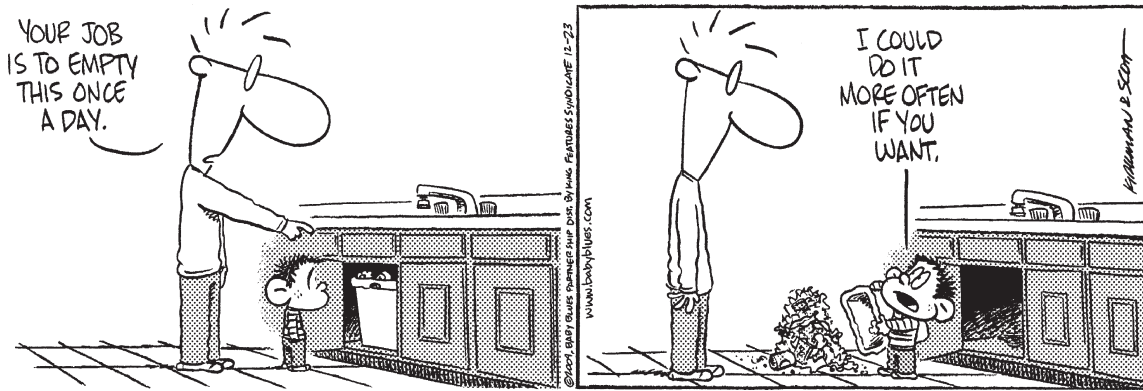
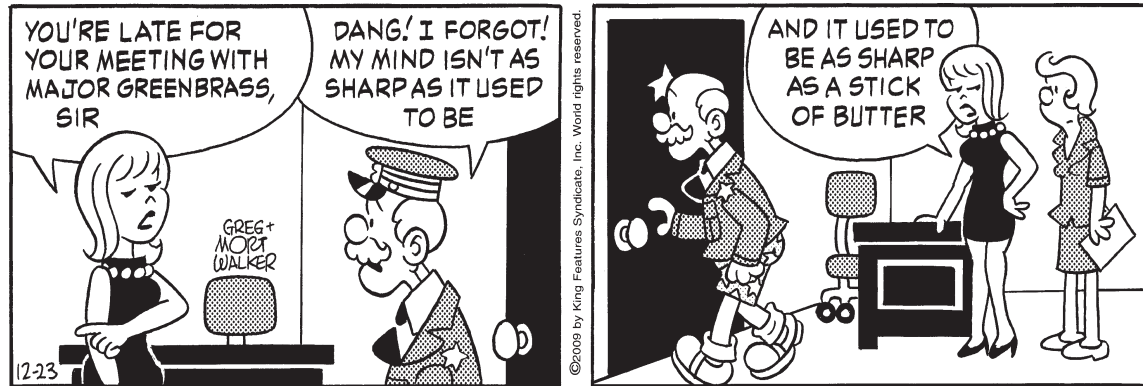


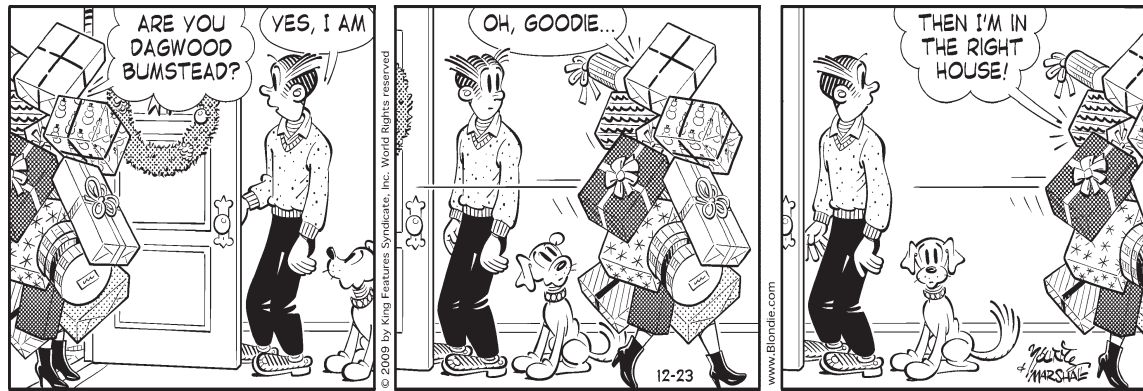
**Baby Blues** • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



