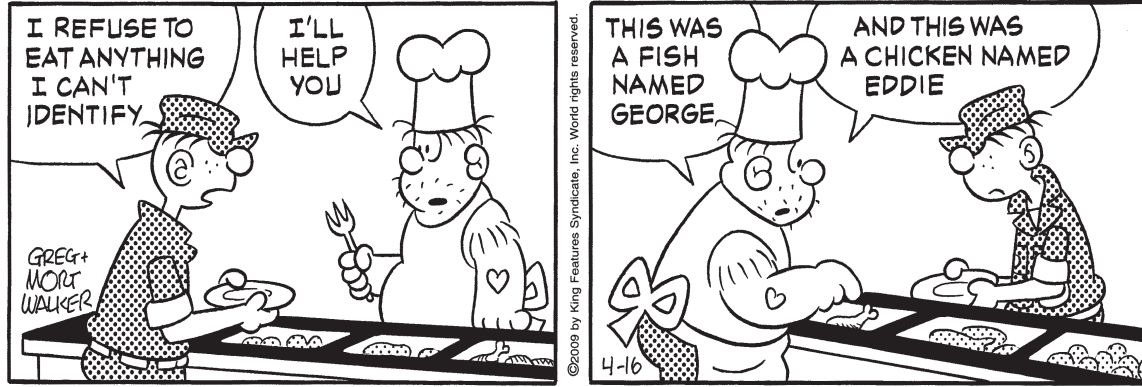


Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Blondie • Chic Young



Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



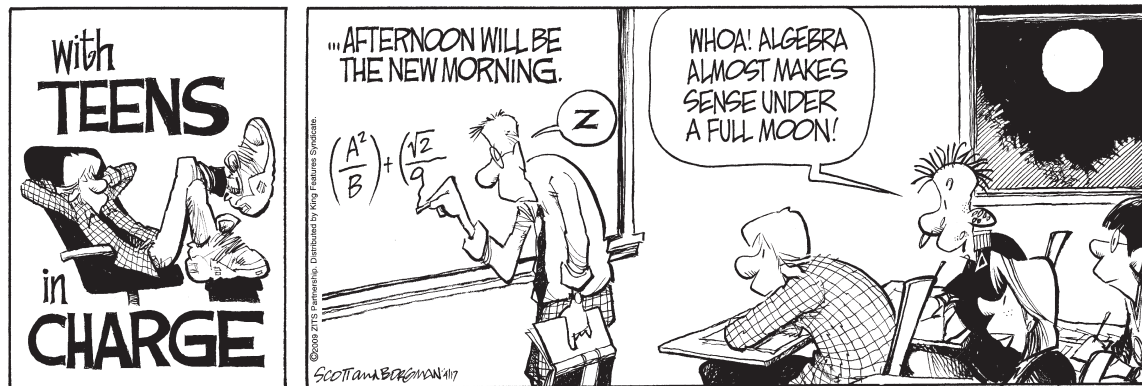
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Dr. Joyce Brothers
• Ask Dr. Brothers
Pre-teen spends evening texting

Dear Dr. Brothers: I am becoming worried about my daughter, who is almost 13. She has a big group of friends, which is nice, but it seems that every one of them must contact her every night on her cell phone, because she spends literally hours text-messaging or phoning them. We have become a family who don't really communicate very well with each other because of this. My husband and I don't know how to limit this texting without wrecking her social life. — L.R.

Dear L.R.: You probably are right to be concerned — the peak ages for texting are 13 to 17, and your 12-year-old is already hooked on this hugely popular form of communication. Teens are said to text more than they phone people now. And while your daughter is getting valuable practice in sharing her emotions and perhaps even making worthwhile plans, the likelihood is that this behavior is going to do some damage to the family circle. I'm sure you are experiencing your daughter being in the room but not really there. You are not alone.

Since this form of connectedness is so new, the long-term effects are not known yet. But it seems to be taking a toll on teens' ability to focus, concentrate and be present in the moment. So, although there are also benefits — you mentioned a strong social circle among them — some rules to restrict texting would be beneficial. Homework and texting don't mix; neither do texting and sitting down to dinner or going to bed. If you start with these reasonable restrictions, you will at least have the basis for some family time with your soon-to-be teen. Don't worry about wrecking her friendships — you and your husband deserve to have her attention, too.

Dear Dr. Brothers: My 15-year-old sister and her friends have a new game that could get them in a lot of trouble. They go to the mall downtown and see how many items they can shoplift. They seem to do this every week, and I feel it's only a matter of time before they get caught. I don't want to tell my parents, but I don't want to seem like the evil big brother either. Help! — D.J.

Dear D.J.: No one likes to be a tattletale, but it seems you have a decision to make. Would you rather get the whole thing out in the open now, or would you prefer to bet on your sister not getting caught? Every time she shoplifts, the odds of getting arrested increase. It's a dangerous game she's playing, and while you can't control the way she acts, you certainly can take steps to help her.

