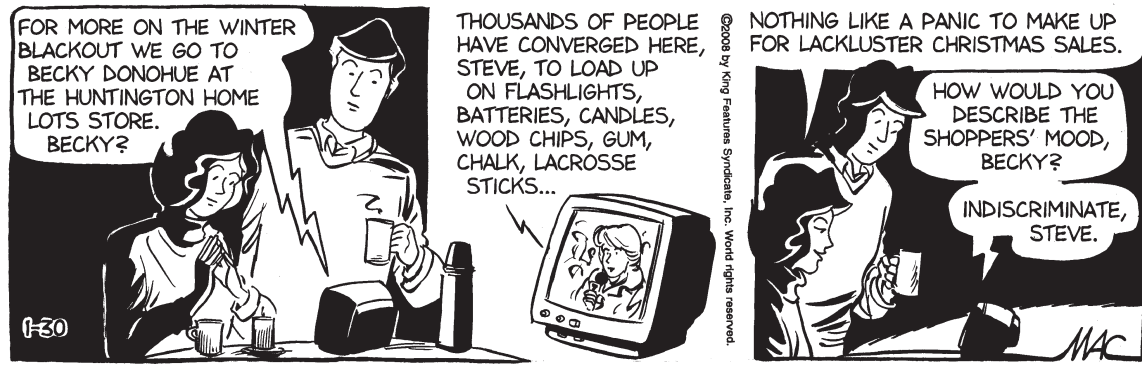
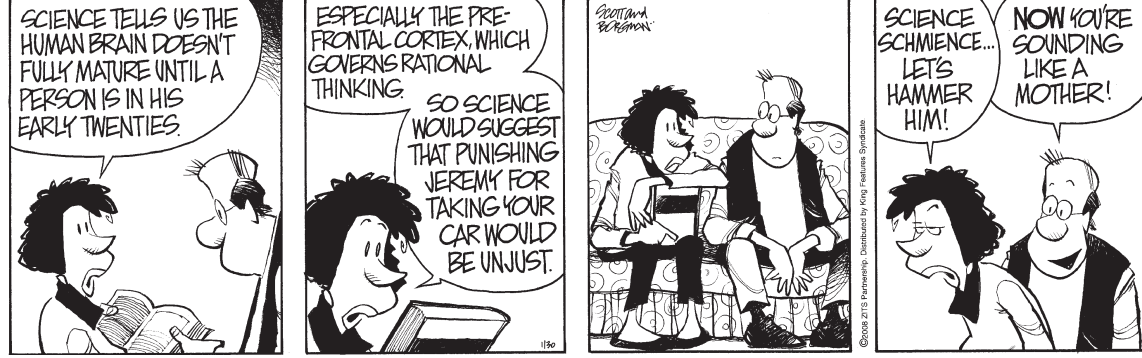


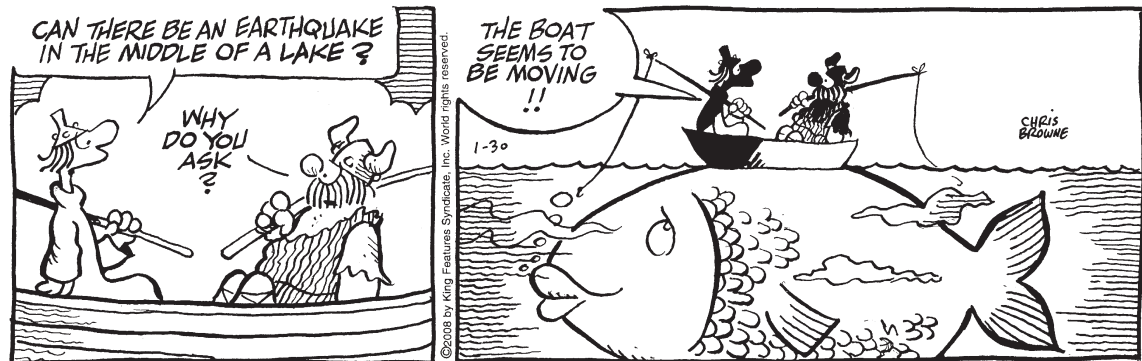
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



