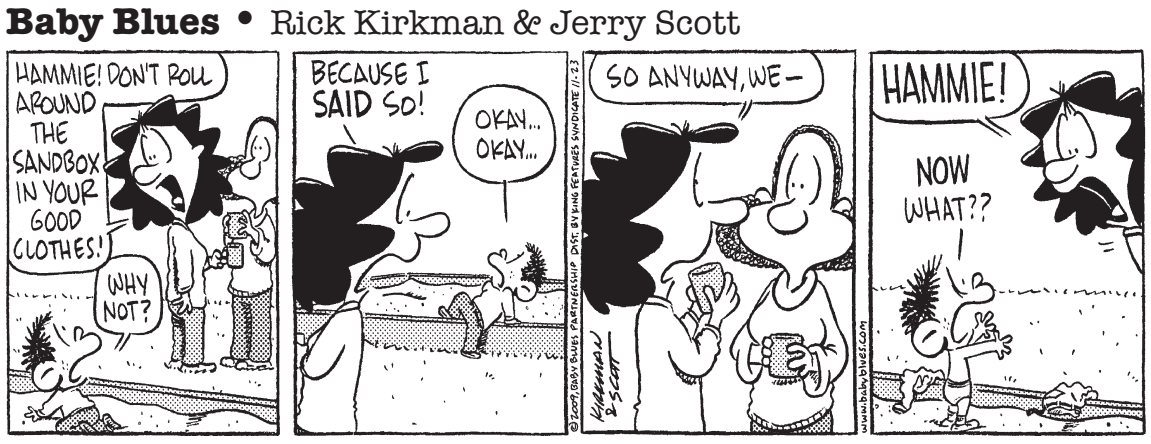
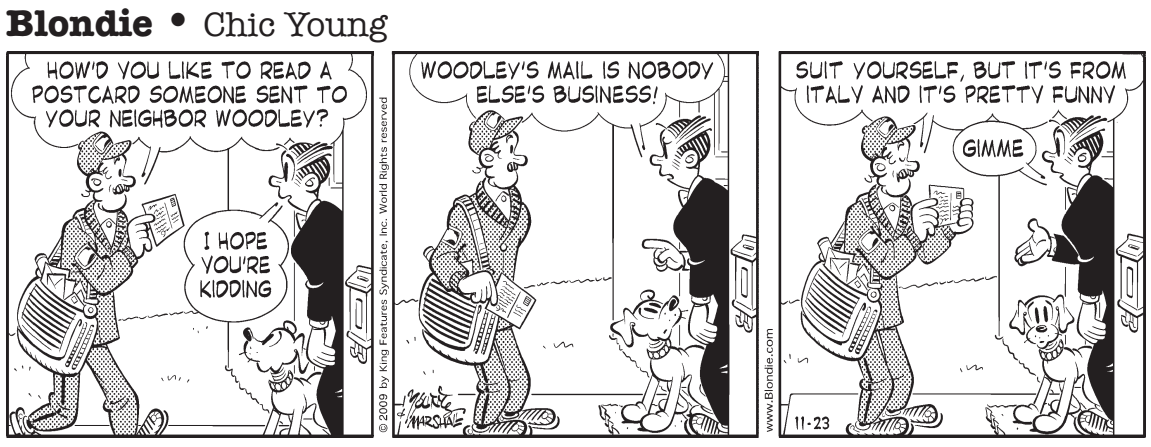
Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker

