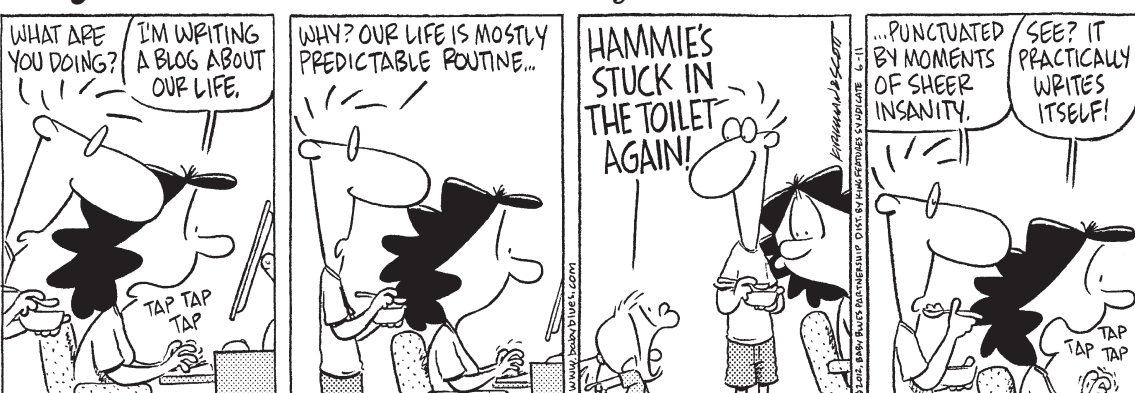
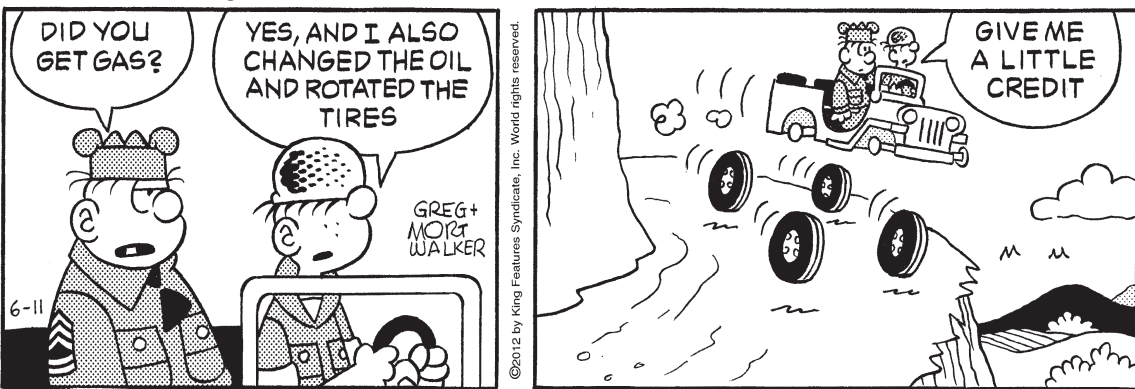


Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



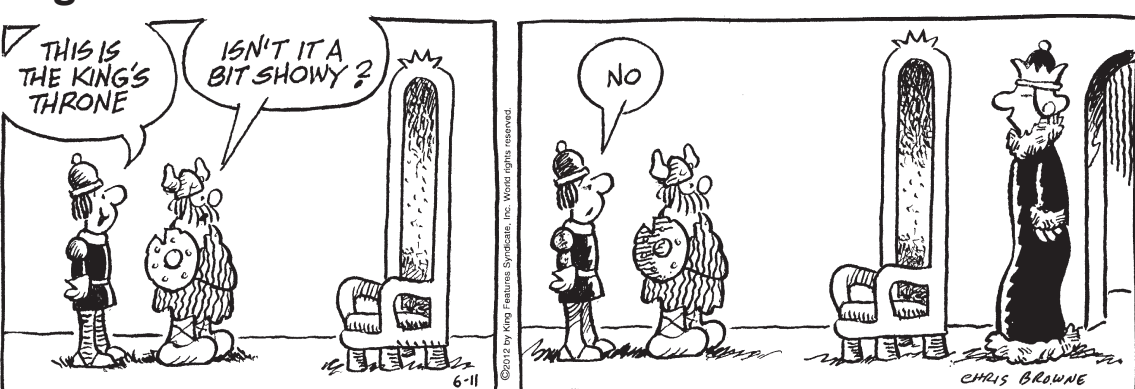
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



