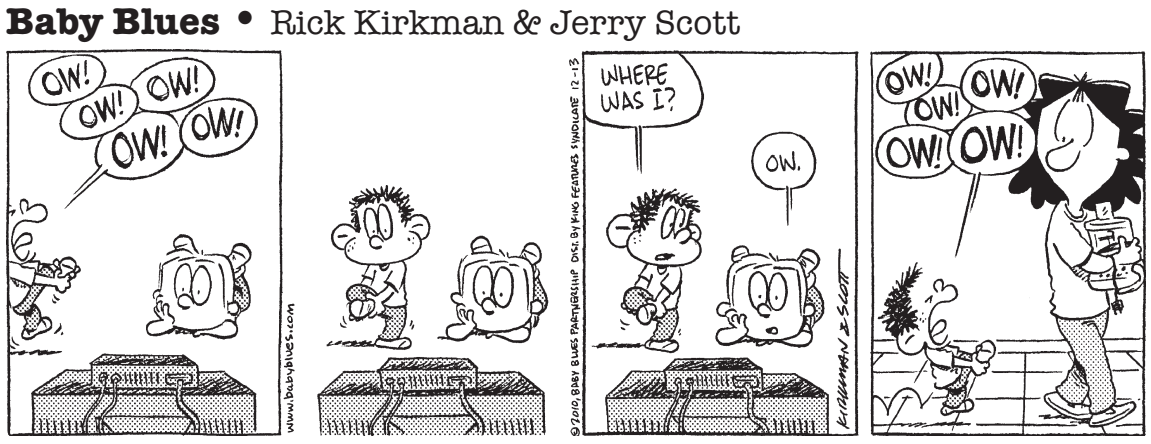
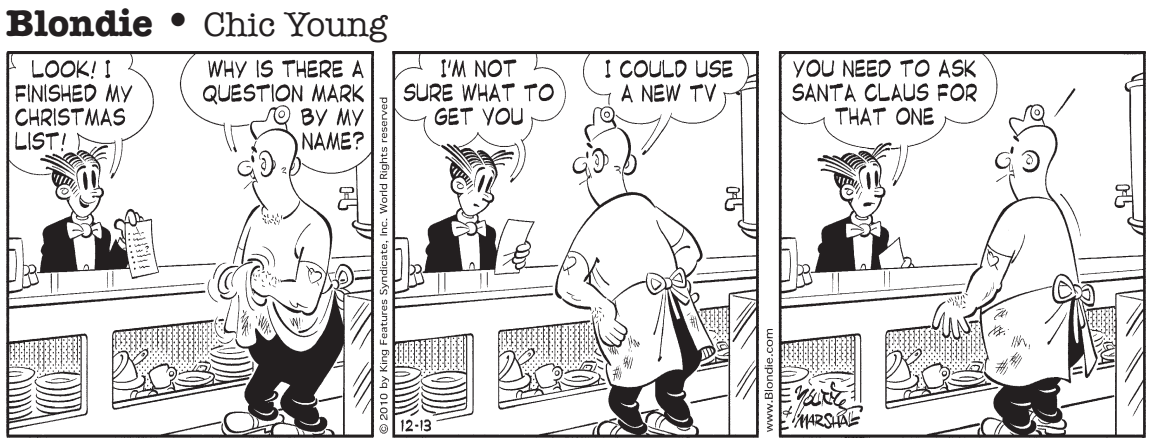
Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker

