

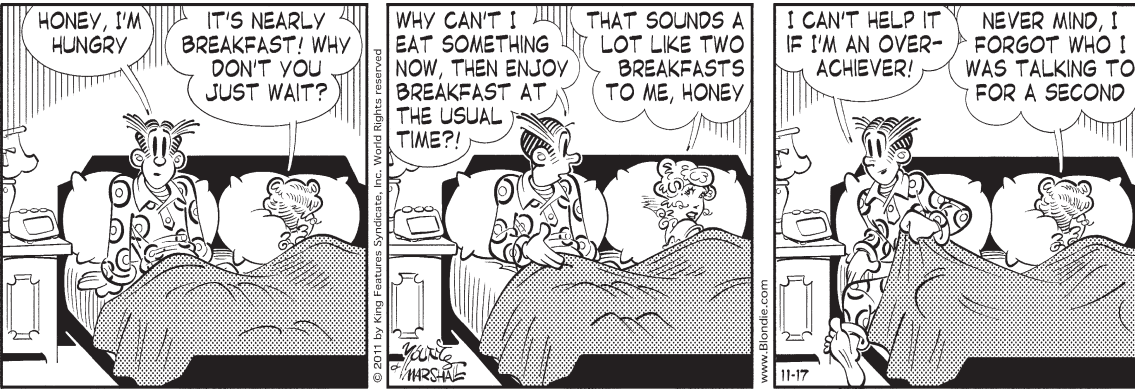
**Baby Blues** • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