Blondie • Chic Young

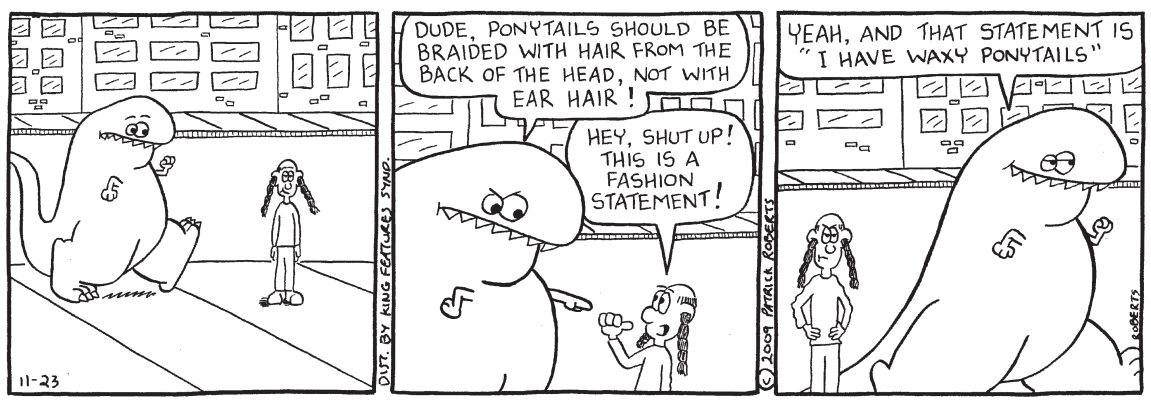


Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne

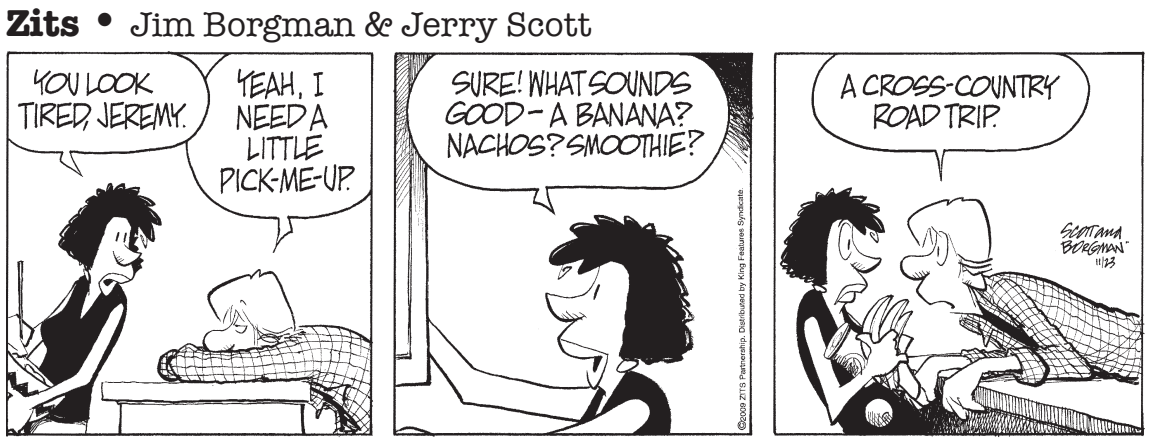
Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters

