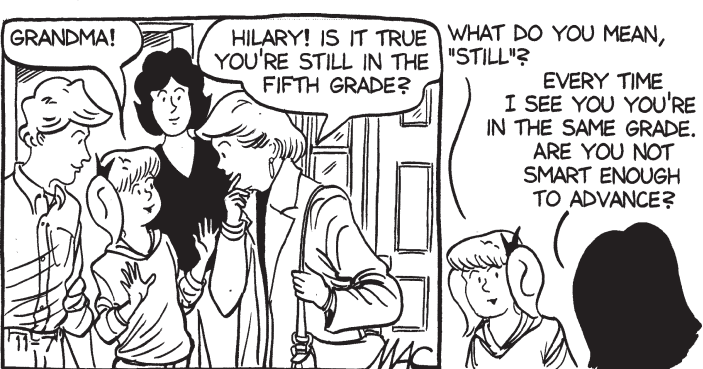


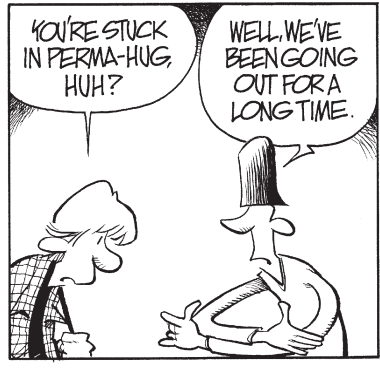
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Sally Forth • Greg Howard



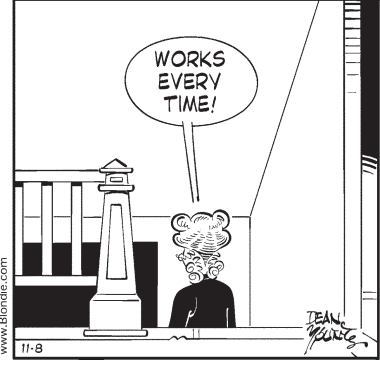
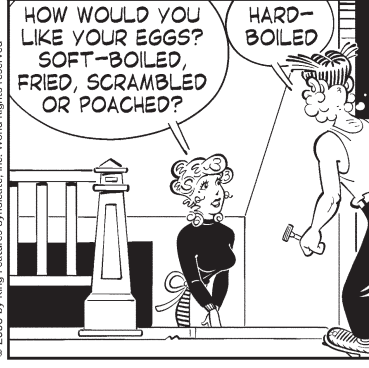
Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



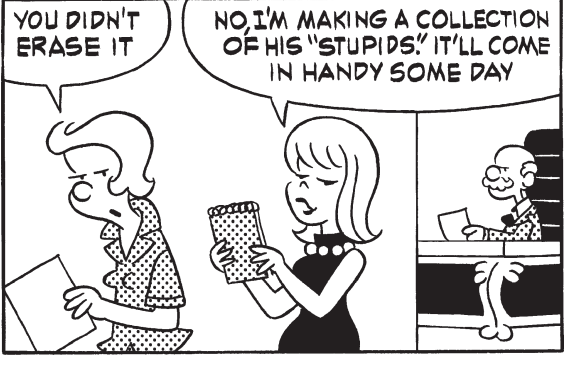
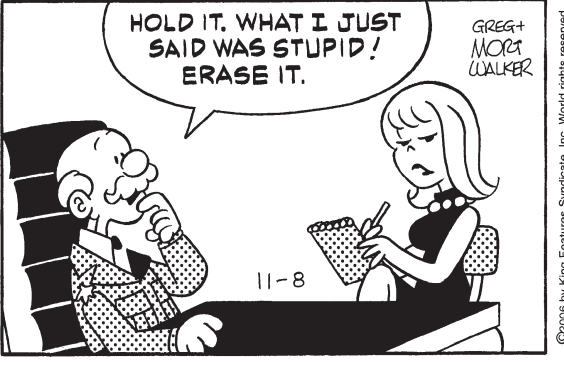
Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



