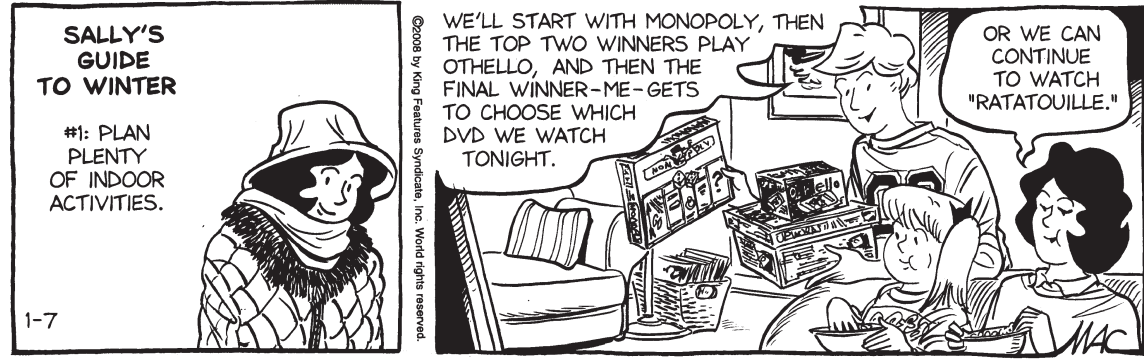


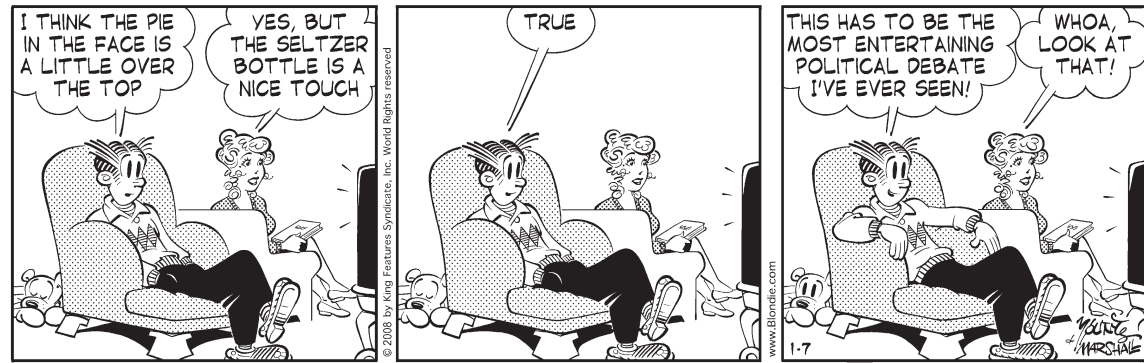
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Blondie • Chic Young



Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



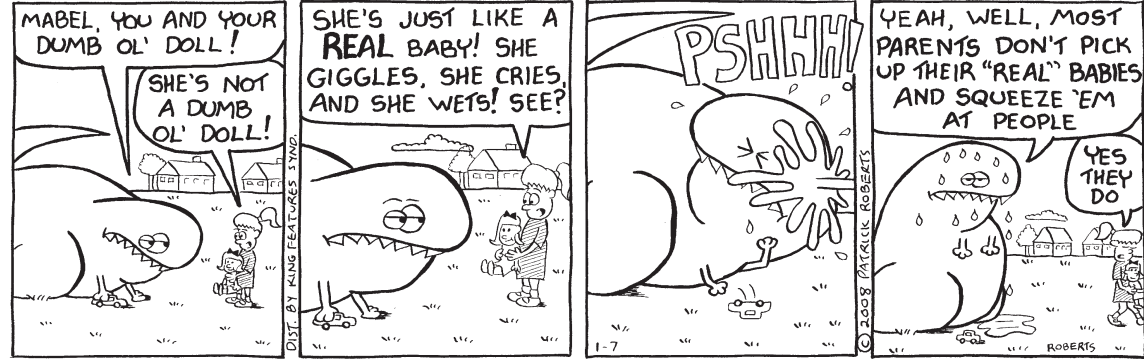
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



