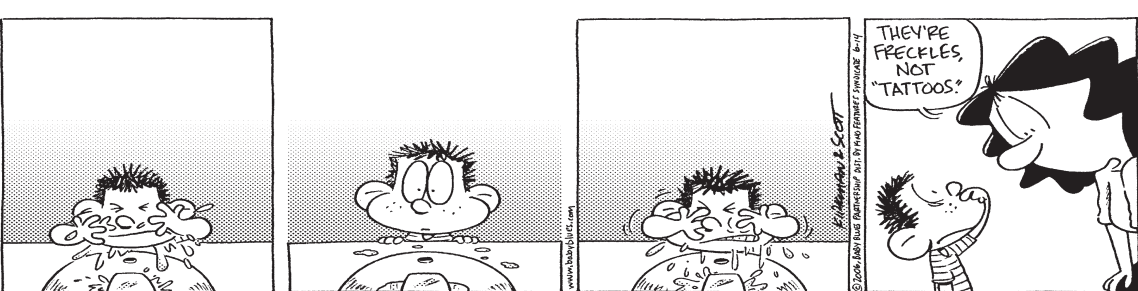


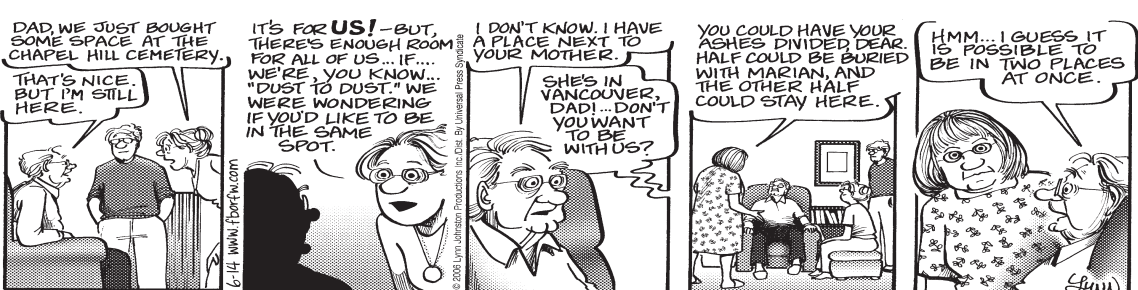
**Retail • Norm Feuti (Sample)**



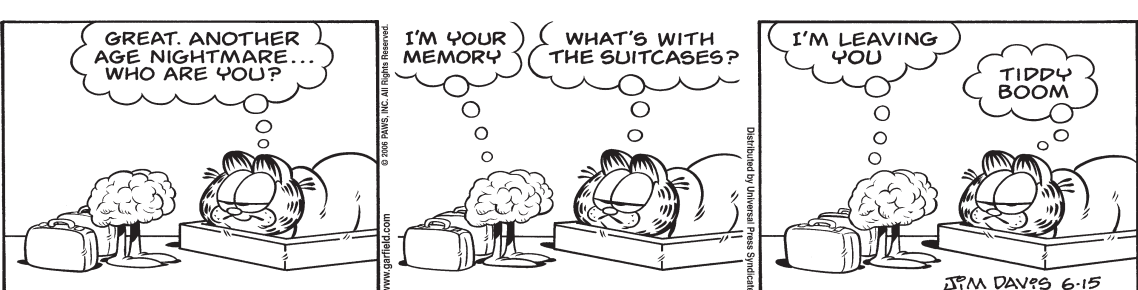
**Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott (Sample)**



