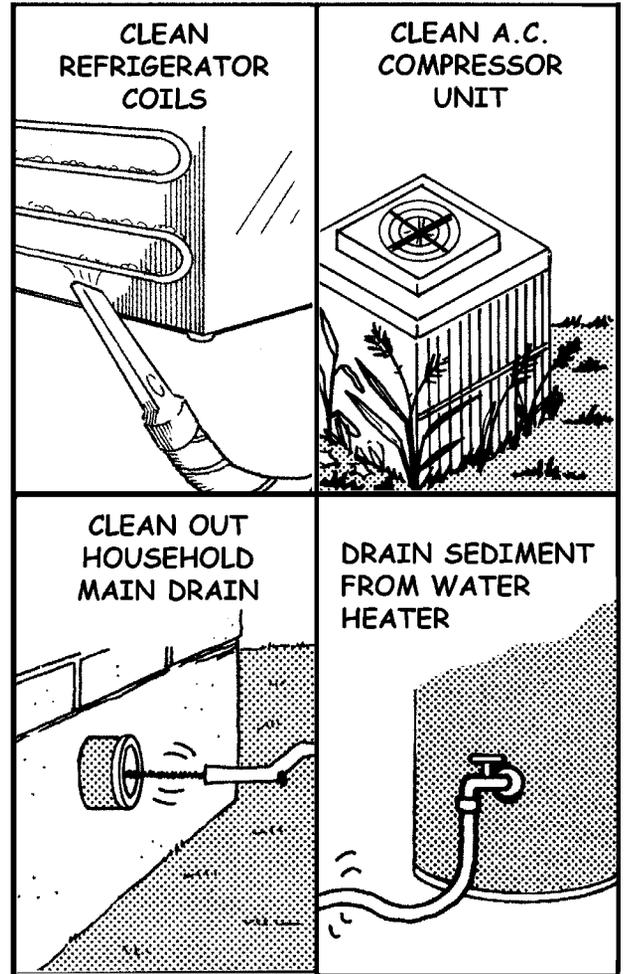
keep your water heater running at peak efficiency.

This is just a partial list of spring-cleaning chores that you might not be thinking about but should. Each one is pretty easy to do and will pay you back in energy savings and longer life for your appliances.

Now you can go to work on your tan. Good luck!

Q: I have an arched doorway in my dining room and am getting ready to wallpaper it. How do I deal with the rounded edge? — E.R.

A: If you are wallpapering just up to the edge, stick it all down and then just trim it off with a brand-new knife blade. Make sure the edges are stuck down really well. If you are wallpapering the inside of the arch, paper right up to it, leaving paper that will overlap the edge. While it's still wet, use a sharp utility knife to make cuts from the edge up to the curve in the wall, and then press the cut edges down onto the curved edge. Then use another piece of wallpaper, cut to size, to cover the inside of the arch.



Got a question or a handy tip? Send it to The Super Handyman in care of this publication, or visit our Web site at www.thesuperhandyman.com. Those of general interest will be used in future columns.

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Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

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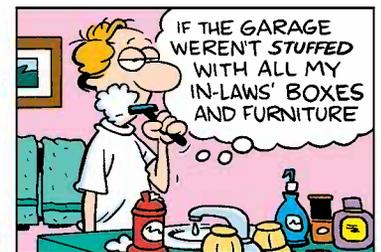
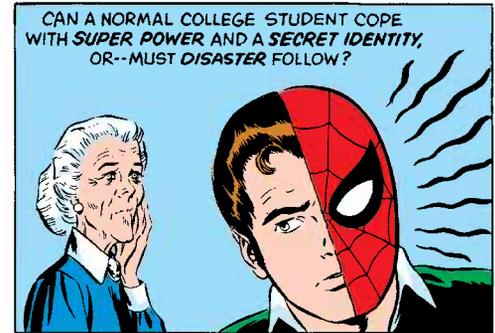
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Difficulty Level ★★★★★

2/15



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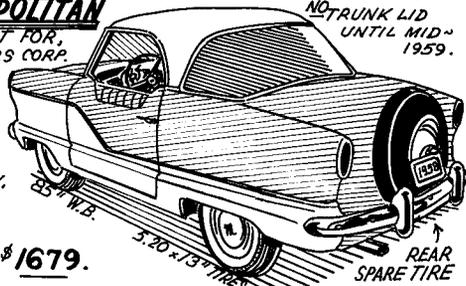
BY TAD BURNESS

(CLIP AND SAVE)

