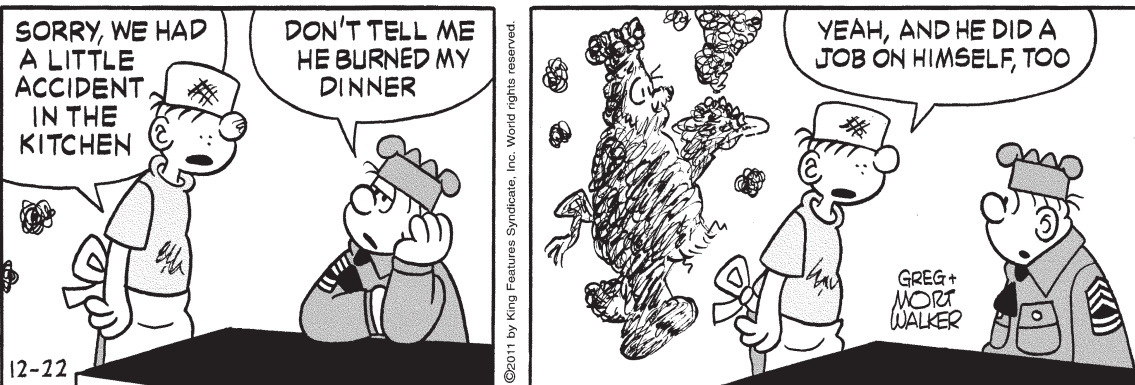


Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



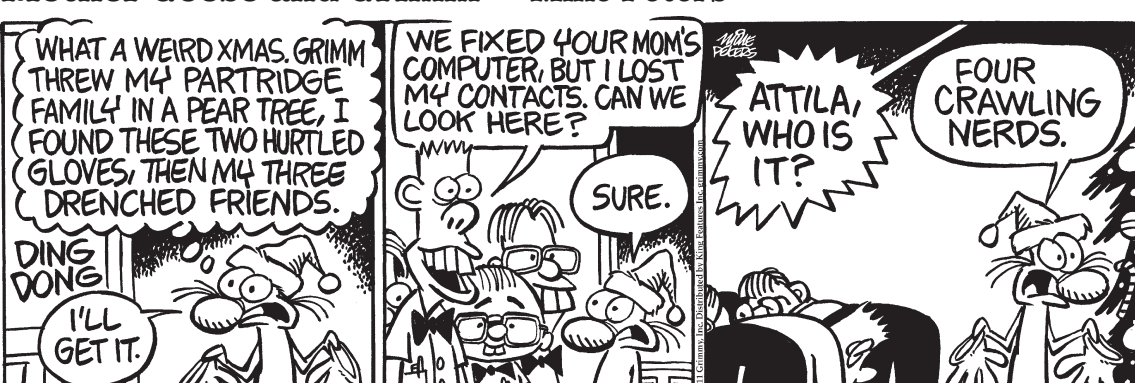
Blondie • Chic Young



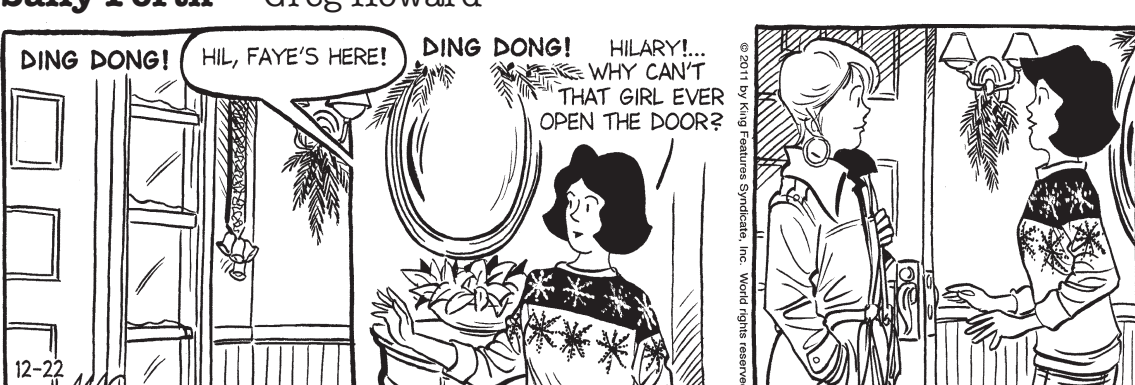
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