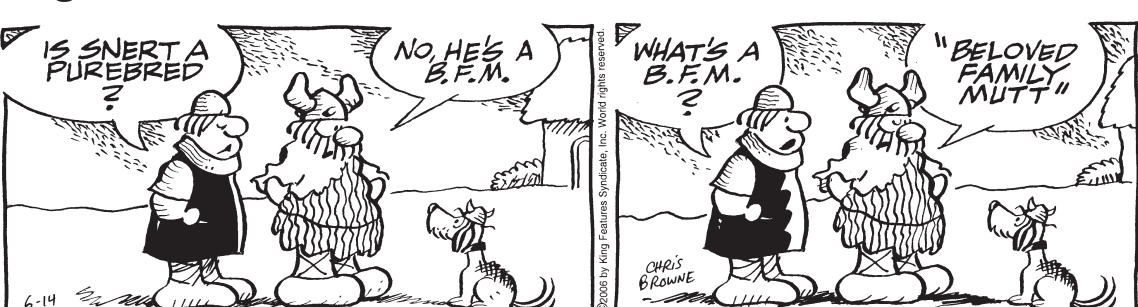
**For Better or Worse • Lynn Johnston**



**Garfield • Jim Davis**



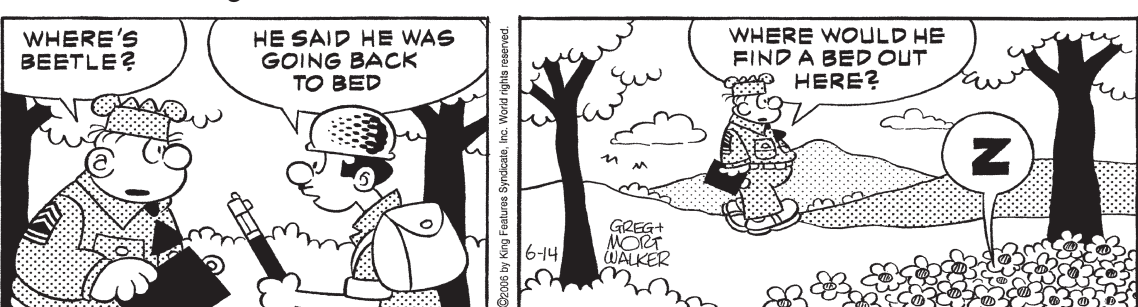
**Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne**



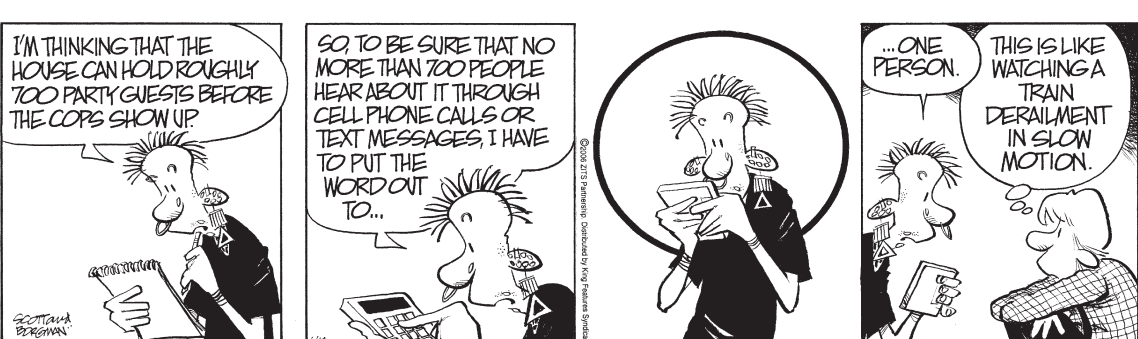
**Blondie • Chic Young**



**Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker**



**Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott**



**Sally Forth • Greg Howard**



**Cryptoquip**

MB G NDJ UFGXXJ XMHFO CLN RNB ISXGA CLYC  
 QMN NTBP OUMLHN, INYCOFNU Y GQOFC HNPCNF  
 ZTKXO JTK NGJ QF'N G GSYU XR YFDQF BYP RYDNU  
 ZTHF-GLO-OGEEFU PJDF?  
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: MY MOTHER OWNS A LOCAL DOG GROOMING COMPANY WHOSE SPECIALTY IS IN TERRIER DECORATING.  
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: J equals Y

"IQQS DNCYS HYGANC."  
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A SPY REALLY LIKED HIS SOFT DRINKS, COULD YOU SAY HE'S A COKE-AND-DAGGER TYPE?  
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: C equals T

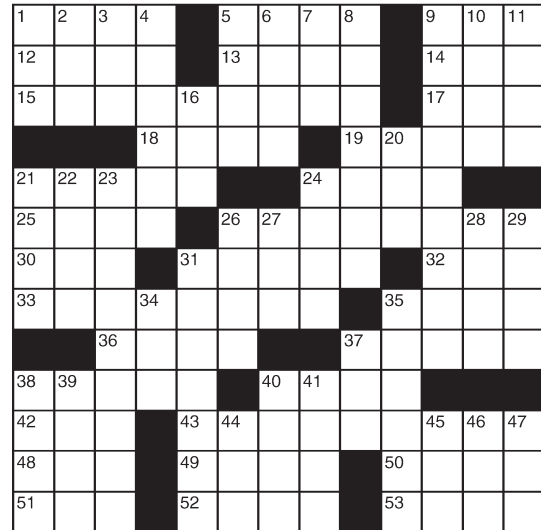
**Crossword**

**ACROSS**  
 1 Pad-locked fastener  
 5 Caviar source  
 9 Chatter away  
 12 Reed instrument  
 13 Facility  
 14 Id counterpart  
 15 Big Band-era drummer  
 17 Fresh  
 18 Test tube  
 19 Apparel  
 21 Carried on  
 24 Pelican's prominence  
 25 Brewery output  
 26 Florist's containers  
 30 Howard or Ely  
 31 Beat  
 32 Prune  
 33 Sessions  
 35 Intimation  
 36 Boston Celtics legend

