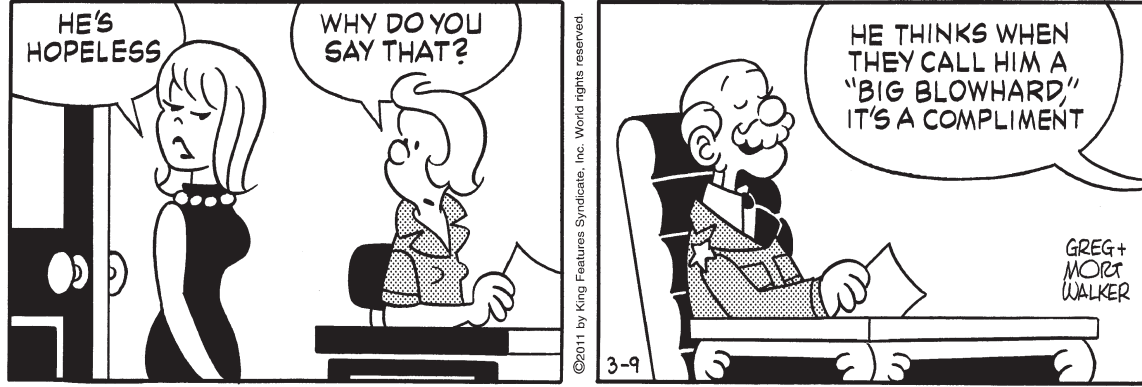


Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



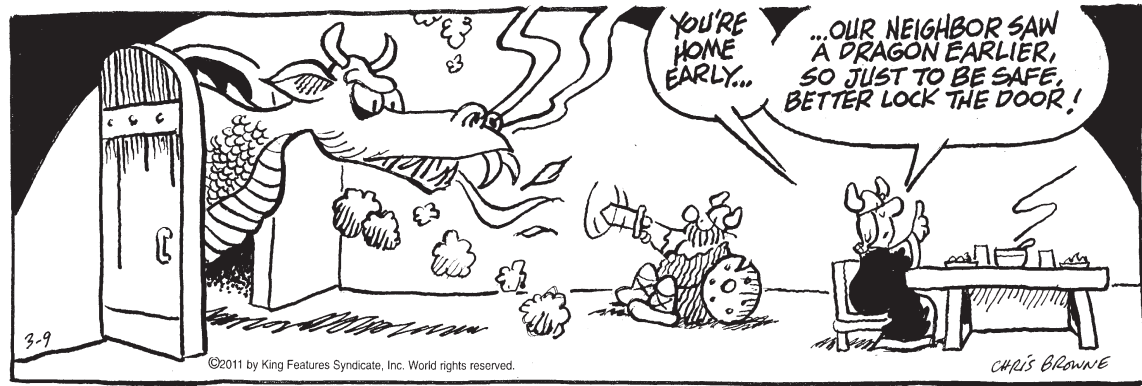
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



