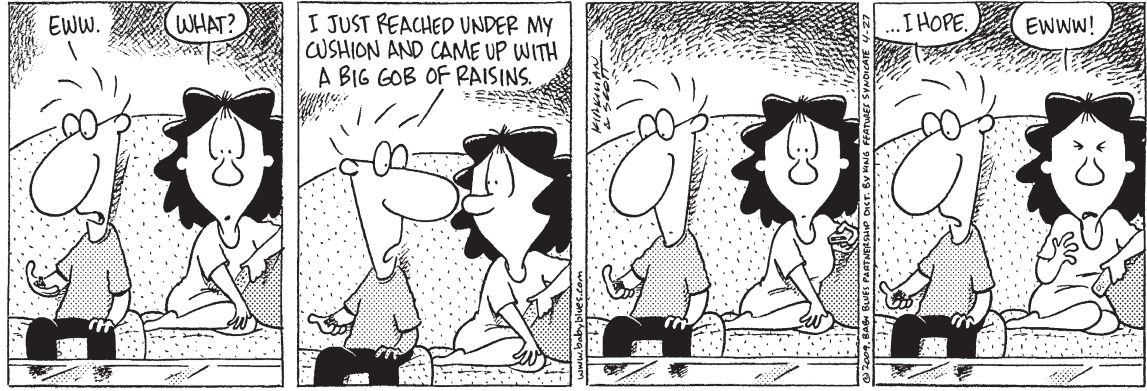


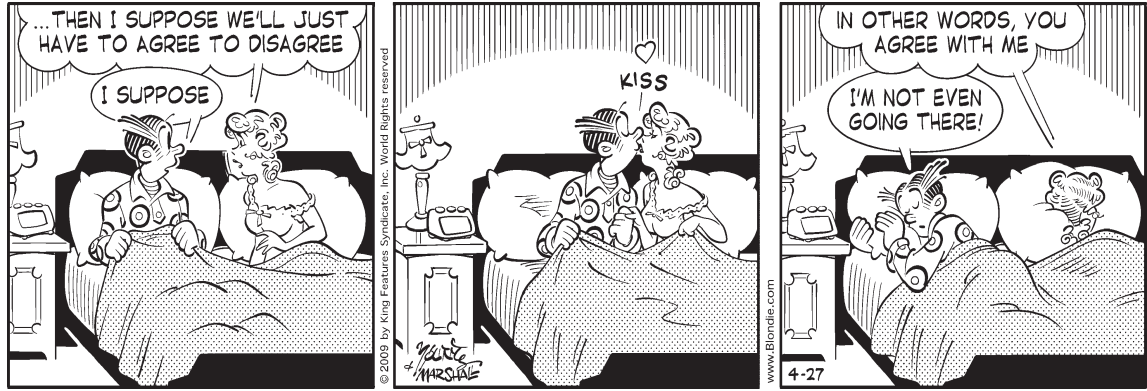
Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Blondie • Chic Young



Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



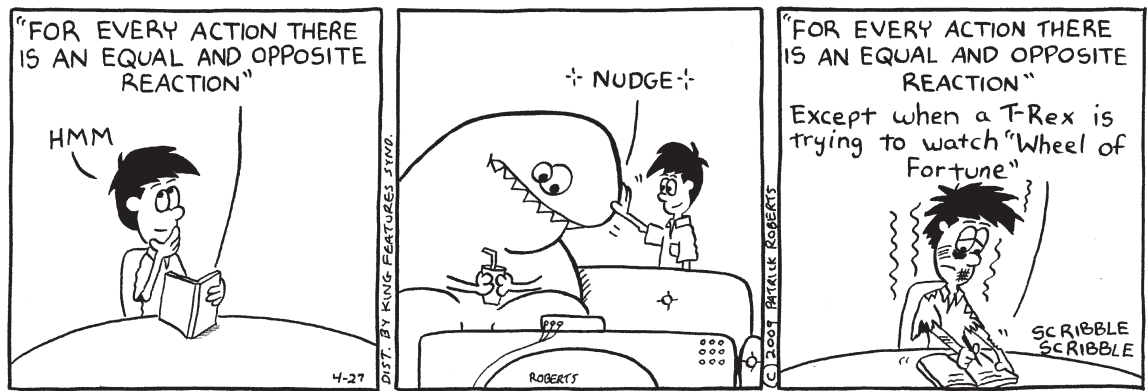
Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