Blondie • Chic Young



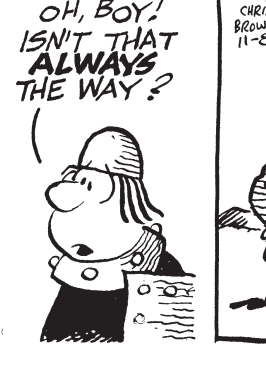
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



Cryptoquip

NRJBZHR WD VKKM CKE
SH VOBZRC ND HWBOO
VMBHSPRH, DKZ WSEYP

PT FPTG OX QNHS FNBRPJ
LNHDG PD GJXPSGFQ
LHUBSHU, P'B DOQ

HBD YR'H PSJX-HXSQRC.
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN THIN, GAUNT PEOPLE LOOK AT YOU RUDELY, I GUESS YOU ARE DRAWING LANK STARES.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: K equals O

QNH'SG O INSGB INOSBGS.
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: BECAUSE MY POOR DOG IS PLAGUED BY SMALL PARASITES, YOU MIGHT SAY HE'S TICK-SKINNED.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: S equals R

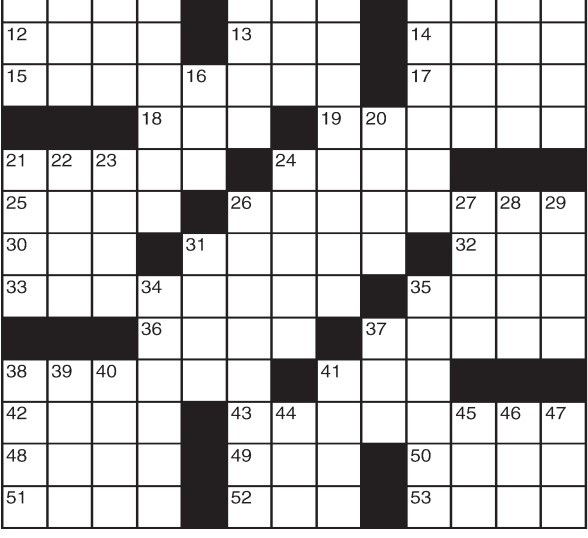
Crossword

- ACROSS**
1 January through December
5 Tree fluid
8 PC picture
12 Oppositionist
13 Mongrel
14 California wine valley
15 Memento
17 Child's play
18 Total
19 Courage
21 Knapsack part
24 Staffer
25 Melt
26 Recover from, overnight
30 "— the fields we go"
31 Reject with disdain
32 Compete
33 Tom's aperture?
35 Disappear gradually
- DOWN**
1 Run up the phone bill
2 Compass pt.
3 Chewed and swallowed
4 Coarse-toothed tool
5 Con game
6 Diving bird
7 Opening night
8 Foot part
9 Is unable
10 October stone
11 Scruff of the neck
- ACROSS**
36 Atmosphere
37 Sample episode
38 Mexican menu item
41 Youngster
42 Second-hand
43 In one's heart
48 Place
49 Little demon
50 Waikiki wingding
51 Reindeer herder, probably
52 Director's call
53 Formerly, formerly
- DOWN**
16 Dine
20 Paradise
21 Cease
22 You
23 Unusual
24 "Be-Bop—"
26 Intermittent
27 Ellipse
28 Faithful pooch
29 Third of a yard
31 Close
34 Settled a debt
35 Hoedown instrument
37 "Great Expectations" hero
38 Right end of a gas gauge
39 Largest continent
40 Military vehicle
41 Maintained
44 Ostrich's relative
45 "— Town"
46 Existed
47 Fanatic

Solution time: 21 mins.



