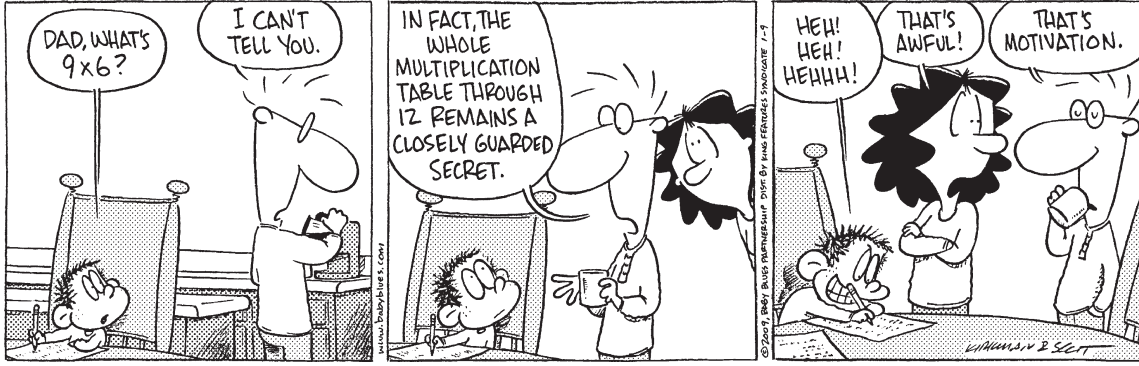
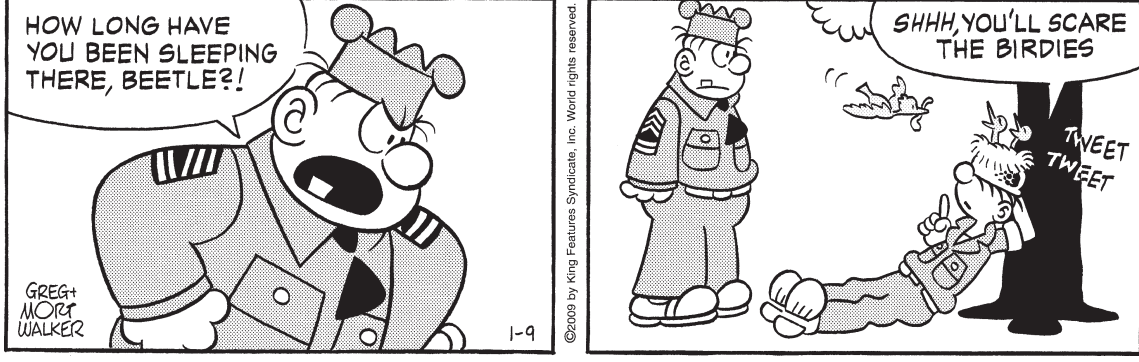


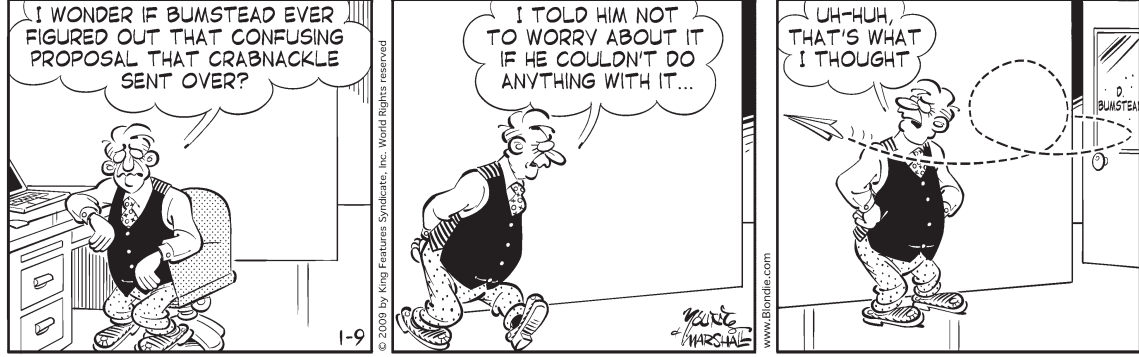
**Baby Blues** • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



