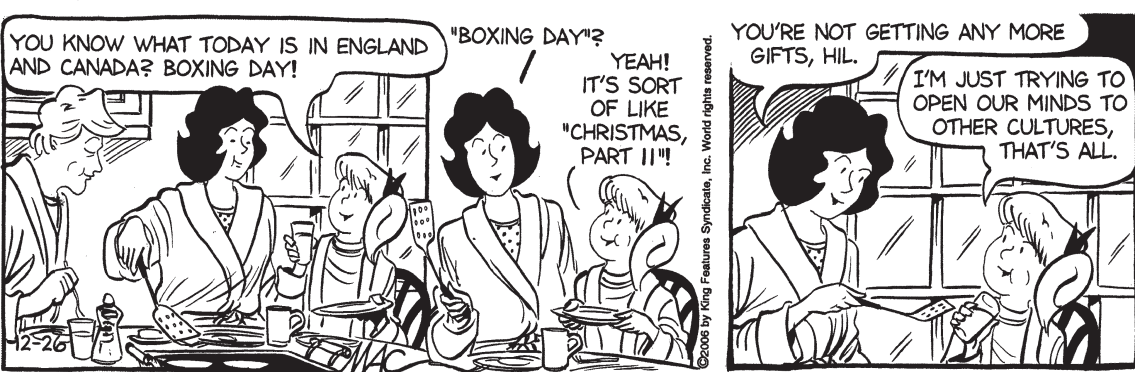
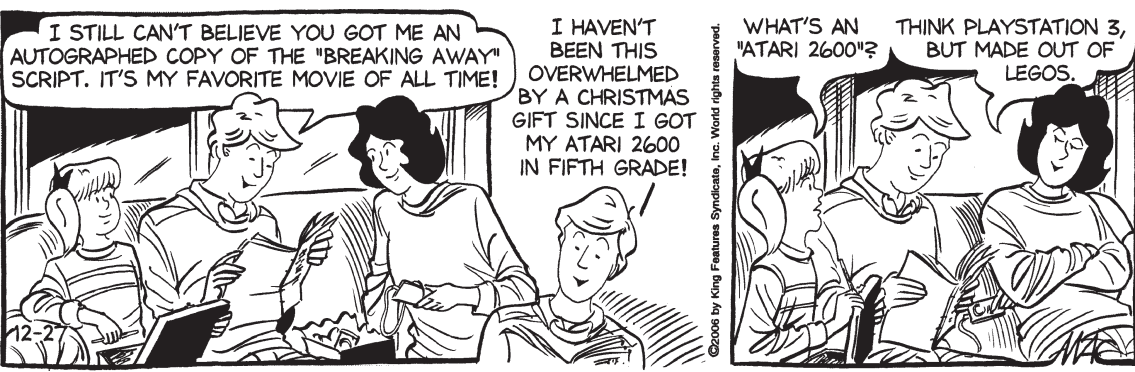


Sally Forth • Greg Howard



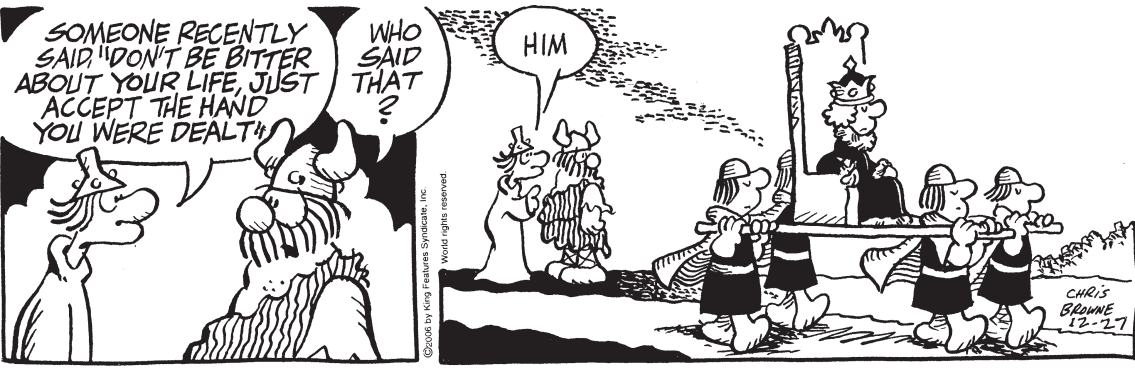
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



