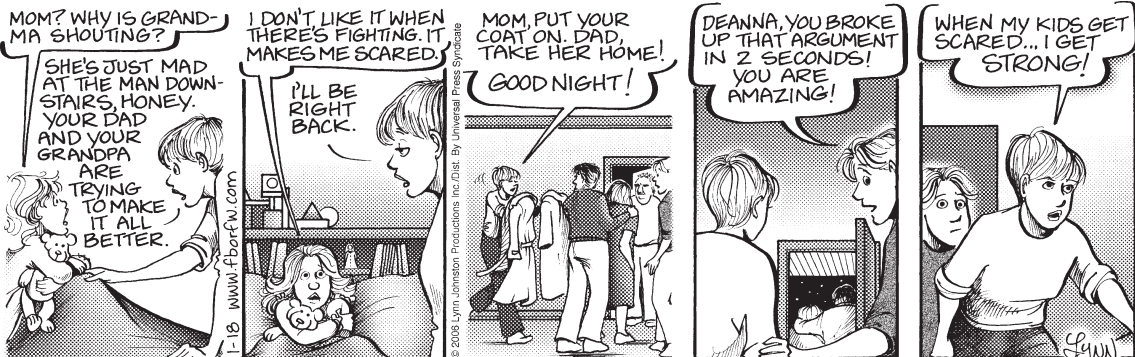


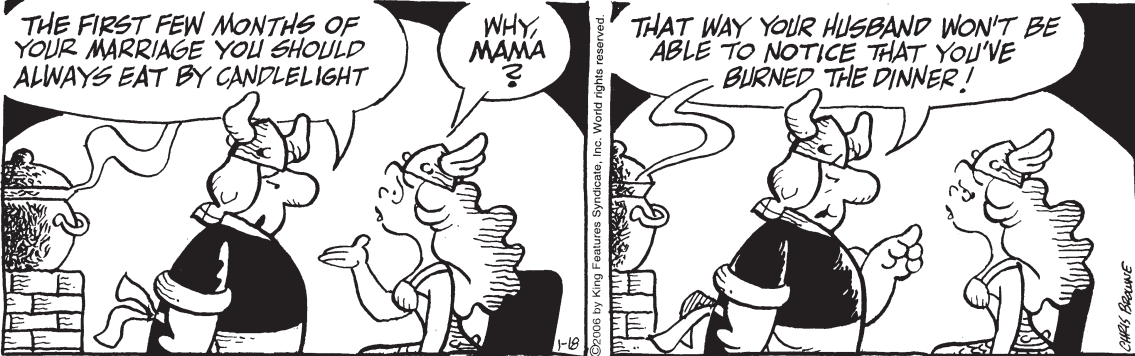
For Better or Worse • Lynn Johnston



Garfield • Jim Davis



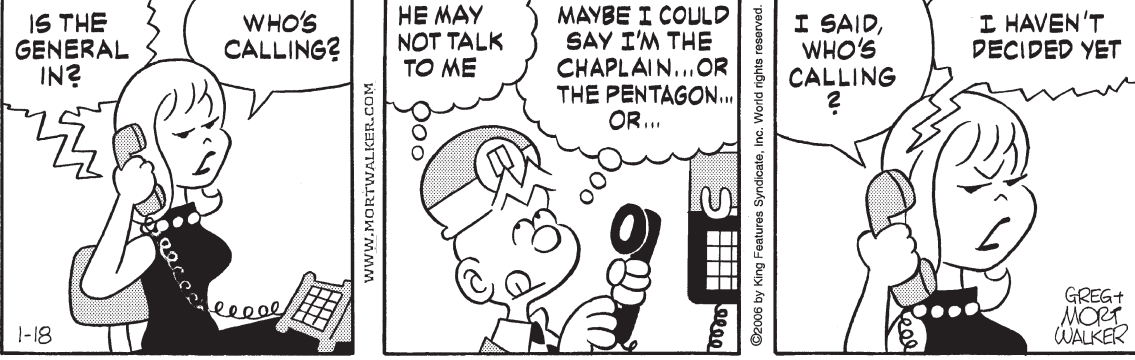
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



