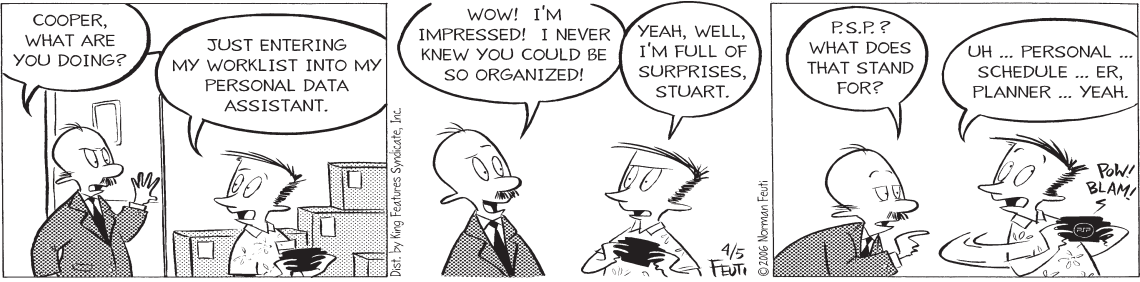
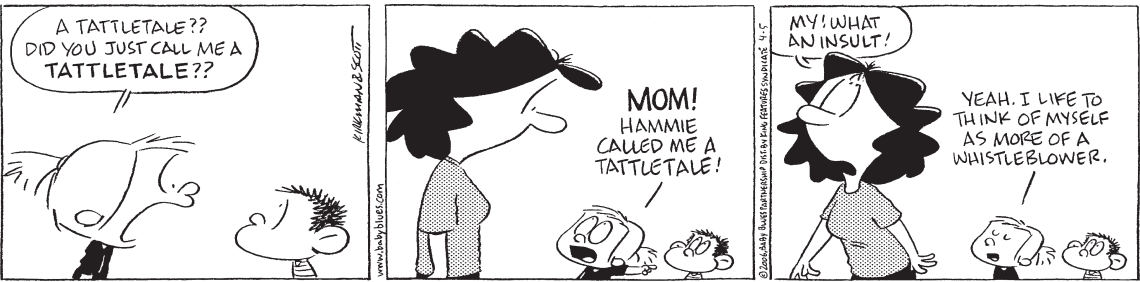


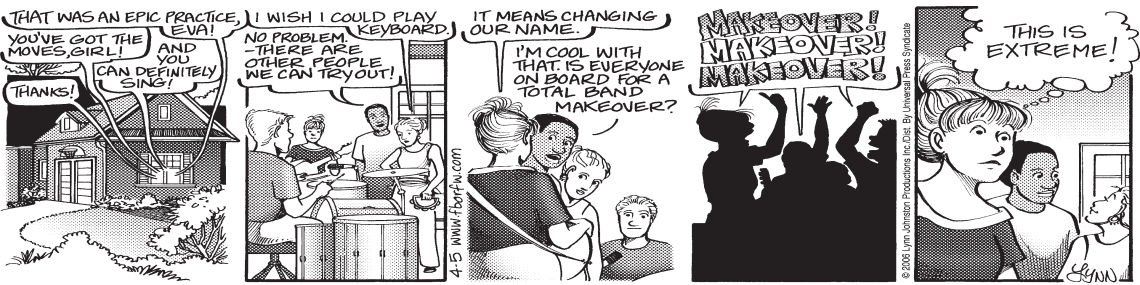
Retail • Norm Feuti (Sample)



Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott (Sample)



