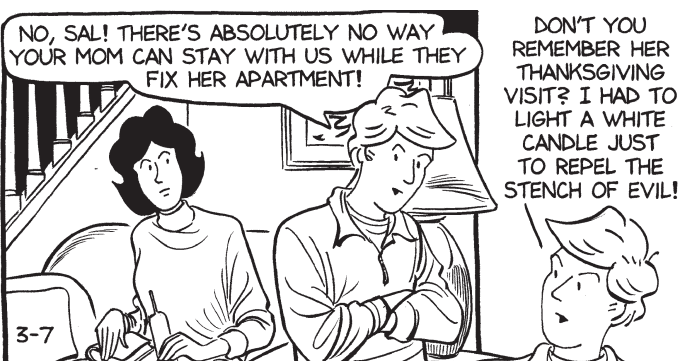
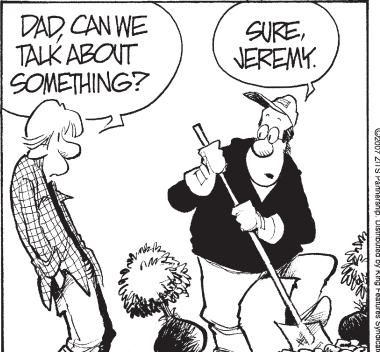


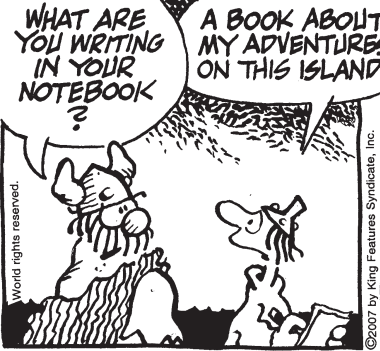
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



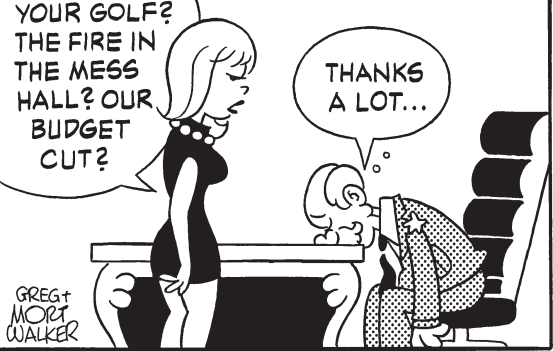
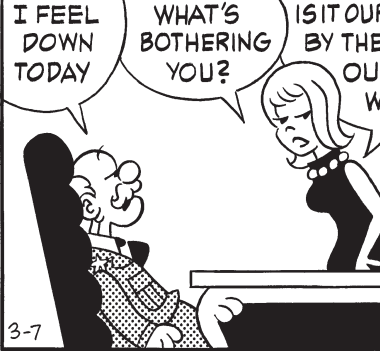
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



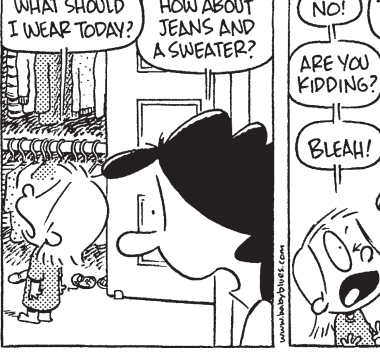
Blondie • Chic Young



Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



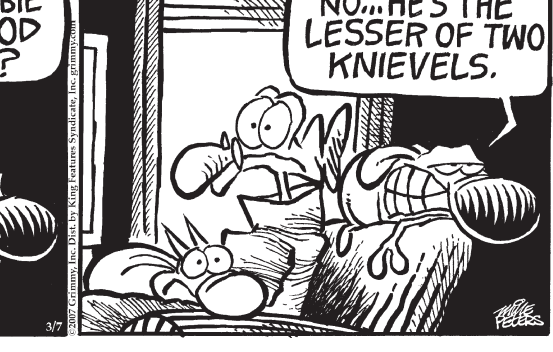
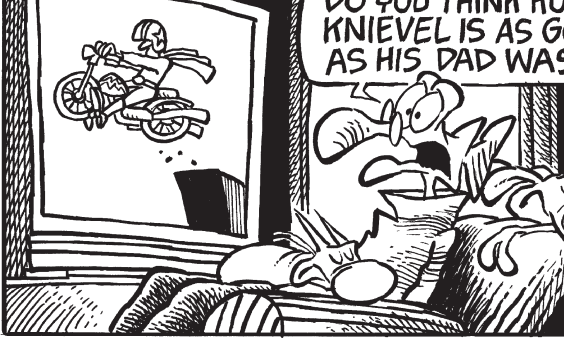
Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



