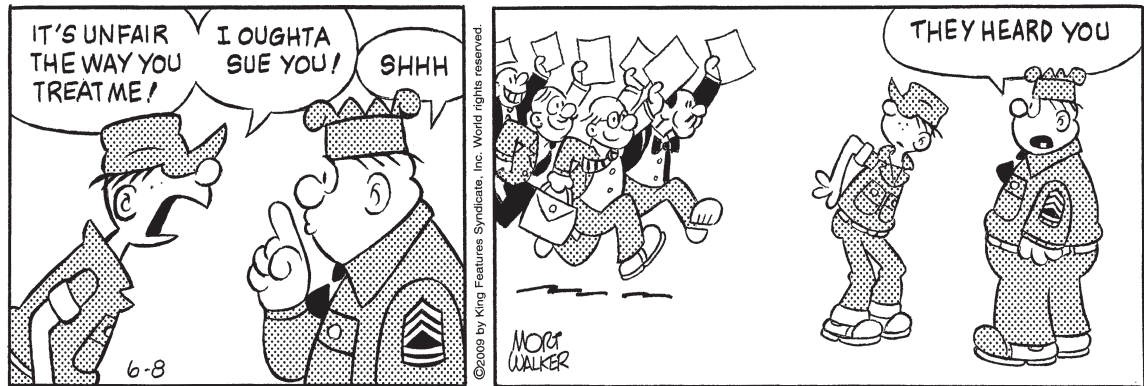


Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



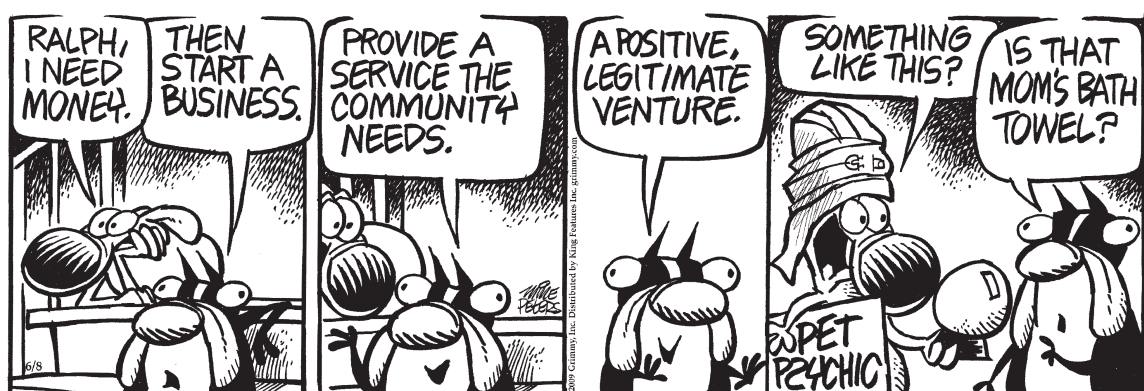
Blondie • Chic Young



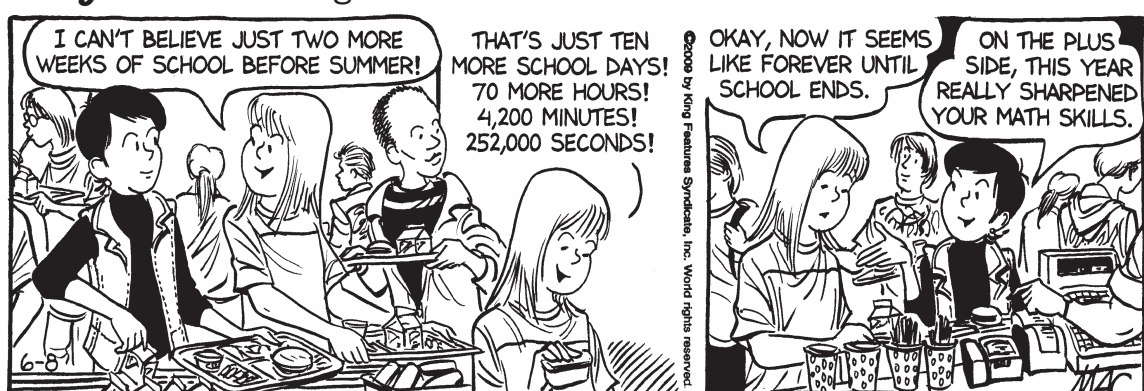
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