**DOWN**  
 1 Glutton  
 2 Penny portrait  
 3 Trinity member  
 4 Grievances  
 5 Antitoxins  
 6 Truckload  
 7 Cleo's slayer  
 8 Cul-de-sac  
 9 "An American in Paris" star  
 10 Census data  
 11 Acknowledges applause  
 16 Tease  
 20 Snitch  
 21 Nearing the treasure

**Solution time: 21 mins.**

Yesterdays answer 6-13

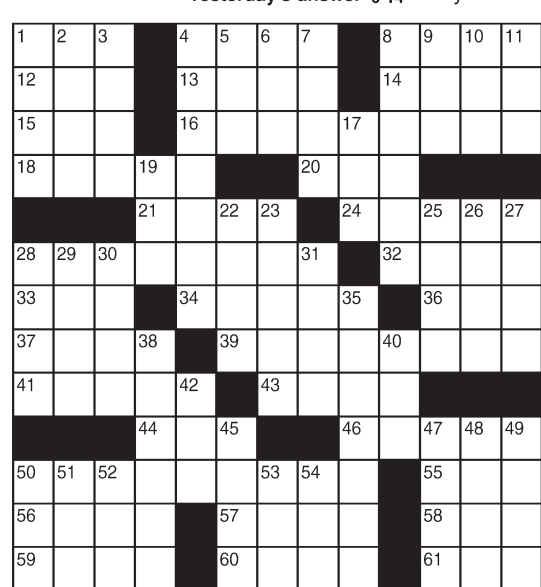


**ACROSS**  
 1 Freudian concept  
 4 Layer  
 8 Former frosh  
 12 Carpet  
 13 Rembrandt's supply  
 14 Aesopian also-ran  
 15 The whole shootin' match  
 16 Nickname of singer Charlie Rich  
 18 Glasses  
 20 Shell-game item  
 21 Ford or Lincoln  
 24 Some sports-wear  
 28 "Clue" weapon  
 32 Former surgeon general  
 33 Diving bird  
 34 Hitchcock's "The 39—"  
 36 Place-kicker's pride  
 37 Rainbow

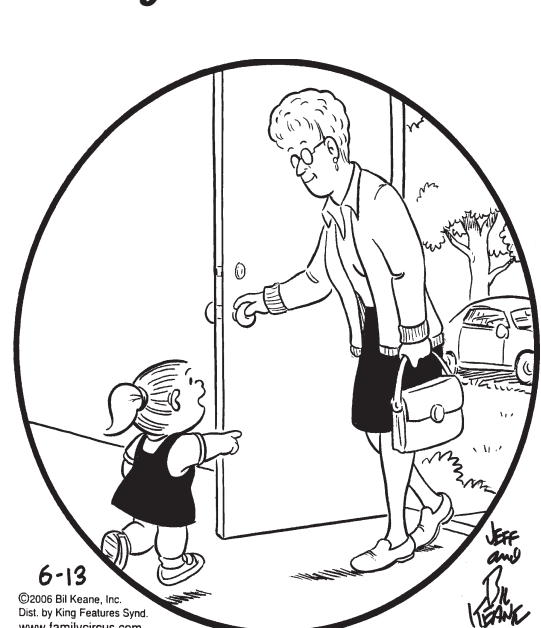
**DOWN**  
 1 Geology periods  
 25 Teeny bit

**Solution time: 21 mins.**

Yesterdays answer 6-14



**Family Circus • Bill Keane**



"Hi, Grandma! Does the candy in your purse make it too heavy for you?"

**Bridge**

South dealer.  
 North-South vulnerable.

**NORTH**  
 ♠ Q 9 8  
 ♥ J 9 8  
 ♦ A Q 7  
 ♣ A J 9 4

**WEST**  
 ♠ K J 5 2  
 ♥ 7 4 2  
 ♦ 10 6  
 ♣ Q 10 8 5

**EAST**  
 ♠ A 10 7  
 ♥ 6 5  
 ♦ J 9 5 4  
 ♣ K 6 3 2

**SOUTH**  
 ♠ 6 4 3  
 ♥ A K Q 10 3  
 ♦ K 8 3 2  
 ♣ 7

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

Opening lead — five of clubs.

**More About Probabilities**

When the opponents have six cards of a suit, they will be divided 3-3 36 percent of the time; 4-2, 48 percent; 5-1, 15 percent; and 6-0, 1 percent. With five cards missing, they will be divided 3-2 68 percent of the time; 4-1, 28 percent; and 5-0, 4 percent. Memorizing these figures is not a matter of life and death, but anyone unfamiliar with them in at least a general way is operating under a handicap.