Tod the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



Cryptoquip

HP WJO'DU MJQGJXUI F
 GJUQ GBFH XHAT WJOB
 PFDJBHKU GUBPOQU, MFRR
 HK "JIU IU MJRJTU." Yesterday's Cryptoquip: CLASSIC OLDIE ABOUT A NEWBORN DOG THAT WAS FOUND ON TOP OF A BUILDING: "PUP ON THE ROOF." Today's Cryptoquip Clue: W equals Y

ST WTVTH SWR ARHX QRY5
 FCYTVY GV SWR QOYGVRYY,
 FCXQR UR YWTKP WCAR
 CVVOCK YSTVX CUCHPY. Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF YOU'VE COMPOSED A POEM PRAISING YOUR FAVORITE PERFUME, CALL IT "ODE DE COLOGNE." Today's Cryptoquip Clue: V equals N

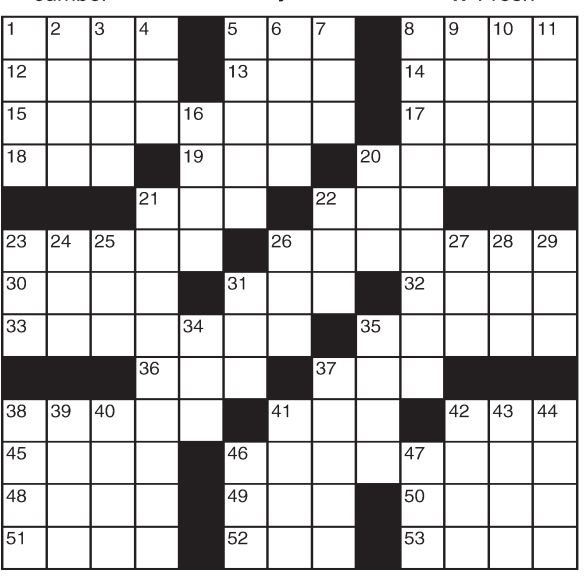
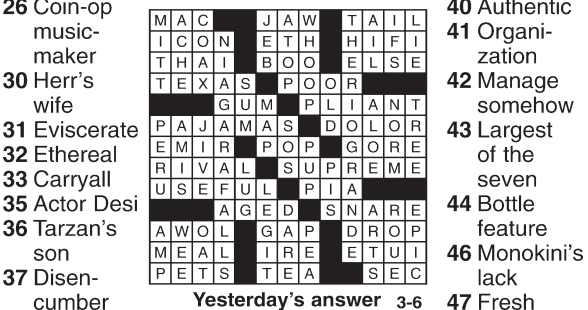
Crossword

- ACROSS**
- 1 Long-popular TV clown
 - 5 Reuben bread
 - 8 1950s sci-fi villain
 - 12 Improved, as wine
 - 13 Attila, notably
 - 14 Stromboli spillage
 - 15 Symbol of happiness
 - 17 One
 - 18 "Of course"
 - 19 Pismire
 - 20 Garden invaders
 - 21 Sibling, for short
 - 22 Occupation
 - 23 Tell target
 - 26 Coin-op musician
 - 30 Her's wife
 - 31 Eviscerate
 - 32 Ethereal
 - 33 Carryall
 - 35 Actor Desi
 - 36 Tarzan's son
 - 37 Disen-cumber

- DOWN**
- 2 Look lasciviously
 - 3 Jupiter counter-part
 - 4 Praise in verse
 - 5 African heavy-weight
 - 6 Mongol tent
 - 7 Conclusion
 - 8 Fairytale character
 - 9 Bowling site
 - 10 "Metamorphoses" poet
 - 11 Crazy
 - 16 Naked
 - 20 Stir-fry pan

Solution time: 21 mins.