It's possible that you might not have to bring your parents into the situation at all. Tell your sister flat out that you know what she's up to at the mall. Don't be threatening, just tell her that you don't want to see her in jail. Being bluntly confronted with the truth may be enough to shake her, but if she continues, it will be time to call in your mom and dad. Shoplifting is a crime, and your sister needs to realize that there can be serious consequences to her actions. The longer people are left to engage in dangerous behavior without serious repercussions, the more invulnerable they are. As her older brother, it's up to you to decide what's the best way to tell her before someone else does. This time, you need to align yourself with the adults.

Bridge • Steve Becker

South dealer. Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ K J 8 5
♥ 10 2
♦ A K J 5
♣ 10 5 3

WEST
♠ 10 4
♥ Q J 9 5 4
♦ 10 9 3 2
♣ Q 6

EAST
♠ 7 3 2
♥ K 8 6
♦ Q 7 6 4
♣ 8 7 4

SOUTH
♠ A Q 9 6
♥ A 7 3
♦ 8
♣ A K J 9 2

The bidding:
South West North East
1♠ Pass 1♦ Pass
1♦ Pass 3♦ Pass
6♣

Opening lead — queen of hearts.

Malfeasance in Office
To find a way to give yourself two chances to make a contract instead of just one is surely desirable, but it is sometimes easy to overlook the second chance.

Consider this deal where West led the queen of hearts against six spades. South took the ace, drew three rounds of trumps, cashed the ace of clubs, crossed to the ace of diamonds, led the ten of clubs and finessed.

The ten lost to the queen, and West's heart return sunk the slam. Of course, as can be seen, if South had cashed the A-K of clubs, he would have caught the queen and made the slam.

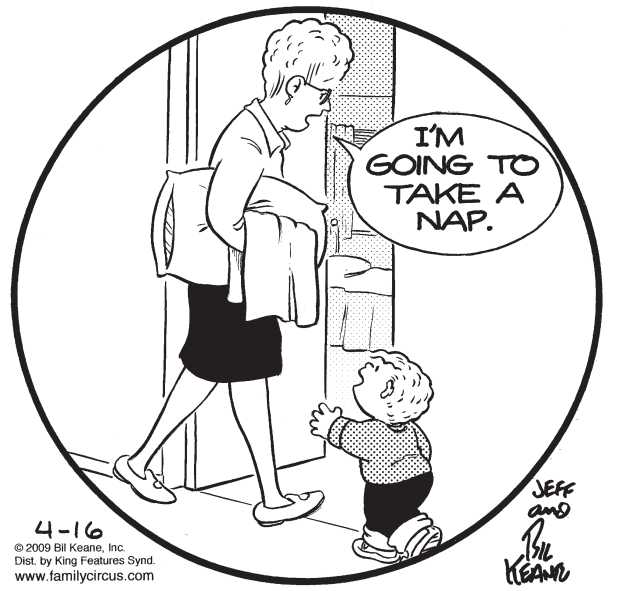
Oddly enough, cashing the A-K of clubs after drawing three rounds of trumps is the proper play — and this is not based on a peek at the East-West cards. The way South chose to play the hand gave him only one chance to succeed — that East had the queen of clubs. But had South spurned the club finesse and cashed the A-K of clubs, he would in so doing have gained an extra chance to make the slam.

Let's suppose that the queen does not fall under the A-K. In that case, South next leads a diamond and finesses dummy's jack. If the jack wins, South deposits his two heart losers on the A-K of diamonds, concedes a club to the queen and so makes the slam.

The suggested method of play succeeds if (1) West has the queen of diamonds, or if (2) either defender was dealt the doubleton queen of clubs (a 27 percent chance). That represents a substantial improvement over the one chance that East has the queen of clubs.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



"Want me to sing you to sleep, Grandma?"

Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★★ 4/16

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

R Q E H J D M J A J N N T G G M T
P Z L J C D M Q R N T Z A M Z R Z
H T H L J F J C R J E R J T A M Y V T X,
Q Z R R Y V J Q D ' R G X F P X J Z C.
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN A CHINESE DOG IS OWNED BY A TIBETAN MOUNTAIN GUIDE, MIGHT YOU CALL IT A SHERPA SHAR-PEI?
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: D equals T

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Auction action
4 Presentation
8 A-number-1
12 Blackjack component
13 Emanation
14 Make a lasting impression?
15 JFK or LBJ, e.g.
17 Waikiki wingding
18 Rowing need
19 Granting permission
21 Cold season
24 Uncivilized
25 "— was saying, ..."
26 Fix the soundtrack
28 Doppler device
32 Heckle
34 Space
36 Bigfoot's cousin

DOWN
1 Awful
2 "Rocks"
3 Portray as
4 Holy
5 "Ben- —"
6 Exam format
7 "Just add —"
8 D.C.
9 Needle case
10 Read briefly
11 Hoodlum
16 Feedbag bit
20 Paving gunk
21 Hospital section
22 "— Mommy Kissing Santa Claus"
23 Obvious hairpiece
27 Satchel
29 Reducing in rank
30 On
31 Frost-covered
33 Ardent enthusiasts
35 — -10 Conference
38 Street address?
40 Overshoe
43 Runway VIP
45 Zilch
46 Seethe
47 As well
48 Fast time?
49 Infamous lyre player
53 Singer Davis
54 The Red or the Black
55 Coal carrier

Solution time: 25 mins.

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

Yesterday's answer 4-16

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				60					61	