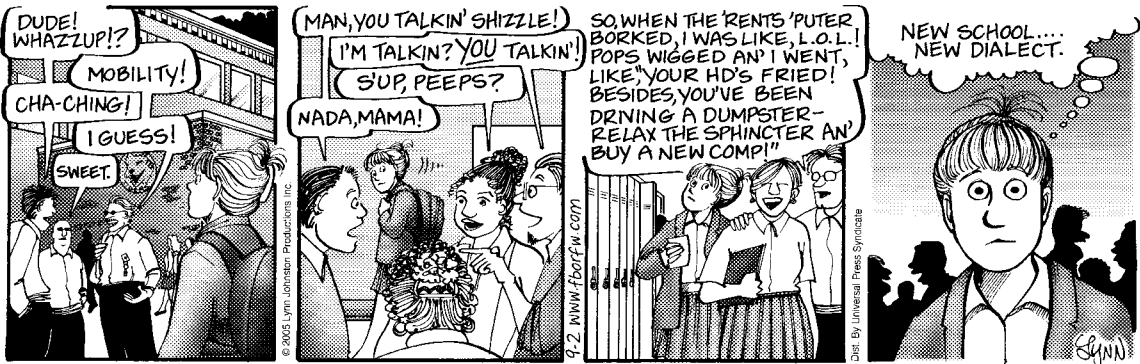
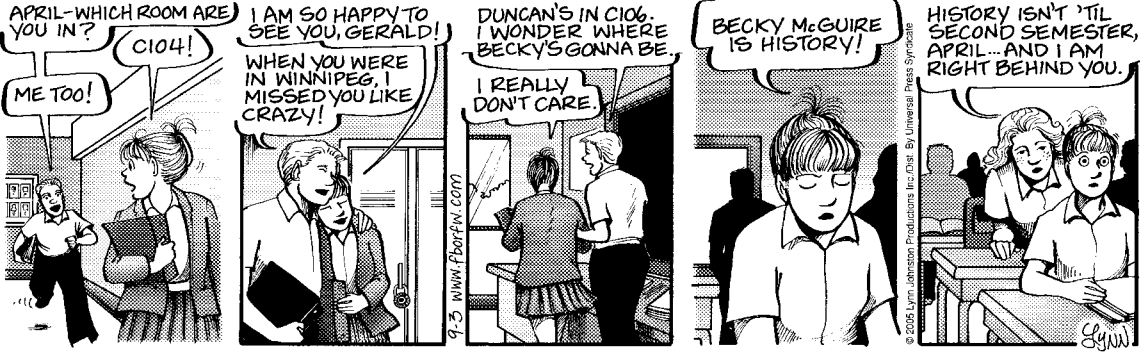