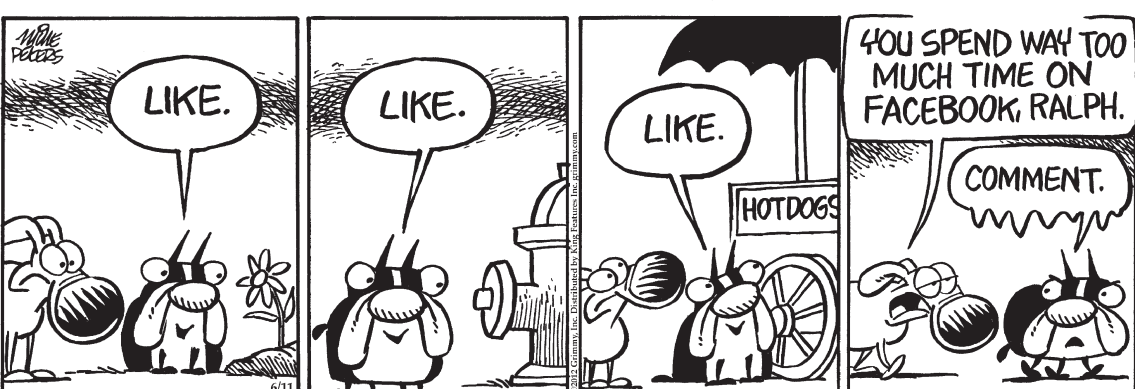
Blondie • Chic Young



Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



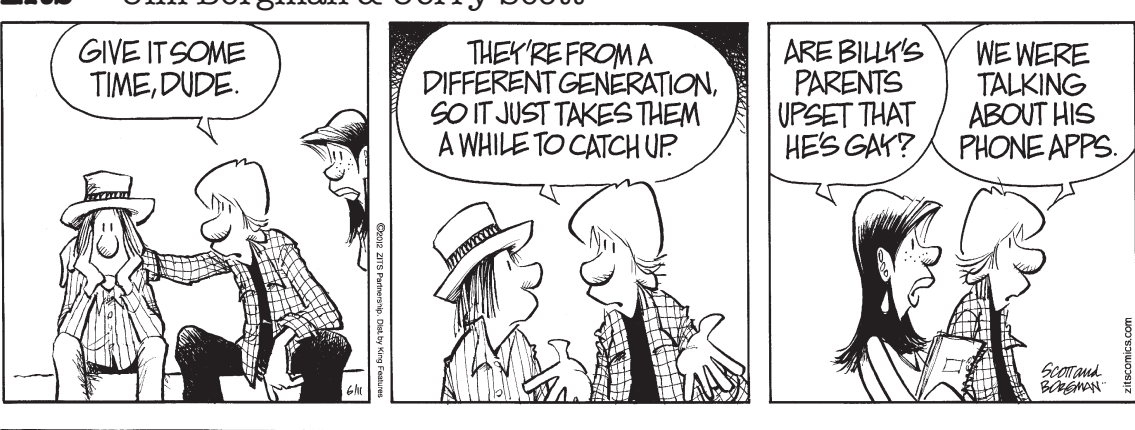
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Terry Kovel

• Antiques and Collecting

Cake toppers recent invention

The bride and groom topper on a contemporary wedding cake often is made of plastic or sugar. But the traditions of wedding-cake toppers and even wedding cakes do not go back very far.



The sweets served at weddings centuries ago included barley bread, sweet rolls or pies. Later, fruit cakes were served, and, by the 1600s, dessert cakes.

In the 19th century, white icing was expensive because of the cost of refined sugar, so it was served only by the rich. The modern wedding cake became fashionable in the 1880s, but the bride and groom topper wasn't introduced until the 20th century.

Early figures were made of bisque, composition (like that used for dolls), chalkware or a sugar mixture called "gum paste." The groom wore a tux or tails and a top hat. In the 1920s, small bisque kewpie figures were dressed in crepe paper to represent the couple. The bride usually wore a lace cap and a long veil.

In the 1940s, the war influenced designs and materials. Plastic toppers were introduced. The bride wore a fashionable dress with lace, and the groom was hatless but might be in tails. Soldier, sailor and other military uniforms were chosen for military weddings. All-sugar figures returned, and a few porcelain sets were made.

Today's toppers are plastic, sugar or even porcelain figurines by Lladro or Lenox. Old toppers are inexpensive but hard to find.

Q: When my wife and I married in 1948, a relative gave us a new four-piece bedroom set as a wedding gift. The set includes a double-bed frame, a mirrored vanity with an upholstered bench and a five-drawer chest. The furniture was manufactured by Showers Furniture of Bloomington, Ind. Does a set like this have any value?

A: The history of Showers Brothers Co. can be traced back to the 1850s, when Charles Showers opened a cabinetmaking business in Bloomington. His sons took over the business in 1868. Business expanded between the 1880s and the 1920s and Showers became one of the largest furniture manufacturers in the country. Bought out in 1955, it closed for good in 1958. One of its factories is today's Bloomington's City Hall.

If you want to sell your bedroom set, it is easiest to sell it locally. Try posting an ad online. Depending on its style and condition, you might be able to get a few hundred dollars for it.