09~06

1958 METROPOLITAN

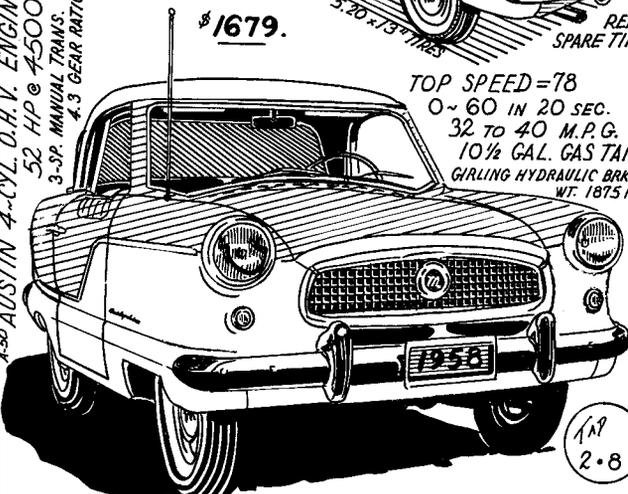
BUILT FOR AMERICAN MOTOR'S CORP. (BY AUSTIN OF ENGLAND) PININFARINA BODY DESIGN FOR A.M.C. (BODY BLT. BY FISHER + LUDLOW, BIRMINGHAM, ENGLAND)



NO TRUNK LID UNTIL MID-1959.

\$1679.

TOP SPEED = 78
0~60 IN 20 SEC.
32 TO 40 M.P.G.
10 1/2 GAL. GAS TANK
GIRLING HYDRAULIC BRKS.
WT. 1875 lbs.



INTRO. 1954, RESTYLED 1956, DISCONTINUED 1962. (CVT. ALSO AVAIL.)

1958 METROPOLITAN

A CUTE LITTLE SURVIVOR, EVEN TODAY

The Metropolitan, first introduced in 1954, was inspired by its then-president, George Mason. (That little car was seen some months ago in "Auto Album.") Times were good in the 1950s, and gas was only about 23 cents a gallon in most of the U.S. But Nash sensed a need for a little gas-sipper, even if only as a second car for the average family.

The '54 to '62 Metropolitan was a joint venture by Nash and Austin of England. Austin built the car, using Nash styling inspired by the house of Pininfarina of Italy (styling first seen on the full-size 1952 Nash). Body choices: a two-door hardtop or a convertible. Only one major Metropolitan styling occurred in 1956, along with the introduction of a more powerful Austin A-50 engine. (There were some leftover A-54 engines, but most buyers wanted the new 1500cc A-50, which quickly became the only choice.) These little cars sported two-tone paint jobs, as shown here. Lower body and steel top were customarily white, with a contrasting midsection of red, blue, green, orange, yellow, purple, etc. Before the mid-1959 season, the trunk compartment was accessible only by folding the back section of the rear seat. But a deck lid was finally incorporated, by popular demand.

In the mid-1970s, my daughter had a little friend, Joey, whose grandmother owned a yellow-and-white early '59 Met (without the deck lid). She offered it to my wife and me for only \$250, so we bought it. We drove our daughter and four of her classmates to kindergarten each day, with five kids crowded in the small back seat of the little car. They fit in with little discomfort. Many Mets have survived today, and are now worth a few thousand each! There are even Metropolitan clubs on the Internet.

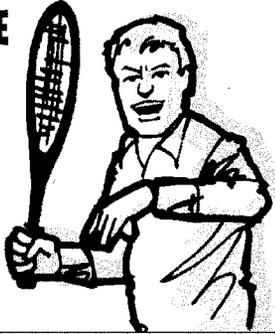
Tad Burness welcomes mail from readers. His address is "Auto Album," P.O. Box 247, Pacific Grove, CA 93950. Please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope if you would like a reply. If you would like to be contacted by telephone, please include your phone number, with area code, in your reply.

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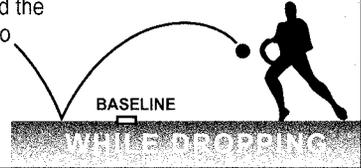
STAN SMITH'S TENNIS CLASS

BE READY FOR THE SMASH

Getting ready early on the overhead is important, so as soon as you see the lob go up, turn your shoulders and start moving your feet. A quick start will allow you to hit a stronger shot.



You know you are taking too long to hit the ball when it bounces, reaches its peak and begins dropping before you hit it. This is a common problem if you stand too far behind the baseline and are slow to reach the ball. Instead, try hitting the ball as early as possible.



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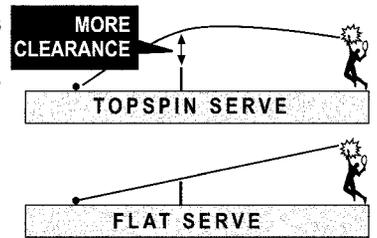


A common mistake is to retreat with the racket down by your knees or on your shoulder as you run backward. Instead, move with the racket in a natural position – be fluid as you retreat. Practice using a short swing on the overhead, without an elaborate movement – for instance, like Roddick's service motion.

