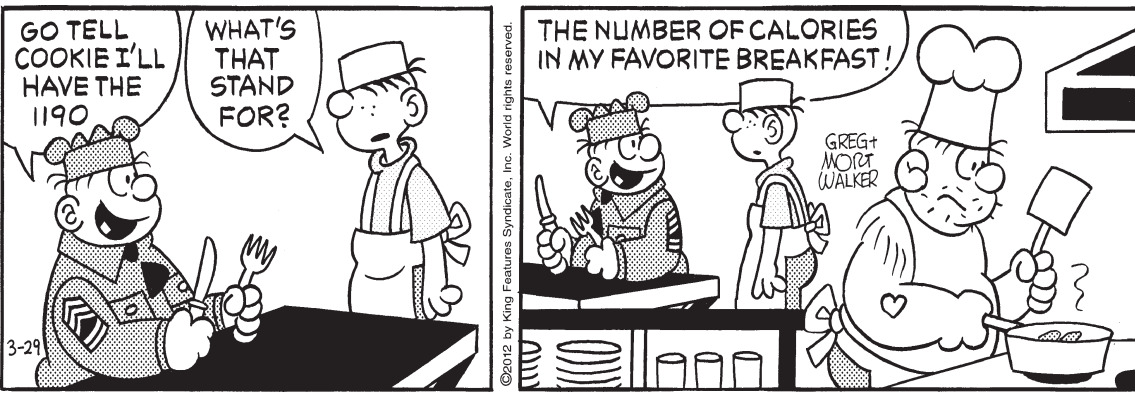


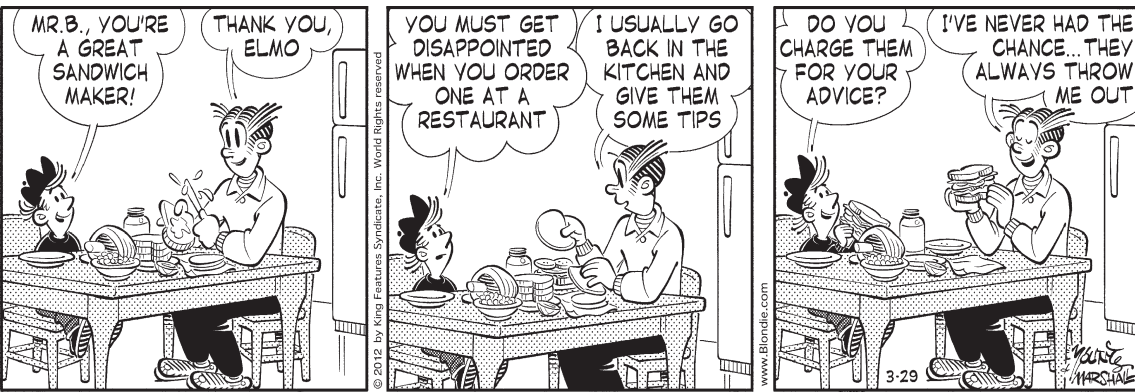
Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



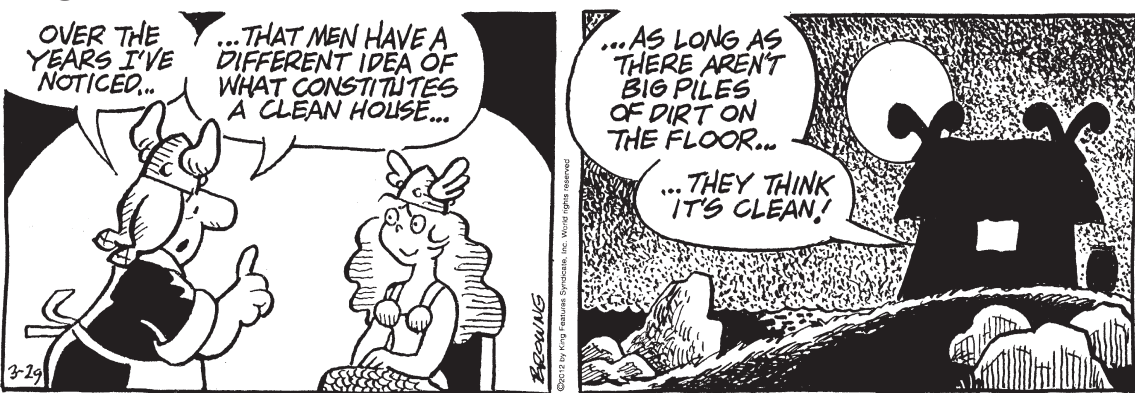
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



