

Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



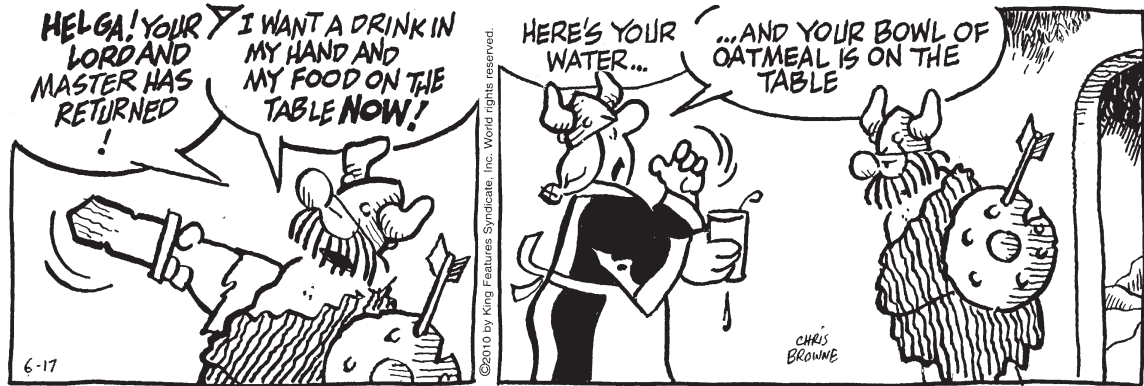
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Blondie • Chic Young



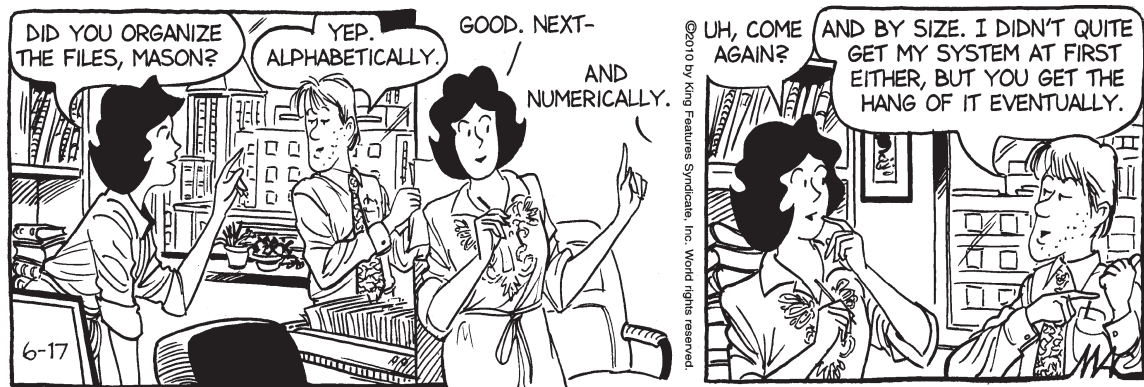
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



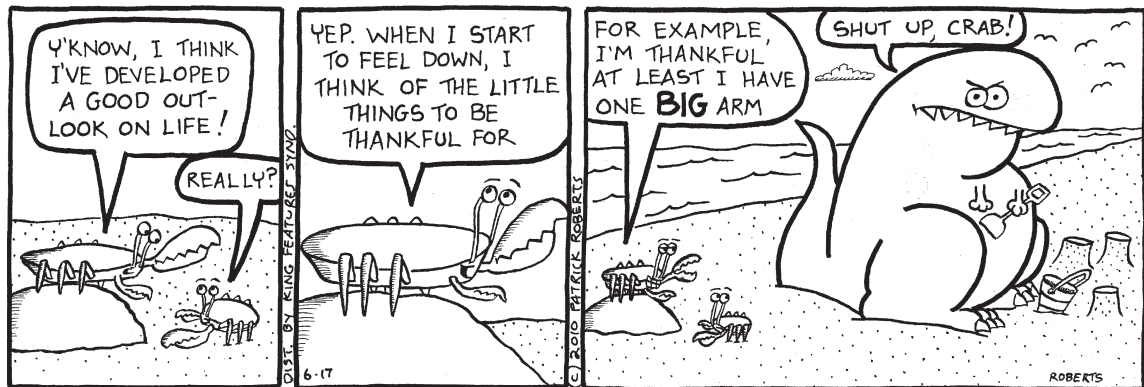
Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



