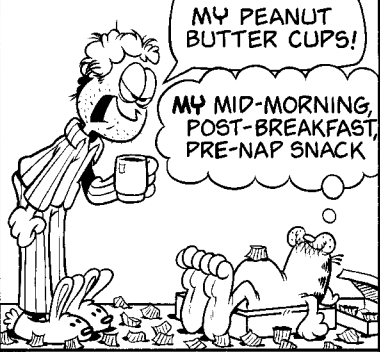
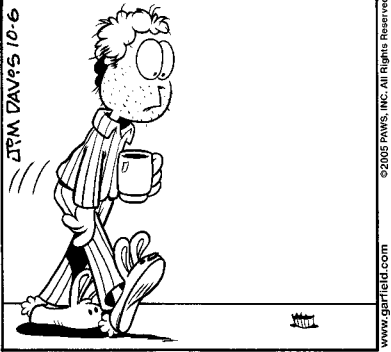


**For Better or Worse • Lynn Johnston**



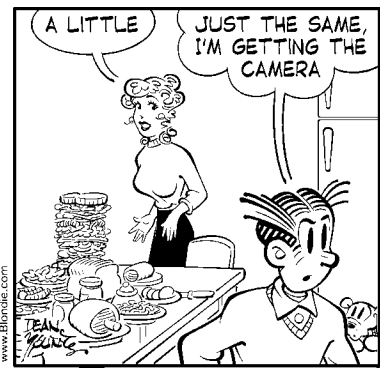
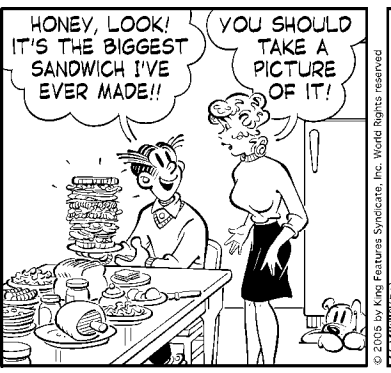
**Garfield • Jim Davis**



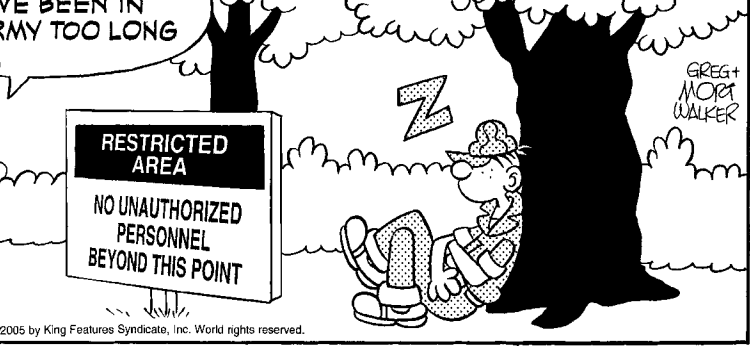
**Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne**



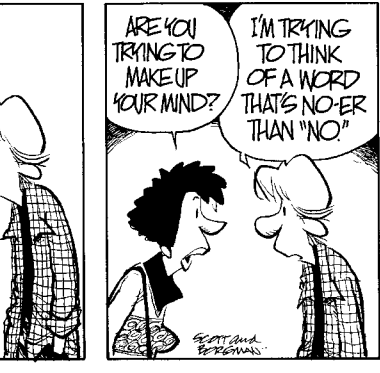
**Blondie • Chic Young**



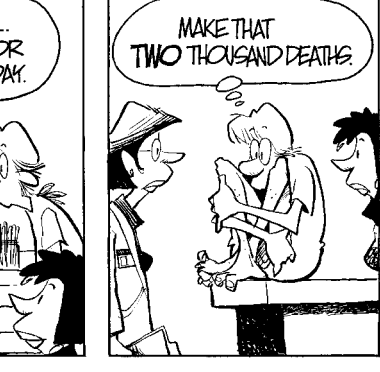
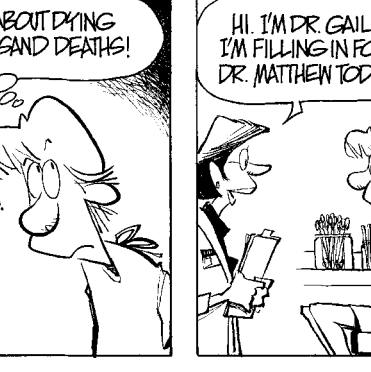
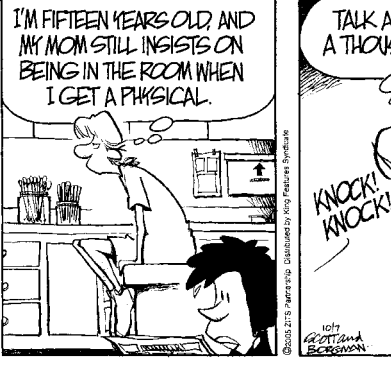
**Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker**



