

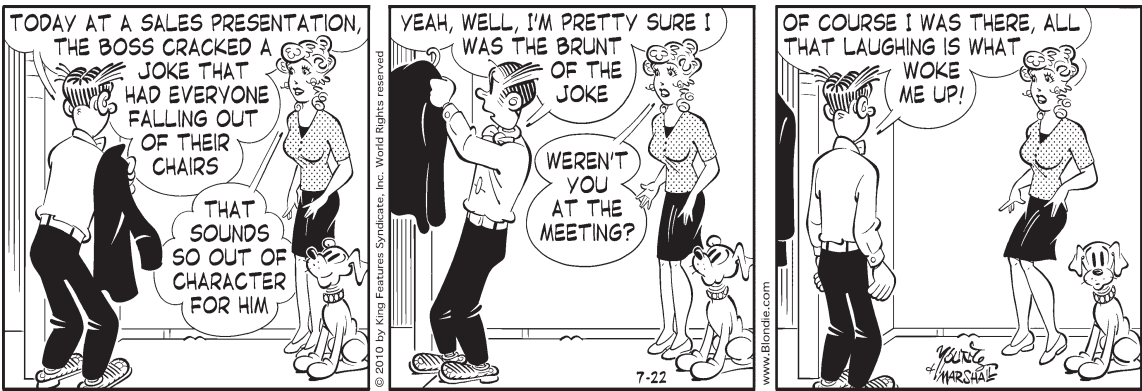
Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Blondie • Chic Young



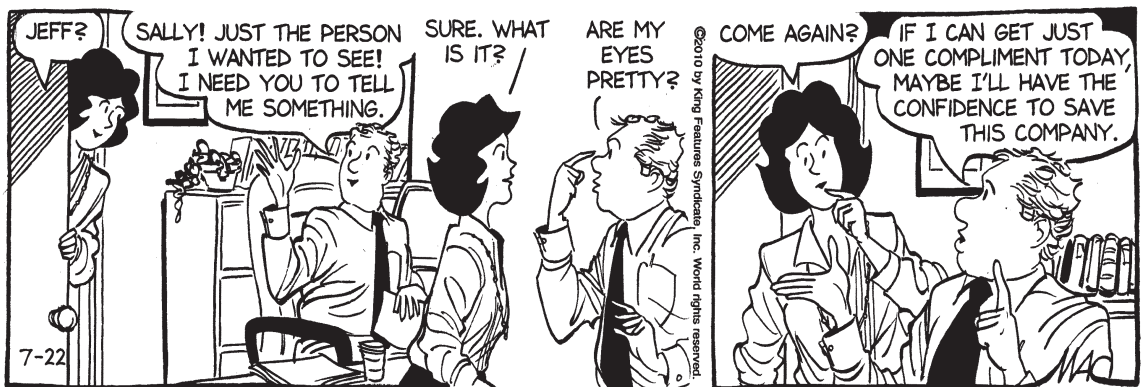
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



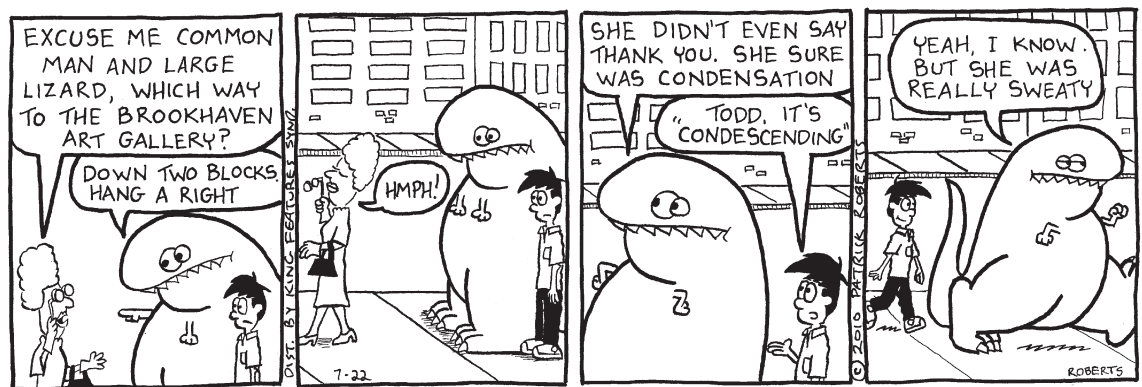
Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