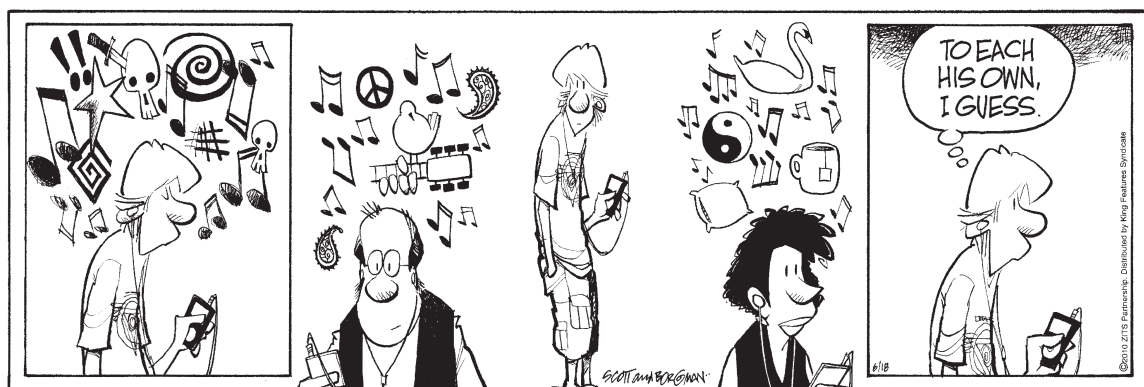
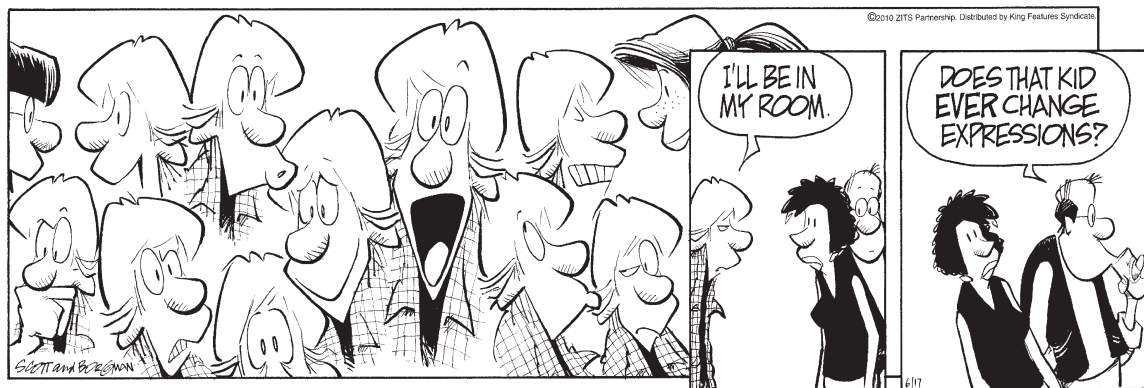
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Dr. Joyce Brothers • Ask Dr. Brothers New mom feels overwhelmed

Dear Dr. Brothers: I've been a mom for almost a year now, and I feel completely overwhelmed. Don't get me wrong - I love my little boy and husband, and wouldn't trade them for anything. I just feel there's too much going on. I'm not used to this juggling act. Other moms take in stride things that bother me, and I can't for the life of me figure out - how do they do it? - L.C.