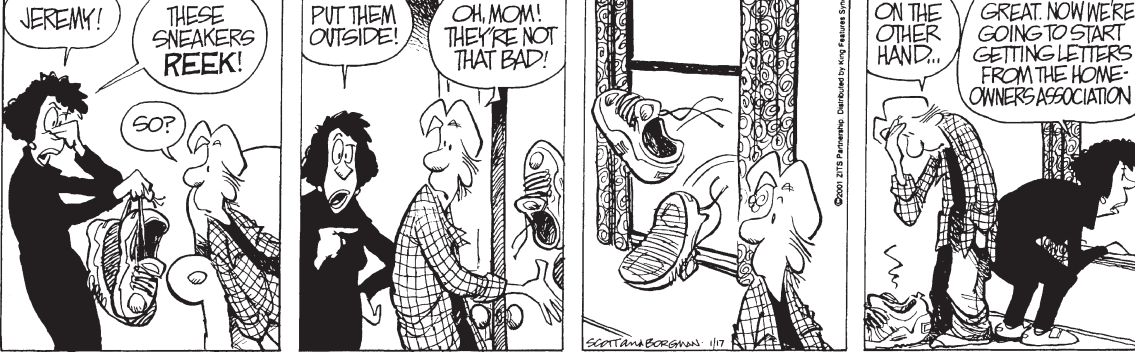
Blondie • Chic Young



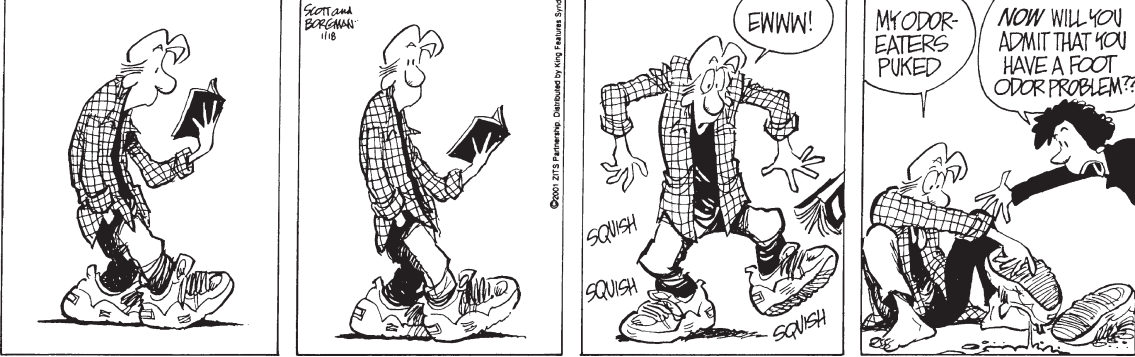
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Cryptoquip

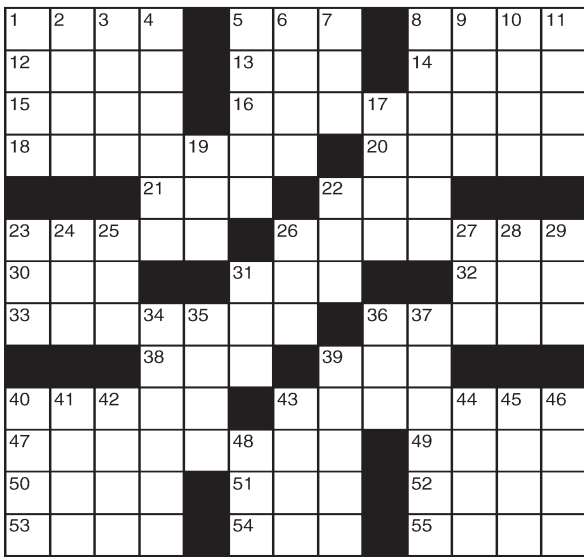
DYTT YQHCZBYNQL XCTO BN CE WVL NFPU F AVKZ
ZWMC EJ EUHNM UTTCMAJ SFAPCKZ NVLY VE F
OMNVTC? Y AWCLL YB'TT SFHICKZNVK GCNW, WVL TCZIN
VC DNMBX U LXNB.
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A PERSON SELLS
FLOWERS OUTSIDE ON THE CORNER, SHOULD
WE CALL HER A STREET PETALLER?
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: T equals L
GVTU IVTU HUFNNAU-HVYU.
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WILL INJECTIONS
HELP TO CURE MY MAJOR ALLERGY
PROBLEM? I GUESS IT'LL BE WORTH A SHOT.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: W equals Y

