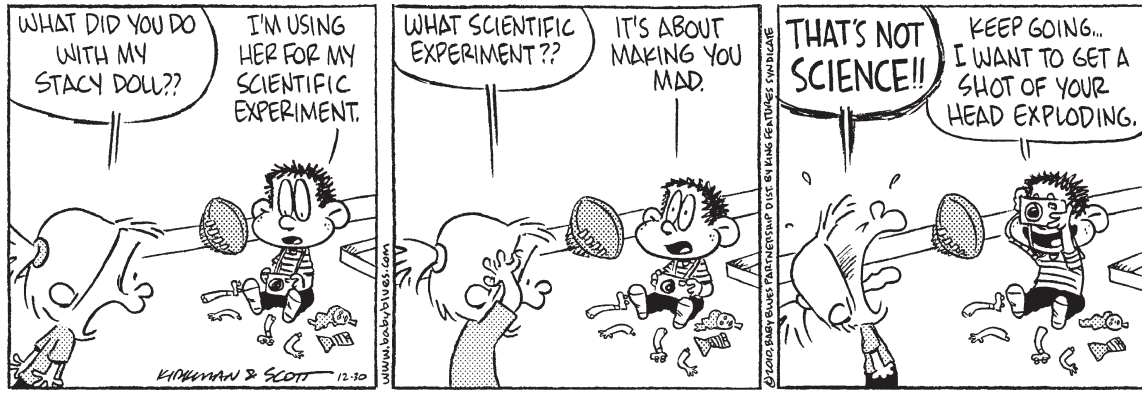
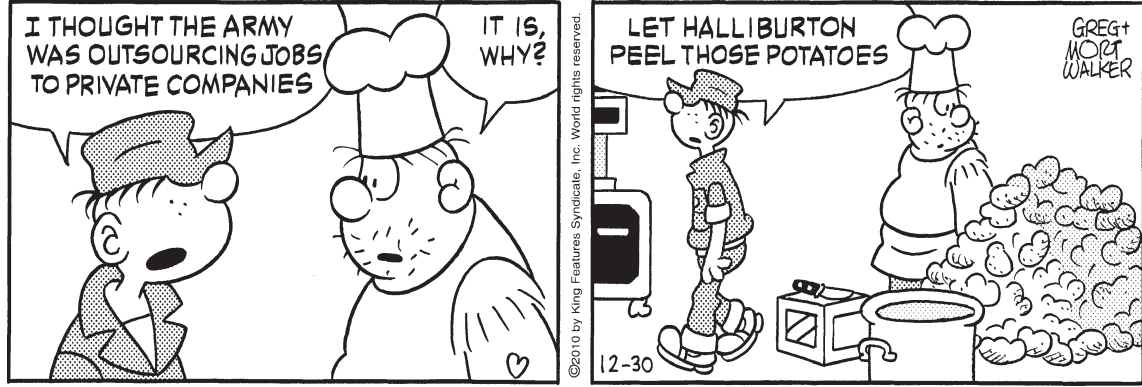