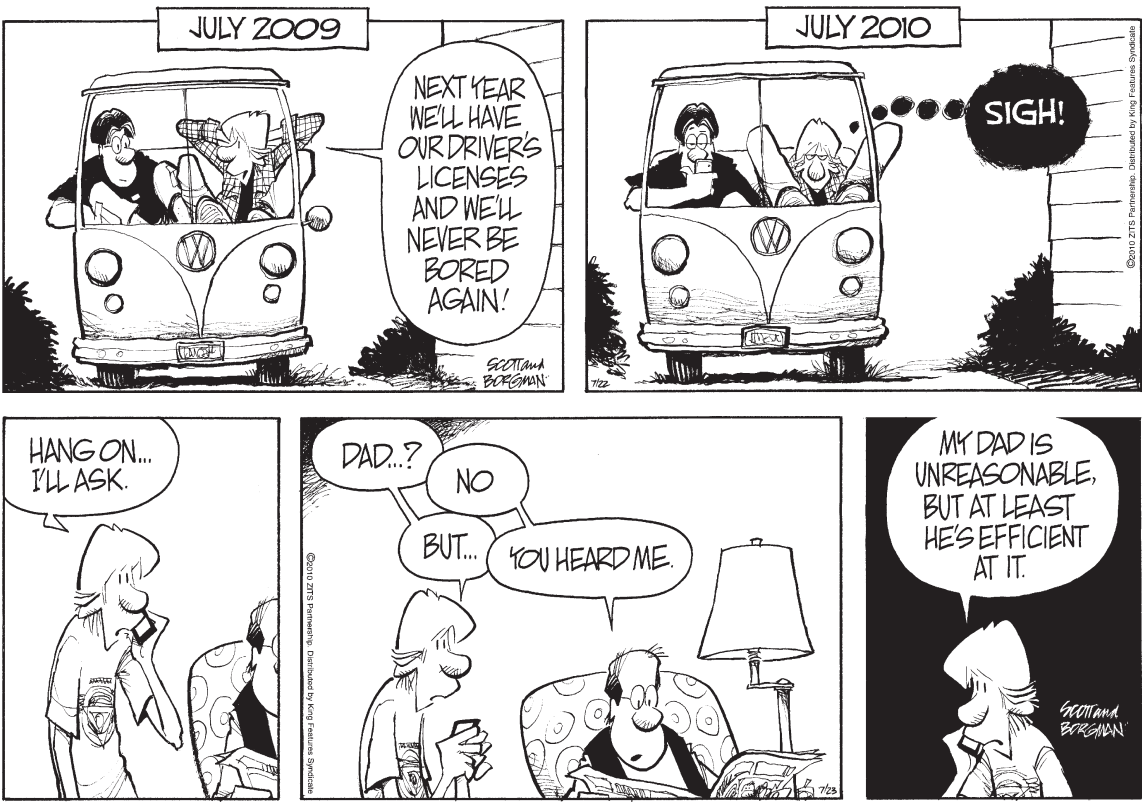
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Dr. Joyce Brothers • Ask Dr. Brothers

Don't mess with playtime

Dear Dr. Brothers: My wife and I agree on nearly everything, but there's one point of contention that gets us arguing. I say man was not made to be a machine, and requires ample time to kick back and have fun. She looks at playtime as a waste, and is fond of saying, "All work and no play makes Jack a very rich and happy boy." It drives me crazy! Please give me some ammo to make her see the benefits of having fun! – D.B.

Dear D.B.: You don't say whether your wife takes playtime for herself and just wants you to work all the time, or whether she is driven to keep her own nose to the grindstone as well. If work is her prescription for you while she relaxes, I urge you to call her on it and take your own recreation. But if she is all tied up with working constantly because she really believes leisure activities are a waste of time, it could be she is feeling overwhelmed by her responsibilities and wants to make sure they are taken care of first.

Some people who are extremely conscientious find it hard to relax without feeling guilty. They honestly may feel that playtime is frivolous when there are things that will be left undone if they fritter away their time. So make sure you are there for your wife when it comes time for household duties as well as having fun, and you may find her more playful once the chores are done. Human beings are made to enjoy fun as well as work, and if your wife doesn't know about the benefits to mental and physical health, you can start down that path together.

Dear Dr. Brothers: My wife's best friend wants to throw her a surprise birthday party – which is great. This woman is a recovering alcoholic. Now, I know our friends would definitely expect liquor at my wife's party, but would it be wrong to have everyone BYOB? I guess what I'm asking is, would it be psychologically harmful to our host if we brought booze to the party? – V.A.

Dear V.A.: It is great that this friend is thoughtful enough to throw a party for your wife's birthday. If it were not a surprise, I would advise you to just ask your wife how her friend feels about other people drinking in front of her, or in her own home. Does she have a significant other who drinks? Have you or your wife ever been to dinner with the friend, or to a party where there was drinking, and if so, how does she react?

I believe that in normal circumstances, if you were out somewhere neutral and there was alcohol involved, your wife's friend probably would adjust and follow her normal routine of having something nonalcoholic. She would not expect others to tiptoe around her problem. With the party being held in her own home, though, the situation is a bit more delicate. It would be very rude to just tell everyone to bring their own beer or wine without first discussing it with the hostess. So, one way to approach this would be to simply ask her if she'd like some help handling the beverages, and what she has in mind. If she makes no mention of alcohol, I would not ask anyone to bring their own. I'd put the friend's feelings first, if I were you.

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Bridge • Steve Becker

South dealer. North-South vulnerable.

