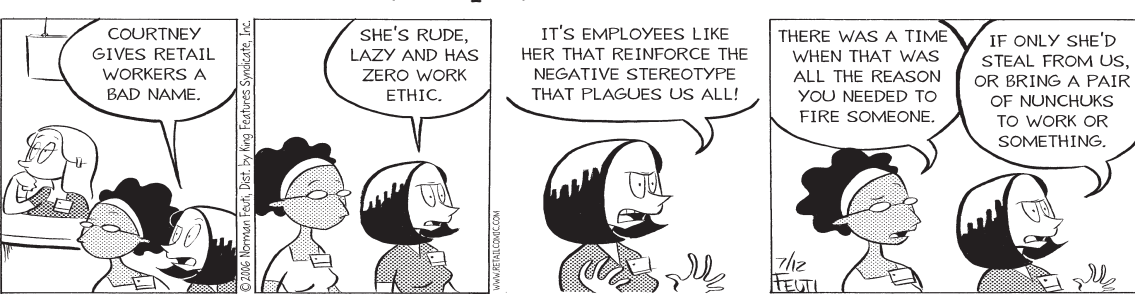


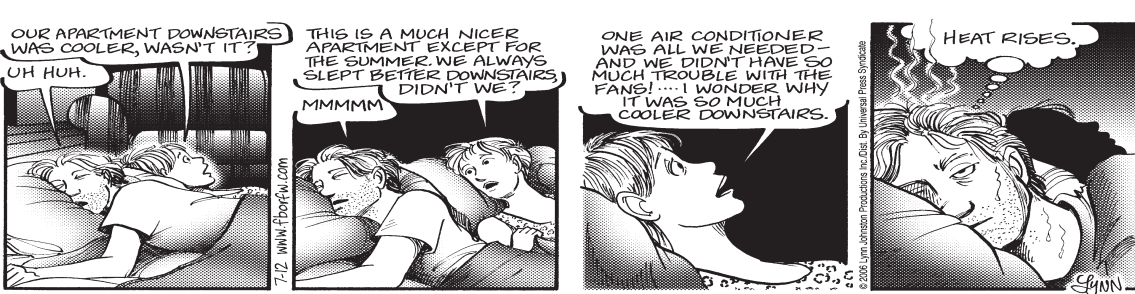
**Retail • Norm Feuti (Sample)**



**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**

VO HM VMCHVS EQKMX HDV CKYEY ODKRDO  
 SXEVB M VE OHVPCA LNHLDKHRHZ OYHWY ENHRLY  
 IMMEDVPVMB, AKI JV BQ EHA KDORCDHWO' ZKYOOM  
 QGHQ'E H DPKEHVZ JKEHVZ.  
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: SINCE I MISPLACED MY ONLY STEAM IRON THE OTHER DAY, I SEEM TO BE A BIT DE-PRESSED.  
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: V equals I

MYKCO: "Q.Y. QYVH."  
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF AN INLAID STONE DESIGN IS FAIRLY UNINSPIRING, YOU MIGHT SAY THAT'S A PROSAIC MOSAIC.  
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Q equals L

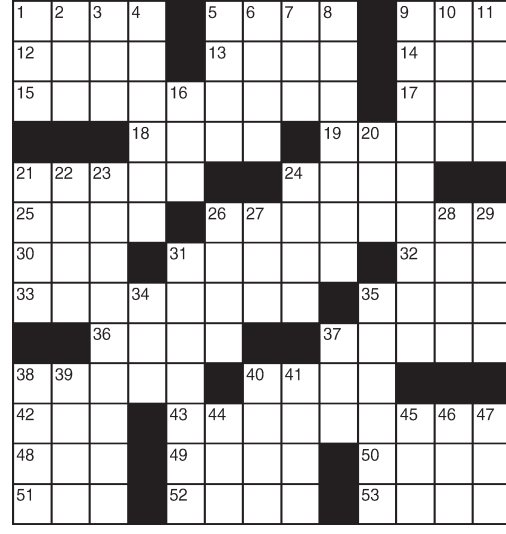
**Crossword**

**ACROSS**  
 1 Grate  
 5 Sod  
 9 Massachusetts cape  
 12 Medley  
 13 Con  
 14 "Eureka!"  
 15 Wood worker  
 17 Edge  
 18 Toy block name  
 19 Rocker John  
 21 AMPAS trophy  
 24 Busy as —  
 25 Bartlett, for one  
 26 Rodgers & Hammerstein show  
 30 Mess up  
 31 Cleaning agent  
 32 Savings fund (Abbr.)  
 33 Fair  
 35 Combo  
 36 Erstwhile  
 37 — Island  
 38 Crew member  
 40 Pitch

**DOWN**  
 1 Sinbad's bird  
 2 Carte lead-in  
 3 Round Table address  
 4 Aspen or cottonwood  
 5 Piquant flavor  
 6 "Do — others ..."  
 7 Hwy.  
 8 Street-corner alarm  
 9 Re philosopher René  
 10 Part of B.&O.  
 11 Rhett's shocking word  
 16 Always  
 20 Romanian money org.  
 22 Antitoxins  
 23 Scott Thompson's nom de comedy  
 24 — Sea Inlet  
 26 Inlet  
 27 Coach Parseghian  
 28 Sea bird  
 29 Tramp's love  
 31 Arm-strong's transport  
 34 Away from SSW  
 35 Sarajevo is there  
 37 Marg Helgenberger series  
 38 Oodles  
 39 Lotion additive  
 40 Arduous journey  
 41 Probability  
 44 Have a bug  
 45 Do sums  
 46 Actress Thompson  
 47 Muppet eagle