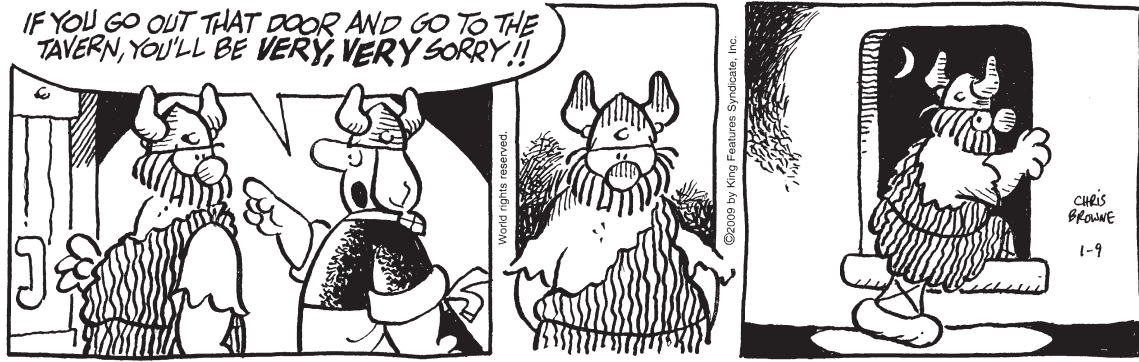
**Beetle Bailey** • Mort Walker



**Blondie** • Chic Young



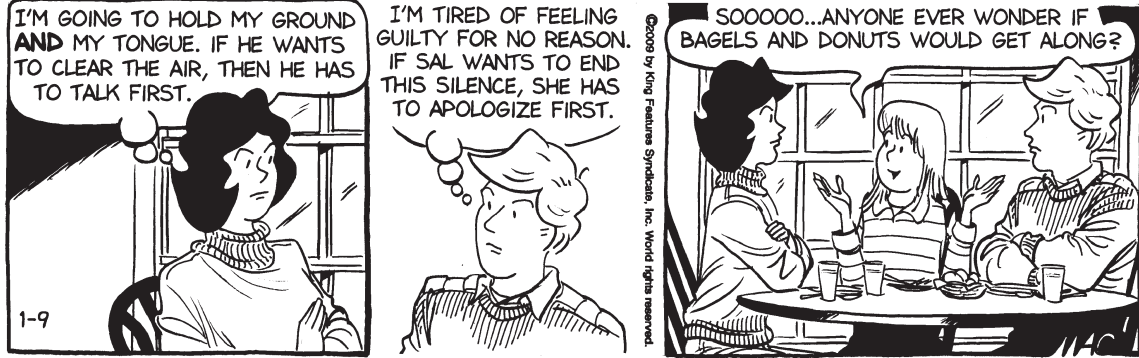
**Hagar the Horrible** • Chris Browne



**Mother Goose and Grimm** • Mike Peters



**Sally Forth** • Greg Howard



**Tod the Dinosaur** • Patrick Roberts



**Zits** • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



**THANK YOU FOR READING THE**

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**Cryptoquip**

OI IYJ FEKQKEAJ HJMHPJ,  
IYJW FJHJ BNLQGBIELX  
OL JVYOGMIEPJ MJOHBY  
ANH MNZJ ZEMMELX KWL.V  
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A BUNCH OF DISGRUNTLED COMEDIANS ENGAGED IN A MOB BRAWL, WOULD THAT BE A LAUGH RIOT?  
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: H equals R

**Conceptis Sudoku**

By Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

1/09

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.

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

Difficulty Level ★★★

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**Bridge**

You are South, both sides vulnerable. The bidding has gone:

North East South West  
1♦ Pass 1♥ Pass  
2 NT Pass ?

What would you bid now with each of the following five hands?

- ♠ K63 ♥ Q7542 ♦ 62 ♣ J73
- ♠ A94 ♥ KQ863 ♦ QJ ♣ K92
- ♠ KQ95 ♥ AJ843 ♦ K94 ♣ 10
- ♠ 872 ♥ KJ95 ♦ AJ76 ♣ 93
- ♠ K853 ♥ J764 ♦ 10 ♣ A852

**Bidding Quiz**

1. Pass. Partner's two-notrump bid is highly invitational, but not forcing. It shows an 18- or 19-point balanced hand, and asks responder to continue bidding with more than six points. As your one-heart response was just about rock-bottom, the wisest thing to do is to pass, since the combined values cannot total 26 points, the number usually required for game. Indeed, making even eight tricks is far from certain.