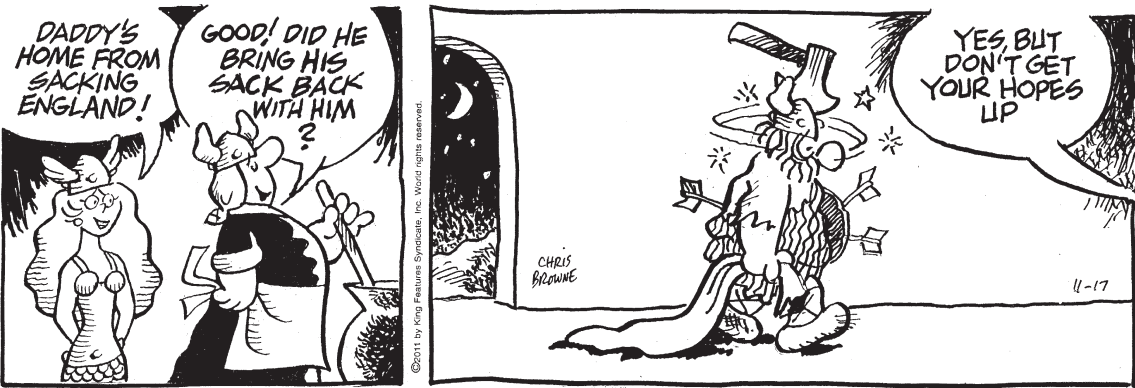
**Beetle Bailey** • Mort Walker



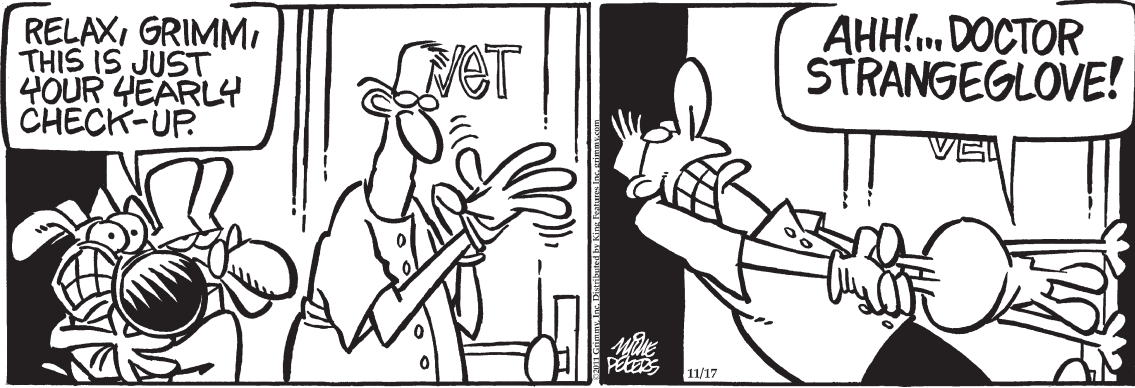
**Blondie** • Chic Young



**Hagar the Horrible** • Chris Browne



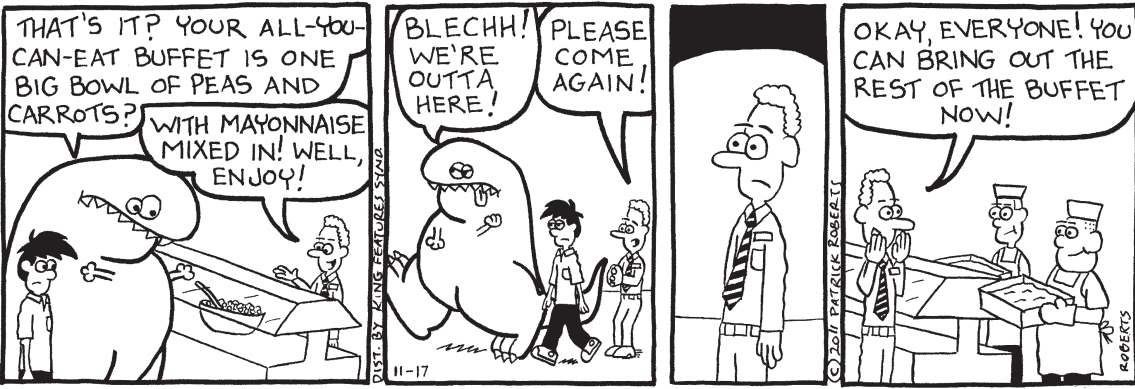
**Mother Goose and Grimm** • Mike Peters



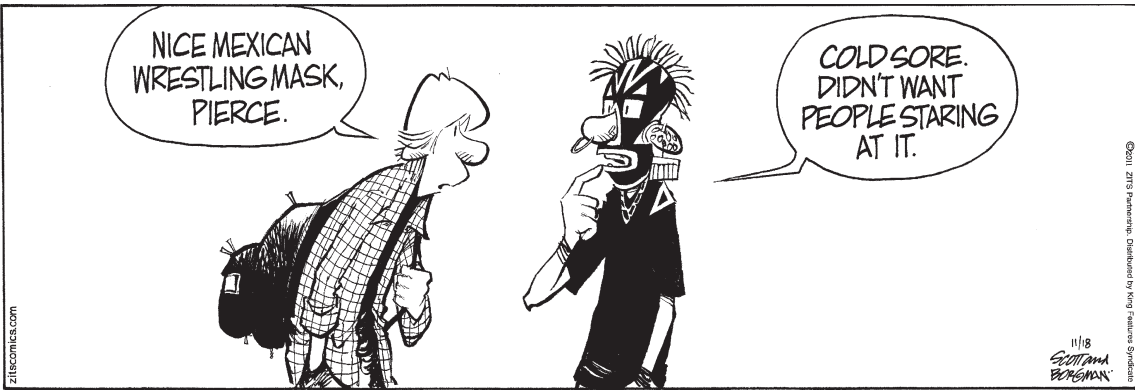
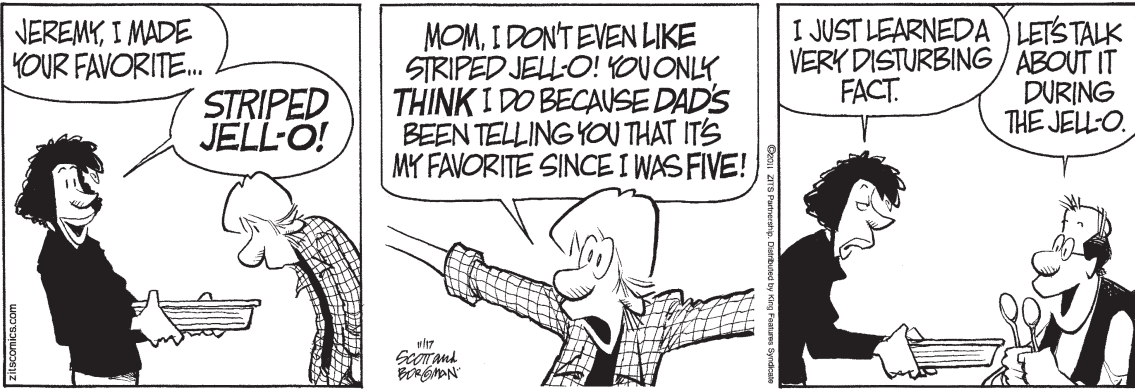
**Sally Forth** • Greg Howard



