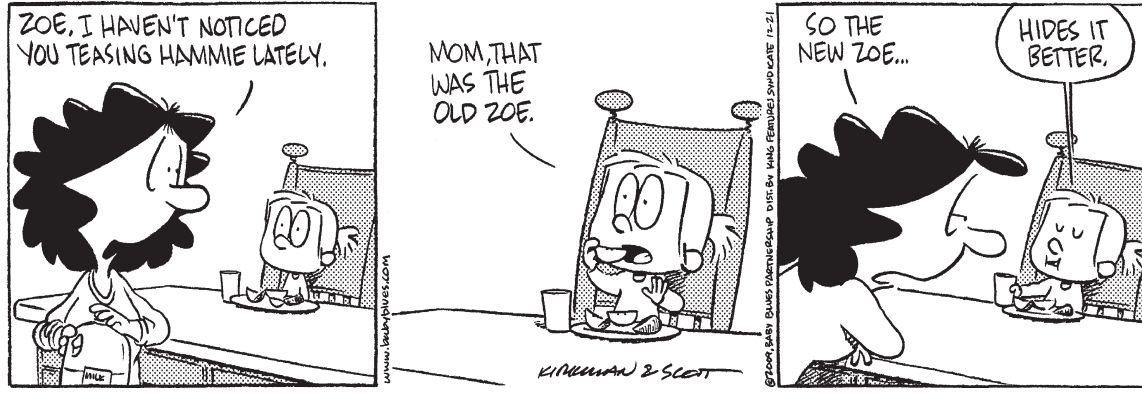


Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



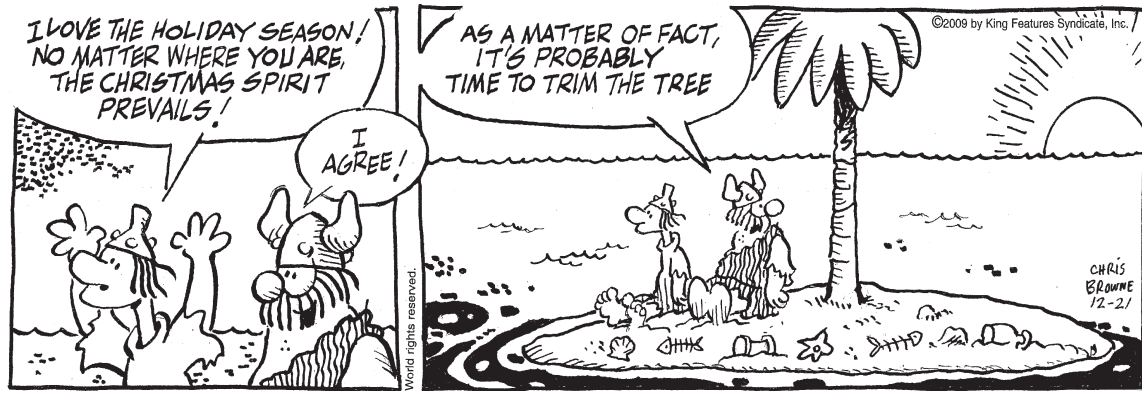
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