Crossword

ACROSS
1 Lends a hand
5 Understand
8 "— Factor"
12 Edge
13 Swiss canton
14 Incite
15 Diamond corner
16 Glowing praise
18 Surround
20 Loblo-lies, e.g.
21 Illumi-nated
22 Sandra or Ruby
23 — alcohol
26 Become caked
30 Evening hour, on a sundial
31 Man-mouse link
32 Round Table address
33 Dictionary name
36 Villain
38 Toper
39 Scull tool
40 Craft
43 Sets up shelter
47 Writes in cipher
49 Poet
50 Sicilian spouter
51 Pirouette pivot
52 Way out
53 Yuletide refrain
54 Pismire
55 Frost
4 Rank
5 Visitor
6 Sea eagle
7 Spasm
8 More vaporous
9 "— go braght"
10 Malaria symptom
11 Sleep phenom-ena
17 Fuel cartel ...
19 ... and its product
22 "CSI" evidence
23 Leading lady?
24 Stan-nation
25 Remark from 38-Across
26 History chapter
27 "Dream Team" logo
28 Clerical error?
29 Take a shot at
31 Mel of Coopers-town
34 Starry
35 Optimistic
36 Brit's raincoat
37 It gets the lead out
39 Begin-ning
40 Existed
41 Aware of
42 Derma-tology subject
43 Harrow's rival
44 Winter skirt, maybe
45 Decorous
46 Appease fully
48 Sch. group

DOWN
1 Singer Lane
2 Mideast nation
3 Frisbee, e.g.
4 Lava
5 Hum
6 Molt
7 Olio
8 Remind-er
9 Air-gun
10 Beam
11 Iou
12 Foun-der
13 East
14 Liv-er
15 Sedan
16 Rho
17 Ape-s
18 Defend-er
19 Rna
20 Afro
21 Pat-ent
22 Squire
23 Edu-cated
24 Gave
25 Surd-art
26 Amen
27 Ties
28 Key
29 Tent

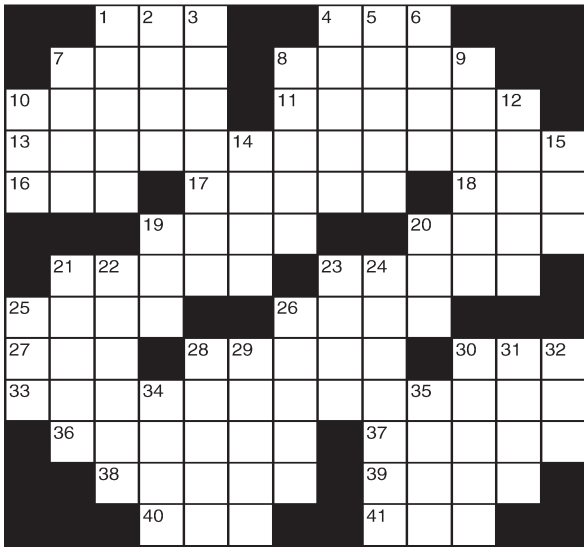
Solution time: 21 mins.
Yesterday's answer 1-17



ACROSS
1 Felon's flight
4 Retriever type, for short
7 Unrivaled
8 Conversation starter
10 Navajo house
11 Whopper toppers
13 Concise
16 Heavy weight
17 That is (Lat.)
18 Series of skirmishes
19 Buffalo Bill
20 "What's My Line?" host
21 Seventh-day Christmas gift
23 Con-vinces
25 Multi-colored
26 The Mac-Donald place
27 Moreover
28 "To — own self be true"
30 El preceder
33 Girl's makeup?
36 Tranquil
37 Restau-rateur
38 "Night-hawks" setting
39 Winning-streak ender
40 Billboards
41 Wapiti
14 Puts two and two together?
15 Have a go at
19 Scoundrel
20 Hoover, e.g.
21 Conges-tion locale
22 Stuck
23 Hourglass stuff
24 Grapple
25 — de deux
26 "Nothing could be — ..."
28 Pollster's finding
29 Under-wear brand
30 News-stand
31 Gospels follow-up
32 Un-doubtedly
34 Met melody
35 Combine resources

DOWN
1 Prepare to e-mail
2 Winglike
3 Bring up
4 Gives tempo-rarily
5 Top-notch invitees
6 Erupt
7 Section of London
8 Sweet-heart
9 Unilateral
10 White House mono-gram
12 Easter mail
13 Attach-ments

