Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott
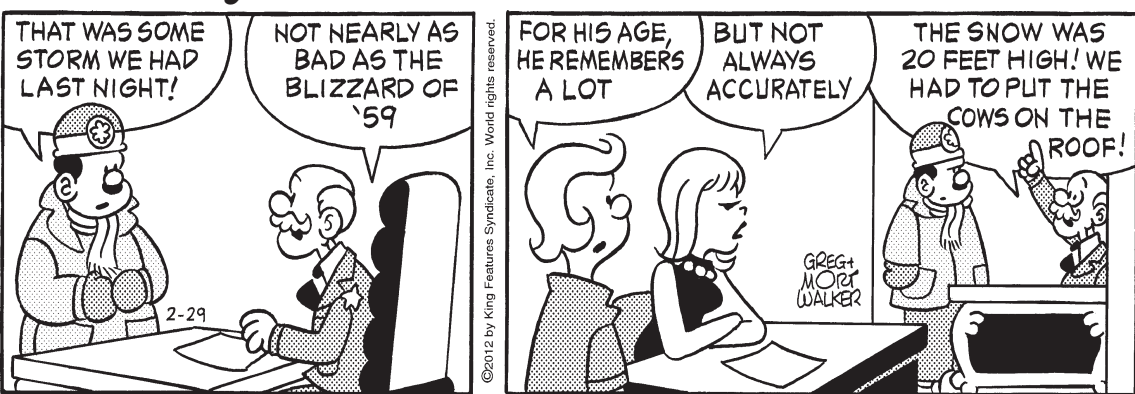

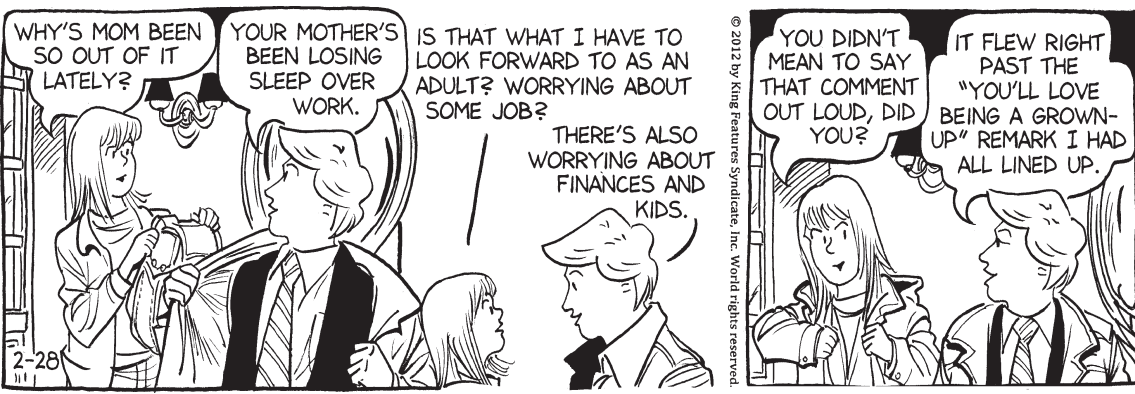## Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker

Blondie • Chic Young

Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne

Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters
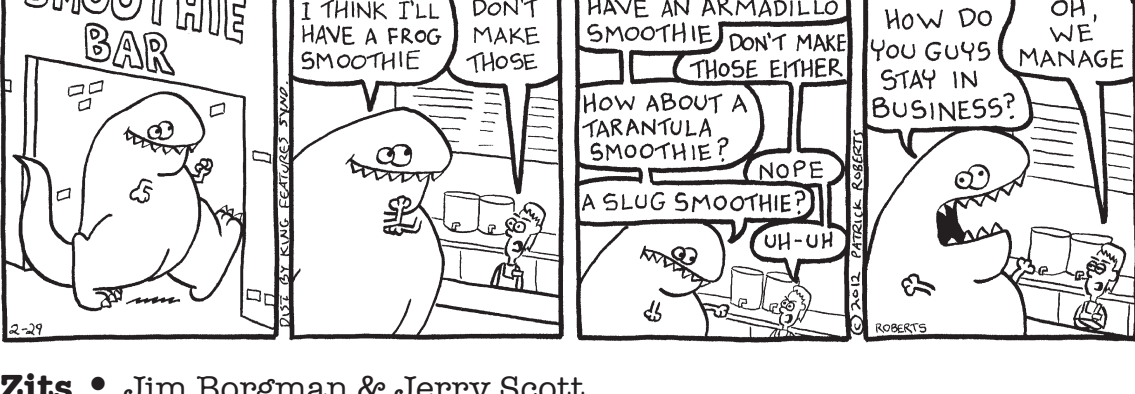

