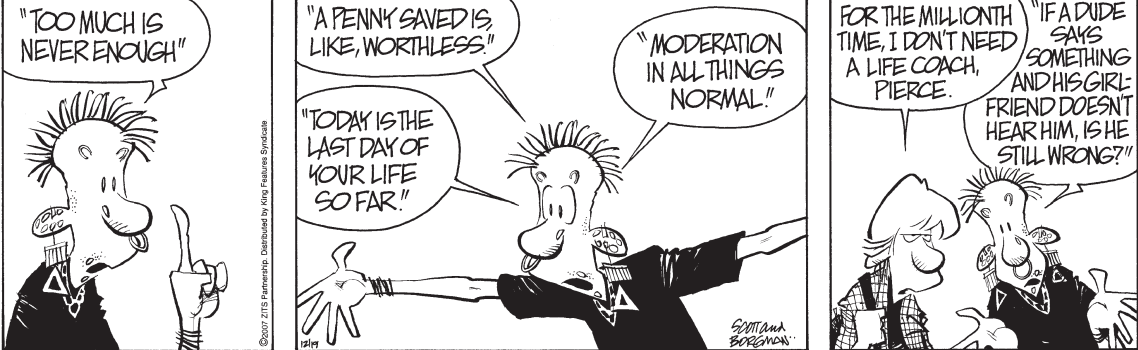


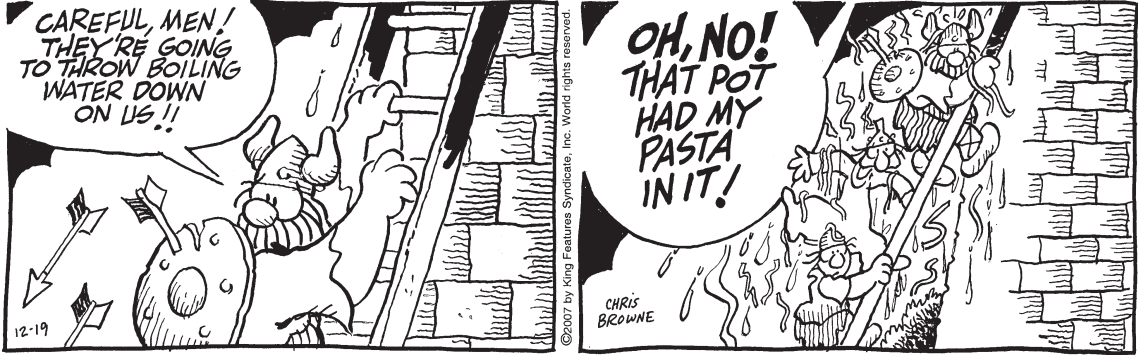
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



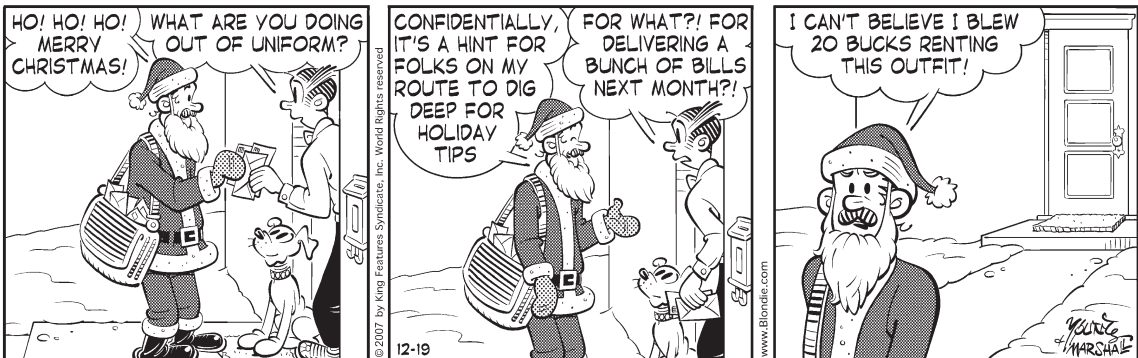
Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



