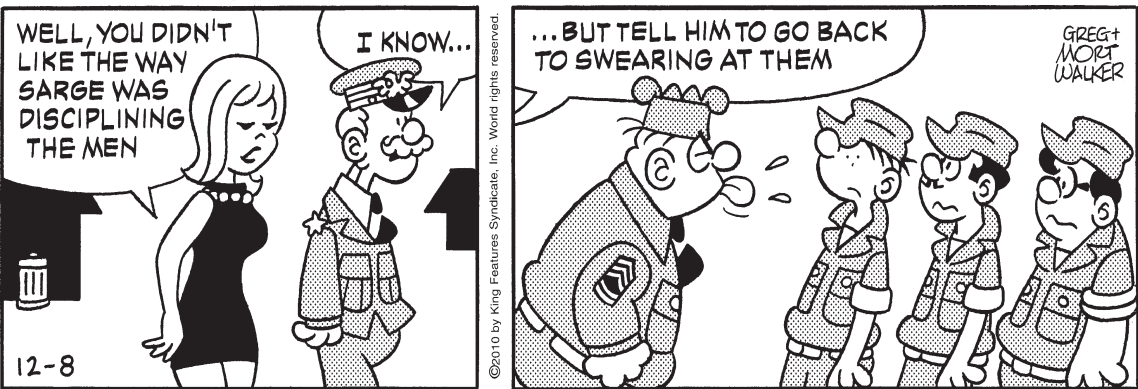


**Baby Blues** • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



**Beetle Bailey** • Mort Walker



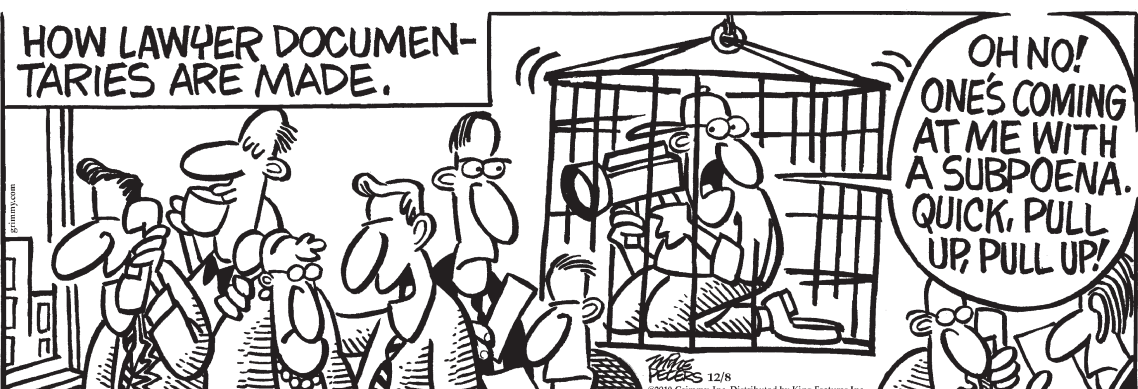
**Blondie** • Chic Young



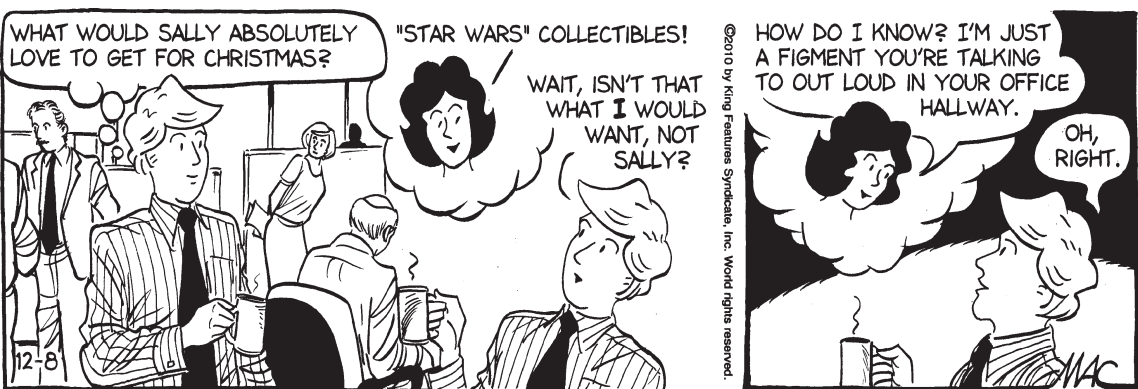
**Hagar the Horrible** • Chris Browne



**Mother Goose and Grimm** • Mike Peters



**Sally Forth** • Greg Howard



**Todd the Dinosaur** • Patrick Roberts



**Zits** • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



**Heloise**

- Hints from Heloise

**Cutting board gets a cleaning**

Dear Heloise: How can I deodorize/sanitize my WOODEN CUTTING BOARD? It reeks of onions. Do I just toss it? – A Reader, via e-mail

Hot, soapy water is your best friend when cleaning cutting boards. Wash each time you use it, rinse, air-dry and finish drying with paper toweling, since dish towels may have some germs. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, to sanitize, use 1 tablespoon of unscented chlorine bleach in a gallon of water. Carefully pour the mixture over the board and let it sit for several minutes. Rinse and dry with paper towels if you need to.

An eco-friendly way to remove odors and clean one, especially wood? Sprinkle with plain old salt and rub with half a lemon, lime, grapefruit or orange. Wash with hot, soapy water, rinse and dry.

Here's a hint from the USDA: "All plastic and wooden cutting boards wear out over time. Once cutting boards become excessively worn or develop hard-to-clean grooves, they should be discarded." – Heloise

P.S.: If you have any questions, the USDA can be reached toll-free at (888) 674-6854. Representatives are available to answer questions from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Eastern time Monday through Friday.

**APPLESAUCE FOR OIL**

Dear Heloise: Can applesauce be used instead of cooking oil in baking cakes? – Nella Dean Osborne, via e-mail

