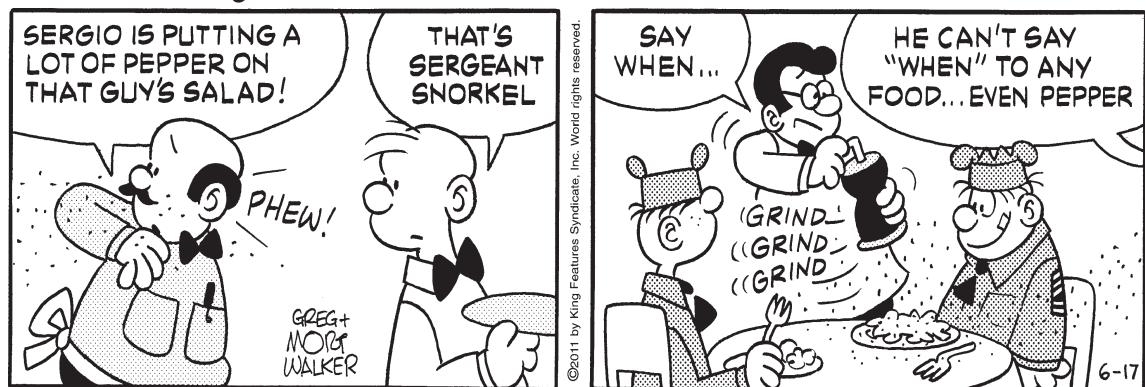


Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



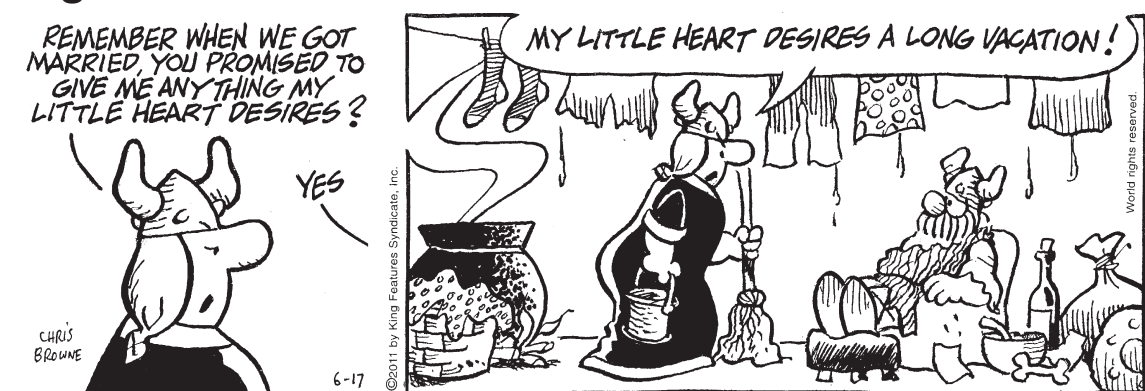
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



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

Vinegar safe for septic tank

Dear Heloise: I have a big question that I haven't seen addressed in your column. We live in the Hill Country of Texas (not too far from San Antonio), and we have a SEPTIC TANK. What are the effects of vinegar on a septic tank? — Deanna J., Canyon Lake, Texas

Research shows that using safer biodegradable cleaners, like vinegar, is better than harsher cleaners, especially if you use a lot at one time. So, small amounts of vinegar as a cleaning agent should be OK in a septic system, and certainly is better than superstrong products.

We have a septic system, and I've used vinegar for 30 years without a problem!

Also, don't stress the septic tank by running many loads of laundry and the dishwasher at the same time.

If cleaning-product labels warn of danger or poison, don't pour them down the drain. There's lots of information available online about the proper care of septic tanks. If you don't have access to a computer, contact your county extension office. For other ways to save money using vinegar, just send a long, stamped (64 cents), self-addressed envelope to: Heloise/Vinegar, P.O. Box 795001, San Antonio, TX 78279-5001. If there's too much salt in your favorite dish, try adding a dash of vinegar! — Heloise

PAPER SHREDDING

Dear Heloise: I just read a hint in the San Antonio Express-News on shredding paper. The reader suggested lining the shredder basket with a plastic bag. I have an idea to cut down on the amount of shredding altogether. Just tear off the part of the page or pages that hold the personal information, then recycle the rest of the page. Many times it is just a few numbers or a name and address that need shredding. — Samantha, via email

Yes, indeed! I do the very same. One note: Be sure to go through the pages, because sometimes there is info on other pages. — Heloise

EASY ID

Dear Heloise: I manage a farm market and was frustrated by cardboard tags on plants dissolving in rain or when they are watered. I now cut up plastic milk bottles into strips, punch a hole, add wire or string and mark them with a permanent marker. If it is a flowering plant (like hibiscus), I also add the color of the flower in case only buds are showing. I can remove these tags from the plant when sold and reuse them. — Jan Lowe, Athens, Ala.

QUILT STORAGE

Dear Heloise: When we bought new furniture, I no longer had space on the living-room floor to layer my quilts, as many quilters do. One day after stripping my bed, I noticed the nice, flat surface of the mattress and thought, "Queen-size bed, double-size quilt." It worked very well — backing, batting and quilt top. I was able to trim the backing and reach under to pin the layers together. — Hilde in New Jersey

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Bridge • Steve Becker

Partner bids One Heart, and the next player passes. What would you respond with each of the following four hands?

