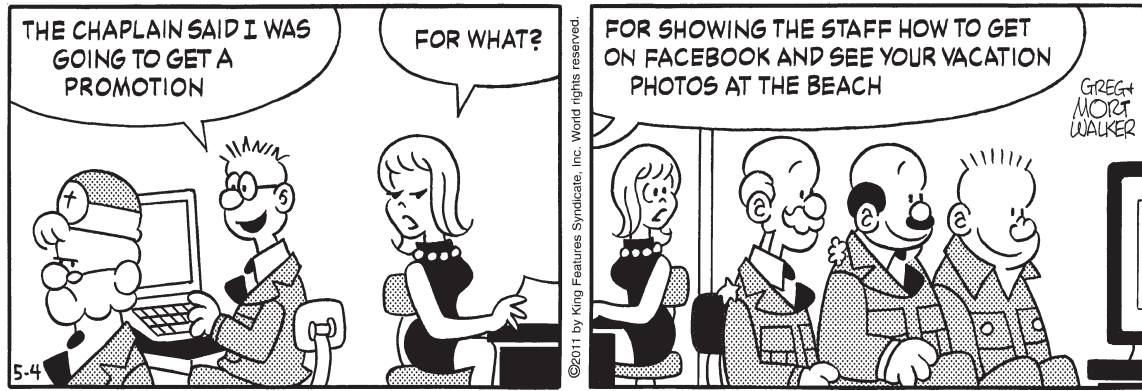


**Baby Blues** • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



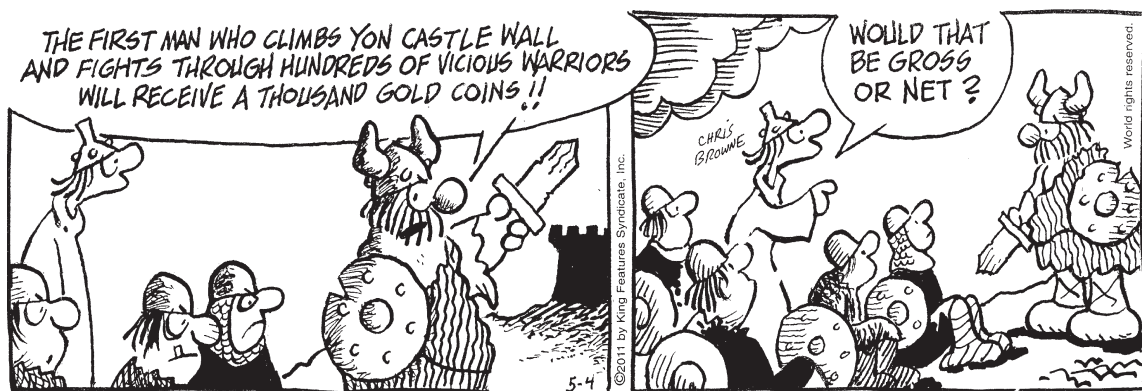
**Beetle Bailey** • Mort Walker



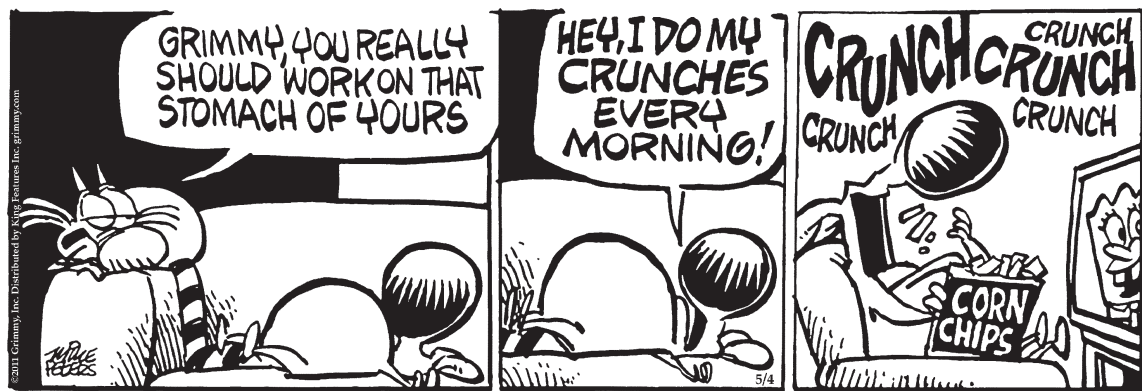