**Beetle Bailey** • Mort Walker



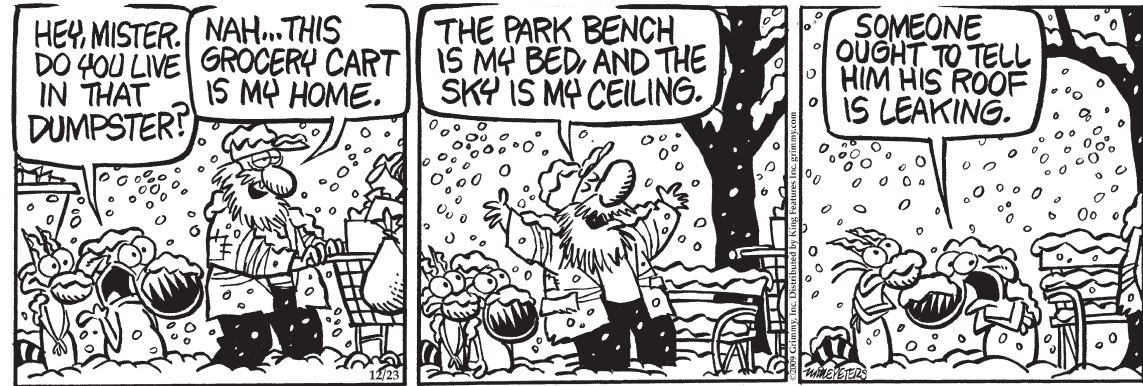
**Blondie** • Chic Young



**Hagar the Horrible** • Chris Browne



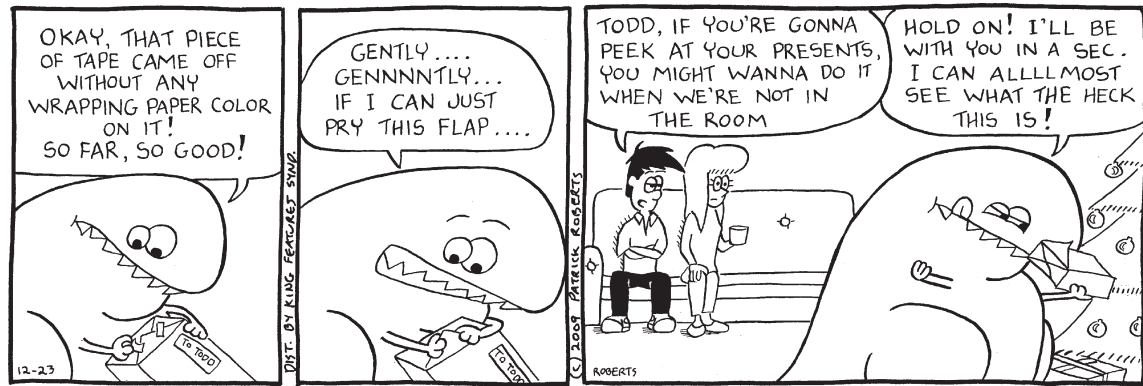
**Mother Goose and Grimm** • Mike Peters