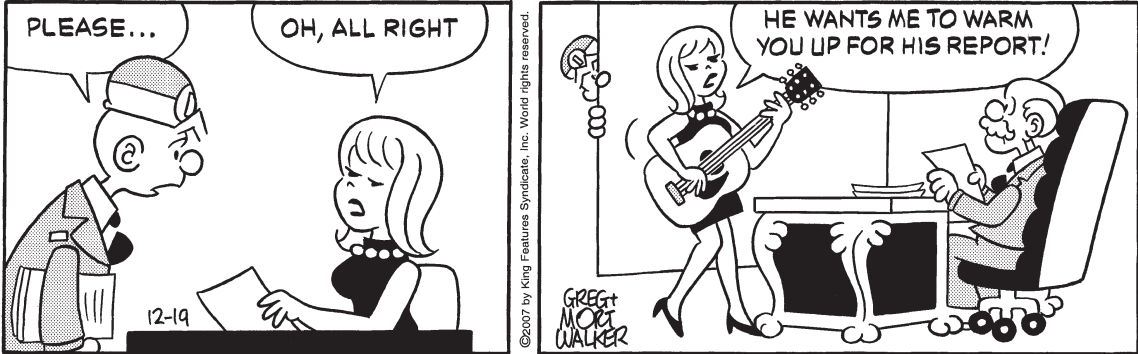
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



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

JN EIW GXJEJFQ XWHRI

NRCJBH CVCGVXF FYWXVM

JMVKEJYRBBH JK R PRCV

CJPQE JE GV R IJKMFWX EJV

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: COULD A PERSON RIGHTFULLY SAY THAT ALL CATS AND DOGS HAVE FURRY, CLAWED FEET? PAWS-ITIVELY!

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: J equals I

DWGTK LHUWF RKBRIK WVYU

BPF DWKY FWKZ'TK NRTKVQHYU

LVIJHOHPN UBNNHR? QBDY

VF OVFFZ OBTYKT.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF TWO BRITISH ROYAL FAMILY MEMBERS SCORED IDENTICALLY IN A GAME, MIGHT IT BE A WINDSOR TIE?

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: R equals P

Crossword

ACROSS

1 Freebie

5 Scratch the surface

8 Upper-case

12 Reed instrument

13 Honest politician?

14 Out of the storm

15 Total disarray

16 Black-and-orange songbird

18 From memory

20 Otherwise, in music

21 Attempt

22 "Thank —"

23 "Begone!"

26 Cameo

30 Exist

31 Fellow

32 Buck's mate

33 Animal-driven vehicle

36 Wall-paperer's need

38 Storefront sign abbr.

39 Part of UCLA

40 For this purpose

43 Cultural paintings, e.g.

47 "USA Today" illustration

49 Concept

50 Bag

51 Cauldron

52 Siestas

53 BPOE members

54 "I" strain?

55 Understand intuitively

2 Do as you're told

3 Slam dance

4 Spanish pre-euro money

5 Wed

6 Help a thief

7 Roulette bet

8 Burger enhancement

9 "Sad to say ..."

10 "Frasier" actress

11 — precedent

17 Santa's laundry problem

19 Branch

22 Yang counter-part

23 Blue

24 Magnon precursor

25 Rule, for short

26 Cudgel

27 Billboards

28 Deteriorate

29 Shirt shape

31 "— Doubtfire"

34 Door-stops, e.g.

35 St. Louis landmark

36 D.C. type, briefly

37 Posing queries

39 Gambling game

40 Church section

41 Use a rotary phone

42 "Damn!"