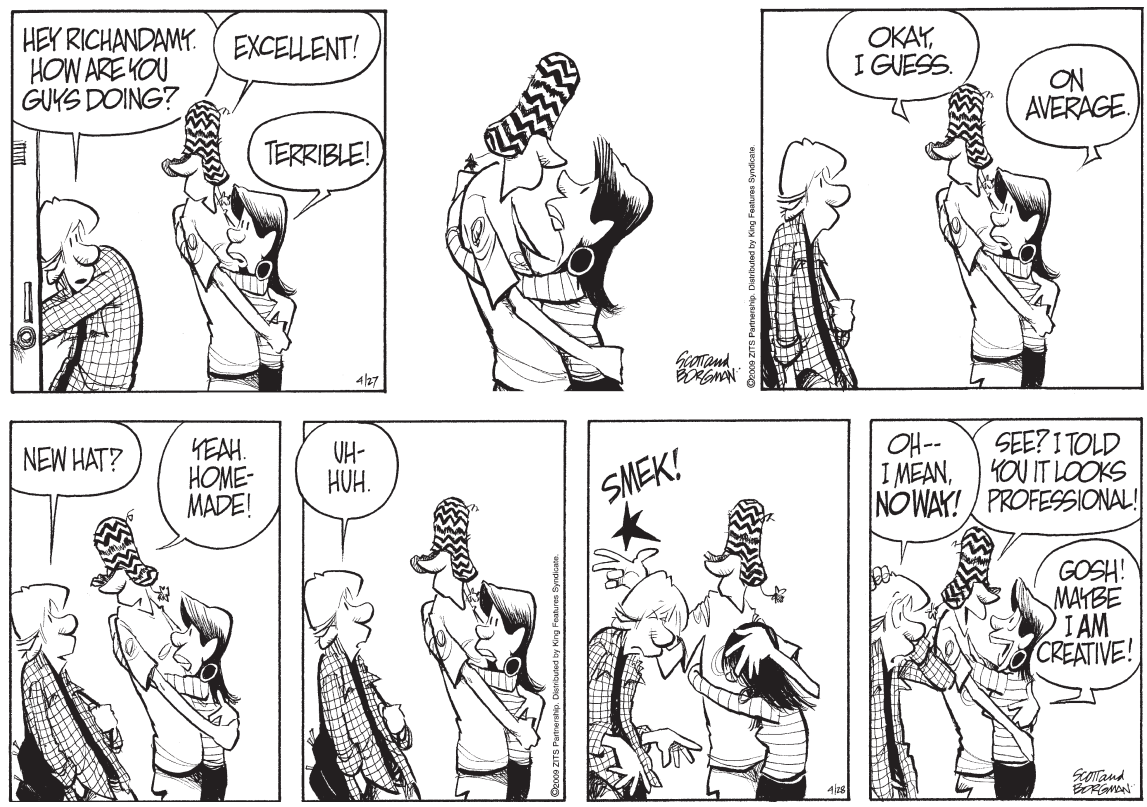
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Dr. Joyce Brothers • Ask Dr. Brothers



Boyfriend acts like time bomb

Dear Dr. Brothers: My boyfriend seems to be acting like a time bomb. I can't really enjoy going places with him because I never know what's going to set him off. It could be the service at the restaurant, the menu choices or where we sit — things I wouldn't even give a second thought to seem to be so important to him that he launches into a 15-minute angry monologue. It seems the only time he's happy is when he is complaining. I've tried letting him choose where we go, but that doesn't seem to work, either. What should I do? — C.N.

Dear C.N.: Perpetually not knowing what to expect from your significant other can lead to all kinds of anxiety. It's no doubt difficult to relax and have a good time when the mood of the person sitting across from you at dinner changes so drastically. But your boyfriend's angry reactions most likely are based in something deeper than your choice of restaurant. What you have to decide is whether it's worth trying to find out what's really bothering him.

You might have to face up to some hard truths. It's possible that in launching into angry tirades, your boyfriend is either consciously or subconsciously trying to tell you that he's unhappy with your relationship. He might be looking to you to initiate a breakup. You have to ask yourself just how many more times you can sit through one of his angry rants waiting for him to cool down. Is there a limit? Do you think he'll be happier someday, and if so, why? You may save yourself a lot of heartbreak in the future by simply realizing that you two are not a good fit. If his unpredictable behavior makes you anxious all the time, then what's the point? Life's too short to be spent waiting for the volcano to blow.

Dear Dr. Brothers: When I first moved to my new house, I signed up for the neighborhood e-mail newsletter. It seemed like a good idea at first. It was nice to find out about different events going on in the community. But now the list has gone way off topic. I receive at least eight mails a day with inane subject lines, like "School's in — watch out for the kids!" and "Remember to set your clocks back." It seems the woman who runs the list has nothing better to do. How can I ask to be removed and still be a good neighbor? — T.H.

Dear T.H.: Before you hit the "send" button on that unsubscribe request, you may want to consider a few points. What do you think changed the focus of the newsletter? Is a different person running it, or is there simply nothing going on in your community at the present time? The great thing about the Internet is that it allows you to send as well as receive. You can let your thoughts be known by hitting "reply all" so the whole neighborhood can know.

With the Internet, we no longer have to be discontent members of an audience. Instead of complaining, if we care enough about something, we can change it.

Bridge • Steve Becker

Bridge hand analysis showing North-South vulnerable, bidding, and card distributions for West and East. Includes the bidding and opening lead information.

