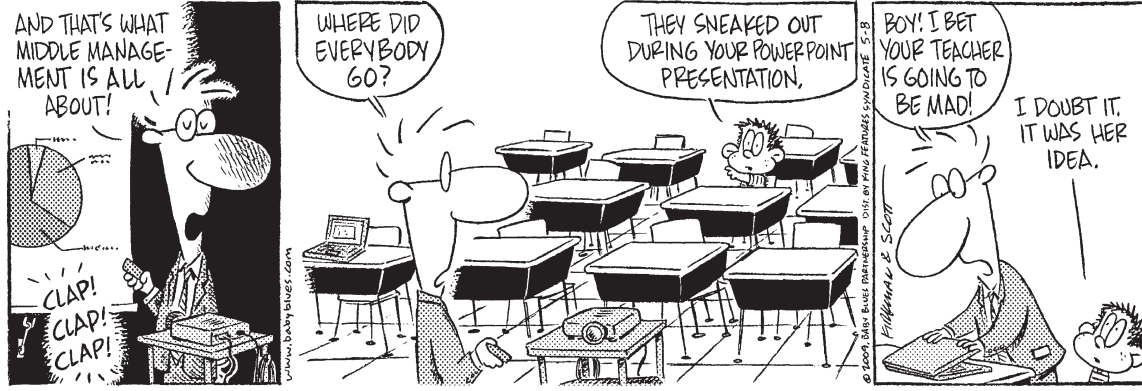


Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



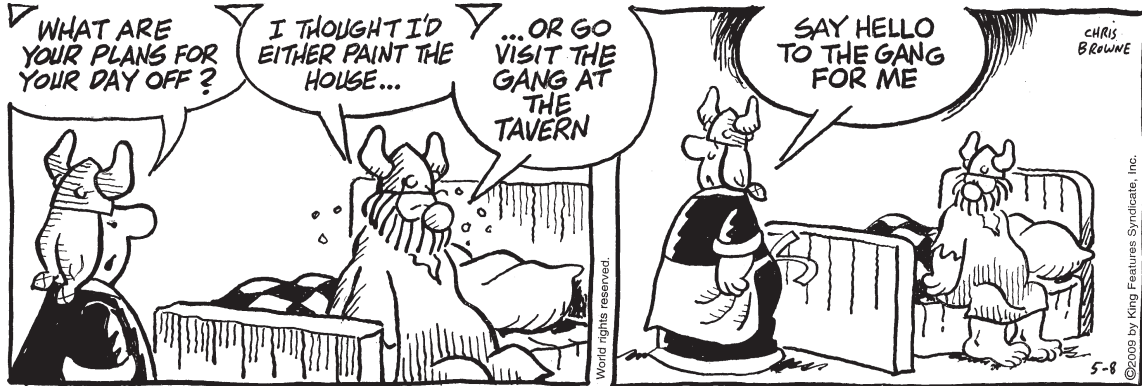
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