**Blondie** • Chic Young



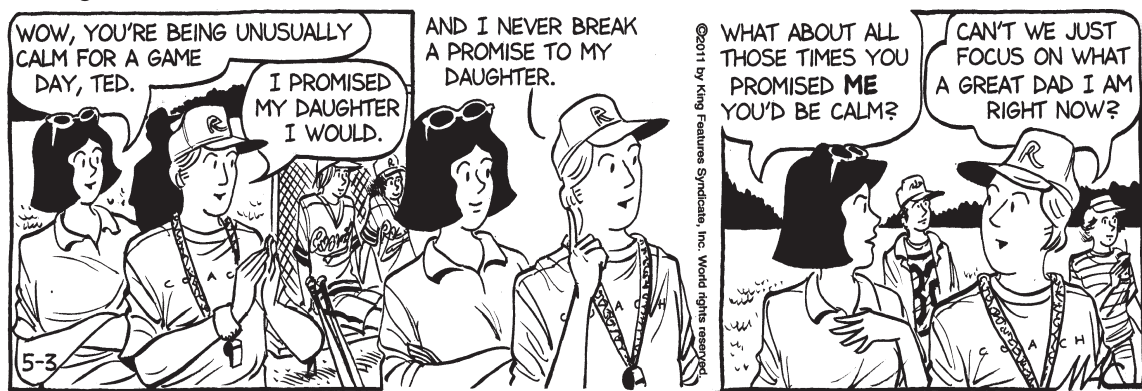
**Hagar the Horrible** • Chris Browne



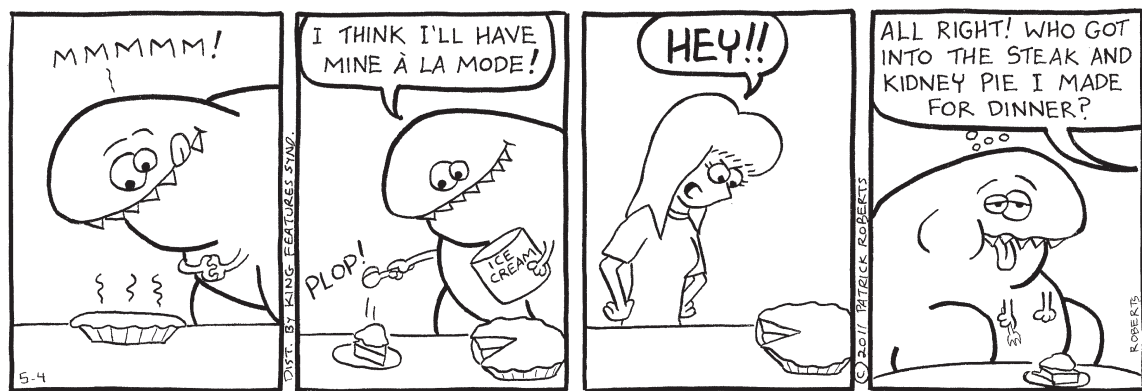
**Mother Goose and Grimm** • Mike Peters