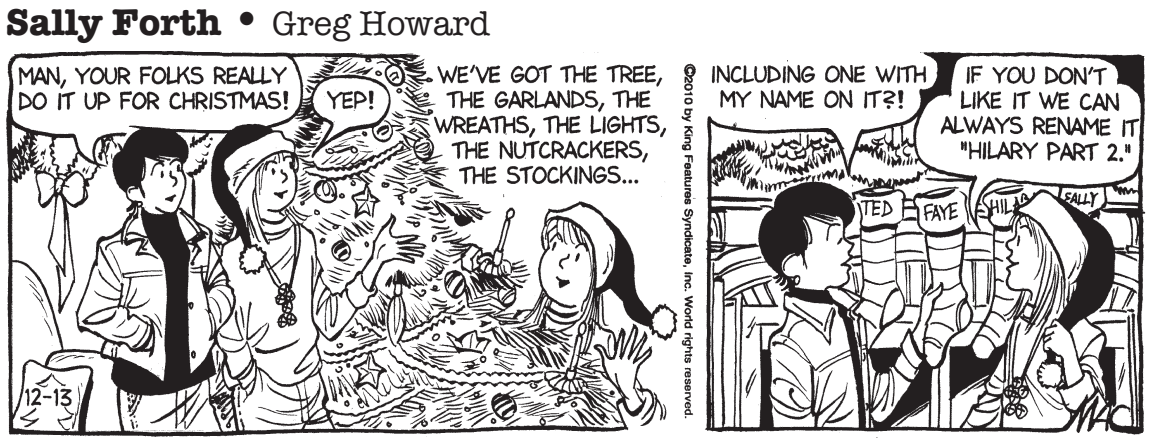
Blondie • Chic Young



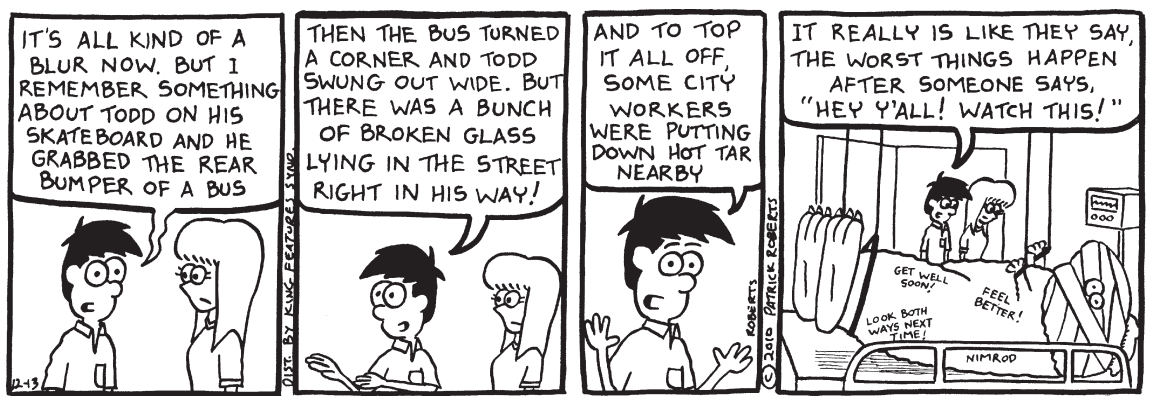
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne

Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters

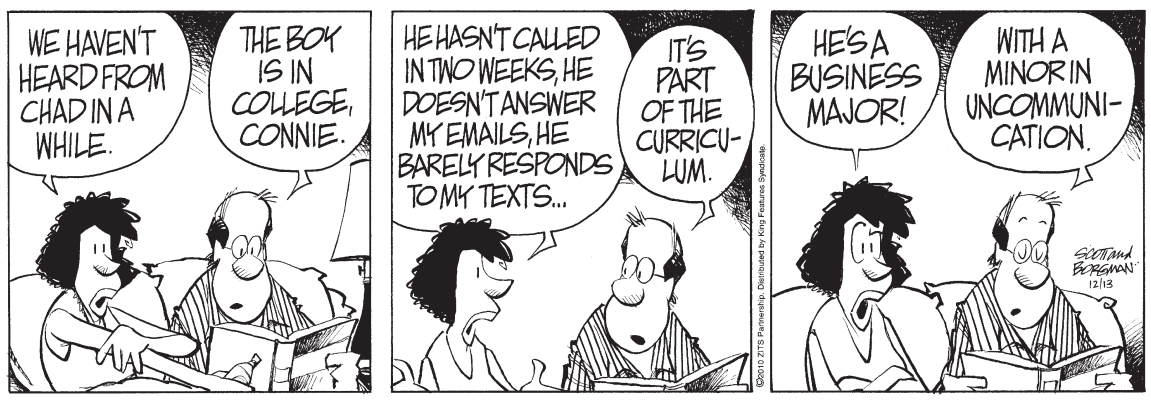
Sally Forth • Greg Howard

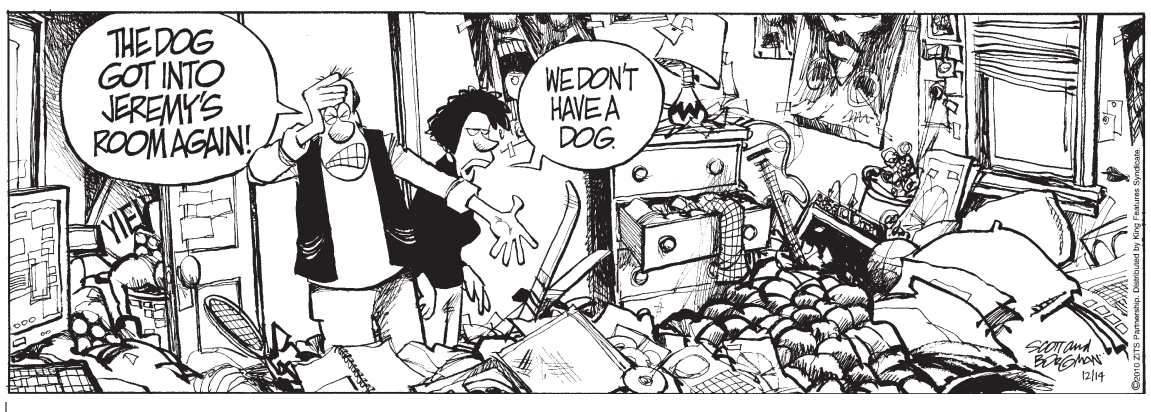


Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott





Dr. Joyce Brothers • Ask Dr. Brothers

New neighbors hard to handle

Dear Dr. Brothers: I recently retired from a state university where I enjoyed a long and fruitful career and had many friends. I decided to move to a different neighborhood from the on-campus one I had been living in. It is a whole new world to me, and I find it hard to adjust. While I am used to scientists, most people in my new area are artistic, free souls I find undisciplined. Maybe I am too old to do this. – C.M.

Dear C.M.: You must be feeling disoriented because of the culture shock of exploring a new side of yourself. But it should be interesting if you don't get discouraged and go back to your comfort zone, which will feel restricting after you have made the decision to keep growing in your personal life. As a scientist, perhaps you can look at this as a grand experiment in which you can influence the outcome. Whether your retirement is all you want it to be is largely in your hands, and that should make you a little more comfortable.

There's no reason you can't keep some of your old friends in the scientific and academic community as you move to explore another side of your brain. People tend to like others who are positive, flexible and interested in what they are doing and have to offer. You may want to concentrate on just a few individuals you have met and see what you can learn about them. Chances are, after a few rounds of coffee or concerts, or peeking into their workspaces and private spaces, you'll be ready to be more creative with your own work or hobbies. In any case, I think you should give it a try.

Dear Dr. Brothers: Don't laugh, but I am writing about my brother's duck. He actually gave his girlfriend a duck for her birthday. They saw it at a flea market. Now they are having a lot of fun taking care of it and letting it swim in the bathtub, etc. It is getting loud, and they are worried the landlord will find out and make them get rid of it. I say it is a dumb idea to have it anyway, and they are being selfish. Who is right? – J.Y.

Dear J.Y.: I think this is less a question of who is "right" than it is of why these people let their need for immediate gratification get the best of them. Baby ducks, and most other babies, are designed to be irresistible. It is so they will be cared for by their parents, or by surrogates, like young couples who want to play with them. This urge is hard to resist. I am sure they are having fun with the duck now, but as it loses its cute baby ways and becomes big, loud and messy, they may come down to earth and wonder what they have done and how they will cope.

On the other hand, they may try to fit it into their lifestyle. Visions of splashing, quacking and duck diapers may cross their minds and seem reasonable. But if they want to do the right thing, they will have to admit an apartment is not a habitat for a duck. It needs a place where it can have a pond, dig in the mud, and enjoy other ducks. Why not offer to help them find a farm that would take it. Then you could offer to help them pick out a more suitable pet for their living space. It might help avert the disaster ahead!

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Bridge • Steve Becker

North dealer.
Neither side vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ 7 6 4 2
♥ A K 7 3
♦ 5
♣ A K 6 5

WEST
♠ 3
♥ 9 8
♦ K Q J 10 7 6 2
♣ 10 4 3

EAST
♠ 5
♥ Q J 10 4
♦ 9 8 4 3
♣ Q J 9 2

SOUTH
♠ A K Q J 10 9 8
♥ 6 5 2
♦ A
♣ 8 7

The bidding:

North	East	South	West
1 ♣	Pass	1 ♠	3 ♦
3 ♠	Pass	4 NT	Pass
5 ♥	Pass	5 NT	Pass
6 ♥	Pass	7 ♠	

Opening lead — king of diamonds.