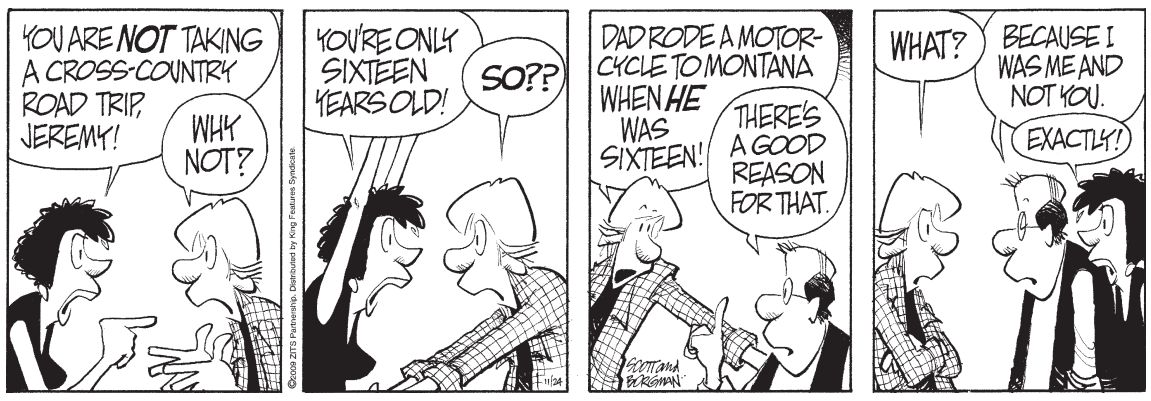
Sally Forth • Greg Howard

Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott





Dr. Joyce Brothers

• Ask Dr. Brothers

Travel turns job into a nightmare

Dear Dr. Brothers: I have a great job and a great family. My wife recently gave birth to a baby girl, and we couldn't be happier. The problem is, I don't like leaving! I must take a business trip once a month. I know this isn't a time to rock the boat, but can I ask my boss to leave me behind every other time or so? I really can't stand worrying about my family while I am away. – P.K.

Dear P.K.: I know you feel pride, excitement and love with that new baby. Those feelings make it hard to go out the door in the morning, much less away on an airplane for several days a month. You don't want to miss a thing, and worry about perils befalling your girls. The responsibility that comes with parenthood often hits men like a ton of bricks, and you fit the pattern. Your wife may feel vulnerable during your absences as well – no longer the good sport who coped while you were traveling. What was not a big deal suddenly is.

I know you don't want to risk losing your job by asking for special favors. You definitely don't want to show him you are dispensable. But you could work up ways in which some of what you accomplish could be done from home – perhaps with videoconferencing or use of shared documents, conference calls or whatever it takes to get the job done. It may not be too late to ask for paternity leave so you can spend quality time with your wife and baby. As time goes by, you will feel more confident about leaving. Good luck.

Dear Dr. Brothers: I have a stressful job, and after work I like to go to happy hour near the office. I always dress in business attire and conduct myself in a way that wouldn't embarrass my company. But there is one woman in our group who often ends up loud, sloppy and embarrassing. She's a nice girl otherwise, but I keep avoiding her, and she wants to know why. – D.F.

Dear D.F.: You have set high standards, and it shows you are a good representative for your company. Too bad the same can't be said for your co-worker, who can't hold her booze or understand why people are upset. It sounds as though she doesn't have a clue that her behavior is unacceptable. Maybe she keeps going overboard because no one calls her on it. Is someone getting her home? Are her antics met with laughter and encouragement from others – except you?

It may be time for you and some of the others to tell her just how uncomfortable she makes you feel. You don't have to be nasty; let her know you are concerned with her safety, well-being and reputation. Express your interest in her not developing a problem with alcohol. This would be better than giving her the cold shoulder at work, and might help her change. For stress relief, how about changing the venue to a gym, spa, yoga class, film or bowling? You might be surprised how much fun you can have.

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Bridge • Steve Becker

West dealer.
Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ 6 2
♥ Q J 5
♦ 10 9 8 7 5
♣ Q J 10

WEST
♠ —
♥ A K 10 8 4 2
♦ A J 2
♣ A 7 5 3

EAST
♠ J 8 3
♥ 9 6 3
♦ Q 6 3
♣ 9 8 4 2

SOUTH
♠ A K Q 10 9 7 5 4
♥ 7
♦ K 4
♣ K 6

The bidding:

West	North	East	South
1 ♥	Pass	Pass	4 ♠

Opening lead — king of hearts.

Famous Hand

This deal occurred in the 1996 World Olympiad Women's Teams. The heroine was Dianna Gordon of Canada, who made a brilliant defensive play to defeat a game in her team's match against India.

Even with all the cards in view, it is not easy to see how South can be prevented from taking 10 tricks at four spades. It is true that declarer has four apparent losers -- a heart, a club and two diamonds -- but West seems certain to be forced to yield the game-going trick to South at some point during the play.

For example, if West starts by playing the K-A of hearts, declarer ruffs, draws trumps and leads the king of clubs. West can hold up once, but must win the second club, after which a club, diamond or heart return hands South the contract.

Nor is it any better for West to cash the ace of diamonds or ace of clubs at trick two. The diamond ace sets up declarer's king, while on the play of the club ace, South unblocks the club king to ensure scoring dummy's Q-J.