Dear L.C.: You are not alone, and despite what appears to be a world of mommies functioning smoothly while you are struggling, I guarantee you that is not the case. Most new mothers feel overwhelmed, and it is perfectly normal. Of course, if this feeling results in the inability to take care of your baby and function, you may want to seek professional help with your feelings - or with the housework! Don't be afraid to ask Dad for a hand or a helper around the house.

You need friendships now more than ever - and other moms would be a boon. After marriage, women tend to forget about their female friends, preferring to hang out with their husband as they build their life. But now is the time to renew friendships or make new ones, and you'll soon find yourself sharing and solving problems together you thought were yours alone. And don't forget about childless friends - maybe it would be refreshing to take time off to go to a movie or shopping with someone whose world doesn't stop at the nursery door. Soon you will get perspective and realize the supermom is just a myth.

Dear Dr. Brothers: I recently got a call at work from my son's school. The principal was adamant that I come down there immediately; he said there was a problem with my son. When I arrived, he showed me a picture that my 7-year-old had drawn of the school on fire - and said my son was exhibiting terrorist tendencies! I told him my husband is a firefighter, but he insisted I get my son counseling! It seems nuts to me, but what if the principal is seeing something I'm not? - J.F.

Dear J.F.: I suppose you are lucky the school didn't kick your son out, or suspend him or call the cops. It seems almost every school system has new rules to make sure there is no hint of violence or even politically incorrect speech. Our fear has driven us to sometimes ridiculous heights of safety and security obsession. I'm sure there is some good to have come out of all of this concern. Some schools actually do need metal detectors and hallway patrols. And it's not cool for little kids to bring to school knives, guns and other objects their parents have allowed access to. But for the most part, little kids are not terrorists in training, and it's a shame they are being looked at that way. I urge you to talk to the principal to try to put things in perspective.

You should talk to your son about his drawing. Children in elementary school are just learning how to act. They are being themselves, and it is the school's job to direct that and to civilize the kids to some extent - no food fights, tantrums or hitting. But when they get down to interpreting innocent free speech - including drawing, playing, experimenting with language and personas - political correctness gets out of hand.

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Bridge • Steve Becker

Bridge hand diagram showing South, West, North, and East cards. South: ♠A875, ♥6, ♦AKQ742, ♣95. West: ♠Q943, ♥J965, ♦QJ862, ♣- . North: ♠- , ♥- , ♦- , ♣- . East: ♠J962, ♥KJ108752, ♦- , ♣- . The bidding: South 1♠, West Pass, North 3♦, East Pass, South 4♠, West Pass, North 5♦, East Pass, South 7♠. Opening lead - three of hearts.

A Precautionary Tale

Cards that are seemingly unimportant insofar as making the contract is concerned are often played indiscriminately, but there are hands where very careful handling of such cards is required.

Consider this deal played by Rafael Bufill, well-known Spanish expert. There seemed to be nothing to the play when he took West's heart lead with the ace, but a complication arose when he cashed the king of spades and West showed out. Bufill continued with a spade to the ace, finessed the ten and then extracted East's last trump with the queen.

At this point, the 10-8-3 of diamonds appeared to be of little consequence, since they were destined to go on dummy's A-K-Q. But Bufill, anticipating danger ahead, made the precautionary move of leading the ten toward dummy.

West followed low, and Bufill, having no reason to expect East to show out, went up with the queen. This did not prove fatal, however, because he was able to return to his hand with a club to lead the eight of diamonds through West.