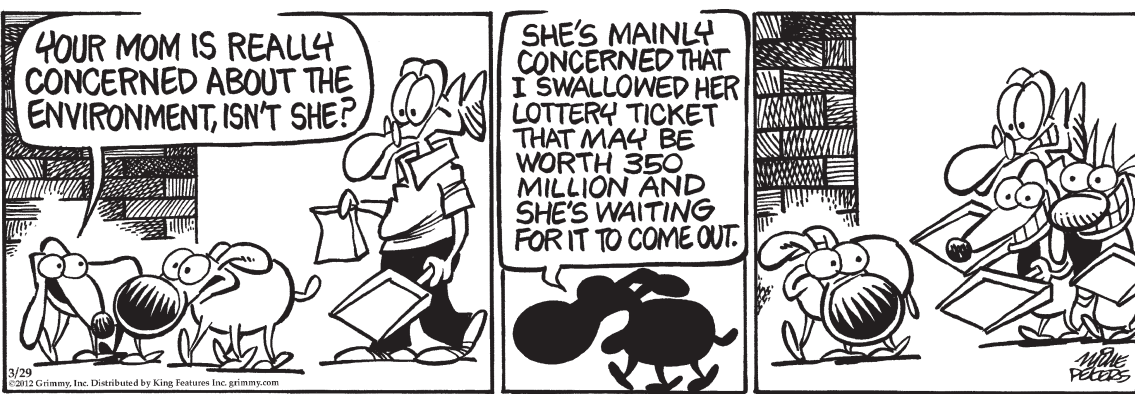
Blondie • Chic Young



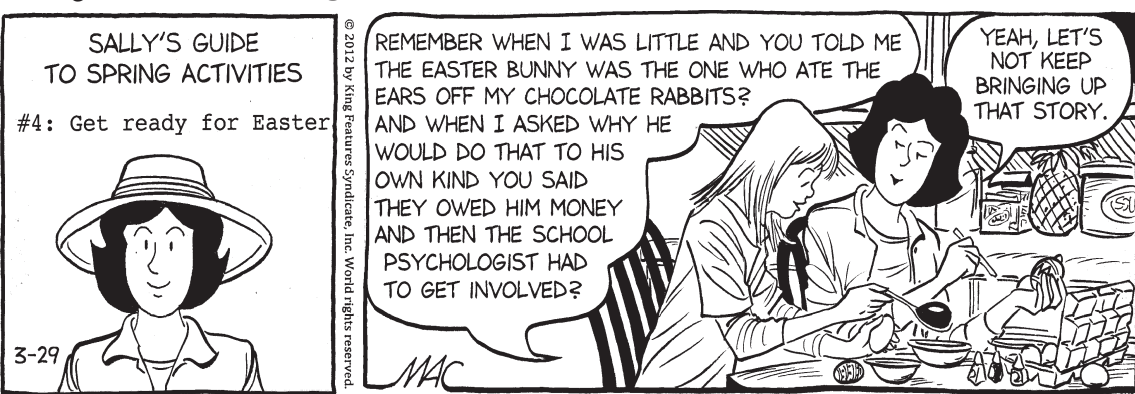
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