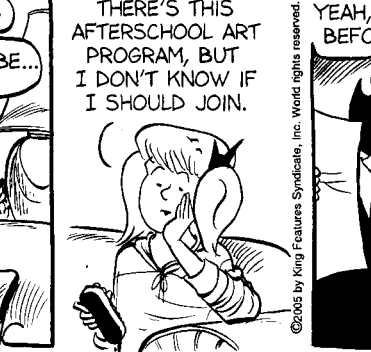
**Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott**



**Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott**



**Sally Forth • Greg Howard**



**Katrina victim finds strangers kind**

DEAR ABBY: From time to time I have seen letters in your column about acts of kindness. I hope you will print my letter to say "thank you" to a kind soul who helped me after Hurricane Katrina.

My husband and I stayed in our home in Biloxi during Katrina. We were fortunate that the storm stopped at our front door. The large oak trees that fell did not fall on our house, and we were able to assist others on our street who also stayed. But we both knew that I needed to get our children (3 1/2 years old and 15 months) out. We were running short of water and were not sure when there would be more food.

Not realizing how badly everyone had been affected, I left the house with only two small bottles of water, \$10 in cash and a few snacks. I wanted to leave everything for my husband — thinking that as soon as I got to Jackson, Miss., everything would be fine.

I arrived in the town of Hazelhurst on Tuesday evening with two thirsty, crying babies, and wondering what in the world to do. I pulled into the Days Inn and asked if they had a room. They did, but there was no water, no electricity and no drinking water. I left the front desk in tears.

A kind Hispanic woman ran after me and offered me a gallon of her water. I offered her the \$10, but she refused it. Her husband told me I needed to stop and rest. She helped me take the kids out of the car, helped me with my luggage, helped me check in, and showed me to my room. Later that night, she brought me half a gallon of milk for the babies, and a beautiful votive candle so I could see them. She said, "For the babies."

I left early the next morning to try to get enough gas so I could reach my parents, and I never got the woman's name. May God bless her for the rest of her life. I am normally



**Abigail Van Buren**  
Dear Abby

very logical and calm, but I could not think clearly that day. She opened her arms and her heart, and for that I am truly grateful.

I wish I could see her, hug her and say "thank you" in person. I owe her so much, but all I can offer her are my prayers for the rest of her days on this Earth.

Thank you for helping me try to reach her, Abby. God bless all of us in this difficult time.

— LAURA V., BILOXI, MISS.

DEAR LAURA: I'm pleased to print your letter. I hope your guardian angel sees it. By sharing what little she had with you, she demonstrated the true spirit of giving in its highest form.

DEAR ABBY: My wife, "Sybil," had a close friend, "Maxine," who recently offended her. Now she prefers to avoid the woman altogether.

Maxine's husband and I play golf together, and Sybil feels that I am wrong to continue a relationship with him. I disagree; first, because in time my wife's wounds may heal and her relationship with Maxine may resume. Also, I have never dictated who Sybil should or should not befriend, and I feel the reverse should also be true.

Who's right here? You decide!

— "SWINGER" IN PENNSYLVANIA

DEAR SWINGER: You are. Just because you are no longer a foursome shouldn't mean you have to scratch your golf buddy. She should "putt out" of your golf game. For her to attempt to punish her former friend by punishing her husband is childish.

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I have one child and are not planning on having any more. While I have no problem with people asking when we'll be having another one (this is the most common question), I am offended when some people — usually the parents of more than one — insist on telling me that I "must" have another child.