Yes! Applesauce is a great substitute for oil, and it is a 1:1 ratio, meaning you can substitute 1 cup of applesauce for 1 cup of oil. It's best to start off by substituting half of the oil in a recipe with applesauce first. Applesauce will make the cake sweeter and softer than oil typically does. If you like the way the cake tastes, then next time try upping the amount a little. Some cake-mix boxes even have suggestions for low-fat and no-cholesterol alternatives. Applesauce is not going to be as good in cookies unless you like cookies to have a cakelike consistency. Happy baking! – Heloise

**CHOCOLATE PUMPKIN BROWNIES**

Dear Heloise: I read your response about the difference in chocolate cake mixes and was reminded about a brownie recipe. Thoroughly mix one box of brownie mix and a 15-ounce can of pumpkin (NOTHING ELSE -- Heloise). Bake according to package directions. I add a cup of chopped pecans, walnuts or mixed nuts, and for special occasions I add some chopped fresh cherries. – Carl Reicherzer in San Antonio

We tested this, and all love it! It was fudgelike, with no pumpkin taste! – Heloise

**BREAD CRUMBS**

Dear Heloise: At this time of the year, a lot of recipes call for bread crumbs. If you have bread that gets too old to eat, place it on a cookie sheet and bake to a toasty brown. Then run the bread through a food processor. You can add garlic or other seasonings, or just use it plain. They will last up to two weeks in the refrigerator. – Velma Fuller in Kilbourne, La.

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**Bridge** • Steve Becker

West dealer. North-South vulnerable.

**NORTH**  
 ♠ K 10 9  
 ♥ Q 5  
 ♦ Q 8 4  
 ♣ A 9 7 3

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

**EAST**  
 ♠ Q 7  
 ♥ J 10 7 6 4  
 ♦ 7 3  
 ♣ K Q 6 5

**SOUTH**  
 ♠ A 6 5 3  
 ♥ A 9  
 ♦ A K J 10 6 2  
 ♣ 4

The bidding:  
 West North East South  
 Pass Pass Pass 1♦  
 Pass 3♦ Pass 6♦  
 Opening lead — jack of clubs.

**Just Plain Common Sense**

You don't have to be a great mathematician to solve most of the basic play problems that arise in bridge. The ability to count to 13 covers a large percentage of the arithmetical problems that may crop up, and most of the others can usually be resolved in very simple fashion.

