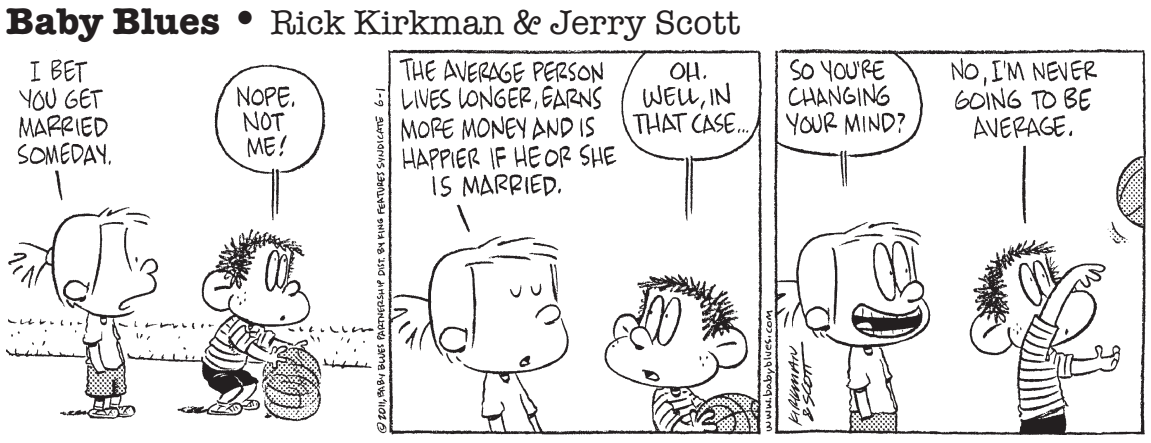
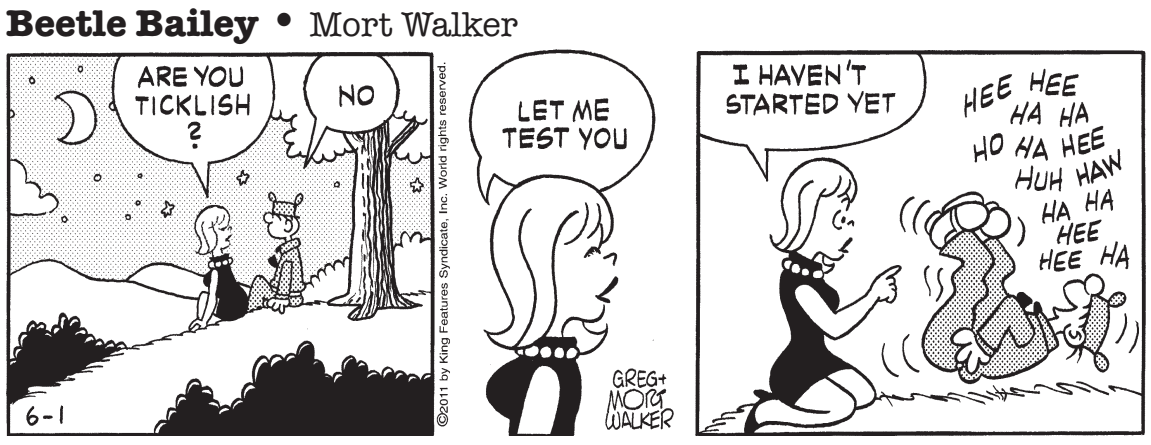
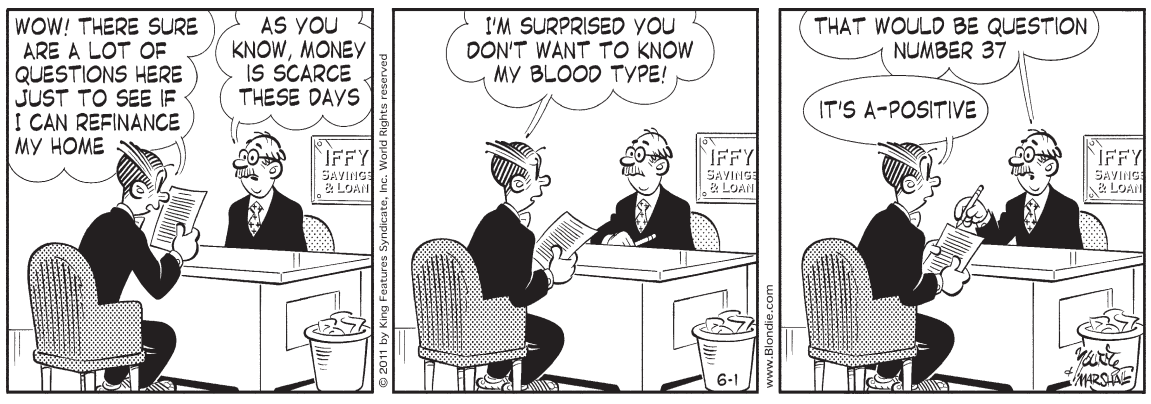
Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