For Better or Worse • Lynn Johnston



For Better or Worse • Lynn Johnston



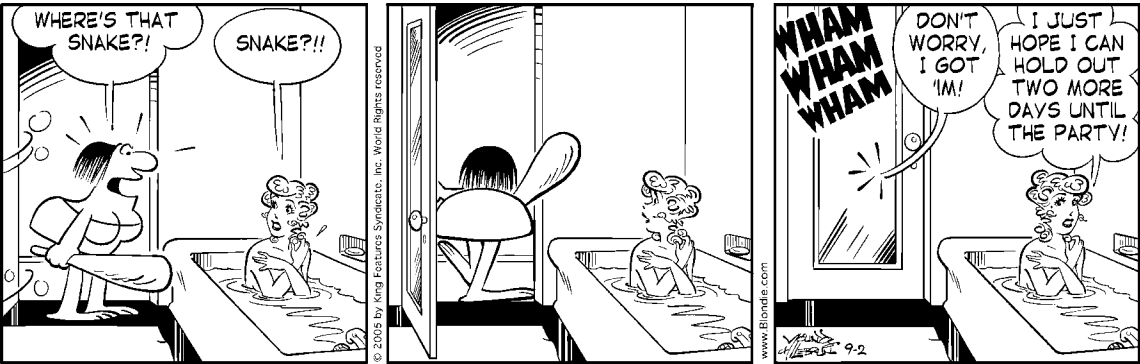
Garfield • Jim Davis



Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



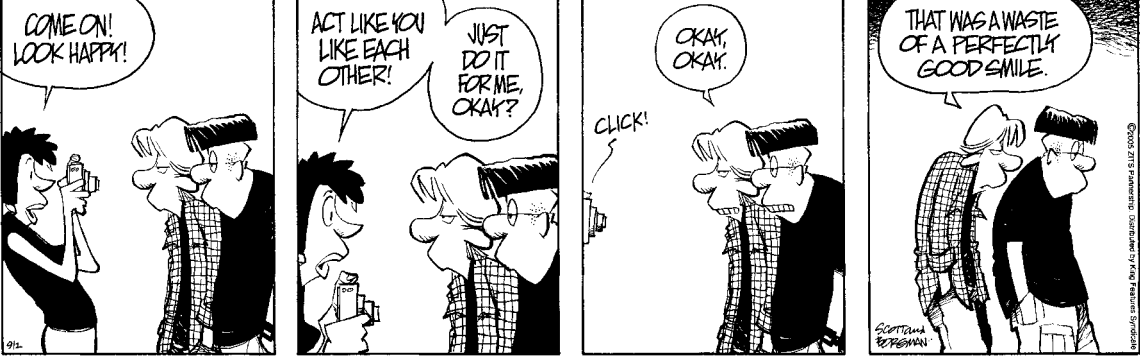
Blondie • Chic Young



Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Cryptoquip

ZVQEGJV S IWSY YL BEQSEO MI VHA'JR WJVMUT WH
 XESW SC EBIVWCPPC FMDQ WXR JMTXW PFR00
 XPGWJ, NP S PZJVVUV WH DEPW, CHAOS VHA DE00
 NELOSAXI JXEUSCA ISYV? MW CMWDXIAO WXMUQMUT?
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN HIP-HOP TUNES SOUND REALLY PHONY AND INSINCERE, WOULD YOU CALL THAT PLASTIC RAP?
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: P equals O

Crossword

ACROSS
 1 Poke
 4 "Unforgettable" singer
 8 Herringway sobriquet
 13 First victim
 14 Writer Kingsley
 15 Car dealer's list
 17 Draft team's frame
 18 North Sea feeder
 19 "M*A*S*H" locale
 20 Tasteless
 22 Jack and Jill's prop
 24 Canyon comeback
 25 Small, like a TV set
 29 Chartres chum
 30 Strindberg's "Miss —"
 31 Deposit
 32 Supplanted

DOWN
 1 Triangular sail
 2 The whole enchilada
 3 High-quality, as in a stock
 4 Hack
 5 Reed instrument
 6 Writer Buscaglia
 7 Wapiti
 8 DJ's bribe
 9 Cupid's field
 10 Toll road
 11 Cruising, maybe
 12 Nevada city
 13 Charlie Brown's nemesis
 14

20 Wardrobe malfunction
21 Wile E.'s supplier
22 Skier's needs
23 Saharan
25 Dark red
26 Ultramoral one
27 Metallica drummer Ulrich
28 Spuds' buds
30 They hold the mayo
33 Also-rans
34 Bridge coup
36 Extort
37 Film sample
38 Hayworth or Moreno
39 Acknowledge
40 100 percent
42 Support system?
43 Trail the pack
44 "— Town"
45 Born

Solution time: 25 mins.

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER 9-2

Bidding Quiz

Your partner opens with Two Notrump (21-22 points), and the next player passes, both sides vulnerable. What would you bid with each of the following five hands?

- S 865 H Q63 D J732 C J54
- S KJ8 H 732 DAQ6 C Q952
- S KJ8543 H 652 D 74 C 82
- S K62 H Q964 D J85 CAJ3
- S 74 H 8 D KJ743 CAQ92

1. Pass. In addition to showing 21 or 22 points, partner's bid indicates a balanced hand with strength in all suits. It could therefore be argued that since the combined holding might total 26 points, you should raise partner to three notrump. However, another factor must also be considered, namely that partner will have trouble reaching dummy to take whatever finesses he might require. This lack of communication with dummy is apt to prove troublesome even if partner has a 22-point hand. While it is true that a combined holding of 26 points usually produces a satisfactory play for game, this is rarely the case when one player holds practically all of the high cards.

2. Six notrump. This is merely a matter of arithmetic. Partner's 21 or 22 points added to your 12 bring the combined holding to 33 or 34. Only 33 points are ordinarily required for a small slam (37 for a grand slam). You should therefore bid six without further ado.

3. Four spades. High-card points are of course not the only criterion in judging the probability of game. Here you have only four points in high cards, but the six-card suit is worth several points more. Five or six tricks can probably be taken with this hand if spades are trump. There is no point in bidding three spades, since you don't plan to pass a three-notrump bid by partner, so it is best to bid four spades (a shut-out) straightaway.

4. Four notrump. This bid is simply a raise in notrump suggesting the possibility of a slam, and has nothing whatever to do with Blackwood. Partner is expected to pass with a minimum, and to go on to six with maximum values for his two-notrump bid. Holding 11 points, you can't tell whether the combined count comes to 32 or 33 points, and the four-notrump bid expresses that uncertainty.