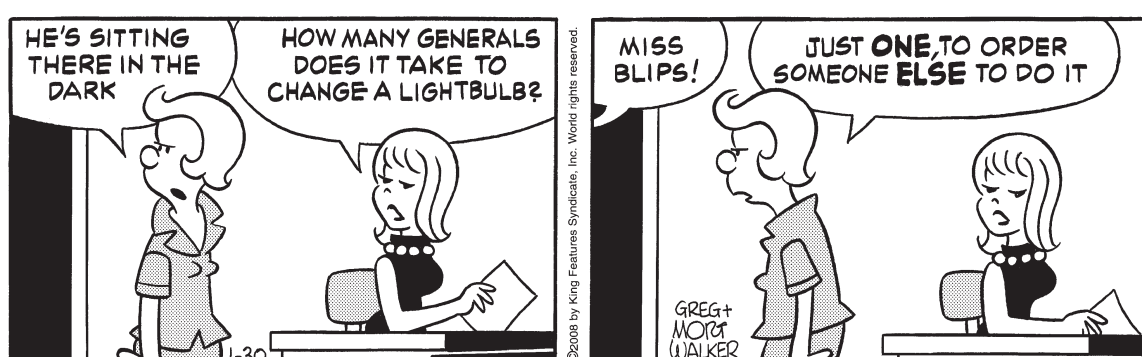
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



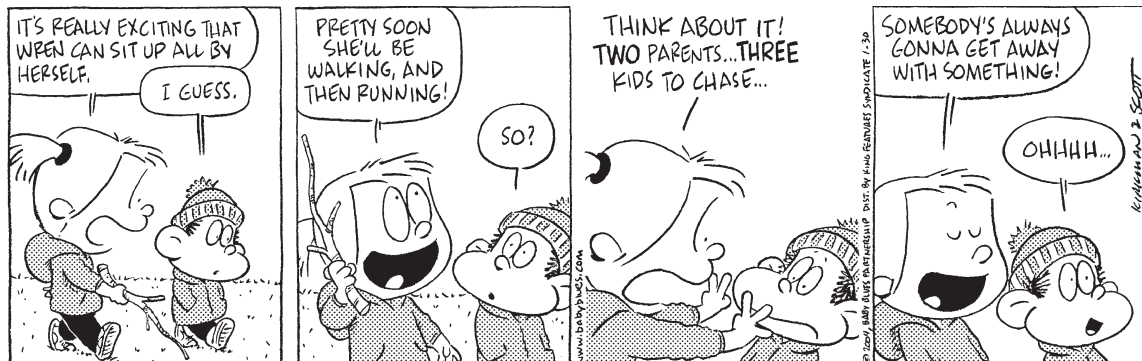
Blondie • Chic Young



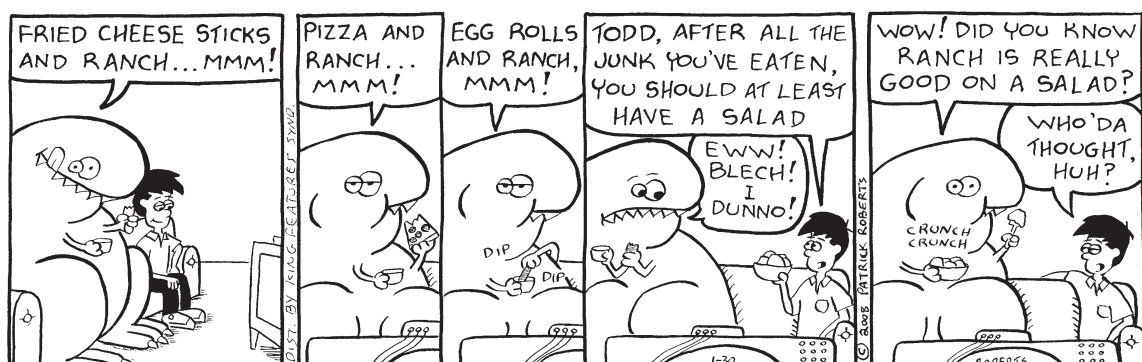
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



