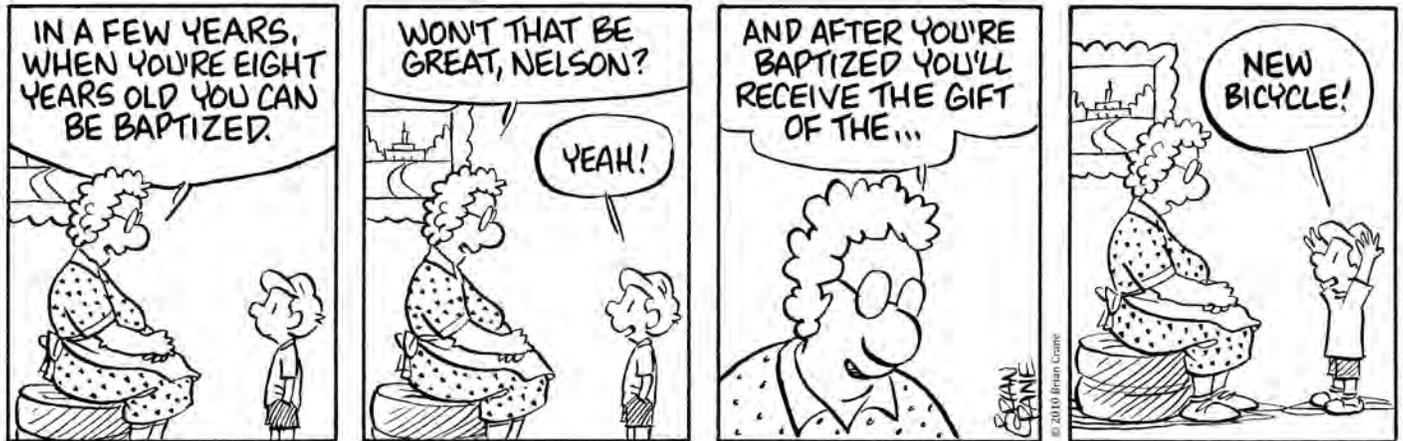


# THE SUBLIMELY SUBLIMINAL

By Brian Crane



CREATING AND PRODUCING a daily syndicated comic strip is something I dreamed of doing since I was a child. And now I have been writing and drawing the *Pickles* comic strip for more than 20 years, and I feel very blessed to be able to do it. But still, there is some truth to the saying, “Be careful what you wish for. It might come true.” Cranking out a comic strip seven days a week, 365 days a year, and still keeping it fresh and funny is a relentlessly difficult task. Yet I still get a thrill out of seeing my thoughts and drawings in the newspaper and on the internet each day, and I wouldn’t want to give it up.

Years ago, shortly after I began doing *Pickles*, I was drawing one of my characters, Opal, reading a magazine. I debated about how to render the cover of the magazine. Should I make it just a generic, non-specific cover or should I draw it as an actual cover of an existing magazine? I ended up depicting it as a *Redbook* magazine, since I thought that was one that Opal might read. Soon after it was published I got word that the editor of *Redbook* would like the original artwork of that strip to frame for their office. I complied with that request, but it got me thinking, why am I giving free publicity to *Redbook* magazine? So, the next time I had occasion to have a character in *Pickles* reading a magazine I decided to make it the *Ensign*, the official publication of the LDS Church, of which I am a member. I got a lot of positive response from members of the Church—and also a request for the original from the editor of the *Ensign*. Since then I have continued to feature the *Ensign* in my strip from time to time. Sometimes I show Nelson, the grandson, reading *The Friend* or wearing a CTR T-

shirt. And now I often depict a picture of an LDS temple on the wall. I do this as kind of a nod to my LDS readers who still seem to enjoy looking for these Mormon icons. And as a former ad man, I guess it is my humble way of doing a little subliminal advertising for the Church. Not that they need my help.

C. L. HANSON



*It had been a long time since either of them had had a decent meal, and Elder Jensen’s companion was looking at him funny . . .*