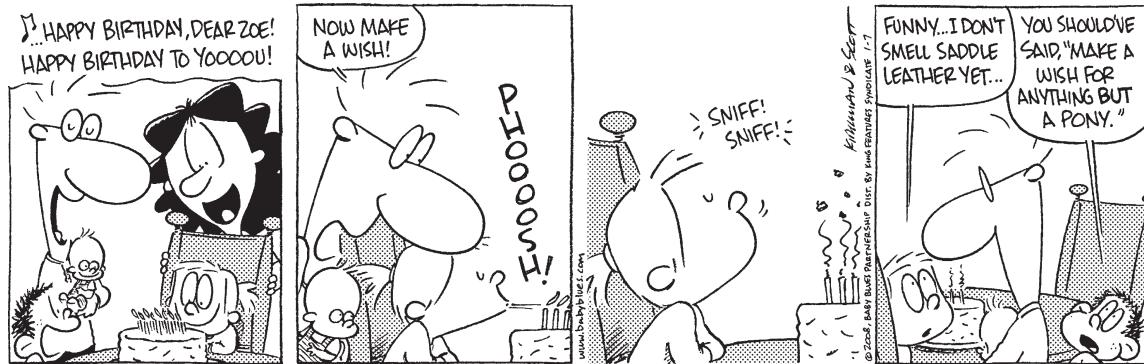
Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



Tod the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



THANK YOU FOR READING THE

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Cryptoquip

L CHBCQN NWPN LE P DLUM
UV NLICV DLTCK P ALHCV
LM LNX KVLMTX, LN ALIWN
BVCECV P QPN-P-NUMLQ.

Saturday's Cryptoquip: BECAUSE THE COOK'S CRAFTY PLOTS ARE POORLY PLANNED OUT, HE HAS MANY HALF-BAKED SCHEMES.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: L equals I

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

5		7				3		2
			2	8	9			
4		9				1		6
	4		3		7		2	
	3						5	
	5		4		6		1	
2		5				7		1
			6	9	2			
8		3				2		9

Difficulty Level ★ 1/07

This is a logic-based number placement puzzle. The goal is to enter a number, 1-9, in each cell in which each row, column and 3x3 region must contain only one instance of each numeral. The solution to today's Sudoku puzzle is right.

5	8	7	1	6	4	3	9	2
3	1	6	2	8	9	5	7	4
4	2	9	7	3	5	1	8	6
9	4	1	3	5	7	6	2	8
6	3	2	9	1	8	4	5	7
7	5	8	4	2	6	9	1	3
2	9	5	8	4	3	7	6	1
1	7	4	6	9	2	8	3	5
8	6	3	5	7	1	2	4	9

Difficulty Level ★ 1/07

Bridge

East dealer.
North-South vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ Q 10 8 7
♥ 10
♦ A 9 8 7 2
♣ 8 4 2

WEST
♠ A K 9 6 5
♥ Q J 6 2
♦ 6
♣ 9 7 6

EAST
♠ 3 2
♥ K 7 4 3
♦ Q 5
♣ K Q J 10 3

SOUTH
♠ J 4
♥ A 9 8 5
♦ K J 10 4 3
♣ A 5

The bidding:
East South West North
Pass 1♦ 1♠ 3♦
Dble 4♦ 4♥

Opening lead — ace of diamonds.

Famous Hand

In "The Maltese Falcon," Sydney Greenstreet's character, Kasper Gutman, refers to Sam Spade, played by Humphrey Bogart, as a man of "nice judgments."

In many ways, this description can be applied to successful bridge players. At the highest levels of the game, where the players have mastered the most complex bidding systems, and where the card play is virtually flawless, the difference between winning and losing is often determined by "nice judgments."

