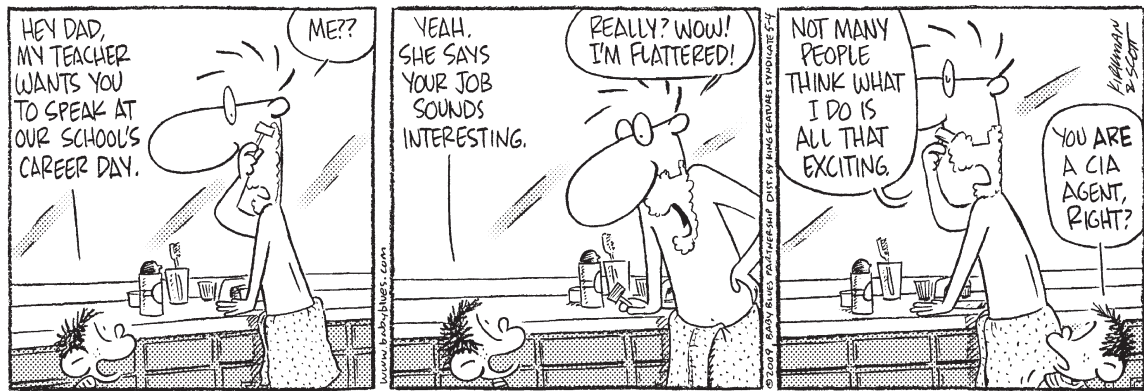


**Baby Blues** • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



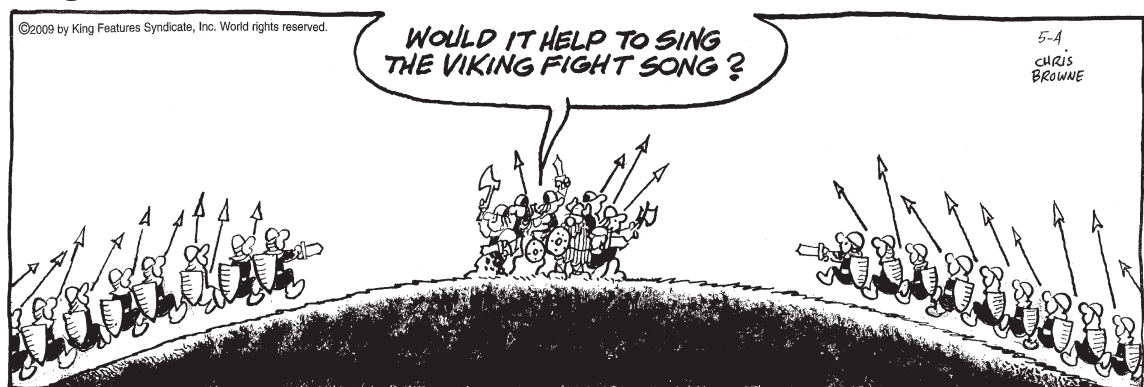
**Beetle Bailey** • Mort Walker



**Blondie** • Chic Young



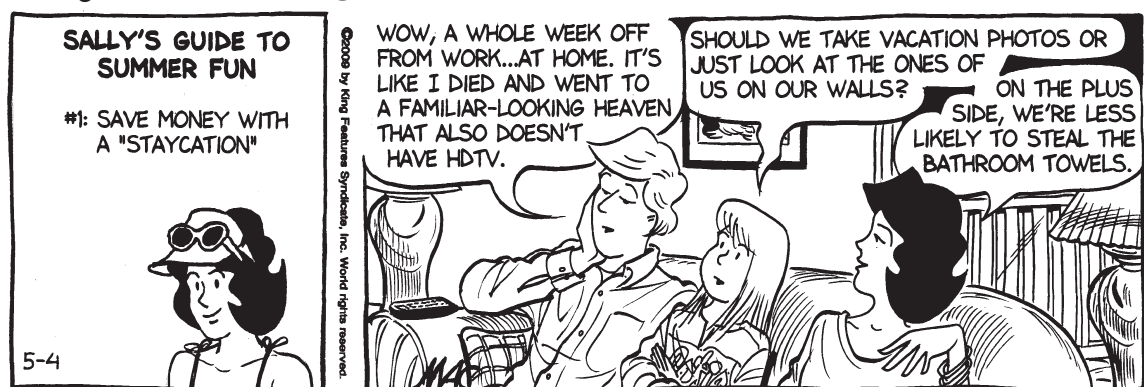
**Hagar the Horrible** • Chris Browne



**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

**Brother fears for sister's future**

**Dear Dr. Brothers:** My younger sister was always the "little mother" of the family - taking care of everyone, and really enjoying that kind of role. Unfortunately, she married a guy who took full advantage of her nurturing personality and has treated her cruelly enough that they are getting a divorce. I am afraid my sis is going to let this guy walk all over her because she is "too nice" and doesn't understand that she has to fight for herself. Should I butt in or not? - J.L.

**Dear J.L.:** It is very difficult to watch the dream of a sister or brother start to die - especially at the hands of unscrupulous people who promised to love them forever. It sounds as though her husband is fully prepared to take advantage of her in the divorce settlement. Your sister certainly could use someone on her side. But should you be the one to step in?

It might not be a good idea to publicly intervene for your sister's sake. Whatever your relationship is - if any - with your brother-in-law, remember that he probably will take any opportunity to turn your support against her in whatever way he can, fair or not. So, anything you say to him might only make things worse. Try to encourage your sister to talk things out with you or with a therapist who can help her clarify her feelings and sort through her options. If the couple is too far apart to agree on mediation, then a strong lawyer could be your sister's first line of defense against this bully. In any case, she should be focusing on the boundaries between generosity and being played for a sucker. Her self-esteem may be suffering now, but with your support and a chance to reinvent herself, she has much to look forward to.