**Baby Blues** • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



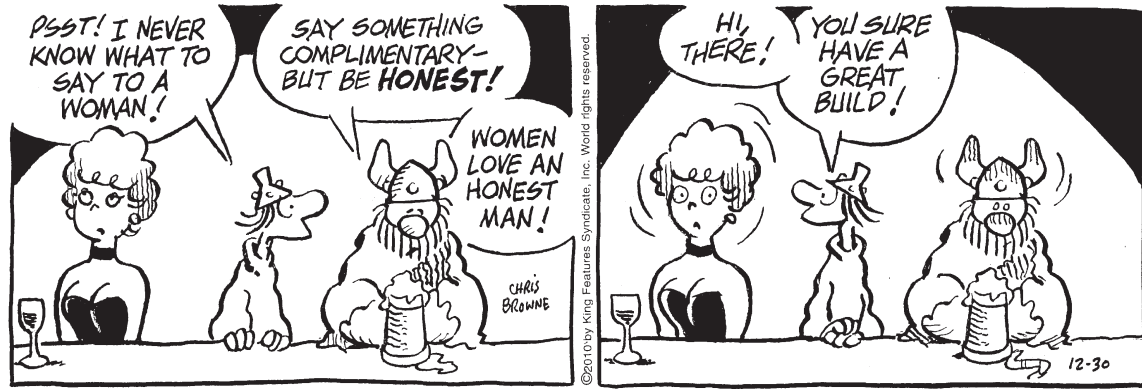
**Beetle Bailey** • Mort Walker



**Blondie** • Chic Young



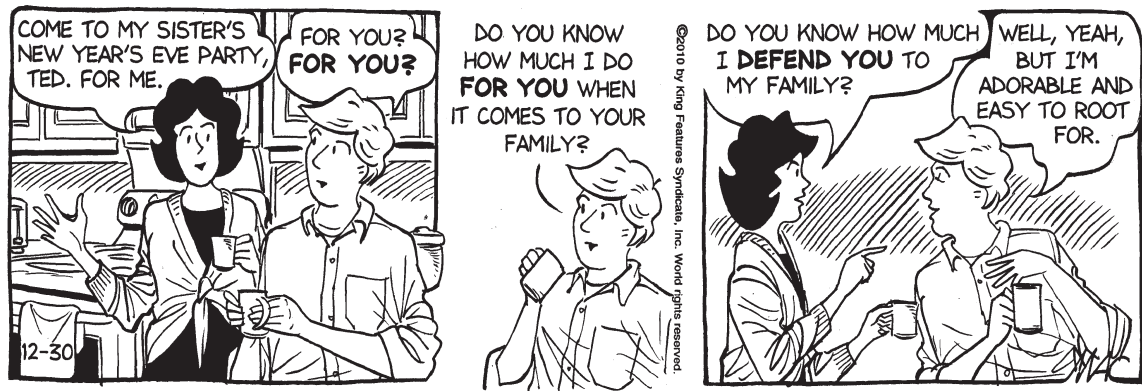
**Hagar the Horrible** • Chris Browne



**Mother Goose and Grimm** • Mike Peters



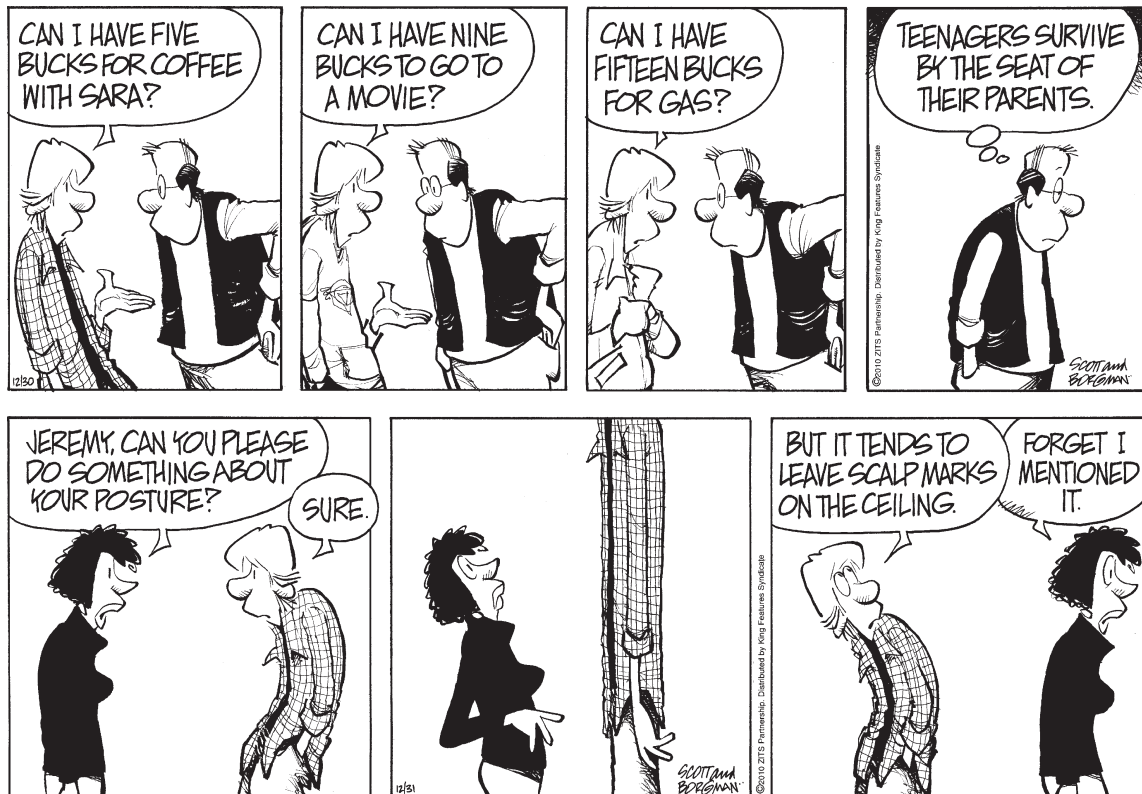
**Sally Forth** • Greg Howard



**Todd the Dinosaur** • Patrick Roberts



**Zits** • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



**Dr. Joyce Brothers**

• Ask Dr. Brothers

**Mother has split dad and children**

**Dear Dr. Brothers:** My brother is going through a horrible time, and his wife is to blame. In fact, she has managed to tear apart two families and guarantee that her own kids will have awful memories of their childhood. She wants a divorce so she can marry another guy, and she has managed to turn the kids against their dad, who really loves them. How can I help with this situation, other than try to persuade her to stop? — L.D.

**Dear L.D.:** It is a difficult position for you: wanting to help yet knowing it probably will not be a happy outcome as long as a contested divorce and alienation are part of it. But you could try the move you just mentioned: Invite the woman to lunch and let her know you care about the kids. Without getting into the merits of her new boyfriend, let her know your brother's children are a priority for you, and you'd like them to have a good relationship with their dad, because that will be best for their future happiness.

If she answers with a litany of her husband's sins, there's no point in arguing. But if she shows any flexibility, try to offer your help to the kids as a loving relative who wants to help heal the situation. Even if her goal seems to be to alienate her kids from your brother in order to gain custody, don't give up. Try to establish a regular time to be with the children and remind them how much their dad loves them, without denigrating their mother. You might raise the possibility of counseling as well. Just keep that foot in the door.

**Dear Dr. Brothers:** I have moved to the South for job purposes, and my wife is adjusting better than I am. I keep thinking we may be reassigned to New England, so I don't want to get too settled here. Besides, I am more reserved and don't really try to make friends the way she does. This is starting to bother her, and we even had a fight about whether we should start saying "y'all," like the locals do. She seems to do it naturally. I don't do it at all. — S.C.