Yesterday's answer 11-7

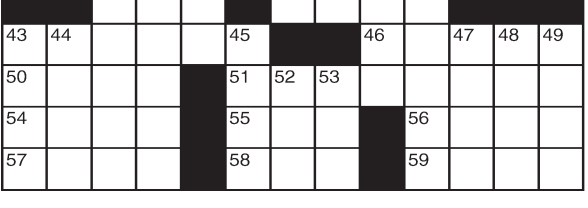


- ACROSS**
1 Zoo structure
5 Hold the rights to
8 Andy's pal
12 Emcee
13 Caviar base
14 Tiddly-winks, for one
15 Maker of small cars
17 Elevator name
18 Actor Davis
19 Doctrines
21 Salver
24 Former U.A.R. member
25 Last word spoken in "The Wizard of Oz"
28 "— and Circumstance"
30 Conditions
33 Geologic period
34 Auto style
35 Foreman foe
36 Drench
- DOWN**
1 GIs' concealment garb, for short
2 "Oh, woe"
3 Comprehends
4 Enthuse
5 Sphere
6 Seek the heart of
7 Barber-shop call
8 Great pain
9 Fabric
10 Leave out
11 Mtg.
16 That girl
- ACROSS**
37 Deuce topper
38 Speak unclearly
39 Seesaw quorum
41 Timber wolf
43 Little bits of hardware
46 Time for a shower?
50 Bee keeper played by Peter Fonda
51 Famed WWI spy
54 State secretary under JFK
55 Employ
56 Part of the loop
57 Crockett portrayal
8 Great
9 Fabric
10 Leave out
11 Mtg.
16 That girl
- DOWN**
20 "Sports-zone" network
22 Mimic
23 Mountain air?
25 Chop
26 Mined-over matter
27 Futon
29 BLT enhancer
31 Winter ailment
32 Round Table address
34 Pack away
38 Ms. Loren
40 Certain sets of seven
42 Sheepish comment
43 Cruise the Internet
44 Hint
45 Pornography
47 Rhapsody princess
48 Press agent?
49 Fluff
52 "— was saying, ..."
53 Ball prop

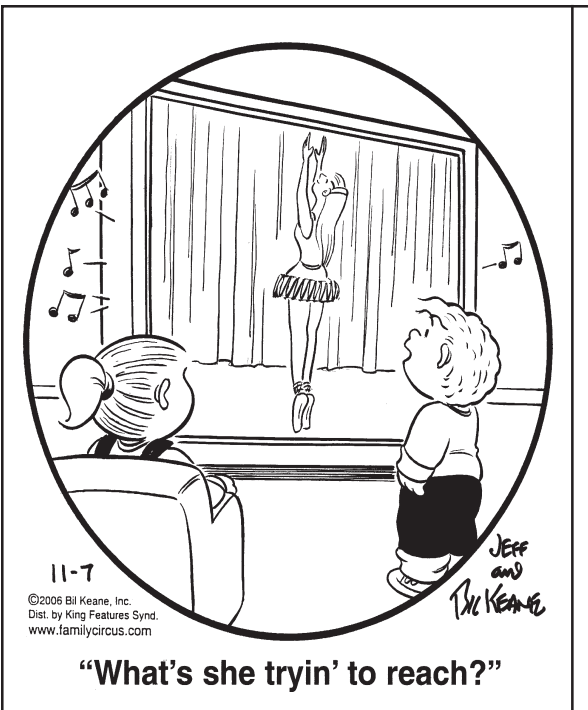
Solution time: 21 mins.



Yesterday's answer 11-8



Family Circus • Bill Keane



"What's she tryin' to reach?"

Bridge

North dealer.
North-South vulnerable.
NORTH
♠ A Q J 5 2
♥ 6
♦ A Q J 4 3
♣ A 8

WEST
♠ 10 8 3
♥ K 8 7 5 2
♦ 8 7
♣ 6 4 2

EAST
♠ K 9 6 4
♥ 10 9 4
♦ K 10 9 6
♣ K 5

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

The bidding:
North 1♠ East Pass South 2♣ West Pass
2♦ Pass 2♥ Pass
3♦ Pass 3NT
Opening lead — eight of diamonds.

Declarer Dodges Temptation

The temptation to finesse is often irresistible, but the fact is that some finesses might do declarer more harm than good. Take this unusual case where South is in three notrump and has an opportunity to finesse against all four missing kings. Oddly enough, declarer's proper method of play is to reject all four finesses. If he takes any one of them, he fails in his mission, assuming the opponents defend correctly.