43 Kermit is one

44 Hebrew month

45 Failure-to-pay result

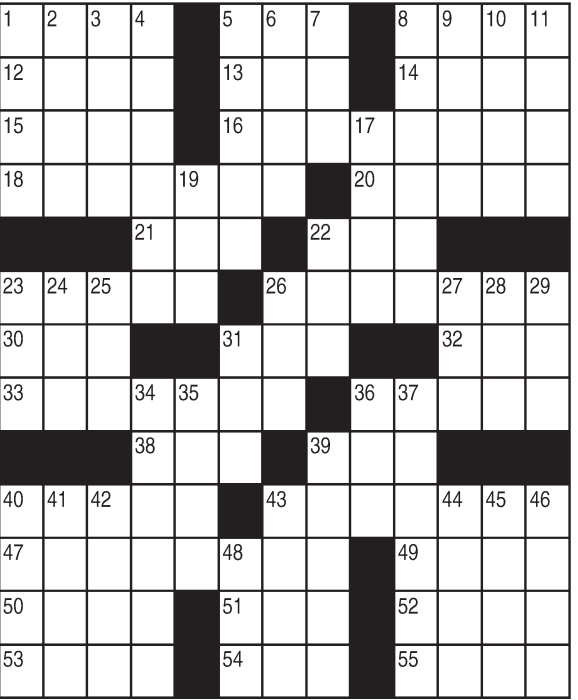
46 Chore

48 Mimic

Solution time: 21 mins.

DECO	BYE	TBS	P
ECHO	RAG	ILIA	
CRUZ	AMATEURS		
KUMISS	DURESS		
	EPIC	TEC	
AMARILLO	DOER		
MOI	TIARA	ASH	
PORK	AMARETTO		
	PIG	SNIP	
GALLOP	GAITER		
AMANDINE	LAVA		
LONE	NOR	OMIT	
EKED	STY	GELS	

Yesterday's answer 12-18



ACROSS

1 "— Miniver"

4 Curved character

7 Drench

8 "Crazy" singer

10 Patsy

11 Un-escorted

13 Austere conditions

16 Holmes por-trayer

17 Chowled down

19 Melodies

18 Water barrier

19 Sharpen

20 Small barrels

21 French river

23 Accom-plish-ments

25 Resistance units

26 Like polished floors

27 Energy

28 Alterna-tive to Edam

30 Encoun-tered

33 Brass music-maker

36 Facades

37 Stands

38 Heron's kin

39 Told a whopper

40 Always

41 Night-marish street

2 Hindu royal

3 He was Clem

4 Upper hopper

5 Deep set

5 Deep audible

6 Uppity sort

7 Bed-frame part

8 "The Red Badge of Courage" author

9 Worn down

10 Lawyers' org.

12 Unfore-seen problems

14 Mysteri-ous letter

15 Pairs of ens

19 Owned by the gent

20 Crucial

21 Tchotchke holder

22 Realm

23 Pedestal part

24 Case

25 Chances, for short

26 Sausage

28 Literary type

29 Playful water critter

30 Phone-PC connec-tion

31 Okla-homa city

32 Afternoon social

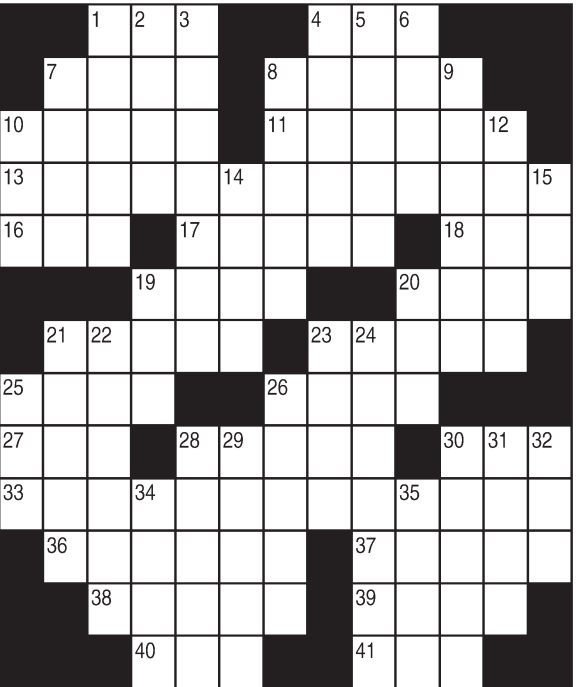
34 Venetian bigwig

35 Seethe

Solution time: 21 mins.