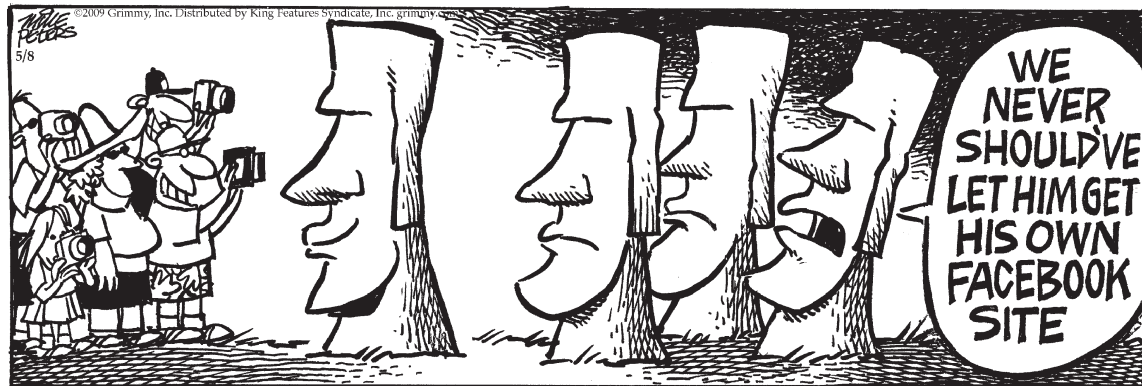
Blondie • Chic Young



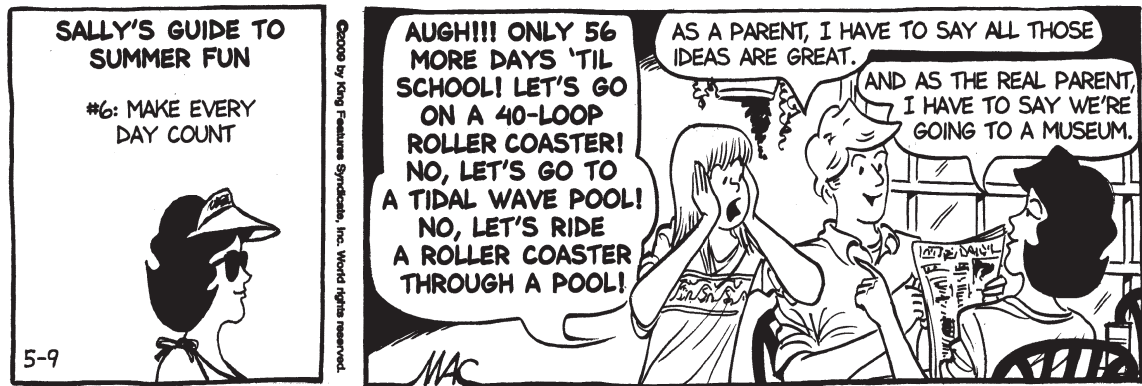
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



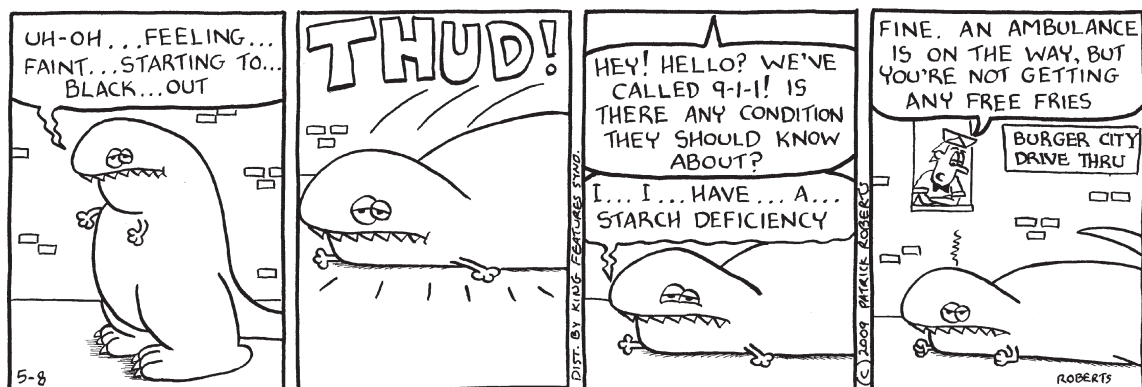
Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Heloise

• Hints from Heloise

Favorite hints help taking trips

Dear Heloise: Here are a couple of my favorite TRAVEL HINTS:

• I always pack one or two tall plastic kitchen bags with drawstrings in each family member's luggage. Dirty clothes go in the bag. Pull the drawstring and put the bag back in the luggage when leaving, if desired.

• I save the clear plastic bags my newspaper comes in. A shoe can go in each bag. I close the bag with a twist-tie and pack in the luggage. The bags also can be used for wet swimsuits.

• My husband brings a little night light to plug in the bathroom wall if it's too dark in the room when getting up in the night. — Ramona, Prairieville, La.

All good travel hints, and a reminder to reuse plastic bags, too. If you forget one, just grab the plastic dry-cleaner bag that is usually hanging in the hotel closet. — Heloise

BLEACH VS. CLOTHING

Dear Heloise: Recently, a writer suggested that washing-machine load order should be dark, light and then bleachable so that the last wash with bleach deodorizes the machine.

This means that a bleach wash will be followed by dark in the next cycle of washes. When I did this, some of the dark clothes were ruined with little bleached dots. It seemed the bleach was still in the machine and came through the little holes in the basket as the clothes were spinning. I ruined many clothes.

Now, my method is to wash bleach loads first, then whites and then lastly the darks. This way, the bleach is cleaned out by the water in the white wash and also cannot bleach anything. — Lorna, via e-mail

CLEANING COUNTERTOPS

Dear Heloise: I have my original kitchen countertop, which is white laminate. Lately, I've been having trouble keeping it stain-free. Can you suggest something to keep it white? — Lenny Silverberg, Boynton Beach, Fla.

Sometimes older countertops, with wear and tear, become susceptible to staining. Try sprinkling a bit of baking soda on the stain, dampen with warm water to make a paste and rub, then let it sit for a bit. Rinse with clean, clear water. This may help. A bit of furniture polish or car wax will help restore the shine. — Heloise

REUSING OLD MATTRESS PADS

Dear Heloise: When my cotton mattress pads developed wear, I replaced them with new polyester pads. However, they tended to slip on the slick mattress, so I put the clean, old cotton ones next to the mattresses and the new ones on top. Problem solved! — Nila Boone, Rapid City, S.D.