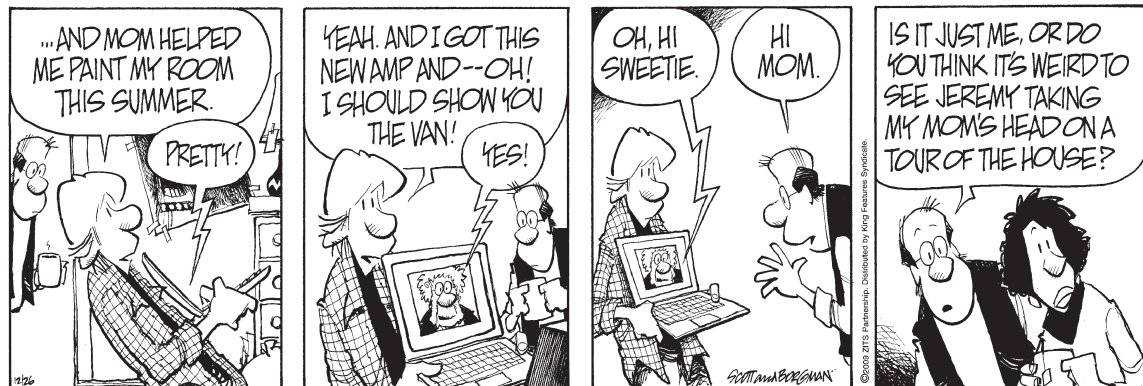
**Sally Forth** • Greg Howard



**Todd the Dinosaur** • Patrick Roberts



**Zits** • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



**Heloise**

• Hints from Heloise

**Try sea salt for a change**

Dear Heloise: I have some recipes that call for SEA SALT. What's the difference between sea and regular table salt? — Flo, Bellaire, Ohio

Where it comes from, taste, price and even color are the differences. Sea salt is a general term for salt that is simply made from evaporated seawater. It is not usually processed, is generally coarser than table salt and contains more minerals. Sea salt contains iodine naturally.

Table salt is mined and processed, which removes most minerals, including iodine.

Sea salt is usually more expensive, and some varieties are very expensive, but if your recipe calls for sea salt, give it a try! You should be able to find regular sea salt at your grocery store. — Heloise

P.S.: Many high-end grocery stores have it in bulk, so you could just get a small amount that way to try.

**EASY SLICE**

Dear Heloise: One of my relatives owns a cheesecake store, and I have watched his staff cut cheesecakes for customers. They have a percolator for coffee filled with hot water. A long, sharp knife (kitchen knife, not table knife) is used. The blade is dipped in the hot water to warm the metal, wiped dry, and one cut is made. The blade is wiped, dipped again and re-wiped before the second cut.

I have used this method at home, only using hot water from the tap running over the knife. It works. — Mary Ann Peeples, Stedman, N.C.

**RECIPE STORAGE**

Dear Heloise: Buy a notebook-binder-style photo album with magnetic clear sheets for your recipes. You can take the pages out when you need to use them. If anything gets spilled, you can just wipe it off. You also can rearrange the recipes, and additional pages are cheap. To save money, you could buy a three-ring-binder notebook and replacement pages. This works great for me. — Pat in Arkansas

Isn't it fun to read and collect new recipes, even if we may never get around to actually making them? My latest pamphlet, Heloise's All-Time Favorite Recipes, is filled with delicious family recipes, and it would be a great stocking stuffer. All you need to do is send \$5 and a long, self-addressed, stamped (61 cents) envelope to: Heloise/Recipes, P.O. Box 795001, San Antonio, TX 78279-5001. This pamphlet includes favorites like Heloise's Peking Roast, Cookies From Cake Mix and Apricot Preserves, which are so easy to make you won't believe it! — Heloise

**CROISSANT CUTTING**

Dear Heloise: I love croissants, but slicing them can be a bit annoying. I buy 12 to 14 at one time and put two to four into plastic bags and put them in the freezer. When I want a sandwich, I pull out a bag and slice the croissant in half while still frozen/semi-solid. By the time I finish making the filling or slicing the meat, the croissant has thawed. — Kandee, via e-mail

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**Bridge** • Steve Becker

North dealer.  
Both sides vulnerable.

**NORTH**  
♠ A  
♥ AK 10 4  
♦ AK 10 5  
♣ J 10 4 2

**WEST**  
♠ 10 7 2  
♥ J 8  
♦ J 9 4 3  
♣ AK 6 5

**EAST**  
♠ K 4  
♥ Q 9 7 5 3 2  
♦ Q 6  
♣ 9 8 7

The bidding:  
North East South West  
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass  
2 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass  
3 ♠ Pass 3 ♠ Pass  
4 ♠

Opening lead — king of clubs.

**Maximum Precaution**

It is not uncommon to hear a player claim that his partner should have made a contract he failed to make. However, one must be careful to base such an opinion on fair analysis rather than on hindsight derived from seeing all four hands.

South went down one on this deal, and the question is: Should he have made the contract? West led the K-A and another club, South discarding a diamond on dummy's ten of clubs.