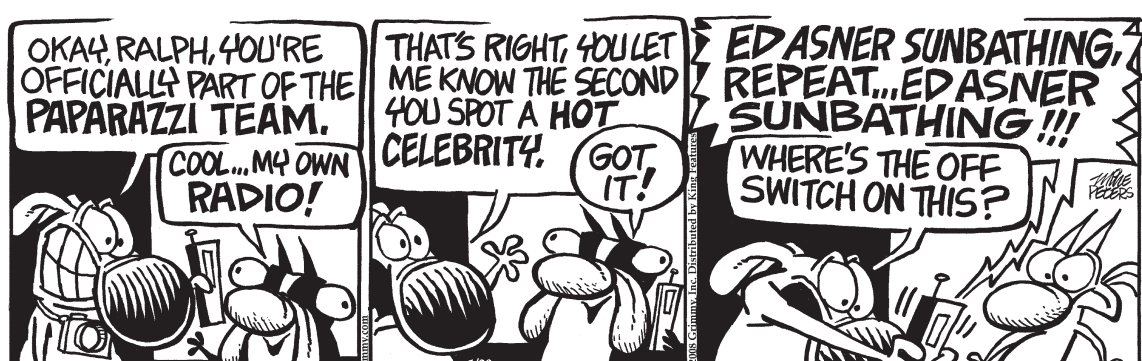
Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



Tod the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



Cryptoquip

BAHS M CTMOHUVSX LAPB AW B TXGBS TJX JDYER
 HQRUPZHH VL M QHMC- ZDYAQDM IBIADR JBR IAU
 HMCHT, RHPRUH QVXAC EMXIYDGR, AR RJD JBQASU
 JMUU AVQ M JMTSZ-OPHT.
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: DOG COMPETITION CATEGORY FOR POOCHES THAT PERFORM BEAUTIFULLY IN DOWNPOURS: BEST IN SHOWER.
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: R equals P
 B GAZTAWD KMARAR?
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN A TRAVELING SHOW EMPLOYEE IS A MEAT-EATER, PEOPLE MIGHT CALL HIM A CARNY-VORE.
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: T equals W

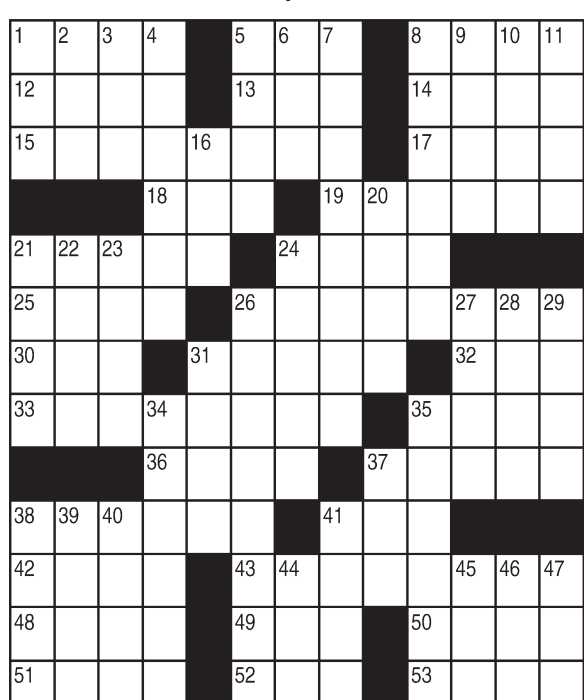
Crossword

- ACROSS**
 1 Locate
 5 Workout venue
 8 Garbage barge
 12 Smell
 13 Romanian money
 14 Desire
 15 Pasadena event
 17 Timbuktu's country
 18 Witnessed
 19 Agile
 21 "Loves me (not)" flower
 24 Indian wrap
 25 Green-eyed monster
 26 Soup legume
 30 Greek H
 31 Rids of rind
 32 Remiss
 33 It's spent on incidentals
 35 Withered
- DOWN**
 2 Altar
 3 Ph. bk.
 4 Stylish
 5 Radiate
 6 Evergreen
 7 Megan of "Will & Grace"
 8 Apex
 9 Grouch
 10 See 48-Across
 11 "Dead Poets Society" director
 12 Peter
 13 Chesapeake, for one
 20 Eye part
 21 Profound
 22 Opposed to
 23 Terrible guy
 24 Velocity
 26 D.C. 100
 27 Entreaty
 28 Deserve
 29 Cut from the payroll
 31 Comic strip
 34 "Cats" show-stopper
 35 Eats soup loudly
 37 Roscoe
 38 Jell-O creation
 39 Scored 100 on
 40 Actress
 41 Catch sight of
 44 Zero
 45 Rage
 46 Do-it-yourselfer's buy
 47 Type squares