EXTRA SEAT BELT

Dear Heloise: Usually in your car there are only two back-seat passengers, but there are three sets of seat belts. If you keep the middle seatbelt fastened, then there is no problem in finding the correct receptacle for the passenger who has two seat locks on his or her side. — Ellen Coppock, via e-mail

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Bridge • Steve Becker

1. You are declarer with the West hand at Four Spades, and North leads the king of hearts. How would you play the hand? (Assume the trumps are divided 2-2.)

West: ♠K Q J 10 4, ♥8 2, ♦K 7 5, ♣A 6 3
 East: ♠A 9 8 7, ♥A 7 6 3, ♦J 4, ♣K 9 5

2. You are declarer with the West hand at Three Notrump. North leads the jack of hearts. South following low. How would you play the hand?

West: ♠A K J 4, ♥A K, ♦A Q 9 2, ♣K J 3
 East: ♠Q 7 6 5 3, ♥8 5 4, ♣A 7 4 2

Test Your Play

1. Win the heart lead with the ace, draw trumps and play a low diamond toward dummy's J-4! This gives you about a 75 percent chance for the contract, which is much better than the 50 percent chance you'd have if you started the diamonds by leading one from dummy.

The low diamond toward the jack makes the contract whenever North was dealt the queen, which happens 50 percent of the time. He has no choice but to take the queen, and after you later force out the ace of diamonds by playing the jack, you will be able to discard a club from dummy on the king of diamonds. Your only losers in that case would be a heart and two diamonds.

Even if South has the queen of diamonds and wins dummy's jack with it, you are still in contention. You have plenty of time later on to lead a diamond toward your K-7, and if South has the ace, you make the contract that way.

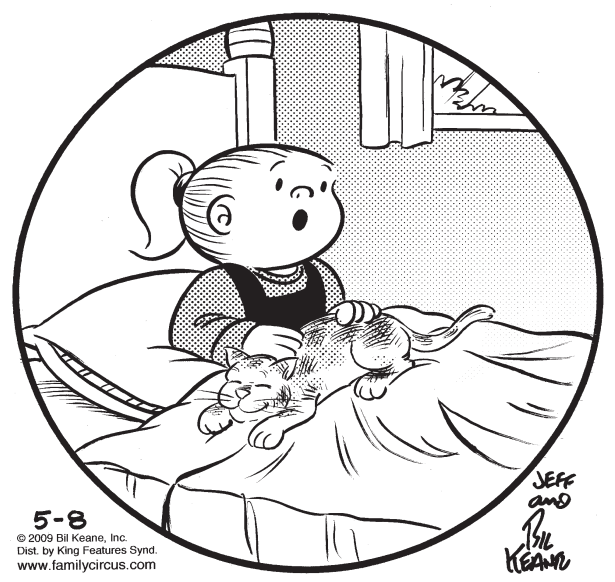
The suggested method of play fails only when South has the queen and North the ace -- about a one-in-four chance -- but in that case any other method of play is also virtually certain to fail.

2. Here you've got a sure thing. Cash the A-K of hearts, cross to the ace of clubs, then play the queen of hearts and discard a spade. If North turns up with either four or five hearts, play another one and let him cash his heart trick (or tricks), discarding one or two diamonds from your hand. North must then hand you trick No. 9, whether he returns a spade, a diamond or a club.

If North started with only one or two hearts -- unlikely, but possible -- you still have him on the hook. After cashing dummy's queen of hearts, you next lead a diamond to the nine (or queen, if South plays the ten or jack). North wins but is forced to give you your ninth trick whether he returns a spade, a diamond or a club.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★★★★ 5/08

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.

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

The solution to the last Sudoku puzzle is at right.

Cryptoquip

W WRSKW FJ S BWUINJF U TTP
 UNSU USBJX UNJ XBWFX TZZ
 TZ XTYQ ZQYWUX RWKNU
 KJU ISPPJC S PJRTF SWC.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: SUPPOSING SOME COINED MONEY WAS BECOMING REALLY THREATENED, WOULD THAT BE ENDANGERED SPECIE?

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: T equals O

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

- Volcano output
- One of the Three Bears
- Slaughter of base-ball lore
- Story of a lifetime?
- Scratches (out)
- Anger
- In the attic, maybe
- Anger
- At bat, so to speak
- Seraglio group
- Thick chunks
- Be patient
- Senate employee
- Pirates
- Luau music-maker
- Conficker et al.
- Extinct bird
- Gives up hope
- Urban pall

DOWN

- Dhabi preceder
- Try the tea
- Abductees
- Bosc and Bartlett
- Related
- Apiece
- Fool
- Proof-reader's finds
- Depilatory brand
- Eyeball
- Appear
- Brits' subway
- Greet the villain
- Water
- 25 mins.
- Prefix with plasm
- Upper limit
- Yoko of music
- Shad delicacy
- Scale member

Yesterdays answer 5-8

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