Declarer's only problem was to draw the opposing trumps. So he cashed the ace of spades and ace of hearts, ruffed a heart and led the queen of spades. East took the king and returned a heart, and West's ten became the setting trick.

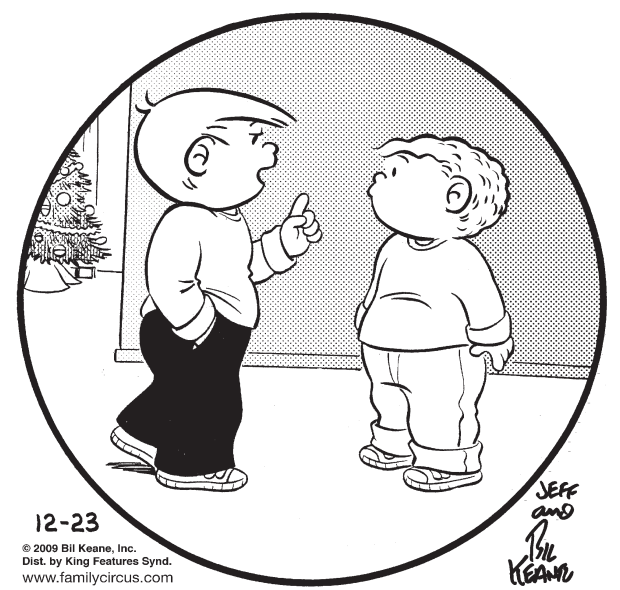
South was unlucky to run into a 6-2 heart break and an overruff as well. However, he did make a mistake in the play — a small one, to be sure, but it cost him the contract. The error occurred at trick three when he discarded a diamond on the ten of clubs. Instead, he should have discarded a heart!

Had South done this, he would have made the contract. After cashing the ace of spades, he could have ruffed a heart without having to cash the ace first and then led the queen of spades. This would have left declarer in complete control regardless of what East returned, since West would still have had a second heart in his hand.

This minor variation in the play was necessary in the actual deal, though most of the time it would have made no difference. It illustrates how important it is to employ maximum precaution during the play of the cards.

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**Family Circus** • Bil Keane



12-23  
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www.familycircus.com

**Conceptis Sudoku** • Dave Green

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

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.

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

**Cryptoquip**

KE C BIMQSKQ IE FTVCSG  
BKQSD JVTV FVKQY GCMWVU  
KQ JCYIQD, IQV RIMWU  
RCWW SGCS C SKR SCR SIJ.  
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: NOT GETTING ENOUGH SUN OR VITAMIN D, I HEARD SOME LEAPING INSECTS DEVELOPED CRICKETS' RICKETS.  
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: S equals T

**Crossword** • Eugene Sheffer

**ACROSS**

1 Massachusetts cape  
4 Eager  
8 React in horror  
12 Lawyers' org.  
13 Baseball team  
14 Church section  
15 Part of H.R.H., at times  
16 "The Clue in the Crossword Cipher" solver  
18 Asian leader who inspired a jacket style  
20 Small barrel  
21 "Oh, woe!"  
24 Antitoxin  
28 Tapped  
32 Ripped  
33 Tatter  
34 Binge  
36 Past  
37 Bit for Fermi

**DOWN**

1 Song-writer  
2 Theater trophy  
3 Morse's T  
4 Ring  
5 By way of  
6 Hostel  
7 Ship's floor  
8 Thingle  
9 Spring-time abbr.  
10 Away from  
11 Church NNW  
12 Church perch  
13 "Absolutely"  
14 "Honor — father ..."  
15 Un-cooked  
16 iPhone downloads  
17 In a way, slangily  
18 Bellow  
19 Incite  
20 Cat call  
21 Hardly colorful  
22 —tat-tat  
23 Holly-wood clashers  
24 Approach  
25 Put into code  
26 Carnival area  
27 Scooby-  
28 Pouch  
29 Cry loudly  
30 Touch  
31 Obi or cummerbund  
32 Yon folks  
33 Insult  
34 Tier  
35 Greek vowel  
36 "Flying Down to —"  
37 Ostrich's cousin

**Solution time: 21 mins.**

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

Yesterday's answer 12-23

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	52				53	54		55	
56				57					58	
59				60					61	