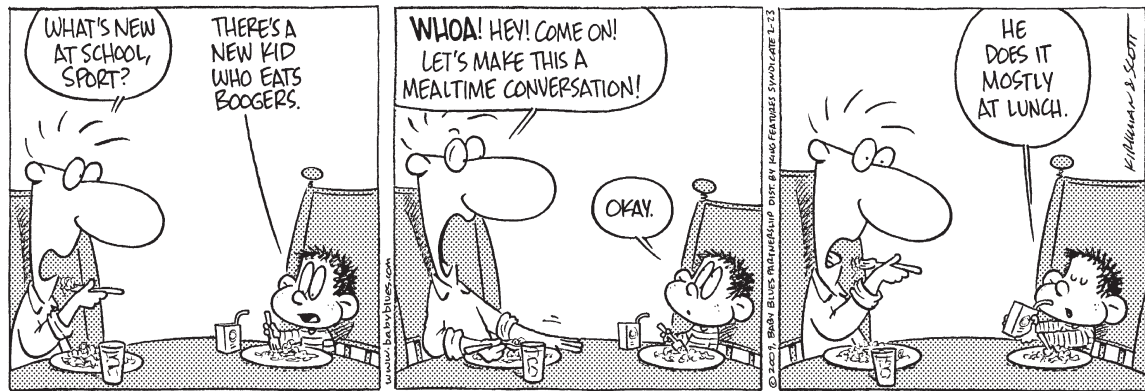
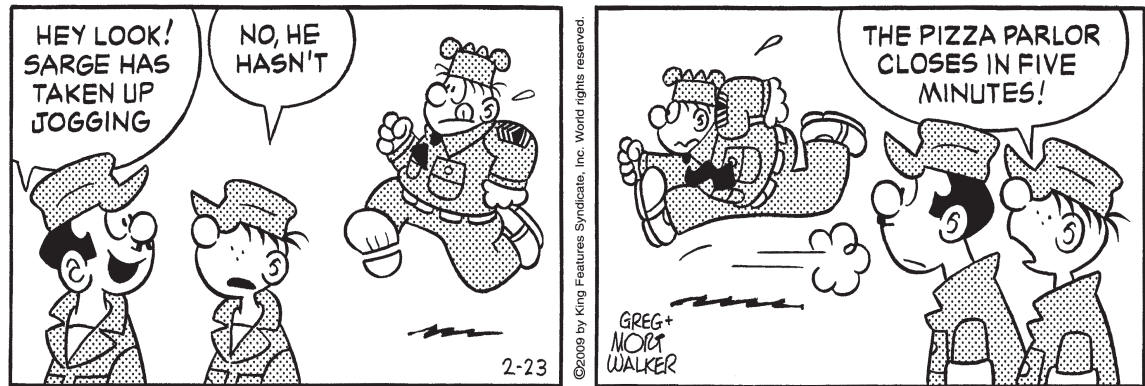


Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



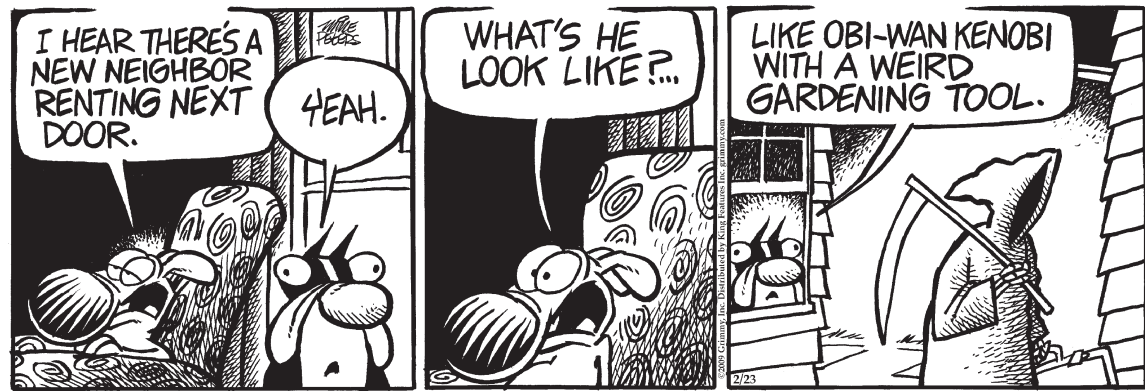
Blondie • Chic Young



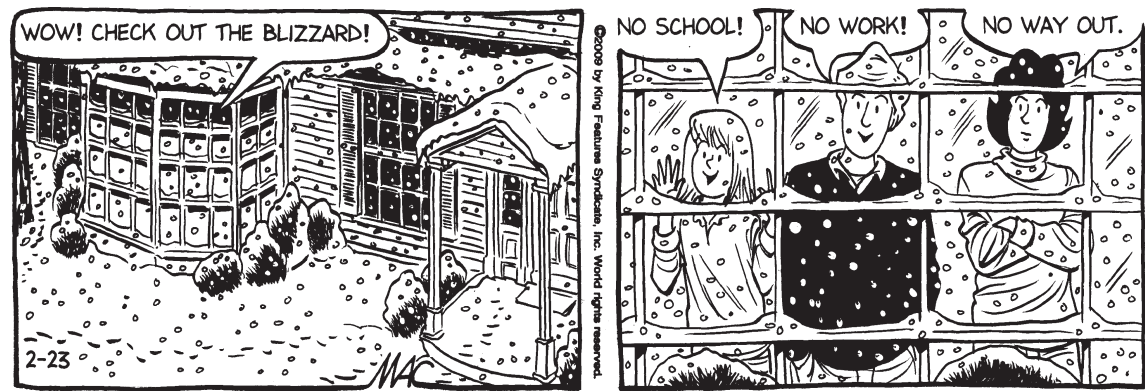
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Dr. Joyce Brothers
• Ask Dr. Brothers
Gossip can end a relationship

Dear Dr. Brothers: My husband and I live in a very small, close-knit town. We have a happy marriage, but part of my job entails traveling a lot and entertaining visitors in town when they are here. This has led to a certain amount of speculation and lots of rumors flying around town that I'm being unfaithful. I love my husband, and he's been a good sport about the whole thing, but it's starting to get to both of us. How can we combat these rumors and stop people from gossiping? — B.L.

Dear B.L.: Gossip, especially in a small town, can be almost impossible to quell. If the gossip starts getting worse, or you just have had enough, you can try talking to some of the worst offenders, if you know who they are. Usually, simply hearing a rumor makes people believe it, so it can be hard to combat rumors once they've started. If you can figure out an underlying motivation for these hurtful rumors, you can combat them more easily. That will make it harder for them to spread lies about you, especially because you have a legitimate explanation for your behavior.

Dear Dr. Brothers: I drink a lot of coffee at work, and recently a co-worker told me that drinking so much caffeine can actually make it harder to concentrate and work effectively. I told him to mind his own business. He then went over my head to my superior and told him that I started a fight over his constructive criticism. Now I'm being disciplined for something I never did, and my co-worker is telling everyone that I'm bad at my job — all over a cup of coffee. How can I set the record straight and get back at my co-worker? — T.G.

Dear T.G.: First, your goal shouldn't be revenge on your co-worker. The last thing you want to do is start a feud with a co-worker, especially over something so trivial. Make an appointment to see him, and keep the meeting entirely professional. Rather than point fingers, talk about your reaction to your co-worker, and ask whether he feels that your work truly has been suffering.

If your superior agrees with you that you've done nothing wrong once you explain the situation to him, that is as much revenge as you need. You should continue to work normally, knowing that if something like this happens again, you have recourse in the facts of the situation. However, your co-worker might be seeing something that you are missing about your work. Your superior also might see a problem with your work habits, in which case you should use this opportunity to reflect on why it is you drink so much coffee, and whether your lifestyle is causing your work to suffer.