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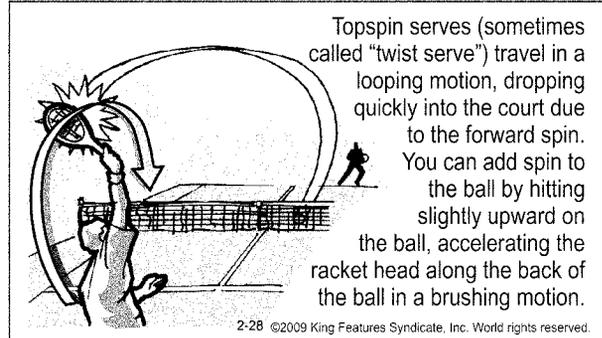
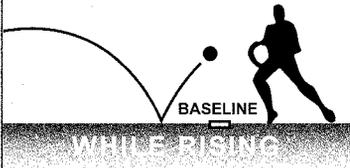
DIFFERENT TYPES OF SERVES

It's important to mix up the types of serves during a match. A topspin serve, or twist, can be a useful shot to add to your game. It's good for second serves since it clears the net higher than other serves.



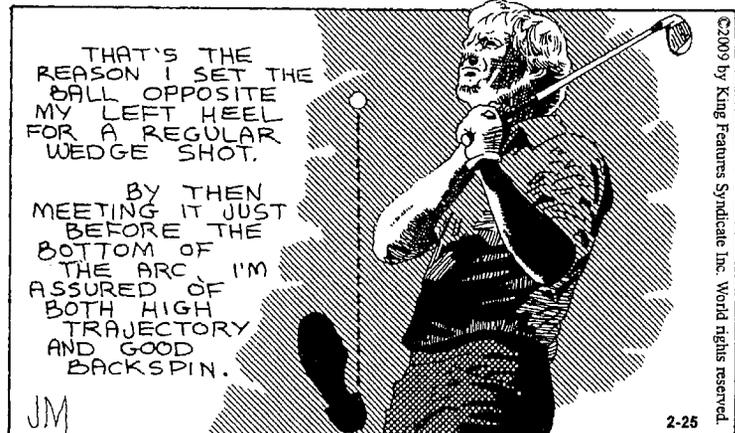
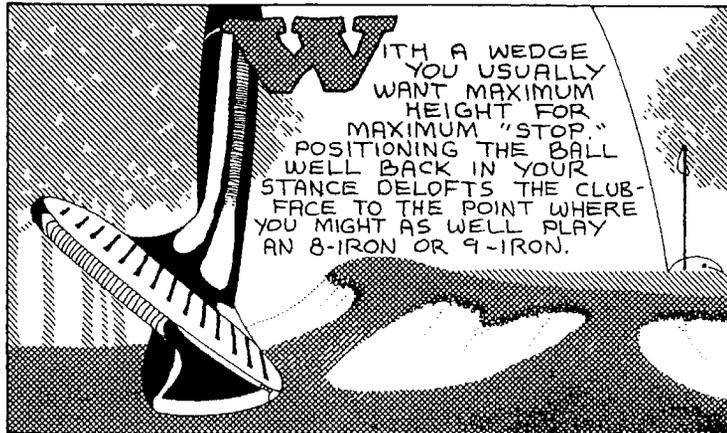
TRY TO TAKE THE BALL EARLY

One thing you hear tennis coaches tell players is to hit the ball "on the rise." That means they should hit it while it is still bouncing up. To do this, you need to stand near the baseline and take the ball early. This is an aggressive position that requires good timing and racket speed.



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Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



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We hope you enjoy all the features and entertainment in our fun magazine. Drop us a line if you have any suggestions, comments, or just to say "hello" neal@thebestoftimes.us