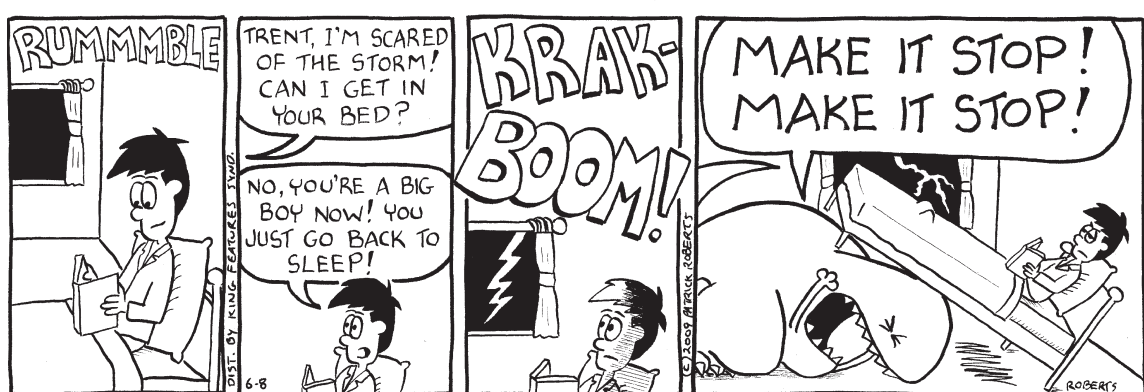
Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



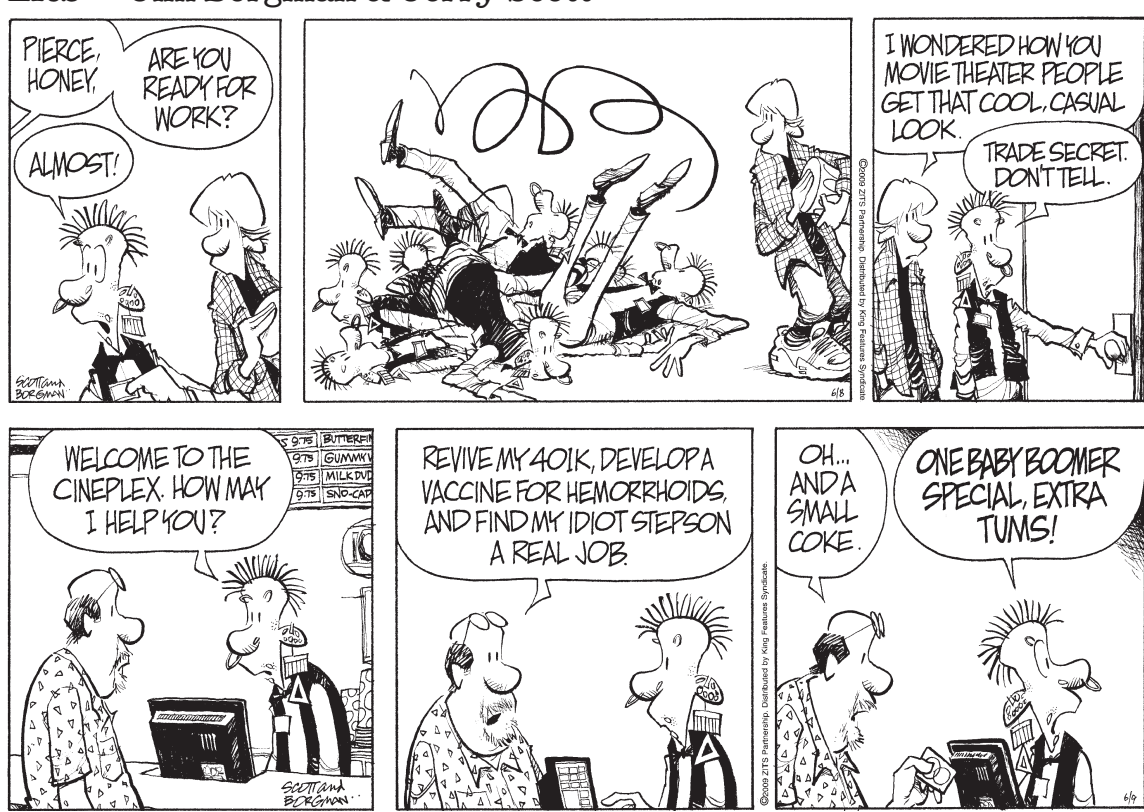
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Dr. Joyce Brothers

