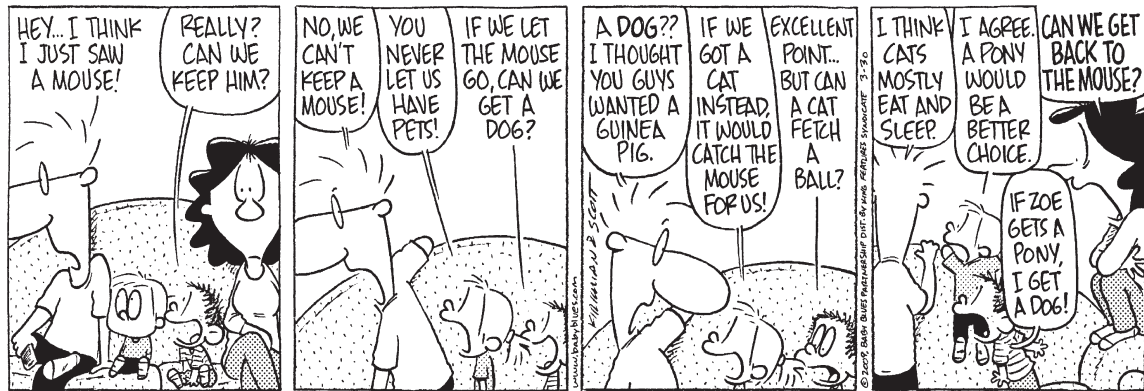
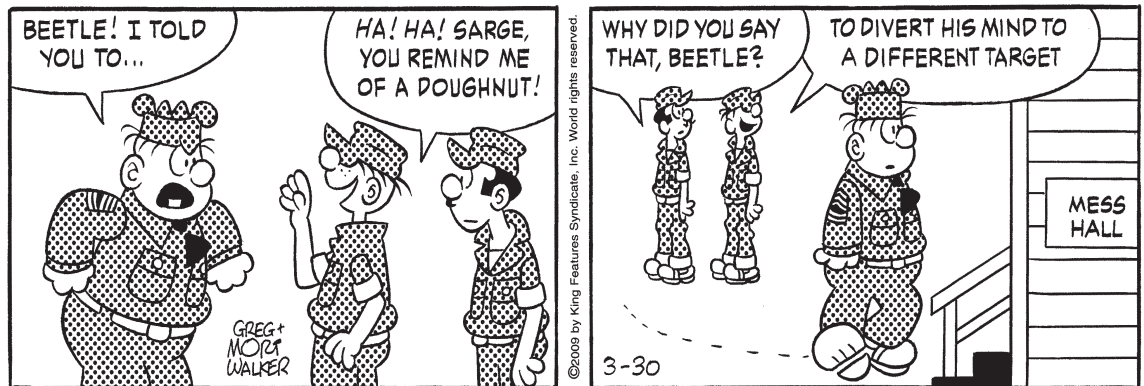


Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



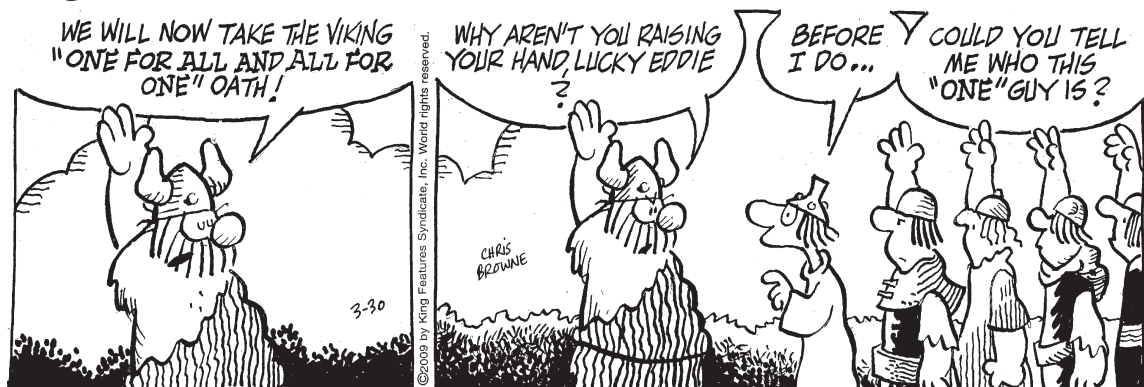
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Blondie • Chic Young



Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



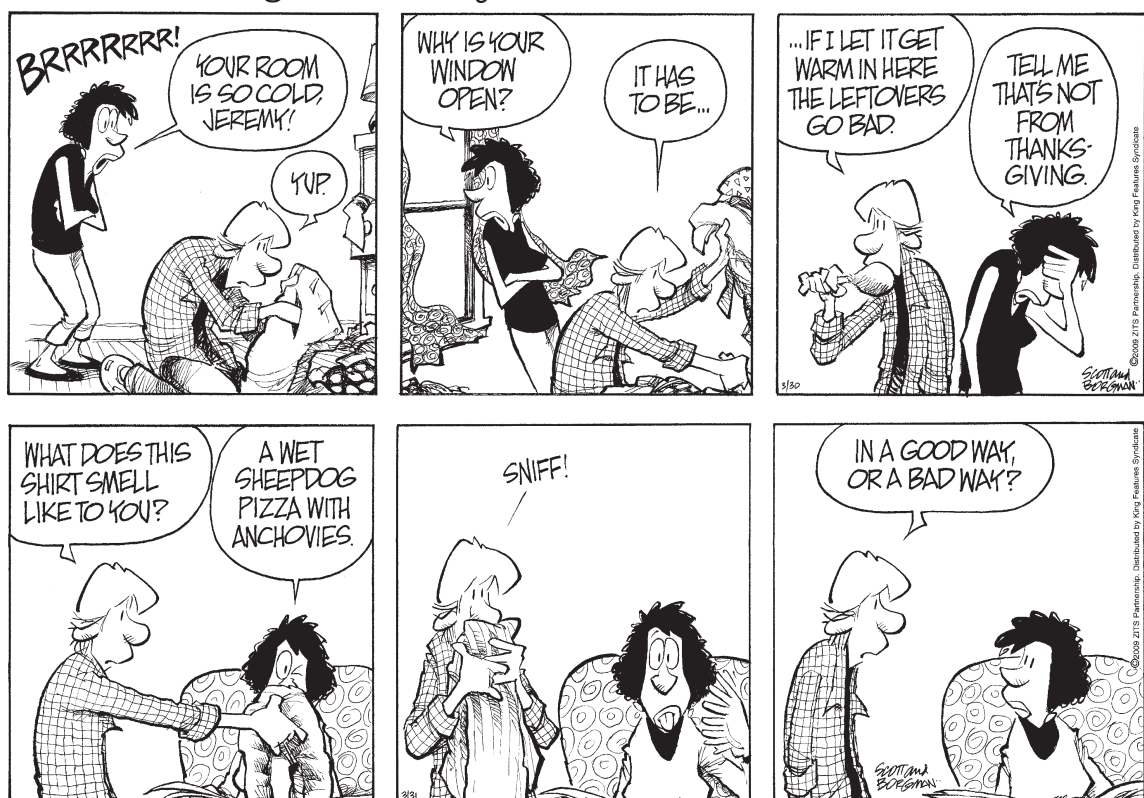
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Dr. Joyce Brothers

• Ask Dr. Brothers

Band success not fun for all

Dear Dr. Brothers: My friends and I started a band about three years ago, right around the time of my 15th birthday. At first it started off mostly as a joke, but as time went on, things became more serious. After we put up a MySpace page, we started to get all these fans, and now we frequently get offers to play around town. I've started to think we could make a career out of this, but my bandmates still don't take it too seriously. I think they're getting tired of me being the "serious one" and might kick me out. — L.B.

Dear L.B.: Being in a band is like being married — except your relationship is with more than just one person. It's hard to juggle so many different personalities when everybody is not on the same page. If everyone wants something different from the experience, there's a good chance nothing will get done at all. They all may have reached the stage of the "seven-year itch" a few years too early!

You shouldn't feel guilty for taking your music seriously, nor should your friends start to resent you for doing so. It's simply a difference of opinion about how important the band is to each of you, and perhaps the best thing for all is to part ways. Your best bet is to get together with people as serious about music as you are. You might want to cash in a bit on your blossoming local fame to start from scratch — audition members for a new band who know how to mix fun with work. Keep in mind that there can be a difference in style, but as long as the common goal among your new bandmates is more than those turn it is to buy the next keg, you'll do fine.

Dear Dr. Brothers: I've had it! Sometimes it feels as though every e-mail I send out to someone disappears into some cyber netherworld, never to be seen again. My problem is that every time I e-mail someone, they NEVER e-mail me back until I write them a "quick note" to see if they received the original e-mail. It's driving me nuts, as I'm always second-guessing whether I offended them somehow. I always reply promptly to my e-mails, and I feel slighted when I'm not treated the same way. Is it me, or them? — B.D.

Dear B.D.: There are few tasks in the world lonelier than sitting in front of your computer hitting the refresh button to check for new e-mails. Here's where the guessing games start: Are they ignoring me? Why are they ignoring me? How dare they ignore me?

Our minds begin to build resentments upon a foundation of being disrespected, when sometimes we neglect the obvious. Computer users seem to be divided into two camps. There are those who check their e-mail throughout the day. And then there are those who treat e-mail almost more as a novelty than as an urgent matter that must be dealt with right away. These people most likely don't mean you any disrespect; it's just not as important to them as it is to you. They might not even check their e-mail for days (gasp!). My advice is to not center your life on the amount of replies in your inbox. And if you want a more immediate response, the telephone is always there!