**Todd the Dinosaur** • Patrick Roberts



**Zits** • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



**Dr. Joyce Brothers**

• Ask Dr. Brothers

**Overscheduling doesn't help kids**

Dear Dr. Brothers: I have two great kids, 9 and 11. I just signed them up for all sorts of activities so they don't get bored. My theory is they are young enough not to be chained to a desk doing homework, and should enjoy their free time by doing fun stuff. My husband thinks I have overscheduled them, but I am afraid they will just sit around watching TV and playing video games if I don't keep them booked. - S.H.

Dear S.H.: Your theory about what kids will do if not booked up is pretty much on the money. In the past few decades, children have spent more time exercising their thumbs and learning the art of being a couch potato than racing outside to play after school. This has led to an epidemic of obesity and, according to a special issue of the *American Journal of Play*, a decline in emotional and social health. Overscheduling to the point where kids have lost the ability to entertain themselves with play also has become the norm, and kids are none the better for it.

According to the journal, the decline of free play has led to kids prone to depression, narcissism and feelings of helplessness. There is particular value in mixed-age groups playing together, researchers contend - older kids help younger ones develop mentally, socially and physically. So, rather than scheduled activities, perhaps you could work toward some real free time for your kids, with certain parameters. It's great to expose them to activities to see where their talents and interests lie, but encourage time for them to dream, plan and play without an agenda.

Dear Dr. Brothers: My sister and I were excited to have our two boys born six months apart. They are between 2 and 3 now, and I am afraid they won't be able to play together much longer. Although he is younger, my nephew has become a bully. He grabs toys, hits, breaks things and generally is not fun for my son to play with. How do I talk to my sister without hurting her feelings or seeming too critical? - D.N.

Dear D.N.: It is too bad the kids are having trouble, and your sister is the mom you need to treat with kid gloves. She must have noticed her little angel has developed alarming habits and probably feels just as bad as you do. The frustrations of children in the "terrible twos" can be hard to handle - both for them and the people around them. Although you may think of your boys as roughly the same age, it is more helpful to realize they can be at very different stages of development. Then there is personality and temperament - your son may be more mild-mannered, so he never acted. And your sister may have a different parenting style or hasn't figured out yet how to approach this new behavior in her son.

Although you seem to equate being younger with being gentler, such is not always the case. Your nephew hasn't learned to stifle his impulses, and while bullies generally get more aggressive as they grow, some will switch to verbal and emotional battering. But there is no reason to label the child a bully at the tender age of 2. Explain to your sister you've noticed the kids aren't getting along as well as they did, and see if you can suggest some strategies that encourage and reward calm behavior. She probably will be grateful. (c) 2011 by King Features Syndicate

**Bridge** • Steve Becker

North dealer.  
North-South vulnerable.

**NORTH**  
♦ A K 5  
♥ K J 10 8  
♠ 9 7 4  
♣ A 6 2

**WEST**  
♠ 6  
♥ Q 6 5 3 2  
♦ 8 2  
♣ 10 9 7 5 4

**EAST**  
♠ 8 7 4 2  
♥ 7  
♦ A K J 10 5  
♣ Q J 3

**SOUTH**  
♦ Q J 10 9 3  
♥ A 9 4  
♠ Q 6 3  
♣ K 8

The bidding:  
North 1 NT  
East 2♦  
South 3♠  
West Pass

Opening lead - eight of diamonds.

**A Recommended Procedure**  
In the play of many hands, everything fits into place as neatly as in a jigsaw puzzle. Declarer's chief job is to assemble the missing pieces and determine how they fit into the overall picture.