• Ask Dr. Brothers

Baby boomer wants to retire

Dear Dr. Brothers: I am of the baby boomer generation, but I seem to be different. I am not interested in working till I drop dead at the age of 80! What's wrong with retiring to Florida and playing golf and a little bit of bridge? That's what my parents did, and I know that a lot of other people still do that, too. I was all set to retire this year, when all this economic nonsense hit. Now I have to keep working indefinitely. I am so mad. Can you advise on how to accept this? — C.P.

Dear C.P.: You're perfectly correct — there is an unspoken assumption among many these days that the baby boomer generation would never hang up their boots and go softly into the assisted-living facility. The '60s hippies and rebels are the ones who never wanted to grow up, much less retire! But to you, golf and bridge don't sound half bad. You just have to figure out a way to get there, and hope there are a few other like-minded boomers around to argue club selection with. Where the stress and emotional fatigue come in is when you just can't find a way to retire on schedule. You are far from alone.

The key now is to be able to have some fun along with all you're feeling because you still must be working. Incorporate some elements of retirement into your current home — maybe install a putting green, a hot tub or a reading nook. Take up gardening, biking or another hobby that will keep you outside and active. Or, just put all your money into saving for retirement, and know that if you can stay employed until age 70, your Social Security benefits will be at their highest and you'll be able to afford a little better lifestyle.

Dear Dr. Brothers: I never really got along with my husband's mother. She's about as "old school" as you can get, and we disagree on many political issues. I've grown accustomed to her, but now it seems she has gone too far. A young African-American couple just moved in next door to her, and now when we visit her, she breaks into some bigoted rant. My husband refuses to say anything to her! How do I deal with this? — B.R.

Dear B.R.: It's not easy to deal with any bigot. It's a fine line between respecting your mother-in-law and biting your tongue all the time. But nowhere is it written that speaking your mind has to be a knock-down, drag-out confrontation. You can let your thoughts be known without a feud.

Perhaps next time your mother-in-law launches into one of her diatribes, you can engage in a little amateur psychoanalysis. Try to find out just why she's doing it. There's an outside chance that she knows her comments upset you and makes them just to push your buttons. Try to contain any signals of disgust you may give off. If she continues, try asking her flat out why she talks about her neighbors in such a negative way. Where did she develop her views — was she brought up in that mind-set, or did some event happen in her life that caused her to think the way she does? Ask her if she ever had any African-American friends.

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Bridge • Steve Becker

West dealer. Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
 ♠ A K 8 7
 ♥ 10 4
 ♦ A 10 8 7 5 4
 ♣ —

EAST
 ♠ Q J 10
 ♥ 10 6 2
 ♦ 9 6
 ♣ K Q J 3 2

SOUTH
 ♠ 8 2
 ♥ J 9 4
 ♦ A K Q 8 5 3
 ♣ 9 6

The bidding:
 West North East South
 2♦ Dblc 3♦ Dblc
 Pass 5♦ Pass 3♦
 Pass 5♥ Pass 6♦
 Opening lead — three of spades.

Famous Hand

The exploits of Pakistan's Zia Mahmood have been chronicled in this space many times, and today's hand provides still another example. It occurred in an early qualifying match between the U.S. I and U.S. II teams at the 2007 Bermuda Bowl.

The bidding shown took place when Michael Rosenberg and Zia held the North-South cards. When the deal was played in only five diamonds at the other table, the declarer, Eric Rodwell, won the spade lead with the ace, led a trump to his ace and ruffed his last spade in dummy. He then tried to cash the ace of clubs, but West ruffed and led a third spade.