- ♠ KQ8 ♥ 103 ♦ QJ42 ♣ AQ96
- ♠ 752 ♥ K4 ♦ A983 ♣ AK42
- ♠ KQJ632 ♥ A4 ♦ KQ7 ♣ Q6
- ♠ 10 ♥ Q8743 ♦ 86 ♣ KJ952

Bidding Quiz

1. Two notrump. This indicates a hand of 13 to 15 high-card points with notrump distribution (4-3-3-3 or 4-4-3-2) and stoppers in the three unbid suits. The two-notrump response tells partner precisely the type of hand you have, usually putting him in an ideal position to choose the best final contract.

Some players might prefer to respond two clubs with this hand, but the fact remains that two notrump is much more descriptive of the kind of hand you actually have than the ambiguous two-club response. Simplest is best.

2. Two clubs. Here you can't bid two notrump, as you don't have a spade stopper. The best choice is to bid your time by bidding two clubs and await developments. Your side may very well wind up in three notrump, but partner will have to bid notrump or spades to get you there.

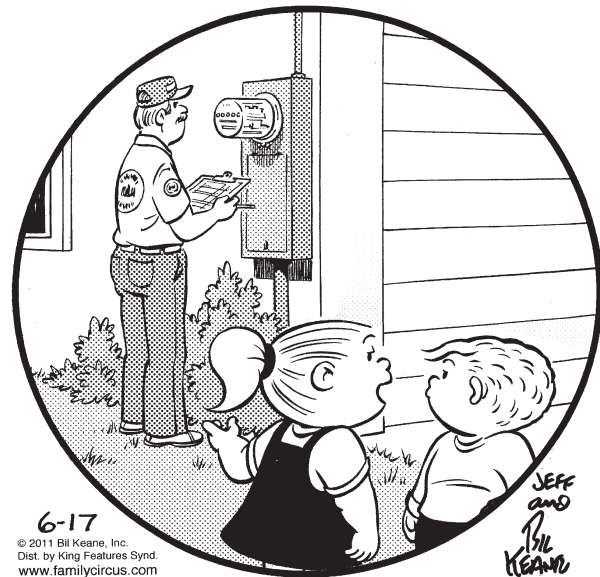
3. Two spades. The jump-shift indicates 17 or more points and interest in slam. It is normally based on one of two types of hands: a hand containing a powerful suit, or a hand with excellent support for partner's suit. Players who respond one spade with this type of hand usually find that there's no good way to tell partner later on about the strong possibility of a slam. The winning approach in the long run is to send the slam message right away.

The jump-shift does not commit your side to a slam. In the present case, for example, if partner's response to two spades were two notrump, you would rebid your spades. If partner then bid three notrump, denying interest in a slam for the second time, you would do best to pass.

4. Four hearts. This is a pre-emptive bid, pure and simple. It tells partner that you have a reasonably good hand if hearts are trumps, but a rather poor hand defensively. Usually, the immediate leap to four is based on at least five trumps, about five to nine high-card points and nearly always a singleton or a void. The primary purpose of the bid is to try to shut the opponents out of the bidding. Thus, in the present case, there is a strong possibility that the opponents can do well in some number of spades, and your four-heart bid will make it that much more difficult for them to find their fit.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

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.

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

Cryptoquip

CXQS K PXQQY PHQYP NS

HG PQHHVQ K JNPYRHQ, N

CGRVJ ZXKMKZHQMNOQ HXKH

KP GWNSQ NSHQMWQSHNGS.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THE VOCAL GROUP'S SONGS HAVE DRIVING BEATS AND NO INSTRUMENTAL BACKUP. IT'S ALL ROCK-CAPPELLA.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: H equals T

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS**
- Cow catcher?
 - AWOL's pursuers
 - Church seat
 - "Holy cow!"
 - Mighty tree
 - Actress Longoria
 - Sends out
 - Social networking site
 - Some KFC pieces
 - "Monopoly" payment
 - Favorite
 - Microbrewery offering
 - Component of a mechanic's bill
 - On in years
 - Bad lighting?
 - Lyracist Hart
 - Minor setback

- 35 Run-down**
- Sea eagle
 - West Point newbie
 - Moray or conger
 - Charged bit
 - Hebrew month
 - 6-Down, e.g.
 - Sparkle
 - The same
 - Always, in verse
 - Soldier or carpenter
 - Gather
 - Parched
 - To the — degree
 - Bizarre

- DOWN**
- Caustic solution
 - Intend
 - Move jerkily
 - Meyers of "SNL"
 - Or, in a musical score
 - Mid-May honoree
 - Dog's dogs
 - Schuss
 - Partner of Paul and Mary
 - Occurrence
 - Imperfections
 - Stuporous state
 - Doughnut coat
 - Crony
 - Swelled head
 - Luuu bowlful
 - Leave in the lurch
 - Less extroverted
 - 30 Profit
 - Animal
 - Important numero
 - Corral
 - Severe lack
 - Incarcerated
 - Freud contemporary
 - Supermarket section
 - Sill
 - Confined, with "up"
 - Cleo's water
 - Bronze
 - Skater Babilonia
 - "A Chorus Line" show-stopper

Solution time: 25 mins.

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

Yesterday's answer 6-17

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			