Let's see how the odds apply to this deal. Assume you're declarer and West leads a club against your four-heart contract. Obviously, you are sure of five trump tricks, three diamonds and one club. This comes to only nine tricks, but there is a chance for a 10th trick if the diamonds are divided 3-3. However, this offers only a 36 percent chance, not a particularly appealing prospect.

Fortunately, there's a much more attractive alternative. About all it depends on is finding the trumps divided 3-2, a 68 percent probability.

Accordingly, you win the club and ruff a club with the queen. Next you cash the ace of trumps and lead the three to the nine. When both defenders follow suit, you know the trumps are divided 3-2.

You then ruff another club, cross to the queen of diamonds and ruff the jack of clubs with your last trump, at which point you have taken seven tricks. A diamond to the ace allows you to draw West's remaining trump with the jack, and the king of diamonds constitutes trick number 10.

This line of play enables you to score six trump tricks instead of the obvious five. More importantly, it makes you about a 2-to-1 favorite, while if you draw trumps and rely solely on a 3-3 diamond division, the odds are nearly 2-to-1 against you.

Tomorrow: Eliminating the risk factor.  
 (c)2006 King Features Syndicate Inc.

**East dealer. Neither side vulnerable.**

**NORTH**  
 ♠ Q 8 3  
 ♥ 6  
 ♦ A K J 10 8 5 2  
 ♣ K 6

**WEST**  
 ♠ A 6 4  
 ♥ A 5 3 2  
 ♦ 7 6  
 ♣ 9 8 5 4

**EAST**  
 ♠ K 9 7 2  
 ♥ Q J 10 8  
 ♦ 4  
 ♣ A 10 7 3

**SOUTH**  
 ♠ J 10 5  
 ♥ K 9 7 4  
 ♦ Q 9 3  
 ♣ Q J 2

The bidding:  
 East Pass South Pass West Pass North 1♦  
 East Dble Pass South 1NT West 2♥ North 3♦  
 East Pass South 3NT West 2♥ North 3♦

Opening lead — nine of clubs.

**Eliminating the Risk Factor**

One of a defender's primary responsibilities is to anticipate a problem his partner might encounter and try to prevent him from going wrong. West did exactly that in today's deal, and thereby spared East the agony of being subjected to a very difficult guess.

The three-notrump contract reached by North-South was a shaky affair at best, and would have had no chance had West led a heart or a spade initially. But West, certain that South had the king of hearts for his notrump bids, elected to make a noncommittal club lead, after which the defense might easily have gone astray.

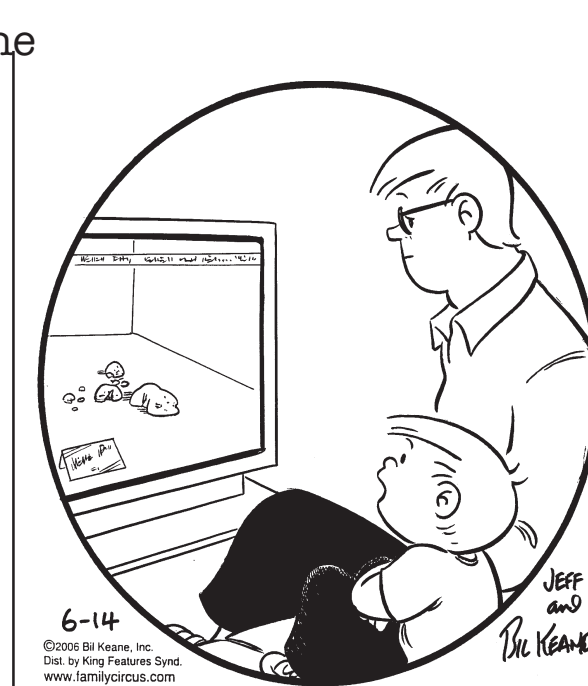
South played the king from dummy, hoping to induce a club return, but East won and shifted to the queen of hearts, covered by the king and ace. This brought West to the critical point of the play.

Had West simply returned a heart, East would have taken the ten and jack, giving the defenders the first four tricks, but he would then have had to guess who had the missing nine of hearts. And if East had misguessed by returning a fourth heart, declarer would have taken the rest of the tricks.

After winning the ace of hearts, though, West paused to analyze the situation. He didn't know how good his partner's hearts were, but he did know that he couldn't contribute anything more of substance in that suit. He also couldn't tell who held the missing high clubs or the king of spades.

To clarify the situation for his partner, West therefore cashed the ace of spades before returning a heart. East then happily collected the setting tricks with the J-10 of hearts and king of spades, after which he thanked his partner for having spared him a big headache.

Tomorrow: Crime and punishment.  
 (c)2006 King Features Syndicate Inc.



"Rocks from Mars? I think I'd rather buy American."