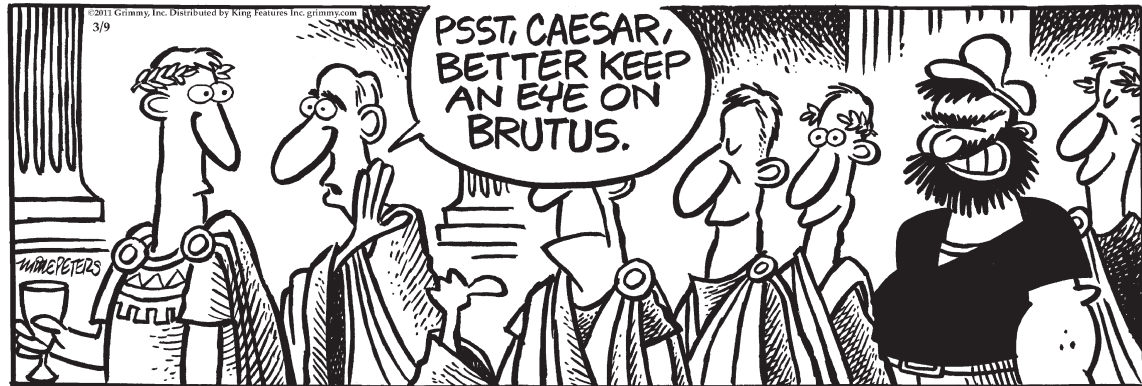
Blondie • Chic Young



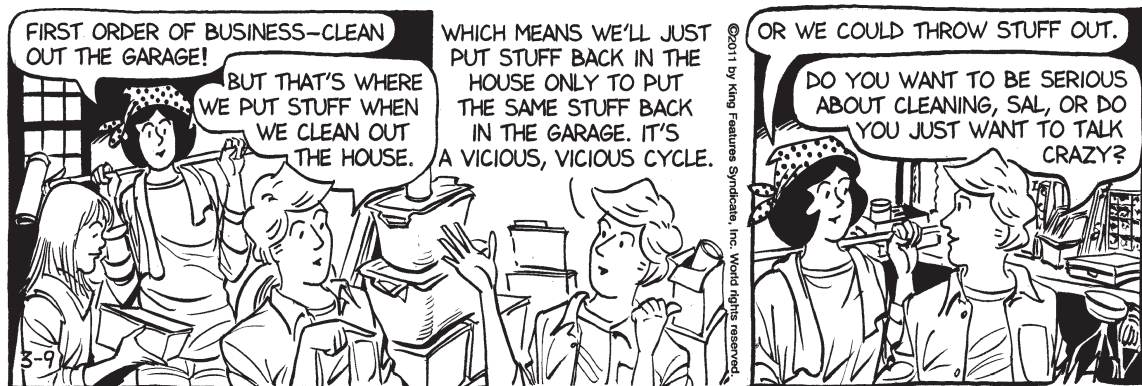
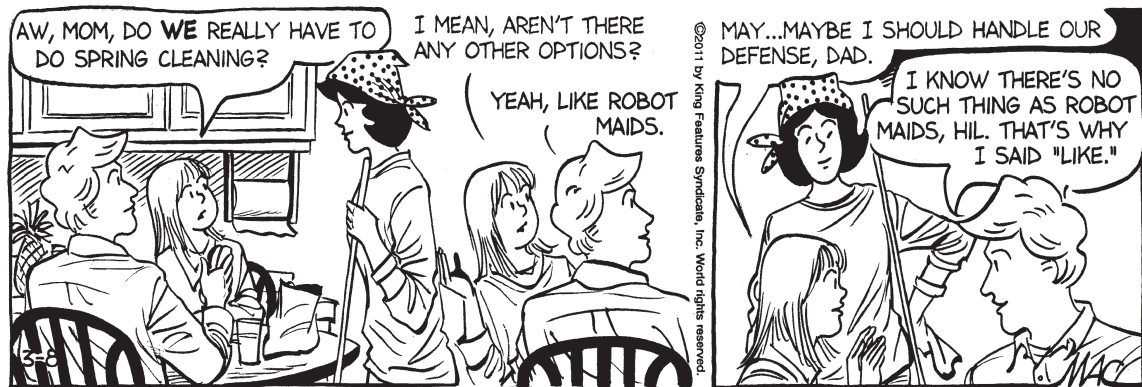
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



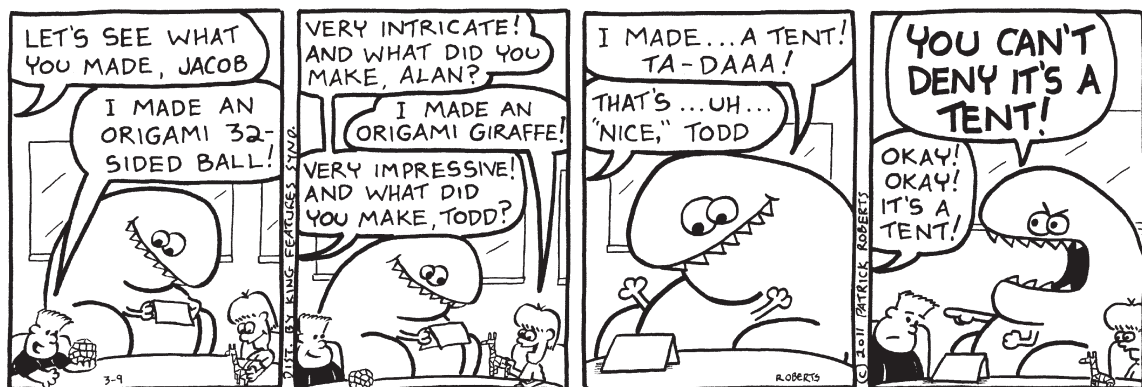
Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Heloise