Yesterday's answer: 3-6



- ACROSS**
- 1 Numbers racket?
 - 5 Scenery chaser
 - 8 Lean-to
 - 12 Reed instrument
 - 13 Kyoto cummerbund
 - 14 Bleachers choreography
 - 15 Movie-goers' mecca
 - 17 Met tune
 - 18 Van
 - 19 Over-whelm
 - 21 Snow
 - 22 "Reservoir"
 - 23 Rest-room, for short
 - 26 Speck
 - 28 Profundity
 - 31 Larger than life
 - 33 Existed
 - 35 Ca-boose's place
 - 36 Praise
 - 38 Make margalia

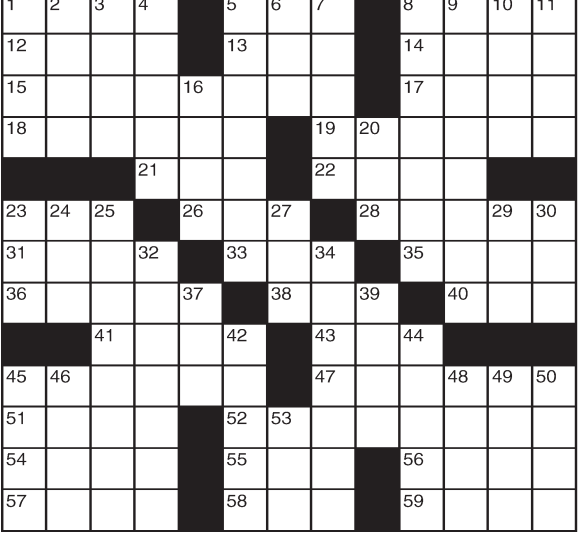
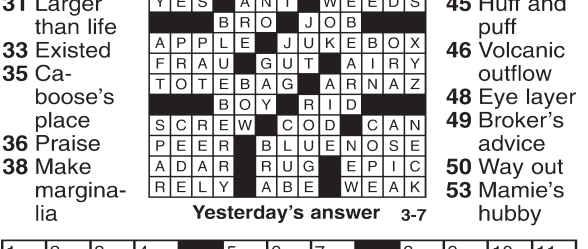
- DOWN**
- 1 Mid-May honorees
 - 2 Drive the getaway car, maybe
 - 3 Frat-party garb
 - 4 Got wind of
 - 5 "Gee whiz"
 - 6 Honest politician
 - 7 Heterogeneous
 - 8 Walk arrogantly
 - 9 Diviner of old Rome
 - 10 Beelzebub's field
 - 11 Un-hearing
 - 16 Incite to action

- ACROSS**
- 40 Greek consonants
 - 41 Oklahoma city
 - 43 High arcing shot
 - 45 Fair of hair
 - 47 Stir
 - 51 Tardy
 - 52 Curving outward on both sides
 - 54 Finished
 - 55 Guitar's kin
 - 56 Sandwich shop
 - 57 Ceruminous
 - 58 Kennedy or Koppel
 - 59 Seaman

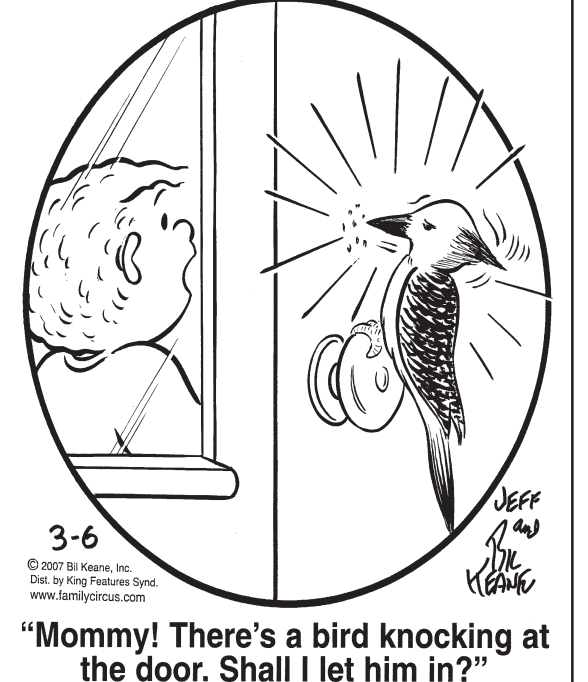
- DOWN**
- 19 Over-whelm
 - 20 Wooden shoe passenger
 - 21 Albanian money
 - 24 "Simpsons" store-keeper
 - 25 Data-retrieval system that may use a TV set
 - 27 Mahal
 - 29 Skater
 - 30 Babilonia
 - 31 168ths of a wk.
 - 32 007
 - 34 Quelled one's grief
 - 37 Caesar or Vicious
 - 39 Corrida critter
 - 42 Opening night
 - 44 Stocks' counter-parts
 - 45 Huff and puff
 - 46 Volcanic outflow
 - 48 Eye layer
 - 49 Broker's advice
 - 50 Way out
 - 53 Mamie's hubby

