

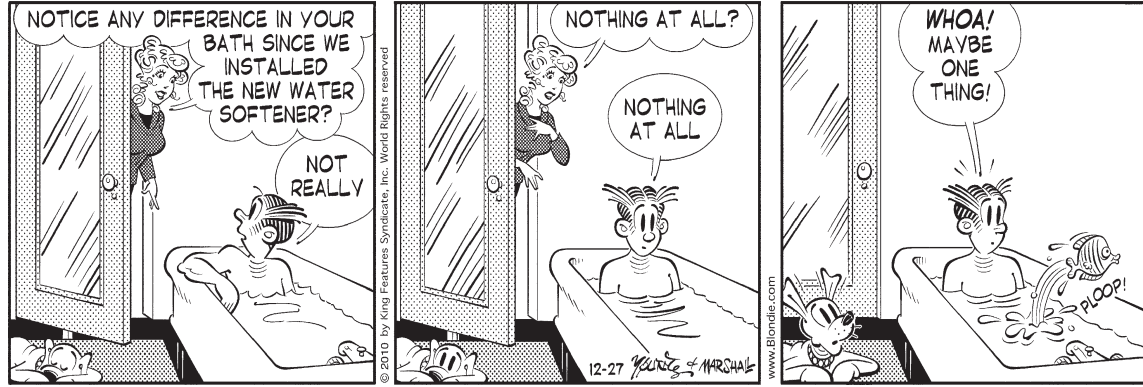
**Baby Blues** • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



