

# Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



# Blondie • Chic Young



# Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



# Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



#### Sally Forth • Greg Howard



**Dear Dr. Brothers:** My son got caught bringing his Swiss Army knife to middle school. I'd told him not to carry it, but I'm not sure he knew how much trouble he'd be in, especially since he brought it only to show his friends and not as a weapon. I've been teaching my kids outdoors skills since they were little. Is what he did really wrong? And how can I explain this double standard to my kids? – L.B.

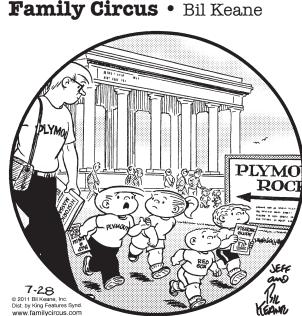
**Dear L.B.:** This has become a tough issue for parents in rural or even suburban areas where outdoor activities are popular. No one will argue that the skills for outdoor activities like camping or hiking are detrimental to kids, and many people think these are as important as academics. Learning how to build a fire or pitch a tent can teach a child important lessons in self-reliance, problem-solving, planning and perseverance that are sometimes harder to come by when reading books or doing math problems.

The important thing to stress is that while there is a place for these activities, it's important to teach kids about the dangers. Your son may think of his knife as a tool, but it can pose a danger in a school setting. Explain these dangers to your kids and have them appreciate the power of the tools they are using. With explanation, hopefully your kids will understand that rather than a double standard, the rules against bringing knives to school are there for the safety of kids who haven't been taught how to use them properly. Unfortunately, there's also the issue of violence to discuss.

**Dear Dr. Brothers:** My toddler won't eat anything I give him at lunchtime. It's getting frustrating, especially since I don't have my wife around during the day (she works) to take some pressure off, like at breakfast and dinner. He basically refuses to eat, and only wants foods like purple ketchup and dinosaur-shaped cookies. What can I do to get my toddler to eat normally? – D.T.

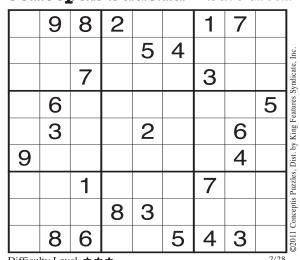
**Dear D.T.:** There are a lot of ways to encourage your toddler to eat, and it's important not to associate mealtimes with frustration, because your son will pick up on that and only become harder to feed. First, think about your schedule. Toddlers are creatures of habit, so lunchtime should be at the same time every day, with the same routine. Use his favorite dish and make the routine fun so he looks forward to it. Also remember to keep your expectations low – if you want to see your son scarf down the turkey sandwich you do, you'll be disappointed. Toddlers need smaller portions, and variety is key.

Trying new foods can be tough for toddlers once they know what they like. You can use your son's favorite foods, though, and keep an open mind. If he loves purple ketchup, try putting it on broccoli. You might not like ketchup on broccoli, but if it gets him eating nutritious foods, that's the important thing. It can be frustrating, but remember pickiness probably is only a phase and he'll get more flexible with meals eventually. In the meantime, it comes down to patience – relax and you'll both find lunch more enjoyable.



"I thought we'd be able to CLIMB on the rock!"

Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green



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.

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# Cryptoquip

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MWVR SDAWM UV ZDVCJ ANHCL. Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THAT HISTORIC MANUFACTURING PLANT PRODUCES ODD SMELLS. I GUESS IT'S AN OLFACTORY OLD FACTORY.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Z equals F



## Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



# Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



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# Bridge • Steve Becker

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#### The Art of Slam Bidding

The real test of a partnership lies in its slam bidding. Most slams require an extensive series of bids, and it is vital for both players to make as descriptive a bid as possible at each and every turn.

Examine this sequence that enabled the worldfamous Sharples twins of England, Robert and James, to reach an excellent grand slam. Their bidding was natural throughout. They used no artificial bids, except to show first- or second-round controls when deemed necessary.

The one-club bid was normal, and so was the two-spade response, which indicated 17 or more points and interest in a slam. At this very early stage, South could already assume a small slam, since he had 17 points opposite the jump-shift.

However, South did not know where the slam would play best or whether a grand slam might be possible. So he bid three diamonds, showing his second suit while at the same time identifying clubs as his longer suit, since he had bid them first. North then showed club support by bidding four clubs, which established clubs as trumps.

From this point on, first- and second-round controls were shown. South indicated the ace of hearts by bidding four hearts, and North responded five diamonds to show the king in the suit his partner had bid earlier. South replied in kind with five spades, identifying possession of the king, and North, delighted as the last piece fell into place, jumped to seven clubs, which was easily made.

It is interesting to note that neither player resorted to Blackwood at any stage. The four aces were located by inference, and the absence of one king – an unimportant one – did not stop the Sharples from reaching the grand slam with only 33 high-card points.

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### **Crossword** • Eugene Sheffer

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