Some people have even gone so far as to tell me that if I don't have another, my daughter will group up to be self-centered and selfish, or that I'm not a "real" mother until I've had more than one child.

We have worked hard to instill compassion and generosity in our daughter.

Furthermore, these comments can be especially hurtful to those who are physically unable to have more than one child.

I would deeply appreciate it if you could help me get the word out that dictating how many children others should have is highly presumptuous, and it's nobody's business but the parents'. Thanks a bunch, Abby.

— LORNA IN FULLERTON

DEAR LORNA: If you have read my column for any length of time, I'm sure you are already aware that there is no end of personal questions and rude observations that people address to each other.

I think that most people raise the topic of children because they see it as a common denominator — an easy way to establish rapport with strangers.

Because I have no statistics that either prove or disprove the cliché that only children must be spoiled or self-centered, I won't comment about it. However, if someone told me that I wasn't a "real" mother because I didn't have more than one child, I would reply that nowhere is it written that in order to be a real mother I have to have a litter.

**Bridge**

South dealer.  
Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH	
♠	Q 5 3
♥	A 8
♦	A 10 3
♣	Q 10 7 5 2
WEST	
♠	K
♥	Q J 9 2
♦	8 6 5
♣	K 9 8 4 3
EAST	
♠	10 9 8 4
♥	K 7 6 5 4
♦	9 2
♣	A J
SOUTH	
♠	A J 7 6 2
♥	10 3
♦	K Q J 7 4
♣	6

The bidding:  
South West North East  
1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass  
2 ♦ Pass 3 ♠ Pass  
4 ♠

Opening lead — queen of hearts.

**The Winning Edge**

The conscientious declarer continually seeks ways of improving his chances, even if the improvement amounts only to a seemingly trivial percentage point or two.

Such a minuscule addition to one's chance of success might seem hardly worth the effort, but over a period of time it can make all the difference between winning and losing.

Consider this deal where South was in four spades and West led a heart.

Declarer won with dummy's ace and promptly led a spade to the jack, losing to the king.

West cashed the jack of hearts and shifted to a diamond. South won and, when West showed out on the queen of spades, had to concede down one, losing two spades, a heart and a club.

South naturally bemoaned his bad luck in losing a trick to the singleton king of spades, but the unhappy outcome was really his own fault.

Had he considered his approach to the trump suit more carefully, he might have seen the wisdom of playing the ace on the first round of spades rather than the jack.

This would have speared the king and left South with only one trump loser.

The play of the ace is not based on a peek at West's hand, but on simple probabilities.

Declarer should reason that if the opposing spades are divided 3-2, he cannot lose more than one trump trick no matter how he broaches the suit.

Similarly, if the spades are 4-1, with the king guarded, the contract cannot be made, since two spade tricks will have to be lost regardless of how South plays.

There is, however, one 4-1 division where declarer's play matters — and that is when the king is singleton in either opponent's hand. If East has the singleton king, it will show up when the first spade is led from dummy.

But if West has it, the ace must be played to avoid losing an extra spade trick.

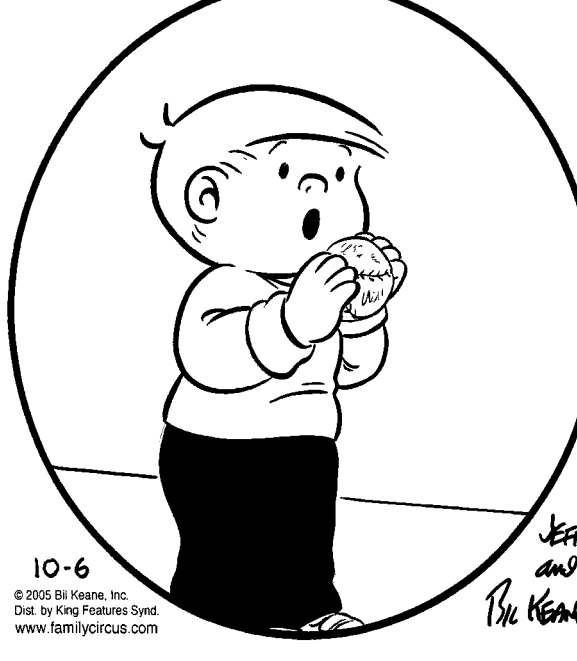
The chance of West's holding the lone king is slightly less than 3 percent — not a very high number.