Sally Forth • Greg Howard

Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts

Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott

Heloise

● Hints from Heloise

Buckeye nuts bring memories

Dear Readers: Wow, the recent column about buckeye nuts was a hit! Here are just a few letters received:

• Carol J. in Hazleton, Pa., wrote: "I've been reading your column for years, but have never written until now. I lived in the Sierra Foothills for a while, where buckeyes are wild and plentiful. I baked them in the microwave – after putting a hole in the top and bottom with a nail. When they were cool and dry, I put my drapery cord through and tied a knot. They were wonderful drapery-cord pulls, and felt so good in my hand."

• Donna E., via e-mail, said: "Did you bring back some very nice memories and answer an age-old question! Buckeyes are for luck! My father's mother always kept one in her jewelry box, and it always seemed 'polished.' Every time anyone opened the box, they invariably picked up the buckeye nut and rubbed it, thus polishing it with the oil on their fingers. My parents also kept one in our adhesive-strip box (remember the old, metal ones?). Thanks for featuring it in your column!"

• Elinor A. in Red Oak, Iowa, wrote: "We lived in Iowa when I was growing up, and there was a big buckeye tree in the front yard. It was the only one in town. Every summer, hordes of young boys would gather under the tree to pick up the ripe buckeyes. At my 40-year high-school reunion, one of my classmates approached me and, with a smile, handed me two brown-and-tan buckeyes. He had kept them for at least 50 years."

Readers, these are only three of the many letters I received. I thought you would enjoy them as much as I did. – Hugs, Heloise

SEND A GREAT HINT TO:
Heloise
P.O. Box 795000
San Antonio, TX 78279-5000
Fax: 210-HELOISE
E-mail: Heloise@Heloise.com

CHOCOLATE DIPPING

Dear Heloise: This past holiday, I made chocolate-covered pretzels. The biggest problem was figuring out how to dip the pretzels and remove them without making a huge mess. I used my potato masher. I would put a couple of large pretzels on the masher and then dip it in the chocolate. I removed them and set them on a sheet of foil. Worked great! – Annie F., via e-mail

COOKIE DECORATING

Dear Heloise: My granddaughter and I were baking sugar cookies. To keep the mess to a minimum, I would place the cookie cutter over each cookie before she sprinkled it with colored sugar. Most of the sugar stayed within the cutout, and I didn't have sugar to clean up. Then we baked the cookies, which were delicious! – Frankie C., Conway, Ark.

STORING LETTUCE

Dear Heloise: Lettuce tends to get mushy quickly, but I have a solution: paper towels. In a container with a lid, fold a paper towel and place it in the container. Then place your lettuce on top, put on the lid and place it in the fridge. Keeps it just as fresh as the day I put it in the container. – Ann M., via e-mail

(c)2012 by King Features Syndicate Inc.

Bridge • Steve Becker

South dealer.
North-South vulnerable.

```
            NORTH
            ♠ A 9 5 4 3
            ♥ K J 4
            ♦ Q 10 7 6
            ♣ 7
WEST                    EAST
♠ Q J 10 6 2            ♠ 8
♥ 10 8 5 3             ♥ Q 9 7 6 2
♦ A 4                  ♦ 3 2
♣ 9 6                  ♣ 10 8 5 3 2
            SOUTH
            ♠ K 7
            ♥ A
            ♦ K J 9 8 5
            ♣ A K Q J 4
```

The bidding:

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

Opening lead — queen of spades.

First Things First

When declarer is playing a slam, he should give the hand more tender, loving care than when he is playing, say, two clubs, trying to make eight tricks. The stakes are bigger and therefore justify extra thought.

