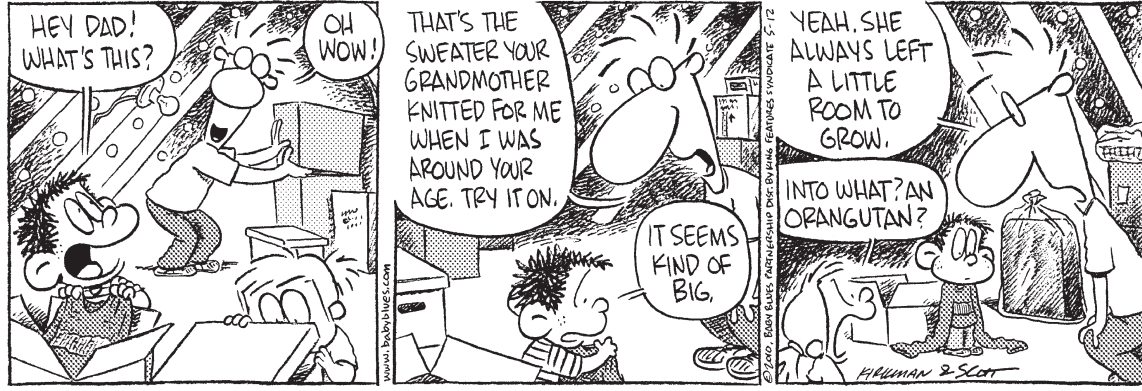
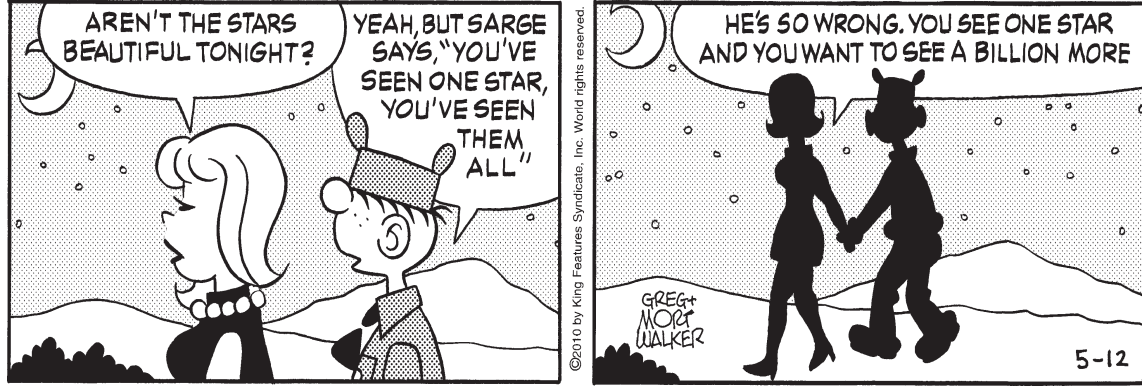




Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



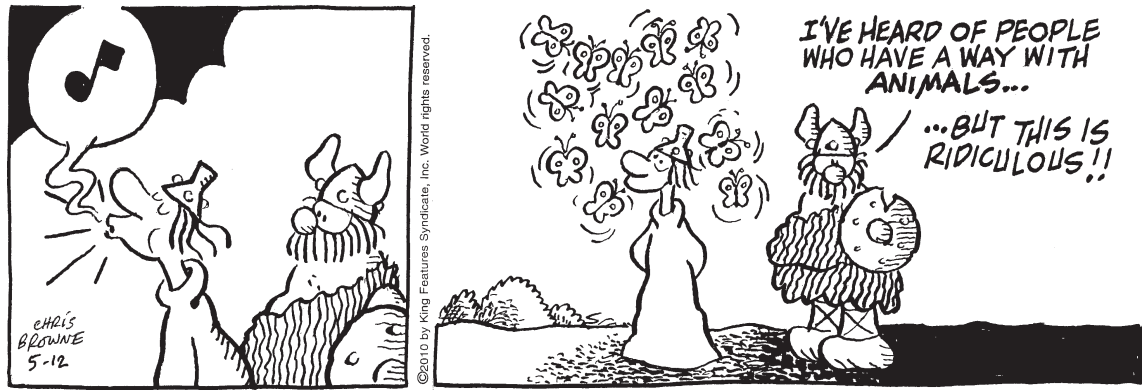
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