**Dear S.C.:** I am sorry your perceived instability is holding you back from making a real home in your new location. I totally understand how disconcerting it can be to have everything up in the air — yet, some people move around every few years and find they are able to adjust easily. Leaving behind friends in each place you live — people you can continue to know throughout life — may be the best way to overcome the problems of mobility. If you try to be friendly and absorb the culture, you will enjoy everything more.

As far as taking up the local lingo, it shouldn't be forced. Let yourself be open and it will happen, which may be why it hasn't for you but has for your wife. You may be interested in a study done by researchers from the University of Texas and reported in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. They observed language used by college students and found language-style matching, or the ability to imitate others' language usage within a few seconds of beginning a conversation. Your wife has been listening to her neighbors, and that allows her to dive in.

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**Bridge** • Steve Becker

East dealer. Both sides vulnerable.

**NORTH**  
 ♠ A 7  
 ♥ A 9 6  
 ♦ A K J 8 5 2  
 ♣ A 8

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

**EAST**  
 ♠ —  
 ♥ J 7 4  
 ♦ Q 10 9 6 3  
 ♣ K 10 7 5 2

**SOUTH**  
 ♠ K Q J 10 9 5 3 2  
 ♥ 8 5 3  
 ♦ —  
 ♣ J 4

The bidding:  
 East Pass South 4♠ West Pass North 7♠  
 Opening lead — king of hearts.

**Born of Despair**

Desperate circumstances require desperate remedies.

For an extreme example, consider this deal from a team-of-four match where at both tables the final contract was seven spades, and West led the king of hearts.

At the first table, declarer won with the ace and, with only 12 top tricks in sight, realized that his 13th trick would have to come from diamonds. He therefore ruffed a low diamond at trick two, hoping the diamonds would prove to be divided 4-3 or, failing that, that either opponent started with the singleton or doubleton queen.

South next led a trump to the ace and ruffed another low diamond. After drawing trumps, he crossed to dummy with a club and tried to run the diamonds. Unfortunately, East turned out to have started with five to the queen, so South went down one.