NORTH  
♠ A 8 5 2  
♥ A J 4  
♦ A J 9 6  
♣ 7 3

WEST  
♠ 3  
♥ 10 8 5 2  
♦ 7 3 2  
♣ J 10 8 5 4

EAST  
♠ J 9 6 4  
♥ 9 7  
♦ 10 8 5  
♣ Q 9 6 2

SOUTH  
♠ K Q 10 7  
♥ K Q 6 3  
♦ K Q 4  
♠ A K

The bidding:  
South West North East  
2 NT Pass 3 ♣ Pass  
3 ♣ Pass 4 NT Pass  
5 ♣ Pass 5 NT Pass  
6 ♣ Pass 7 ♠ Pass

Opening lead – jack of clubs.

Two Ways to Skin a Cat

Bridge is a game of endless refinements, which is one reason it has so many millions of adherents. There is always something to learn, as shown by this hand where South was in seven spades.

West led a club, and South could see 13 tricks, provided he did not lose a trump trick. This would happen only if one opponent had all five missing trumps, or if West started with the J-9-x-x. Declarer can protect against J-9-x-x in the East hand by cashing the king and then leading to dummy's ace. After West shows out, he can then take the proven finesse against East's jack.

The safety play would have worked perfectly in the actual deal except for one small detail. When South cashed the king of spades, East played the nine on it, and the appearance of the nine diverted South from his original plan. He naturally thought the nine might be a singleton, which would mean that West had started with the J-6-4-3.

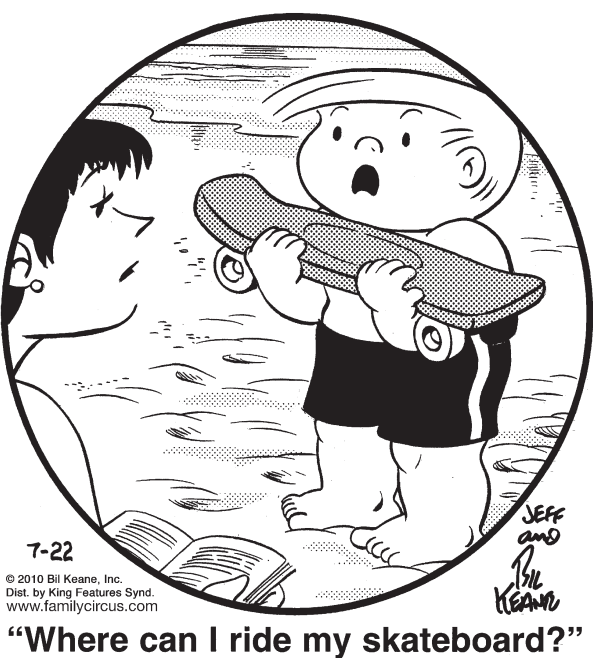
To guard against this possibility, South continued with the queen, planning to next finesse against West's jack if East showed out. But West showed out instead, and South went down one.

Declarer could have improved on his chances significantly if he had crossed to dummy initially with a heart or a diamond and then led a low spade from dummy. It is unlikely that East would have played the nine in this case, fearing that West might have the singleton ten and that the nine play would jeopardize a sure trump trick for his side.

Once East played low on this basis, declarer would surely have made the contract. After West followed to the king, South would have led a low spade to the ace, and the cat would have been out of the bag.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Cryptoquip

WN MW LN ONFFTLK FNHK

KXXUOUKALEB, LGK QHNTR

NX XUWG HKOKALEB IKOUIKI

LN WLMHL OMHR-RNNEUAQ.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A BUNCH OF ROBED MONKS ARE PERFORMING CHANTS TOGETHER, I SUPPOSE THAT'D BE A FROCK CONCERT.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: W equals S

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS  
1 Bullets and such  
5 After-dinner remark?  
9 Moment count?  
12 Black shade  
13 Vicinity  
14 Painter's medium  
15 Data-storage device  
17 To and —  
18 Goya, for one  
19 Performed  
21 Indefinite article  
22 Paycheck extra  
24 Final  
27 Storefront sign abbr.  
28 Non-sense  
31 Altar affirmative  
32 Conger, e.g.  
33 Gorilla  
34 Couch  
36 "7 Faces of Dr. —"  
37 Fix, in a sense

DOWN  
38 After-noon hour  
40 Roman Dalmatian  
41 Diamond side  
43 Power problem  
47 Past  
48 Toil  
51 Scoundrel  
52 "Zounds!"  
53 Abrades  
54 Golf gadget  
55 Umps  
56 Eyelid woe

2 Castle protector  
3 "Walking in Memphis" singer  
4 Hackneyed  
5 Roseanne of sitcom fame  
6 Mentalist  
7 Gun the engine  
8 Hymn  
9 Flattery  
10 Green land  
11 LummoX  
16 Lair  
20 Young Scout  
22 Silver-scaled fish  
23 Scandinavian city  
24 Fleur-de—  
25 Big bother  
26 Less explicit than it could be  
27 Aid  
29 Resort  
30 Attention-getter  
35 Shock and —  
37 Raga music-makers  
39 Something else  
40 —-de-sac  
41 Datum  
42 Malaria symptom  
43 Probability  
44 Touch  
45 Pass  
46 Gaelic  
49 Census stat  
50 U.K. fliers

Solution time: 25 mins.

Yesterday's answer 7-22

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		