5. Three diamonds. The 5-5-2-1 distribution strongly suggests a slam despite a holding of only 10 high-card points, and your intention is to eventually bid six of one of the minor suits. However, the proper trump suit must first be found. You therefore follow the usual procedure of bidding the higher-ranking of two five-card suits first.

If partner rebids three notrump, you will next bid four clubs, intending to carry on to slam in whichever minor suit he prefers.

South dealer.
 North-South vulnerable.

NORTH
 ♠ A J 8 2
 ♥ A 10 7 4
 ♦ K 3
 ♣ 6 5 2

WEST
 ♠ K Q J 9 8 3
 ♥ J 9 6
 ♦ K 10 3

EAST
 ♠ 9 5
 ♥ 6 5 2
 ♦ Q 8 7 4 2
 ♣ J 9 8

SOUTH
 ♠ K Q 10 7 6 3
 ♥ A 10 5
 ♦ A Q 7 4

The bidding:
 South 1♠
 West 2♥
 North 3♠
 East Pass

Opening lead — king of hearts.

Any Port in a Storm

There's a lot of luck in bridge, but there's also a lot of skill. The luck consists mostly of holding good hands — a matter over which you have no control — but the skill is another matter altogether. Here you do have control, and how you exercise that control has a tremendous bearing on how you fare.

Take a case like this one. South's jump to six spades is not scientific; it is simply a good general-direction shot. The odds favor making a slam after North jumps to three spades, so South is right to bid it.

But when dummy comes down, South's chances appear to plummet considerably. West is likely to have the king of clubs for his two-heart overall, increasing the possibility that declarer might lose two club tricks.

Situations like this demand special attention. You'd rather not bank everything on a club finesse that's a favorite to lose, so you look for an alternative line of play.

Accordingly, you win the heart lead with the ace, discarding a club, and ruff a heart. After drawing trumps, you ruff another heart. A diamond to the king and a diamond to the ace are followed by a diamond ruff in dummy. This sets the stage for a loser-on-loser play. You next lead the ten of hearts and on it discard the seven of clubs!

West wins but has no safe return. He must either lead a club into your A-Q or return a heart, allowing you to shed the queen of clubs as you ruff in dummy. Either way, the slam is in the bag.

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
 12
 15
 18 19
 20 21 22 23
 24 25 26 27 28
 29 30 31
 32 33 34
 35 36
 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45
 46 47 48
 49 50 51

ACROSS
 1 Coaster
 5 South American rodent
 9 "Desperate Housewives" home?
 12 California town
 13 Piccadilly statue
 14 Status follower
 15 It takes the cake
 16 Edges
 17 Grecian vessel
 18 Actress Rowlands
 19 Apprehend
 20 Meaty spread
 21 Med. setup
 23 Ms. Gardner
 25 Went after
 28 Went sight-seeing
 32 Snug
 33 Actor Owen
 34 Animal tracks

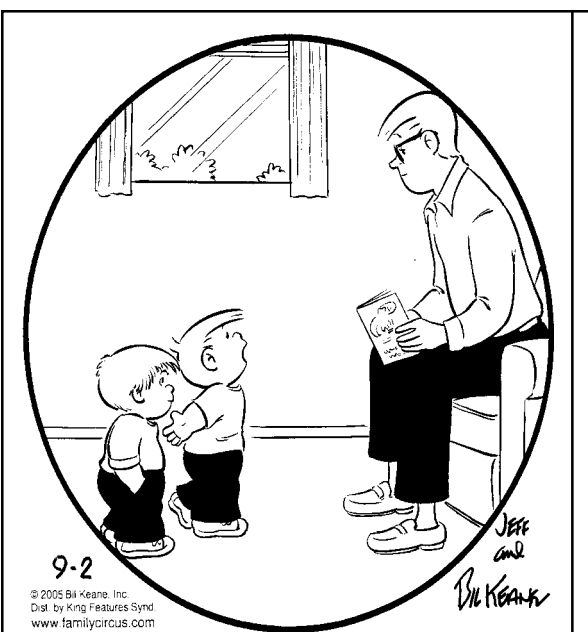
DOWN
 1 Trudge
 2 2003 novel by 43-Down
 3 Perfect place
 4 Singer with an eponymous golf tourney
 5 Licorice liqueur solo
 6 Bocelli
 7 Fight
 8 Fool
 9 Water color
 10 Actor Reynolds

Solution time: 27 mins.

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER 9-3

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
 12
 15
 18
 21 22 23 24
 25 26 27 28 29 30 31
 32 33
 34 35 36
 37 38
 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47
 48 49 50
 51 52 53
 54 55 56

Family Circus • Bill Keane



9-2
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 "How do we know when we're done 'just hanging around'?"

9-3
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 "The next Super Bowl is gonna be a BIG one. It says 'EXTRA LARGE!'"