But it is approximately that small percentage that enables casinos the world over to show millions of dollars in profits annually.

Tomorrow: Test your play.

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**Family Circus • Bil Keane**



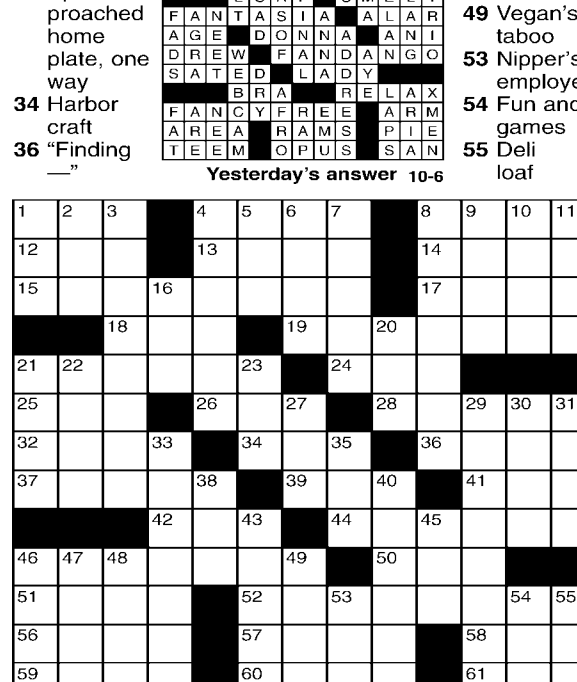
"This baseball wasn't autographed by anyone embarrassing, was it?"

**Crossword**

- |                                    |                                |                              |                    |                      |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| <b>ACROSS</b>                      | 1 "Go, team!"                  | 37 Conservative              | 58 Crucial         | 9 Con                |
| 4 Magnet end                       | 8 Kevin Kline movie            | 41 Stimp's cartoon cohort    | 59 Terrier type    | 10 Bride's accessory |
| 12 Actress Yasbeck                 | 13 Tackle-box item             | 42 Energy looza              | 60 Ollie's partner | 11 Gaelic            |
| 14 Lollapalooza                    | 15 "Desperate Housewives" lane | 50 Festive                   | 61 Lemieux milieu  | 16 Roofing substance |
| 17 He gave us a lift               | 18 Highlander's hat            | 51 Bleak, in Hollywoodese    |                    | 20 Sprite            |
| 19 Unproductive                    | 21 Speaker system              | 52 "Tootsie" cast member     |                    | 21 Back talk         |
| 24 Shade provider                  | 25 Melody                      | 53 Faye Wray's noted co-star |                    | 22 Pinball           |
| 26 Name a knight                   | 28 Deadly                      | 54 Mexican entree            |                    | 23 Chic no more      |
| 32 Ap-proached home plate, one way | 34 Harbor craft                |                              |                    | 27 Wiretap           |
| 36 "Finding —"                     |                                |                              |                    | 29 Japanese dish     |

**Solution time: 25 mins.**

B	I	G	O	V	I	D	S	N	I	P
L	O	W	F	I	N	E	T	Y	R	A
O	W	E	F	A	N	A	T	I	C	A
B	A	N	A	L	D	I	G			
L	O	A	F	S	M	E	L	T		
F	A	N	T	A	S	I	A	A	L	A
A	G	E	D	O	N	N	A	A	N	I
D	R	E	W	F	A	N	D	A	N	G
S	A	T	E	D	L	A	D	Y		
F	A	N	C	Y	F	R	E	E	A	R
A	R	E	A	R	A	M	S	P	I	E
T	E	E	M	O	P	U	S	S	A	I



**THANK YOU FOR READING THE**

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**Cryptoquip**

R LKQI IS PX K LSGJZ-  
AKESVC DJVEPXG CSEXZKU,  
PVI VQASGIVQKIXJU RI'C  
SQJU K DRDX ZGXKE.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A DOUGHNUT SHOP WERE FAILING, I'D SAY ITS OWNER WOULD PROBABLY BE IN THE HOLE.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: I equals T