Solution time: 21 mins.

| | | | | | |
|-----------|-----------|--------|--|--|--|
| APR | RAPID | CUD | | | |
| WOO | OBES | ALI | | | |
| LIBRARIAN | ENS | | | | |
| | AMA | ATRSAC | | | |
| DASHED | CAVA | | | | |
| ONE | DEB | LEROY | | | |
| INCH | DAD | RILE | | | |
| TOTAL | RID | ALL | | | |
| | ALUM | SIGNAL | | | |
| CHROME | ALA | | | | |
| LEI | BARBARIAN | | | | |
| ARA | ADULT | LYE | | | |
| MEN | RENEE | KEW | | | |

Yesterday's answer 1-29

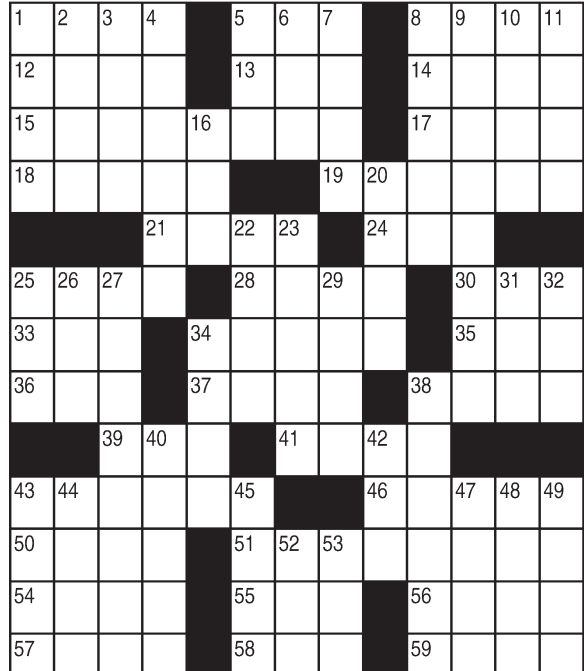


- ACROSS**
 1 Dispatches, "Sopranos"-style beverage
 5 Sprite
 8 Genie's home
 12 Scheme
 13 Ultramodernist
 14 Hebrew month
 15 Bullpark figure?
 17 Raced
 18 Offspring
 19 Triple X?
 21 Leave a lasting impression
 24 — second
 25 Dumbstruck
 28 Hang around lazily
 30 Spelldown
 33 Solidify
 34 Custom
 35 Trail behind
 36 Peculiar
 37 Bloodhound's clue
- DOWN**
 1 Makes up one's mind
 2 Disaster on stage
 3 "Queen — Day"
 4 Intoxicated
 5 Conclude
 6 Writer
 7 Stronghold
 8 Old tongue
 9 Just so cute
 10 Shopping venue
 11 Quarry
- ACROSS**
 38 "Wozzeck" composer
 39 Have bills
 41 Sushi eater's
 43 Procession
 46 Drive on
 50 Comet competitor
 51 Mad Tea Party guest
 54 Stow cargo
 55 Wildebeest
 56 Pumps up the volume
 57 Cupid's alias
 58 Longing
- DOWN**
 16 Pismire
 20 Sword handle
 22 Dressed (in)
 23 Vagrants
 25 Past
 26 Marry
 27 Site of great wealth
 29 Old Italian money
 31 Listener
 32 Early bird?
 34 Got rid of weeds
 38 Express regret
 40 Depilates, in a way
 42 Kipling lad
 43 Ashen
 44 Open a bit
 45 Provocative
 47 Cougar
 48 Spot
 49 Not so much
 52 Inseparable
 53 Diamond score