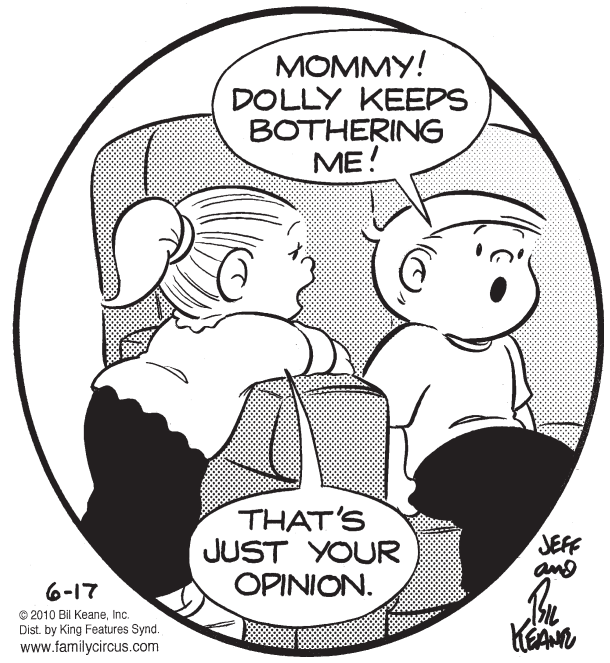
West covered with the nine, taken with the king, but was helpless when Bufill next crossed to his hand with a club and led the three of diamonds toward the A-7-4-2, trapping the jack and thus making the grand slam.

Observe that South would have gone down had he made the mistake of leading the diamond three initially instead of the ten. After West followed low and declarer put up the queen, there would have been no way to recover.

West would have covered the next diamond lead of the ten with the jack, but later would not have covered the eight with the nine, thereby preventing declarer from running the suit.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

Conceptis Sudoku grid. A 9x9 grid with some numbers filled in. Row 1: 6, 2, 4. Row 2: 8, 1. Row 3: 9, 7, 5. Row 4: 7, 1, 2. Row 5: 5, 8, 4, 1. Row 6: 1, 6, 3, 7. Row 7: 3, 8, 5. Row 8: 4, 6, 7, 3, 8, 5, 2, 1, 9. Row 9: 8, 2, 5, 9, 3, 1, 6, 4, 7. Row 10: 3, 7, 1, 4, 6, 8, 5, 9, 2. Row 11: 6, 9, 4, 5, 7, 2, 8, 3, 1.

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.

Cryptoquip

IES IJQ XNYNZX PEB JKFU

QBKYNHFBFBZ SKABKQ SZ ESI

PS OKSOBKDU FJVB ONHVDBQ?

PEB ANDD QBKXBZJP.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THE TAPE AND GLUE ONLY COMPLETE WORK AS A TEAM. THEY DECIDED THEY MUST ALWAYS STICK TOGETHER.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: S equals O

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

Crossword clues and grid. Clues include: 1 Sir's partner, 5 Chart format, 8 Grand story, 12 Actress Jessica, 13 Be indisposed, 14 Exceptional, 15 Poker variety, 16 Pen point, 17 In due time, 18 High-speed, 35-Across, 20 Home sick, maybe, 22 Lumberjack's need, 23 Prot. or Cath., 24 Pumps up the volume, 27 Learn by heart, 32 Pirouette pivot, 33 George's brother, 34 Fresh, 35 Auto, 38 Curved molding, 39 Swelled head, 40 Menagerie, 42 Ingredient in Scotch, 45 "Absolutely", 49 Ready for the picking, 50 Matter-horn, for one, 52 Waikiki wingding, 53 Hebrew month, 54 Meadow, 55 Gaelic, 56 Deep desires, 57 Very long time, 58 Drunkards, 1 Korea-based sitcom, 2 Choir member, 3 Touch area, 4 Port city of India, 5 Covering a wide area, 6 Midafternoon, maybe, 7 Exile isle, 8 Chalkboard, 9 Wallpaper alternative, 10 Unyielding, 11 Minimal change, 19 Beast of burden, 21 Pal, on the streets, 24 \$ dispenser, 25 Cattle call, 26 Collar style, 28 Historic time, 29 Almond confection, 30 Last letter, 31 Ram's mate, 36 Leering folks, 37 Shad product, 38 A great amount (of), 41 Performing, 42 Hee-haw, 43 Staffer, 44 Harvard rival, 46 Multi-national coin, 47 Sunrise direction, 48 Union member's payment, 51 Zodiac feline.

Crossword grid with numbers 1-58 indicating starting positions for clues.