PREMIER Crossword

By Frank A. Longo

**B-4 YOU
KNOW IT
ACROSS**

- 1 Paragons
7 Intent stare
11 Bolt securer
14 European reindeer herders
19 Fawcett of films
20 Verbal
21 Ear: Pref.
22 Cancel, as a mission
23 Silly, flighty person
26 Sorrow
27 Japanese money
28 "Peek- —, I see you!"
29 Word stamped on some mail from Mexico
31 Choral voice
32 Assembled
33 Audibly flowing stream
37 Tender pork dish with barbecue sauce
42 Red stuff in a first-aid kit
43 Sum of money owed
44 "Which is longer, —?" (optical illusion question)
45 Salutes
48 — -do-well
49 Canadian prov.
51 Tub additive
56 Genetic ID
57 Scuba site
59 City in Utah
60 Spanish for "water"
61 Boy on "The Flintstones"
66 Kickoffs
68 Pros and —
69 Actor Cage, informally
70 Jai follower
71 Hector or Paris, e.g.
74 "Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman" Emmy nominee
81 Prefix in flight
82 Ballet skirt
83 Large book
84 — -and-pop
85 Whitney Houston's ex-husband
88 Fizzy drink
90 Coffee, in slang
91 "You — match for ..."
92 Scent
94 More thin
96 New York lake
100 Bill Clinton's Interior Secretary
102 Cry of Fred Flintstone
106 Italian writer Umberto
107 Germany's Graf —
108 Mist
109 Comedian Laurel
110 "— wrong?"
113 Longtime Yankees skipper Joe
115 Longtime beer brand
120 "Dallas" matriarch
121 Tell a fib
122 Avenue

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- 123 Steeped thing on a string
124 Money of Saudi Arabia
125 Photog. blowup
126 WWII group
127 Lordly home
- DOWN**
1 Not for sure
2 Broad valley
3 "— Brockovich"
4 NYSE trader
5 1959 Ritchie Valens hit
6 Female bruises
7 — bat for
8 D-backs, on scoreboards
9 Zig and —
10 Yale alum
11 Coveted annual prize
12 Wombs
13 On a scale of one —
14 Schoolboy
15 On the plane, e.g.
16 Hoi —
17 Positive particle
18 Putt, e.g.
24 Military org. on campus
25 Streisand, informally
30 Disney's "Darby — and the Little People"
33 Stock pro
34 Atmosphere
35 Fraud-tracking org.
- 36 Big name in home audio systems
37 Cozy inn, briefly
38 Stadium
39 Classical guitarist Julian
40 "— out!"
41 Top-40 D.J. Casey
45 Fling
46 Busy as —
47 Former laptop name
50 Weapons
51 Small lynx
52 Elementary
53 Lifetime
54 Boy king
55 Owns
58 Friendly race
62 Dull, low-paying work, in slang
63 Constrictor
64 Raggedy —
65 Wee eater's neckwear
66 Suffix with Motor
67 Get in cuffs
70 Adam's second son
71 Indent setter
72 Very old Olds
73 Space ball
74 "— giorno!" (Italian's "Good day!")
75 Part of Lawrence Welk's count
76 Very ornate
77 Love, in Italy
78 Muscat man
79 Really want
80 Target competitor
82 Luigi's three
86 "Et cetera," when tripled
87 Thin nails
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90 Ring punch
92 No. like "first" or "second"
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PRIME TIME WITH KIDS

BY DONNA ERICKSON

Much to the disappointment of my snack-starved son, who had just bounded into the house after a 5-mile run, the note on the kitchen counter by the metal cooling rack read: "Dog Biscuits! Sorry, not for you. — Mom." The tempting treats may have looked and smelled like peanut-butter cookies, but they were hard as rocks, ready for our canine friends to enjoy.

Bake a batch of these crunchy dog biscuits with your kids for Valentine's Day doggie gifts. This simple recipe goes together in minutes, and young kids will have an easy and satisfying time rolling out or patting down the pliable dough to create shapes with cute cookie cutters.

Ingredients you'll need:

- 2 cups whole-wheat flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1 cup peanut butter at room temperature
- 1 cup whole milk
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

All-purpose flour for rolling the dough

After you set the oven to 375 degrees, here's how to get the kids involved:

Step 1: Let one child measure and combine the flour, baking powder and salt in a large mixing bowl.

Step 2: Another child may measure and stir the peanut butter and milk together in a smaller mixing bowl. It will take a minute or two until the mixture is smooth. Slowly pour it into the dry ingredients and stir until well-combined.

Step 3: Sprinkle flour on the counter. Knead the dough a few times until it is easy to roll out into a 1/4-inch rectangle with a lightly floured rolling pin. Cut with cookie cutters in fun shapes such as a fire hydrant, bone, kitty, heart or X's and O's, and transfer to greased (or parchment-paper-covered) cookie sheets.

Step 4: Bake 20 minutes, or until edges are lightly browned. Let cool.

Divide into gift bags, tie with red ribbon and a Valentine tag, and deliver to neighborhood dog friends on Valentine's Day.

Note: A 1-1/2-inch, heart-shaped cookie cutter makes six dozen Valentine biscuits.

"The grandkids are coming!" tip: If you have preschool grandkids, make the dough in advance of their arrival. When it's time to shape and bake, sprinkle flour on the counter, give each child a chunk of dough, and show them how to pat the portions flat with their clean hands. Cut out shapes with cookie cutters and set on cookie sheets for you to bake.

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