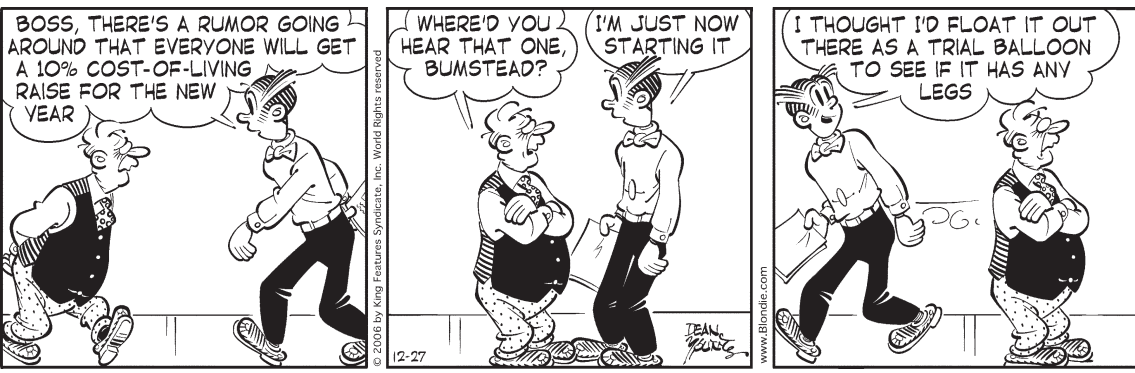
Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



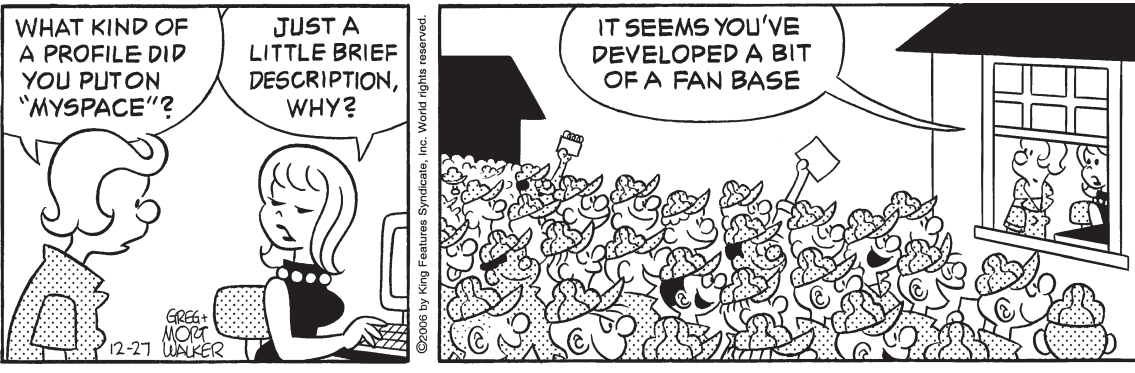
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