Tip: Wash your hands before handling paper collectibles. Wipe off the table before you put valuable papers down on it. There are mold spores in dirt and dust.

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Bridge • Steve Becker

South dealer. Neither side vulnerable.

NORTH
 ♠ 9 5
 ♥ K 10 8 3
 ♦ Q 6 2
 ♣ 8 7 4

WEST
 ♠ A K 10 7 6
 ♥ A J 9
 ♦ 8 3
 ♣ K 5 3

EAST
 ♠ J 8 4 3 2
 ♥ Q 7 6 5 4 2
 ♦ 7 4
 ♣ —

SOUTH
 ♠ —
 ♥ —
 ♦ A K J 10 9 5
 ♣ A Q J 10 9 6 2

The bidding:
 South 1♣ West 1♠ North 4♠ East 6♣
 Dblc
 Opening lead — king of spades.

Famous Hand
 This spectacular deal occurred some years ago in a knockout team match in which this writer was a participant.

At both tables, South elected to open one club with his 7-6 powerhouse, and the bidding then followed the course shown. North's double was of the "negative" variety, promising at least four hearts and upward of six high-card points. Both Souths then leaped to six diamonds over East's pre-emptive raise to four spades.

South's unusual bidding would seem to warrant close consideration, but both Wests, apparently thinking South had temporarily taken leave of his senses, doubled without pause for thought. Both Wests then led the king of spades and a short time later entered minus 1,090 on their scorecards.

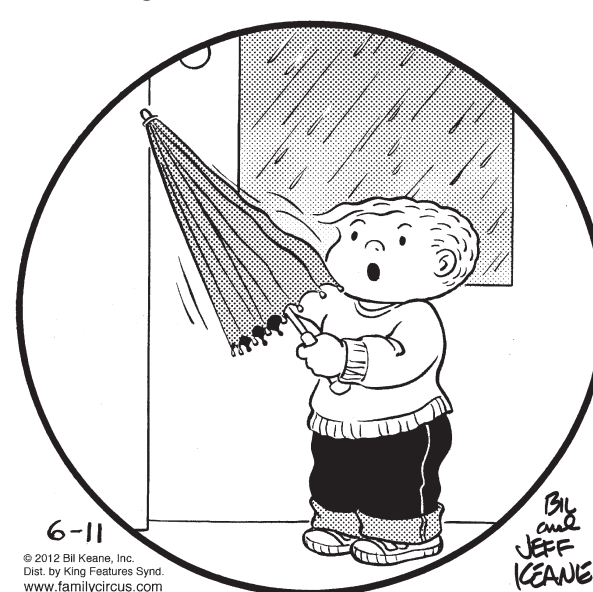
Both Wests should have given more credence to South's bids. Since West was looking at the king of clubs — a critical card South knew he was missing when he bid the small slam — it would have been reasonable to conclude that South was not concerned about the lack of either major-suit ace. South thus had to be void in both major suits. This would be consistent with his one-club opening and subsequent six-diamond bid, marking him with 6-7 distribution.

But the story does not end there, for there was actually a way to defeat the slam! If West leads a low club at trick one, East ruffs, and West later scores the king of clubs for down one!

Finding the killing lead is not as far-fetched as it might seem. If West is more trusting of South's bidding and passes six diamonds, East might very well make a "Lightner" double, requesting an unusual lead. Given the bidding, the unusual lead would have to be a club, sinking the slam.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



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Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★ 6/11

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

Cryptoquip

QKZJY N GYJTOQY DOP N

PID IZ PLKQ JIZPNKZYG

PKMLPTB, K'E KFNMKZY KP'Q

LYGFKP-KJNTTB QYNTYE.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: SINCE I DID AN IN-DEPTH STUDY OF THE DEEP, NARROW RUT, YOU COULD CALL THAT A FURROW ANALYSIS.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: K equals I

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS**
 1 Knock
 4 Wound covers
 9 TV network with an eye logo
 12 Lamb's mother
 13 Chicken (Sp.)
 14 Former acorn
 15 Bright hue
 17 Attempt
 18 Fuss
 19 Kind of inspection
 21 Appliance at a movie snack counter
 24 Farmer's home, in song
 25 Prince — Khan
 26 15-Across, e.g.
 28 Body powders
 31 Latvia's capital
 33 Aachen article
 35 Surrealist Joan
- DOWN**
 11 Terrier type
 16 Atlas entry
 20 Bang the door
 21 Pizzeria cheese, for short
 22 Hodge-podge
 23 Play that became "My Fair Lady"
 27 Lair
 29 Actress Penelope
 30 Angry
 32 Bullets et al.
 34 Theft
 37 Away from the mouth
 39 Cave-dwelling giants
 42 Last Greek letter
 44 Hooter
 45 Charitable donations
 46 Suitor
 50 Auction action
 51 "— Im-possible"
 52 Have bills
 53 Present

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

Saturday's answer 6-11

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		
57			58						59		