• Hints from Heloise

Big bags keep frozen meat neat

Good morning, Heloise: I often buy MEAT in a quantity that will provide five or six meals. I bring it home, separate, vacuum-seal, label and store it in the freezer.

Pretty soon, I had no idea what meat I had in there or where. So I bought a box of those great big plastic bags. I labeled one "beef," one "chicken" and the other "misc.," like pork, fish, ham, etc.

When I am wondering what kind of meat to have for dinner, I just pull out one of those bags, see what looks good, and also see if I am getting low on a particular "cut" and need to buy more.

It is so simple, and I am not losing an expensive filet mignon under the frozen broccoli because I didn't remember that it was there! — Jeanne from California

SEND A GREAT HINT TO:

Heloise
P.O. Box 795000
San Antonio, TX 78279-5000
Fax: 210-HELOISE
E-mail: Heloise(at)Heloise.com

CLEANING CUPBOARDS

Dear Heloise: It is that time again when I get the urge to clean my kitchen cupboards. There are hard-to-reach places, so I bought a toilet brush (the kind that has a rough scrubber). I take a rag, wet it just enough to wrap around the brush, and I can clean many places in and around my cupboards. — Pat Zoccali, Warren, Ohio

As long as the brush is clearly marked for kitchen use only! — Heloise

BAKING MUFFINS

Dear Heloise: When baking muffins, I use the paper cups. I find that placing the paper cups on my countertop to fill them with batter is easier since they are open wider than when in the muffin pans. I then place the filled liners into the muffin pan and bake. Sure beats the times I have spilled some of the batter on the pan, and it does make cleanup easier. — K.D. in Texas

We tested your hint in the office. The cups didn't seem to open much wider; however, it did cut down on the mess of spilling it on the muffin pan. Another hint? Use a gravy ladle to make the process easier. — Heloise

SLOW COOKERS

Dear Heloise: The other day you had a number of hints regarding the use of slow cookers. The slow-cooker liners are a huge help in cleaning up, but I would forget to use them! My solution is to store the box of liners in the slow cooker when not in use! Works every time! — A Reader, via e-mail

TEA TIP

Dear Heloise: I love tea — hot and cold! I have a variety of flavors and types of tea. I like keeping them in ceramic canisters, which look nicer than boxes and tins, but it's difficult to tell what is in which canister. I write on them in dry-erase marker — the contents are evident at a glance, and they are easy to change! — Kim Otte in New Market, Ala.

Love this simple hint that makes life and tea-time a little easier. Here's a cup of tea to you! — Heloise

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Bridge • Steve Becker

East defense.
Both sides vulnerable.
NORTH
♥K 10 5
♦Q 9 8 2
♣K
♠K Q J 9 6
WEST
♥J 8 4 2
♦6 3
♣J 7 6 5 3
♠5 2
EAST
♥A Q 7
♦5
♣A Q 10 8 4 2
♠A 10 3
SOUTH
♥9 6 3
♦A K J 10 7 4
♣9
♠8 7 4
The bidding:
East 1♦ South 2♥ West Pass North 4♥
Opening lead — five of diamonds.

Active Defense

In many deals, the best method of defense is to play possum and simply wait to collect the tricks declarer must inevitably lose. This is called passive defense.

In other deals, it is necessary to be more aggressive in order to establish your side's tricks before declarer can establish his. These deals require active defense.

There is no hard-and-fast rule that tells you when to adopt one type of defense or the other. Each deal has its own particular set of circumstances, with the bidding, the dummy, the early play and many other considerations determining which form of defense to adopt. In the final analysis, good judgment is the critical factor.

Assume you're East in today's deal, defending against four hearts. West leads a diamond, which you win with the ace. What should you return?