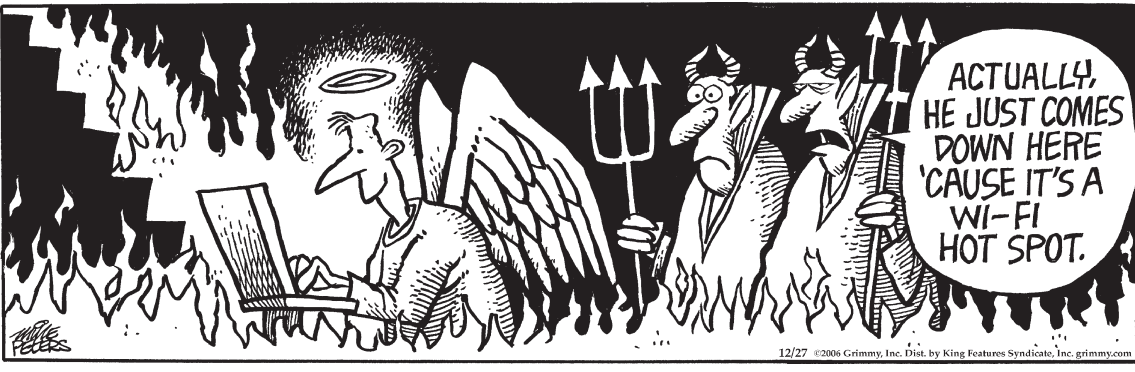
Blondie • Chic Young



Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



Cryptoquip

WKV MDN UZHWVZRPWJ HC R CGY GC VNKYSERF PYSY
 TVTCVZ AVZWHPRDJ KHN UIR, RF YTLSY EY PYHIMLQHC LYS,
 CIW RMO P EIYYMEV KV'E EHIML KYGKQY SYCYS LG
 ZVHNJ UMZ H RVO AKHYWVZ. MHE RV CQYT QNLGMS?
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF YOU KNEW ABOUT ST. NICK'S HOLIDAY HELPERS, I SUPPOSE THAT COULD BE ELF-AWARENESS. Today's Cryptoquip Clue: W equals T
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THE OLD FRATERNITY MEMBER CERTAINLY HAD FUN, BUT NOW I SUPPOSE HE'S READY FOR A NEW CHAPTER. Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Y equals E

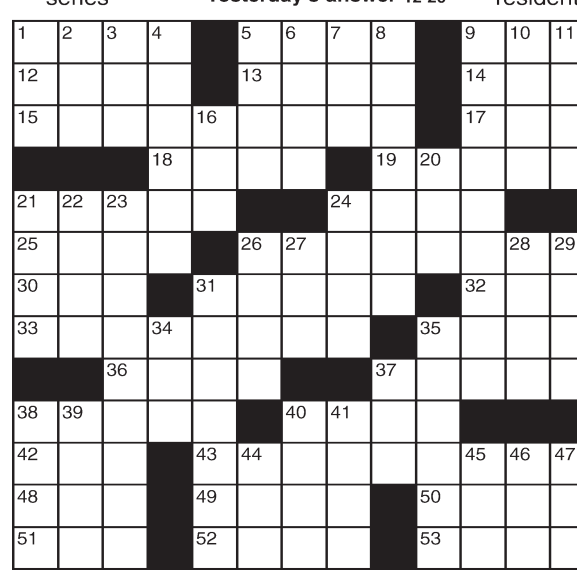
Crossword

- ACROSS**
 1 Morse "T"
 5 Dressed
 9 The girl
 12 Reed instrument
 13 Helper
 14 Energy
 15 It has its highs and lows
 17 Ram's companion
 18 Escape
 19 Actress Witherspoon
 21 Swiss city
 24 Temperate
 25 Winged
 26 High-scale seriousness
 30 Round Table address
 31 Drunkard
 32 Geneticist's abbr.
 33 Lucas epic series
- DOWN**
 1 "Le Coq —"
 2 Honest politician
 3 Scale member
 4 Young cow
 5 Restaurant
 6 Rickey flavoring
 7 Oklahoma city
 8 Take something from
 9 State trooper's play
 10 Chops
 11 Duel tool
- 35** Its longevity was topped by "Phantom"
36 "Swell!"
37 Vatican VIPs
38 Almost out of
40 Dorothy's pooch
42 Bobby of hockey
43 Nigel Tufnel's band
48 "Clown"
49 Pitcher Hersher
50 Relaxation specialty
51 Kreskin's
52 Inquisitive
- 53** Parks or Bonheur
16 Right angle
20 Inventor Whitney
21 Low voice
22 Settled down
23 Tinfoil alternative
24 Church service
26 Capricorn
27 Capek play
28 Initial stake
29 Back talk
31 Big name in frozen food
34 Speedwagon letters
35 Ice chest
37 Sch. org.
38 Earring site
39 Raw rocks
40 Cravats
41 Sans siblings
44 Expert
45 Confucians' path of virtue
46 Fool
47 Pod resident