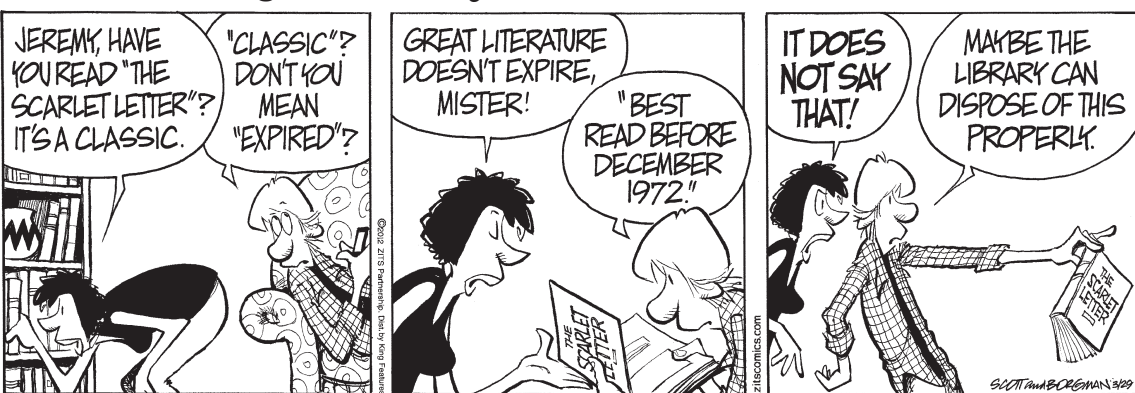
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Tom and Ray Magliozzi

• Click & Clack Talk Cars

Pine needles harmless in oil

Dear Tom and Ray:
When I was filling my engine with new oil, the pine needles fell into the oil and are now in the engine. The little stem that went in had three needles on it, each approximately 4 inches long (long-leaf pine, *Pinus Palustris*). Is this going to hurt my engine? My car is a 2011 Honda Accord EX, 4-cylinder. — Marissa

TOM: Oh, good thing it was the *Pinus Palustris*, and not the dreaded *Pinus Enginus Rebuildis*!

RAY: Your engine's going to be fine, Marissa. There are several things that can happen to these needles, and none of them is harmful.

TOM: The oil fill on this car is right on top of the valve cover. Most likely, the pine needles are just sitting there on top of the valve train, soaking up oil and doing no harm. And they may stay there for years, or decades, without affecting anything.

RAY: If they do get in the way of one of the cams, they're soft enough to just be pulverized. Remember, all the engine parts are metal. They'd make short work of these three little pine needles.

TOM: Then the pulverized pine needles would get circulated with the other oil that gets sent up to the valve train, and the entire top of your engine will have a nice, fresh scent! Sweet, huh?

RAY: Eventually, you'll get rid of these needles in one of two possible ways, Marissa: If they get ground up, their crushed remains will end up either at the bottom of the oil pan or in the oil filter, and will be removed next time you change your oil.

TOM: Or, 10 years from now, when some mechanic removes the valve cover to replace a gasket, he's going to find a 6-inch Christmas tree growing in there. Either way, it's nothing to worry about, Marissa.

It's never cheaper in the long run to buy a new car. Want proof? Order Tom and Ray's pamphlet "How to Buy a Great Used Car: Secrets Only Your Mechanic Knows." Send \$4.75 (check or money order) to Used Car, Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475.

Get more Click and Clack in their new book, "Ask Click and Clack: Answers from Car Talk." Got a question about cars? E-mail Click and Clack by visiting the Car Talk website at www.cartalk.com.

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Bridge • Steve Becker

North dealer.
Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ K 4
♥ A Q J 6
♦ A J 9 8
♣ K 4 3

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

EAST
♠ 9 6 2
♥ K 10 8 4
♦ K 5
♣ A 9 8 5

SOUTH
♠ A Q J 10 7 3
♥ 5 3
♦ 10 6 2
♣ 7 2

The bidding:
North East South West
1♦ Pass 1♠ Pass
2NT Pass 4♣
Opening lead — queen of clubs.

A Question of Probabilities

There are many deals where success or failure for the declarer depends strictly on the opposing distribution and/or the location of specific key cards. But there are also many deals where the outcome depends on how declarer elects to play rather than on how the opposing cards are divided. It is these hands that are of the greatest interest to most players.

Take this case where the defense starts by playing three rounds of clubs, declarer ruffing the third. How should South proceed?

One possibility is to play for West to have the king of hearts, in which case two successful heart finesses will allow South to avoid a heart loser and to discard one of his losing diamonds. Declarer's only losers in that case would be two clubs and a diamond.

A second possibility is to attempt two finesses in diamonds against the missing king and queen. If West has either or both honors, declarer will lose only two clubs and a diamond, eventually discarding his heart loser on dummy's fourth diamond.