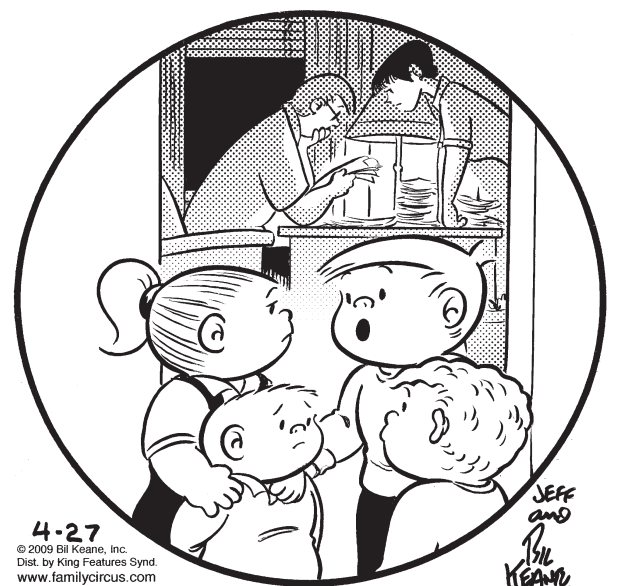
Famous Hand

Once upon a time — and this is no fairy tale — Easley Blackwood, inventor of the Blackwood Convention, was playing in a pair championship when two awestruck and nervous novices came to his table and played this deal against him. Blackwood got to four spades, and the player on his left led a diamond (the king of hearts would have been a more inspired lead). Blackwood won the diamond with the nine and returned the club deuce. West followed low, and dummy's queen won the trick. South then discarded the king of clubs on the ace of hearts and returned a trump. Ordinarily, declarer would finesse in this situation, but Blackwood reasoned that, having already "stolen" two tricks in the play, it was wiser to cash the A-K to avert a possible diamond ruff. This turned out exceptionally well when he caught West's queen to pick up yet another trick. Still not satisfied, Blackwood played four more rounds of trumps, producing this position:

Bridge hand position after several rounds of play, showing the layout of cards in North, South, and West's hands.

Blackwood now led his last trump, and poor West, who could not spare the king of hearts, discarded a diamond. Blackwood thereupon discarded a heart from dummy and cashed the A-K-J of diamonds to finish with all 13 tricks. As the two newcomers were leaving the table, West turned to his partner and said, "You see, Charlie, it's just like I told you. Even the experts don't bid all their slams." (c)2009 King Features Syndicate Inc.

Family Circus • Bil Keane



"If the 'conomy doesn't improve, I think Daddy might hafta let PJ go."

Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

Conceptis Sudoku puzzle grid with numbers 1-9 placed in some cells. Includes difficulty level and copyright information.

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 V TCCZVM XLMG KBEZJ

CKBRGZ JMPKRGV AKRELATN

KGS LZGMVE, VZPM XZTNS

BKNN ELKE KN-EJTM-RVP.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: TO FIND OUT WHO COULD KNIT THE BEST SOCKLIKE SHOE FOR BABIES, WE STARTED A BOOTEE CONTEST.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: N equals L

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

- Crossword clues for Across and Down words. Includes: 1 Proscribe, 4 Pugilistic, 7 Greek, 11 Venusian, 13 Puncturing, 14 Leave out, 15 Creche, 16 Sticky, 17 Ancient, 18 Sub, 20 Lummock, 22 Afternoon, 24 Soul, 28 Watch, 32 Moral, 33 Grad, 34 Treasure, 36 Long, 37 Helvetica, 39 Inhabitant, 41 Anatomical, 43 Teensy, 44 Pre-swan, 46 Duck, 50 Shock, 53 Once, 55 "Zounds!", 56 Pennsyl-, 57 Have bills, 58 Fax, 59 Hotel, 60 Potent, 61 Rotation, 63 Fugged-aboutit, 64 Binge, 5 MPs', 6 High-, 66 Pennsyl-, 67 Have bills, 68 Fax, 59 Hotel, 60 Potent, 61 Rotation, 62 Binge, 63 Fugged-aboutit, 64 Binge, 65 MPs', 66 High-, 67 Arc, 68 Baseball, 69 Ali, 69 Baba's, 69 Foes, 69 Flightless, 69 Bird, 69 Bronze, 69 Ironside, 69 Star, 69 Slight, 69 Amount, 69 Church, 69 Seat, 69 Newton, 69 Ingredient, 69 Born, 69 Apportion, 69 Show, 69 Boredom, 69 On in, 69 Years, 69 Carvey or, 69 Delany, 69 Vortex, 69 Dubya's, 69 Brother, 69 Raw, 69 Rock, 69 Cover, 69 Favorite.

Solution time: 27 mins. Saturday's answer 4-27. Crossword grid with filled-in letters.

Crossword grid with empty cells and numbers indicating starting points for clues.