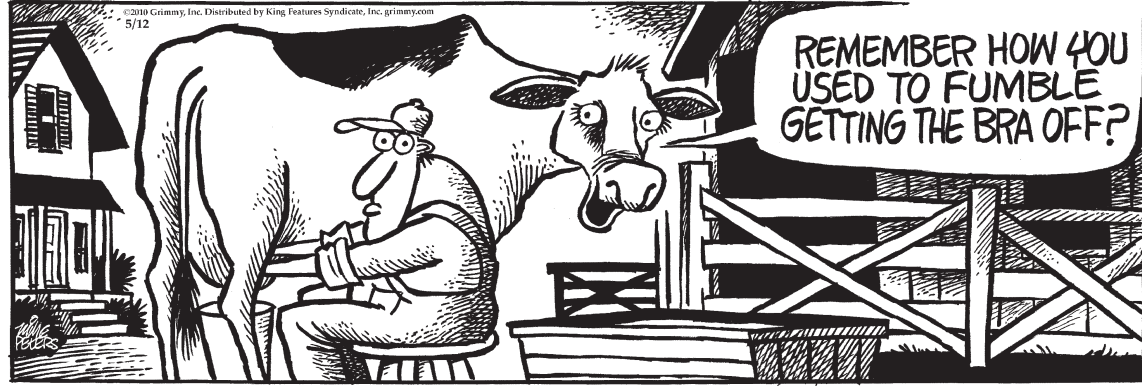
Blondie • Chic Young



Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



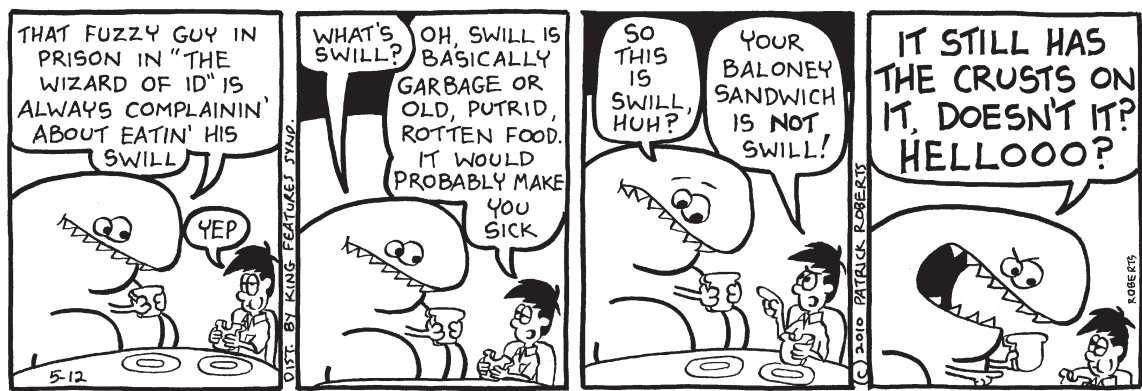
Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Heloise

• Hints from Heloise

Should beans be tossed out?

Dear Heloise: I always read your column, and I would like to ask you a question.

I've had in my pantry for at least 10 years several varieties of DRIED BEANS in glass and plastic jars, such as lima beans, black-eyed peas, black beans, etc. They are very hard. Are those different kinds of beans still good to cook and eat? Thank you so much. I appreciate your help. — Clarita Q., Houston

Dear Clarita: We checked with the United States Dry Bean Council, and it would advise you to toss your beans. Dry beans can be held in an airtight jar out of the sunlight and in a cool, arid pantry, for example, for about 12 months. After one year, the beans either can dry out or absorb moisture, or they can become impossibly hard.

When loading beans into a canister, mark the date on the bottom so you can track your beans and their age. Hope this helps. — Heloise

NO-STICK MARSHMALLOWS

Dear Heloise: I have found a way to keep marshmallows from becoming one big lump when you store them in your pantry or cabinet.

When I bring them home, I put them in a big zipper-top bag and sprinkle some powdered sugar on them, then shake the bag. This will keep them from sticking together.

When I was a child, I think they put more sugar on them, because I used to get it all over myself. I think they have cut back on the sugar, so now they will stick together sooner.

I work as a cashier, and when I see someone buying marshmallows, I give them my hint. It really does work. — Deb in Pennsylvania

NO SLICED OLIVES? NO PROBLEM

Dear Heloise: While making enchiladas one night, I found out we were out of sliced olives, but we did have a can of whole olives. So, I decided to use the egg slicer to get some sliced olives. It worked great, and I don't have to remember to buy sliced olives anymore. — Eliot, via e-mail

STICK OF BUTTER

Dear Heloise: When placing a new stick of butter out, I first use the blunt edge of a butter knife to gently depress where the tablespoon marks are. Even as it softens on the dish, the marks stay. Then when a recipe calls for a tablespoon or two of butter, I have the exact measurements. It also helps the family monitor just how much butter we use in our servings. — Michele Gatts, Austintown, Ohio

P.S.: I love and depend on your column (read you in The Vindicator of Youngstown, Ohio)! Keep up the great work!

