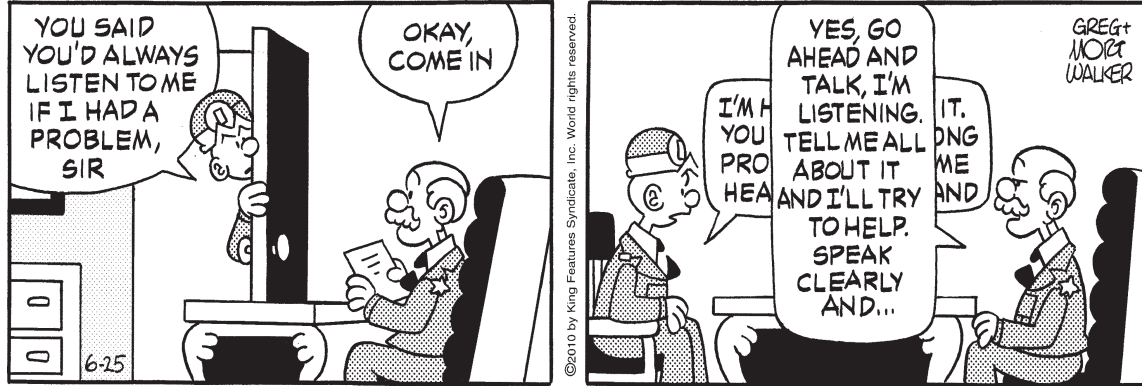


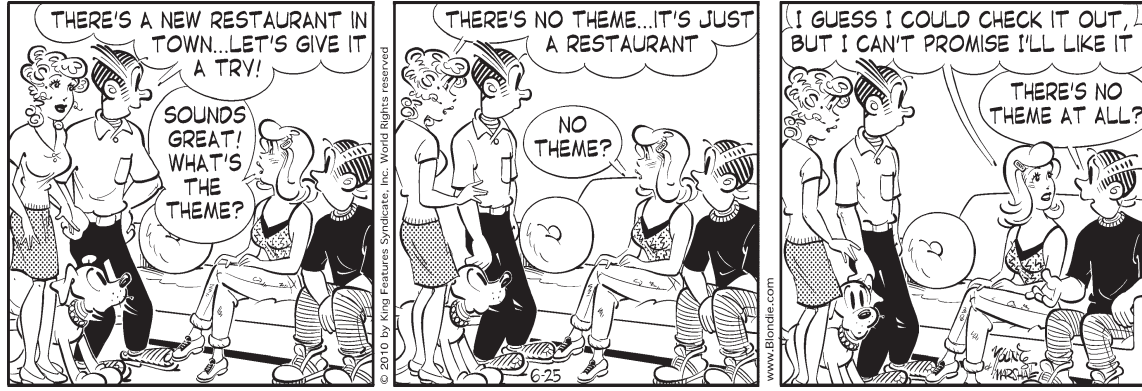
Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



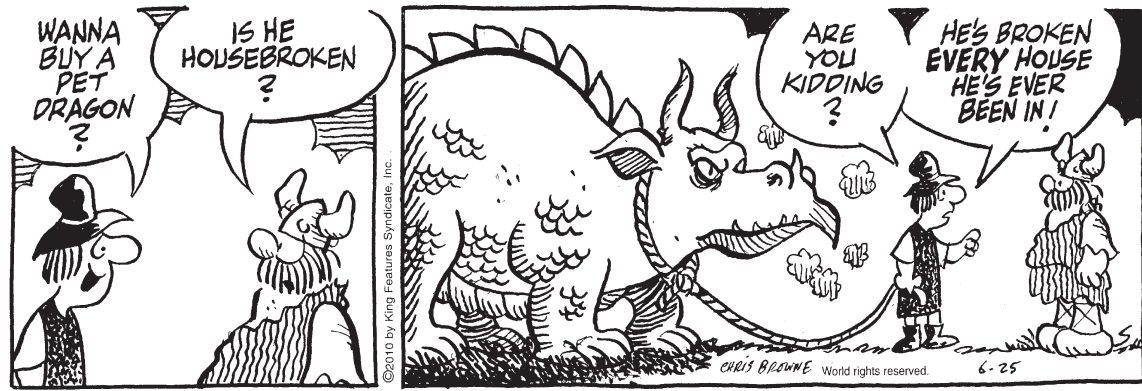
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Blondie • Chic Young



Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



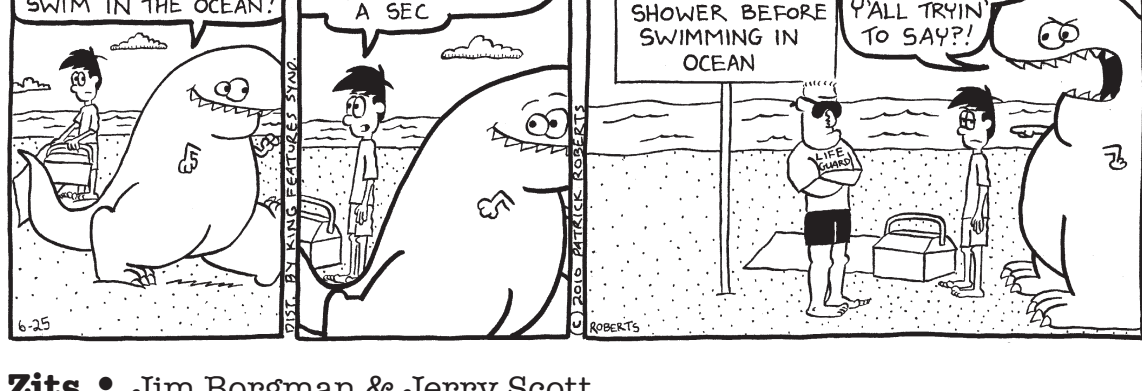
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Heloise

• Hints from Heloise

Noisy hardwood can be quieted

Dear Heloise: Is there a simple remedy for NOISY HARDWOOD FLOORS? I have tried baby powder and mineral oil. Thank you. — Chris, via e-mail

Chris, there could be several causes. There aren't enough nails in the floor, the subfloor is weak, or you have too much or not enough humidity in the room.

We checked with the National Wood Flooring Association, and humidity is the most common culprit. Regulate the humidity of your home year-round. Even in northern climates — like Michigan, for example — it can get very hot and sticky in the summer. You may be able to just open doors and windows for airflow through the house, but an air conditioner is a good way to dehumidify. In winter or dry climates, add moisture to the room by boiling water on the stove or opening the dishwasher during drying. Your home should be at a relative humidity of 50 percent or below.

Baby powder can work temporarily to quiet the floors, but you may want a general contractor to size up the situation. — Heloise

A MUST FOR DUST

Dear Heloise: I keep my dust cloths in one of those plastic-bag storage sleeves that hang up. Then when I need one, I simply pull it out of the bottom. If I wash it for reuse, it goes in again at the top. — Jean in Connecticut

HOME CLEANING

Dear Heloise: To clean Venetian blinds, use a fluffy dust wand, but spray it with an inexpensive duster spray and let dry thoroughly. Dust really sticks, and this cleans both sides at once. — Caroline in West Palm Beach, Fla.

Caroline, you're right. You don't have to spend big bucks on cleaners! For some great recipes to make inexpensive cleaners for just about any surface, send for my six-page Heloise's Homemade Cleaning Solutions pamphlet. To receive a copy, just send \$5 and a long, self-addressed, stamped (61 cents) envelope to: Heloise/Cleaners, P.O. Box 795001, San Antonio, TX 78279-5001. FYI: Grab a small paintbrush to dust in corners, crevices and tight spaces. — Heloise

FREEZER PLEASER

Dear Heloise: I never put wet garbage in the trash can. If I can't put it in the garbage disposal, I put it in a plastic bag and store it in my freezer until garbage day. Thank you for all of your helpful hints! — E.K.L. in Colorado

PACK WRAP

Dear Heloise: For packages I send to my 10 great-grandchildren, I use the plastic bags from grocery stores and drugstores as filler. I fill one bag with enough other bags to make it sturdy, then, if needed, add more bags. Of course, I save all the bags from my shopping. — Stella in San Antonio

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Bridge • Steve Becker

1. You are declarer with the West hand at Six Spades, and North leads the jack of clubs. How would you play the hand? (Assume the missing trumps are divided 2-2 or 3-1.)

West: ♠A Q 9 5 2, ♥K 8 4 3, ♦A J, ♣7 5

East: ♠K J 10 8, ♥A 10 5 2, ♦K Q 9, ♣A Q

2. You are declarer with the West hand at Three Notrump, and North leads the king of clubs, South discarding a heart. How would you play the hand to guarantee a favorable outcome?

West: ♠A K Q 2, ♥—, ♦A K Q 2, ♣J 10 9 8 6

East: ♠K J 10 8, ♥A 10 5 2, ♦K Q 9, ♣A Q

Test Your Play

1. This is one of those cases where you can assure the contract regardless of how the North-South cards are divided. Win the club lead with the ace, draw trumps and cash the A-K-Q of diamonds, discarding your club loser. Then ruff dummy's queen of clubs and lead the three of hearts.