With all four suits having been bid, West elected to lead through dummy's second suit. Had declarer finessed the jack, he would have gone down after East took the king and made the normal return of the ten of hearts. This would have prevented South from ever making use of his long club suit, as he would have had no entry to his hand to cash his clubs after they became established.

But declarer wisely went up with the diamond ace at trick one and then played the ace and another club — bypassing the club finesse — in order to establish his clubs while he still had the ace of hearts as an entry to his hand.

East won the club with the king and returned a heart, and again South rejected an opportunity to finesse. He went up with the ace and cashed four club tricks, discarding the Q-J-5-2 of spades from dummy. He then played a diamond to the jack, establishing his ninth trick, and so made the contract.

In general, where there is limited communication between the closed hand and dummy, declarer must take special care in planning the play. In misfit hands such as this one, he must sometimes deny himself the luxury of a finesse.

South dealer.
East-West vulnerable.
NORTH
♠ 7 6 3
♥ —
♦ J 10 4 2
♣ A K Q 10 8 5

WEST
♠ J 8 5 2
♥ K Q 10 3
♦ A Q 7
♣ 9 4

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

SOUTH
♠ A K Q 10 9
♥ 8 6 5 2
♦ K 5
♣ J 3

The bidding:
South 1♠ West Pass North 2♣ East Pass
2♦ Pass 4♣
Opening lead — king of hearts.

An Auxiliary Precaution

Everyone at one time or another has experienced the trauma that occurs when a seemingly impregnable contract suddenly unravels because of an unexpected development. When declarer has no control over the distribution, such occurrences can be attributed to bad luck, but in more than a few cases Dame Fortune might not be the true culprit.

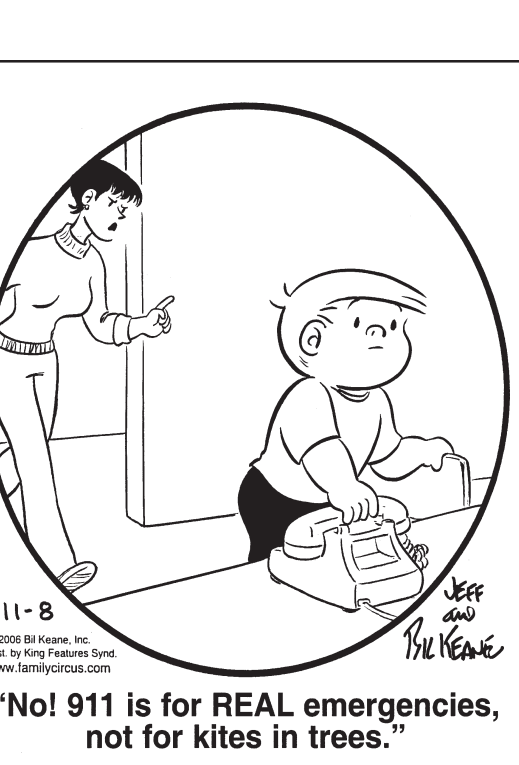
Consider this deal where South reached four spades and, after viewing dummy, thought he was merely playing for overtricks. He ruffed the heart lead in dummy, crossed to the ace of spades, ruffed a second heart and led a club to the jack.

All that remained was to draw trumps and run the clubs to finish with all 13 tricks, but when declarer next cashed the king of spades and East showed out, the contract was suddenly in severe jeopardy. South did the best he could by cashing the queen of spades and then playing clubs, discarding a heart on the third club, but West ruffed, and the defenders still had to get a heart and two diamonds for down one.

Declarer was certainly unlucky to find the opposing cards divided as they were, but had he taken one simple precaution, 11 tricks would have fallen right into his lap. Before barging ahead with the play, he should have stopped to ask himself what, if anything, could be done to neutralize the one threat to the contract — a bad trump break.

To guard against this possibility, when the trump is led from dummy at trick two and East follows low, South should play the ten! If the ten wins, he can proceed as before, scoring all the tricks.

But if, as in the actual deal, the ten loses to the jack, declarer is still in complete control. No matter what West does, declarer finishes with an overtrick. (c)2006 King Features Syndicate Inc.



"No! 911 is for REAL emergencies, not for kites in trees."