Take this case where South was in six diamonds and West led the queen of spades, won by declarer with the king. It did not take South long to go down one. He played a low diamond at trick two, whereupon West took the ace and led the jack of spades, and East ruffed to sink the slam.

It was obvious from the start that only a spade ruff could beat the contract. Declarer's thoughts should therefore have been focused on finding some way to stop the potential ruff. Instead of leading a trump at trick two, South should have cashed the ace of hearts and continued with the ace of clubs and a club ruff in dummy.

After discarding his seven of spades on the king of hearts, South could then safely lead a trump to force out the ace. Declarer couldn't lose more than a trump trick on this line of play against virtually any lie of the opposing cards.

The governing principle that applies is the same as it always is when the contract seems easy to make. Before proceeding with the play, declarer asks himself, "What can defeat me?" If he finds a threat, he then takes every step he possibly can to overcome the hypothetical danger.

(c)2012 King Features Syndicate Inc.

Family Circus • Bil Keane
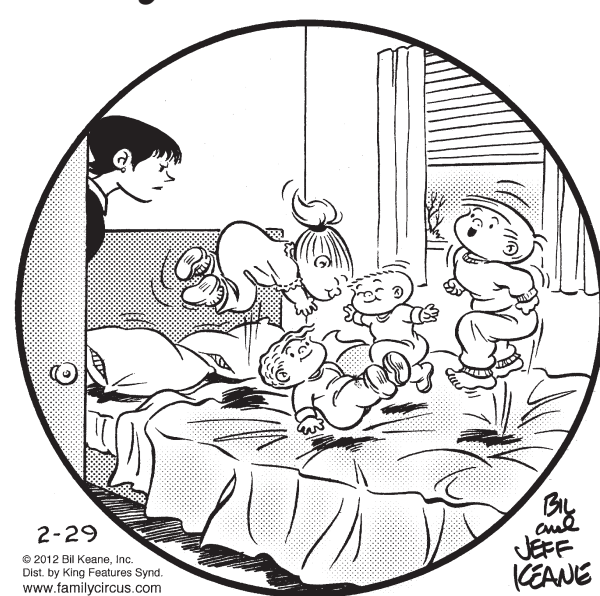
"This is allowed today! We're celebratin' leap year!"

Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

Difficulty Level ★★★ 2/29

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.

Cryptoquip

H ZRFLP'E JDOYPB HPEN EZL

RHO LFLP NPL EHIL RKK

LFLPHPB. H BYLJJ H'I

ZRFHPB R KLRD-KLJJ PHBZE.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: SONG ABOUT A FELLOW WEARING A CLERICAL ROBE TWENTY-FOUR HOURS A DAY: "FROCK AROUND THE CLOCK."

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: I equals M

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Syringe, for short
5 TiVo, for example
8 iPhone downloads
12 Really long time
13 Midafternoon, on a sundial
14 Crooner Jerry
15 Firm adherent to a cause
17 Ontario neighbor
18 Scabbard
19 Stocking holder
21 Apiece
22 Kill
23 Swiss mountain
26 Treasure seeker's aid
28 Spry
31 Water vessel
33 "Golly!"
35 Oklahoma city
36 Hannah Montana portrayer Miley
38 Pismire
40 Bygone Pontiac muscle car
41 Walked (on)
43 Stomach
45 Actress Headly
47 Frightened
51 Continental coin
52 Bit
54 Have coming
55 Peculiar
56 Reedy
57 Seeks restitution
58 Pirouette pivot
59 Spud's buds

DOWN
1 Chance occurrences
2 "Why not?"
3 Sweat outlet
4 Available
5 Symbol of limpness
6 By way of
7 "Lord of the —"
8 Par
9 Whooping it up
10 Ballet bend
11 Prognosticator
16 Detail
20 Chicken — king
23 "The View" network
24 Myrna of Hollywood
25 Path-filled garden
27 Shooter ammo
29 Torched
30 Tokyo's old name
32 Strong likes
34 Fencing call
37 Bart, to Homer
39 Clump of grass
42 Station
44 Hackneyed
45 The Bee —
46 Hawaiian feast
48 Needing liniment
49 Nastase of tennis lore
50 Lairs
53 Fuss

Solution time: 21 mins.

Yesterday's answer 2-29