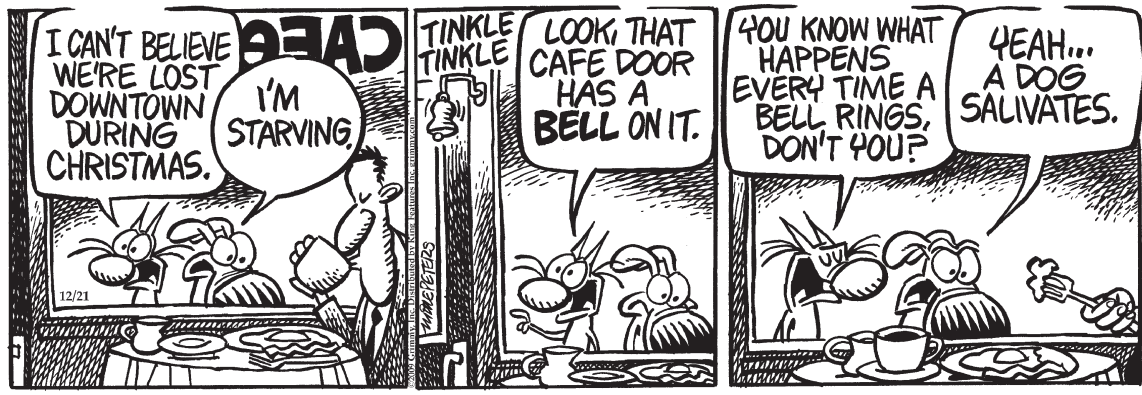
Blondie • Chic Young



Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



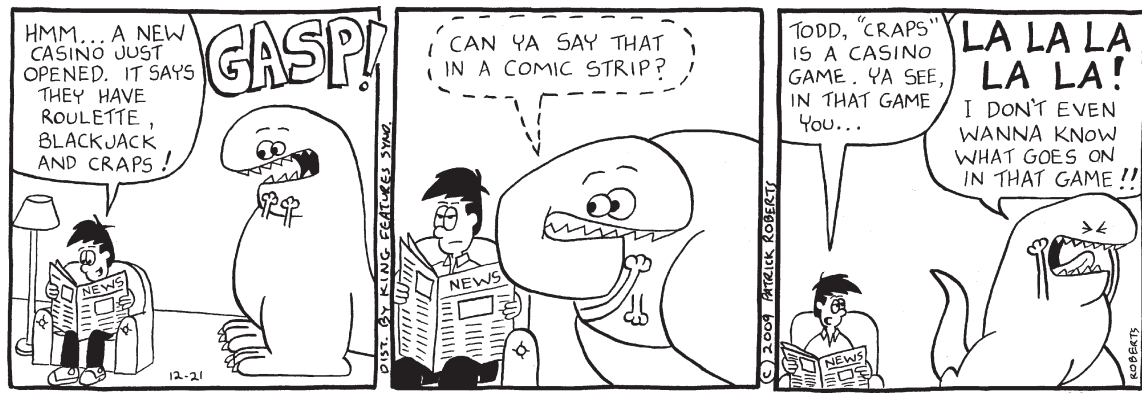
Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



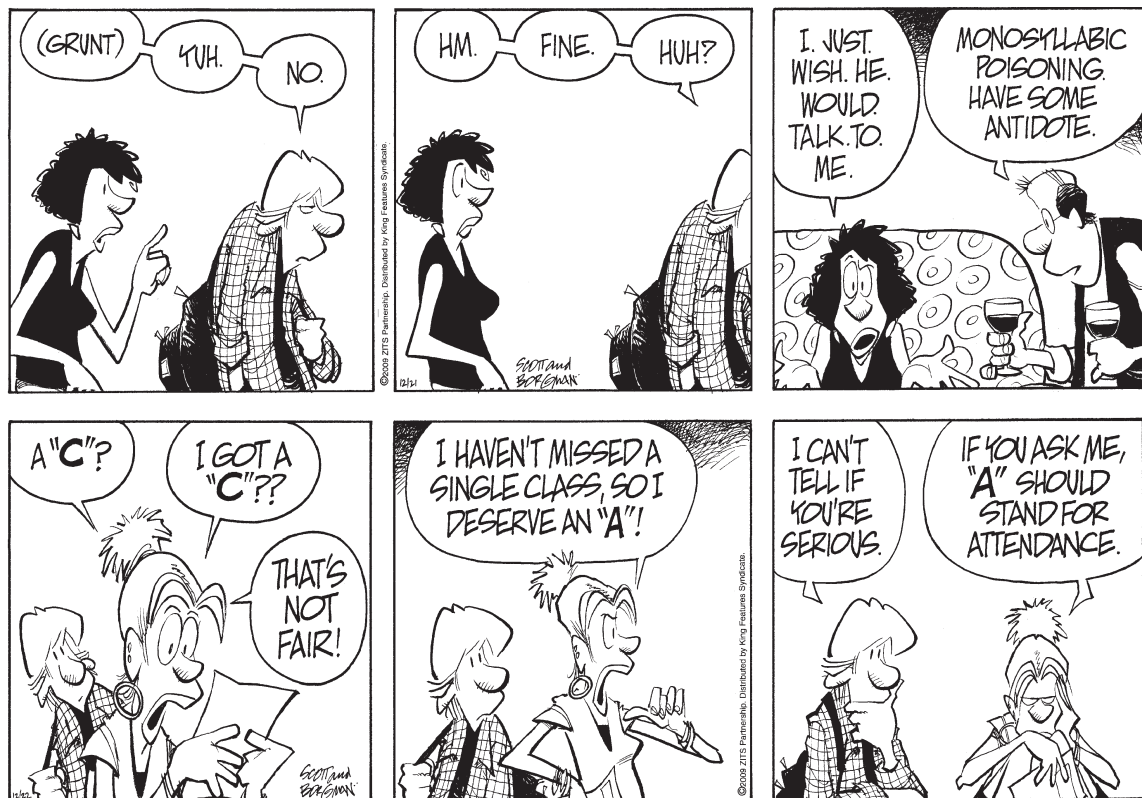
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Dr. Joyce Brothers