Solution time: 21 mins.

Yesterday's answer: 3-7



Family Circus • Bill Keane



Bridge

South dealer.
Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
 ♠ 10
 ♥ A 10
 ♦ A J 8 5 4 3
 ♣ J 9 6 2

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

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

SOUTH
 ♠ A
 ♥ K Q 6 3
 ♦ K Q 10 7 2
 ♣ A 5 4

The bidding:
 South: 1♦
 West: Pass
 North: 4 NT
 East: Pass
 South: 5 NT
 West: Pass
 North: Pass
 East: Pass

Opening lead — queen of spades.

A Choice of Percentage Plays

Many deals present declarer with more than one line of play. Whenever he is faced with such a situation, declarer should opt for the approach that offers the greatest likelihood of success.

Consider this deal where South reached six diamonds as shown. He won the spade lead, drew a round of trumps, cashed the A-K-Q of hearts and ruffed his last heart in dummy. He then played the ace and another club, and the defenders collected two club tricks to put the slam down one.

Declarer's method of play would have worked against several distributions of the adverse clubs. If either opponent had been dealt the doubleton K-Q, or if East had started with the singleton king or queen, declarer would have been home free.

In addition, South would have succeeded if East had been dealt the doubleton king or doubleton queen of clubs. In that case, East would have been forced to return a spade after taking his club trick, allowing declarer to make the slam by discarding his last club as he ruffed in dummy.

Granting the legitimacy of South's line of play, the fact remains that he did not choose the best course of action. He was unlikely to make the contract by this line of play more than about a quarter of the time.

A far better approach — admittedly hard to think of because it is an unnatural thing to do — is to lead a low heart toward dummy at trick three and finesse the ten. As it happens, the ten wins, and declarer later discards two of dummy's clubs on his K-Q of hearts and so loses only one club trick. Because the heart finesse will make the slam whenever West holds the jack — 50 percent of the time — it is clearly the better line of play.

West dealer.
East-West vulnerable.

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

WEST
 ♠ 8 5
 ♥ J 10 9 7 4
 ♦ A J 8 4
 ♣ 7 6

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

SOUTH
 ♠ 7 6 4
 ♥ K Q 2
 ♦ 10 7 6 3
 ♣ J 10 4

The bidding:
 West: Pass
 North: 1♣
 East: 3 NT
 South: 1 NT
 Opening lead — jack of hearts.

It Only Hurts for a Minute

To be a good player, you must acquire the habit of making assumptions. Often these assumptions will turn out to be wrong, but that doesn't mean it was wrong to make them; only by making assumptions can you put yourself in a position to win when it is possible to win.

Here is a typical case. Let's say you're East and partner leads the jack of hearts against three notrump. South wins with the queen and leads a spade to dummy's jack. It doesn't matter when you take your ace; what does matter is what you play next. It's easy to see — if you look at all four hands — that if you return a low diamond, your side can snatch four diamond tricks and put the contract down one. But if you don't return a low diamond at trick three — perhaps because you were taught not to lead away from a king, or always to return your partner's suit — declarer finishes with 10 tricks.

Regardless of what you might have been taught, however, the fact is that in this case you must assume West has the ace of diamonds to give yourself any chance of beating the contract.

To assume that South has the ace of diamonds — or to ignore entirely the question of who has the ace — and blindly return a heart would be giving up. It is obvious declarer will score at least nine tricks — four spades, two hearts (you can't be sure who has the king) and three clubs — if you play "safe" and return a heart. It is true that West must have somewhat more strength in diamonds than just four to the ace — he must have at least the jack with it — but this is merely an extension of the original assumption.