For Better or Worse • Lynn Johnston



Garfield • Jim Davis



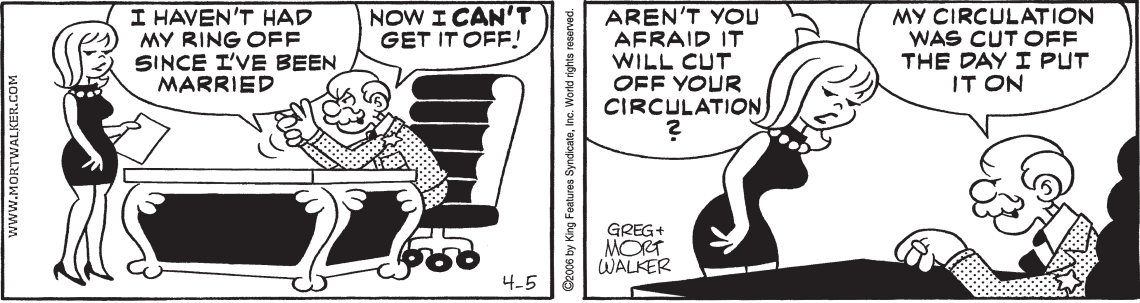
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



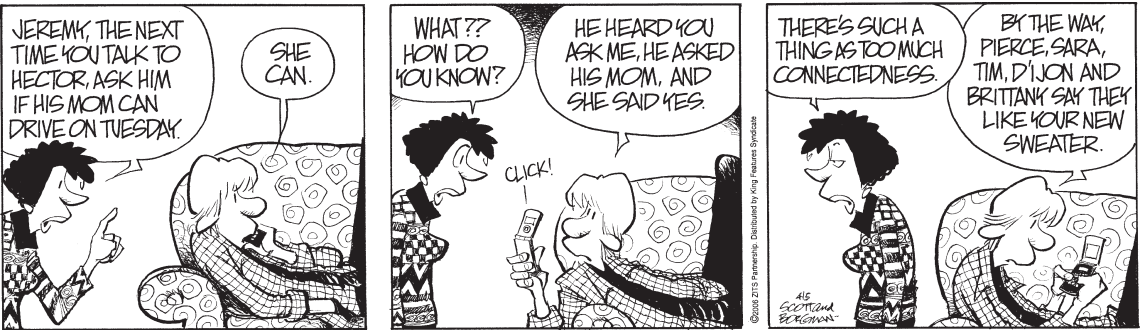
Blondie • Chic Young



Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Cryptoquip

POYKB TOZCYRV TOYXSMRDC, XM MBG XPXJGLE XIXNJO,  
YH'C XQCCYAKB Z RBZU- MBG AXOGAXRR URXEGN  
CYVOHBJ JQV SYVOH IXO YFG YT MBG FYLHFGGO  
AZUD MX HOB PUQRV HUBB. TYN AGOM UHMPBGN.  
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A SPITEFUL GUY  
STARTS BEING MUCH NICER TO PEOPLE, YOU  
MIGHT SAY HE'S BEEN DE-MEANED. Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHILE CHASING  
CHIPMUNKS, IT'S POSSIBLE A NEAR-SIGHTED  
DOG MIGHT BARK UP THE WRONG TREE.  
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: H equals T Today's Cryptoquip Clue: B equals H

Crossword

**ACROSS**

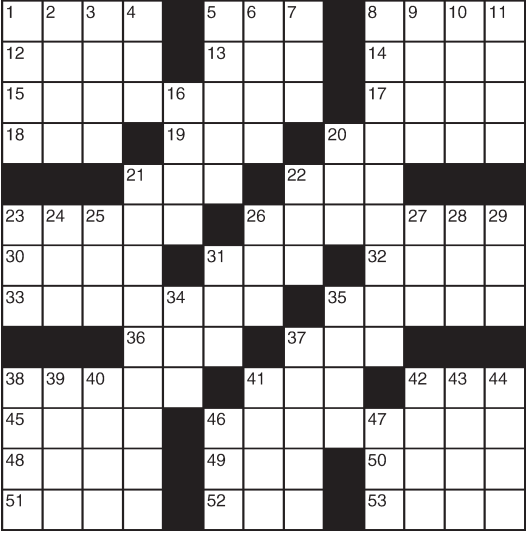
1 BPOE members  
5 \$ dispenser  
8 Capri, e.g.  
12 Stead  
13 Sticky stuff  
14 Indian Ocean vessel  
15 \*NSYNC, O-Town, et al.  
17 Tempt  
18 Reply (Abbr.)  
19 Roulette bet  
20 Parking regulator  
21 "— Impossible"  
22 "Phooey!"  
23 Parents' employee  
26 Venezuela's capital  
30 Out of control  
31 Stein  
32 Zilch, in  
33 Adore  
35 Extra  
36 Monkey suit