2. Six notrump. Point count is again very helpful here. Your 15 points, added to partner's 18 or 19, bring you to 33 or 34 in the combined hands. The magic number for a small slam is 33, so you are on firm ground in raising partner to six.

3. Three spades. This hand also has a great potential for slam, but it is not certain that notrump is the best denomination because of the singleton club. Suit slams often don't require 33 points when there are distributional values that compensate for a shortage of high-card points.

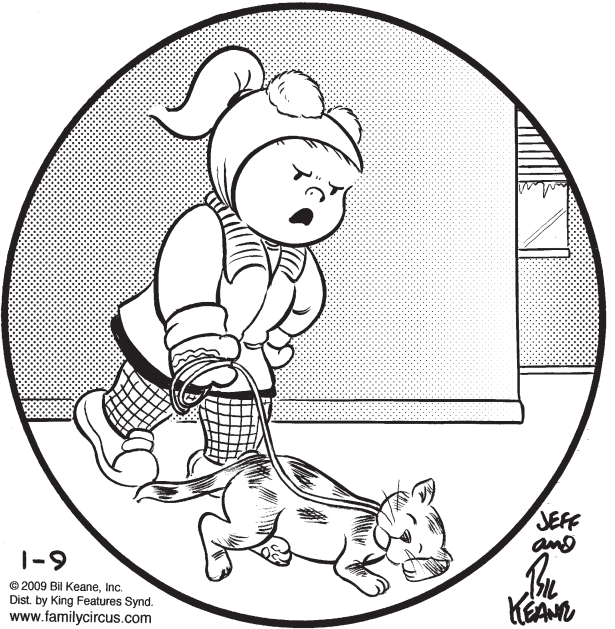
Spades are mentioned at this point, not so much in the hope of finding partner with four of them, which is unlikely, but as part of a plan to describe your 4-5-3-1 distribution for slam purposes. You intend to bid four diamonds next if partner rebids three notrump. He will thus be apprised of your club shortage, and this will make it much easier for him to select the best contract.

4. Three notrump. It is not necessary to bid three diamonds, since nine tricks in notrump are apt to be easier to negotiate than 11 tricks in diamonds. Three diamonds would also suggest interest in a possible slam or an aversion to notrump, neither of which is the case with this hand.

5. Three notrump. Hands with singletons are not ideal for notrump, but here the singleton is in partner's suit, and there is no better alternative in sight. Obviously, a game must be reached, since the combined hands contain at least 26 points, and three notrump seems the only realistic possibility.

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**Family Circus** • Bil Keane



"Cats aren't too crazy about goin' for walks."

**Crossword**

**ACROSS**

- Wool wearer
- Out of harm's way
- Forehead
- Prune
- Mountain goat
- Discourteous
- Something buried (in)
- Prayer closer
- Breast-bones
- Legislation
- Jewel
- Dormant
- Mixed metal
- Marceau character
- One of the kin
- "Give a —, don't pollute"
- Oppositionist
- Minor players
- Past
- Candle matter

**DOWN**

- Benevolent herd?
- Refuses to
- Duel
- Director
- Perpendicular, at sea
- Retainer
- Clarify
- Barroom set-to
- Pirates' quaff
- "— on a Grecian Urn"
- Rune equivalent to a W
- Grain disease
- Cleo's slayer
- Black, to Browning?
- Therefore
- Sit for a shot
- Moby's pursuer
- Trade-mark symbol
- Aerobic maneuver
- Carton
- Skilled
- Ersatz chocolate
- Teensy
- Kidderminster, e.g.
- salts
- Bumps into
- Campus VIP
- Slithery
- Detail, for short
- Upper limit
- E.T.'s vessel
- Before
- Corn spike

**Solution time: 25 mins.**

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

Yesterday's answer 1-9

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	
26	27	28				29			30			
31						32			33			
34						35			36			
37						38			39			
						40			41	42	43	44
45	46	47				48	49					
50						51				52		
53						54					55	