Gordon, however, found the winning defense -- and she did it without seeing South's cards. After cashing the heart king at trick one and noting her partner's three -- denying a doubleton -- she rightly concluded that declarer had a singleton heart.

Visualizing the actual setup (or one similar to it), she shifted to a low club at trick two! Declarer won with the king, drew trumps and returned a club. Now, however, Gordon was able to win and play the heart ace, leaving South with no recourse. After ruffing, declarer ran her spades, but the defenders scored two diamonds at the end for a one-trick set.

Gordon's low club return had much to recommend it. If her partner had the king, all was well, while if declarer had three or four clubs including the king, nothing would be lost one way or the other. But if South had the hand she actually held, a low club at trick two was the only way to defeat the contract.

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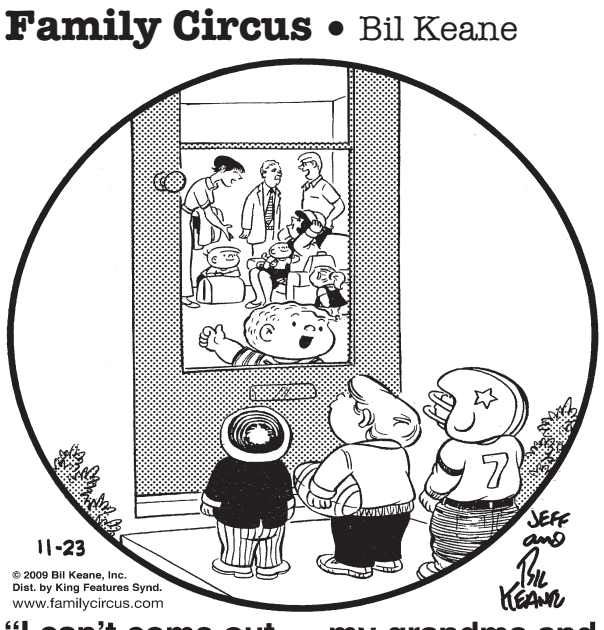
Family Circus • Bil Keane



"I can't come out — my grandma and granddad just got here and I get to play with THEM."

Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★ 11/23

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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.

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

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 11/20

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Cryptoquip

ZYOLNZNGHOT AGHR JYNZZUH OMGQZ O HUJ DGYW MOAUMOTT KTODUY'A FQYTD-FGOZUL LGR: "DOHWUU KGGLTU."

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: BEING THAT THE GUY CARRIES BOTH AN AMULET AND A GUN, YOU COULD SAY HE'S CHARMED AND DANGEROUS.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: G equals O

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Martial art
5 Clerical addr.
8 Major or Minor constellation
12 Products that may be "wrought"
14 Approach
15 Off
16 Part of TLC
17 Anger
18 Venue of perfection
20 Batter's woe
23 Despot
24 Firetruck essential
25 Coagulate
28 Coloration
29 Gold measure
30 Swab the deck
32 Intoxicated
34 Location
35 Panorama
36 Playful water critter
37 Capital of Mozambique
40 Mongrel
41 MPs' target
42 Abandoned
47 California wine valley
48 City in the Bahamas
49 Spud's buds
50 Stitch
51 Unuttered "alas"

DOWN
1 Diamond — Brady
2 Mentalist Geller
3 Two, in Tijuana
4 Not tardy
5 Croupier's tool
6 Before
7 UFO passenger, maybe?
8 Open the champagne
9 Harvest
10 Indian woman's garment
11 Neighborhood
13 Distort
19 Diplomacy
20 "Be quiet!"
21 Stentorian
22 Addict
23 Pitched
25 Spoofs
26 Send forth
27 Memorandum
29 Heal, as a fracture
31 Part of MPH
33 Soft palate extensions
34 Harness parts
36 English river
37 Horse's neck hair
38 Vacationing
39 Benedict XVI, e.g.
40 Captain's squad
43 Raw rock
44 Japanese pond carp
45 Work unit
46 To the — degree

Solution time: 27 mins.

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

Saturday's answer 11-23

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			