**Solution time: 21 mins.**

Yesterday's answer 7-11

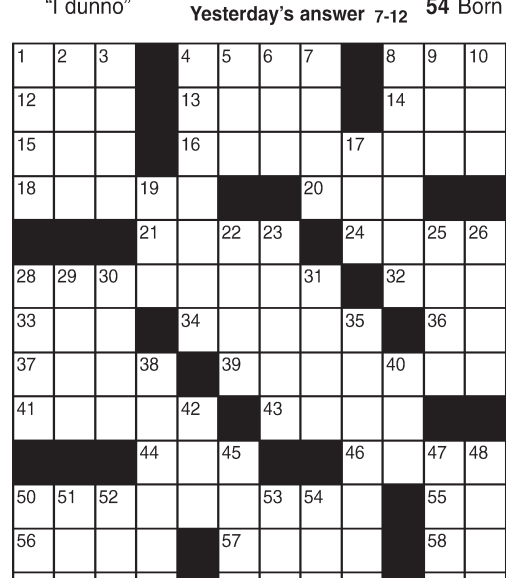


**ACROSS**  
 1 Make inquiries  
 4 Puerto —  
 8 Mined-over matter  
 12 Sheepish remark  
 13 Unyielding  
 14 Destiny  
 15 Commit a misstep  
 16 Affair  
 18 Pale purple  
 20 Affirmative  
 21 Verboten (Var.)  
 24 Insurrectionist  
 28 Set of circumstances  
 32 Heavy reading  
 33 Onassis' nickname  
 34 Great Lake tribe  
 36 Repose  
 37 Cicatrix  
 39 Approximate  
 41 Unspoken "I dunno"

**DOWN**  
 2 Ganges garment  
 3 Malden or Marx  
 4 Vile  
 5 George's brother  
 6 Army rank (Abbr.)  
 7 Sibling-less  
 8 Balance  
 9 Uncultured  
 10 H  
 11 Gender look-alike  
 17 "— the ramparts ..."  
 19 Pac. counterpart  
 22 Zinger

**Solution time: 21 mins.**

Yesterday's answer 7-12



**Family Circus • Bill Keane**



**Bridge**

North dealer.  
 North-South vulnerable.  
**NORTH**  
 ♠ J  
 ♥ Q 5  
 ♦ Q 10 5 2  
 ♣ A K Q 9 8 3

**WEST**  
 ♠ 10 7 6 5 2  
 ♥ J 10 8 6 3  
 ♦ A 6  
 ♣ 4

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

**SOUTH**  
 ♠ K Q 8  
 ♥ A K  
 ♦ K J 9 7 4 3  
 ♣ 7 5

The bidding:  
**North** 1 ♣  
**East** Pass  
**South** 1 ♦  
**West** Pass

Opening lead — four of clubs.  
 The suit-preference signal is one of the more effective weapons available to the defenders. Consider this deal where South wound up in five diamonds after his Blackwood inquiry disclosed that the opponents held two aces.

West led the four of clubs, which East had no trouble diagnosing as a singleton, not only because West had led dummy's suit, but also because the four was the lowest missing club. Had West started with, say, the 7-4, he would have led the seven initially.

When South played the queen from dummy, East played his jack on it! This was intended to show that East had the ace of spades as an entry card. Accordingly, when declarer next led a diamond from dummy, West took the ace and returned a spade. East won and led a club, and South went down one.

Note that without the suit-preference signal, West would have been hard-pressed to guess the right suit to return at trick three. As can be seen, a heart return would have handed South the contract.

The signal is easy enough to use. In a potential ruffing situation, the play of an unnecessarily high card is a signal indicating an entry in the higher-ranking of the two side suits. (There are ordinarily only two suits to choose from, since the trump suit and the suit to be ruffed obviously are not considered.)

Conversely, the play of a very low card indicates a preference for the lower-ranking side suit. Here, if East had held the ace of hearts in stead of the ace of spades, he would have played the deuce of clubs at trick one to suggest a heart return.

Tomorrow: The science of card-reading.  
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North dealer.  
 Both sides vulnerable.  
**NORTH**  
 ♠ 10 6  
 ♥ A Q 10 4  
 ♦ Q J 10 8 4  
 ♣ A 9

**WEST**  
 ♠ K 9 4 2  
 ♥ 7 5  
 ♦ A 6  
 ♣ K Q 6 4 2

**EAST**  
 ♠ 8 7 5 3  
 ♥ J 9 6 3  
 ♦ 7 3 2  
 ♣ J 5

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

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

Opening lead — four of clubs.  
 When declarer starts the play of a hand, he usually doesn't know much about how the defenders' cards are distributed. This is especially true when the opponents have remained silent throughout the auction.

This does not mean, however, that declarer must rely on a lot of guesswork when the opponents haven't bid. In many cases, the lie of the opposing cards can be inferred by drawing conclusions from the early plays made by the defense. This is where much of the skill in declarer play comes to the fore.

Here is a relatively simple exercise in card-reading. West leads a low club. How should South play the hand?

To begin with, it is reasonable to assume that West does not have the K-Q-J of clubs because, if he had that holding, he would have led the king and not the four. It follows, therefore, that East must have at least one of the missing club honors.

It is also fairly certain that West has led from either a four- or five-card suit, which marks East with either two or three clubs.

The contract is not in danger if West has only a four-card suit. The most that can be lost in that case is three clubs and a diamond. Declarer's primary concern, therefore, is to guard against a five-card suit.

This can be accomplished by going up with the ace of clubs at trick one and immediately forcing out the ace of diamonds. West will then be unable to cash four club tricks, because East's now-singleton club honor prevents the suit from being run.

Observe, though, that if a low club is played from dummy on the opening trick, South enables the defenders to disentangle their clubs. In the actual deal, he would be defeated after East wins with the jack and returns a club.

Tomorrow: Discovery play.  
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