Solution time: 21 mins.

| | | | | | |
|----------|-------|--------|--|--|--|
| FIND | GYM | SCOW | | | |
| ODOR | LEU | URGE | | | |
| ROSEBOWL | MALI | | | | |
| | SAW | LIMBER | | | |
| DAISY | SART | | | | |
| ENVY | SPLIT | PEA | | | |
| ETA | PEELS | LAX | | | |
| PIN | MONEY | SERE | | | |
| | EGAD | GLAND | | | |
| MARMOT | EAU | | | | |
| OCHO | ONSTR | RIKE | | | |
| LEER | RIP | PRIM | | | |
| DDAY | SLY | SETS | | | |

Yesterday's answer 1-30



Bridge

North dealer.
 East-West vulnerable.

NORTH
 ♠ A Q J 6
 ♥ K J 7 3
 ♦ —
 ♣ A J 9 5 3

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

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

SOUTH
 ♠ 8 5 3
 ♥ A Q 10 9 6
 ♦ J
 ♣ K 8 6 4

The bidding:
 North 1 ♠
 East 1 ♦
 South 3 ♦
 West 4 ♦
 Opening lead — six of diamonds.

A 100 Percent Finesse

Today's hand features the recurring problem of whether to finesse or play for the drop of the queen when missing Q-x-x of a suit. The general rule is to cash the A-K, but because this is mathematically a very close proposition, declarer will frequently switch to the finesse for good and sufficient reasons. Such was the case in this deal.

South found himself in six hearts after the sequence shown. The slam was an excellent one, since it would make if West had the king of spades, or if a club loser could be avoided. West's diamond lead was ruffed, and two rounds of trumps were drawn. The king of clubs was then cashed, and another club was led toward dummy, West playing the ten. To finesse or not to finesse was now the question. Declarer finessed and made the contract. But it was not just a lucky guess. The finesse guaranteed the contract, win or lose. This was because if East turned up with the queen, he would have no choice but to hand South the slam by returning a spade or a diamond -- the only two suits he still held.

If East led a spade into dummy's A-Q-J-6, declarer's other spade loser would go on dummy's fifth club. And if East returned a diamond instead, South would discard a spade, ruff in dummy and again score the rest.

So the club finesse, with nine cards of the suit, turned out also to be a safety play.

South dealer.
 Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
 ♠ K 9 7 6
 ♥ 10 7 2
 ♦ K Q 3
 ♣ A Q 4

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

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

SOUTH
 ♠ A Q 4 3 2
 ♥ Q 6
 ♦ J 10 4
 ♣ K J 8

The bidding:
 South 1 ♠
 West 2 ♥
 North 3 ♠
 East Pass
 Opening lead — king of hearts.

Steppingstone to Success

The most innocent-looking cards sometimes prove to be worth their weight in gold. For example, if you study the East hand -- and we hope you won't have occasion to study many like it -- you wouldn't think that this motley collection could contribute anything of significant value to the defense against four spades. But it did, as we shall presently see. At first blush, when you look at all four hands, it might seem that four spades is laydown. But declarer failed to make the contract, and, what's more, there was nothing he could do about it. When you run into the kind of defense he encountered, you just have to tip your hat and let it go at that. West led the heart king, East signaling with the eight to begin a high-low, and continued with the ace, East playing the three. West now studied the situation at length and concluded that in view of South's opening bid, plus what he could see in his own hand and dummy, there was no chance East could come up with a defensive trick of his own. However, West also realized that if his partner held just the five of spades, the contract could be beaten. Accordingly, he led a low heart (instead of the jack) at trick three! East ruffed with his one and only trump, the five, forcing declarer to overruff with the queen. As a result, South had to go down one, since he could not avoid losing a trump trick to West as well as the ace of diamonds. Good defense by West, you might say, because if he had led the heart jack at trick three, East might not have bothered to ruff his partner's high heart. At the same time, though, it cannot be denied that East's lowly five struck the really decisive blow. It just goes to show that even the sorriest of hands may occasionally perform a function that almost defies credulity.

Family Circus • Bill Keane