Famous Hand

At first glance, it might seem impossible to make seven spades on today's hand since declarer appears to have an unavoidable heart loser. But when the deal was played many years ago by Paul Allinger, he found the way to make all 13 tricks.

Allinger saw at once that his only chance to make the grand slam was by a squeeze. This required East to have the bulk of the missing hearts and clubs, a possibility made more likely by West's professed diamond length. So Allinger won the opening diamond lead and cashed five trumps to bring about this position:

North
♥ A K 7
♣ A K 6 5

West
♥ 9 8
♦ Q J
♣ 10 4 3

East
♥ Q J 10
♣ Q J 9 2

South
♠ 9 8
♥ 6 5 2
♣ 8 7

When he now led another trump and discarded a heart from dummy, East was squeezed. He could not afford to part with a heart, which would have allowed Allinger to cash the A-K and score the rest of the tricks.

So East discarded a club, whereupon Allinger cashed the A-K of clubs and ruffed a club. This established dummy's six as his 13th trick, and the slam was home.

Whenever declarer has all the tricks but one – and particularly when there is no apparent way to develop an additional trick – he should look for a squeeze. If one opponent has to guard two suits, he might not be able to withstand the pressure when declarer runs his winners.

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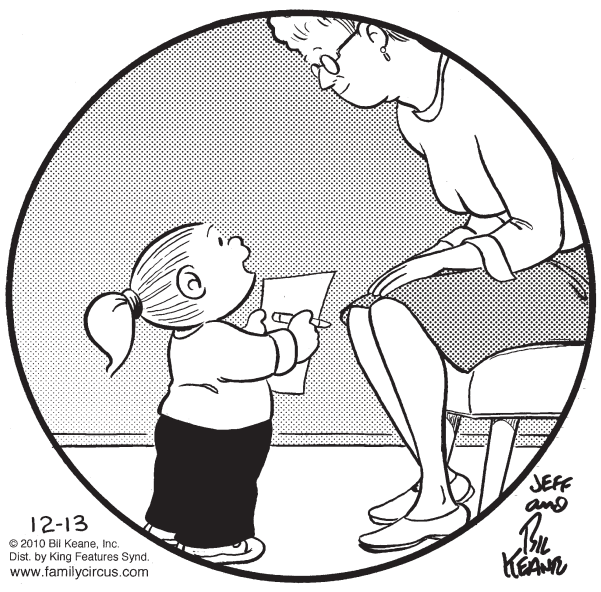
Family Circus • Bil Keane



"Would you like me to help you write a letter to Santa Claus, Grandma?"

Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★ 12/13

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.

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

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 12/10

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Cryptoquip

HFV BRE IRTAVG HN MVBTH FTD ZFRMWV ZRMG URPBVEH INM DN ANEW HFRH HFV ZNBUREP GTD-ZMVGTHVG FTB.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: AN AMERICAN INSURANCE CORPORATION'S LIMA-BASED SUBSIDIARY SHOULD REALLY BE NAMED PERU-DENTIAL.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: H equals T

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Reveille's opposite
5 Sindbad's bird
8 Reach by telephone
12 Urban disturbance
13 Altar affirmative
14 Lotion additive
15 Smell
16 MySpace alternative
18 Import duty
20 Tweaks
21 Automaking pioneer
23 Individual
24 King, queen or jack
28 Pinnacle
31 Listener
32 Beatles' "— Fine"
34 Anger
35 Caprice
37 Hockey goalie's protection
39 Bill
41 Roman 1,052
42 In the same place (Lat.)
45 "Gilligan's —"
49 Lying prone
51 Stead
52 Woman in Germany
53 That woman
54 Paradise
55 Shrill bark
56 Turf
57 Cincinnati team

DOWN
1 Jog
2 Verdi opera
3 Indigent
4 Bitter discord
5 Rabble
6 Harem room
7 Imogene of old TV
8 Poolside hut
9 Baldness
10 Swag
11 Albanian money
17 Tokyo's old name
19 Points of convergence
22 Night vision?
24 A mere handful
25 "That feels so-o-o good"
26 Fault-finding
27 Just said no
29 Wife's address
30 "A mouse!"
33 Hawaiian garlands
36 Improvised
38 "King of the Road" singer Roger
40 Foundation
42 Uncertain
43 Exposed
44 Rolling stone's lack
46 Staffer
47 Require
48 Presses for payment
50 Personal question?

Solution time: 27 mins.

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

Saturday's answer 12-13

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			