COMP	MAR	CAPS	
OBOE	ABE	ALEE	
MESS	RED	START	
BYHEART	OSSIA		
	TRY	YOU	
SCRAM	BIT	PART	
ARE	MAN	DOE	
DOGCART	PASTE		
	HRS	LOS	
ADHOC	FOLK	ART	
PIE	CHART	IDEA	
SACK	POT	NAPS	
ELKS	EGO	GROK	

Yesterday's answer 12-19



Bridge

North dealer. Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH

♠ 10 6 3

♥ K 10 7 4

♦ K Q 8

♣ A Q 5

WEST

♠ K 5

♥ 8 2

♦ 9 7 5 4

♣ J 10 8 6 3

EAST

♠ A Q J 9 7 2

♥ 6 5

♦ 10 6 3

♣ K 9

SOUTH

♠ 8 4

♥ A Q J 9 3

♦ A J 2

♣ 7 4 2

The bidding:

North

1 ♣

3 ♥

East

1 ♠

Pass

South

2 ♥

4 ♥

West

Pass

Opening lead — king of spades.

An Arithmetical Solution

At times, a skillful declarer may make a play that, to the less-experienced player, would seem to make no sense. But after the play proves successful, subsequent analysis discloses that had he adopted the more obvious approach, the contract would have failed.

Consider declarer's sequence of plays on today's deal. East overtook the king of spades with the ace at trick one, then played the queen and jack, South ruffing the third spade high as West discarded a club.

After drawing trumps in two rounds, declarer cashed the K-Q-A of diamonds and led a club. When West followed low, South put up the ace instead of attempting a finesse, then crossed to his hand with a trump and led another club to the queen.

East took the queen with the king, but had to return a spade, allowing declarer to discard a club as he ruffed in dummy. As a result, South made his game, losing only two spades and a club.

To the casual observer, it might seem that South had handled the club suit in a bizarre fashion, and then got lucky at the end. But in fact what happened was by design, not by accident.

As the play progressed, South learned that East had started with precisely six spades, two hearts and at least three diamonds. Therefore, he could not have been dealt more than two clubs. If East happened to hold the K-x of clubs and South took a first-round finesse, East would win and return a club, after which another club loser could not be avoided.

To guard against this possibility, declarer cashed the ace first and then led a club toward the queen. This guaranteed 10 tricks regardless of who had the king of clubs, leaving nothing to chance.

South dealer. East-West vulnerable.

NORTH

♠ Q 10 4

♥ J 3 2

♦ K 10 7 5 4 3

♣ 5

WEST

♠ A K 6

♥ A K 10 9

♦ A 9 6 2

♣ 8 3

EAST

♠ J 9 8 3 2

♥ Q 7 6 5 4

♦ —

♣ 9 6 2

SOUTH

♠ 7 5

♥ 8

♦ Q J 8

♣ A K Q J 10 7 4

The bidding:

South

1 ♣

3 ♣

Pass

5 ♣

West

Dble

Dble

4 ♥

Dble

North

1 ♦

Pass

Pass

East

1 ♠

3 ♠

Pass

Opening lead — king of spades.

Pinpoint Defense

This deal occurred in the final of the McConnell Cup teams, which was won by a U.S./Russian aggregation at the 2006 world bridge championships in Verona, Italy.

Both Souths ended up in five clubs doubled following a highly competitive auction that saw both Easts reach four hearts after having bid spades initially in response to their partner's takeout double.

At the table where the auction shown took place, West started by leading the king of spades, then switched to the king of hearts. East followed low to both leads, whereupon West continued with the heart ace. Declarer ruffed, drew trumps and conceded two tricks to the ace of diamonds and ace of spades to go down two, -300.

At the other table, the East-West defense was far more accurate, extracting the maximum penalty possible. West, Debbie Rosenberg, started with the king of hearts, on which her partner, JoAnna Stansby, dropped the queen! Since Stansby had bid hearts, and since the jack of hearts was in dummy, it was clear that her play of the queen was an attempt to get her partner to switch her attentions elsewhere.

It did not take Rosenberg long to work out what her partner wanted her to do. Accordingly, she cashed the ace of diamonds, Stansby showing out, and continued with the nine -- a suit-preference signal asking for a spade return. After East ruffed, her spade return to Rosenberg's king was followed by another diamond ruff, and a spade to the ace constituted the defense's sixth and final trick.

The result of plus 800 gave Rosenberg-Stansby's team a net gain of 500 points -- 10 IMPs -- on the deal.

Family Circus • Bill Keane