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Bridge • Steve Becker

West dealer. Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
 ♠ 10 2
 ♥ Q 6
 ♦ Q 5 4 2
 ♣ 10 9 8 5

WEST
 ♠ 7 6 4
 ♥ 10 9 5 2
 ♦ K J 9 8
 ♣ K

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

SOUTH
 ♠ A K Q 9 8 3
 ♥ A 7
 ♦ A J 7 3 2

The bidding:
 West North East South
 Pass Pass Pass 1♠
 Pass 1♦ Pass 2♦
 Pass 2NT Pass 3♣
 Pass 4♦ Pass 5NT
 Pass 7♦ Pass 7♣

Opening lead — jack of hearts.

Famous Hand

This deal occurred in the quarterfinal match between England and China at the 2007 women's world team championship in Shanghai. It features a brilliant defensive play by the British East, Michelle Brunner, who laid a cunning trap for her Chinese opponent when she seemed about to bring in a grand slam.

The bidding by the Chinese North-South was natural after a forcing one-club opening and one-diamond response indicating a weak hand. South's five notrump was no doubt intended as the "grand slam force," asking North to bid seven clubs if she held two of the top three club honors. North then elected to bid the grand slam without both honors, possibly influenced by her five-card support when she could have held somewhat less.

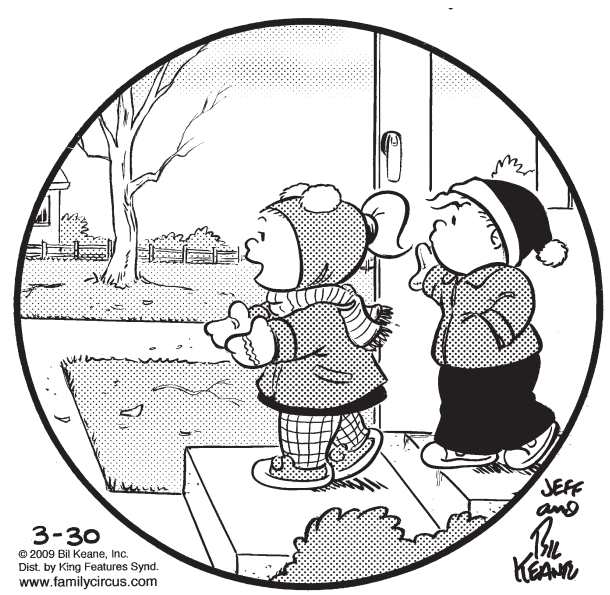
As can be seen, seven clubs was due to succeed because declarer had no way to get to dummy to try the trump finesse. After winning any lead, declarer would have had no choice but to plunk down the ace, dropping the king.

Things seemed headed for that outcome when Brunner's partner led the heart jack, on which the declarer, Yi Qian Liu, played dummy's queen. It was here that Brunner had her chance to shine. Having noted the absence of the club king in dummy, as well as the dearth of entries on the table, she decided to give declarer a bit of rope by refusing to cover the heart queen!

Declarer happily accepted this unexpected opportunity to take the trump finesse and so went down one. Of course, had Brunner made the routine play of covering the queen of hearts with the king, the grand slam would have come rolling home.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



"It was really windy yesterday, but today it's nice and calm."

Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★ 3/30

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.

Cryptoquip

UQU LDK GICO FGI BQOJ QA
 FGI NICPG ND LH HDAB
 NDKBGF C PCO JDF CAU PCJJIU
 QF OGD AUC'H GDAUCH?

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: SINCE HE REPEATEDLY SPRINGS INTO THE AIR WHILE TAKING STRIDES, COULD YOU SAY HE'S LEAPWALKING?

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: U equals D

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
 1 History chapter
 4 Recede
 7 Note to self, e.g.
 11 Co-ed quarters
 13 Stout cousin?
 14 Verve territory
 15 Concept
 16 Dress (in)
 17 Otherwise
 18 Tropical timber trees
 20 Coated with gold
 22 Dawn goddess
 24 Acceptable
 28 Splendor
 32 Form
 33 PC picture
 34 Morning moisture
 36 Facility
 37 Disreputable
 39 It may say "Home Sweet Home"

DOWN
 1 Tend texts
 2 Took the bus
 3 Vicinity
 4 Have breakfast
 5 Online journal
 6 Start
 7 Tim
 Russert's
 longtime show
 8 Right angle
 9 More, to Manuel
 10 Indivisible
 12 Just stay within your budget
 19 "Mayday!"

21 — Angeles (Abbr.)
23 Norm
25 False idol
26 Church section
27 Antelope's playmate
28 Fail to hit
29 Rue the run
30 Rivers or Collins
31 "Of course"
35 Ashen
38 Second person
40 Swab the deck
42 Batman's partner
45 Protuberance
47 Teensy bit
48 Get by somehow
49 Nobel chemist Otto
50 Venomous snake
51 Bill and —
52 Wife's address
54 "Roscoe"

Solution time: 27 mins.

Saturday's answer 3-30

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
28	29	30				31			32
33						34			35
37						38			39
41						42			43
						44			45
						46			47
50	51	52				53			54
56						57			58
59						60			61