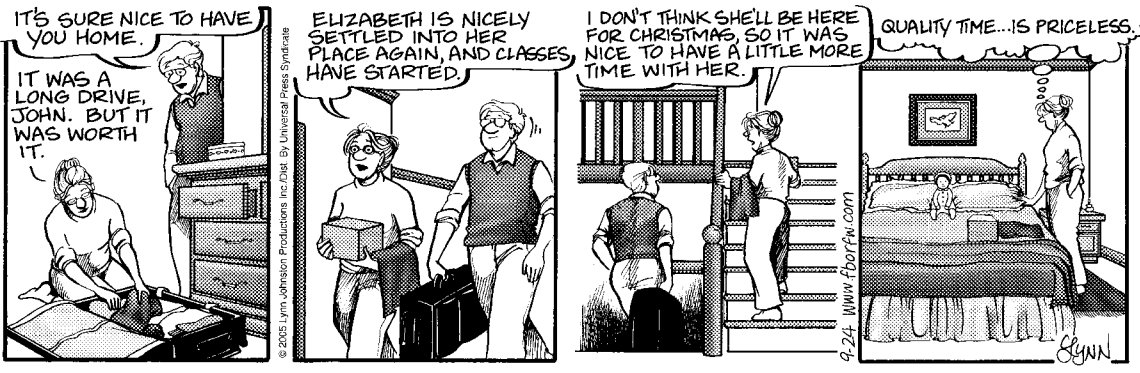
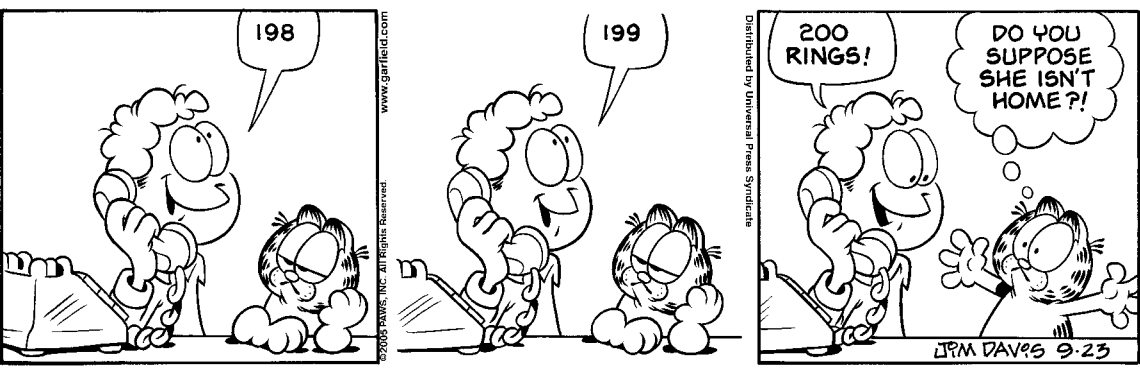