Consider this deal where South is in four spades and West leads a diamond. East cashes the A-K and returns the five, ruffed by West, who shifts to a club.

South must now make the rest of the tricks. His only potential loser is in hearts, and he knows he can make the contract if he takes a heart finesse in the right direction. The question remaining is which opponent is more likely to hold the queen.

To try to solve this fairly common problem, declarer initiates a series of plays designed to ferret out the desired information. He begins by taking the club return with the king and drawing four rounds of trumps, discarding a heart from dummy.

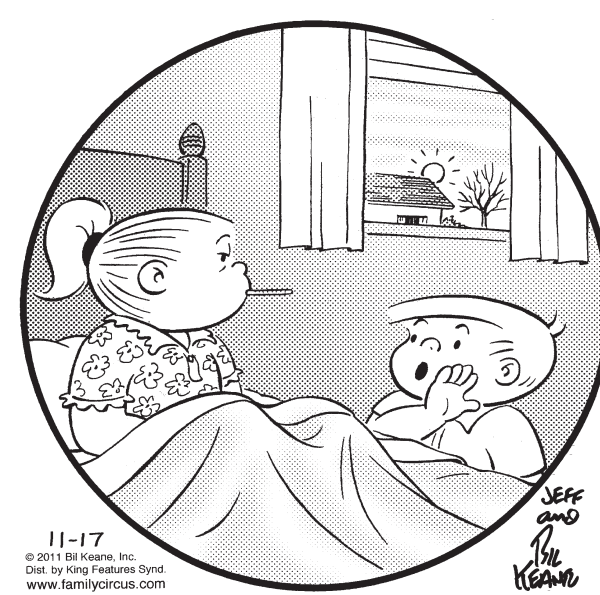
These plays reveal a great deal about East's hand. Declarer discovers that East started with four spades in addition to five diamonds, so all that remains is to find out how many clubs he started with.

Accordingly, South leads a club to the ace and ruffs a club as East follows suit each time. The picture of East's hand is now virtually complete, since 12 of his 13 cards are accounted for. At most, East can have one heart.

So South plays the ace and another heart to dummy's jack with 100 percent assurance that it will win, and the contract is home.

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**Family Circus** • Bil Keane



11-17  
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**Conceptis Sudoku** • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★★ 11/17

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

**Cryptoquip**

TBOV RZBKH BOA'T OAPAS-  
IARTDOV LBOEOATT LBS  
IASHRDO NAEVA TNSKZT: "D  
YDMM RMYRFT MBPA FAYT."

**Yesterday's Cryptoquip:** SUPPOSE A FLORIST HAS A STORE THAT'S SUCCESSFUL. MIGHT HE CLAIM THAT BUSINESS IS BLOOMING?  
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: M equals L

**Crossword** • Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS**  
1 Arp's style  
5 Dowel  
8 Medal earner  
12 Memo acronym  
13 Motorists' org.  
14 "Once - a time, ..."  
15 Passenger's payment  
16 "Impossible"  
17 Teeny amount  
18 Activate, as a TV set  
20 Reveille's opposite  
22 Quake follow-up  
26 Characteristic  
29 Spot on a die  
30 Buck's mate  
31 Legacy recipient  
32 Sleepy companion?
- DOWN**  
33 Green acres  
34 Always, in verse  
35 Pen name  
36 Do very well  
37 Cologne's cousin  
40 Mosque VIP  
41 Day spa treatment  
45 For this reason  
47 "not choose to run"  
49 Incite  
50 Thai money  
51 Round Table address  
52 "Piggies"
- 11 Individual**  
19 Frequently, in verse  
21 Cleo's slayer  
23 Geological time  
24 Heart barterer  
25 Nautical stabilizer  
26 "Take - Train"  
27 Coral structure  
28 Unbreakable, as an alibi  
32 Send packing  
33 Do  
35 Underwear with underwire  
36 Longoria or Mendes  
38 Overact  
39 Earlier  
42 Press  
43 On in years  
44 Not as much  
45 Recede  
46 Comic Romano  
48 Conk out

**Solution time: 25 mins.**

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

Yesterday's answer 11-17

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			