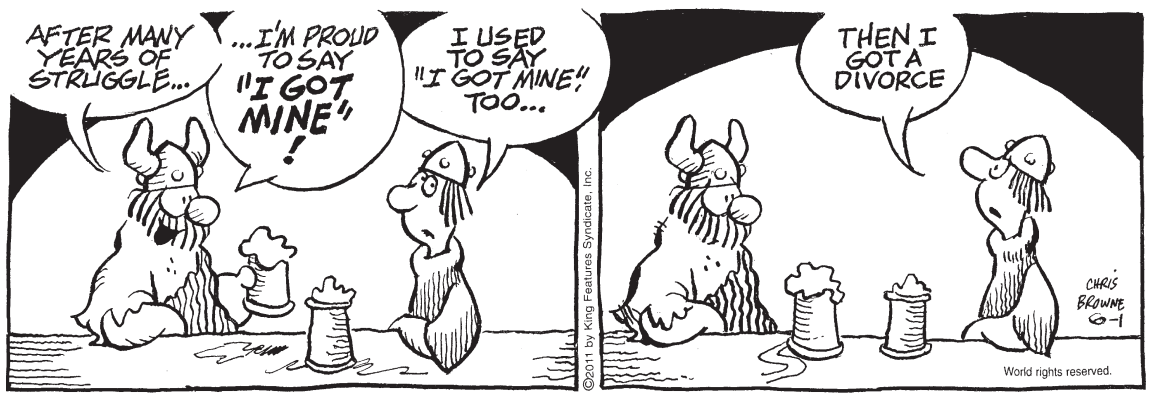
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Blondie • Chic Young