You can't fail to make the slam if the opposing hearts are divided 3-2, so all your attention should be focused on protecting against a 4-1 (or 5-0) split. Accordingly, you proceed as follows:

If North follows low or shows out on the three, play the heart ten from dummy. If South wins with the jack or queen of hearts, he cannot avoid making a losing return. Whatever his holding, he must either give you a ruff-and-discard or lead a heart. If his original heart holding is, say, Q-J-9-6 and he returns the six, you play your eight to assure the contract. If he returns the nine, jack or queen of hearts, you play low from your hand, win with dummy's ace and again make the contract by leading toward your K-8.

If, on your lead of the three of hearts, North produces the jack or queen, you can assure the slam by either letting him hold the trick or by winning the jack or queen with the ace and returning the heart deuce from dummy, planning to finesse the eight if South follows low.

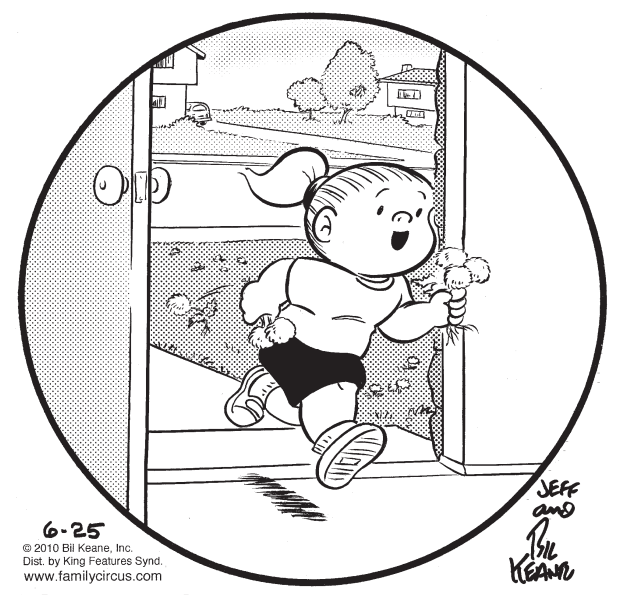
2. Play your eight of clubs on the king. If North shifts to any other suit, you automatically acquire an entry to dummy that assures at least nine tricks.

If North continues with the A-Q of clubs, play your 10-9! North still can't lead another suit or you'd make four notrump, so he's forced to lead his seven of clubs — on which you play your carefully preserved six! North is then at the end of his rope; whatever he leads, you win the remaining tricks.

If you were to play your six of clubs on the ace, king or queen, you could not be sure of making more than eight tricks and might go down one against best defense.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



"Our lawn is the best! We've got more little yellow flowers than anyone else."

Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

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.

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

Cryptoquip

P JPYC BM OPKZ XYAKYDUX

INB PCZ IBCGYDU MBC LNZ

E P K Z L X Z C E Y F Z F P K K

LNZOXXKEZX JPCGZC ACBLNZCX.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: PARK-INHABITING CARTOON ANIMAL THAT REALLY LIKES CERTAIN CULTURED MILK PRODUCTS: YOGURT BEAR.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: B equals O

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS**
- 1 Has the competence
 - 4 Post-bath soother
 - 8 Journey
 - 12 Pub order
 - 13 On the briny
 - 14 Bellow
 - 15 Where to hock stuff
 - 17 Wile E.'s supplier
 - 18 Will subject
 - 19 Whatever amount
 - 21 Toe tally
 - 22 Priest's superior
 - 26 Wanderer
 - 29 Sort
 - 30 Lamb's dam
 - 31 Botanical angle
 - 32 Expert
 - 33 Worry
 - 34 Roulette bet
 - 35 Inseparable
 - 36 Lipstick alternative
 - 37 Co-star with Moore and Asner
 - 39 Take a stab at
 - 40 Parisian pal
 - 41 Fame
 - 45 Browse the Web
 - 48 Hive boss
 - 50 Educator, for short
 - 51 Second-hand
 - 52 "— Got a Secret"
 - 53 Initial chip
 - 54 Uncomplacated
 - 55 Birth name of
 - 37-Across
 - 3 Salaman-der
 - 4 Took a bite
 - 5 Wan
 - 6 Writer
 - 7 Skilled
 - 8 Cafeteria stack
 - 9 "Arabian Nights"
 - 10 Cartesian conclusion
 - 11 Grand —, N.S.
 - 16 Birth-related
 - 20 End for beat or neat
 - 23 Medal earner
 - 24 Has bills
 - 25 House- hold members
 - 26 Stratford stoolie
 - 27 The yoke's on them
 - 28 Calf-length
 - 29 "Rocks"
 - 32 It's nothing new
 - 33 Robin Hood portrayer
 - 35 Resistance measure
 - 36 Avaricious
 - 38 Big mistake
 - 39 Kilmer poem
 - 42 Final notice
 - 43 "— Only Just Begun"
 - 44 Requirement
 - 45 Hot tub
 - 46 Ode subject
 - 47 Deteriorate
 - 49 Can. neighbor

Solution time: 25 mins.

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

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	