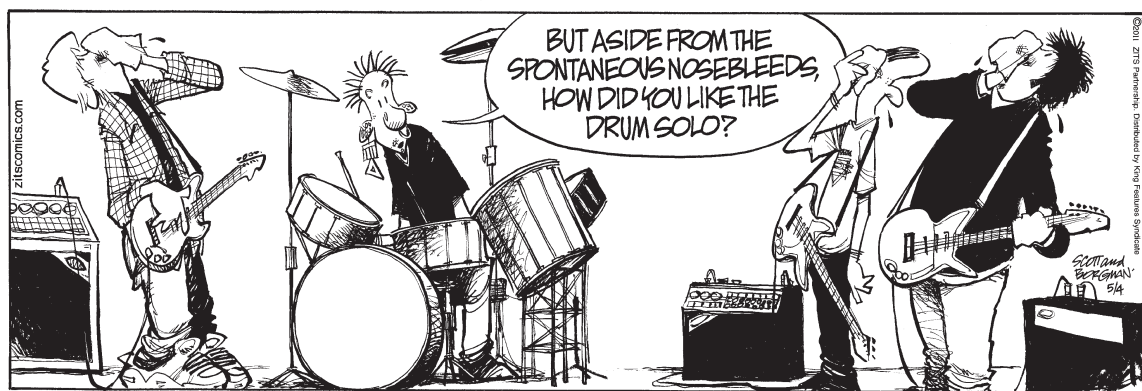
**Sally Forth** • Greg Howard



**Todd the Dinosaur** • Patrick Roberts



**Zits** • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



**Heloise**

• Hints from Heloise

**Leftovers taste like fresh made**

Dear Heloise: My husband makes PANCAKES AND WAFFLES for the household. We always have a few left over. I put them in a freezer bag, and when heating them again, he puts them on a plate on top of a dampened paper towel and covers it with another one before putting them in the microwave. They taste as if he just made them. — Darlene Minor, New Braunfels, Texas

Love this hint, and why not make up a double batch and freeze? Cook once, eat twice. — Heloise

**SEND A GREAT HINT TO:**

Heloise  
P.O. Box 795000  
San Antonio, TX 78279-5000  
Email: Heloise(at)Heloise.com

**OATMEAL HINT**

Dear Heloise: I love having oatmeal for breakfast and occasionally for supper, but I get tired of the same flavor, and those little packets are expensive.

I take several nuts, put them in a food processor and grind them into powder, then add to the serving. The other flavorings I use are vanilla extract and any you find in the grocery store. I also use these liquid flavorings in my cold or hot tea. Sure beats the extra expense of paying for the flavored tea bags. — William V. Bean, via email

**EASY FLIP**

Dear Heloise: A tip for those who make cakes in angel-food or ridged ring pans: I cut a hole in the center of a paper plate and put it on the top of my cooled, baked cake over the tube in the center, and then turn the cake over. This gives you a base to hold to turn the cake back on its right side on a serving plate. (I keep the paper plate and use it again.) — Mary K., Mulberry, Fla.

**NO SLIP**

Dear Heloise: I repeatedly attempted to slice meat on my cutting board, only to have the board slip all over the countertop. Remembering I had extra rubber shelf liner, I cut a piece and put it under the board. No more moving around, and the shelf liner rolls up easily to be stored in a kitchen drawer for future use. — Jane D., Danville, Ky.

**CLEAN GRILL**

Dear Heloise: When using your electric grill (double-sided), this hint will keep the grill spotless, with no cleaning required after use. Put a sheet of nonstick foil on the bottom part of the grill while preheating. After applying food such as fish or chicken, etc., place another sheet of nonstick foil on top of the food. After grilling, you will find your grill free from having to be cleaned. — Steve G. in Hammond, Ind.

**SAVE MONEY**

Dear Heloise: I buy block cheeses because they are much cheaper than deli or presliced. A simple way to cut cheese is to use your vegetable peeler. It's the perfect thickness, and it is an easy cleanup! — John Lang, Friendship, Ohio

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**Bridge** • Steve Becker

East dealer. Neither side vulnerable.  
**NORTH**  
♦K Q 5  
♥A J 7 4  
♦Q 8 3  
♣K 10 4  
**WEST**  
♠2  
♥Q 10 8 5  
♦K J 5 2  
♣A J 7 3  
**EAST**  
♠9 3  
♥9 6 2  
♦A 10 4  
♣Q 9 6 5 2  
**SOUTH**  
♠A J 10 8 7 6 4  
♥K 3  
♦9 7 6  
♣8  
The bidding:  
East Pass 3♣ South Pass 4♠  
West Pass North 4♠  
Opening lead — two of diamonds.

**A One-Shot Decision**

Certain defensive plays are considered by many to be virtually automatic, such as playing second-hand low or covering an honor with an honor. But those with sufficient experience have learned that there are exceptions to all such "rules."