• Ask Dr. Brothers

Office romance has repercussions

Dear Dr. Brothers: I made the mistake of getting romantically involved with a co-worker. Things went south, and now we still have to work together. I know it's my fault, since I pursued her in the first place, but now she won't leave me alone. Every day at work is like walking on glass, trying to avoid her angry outbursts. It's gotten to the point where I'm considering quitting my job. How can I make this stop? — A.B.

Dear A.B.: There are a number of ways to handle this. The first, and likely most effective, would be to talk to your ex one on one and ask her to behave more professionally. She must know her behavior is reflecting poorly on her. You also could try going over her head and talking to your boss. This isn't the best option, since it may reflect badly on you as well. No boss wants to get in the middle of a personal disagreement, so it's not likely he'd help, unless your ex has done something particularly egregious at work.

Alternatively, you could try moving within the office. Or you could request a transfer, rather than giving up your job. You don't deserve to work in an uncomfortable situation with no hope of resolution. If you do talk to her, keep your discussion professional and don't bring up personal things best left out of the workplace. Your ex is free to hate you on her own time, but since you have to be stuck in an office together, you both have to learn to control your actions.

Dear Dr. Brothers: My daughter was diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder recently, and her doctor wants her on medication. My husband and I use only herbal and alternative therapies, and don't want to expose our daughter to unnatural chemicals. We've been researching options, but it's hard to wade through the information on the Internet. Do you have suggestions for how to evaluate alternative therapies? — L.F.

Dear L.F.: First and foremost, your daughter's doctor is the best resource. You should discuss your lifestyle choices, and work together to figure out what would be best for your daughter. Many forms of alternative therapy — from dietary changes to meditation or yoga to herbal remedies — have been reported anecdotally, but with little scientific work on any of them, so it can be hard to know what will work and what won't.

There are some things to keep in mind when evaluating therapies. Consider what you want to achieve and whether the treatment can do harm. Think about why you believe it will help, and whether your information is trustworthy. There is a lot of information available on the Internet, not all of it accurate. Lastly, think about the likelihood of success with alternative as opposed to conventional treatment. How much of your time, money and energy are you willing to commit? If you consider these and work with your daughter's doctor, you'll put together the best option to help your daughter within your comfort zone.

(c) 2009 by King Features Syndicate

Bridge • Steve Becker

South dealer. Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
 ♠ Q 5
 ♥ 9 4
 ♦ K J 10 3
 ♣ A K 8 7

WEST
 ♠ J 9 4 3 2
 ♥ 5 3 2
 ♦ Q 5 4
 ♣ 9 2

EAST
 ♠ K 10 8 7
 ♥ K 8
 ♦ 8 7 2
 ♣ Q J 6 5

SOUTH
 ♠ A 6
 ♥ A Q 10 7 6
 ♦ A 9 6
 ♣ 10 4 3

The bidding:
 South: 1♥ Pass
 West: 2♥ Pass
 North: 2♠ Pass
 East: 4♥ Pass
 Opening lead — nine of clubs.