**Dear Dr. Brothers:** I am writing about the situation with my brother's family. I don't think it is my business, exactly, but I wonder if there is anything I can do to turn things around. He has custody of his kids, ages 6, 7 and 11. The 11-year-old is in charge of taking care of the little ones after school. She hits and spansks them when they don't listen to her. I think this is wrong, and I've told her so, but she just keeps on doing it. How can I get through to her? - P.N.

**Dear P.N.:** The 11-year-old is being given far too much responsibility for someone her age. It is fine to start baby-sitting siblings around her age, but she should not be given sole responsibility for them. You need to speak to your brother about more appropriate child care

(c) 2009 by King Features Syndicate

**Bridge** • Steve Becker

East dealer. East-West vulnerable. NORTH: ♠ A Q J 5, ♥ 9 2, ♦ A 8 6 4, ♣ A K 9. WEST: ♠ 10 8 7 2, ♥ A J 8 6 3, ♦ K, ♣ Q 6 2. EAST: ♠ 6 3, ♥ Q 10 4, ♦ Q J 10 5, ♣ 10 7 4 3. SOUTH: ♠ K 9 4, ♥ 5 7 5, ♦ 9 7 3 2, ♣ J 8 5.

The bidding: East Pass, South Pass, West Pass, North 1♦. Pass 2♦, Pass 2♥, Pass 3♥. Dblc 3 NT. Opening lead - six of hearts.

**Famous Hand**

This deal occurred at the 1985 world team championship in the round-robin match between Israel and Venezuela. The declarer was Michael Hochzeit of Israel, who took advantage of a subtle slip by an opponent to bring in a seemingly impossible three-notrump contract.

After taking East's queen of hearts with the king at trick one, Hochzeit could count four spades, a diamond and two clubs to go with the heart already in the bank, but a ninth trick was nowhere in sight.

Undaunted, he began by cashing all four spades, on which East let go of a diamond and a heart. While this last discard seems harmless enough, declarer proceeded to prove otherwise. The ace of diamonds was cashed, producing this position with South needing three more tricks:

North: [H] 9, [D] 8 6 4, [C] A K 9. West: [H] A J 8 3, [C] Q 6 2. East: [H] 10, [D] Q J, [C] 10 7 4 3. South: [H] 7 5, [D] 9 3, [C] J 8 5.

Even with all the cards exposed, it isn't easy to spot the winning play, but Hochzeit found it looking at only two hands. At this point, he led the nine of hearts!

This play rendered the opponents helpless. Regardless of which defender won the heart, declarer was sure to make his game. If West overtook the ten to run his hearts, he would then be forced to lead a club, allowing South to score the jack.