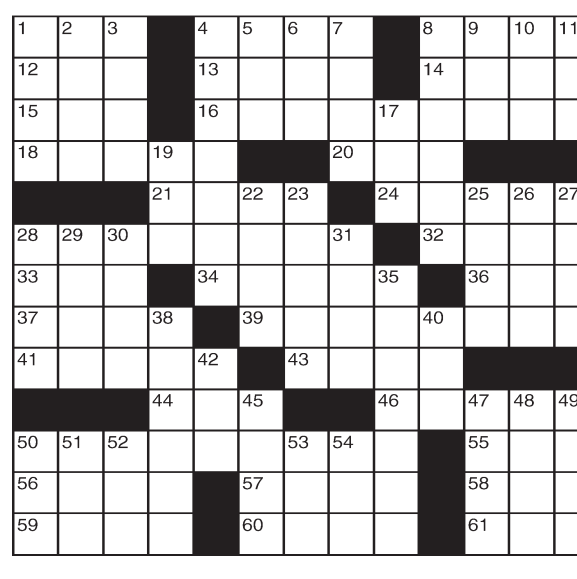
Solution time: 21 mins.

A	C	E	D	A	L	P	W	A	L	K
L	O	T	H	A	R	I	O	E	R	I
E	N	D	A	N	G	E	R	I	C	O
R	I	O	K	I	M	O	N	O		
A	D	A	M	S	A	Y	L	A		
N	I	N	A	I	M	P	E	R	I	L
D	O	T	T	R	A	I	T	V	O	W
R	I	S	K	I	N	G	I	N	G	
L	O	S	S	H	I	N	G	E		
A	M	B	U	S	H	N	O	R		
T	O	R	I	J	E	O	P	A	R	D
O	T	I	C	I	N	D	I	G	E	N
M	E	T	E	G	E	E	O	M	A	N

Yesterday's answer 12-26



- ACROSS**
 1 Vagrant
 4 Particular
 8 Japanese mountain
 12 "Born in the —"
 13 Heart of the matter
 14 Unyielding
 15 "SNL" alumna
 16 Popular ISP
 18 Pre-euro coin
 20 Enjoy the buffet
 21 "The Music Man" setting
 24 Pumpkin eater of rhyme
 28 Goofy movie of 1980
 32 Four-star review
 33 Altar affirmative
 34 Discard unceremoniously
 36 Dead heat
- DOWN**
 1 Shine
 2 Addict
 3 Poet
 4 Subzero
 5 One
 6 customer
 7 Apportion
 8 Spam blocker
 9 Spoon-bender
 10 Garfield's owner
 11 Cuttlefish protector
- 37** Option from
41 Prenatal test, for short
43 Remedy
44 Bikini half
46 All the world, to
50 Nixon's downfall
55 San Francisco, for one
56 "American —"
57 List-ending abbr.
58 Falsehood
- 59** "Anything —"
60 Feudal worker
61 Conclusion
- 17** General Arnold of WWII
19 Pinch
22 Stray child
23 Caper
25 "Farewell"
26 Maleficence
27 Fishing need
28 Verdi opera
29 The same
30 Horse of another color?
31 Beige
35 That woman, to that woman
38 Slanders in print
40 Drench
42 Longtime NHL great
45 Family data
47 Competent
48 Profit
49 Kept watch on
50 Puke
51 Commotion
52 Pirouette pivot
53 Noshed
54 Pitch



Crossword puzzle Saturday, 12/23

Solution time: 24 mins.