Take this deal, which was instrumental in France's 27-IMP victory over the United States in the final of the 1997 world team championship. The bidding shown occurred when Herve Mouiel and Franck Multon were playing North-South for France against Bobby Wolff and Bob Hamman of the U.S. Mouiel's three-diamond bid was pre-emptive, and Wolff's double was "responsive," indicating moderate values and length in the unbid suits.

Mouiel led the ace and another diamond, ruffed by Hamman, who then played the heart queen, ducked by South. When Hamman next tried the heart jack, Multon won and returned the nine of hearts to dummy's king. This left Multon in position to draw dummy's last trump and run his diamonds after he gained the lead with the club ace, and the result was down four-plus 200 for France.

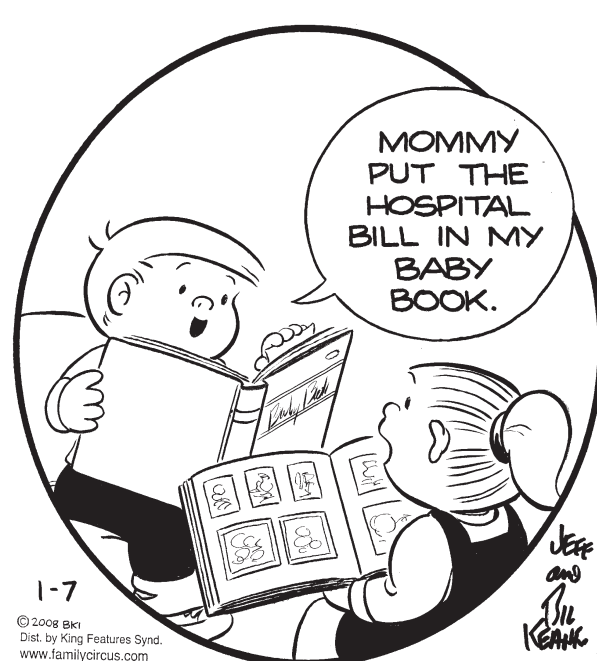
At the other table, the bidding went:

East South West North
1[C] 1[D] 1[S] 4[D]
Pass 5[D] Dble

Eric Rodwell, South for the U.S., continued to five diamonds after his partner's pre-emptive raise to four, and was doubled by Alain Levy. Levy led the spade ace and switched to a club, establishing a club trick for the defense before the king of spades could be driven out. So Rodwell finished down one, another 200 points and 9 IMPs to France.

Of course, if Levy had cashed the spade king at trick two, Rodwell would have made the contract, but that sort of misjudgment was decidedly uncommon for the French at the

Family Circus • Bil Keane



"There's none in mine. Maybe I was a freebie."

Crossword

ACROSS

1 Triangular sail
4 Vagrant
7 Particular
11 Nabisco brand
44 Hammer target
13 Seventh Greek letter
14 PBS science show
15 Chicken
16 Earner's burden
17 Raced
18 — Park, Colo.
20 Stereo set
22 Scepter
24 Contemporary
28 Bullring horseman
32 Aladdin's ally
33 Algerian port
34 Prompt
36 Lends a hand
37 Actor McDowall

DOWN

1 One-liner, e.g.
2 Eye part
3 Borscht veggie
4 "You — Your Life"
5 Orem's state
6 Saying
7 Thoroughly
8 Upper surface
9 Abel's mom
10 Frenzied
12 Type of sports wager
19 Turf

61 Firmament
21 Pea soup, e.g.
23 Medic
25 Oklahoma city
26 Carnival attraction
27 "Untouchables" hero
28 Skin opening
29 Press
30 Scoundrels
31 Abrade
35 Sprite
38 Verily
40 Erstwhile acorn
42 Sean Combs alias
45 Queue
47 Responsibility
48 Eccentricity
49 Remain
50 Vacationing
51 Chart format
52 Historic period
54 Dog's "hand"

Solution time: 24 mins.

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

Saturday's answer 1-7