Alternatively, if East's ten of hearts held and he cashed his two high diamonds, dummy's last diamond would become good. And if he didn't cash his diamonds, his club return would trap West's queen.

In practice, West elected to overtake the heart, and Hochzeit scored three club tricks to make his game. Observe, though, that had East discarded a club or a diamond instead of a heart on the fourth spade, the contract would have failed.

(c)2009 King Features Syndicate Inc.

**Family Circus** • Bil Keane



5-4

"I can't play today 'cause I've got something-itis."

**Conceptis Sudoku** • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★ 5/04

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.

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

**Cryptoquip**

ZGKC AGK FAKT ZHN NADWFKW

KJAIKTKXE AGQIQDUGXE

OE NFCUKI WFHCH, GHW

FA OKKC IQNN-KJHTFCKW?

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHICH COUNTRY IS MOST THICKLY POPULATED WITH BIG BLACK BIRDS? I IMAGINE IT HAS TO BE CROWATIA.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: A equals T

**Crossword** • Eugene Sheffer

- |                                      |                                  |                                      |                            |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>ACROSS</b>                        | <b>39</b> Aye opposer            | <b>DOWN</b>                          | <b>17</b> Thickness        |
| <b>1</b> Cushions                    | <b>41</b> Untrustworthy          | <b>1</b> Folk singer                 | <b>19</b> Tropical tree    |
| <b>5</b> Insecticide letters         | <b>42</b> Slept soundly?         | <b>2</b> Pinnacle                    | <b>22</b> Twine fiber      |
| <b>8</b> Cooking fat                 | <b>43</b> Monkey in a lab, maybe | <b>3</b> Frisbee, e.g.               | <b>24</b> Gear tooth       |
| <b>12</b> Cast-of-thousands movie    | <b>44</b> Victoria's Secret buy  | <b>4</b> Plot                        | <b>25</b> Lawyers' org.    |
| <b>13</b> Black-bird                 | <b>45</b> "So be it"             | <b>5</b> Long-short, in poetic meter | <b>26</b> Incorrect term   |
| <b>14</b> Medley                     | <b>46</b> Scratch as dice        | <b>6</b> "CSI" evidence              | <b>27</b> Fans             |
| <b>15</b> New Age musician           | <b>47</b> Drunkards              | <b>7</b> Occasion                    | <b>29</b> Aviv preceder    |
| <b>16</b> Seek votes                 | <b>48</b> Titanic thwarted       | <b>8</b> Fraudulent, as dice         | <b>30</b> Slithery swimmer |
| <b>18</b> But                        | <b>49</b> Type squares           | <b>9</b> Estrange outcome            | <b>33</b> Colorful fish    |
| <b>20</b> Firstborn                  | <b>50</b> Pairs                  | <b>10</b> Predetermined              | <b>36</b> Removing rind    |
| <b>21</b> Baseball legend            |                                  | <b>11</b> "Cut it out!"              | <b>38</b> Item in a bucket |
| <b>23</b> Longing                    |                                  |                                      | <b>40</b> "Of course"      |
| <b>24</b> Showy white flower         |                                  |                                      | <b>42</b> Wound cover      |
| <b>28</b> Appointment                |                                  |                                      | <b>43</b> Appellation      |
| <b>31</b> Sapporo sash               |                                  |                                      | <b>44</b> Capitol cap      |
| <b>32</b> Blunder                    |                                  |                                      | <b>46</b> Winter forecast  |
| <b>34</b> Ball prop                  |                                  |                                      | <b>47</b> "Do others ..."  |
| <b>35</b> React in horror            |                                  |                                      | <b>48</b> Back talk        |
| <b>37</b> "Gentle on My Mind" singer |                                  |                                      | <b>50</b> Felonious flight |

Solution time: 24 mins.

BAH	SWAP	CHIN			
ACE	PITA	RACE			
THRILLER	USED				
EYELID	ABE				
	LINE	DILLER			
BEGAT	FOG	ORE			
OTIC	BOX	SCAN			
KILLER	MOO				
	OBI	AMUSED			
OPUS	SCHILLER				
OOZE	THEN	URI			
HEIR	AIRY	GOP			

Yesterday's answer 5-2

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			