GLASS BAKING DISH

Dear Heloise: The easiest way to get burned-on, crusty glass baking dishes clean is to put a little dishwasher powder in one and fill the pan up with water, then let it soak a few hours. Comes right off with a few swipes of your sponge. Never fails. — Marilyn, via e-mail

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



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Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★★ 5/12

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.

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

Cryptoquip

LGB THT MGX GPHQ VPJRD

GHQX VR APDB VPHDMJB

MLXDMBVRAXMGHDEV? H EWXVV

RDJB MGX ERRT TBX BRWDE.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: BECAUSE THAT NEWLYWED WOMAN DEMONSTRATES GREAT DENTAL HYGIENE, I'D CALL HER A BRUSHING BRIDE.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: T equals D

Bridge • Steve Becker

North dealer. Neither side vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ 8 7 3
♥ A 9 2
♦ Q 8 4
♣ A K 8 2

WEST
♠ J 10 9 5
♥ 7 5
♦ A 6 3
♣ J 9 5 4

EAST
♠ K Q 2
♥ 6 4
♦ K 10 9 7 2
♣ Q 7 3

SOUTH
♠ A 6 4
♥ K Q J 10 8 3
♦ J 5
♣ 10 6

The bidding:
North 1♠ East 1♦ South 1♥ West Pass
1NT Pass 3♥ Pass

Opening lead — ace of diamonds.

The Art of Signaling
This deal is from Dorothy Hayden Truscott's book "Bid Better, Play Better." It appears in the chapter called "The Art of Signaling," which does much to dispel the confusion over what constitutes a signal.

The hand is a fine example of the effectiveness of defensive signals and the subtle ways they can be applied. Actually — though she does not mention it — the deal occurred in a national pair championship, where Mrs. Truscott sat West and B. Jay Becker, the former editor of this column, sat East.

She led the ace of diamonds, and Becker signaled with the ten for a continuation. His ten play was based on the possibility that his partner might have the A-x or A-J-x of diamonds, in which case he wanted the suit continued.

But, oddly enough, the ten was read by Mrs. Truscott — very properly — as a good reason to stop playing the suit. She realized that Becker couldn't have the K-J-10, since he would have signaled with the jack rather than the ten with that holding. (It is customary to signal with the highest of equal cards, so East's failure to play the jack indicated that South had that card.)

Since another diamond lead would establish dummy's queen as a trick, Mrs. Truscott shifted to the jack of spades. After this play, South had to lose two spades and two diamonds and go down one.

Another odd twist occurred when Becker played the ordinarily discouraging deuce on the spade jack — though he was delighted with the shift. Declarer ducked, but Mrs. Truscott, realizing that he might have no higher spade to signal with, led another spade.

Thus, the overall effect was that Mrs. Truscott discontinued diamonds when Becker encouraged them and continued spades when he discouraged them, and as a result, the contract was defeated.

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Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Banned insecticide
4 Computer geek
8 Sharpen
12 Reaction fireworks
13 Eye layer
14 Unusual
15 Ultra-modern (Pref.)
16 Home of MIT
18 Thin porridge
20 Held a meeting
21 Road Runner's sound
24 Type of golf club
28 Phnom Penh's country
32 Authentic
33 Undivided
34 Zeroes
36 Meadow
37 Barber-shop prop
39 "Wichita Lineman" singer
41 Massage
43 Addict

DOWN

1 Ding follower
2 Active one
3 Grand
4 Atomic
5 Actress Mendes phenom
6 Sleep
7 Slight touches
8 Author
9 Owned
10 Work unit
11 Shirt shape
17 Un-cooked
19 Recede
22 Learning (Abbr.)
23 Rice recipe (Var.)
25 Take out of context?
26 Food critic
27 Mideast-ern airline
29 In due time
30 Unit of cultural information
31 Charitable donations
35 Ghost
38 No-goodnik
40 Sis' counterpart
42 Poorly lit
45 Black, in poetry
47 Filly's mom
48 The same, in a bibliography
49 Long-running true-crime TV show
50 Taxi
51 Past
52 Calendar abbr.
53 Compass dir.
54 HDTV maker

Solution time: 21 mins.

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER 5-12

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	