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Bridge • Steve Becker

South dealer. North-South vulnerable.
NORTH
 ♠ AK 9 7 6 5 4
 ♥ 5 2
 ♦ J 4 3
 ♣ 6
WEST
 ♠ J 8 2
 ♥ A 10 9 4
 ♦ Q 5
 ♣ 9 8 3 2
EAST
 ♠ 10 3
 ♥ 8 7 6 3
 ♦ 10 6
 ♣ K Q 7 5 4
SOUTH
 ♠ Q
 ♥ K Q J
 ♦ AK 9 8 7 2
 ♣ A J 10
 The bidding:
 South West North East
 2 NT Pass 4 ♣ Pass
 4 ♣ Pass 5 ♣ Dble
 Redble Pass 5 ♣ Pass
 6 ♦ Pass 6 ♣
 Opening lead — ace of hearts.

Famous Hand

The 2007 world team championship for the Bermuda Bowl was won by Norway, which easily defeated the United States in the 128-deal final by nearly 100 International Match Points, 334-245.5.

After trailing early, the Norwegians went ahead to stay about a third of the way through the match and continued to build their lead by making one winning decision after another. Today's deal, from the session in which Norway assumed the lead, is a typical example.

When the deal was first played, the Norwegian pair of Boye Brogeland and Erik Saelensminde reached a slam in spades as shown. Saelensminde's decision to open two notrump with a 1-3-6-3 distribution convinced Brogeland to try for slam on the assumption that his side had at least nine spades.

Four diamonds was a slam try in spades, and the rest of the auction consisted primarily of cuebids leading to the slam. With the spades dividing 3-2, the defenders got only the heart ace, so the Norwegians were plus 1,430.

At the other table, with George Jacobs and Ralph Katz of the U.S. North-South, the bidding went:

South West North East
 1 [D] Pass 1 [S] Pass
 3 NT All Pass

Jacobs, North, considered bidding over three notrump, but this was not as clear-cut as it may seem. As played by most of today's expert partnerships, a rebid of three notrump after opening with one of a minor tends to imply a strong, possibly unbalanced hand containing a long, solid or near-solid suit.

Jacobs therefore had to allow for the possibility that South had only one spade, and chose the conservative course. After a spade lead by West, declarer had no trouble taking all the tricks for a score of 720, but wound up losing 12 IMPs.

Tomorrow: For whom the bells toll.
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Family Circus • Bil Keane



2-23
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Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★ 2/23

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

Cryptoquip

NGCEL Y CYRGLH YBLOGEYC
 DLYWLO KLEYBL Y EPU, SGN
 KAWWGLN SYHL WAKKLW
 SGB RSL ESGLV PV UPDGEL.
 YZL UZNSM NZDS SSHOS.
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: SUPPOSING SOMEONE CRIED "I MADE A REALLY BIG ERROR!" ...

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: S equals H

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
 1 "The loneliest number"
 4 "Danny Boy" music-makers
 9 Definite article
 12 Supporting
 13 Lifeless, old-style
 14 Tier
 15 Happen
 17 Gorilla
 18 Can. neighbor
 19 First game of the season
 21 Denim, e.g.
 24 Fishing equipment
 25 Bobby of hockey
 26 Fresh
 28 Fleet-related
 31 Harvest
 33 Legislation
 35 Long skirt

DOWN
 10 Optimist's feeling
 11 Basin accessory
 16 Pecan or almond
 20 Dutch cheese
 21 Old, stale jokes
 22 Sandwich cookie
 23 Exceed time
 27 Bankroll
 29 Wheel holder
 30 Easter flower
 32 Sulk
 34 Feminine
 37 Metal workers
 39 Human trunks
 42 Threaded nail
 44 Up to
 45 Tense
 46 Farm fraction
 50 Carte lead-in
 51 Matter-horn, for one
 52 Afternoon social
 53 Have a bite

Solution time: 27 mins.

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

Saturday's answer 2-23

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						56		
57			58						59		