**DOWN**

1 Exile site  
2 Simba or Scar  
3 Jailer's jinglers  
4 Long lunch?  
5 Moore-head or de Mille  
6 Lincoln in-law  
7 Calendar pp., often  
8 "The devil's playthings"  
9 Close  
10 Traditional tales  
11 Basin accessory  
16 Bohemian  
20 Scratch the surface  
21 Old-time school-desk features

**Solution time: 21 mins.**

**Yesterday's answer** 4-4



**ACROSS**

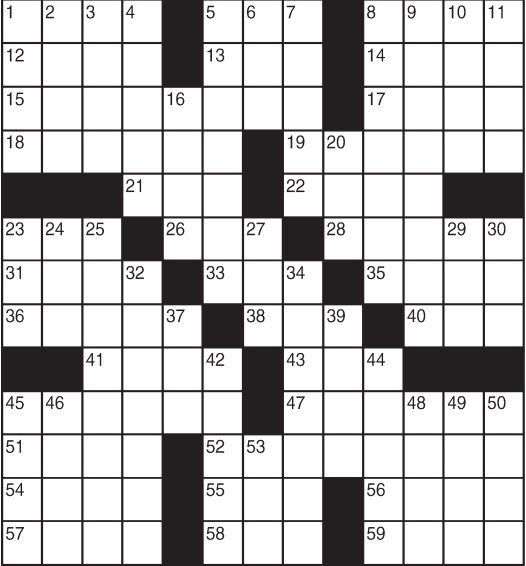
1 Uses a straw  
5 Chignon  
8 Newspaper page  
12 Help a hood  
13 401(k) alternative  
14 Magazine founded by Quincy Jones  
15 "The Incredible Hulk" portrayer  
17 Organic compound  
18 Stretch out  
19 Sea-related  
21 Adversity  
22 Inactive  
23 Fond du —  
26 A Bobbsey twin  
28 Play amorously  
31 Needing liniment  
33 Theme entries' first name

**DOWN**

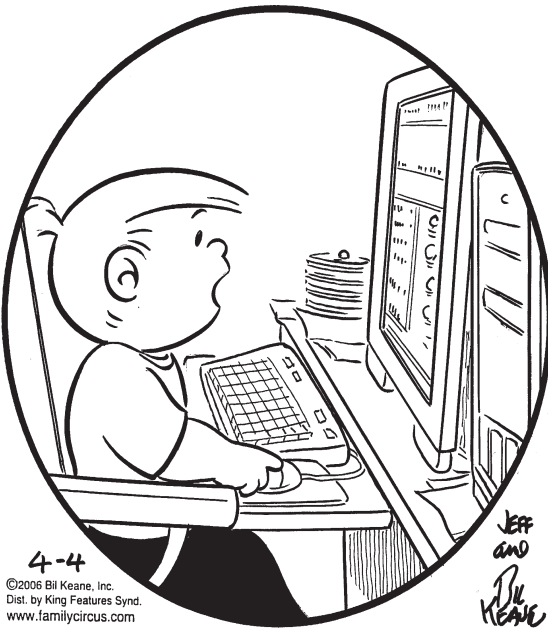
1 Vault  
2 Mountain beast  
3 Saucy  
4 Scatter  
5 "Who cares?"  
6 Coffee-shop vessel  
7 Actress Watts  
8 Cover partially  
9 Recent Devil Rays manager  
10 Black, in verse  
11 Take out of context?

**Solution time: 21 mins.**

**Yesterday's answer** 4-5



Family Circus • Bill Keane



"I'll bet the tooth fairy makes a fortune selling baby teeth on eBay."

Bridge

West dealer.  
Both sides vulnerable.

