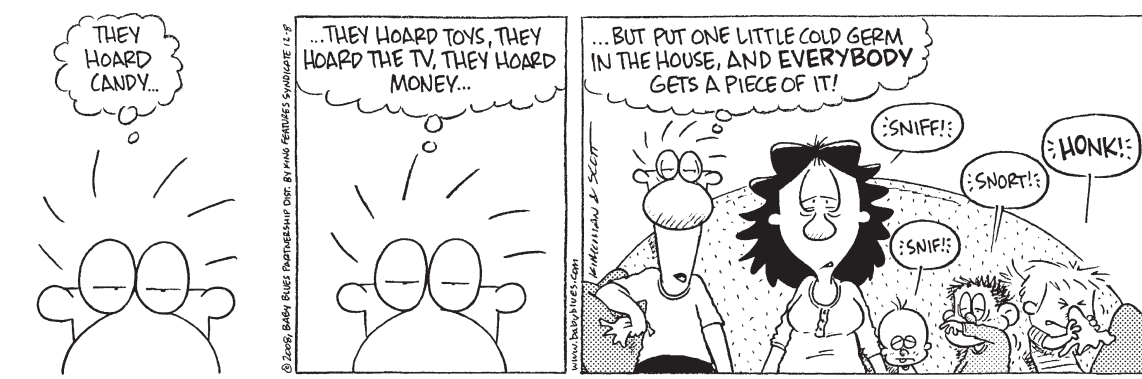


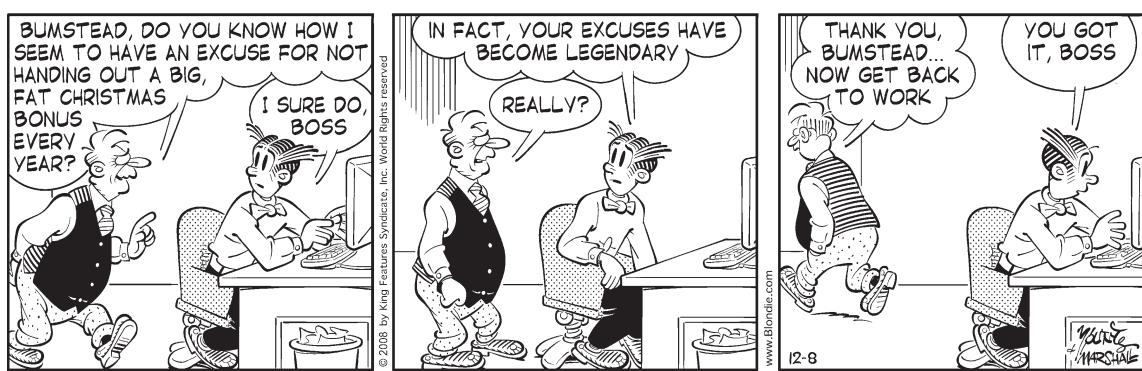
**Baby Blues** • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