Rodwell ruffed, drew trumps and ran his remaining diamonds, forcing East to come down to three hearts and a high club. Rodwell then threw East in with a club and guessed to play the nine on East's low heart return, picking up West's queen to just make five diamonds.

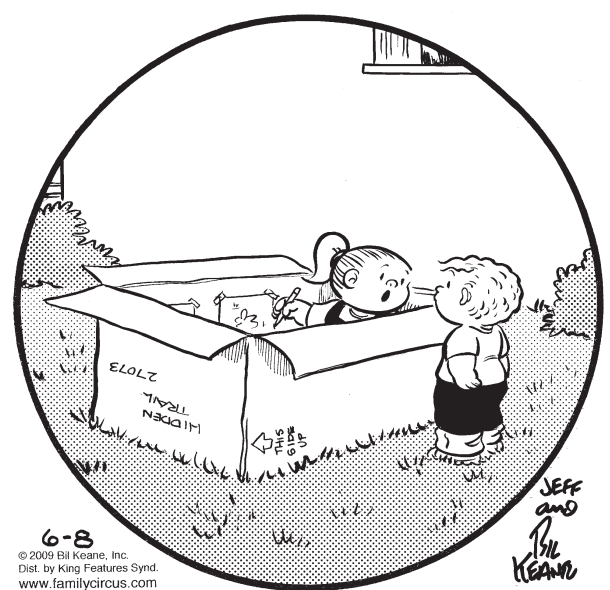
When Zia was declarer at six diamonds, he eyed West's lead of the spade three — from a known six- or seven-card suit — with suspicion, and concluded that West was trying to direct his partner to give him a club ruff if he gained the lead at trick one. So, following his judgment, Zia won the spade ace and returned a low heart toward his J-9-4!

After East followed low, Zia inserted the nine, reasoning that East would surely have gone up with the queen if he had it and returned a club. West took the nine with the queen and continued with a heart, but Zia was now in full control.

He won the heart with the jack, ruffed his remaining spade, drew trumps and discarded his club loser on one of dummy's top hearts. Making six yielded a 770-point gain (13 IMPs) for Zia's team, which went on to finish second to Norway for the world title.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



"I can't play with you till I'm finished workin' here in my cubicle."

Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★

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.

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

Cryptoquip

LOGWSZO Q NWJO W FSH
 QH DUADQHK EPO HWNOZ UC
 WDQWH CAQOXZ, NQKPE VUS
 GWAA EPWE W FAWV UH LQXJZ?

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I HEARD A COUPLE OF SURGEONS MIGHT GET FIRED IF THE HOSPITAL CAN'T MAINTAIN OPERATING COSTS.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: S equals U

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
 1 Mid-month date
 5 Get on
 8 Tranquil
 12 Ships' warning noises
 14 Solo by Sills
 15 Time saver
 16 Encounter
 17 "Monty Python" opener
 18 Type of monkey
 20 String quartet member
 23 Acerbic
 24 — nitrate
 25 Beauty contest, e.g.
 28 Play on words
 29 Wise ones
 30 Dine
 32 Frosty, for one
 34 Long skirt
 35 Knocks

DOWN
 3 Id counter-part
 4 Piercing
 5 Curved
 6 Wildebeest
 7 Female hormone
 8 Paparazzi's need
 9 War god
 10 Steadfast
 11 Gymnasts' surfaces
 13 "Beetle Bailey" dog
 19 Colors
 20 Upper limit
 21 Ostriches' kin
 22 Singer Loretta
 23 Long stories
 25 Brochure
 26 Approach
 27 Cab
 29 Bat a gnat
 31 Dead heat
 33 Transplanted body parts
 34 Kind of alcohol
 36 MIT grad, maybe
 37 Easter tree
 38 Ontario neighbor
 39 Require
 40 From the top
 43 Eggs
 44 Oklahoma city
 45 — the "Walrus"
 46 Reuben bread

Solution time: 27 mins.

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

Saturday's answer 6-8

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