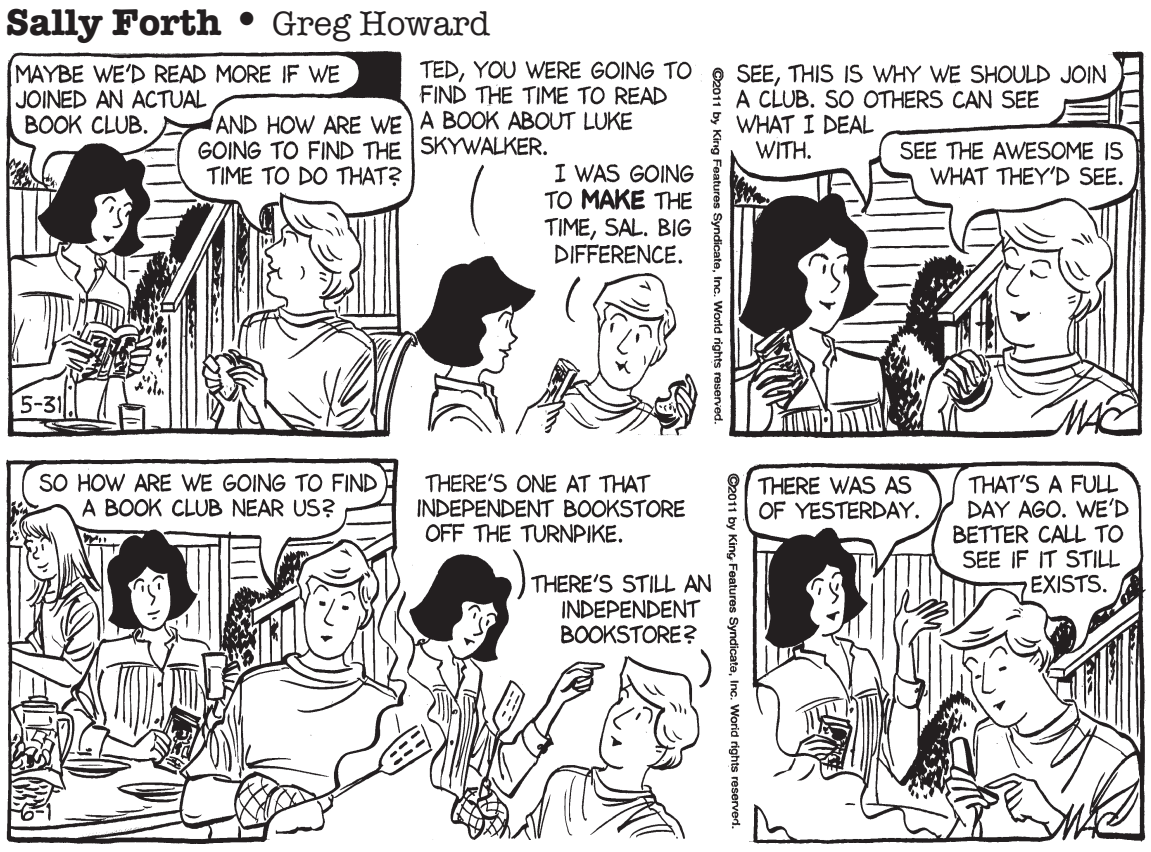


Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne

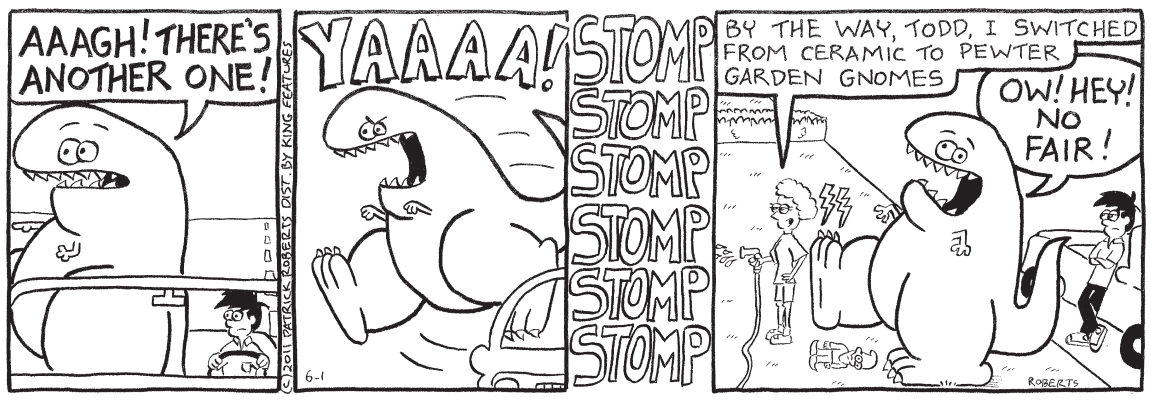


Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters

Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott

Heloise

• Hints from Heloise

Cut onions the easy way

Dear Heloise: I use a lot of CHOPPED ONIONS and have found a good way to dice, chop or slice. Cut the top off about 1/4 inch, but do not cut the root end. Turn the onion, cut side down, and make a vertical cut through the root, making two halves. Again, do not cut off the root end. Remove the skin back to the root end and break off. You now have half an onion that you can hold by the root end, and it will not fall apart while slicing or dicing. – Wick in Baton Rouge, La.