**Beetle Bailey** • Mort Walker



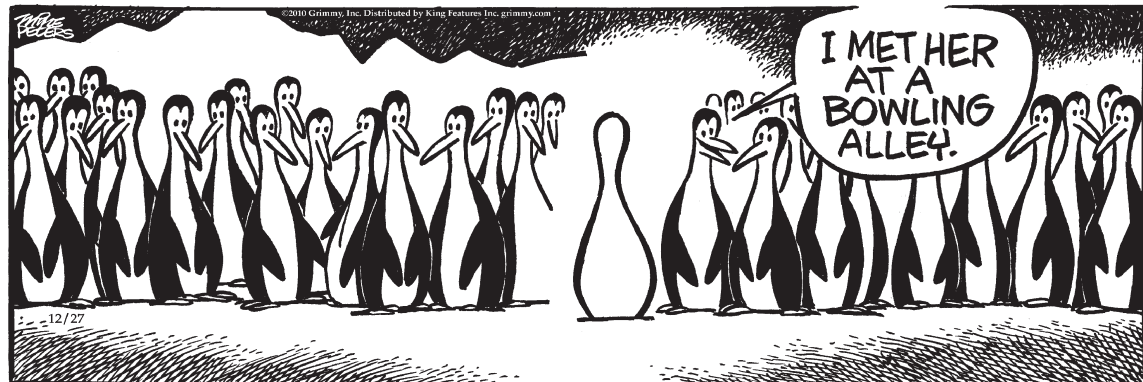
**Blondie** • Chic Young



**Hagar the Horrible** • Chris Browne



**Mother Goose and Grimm** • Mike Peters



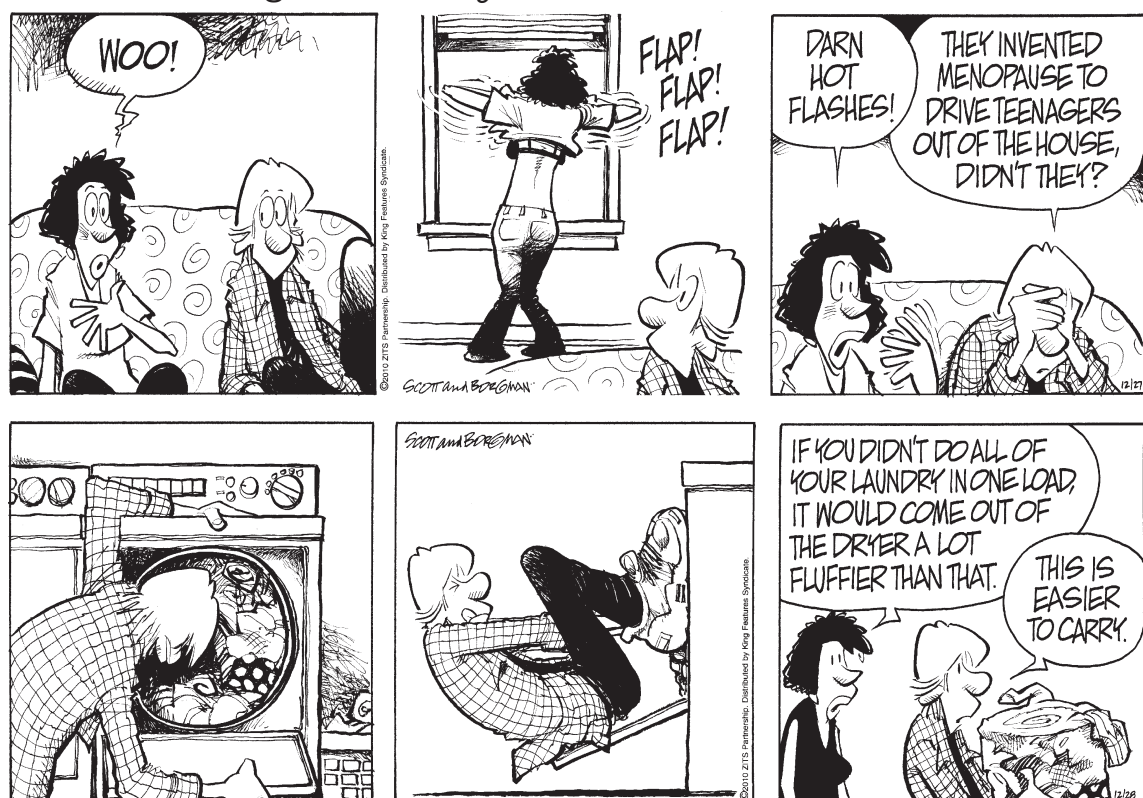
**Sally Forth** • Greg Howard



**Todd the Dinosaur** • Patrick Roberts



**Zits** • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



**Dr. Joyce Brothers**

• Ask Dr. Brothers

**Couple argues about spending**

Dear Dr. Brothers: I have a hard time dealing with my wife's spending. We have gone over the budget so many times I am blue in the face. She came to the marriage with about \$20,000 in credit-card debt, which I paid as a wedding present. Now she's running up bills again, even though I lecture her. I can't afford to bail her out again. She says she only "needs a few things." - B.R.

Dear B.R.: I know you must be frustrated after your efforts to get your wife on track. It could be she is looking to you to bail her out again. You came to her rescue the first time and she suffered no consequences. So, despite lectures, she doesn't take you seriously. She probably puts you in the same bag as an annoying teacher who says study harder while she is getting papers written by a cute boy. She may have a shopping problem, but by paying her debts, you set yourself up to be an enabler. So, take a new tack.

I suggest you go to a financial planner to help you set up a budget including paying off credit cards monthly. Have your wife participate so she can see where the money comes from and where it goes. If necessary, make up envelopes and put cash in them until she gets the idea. This may seem silly, but you have to treat her as though she doesn't get it, because she doesn't. Part of your planning should include setting up mutual goals for saved money. Give her a stake in things.

Dear Dr. Brothers: I am the mother of an adorable 2-year-old girl. In the past few months, Mandy is working hard to have fun - she makes a mess and I spend my day cleaning up after her. She is also wanting to help Mommy in the kitchen. While there are things she can do, the extra work gives me a headache. I am the neat type, and this mess is driving me crazy. - M.E.

Dear M.E.: Because your child is only 2, she can't be expected to be neat - although I have seen 2-year-olds who are almost comically fastidious. You probably also haven't encountered the 2-year-old whose frustration has boiled over into tantrums when she can't accomplish all she has in her head. She probably will take a cue from Mommy when it comes to keeping her room neat and her things picked up; she can help with these chores now, just as she can learn the fun stuff.

But please don't put too much emphasis on neatness in the next few years. While she should be able to clean up when it's time to go to school, she should be able to be a preschooler who is exploring the world and using creativity to make sense of things. If you squelch that in favor of a clean kitchen, I think you could be disappointed in yourself in the end. So try to adjust to your daughter's enthusiasm. If necessary, enlist a young "mother's helper" to clean up the mess! Enjoy your child, and let her get her hands dirty. You will be setting the stage for the next years, when you can say you truly had fun together. You will learn to be less uptight, and your child will grow to be herself.

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**Family Circus** • Bil Keane



"Mommy! Can we start being naughty again or do we still need to be nice?"

**Conceptis Sudoku** • Dave Green

Difficulty Level ★

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

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**

MKS PNKGS SK JOXSDM SK  
NPVLOMA KV UDKZOMA, SWD  
UPVLDS KZMDV CKXSDQ SWD  
XOAM "MK CDSX PJKGQ."

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A COLORFUL, CHATTY BIRD SAYS SOMETHING SATIRICAL, I GUESS THAT MIGHT BE A PARROTY PARODY.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: S equals T

**Crossword** • Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS  
1 Past fabric named for an Indian city  
4 Talked X-ratedly?  
9 Dine  
12 Charged bit  
13 Playful prank  
14 Id counterpart  
15 Babysit, e.g.  
17 Antlered animal  
18 Sprite  
19 Collie of film and TV  
21 Corn bit  
24 Old portico  
25 Columbus sch.  
26 New-comer to society  
28 Attach  
31 Skillets  
33 Bribe  
35 Molecule part  
36 Sontag or Sarandon  
38 Arctic bird  
40 Greek vowel  
41 War god

43 Cotton mouley roulette bet  
45 Somewhat unfriendly  
47 Opposite of post-illustrations  
49 Resembled, as one's parent  
54 Golf prop  
55 Circle the earth  
56 United  
57 That girl  
58 Horseman's handful

59 Even-money  
60 Couch  
61 Keystone  
62 Birthright barter  
63 Chases  
64 Featherly accessory  
65 Yoko of music  
66 Climbed  
67 Brunch  
68 Entree  
69 Make up your mind  
70 Staggerers  
71 Mistakes in print  
72 Cares for fruit  
73 Jab  
74 Barbie's friend  
75 Trolley  
76 Pure gold  
77 Jersey  
78 3, on the phone  
79 Inauguration recitation  
80 Japanese sash  
81 Excessively  
82 Conclusion  
83 Even-money roulette bet

Saturday's answer 12-27

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
12			13						14		
15			16						17		
21	22	23				24					
25			26	27		28			29	30	
31			32		33		34		35		
36			37		38		39		40		
45	46			42		43		44			
48				49		50			51	52	53
54											56
57						58					59