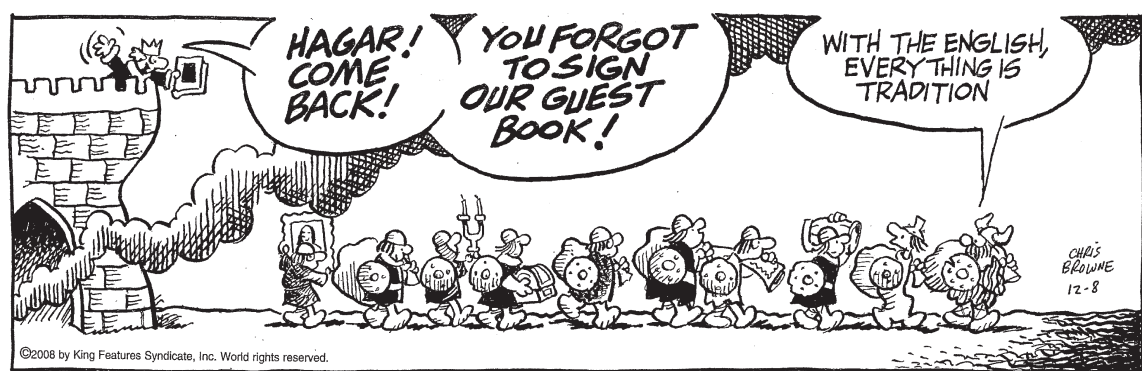
**Beetle Bailey** • Mort Walker



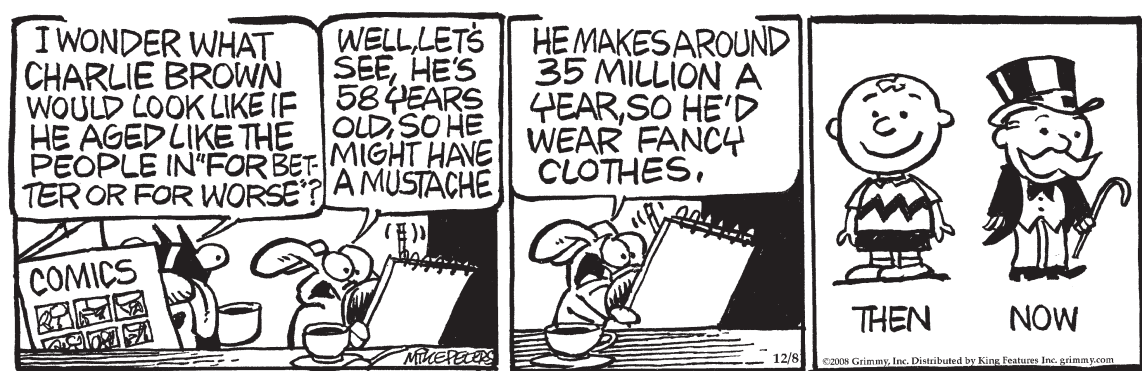
**Blondie** • Chic Young



**Hagar the Horrible** • Chris Browne



**Mother Goose and Grimm** • Mike Peters



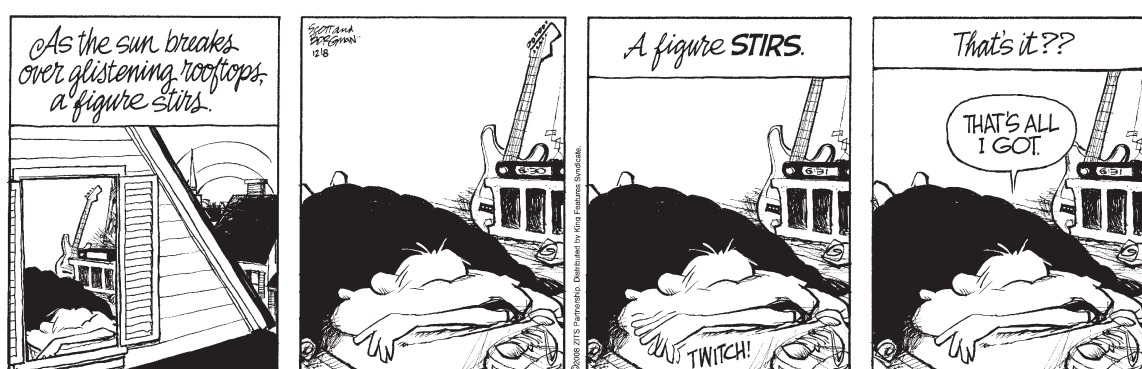
**Sally Forth** • Greg Howard



**Tod the Dinosaur** • Patrick Roberts



**Zits** • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



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**Cryptoquip**  
12-8 CRYPTOQUIP

R K X H L I T R B W U K B H  
B W K A X W X R K I ' G Q X B A A L J H  
W X Q Q J P J U G K B M X , J G T M M I G X  
L I T R J W H X G G P J W H X G G .

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: K equals L

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I KNOW THIS UNASSUMING FELLOW WHO WORKS MAKING NEON SIGNS. HE LIKES TO KEEP A GLOW PROFILE.

**Conceptis Sudoku** By Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★ 12/08

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 the last Sudoku puzzle is at right.

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

Difficulty Level ★★★ 12/05

**Bridge**

West dealer.  
East-West vulnerable.

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

**WEST**  
♠ K 5 2  
♥ Q J 10 8 7 6 3  
♦ —  
♣ K 9 6

**EAST**  
♠ 10 8 7 6  
♥ 5 4  
♦ A K 10 9 8  
♣ 10 3

**SOUTH**  
♠ Q J  
♥ K  
♦ Q 7 6 4 3 2  
♣ J 7 5 4

The bidding:  
West North East South  
3♥ 3 NT Pass 5♦  
Pass Pass Dble  
Opening lead — queen of hearts.