GUACAMOLE STORAGE

Dear Heloise: When storing guacamole, place plastic wrap onto the guacamole, removing all air. This will keep the guacamole from turning dark. – Jim in Texas

Great hint! Another helpful hint is to sprinkle a little lemon or lime juice or vinegar over the guacamole. If the top of the guacamole does turn brown, just scrape off the top layer – the other stuff is still good. – Heloise

FRIDGE STORAGE

Dear Heloise: Like most people, our refrigerator hydrators have an assortment of leftover peppers, onions, tomatoes, etc. If they are not wrapped, they get soft and start to spoil. I now use the plastic carrier from the store-bought rotisserie chicken to house the leftover items. It's sturdy and has air holes already punched through the top. Leftovers now stay fresher longer, and I even added one for fruit. – Gary, via email

NOTE: Please be sure to wash well with soap and water first. – Heloise

SEND A GREAT HINT TO:

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

CORN SILK

Dear Heloise: I was recently having corn on the cob for dinner. It was exceptionally covered with silk, and I was having trouble getting it off. I grabbed a coffee filter, folded it in fourths and ran it over the cob. The silk came right off. – Phylis in Ohio

BUTTER

Dear Heloise: I see unsalted butter and salt called for in the same recipe. Can I just use salted butter? – Lois K., via email

Yes, you probably can, especially if the amount of butter is not much compared with the whole recipe. The amount of salt in butter is minimal, so you should be OK. I say go for it, taste-test and see. – Heloise

FRESHEN UP CRACKERS

Dear Heloise: Crackers and pretzels can be refreshed in the oven on low temperature. Cookies can be refreshed with a few seconds in the microwave. In both cases, the food should be closely monitored. – Rita Loucks, Houston

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Bridge • Steve Becker

North dealer.
Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ K 8 3
♥ Q 7 6
♦ J 8 5
♣ A K 9 2

WEST
♠ 10 9 6
♥ J 5 3
♦ Q 10 6 4
♣ Q 7 5

EAST
♠ 7 5 2
♥ 8
♦ K 9 3 2
♣ J 10 8 6 3

SOUTH
♠ A Q J 4
♥ A K 10 9 4 2
♦ A 7
♣ 4

The bidding:

North	East	South	West
1 ♣	Pass	2 ♥	Pass
3 ♥	Pass	4 NT	Pass
5 ♦	Pass	5 NT	Pass
6 ♥			

Opening lead — four of diamonds.

Picture Bidding

Cuebidding as a means of exploring slam possibilities is an art that has not been sufficiently cultivated by the general bridge-playing public. As a case in point, take this deal from a team contest.

At one table, the bidding went as shown. After South's jump-shift and North's heart raise, South immediately invoked the Blackwood Convention. After learning that North had an ace and two kings, South had to guess which two kings his partner held. If one of them was the king of spades, 13 tricks -- six hearts, four spades, the ace of clubs, the ace of diamonds and North's second king -- could be counted.

Reluctant to jeopardize the small slam, South settled for six hearts. When he saw the dummy, he chided himself for being such a pessimist.

At the other table, the auction began the same way, but on the second round, South chose not to use Blackwood immediately and instead initiated a campaign to elicit precise information from his partner:

North	East	South	West
1 ♣	Pass	2 ♥	Pass
3 ♥	Pass	3 ♠	Pass
4 ♣	Pass	4 ♦	Pass
4 ♠	Pass	4 NT	Pass
5 ♦	Pass	5 NT	Pass
6 ♥	Pass	7 NT	

South's three-spade bid was a cuebid announcing first-round control of that suit (usually the ace) and asked North to reply in kind. North's four-club bid and South's four-diamond bid showed additional first-round controls. Then came the bid South was waiting to hear -- four spades, indicating second-round control (usually the king) of that suit.

From then on, it was easy. South learned via Blackwood that North had an ace and two kings -- just as his counterpart had -- but South knew one of the kings was the king of spades, so it was easy to bid the grand slam.

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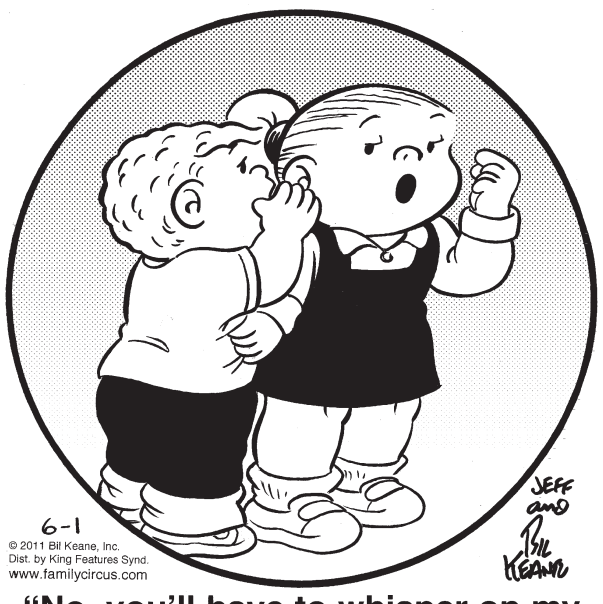
Family Circus • Bil Keane



"No, you'll have to whisper on my OTHER side — I'm left-eared."

Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★★ 6/01

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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.

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

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 5/27

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Cryptoquip

TARH UBKZ SDNL B WNIF PBKBHJNI, HGV FDNAO NS WALUVDTBKZR BDV ODVRVIHJIF HGVJD HDBPVW-WNFR.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: POPULAR COMIC STRIP ABOUT A BUNGLING FOOL FROM A SOUTHEAST ASIAN ISLAND: "THE BORNEO LOSER."

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: S equals F

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 "— the season ..."
4 Perched
7 Understand, slangily
8 Tennis player's sore spot
10 Dish
11 Illinois city
13 Events of 7/29/81 and 4/29/11
16 Type squares
17 "— Foolish Things"
18 401(k) alternative
19 Old World deer
20 Singles
21 Dracula, e.g.
23 Mirror's offering
25 Use the oven
26 Use a teaspoon
27 Geological period
28 Weeps loudly
30 Lawyers' org.
33 No traitor
36 Smoothly, in music
37 Battery terminal
38 Twelve
39 Sorts
40 Teut.
41 Easter-egg preparation

DOWN
1 Cafeteria stack
2 Greek vowel
3 Kadiddlehopper portrayer
4 Coasters
5 Home
6 Actress Spelling
7 Latch (onto)
8 Tools for duels
9 — and dining
10 Opposite of post-
12 Coincide
14 Sharpen
15 Airline to Stockholm
19 Regret
20 Rowing need
21 Christmas song
22 Accepted
23 "— have to do"
24 Lost
25 — canto
26 Faint
28 Fire
29 Subsequently
30 Heard the alarm
31 Foundations
32 Exist
34 Enthusiastic, plus
35 Sans siblings

Solution time: 27 mins.

C	O	W		B	A	C	K		Q	U	A	Y
A	R	A		A	L	A	N		U	R	G	E
P	A	G	A	N	I	N	I		O	N	E	S
P	L	E	D	G	E		T	O	T			
			D	O	N		T	A	H	I	N	I
C	Y	B	E	R		P	E	R		D	I	N
R	E	E	D		B	U	D		B	O	N	D
A	T	A		A	L	P		R	E	L	A	Y
B	I	K	I	N	I		R	E	N			
			B	I	T		E	S	C	H	E	W
E	T	U	I		Z	U	C	C	H	I	N	I
R	A	Z	Z		E	S	A	U		D	D	T
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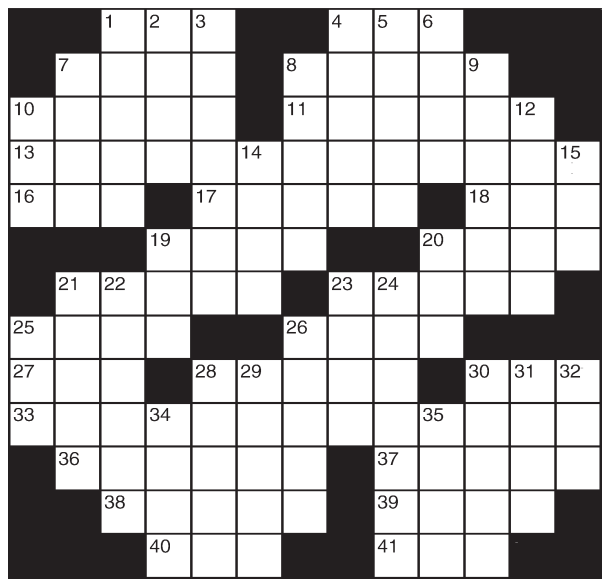
Yesterday's answer 6-1