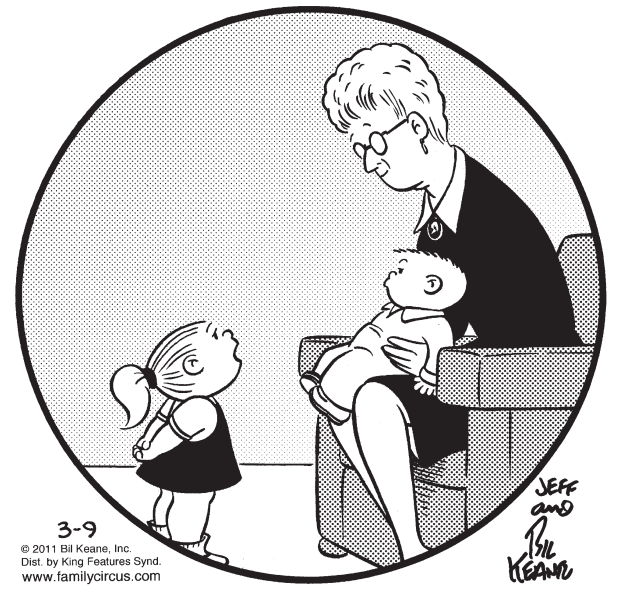
If you opt for the passive approach, you lead a trump. This does not turn out well after declarer wins, draws trumps and forces out your ace of clubs. He loses only a spade, a diamond and a club, and so makes the contract.

But if you lead a spade at trick two — either a low one or the ace followed by another spade — you beat the contract, ultimately scoring two spades, a diamond and a club.

For this method of defense to succeed, declarer must have at least three spades and your partner must have the jack, which is surely not an impossibility. If he doesn't have it, you're fighting a losing cause whatever you do, and your active defense will have cost you nothing.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



“Grandma, have we known each other for a long time?”

Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★★ 3/09

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.

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

Cryptoquip

TAPO ZUJRY UO E JESWP
DEKGGZGK KAGOPYP GYJEOF
WPH FSNOR, FU QUN
YNDDUYP HAPQ HEGTEO UO?

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: SINCE THEY DIDN'T UPHOLD THE VARIOUS VOWS THEY MADE, WOULD YOU SAY THEY VACATED THE PROMISES?

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: U equals O

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

- Step that may be "faux"
- J. Edgar Hoover's org.
- Harbor
- Factories
- Some Japanese-Americans
- Eyes on a peacock's tail
- No different
- Firma-ment
- Arose
- Bronze
- "Ask

DOWN

- Attraction
- Neighbor-hood
- Pullover shirts
- Pod occupant
- Definitively
- Youngster
- Grown-up nit
- "Ham-merin' Hank" of baseball
- Muskrat cousin
- Chaps
- Greek vowel
- 25 St. Louis
- 15 Type measures
- 19 Speed-ometer stat
- 20 Clear the tables
- 21 Starter on a really old car
- 22 Gum arabic
- 23 Instructor, for short
- 24 Set free, as from
- 25 Latin 101 word
- 26 Bygone
- 28 Chaplain
- 29 Satirical news-paper, with "The"
- 30 Abdul or Zahn
- 31 Other-wise
- 32 Brewery output
- 34 Cheese choice
- 35 Source

Solution time: 21 mins.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| W | E | B | B | D | E | B | A | L | A | R | | |
| O | R | A | L | O | R | E | R | A | N | I | | |
| O | N | T | O | W | R | E | S | T | I | N | G | |
| S | E | H | O | R | N | S | T | I | L | E | | |
| | | | M | A | T | A | Y | E | A | | | |
| P | R | E | S | T | I | G | E | R | A | R | E | |
| R | E | X | A | M | O | V | E | L | E | W | | |
| E | P | I | C | E | G | E | S | T | I | V | E | |
| | | | S | H | H | O | N | E | R | | | |
| A | T | T | A | I | N | I | L | E | X | E | S | |
| Q | U | E | S | T | I | O | N | | B | E | T | A |
| U | R | N | S | | G | A | G | | E | N | O | S |
| A | N | T | E | | H | R | S | | K | A | N | S |