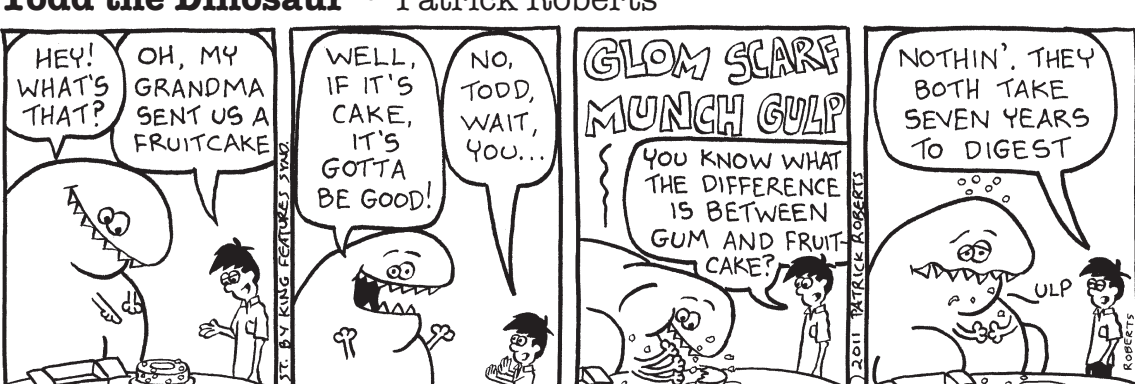
Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Dr. Joyce Brothers

• Ask Dr. Brothers

One twin cuter than the other

Dear Dr. Brothers: My husband and I were blessed with identical twin boys, but as is sometimes the case, the babies are very different. Jeremy is cute and cuddly, and Justin had a lower birth weight and some other issues, but he's fine now. They are 9 months old, and Jeremy gets all the attention because he is so cute and outgoing. I am worried about how this will affect Justin as they grow up. Anything I can do to help our family prepare? - N.V.

Dear N.V.: I'm glad your sons are healthy and thriving, and the fact that they are twins means they both will always get plenty of attention, so you needn't worry about that so much. If you want people to compare them, dress them exactly alike and give them similar haircuts. Make sure they share the same friends. Push them in the same direction in sports and other activities, and make sure they are competing in school in the same classes. But if you would like to encourage their individuality so that each child can develop his own gifts and interests and bring different things to the family circle, try to acknowledge in a positive way that they are two different kids. It will be a lot easier for each of them to find and develop their own personalities and strengths, and at some point you may forget about the fact that one was cuter than the other as a baby.

Dear Dr. Brothers: We live near my mother, and she's been a godsend to have in the neighborhood to help with after-school day care for my daughter, who is 7. Ma is very quiet and is a worrier, and I notice that whenever we are all together, my daughter seems to clam up and become very shy. I know that Ma spends a lot of time worrying and telling her granddaughter to be careful, etc. Can her worry-prone personality be rubbing off on my daughter? - L.R.

Dear L.R.: It is not at all unlikely that this is happening. Talk to your mom about it. I'm sure your mother is trying to be super-responsible when your daughter is around, but what she doesn't realize is that her anxious behavior could be rubbing off on her granddaughter. I don't think it could completely change her personality, but if your daughter has a tendency to be introverted or sensitive, she could well be affected by all the warnings and admonitions she gets from Grandma.