Consider this deal where experience and logic both dictate the best method of play. West leads a club against your six-diamond contract, and you win with dummy's ace. You cash the A-K of trumps and must then try to avoid the loss of both a spade and a heart.

One possibility is to play the A-K and another spade, hoping the opposing spades are divided 3-3. If they are, your fourth spade would become a trick on which you could discard a heart from dummy.

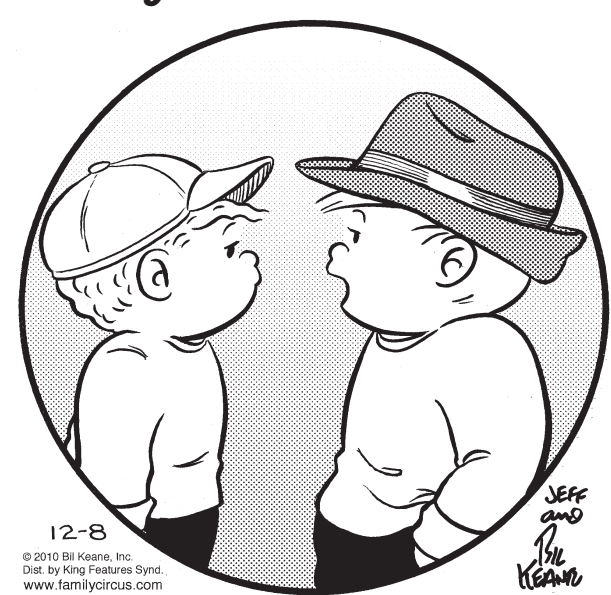
However, the probability of finding the spades 3-3 is only about 36 percent, so this method of play is not particularly attractive. But a somewhat different line of play makes you a decided favorite. After drawing trumps, you should lead a low spade toward dummy, planning to finesse the nine.

Let's say East wins the nine with the jack or queen. You ruff the probable club return and lead another low spade, this time finessing the ten. If the ten wins, as it does in the actual deal, the rest of the tricks are yours.

The probability of finding West with either the queen or jack of spades, or both of them, is about 75 percent -- approximately 3-1 in your favor. Even if the 36 percent and 75 percent figures are not familiar to you, experience and common sense should tell you that the second line of play is far more promising than the first.

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**Family Circus** • Bil Keane



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**Conceptis Sudoku** • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★★ 12/08

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.

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

**Cryptoquip**

ZVTND LQTL QIGYDY HTWC  
 HDRMNTV ZMNLGJDY IE T  
 XMF YMLNIH ETHMVC: LQD  
 RDZTJLHDWL IE XJTRC-IVIFC.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN A SHIP'S CREWMATES CONGREGATE TO EAT BREAKFAST, DO YOU THINK THEY SHOULD PREFER BOATMEAL?

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: L equals T

**Crossword** • Eugene Sheffer

**ACROSS**

1 Leave when things get tough  
 5 Jewel  
 8 Campus lecturer, maybe  
 12 Radius neighbor  
 13 Floral garland  
 14 Theater box  
 15 Illinois city  
 17 Land measure  
 18 Try a case again  
 19 Where a plug goes  
 21 Tackle the slopes  
 22 Muscular development  
 23 Rock band's enhancer  
 26 Salamander  
 28 Follows orders  
 31 "Magical Mystery"  
 33 Thee  
 35 Hodge-podge

**DOWN**

11 Stocking stuffers?  
 16 Phony  
 20 Discoverer's cry  
 23 \$ dispenser  
 24 Miss Piggy's pronoun  
 25 Sex Pistols' genre  
 27 Excessively  
 29 Shriek bark  
 30 "Mayday!"  
 32 Monarchs  
 34 Factor in Marilyn's "Seven Year Itch" pose  
 37 Crafty  
 39 Abound  
 42 English composition  
 44 Restrains  
 45 Skirt length  
 46 Valhalla VIP  
 48 Satan's purchase  
 49 Beige  
 50 Terrier type  
 53 Coloration

**Solution time: 21 mins.**

Yesterday's answer 12-8

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		