For Better or Worse • Lynn Johnston



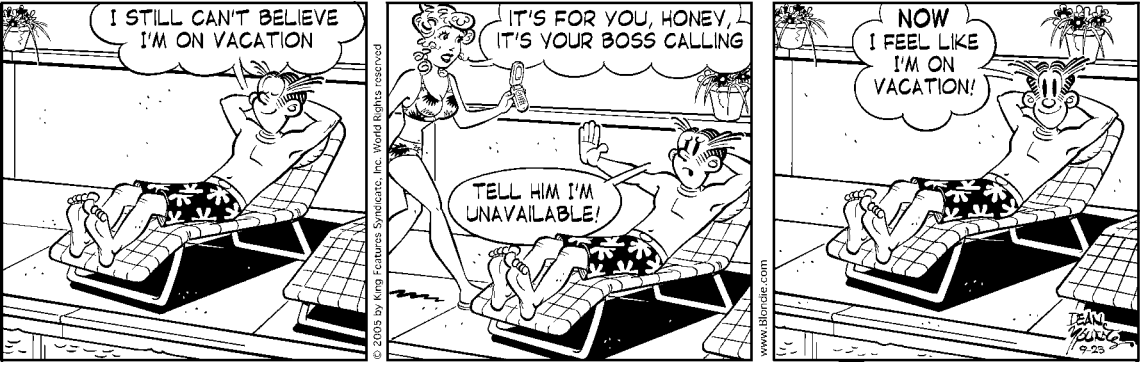
Garfield • Jim Davis



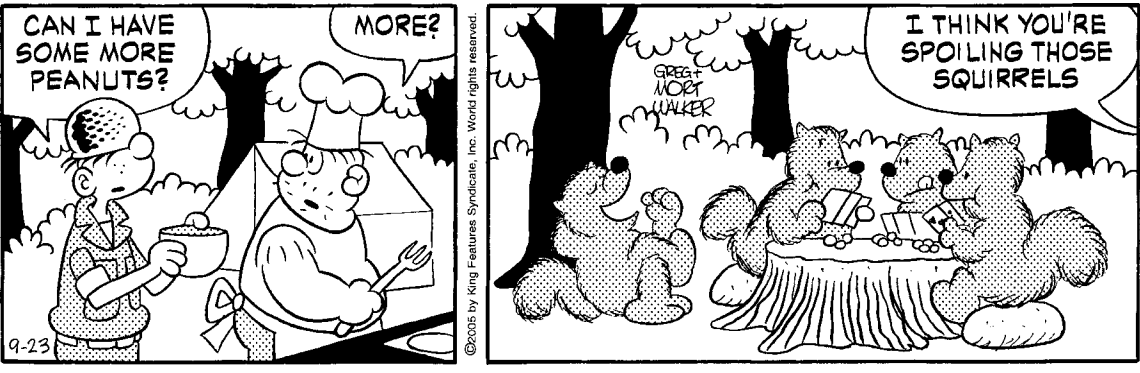
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



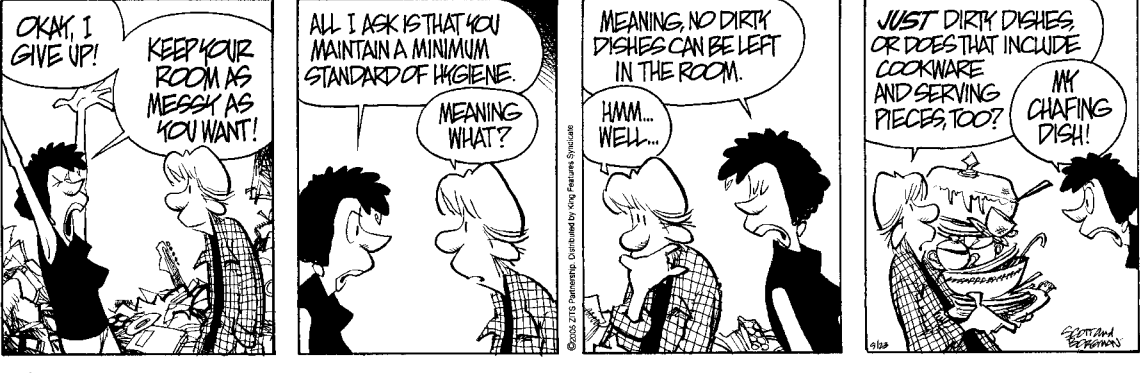
Blondie • Chic Young



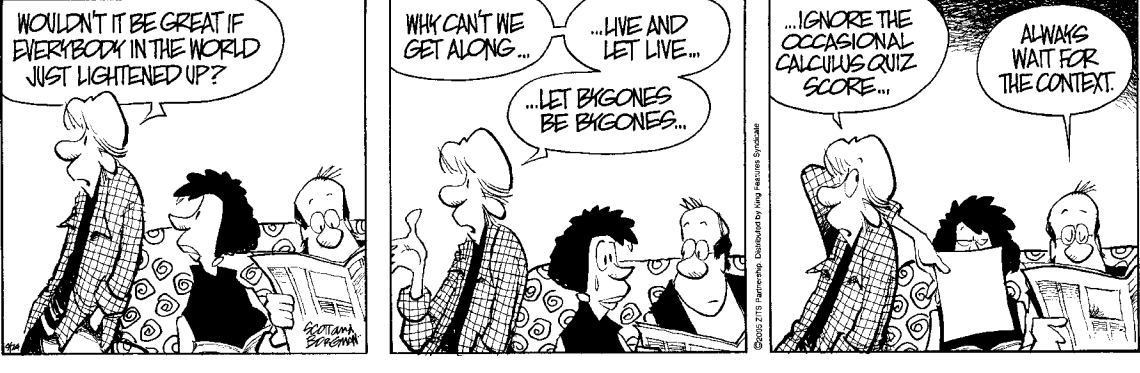
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