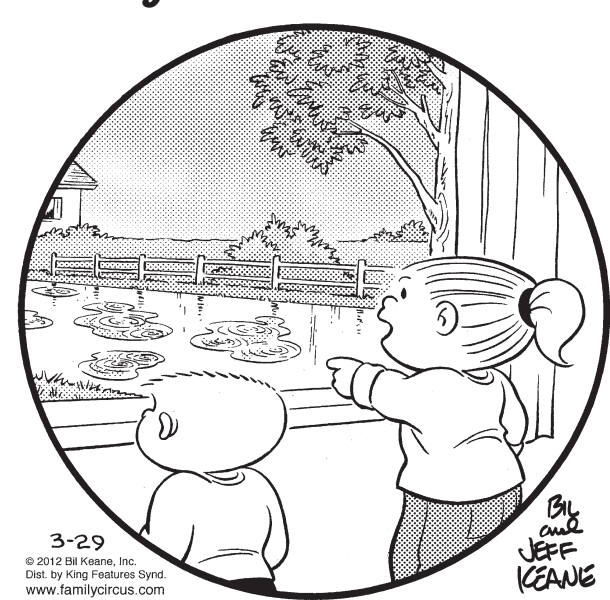
Ultimately, the proper line of play boils down to a question of probabilities. Since there is only a 50 percent chance that West was dealt the king of hearts, and about a 75 percent chance that he was dealt one or both diamond honors, it follows that declarer should pin his hopes on the diamond suit.

Accordingly, after drawing trumps and discarding a heart from dummy, declarer leads a low diamond to dummy's eight. In the actual deal, East wins with the king and returns a club, ruffed by South. Declarer then leads the diamond ten and lets it ride. When the ten holds, the finesse is repeated, and the contract is made.

Note, though, that if South starts by leading the ten of diamonds initially rather than a low one, he goes down. In that case, he'll find himself in the wrong hand after the second diamond finesse wins, and eventually he'll have to lose a trick to the king of hearts.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



"No, it hasn't stopped raining. The puddles are still wiggling."

Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★★ 3/29

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.

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

Cryptoquip

C ZTSM DNPT ABM KSLFNQTR

IL EBM FT QLFT XCFCNPCD

QKNSNIQ, EBI OT XBQI

ACZT FT IOT SBF-CSLBDR.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: NATURE MOVIE IN WHICH GREAT APE GROUPS ARE WEARING CATCHERS' GLOVES: "GORILLAS IN THE MITTS."

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: T equals E

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| ACROSS | DOWN | ACROSS | DOWN |
| 1 Big bash | 1 Pantheon | 36 Leno's network | 23 Oil cartel |
| 5 Virtue's opposite | 2 Help in a crime | 37 Wan | 24 Humongous |
| 9 Flop | 3 Peru's capital | 38 Reflection | 25 Geological time |
| 12 Japanese sashes | 4 Unchanged | 40 Pacino or Yankovic | 26 Wicker-covered bottle |
| 13 Exotic berry | 5 Cisterns | 41 Tangy cuisine | 27 Group of hoods |
| 14 Compass dir. | 6 Here (Fr.) | 43 Ape | 29 "Yecch!" |
| 15 Withdrawing from office | 7 Has the skill set | 47 Yoko of music | 30 Lad |
| 17 "Cool" amount of cash | 8 Square dance group | 48 "Ghost" co-star | 35 Big Aussie bird |
| 18 Ranking | 9 Cecil B. and Agnes | 51 To the degree | 37 Not quite |
| 19 Part of Hispaniola | 10 One sandwich shop | 52 Author Hunter | 39 South American |
| 21 Morning hour on a sundial | 11 Formal wear | 53 Pronto, in the ER | 40 Intention |
| 22 "Psycho" setting | 16 Formal wear | 54 Family for | 41 Hit on the head |
| 24 Hospital furnishings | 20 NRC predecessor | 55 Look for | 42 Oppositionist |
| 27 Space | | 56 Highland hats | 43 Kitchen fixture |
| 28 Organization | | | 44 Greek vowel |
| 31 Anger | | | 45 Composer Khachaturian |
| 32 Sailor's assent | | | 46 Profits |
| 33 "I" strain? | | | 49 Previous night |
| 34 Tournament component | | | 50 West of Hollywood |

Solution time: 25 mins.

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

Yesterday's answer 3-29

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		