**NORTH**

♠ J 7 3  
♥ 10 8 4  
♦ J 9 6  
♣ A Q 6 2

**WEST**

♠ A K Q 10  
♥ Q 3  
♦ K 8 4 3  
♣ 7 5 4

**EAST**

♠ 9 8 6 5 2  
♥ 9  
♦ A Q 5 2  
♣ 9 8 3

**SOUTH**

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

The bidding:  
West 1 ♠  
North Pass  
East 4 ♠  
South 5 ♥  
Dble  
Opening lead — king of spades.

Partnership Discord

This deal comes from the 1966 Tournament of Champions played in Deauville, France. With Walter Avarelli and Massimo D'Alelio of Italy North-South, and Kenneth Konstam and Maurice Harrison-Gray (aka "Gray") of England East-West, the bid ding went as shown.

Gray led the king of spades, on which Konstam played the nine. Ordinarily, the play of the nine — obviously an unnecessarily high spot-card — would constitute a request for West to continue the suit. That is the way almost everyone plays, and that is the way Gray interpreted the nine.

But when Gray led another spade, D'Alelio ruffed and easily made the contract. As can be seen, if Gray had shifted to a diamond, the defense would have won the first three tricks to set the contract.

Obviously, Gray and Konstam were operating on different wavelengths. Konstam intended the nine as a signal for Gray to shift to a diamond — the higher-ranking of the two side suits (clubs and diamonds). This was in accord with the suit-preference convention played by Konstam in such situations.

It can be argued that Gray should have switched to a diamond despite what he thought was a come-on signal in spades, because he could infer from the bidding that South had no more spades.

The answer to this, if we accept Gray's thesis that there can be no suit-preference signal at trick one, is that Konstam was asking for another spade lead because he did not want any other suit led.

But the practical answer is that any pair who is playing in a major championship should settle in advance the defensive methods they plan to use. It is unreasonable to expect harmonious results when the trombone is playing Sousa and the cello is playing Beethoven.

North dealer.  
Neither side vulnerable.

**NORTH**

♠ 5 4  
♥ J 5 4  
♦ 6 4  
♣ K 7 6 5 4 3

**WEST**

♠ A K 10 2  
♥ 9 8  
♦ J 7 5 3 2  
♣ Q J

**EAST**

♠ Q J 9 7  
♥ 7  
♦ A K Q 10 9 8  
♣ 10 8

**SOUTH**

♠ 8 6 3  
♥ A K Q 10 6 3 2  
♦ A 9 2

The bidding:  
North 1 ♦  
East 5 ♠  
South 4 ♥  
West 4 ♠  
Dble  
Opening lead — jack of hearts.

Partnership Harmony

Yesterday, we featured a hand from the Tournament of Champions where the British East-West pair, Kenneth Konstam and Maurice Harrison-Gray (aka "Gray"), had a misunderstanding about a suit-preference signal and permitted the Italian pair, Walter Avarelli and Massimo D'Alelio, to make five hearts doubled. By a strange coincidence, the Italian pair on the very next deal also had a suit-preference opportunity. But, as usual with the Italians, the partnership functioned in perfect harmony.

Gray made an inspired decision when he elected to bid four spades on a four-card suit. D'Alelio would have made five hearts, and the British pair did exceedingly well to find their spade fit at such a high level. Avarelli led the jack of hearts, and D'Alelio played the ten on it. This was a suit-preference signal in the Italian methods, asking partner to shift to the higher ranking of the two side suits.

So Avarelli — showing full faith and confidence in his partner — switched to a diamond. D'Alelio ruffed, played the ace and another club, and Avarelli, after taking the king, led a second diamond for South to ruff. As a result, the Italians collected 500 points.

The hand points up the value of a clear partnership understanding in a situation where most players at best have only a vague arrangement.

Adopting a special convention in either the bidding or the play — because you think it will pay in the long run — is not nearly as important as making sure that you and partner are on the same page whenever the situation actually arises. That is what makes for a good partnership.



"We had a birthday party for Barfy, but he ate the whole cake!"