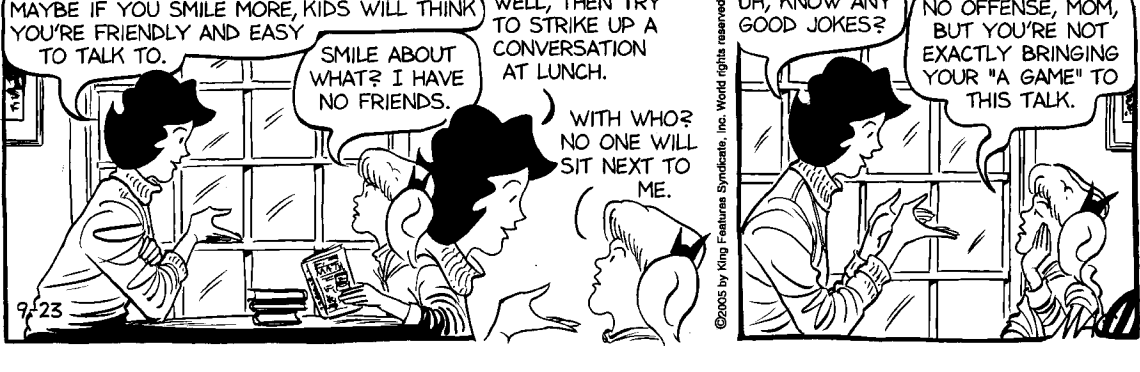
Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Cryptoquip

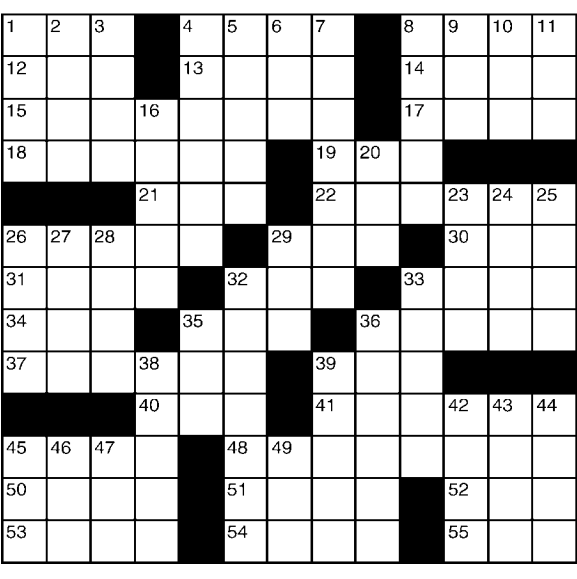
KG N SWYLHQ WG SWWKVR UM CA OCVUAR KORUJOA
 IKZJU EKQJ OWY YL NVJ UT JCEO OTNOXUCBBQ MFK
 JZNRQJ OWY WGG, OWY CEFBOTXOAVT, U'E XCBB
 DWYHJ IQ LKRQWV-EWDQJ. UV C NKF-VOOA EUOV.
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: TO ALLEVIATE FEAR ABOUT A LOW HARVEST, BULB GROWERS GAVE A STATE-OF-THE-ONION ADDRESS. Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A COUPLE OF COOING BIRDS TIED YOU UP AND DRAGGED YOU OFF, YOU WOULD BE PIGEON-TOWED.
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: R equals G Today's Cryptoquip Clue: B equals L