Famous Hand

This hand was played in the 1964 national men's board-a-match team championship by the late Lew Mathe, Los Angeles star. He became declarer at four hearts, and West led the club nine.

In board-a-match play, each deal constitutes a separate match, and the aim is to outscore the opposing team on that board in order to win the one match point involved. The margin by which the board is won — whether by 10 points or 1,000 points — makes no difference.

Mathe took the club lead with the king and played the jack of hearts, covered by the king. After cashing the A-Q-10, he led a diamond to the ten. When the finesse succeeded, he returned to his hand with a low diamond to the ace.

Now assured of 12 tricks, he decided to try for a 13th by attempting an unusual squeeze. Accordingly, he cashed two more trumps, discarding two clubs from dummy to produce this position:

North
 ♠ Q 5
 ♥ K J
 ♦ A

West
 ♠ J 9 4
 ♥ Q
 ♦ 2

East
 ♠ K 10
 ♥ Q J 5

South
 ♠ A 6
 ♥ 9
 ♦ 10 4

When Mathe next led a diamond to the king, East had to discard a club, and when dummy then cashed the jack of diamonds, East had no safe discard. Whatever he did, South was bound to take the rest of the tricks, so Mathe made seven for a score of 710 points.

Despite this, Mathe's team lost the board! At the other table, North played the hand in three notrump. East led a spade, which ran to North's queen, and declarer then took winning finesses in hearts and diamonds to make 13 tricks without a squeeze for a score of 720 points!

(c)2009 King Features Syndicate Inc.

Family Circus • Bil Keane



"By my calculations, their Christmas lists so far will cost \$15,631.87."

Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★ 12/21

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

Cryptoquip

YFXQJKF PF LQZF HJN GPH
 WHEK PFQN LQGXSBE BFXZ
 YQBWK, O COZF GH XQCC
 GSFL XHCCQN-XHHNWOBQGFW.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I THINK AN ALBUM OF HIP-HOP TRACKS PERFORMED BY A PSYCHIATRIST SHOULD BE TITLED "SHRINK RAP"

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: P equals W

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS**
- 1 Pinza of "South Pacific"
 - 5 "Give — break!"
 - 8 Dweeby type
 - 12 "The View" co-host
 - 14 Old Italian money
 - 15 Source of great wealth
 - 16 Press
 - 17 — Bon Jovi
 - 18 Most recent
 - 20 For a specific purpose
 - 23 Platter
 - 24 Nitwit
 - 25 Tennessee city
 - 28 Right angle
 - 29 Funny-man Jerry
 - 30 Medic, familiarly
 - 32 Compose in print
 - 34 Medal earner
 - 35 Wan
 - 36 Substantial
- DOWN**
- 1 Early bird?
 - 2 Menagerie
 - 3 Under the weather
 - 4 Gold-finger ally
 - 5 Chicken chow —
 - 6 Compass event
 - 7 "18 or older" suffix
 - 8 Report-card sticker, maybe
 - 9 Ireland
 - 10 Greek Cupid
 - 11 Philosopher
 - 13 University VIP
 - 19 Poisonous snakes
 - 20 Mr. Lincoln
 - 21 Foolish one
 - 22 Sacred
 - 23 One of Donald Duck's nephews
 - 25 Crazy, in Yiddish
 - 26 Concept
 - 27 Kind
 - 29 For fear that
 - 31 Coquettish
 - 33 Settled a debt
 - 34 "Citizen Kane" inspiration
 - 36 Anti-DUI org.
 - 37 Annoys
 - 38 Verb counterpart
 - 39 Carbonated drink
 - 40 — Well "That Ends Well"
 - 43 "Alley—"!
 - 44 Multi-purpose truck
 - 45 Despondent
 - 46 Day fractions (Abbr.)

Solution time: 27 mins.

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

Saturday's answer 12-21

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
12								14			
15			13						16		
							17		18	19	
20	21	22				23					
24					25			26	27		
28						29			30	31	
			32		33				34		
37	38	39						40			
41						42	43		44	45	46
47						48					
49						50			51		