Take this case where a defender could easily go wrong playing by rote. West had a choice of unattractive leads against four spades and finally settled on the two of diamonds. Declarer played low from dummy, and East, after considerable thought, inserted the ten! When this held, the defenders quickly collected the A-K of diamonds and ace of clubs to put South down one.

As can be seen, had East played the ace of diamonds rather than the ten — following the rule of "third-hand high" — declarer would have made the contract. The question, therefore, is what made East decide to play the ten?

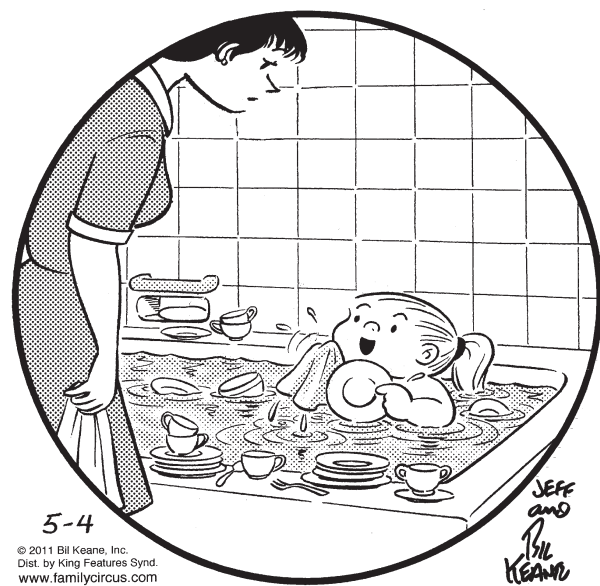
The answer lies in East's assessment that rising with the ace would almost surely hand South the contract. After dummy came down, East could see that, in due course, declarer would score seven spades, the ace of hearts and the king of clubs. East also knew from his partner's lead of the diamond deuce (fourth-best) that South had three diamonds. The play of the ace at trick one would thus ultimately establish the diamond queen as declarer's 10th trick.

East could think of only one case where putting up the ace would be right. If South held S AJxxxx H xx D Jxx C x, East would have to take the diamond ace and return a heart before declarer could establish the king of clubs for a heart discard.

But East reasoned that if declarer had this hand, West would have led the heart king from K-Q-x-x rather than a diamond from K-x-x-x. East therefore placed South with the king or queen of hearts, which meant that playing the diamond ten offered the best chance of defeating the contract.

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**Family Circus** • Bil Keane



"Why don't you get YOUR dishes and join me, Mommy?"

**Conceptis Sudoku** • Dave Green

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

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

Difficulty Level ★

**Cryptoquip**

Q I B S T G Q I S L V D G R E O

S D O A R S E O D C D G

E C D G R V D O A , J E P F A L E P K B F F

S T B S J B F F D S - L K E O S G E F ?

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IN ORDER TO PICK THEIR NEW PRESIDENT, THE SCARECROW VILLAGE RESIDENTS ARE TAKING A STRAW VOTE.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: L equals Y

**Crossword** • Eugene Sheffer

**ACROSS** 27 Elev. 28 Ladd and "Doo" follower 7 First victim 8 Acrylic fiber 10 Scent 11 Wallowed (in) 13 Sofa, recliner, ottoman, etc. 16 New Guinea port 17 Anti-macassar 18 Spotted, a la Tweety 19 Intend 20 Arm bone 21 Cricket, for one 23 Performs high-tech surgery 25 Sonic — 26 Scoff

**DOWN** 14 Grownup kid 2 Actress Moore initials 3 Smear tactics 4 Slobber 5 Metallic blend 6 Actress Celeste 7 Met melody 8 Utah politico Hatch 9 Get snug and cozy 10 The whole enchilada 12 Campus bigwigs 7 Met 22 Spud 23 Chain part 24 Exculpate 25 Evil 26 "King of Pop," in headlines 28 Mountain ridge 29 Begins 30 Thurber's dreamer Walter 31 Aware of 32 Id counter-part 34 Tom-tom, e.g. 35 Christmas refrain

**Solution time: 21 mins.**

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

Yesterday's answer 5-4