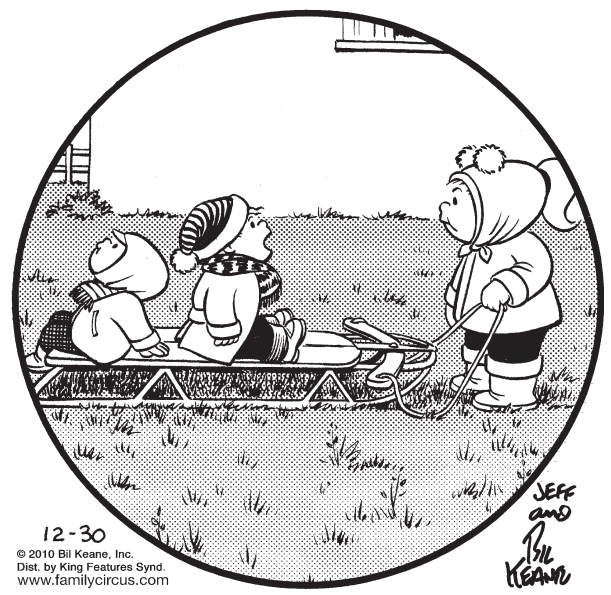
The declarer at the second table, upon winning the heart lead, first cashed the A-K of diamonds and then ruffed a diamond high. When West showed out on the third diamond, South realized he could no longer establish the diamonds with normal play since he was short one entry to dummy.

So at trick five, he led a low trump and, after West followed low, finessed dummy's seven! When the finesse succeeded, South was home. He ruffed another diamond high, led a trump to the ace and ruffed the fifth round of diamonds, finally felling East's queen. After drawing West's last trump, declarer then played a club to dummy's ace and cashed the jack of diamonds to make the grand slam.

Desperate circumstances require desperate remedies!

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**Family Circus** • Bil Keane



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**Conceptis Sudoku** • Dave Green

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

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.

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

**Cryptoquip**

I Q A W D G V Q I Q I G V D

T D K Z D W G G Q U D Z E K I Q A Y Q A Y

H A H K Q H, Q Y B D I I Q G ' I

H A E T D K H - G B A D U E U D A G.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN MOLES DWELL IN MANHATTAN AND BROOKLYN, I ASSUME THEY LIKE MAKING BURROWS IN BOROUGHS.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: G equals T

**Crossword** • Eugene Sheffer

- |                                      |                           |                               |                                    |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>ACROSS</b>                        | <b>38</b> —               | <b>58</b> Changed color       | <b>19</b> Carl Fredrickson's story |
| <b>1</b> Tea time creation           | <b>39</b> Confucian path  | <b>2</b> Reed instrument      | <b>21</b> Ultra-modernist          |
| <b>8</b> Prior nights                | <b>40</b> U-Haul rental   | <b>3</b> Arm bone             | <b>24</b> Away from ENE            |
| <b>12</b> Competent                  | <b>42</b> Potpourri pouch | <b>4</b> Jamaican music style | <b>25</b> "— Town"                 |
| <b>13</b> Indivisible                | <b>45</b> Sign            | <b>5</b> Fit together neatly  | <b>28</b> B-F link                 |
| <b>14</b> Infamous lyre player       | <b>49</b> Turkish VIP     | <b>6</b> Literary collection  | <b>29</b> Snazzy Chevy             |
| <b>15</b> Time-consuming             | <b>50</b> Still           | <b>7</b> Apportion            | <b>30</b> Fawn's mom               |
| <b>16</b> Cistern                    | <b>52</b> One of HOMES    | <b>8</b> Nail polish          | <b>31</b> Mess up                  |
| <b>17</b> On                         | <b>53</b> Lascivious look | <b>9</b> Old soldiers         | <b>32</b> Illiterate               |
| <b>18</b> About three miles          | <b>54</b> Favorite city   | <b>10</b> Cupid's alias       | <b>41</b> Indefinite article       |
| <b>20</b> Interlace                  | <b>55</b> Taj Mahal       | <b>11</b> Former frosh        | <b>42</b> Mall attraction          |
| <b>22</b> Suitable                   | <b>56</b> Icelandic epic  |                               | <b>43</b> On in years              |
| <b>24</b> Heard the alarm clock      | <b>57</b> — out a living  |                               | <b>44</b> Category                 |
| <b>27</b> Expression of praise       |                           |                               | <b>46</b> Wild revelry             |
| <b>32</b> Grand Cherokee, e.g.       |                           |                               | <b>47</b> Old Italian money        |
| <b>33</b> Altar affirmative          |                           |                               | <b>48</b> Graphite, so to speak    |
| <b>34</b> Neither partner            |                           |                               | <b>51</b> "A mouse!"               |
| <b>35</b> He may be hard to pin down |                           |                               |                                    |

Solution time: 25 mins.

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

Yesterday's answer 12-30

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		