S	P	A	T	A	C	M	E	M	O	P
T	U	N	A	T	H	I	S	E	L	L
A	M	O	K	T	E	M	P	R	I	O
B	A	N	E	U	F	O	A	V	O	W
A	W	N	S	A	C					
H	O	M	B	R	E	A	S	H	O	R
A	D	O	R	E	T	Y	R	O	S	
Y	E	M	E	N	I	W	E	B	B	E
A	S	S	E	R						
R	O	C	K	A	I	L	E	A	S	T
E	A	R	H	I	N	D	A	N	K	H
A	H	A	S	A	F	E	K	N	E	E
D	U	B	T	H	O	R	Y	A	W	N

Saturday's answer 12-25

Cryptquip answer Saturday, 12/23

Saturday's Cryptoquip: IF YOUR BEST PAL GIFTED YOU WITH A WHITE-FLOWERING CHRISTMAS PLANT, I'D CALL IT BUDDY HOLLY.
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: M equals Y

Bridge

South dealer.
 Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
 ♠ A J 5
 ♥ A 6 2
 ♦ 7
 ♣ Q 9 8 7 4 3

WEST
 ♠ K 9 6 3
 ♥ J 9 4 3
 ♦ K J 8 6 2
 ♣ —

EAST
 ♠ 10 8 7 2
 ♥ 10 7 5
 ♦ A 10 9 5 3
 ♣ 6

SOUTH
 ♠ Q 4
 ♥ K Q 8
 ♦ Q 4
 ♣ A K J 10 5 2

The bidding:
 South 1 NT
 West Pass
 North 6 NT
 East Pass

Opening lead — three of spades.

Luck Is the Name of the Game

Hands that have been misbid sometimes produce sensational results. For example, consider this deal from a team-of-four match.

South's opening notrump bid at the first table was certainly off the beaten track, since he had two doubletons, a six-card suit and no true stoppers in spades or diamonds.

North's six-club response was optimistic in the extreme, but in the actual case the club slam would have succeeded with the aid of a spade finesse — had South seen fit to pass that response.

But South misinterpreted the six-club bid — it seemed unlikely to him that partner could have a genuine club suit. Since he and his partner had agreed to play transfer bids, he mistakenly decided that North was asking him to bid the next higher-ranking suit. Accordingly, he bid six diamonds.

Realizing that South had misunderstood the six-club bid, North retreated to six notrump. West led a spade, and declarer had no option but to play low from dummy. After winning with the queen and cashing his clubs and hearts, declarer took a second spade finesse and so brought the slam home for a score of 1,440 points.

At the second table, South became declarer at three notrump, rather than six, and West had no trouble finding the normal lead of his fourth-best diamond. East-West quickly collected five diamond tricks, so South went down one for a loss of 100 points.

The moral thus seems to be that it's easier to make six notrump than three!

North dealer.
 Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
 ♠ K J 8
 ♥ Q 6 3
 ♦ K 9 6
 ♣ A Q J 2

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

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

SOUTH
 ♠ Q 10 9 7 5
 ♥ 10 9 4
 ♦ A 8
 ♣ K 7 5

The bidding:
 North 1 NT
 East Pass
 South 3 ♣
 West Pass

Opening lead — ten of clubs.

Actions Speak Louder Than Words

There are times when a defender wants to send an urgent come-on signal to his partner, but lacks the necessary cards to do so in the usual fashion. In that case, he tries to get the message across by telling his partner what not to do.

Consider this deal where South gets to four spades and West leads the ten of clubs. If you look at all four hands, it's easy to see that the defenders can take four tricks before declarer can take 10. But this is more easily said than done. When West sooner or later gains the lead with his ace of trumps, he will have to shift to a heart or else South will make the contract.

Unfortunately, East does not have a high heart that he can afford to discard as trumps are being drawn to show that he wants the suit led by partner. Nevertheless, if East-West cooperate perfectly, they can find the winning defense.

When the deal occurred, declarer tried to muddy the waters for the defenders by putting up dummy's ace of clubs at trick one (on which East played the three, a discouraging signal). South then led dummy's king of spades, hoping to lose the trick at once to the ace.

But West wanted to see his partner's discard on the next trump lead, so he held up the ace. On the next spade lead, East discarded the diamond deuce, another negative signal.

East's two discouraging signals in the minor suits got the message across to West loud and clear. East did not appear to have the king of clubs, nor was he interested in a diamond lead. Only one hope remained — hearts. Accordingly, West took the spade ace at trick three and shifted to the eight of hearts, and East quickly collected three heart tricks to put the contract down one.

Family Circus • Bill Keane