Solution time: 21 mins.
Yesterday's answer 1-18



Family Circus • Bill Keane



Bridge

South dealer.
Neither side vulnerable.
NORTH
♠ 8 3
♥ A K 6 4 3 2
♦ 9 5
♣ J 9 4
WEST
♠ K 9 4 2
♥ J 10 7 5
♦ Q J 8 3
♣ 7
EAST
♠ 7 6
♥ Q 9 8
♦ K 10 7 6 4 2
♣ 8 2
SOUTH
♠ A Q J 10 5
♥ —
♦ A
♣ A K Q 10 6 5 3
The bidding:
South 2 ♣
West Pass
North 3 ♥
East Pass
South 3 ♣
West Pass
North 5 ♣
East Pass
Opening lead — queen of diamonds.

As a rule, a grand slam should not be undertaken unless the chances in favor of making it are at least 2-to-1. These odds come from comparing what can be gained from making the grand slam — an additional 500 or 750 points, depending on vulnerability — to what can be lost — approximately 1,000 or 1,500 points, again depending on vulnerability.

It follows that bidding a grand slam that depends on a finesse — a 50-50 chance — is in the long run a losing proposition. Unfortunately, a player can't always tell whether that's what the grand slam will depend on.

In the present case, for example, South didn't know whether his partner had the king of spades but decided to bid seven anyway. He reasoned that even if North lacked the king, there might be alternative chances for 13 tricks, with a spade finesse still available as a last resort. South then proceeded to demonstrate that his assessment of the prospects was correct.

After winning the diamond lead, he led the five of clubs to the jack, cashed the A-K of hearts, discarding two spades, then ruffed a heart with the ten. When both opponents followed suit to the three heart leads, the grand slam became a certainty.

Declarer next led the six of clubs to the nine and ruffed another heart with the queen, establishing dummy's two remaining hearts. The carefully preserved three of clubs was then led to dummy's four, the two hearts were cashed, providing two more spade discards, and the grand slam was home.

By fully utilizing dummy's heart length and three club entries, declarer thus assured the grand slam if the hearts were divided 4-3 and the clubs 2-1.

This, combined with the spade finesse available if the hearts or clubs were unfavorably divided, gave him better than a 2-to-1 chance to make the contract.

Tomorrow: Comparing right with wrong.
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North dealer.
Neither side vulnerable.
NORTH
♠ A 10 7 5
♥ A 8 2
♦ K J 8
♣ A 6 4
WEST
♠ 8 4
♥ J 10 9 4
♦ A 10 7 5
♣ J 9 3
EAST
♠ K 2
♥ Q 7 3
♦ 9 6 4
♣ K 10 8 5 2
SOUTH
♠ Q J 9 6 3
♥ K 6 5
♦ Q 3 2
♣ Q 7
The bidding:
North 1 NT
East Pass
South 3 ♠
West Pass
Opening lead — jack of hearts.

Assume you're declarer at four spades and West leads the jack of hearts. How would you play the hand?

When the deal occurred, South won the heart with the king and tried a trump finesse, losing the queen to the king. East returned the queen of hearts to the ace, whereupon declarer cashed the ace of trumps and led a low club toward his queen.

East went up with the king and returned a heart to West's nine. South still had to lose a trick to the ace of diamonds, so he finished down one, losing a trick in each suit.

The trouble with this method of play is that declarer gave himself only one chance for the contract. He banked everything on the success of the spade finesse, in essence only a 50-50 probability. In choosing this approach, South ignored an equally good second possibility that would have given him an additional chance to make the contract.

The better approach is to win the opening heart lead in dummy and immediately lead a low club toward the queen. If East has the king, as in the actual case, the best he can do is to win the trick and return a heart.

Declarer takes the heart return with the king, cashes the queen of clubs and then crosses to the ace of spades, refusing the finesse, which is no longer necessary. South's heart loser is discarded on the club ace, and the only tricks the defense can later get are the king of trumps and ace of diamonds.

Of course, if the low club play at trick two fails because West has the king of clubs, South still has the spade finesse in reserve. Since this approach succeeds whenever East has the king of clubs or West has the king of spades, it is clearly superior to the line of play South adopted. Two chances are obviously better than one.

Tomorrow: From the mailbox.
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