Crossword

ACROSS
 1 Round table address
 4 Cavort
 8 Aspen gear
 12 Start of the Vth century
 13 24/7
 14 Stickler for details (Sl.)
 15 Portrayer of Michael Corleone
 17 Race place
 18 Defeated
 19 Corral
 21 Commemorative recitation
 22 "Earth in the Balance" author
 26 Oil source
 29 Squid squirt
 30 Legislation
 31 Sherman's war comparison
 32 Proficient one
 33 Encrust
 34 Shoe width
 35 Exploit
 36 Sidewalk eateries
 37 Dogpatch creator
 39 Dallas cager, for short
 40 Somewhat (Suff.)
 41 Each
 45 Big fish story
 48 "Swanee" singer
 50 Pedestal occupant
 51 Swag
 52 Numerical prefix
 53 Vanished
 54 Sped
 55 Moreover
Solution time: 25 mins.

B	I	B	B	P	E	S	O	D	A	D
A	S	E	A	R	A	S	P	A	G	O
D	A	R	K	H	O	R	S	E	R	R
E	S	T	E	E	M	S	R	O	K	E
R	X	A	O	A	B	A				
H	O	L	I	T	A	U	I	G	E	T
A	R	I	I	R	A	E	G	O		
T	A	G	S	M	O	D	M	S	G	I
H	A	V	E	N	M					
L	A	T	T	E	S	A	M	P	L	E
A	L	P	L	I	G	H	T	B	E	E
U	S	E	D	R	E	A	L	E	N	A
D	O	N	T	E	N	D				

DOWN
 1 Wound cover
 2 Enjoying the hammock
 3 Gifford successor
 4 Ebb
 5 Sheep-ish?
 6 Chaps
 7 Colorless gas
 8 Benny Goodman's style
 9 "Tiki"
 10 Not Rep. or Dem.
 11 Firmament
 16 Coral formation
 20 Wapiti
 23 Royal Norwegian name
 24 Croupier's prop
 25 Rams' ma'ams
 26 Flushing stadium
 27 Scoundrel
 28 A Baldwin
 29 Lemieux milieu
 32 Paving material
 33 Nitpick
 35 Boom times
 36 "In Cold Blood" author
 38 Supermarket section
 39 Of prime importance
 42 "¿Cómo —usted?"
 43 Trite humor
 44 Oklahoma city
 45 Leprechauns' dance
 46 Big bother
 47 Took top honors
 49 Privy



Yesterday's answer 9-23

ACROSS
 1 David's weapon
 6 Mark with spots
 12 Sports arenas
 13 Aviator Earhart
 14 Does the den walls
 15 Governor
 16 Neighborhood
 17 Admitting clients
 19 DDE opponent
 20 Kinks song
 22 "— Boot"
 24 Pos-sesses
 27 Isn't well
 29 Horror reaction
 32 World-wide
 35 Command to Rover
 36 Satan's field
 37 Monkey (with)
 38 Gibson or Brooks
 40 Benevolent organization
 42 Motor-oil additive
 44 Shrek is one
 46 With 2-Down, singer once wed to Xavier Cugat
 50 Impale
 52 "— Boom -Dee-Ay"
 54 Gandhi, e.g.
 55 Merchant
DOWN
 1 Luminary
 2 See 46-Across
 3 Perfect
 4 Zilch
 5 Hydro-carbon fuel
 6 Show guts
 7 Improve
 8 Cribbage scorer
 9 Nice
 10 Occupa-tion
 11 Grub
 12 Resort
 18 Idle chatter
 21 Scull tool
 23 Way back when
 24 Towel designation
 25 Pismire
 26 Wild West festival
 28 Heel type
 30 — Paulo
 31 Thickness
 33 Storm center
 34 Sort
 39 Making all the stops
 41 Skater
 42 "Wheel of Fortune" option
 43 Prong member?
 45 Pool
 47 Ordered
 48 Rabbit or Fox
 49 Corn spike
 51 Disen-cumber
 53 Illustrations