Your mother isn't likely to change her stripes, but you can make her aware that she needn't be quite such a worrywart and that your daughter can handle a certain amount of freedom, which you can talk about and - I hope - agree upon. Perhaps including a playmate after school or finding some other activities would lighten the atmosphere for the child. Less exposure to Grandma may make your life a little more difficult, but it may be best. Your daughter comes first, and you need to stay on top of what she is experiencing, inside and out. Your mother might appreciate the break, too, and find herself a little less stressed.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



12-22
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"According to my calculations, their Christmas lists should REALLY help stimulate the economy."

Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★★ 12/22

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.

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

Cryptoquip

FH BXJHUTSSP CJMHN CR
STJH CFRDH URSZD MECR XE
XJOTMEO BRECHDC, KTC
CFHP NMNE'C CXZH NHKXCH.
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THAT BIKE RACER MAKES GOOD OPPONENTS LOOK LIKE BEGINNERS. HE REALLY RUNS CYCLES AROUND THEM.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: N equals D

Bridge • Steve Becker

East dealer. Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ 4
♥ K Q 9 2
♦ 9 7 6 3
♣ 8 5 4 2

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

EAST
♠ A
♥ A J 6
♦ K Q J 10 8 5 4
♣ 7 3

SOUTH
♠ K Q J 7 6 5 2
♥ 8
♦ A
♣ A K Q J

The bidding:
East 1♦ South 4♣ West Pass North 1♥
1♦ Dble 4♣ Pass
3♦ Redble
Dble Opening lead - two of diamonds.

Dear Mr. Becker: I don't know whether or not you can help me with my problem, but I am in a desperate predicament, and I am willing to grasp at any straw.

A year ago, I was playing in a rubber-bridge game and held the South hand. You can imagine my disappointment when I heard East open the bidding ahead of me. I needed so little to make a small or grand slam -- just an ace or two -- and this guy on my right ups and bids a diamond.

Well, I ended up in four spades doubled and redoubled, as you can see, and won the diamond lead with the ace. I then led the king of spades. East took it and returned a diamond that I ruffed and West overruffed.

West then put East on lead with a heart, and another diamond lead ruined me. It didn't matter whether I trumped high or low -- West was bound to get another trump trick, and I went down one.

That night, I couldn't sleep, and the same thing happened the next night and the night after that. My appetite fell off terribly, and I lost interest in everything. I continued in a depressed state for weeks, and I finally consulted a psychiatrist.

After a couple of treatments -- during which I spent as much time on the psychiatrist's couch as I did at home in bed -- he told me the cause of my troubles, but it didn't help.

I tried a few other skull doctors, and they all told me the same thing. They said I should not have trumped the diamond return at trick three but should have discarded my heart. Then when West overruffed the next diamond lead, he wouldn't be able to put East back on lead and I would have made the contract.

So now I know what I should have done, but I still can't sleep. I just keep reliving this nightmare over and over again. What I'm hoping is that if I see this hand in print, maybe it will all go away. Expectantly, N. Somnia

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Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS**
1 "Humbug!" solution
4 Actress Jessica
8 "Pow!" reply
12 Census statistic
13 Sense
14 Mosque
15 Ball-carrier's target
17 Donate
18 Twosome
19 Beaten down
21 Coarse article
25 Blackbird
26 Gratitude
28 Ballroom dance
32 Baseball team
34 Popular pet
36 Praise highly
37 Trusty horse
39 Young
34-Across
41 Bar supply
- DOWN**
1 Suitcase
2 Earlier
3 Banner
4 Shoyang
5 Main-booyancy
5 Pussy-lander's memmen-to
6 Crooked
7 Watchful
8 "Who cares?"
9 In the thick of
10 Church section
11 Feds
16 Schlep
20 Resistance
21 Moving fleet
22 Condo-minium, e.g.
23 Disen-cumber
27 Bust
29 Suburban Philadel-phia area
30 Dollar
31 Rhyming tributes
33 Thin and slippery
35 Eviscerate
38 Coloring agent
40 "Friends" role
43 Brilliance
45 Puncturing tool
46 Between jobs
47 Require
48 Old Glory
49 Grow weary
53 Adipose tissue
54 Promptly
55 Before

Solution time: 25 mins.

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

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
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				58		
59				60				61		