**Famous Hand**

It is sometimes said that members of the fair sex are not aggressive enough in the bidding, but you'd never prove it by this deal played in the women's world team championship back in 1960. The hand occurred in the match between Switzerland and Great Britain.

At the first table, the Swiss West opened three hearts, and North overcalled with three notrump. As played, somewhat peculiarly, by the British pair, this bid was primarily for takeout, asking South to bid her best suit.

South was looking at a hand far better than it might have been, and she decided to show her extra values by jumping to five diamonds. The Swiss East, rather pleased by this development, doubled. South played the hand very well and went down only two -- 300 points.

At the second table, the British West also opened three hearts, but here the Swiss North passed. East, trying to make things difficult for the opponents, then bid four hearts!

This effort was successful in a fashion, though not in precisely the way East expected. South, obviously a fearless soul, entered the fray all by herself with five diamonds! West passed, and North, having exercised enormous restraint on the previous round, very reasonably went on to six diamonds.

East thereupon expressed her doubt that this contract could be made by doubling. This proved to be an accurate assessment, and East-West collected 700 points when the Swiss declarer went down four (+800 in today's scoring).

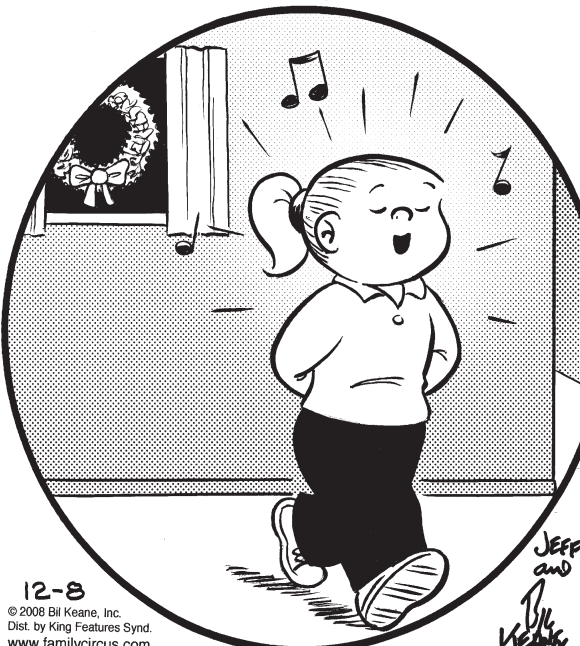
So the British gained 400 points on the deal, with all the players at both tables bidding their hands to the hilt -- and then some. Let it not be said that the ladies are in any way lacking in fortitude!

Tomorrow: Preparing for the unexpected.

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**Family Circus** • Bil Keane

**THE FAMILY CIRCUS** By Bil Keane



12-8  
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"Deck the halls with balls of folly ..."

**Crossword**

**ACROSS**

- Emotional one?
- Watch chain
- Pop duo, — and Jeremy
- Magnificent tale
- Nev. neighbor
- Firetruck necessity
- Opulent
- Actor McBride
- Church section
- Recovery regimens
- Cold War initials
- Like 20-Across
- Brunei bigwig
- Hot water tanks
- Liberace's instrument
- Con
- Assen-ter's vote
- Sea eagle
- Superman comparison

**DOWN**

- Frau's mister
- "... black-birds, baked in —"
- St. with two peninsulas
- Govt. agcy.
- Hawaiian island
- State with certainty
- Skewed entree
- Nil
- Have a bug
- Therefore
- 56 State
- Great joy
- "Two and a Half Men" actor
- Bound
- Donkey
- Ruby or Sandra
- Snoopy's owner
- Spelling contest
- Dine
- Parched
- Bakery offering
- Kournikova
- of tennis
- Christmas refrain
- Low voice
- Aware of
- Detail
- Moment
- Branch
- Shelter
- Tibetan critter
- Do a double-take
- Catastrophic
- Raised
- Taj Mahal city
- Nitwit
- Use a ray gun
- She raised Cain
- Kanga's kid
- Caustic solution

**Solution time: 24 mins.**

Yesterday's answer 12-6

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11			12			13			14
15					16				17
18				19			20		21
			22		23		24		25
28	29	30			31		32		
33				34		35		36	
37			38			39		40	
41				42		43			
			44		45		46		47
50	51	52			53		54		55
56					57				58
59					60				61