Yesterday's answer 9-24

Family Circus • Bill Keane



9-23 © 2005 Bill Keane, Inc. Dist. by King Features Synd. www.familycircus.com

Bridge

You are South, vulnerable against non-vulnerable opponents. East deals and bids Three Hearts. What (if anything) would you bid with each of the following four hands?
 1. ♠ KQ873 ♥ A54 ♦ Q6 ♣ Q82
 2. ♠ A1092 ♥ 85 ♦ KJ93 ♣ AKJ
 3. ♠ AK ♥ QJ942 ♦ 832 ♣ A94
 4. ♠ Q4 ♥ K3 ♦ AKQ985 ♣ AJ6
 * * *

1. Pass. It might be best to first discuss the meaning of the various calls you can make over a pre-emptive three-bid. Let's assume East has made a typical pre-emptive opening based on a holding such as seven hearts to the K-Q-10 and very little else on the side (which is how most people play). His primary purpose in opening three hearts is to make the bidding as difficult as possible for you and your partner.

If you overcall in a suit, you are stating that three hearts you're willing to play the hand. If you bid that's notrump, you want to play it there. And if you double, it's for takeout and you expect partner to bid — though he might pass if he thinks that three hearts doubled is the best spot.

2. Double. You can't afford to pass with this 16-point hand, and the best way to show your values is by doubling. You plan to pass if partner makes a minimum response, as he might have a very poor hand.

3. Pass. Naturally, there's a great temptation to double, but because partner would read this as a request for him to bid — which is exactly what you don't want him to do — you must pass. Your fervent hope is that partner will double for takeout after the next player passes. If this happens — and it's a lovely dream — you would, of course, pass.

4. Three notrump. With eight probable tricks after the expected heart lead, it is certainly reasonable to hope that partner will provide that little something extra you need to make a ninth trick. You shouldn't double for takeout because you don't want partner to bid, and you shouldn't bid four diamonds because that would take you past three notrump, your most likely game.

Tomorrow: Steppingstone to a coup.
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South dealer. Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
 ♠ J 5 4
 ♥ A 10 9 4
 ♦ A K 6 4
 ♣ K 5

WEST
 ♠ 10 9 8 7 6 2
 ♥ 6 5 3 2
 ♦ J 5
 ♣ 6

EAST
 ♠ 3
 ♥ 8 7
 ♦ Q 10 9 8 3 2
 ♣ J 9 7 3

SOUTH
 ♠ A K Q
 ♥ K Q J
 ♦ 7
 ♣ A Q 10 8 4 2

The bidding:

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
2 ♠	Pass	3 ♥	Pass
3 ♥	Pass	4 ♣	Pass
4 NT	Pass	5 ♣	Pass
5 NT	Pass	6 ♥	Pass
7 ♠			

 Opening lead — ten of spades.

Steppingstone to a Coup

In many hands played in a suit contract, the defender's best strategy is to force declarer to ruff and thus weaken his trump holding. However, perhaps incongruously, there are also hands where declarer deliberately shortens his trump length by ruffing dummy's losers. Here is a case of this sort.

West leads a spade, and, when dummy appears, declarer sees that the grand slam is cold if the missing trumps are divided 3-2, as they usually would be.

South's only concern, therefore, is that the trumps might be 4-1 (or 5-0). To cater to this possibility as well as he can, declarer, after winning the first spade, leads a diamond to the king and ruffs a diamond.

He next plays the A-K of trumps, in that order, discovering that East started with the J-9-7-3. At this point, South still has the Q-10-8 of trumps, while East has the J-9. Superficially, it might appear that East has a trump trick coming. But declarer's foresight in ruffing one of dummy's diamonds before leading any trumps now pays off.

He ruffs another low diamond at trick six, then cashes the K-A of hearts and ace of diamonds, discarding the queen of hearts. Next come the 10-9 of hearts, South discarding the A-K of spades when East refuses to ruff. At trick 12, declarer leads a spade from dummy, and East's J-9 of trumps succumb to South's K-10.

Note that if declarer carelessly cashes the K-A of trumps before ruffing a diamond, the grand slam goes down the drain. Regardless of what he does next, there is no way to stop East from eventually scoring a trump trick.

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