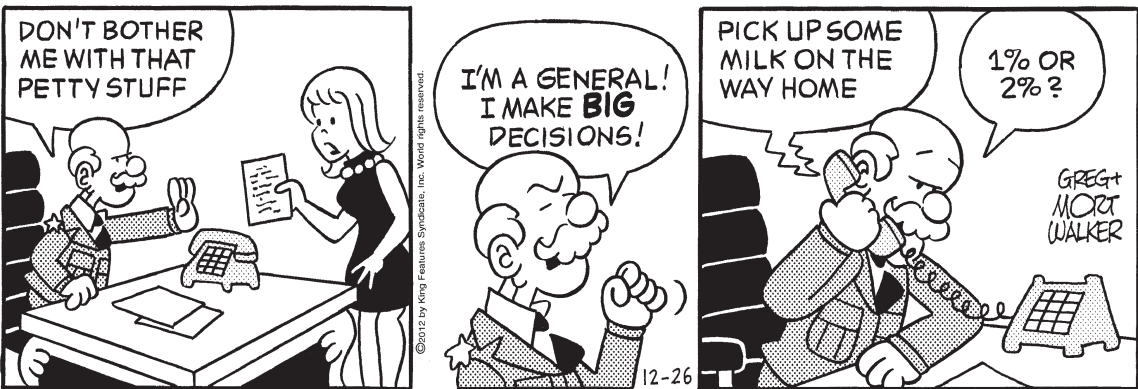


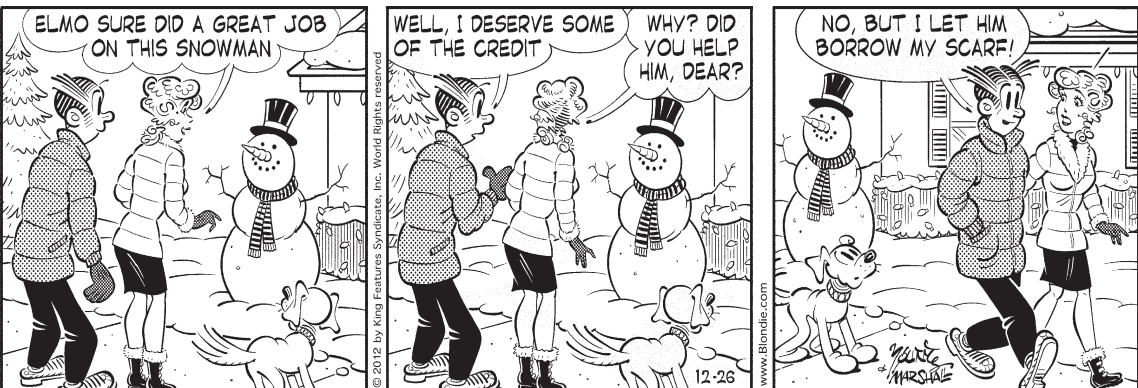
Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



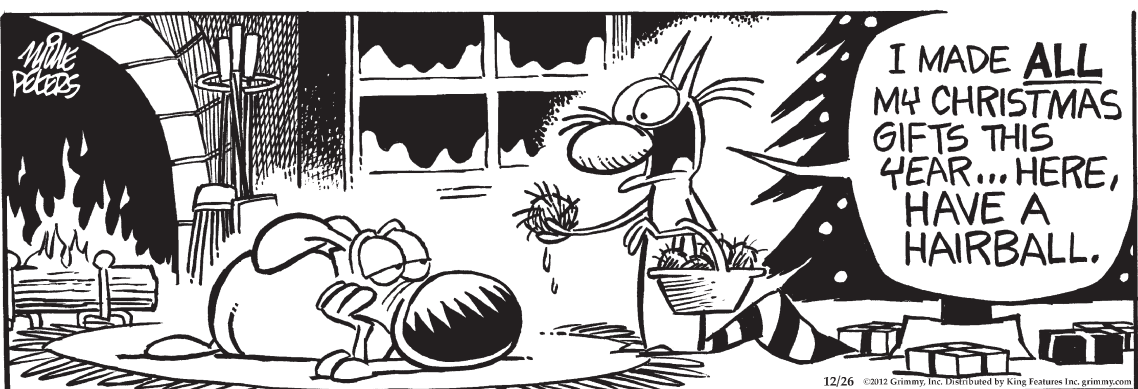
Blondie • Chic Young



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

Mix your spice for pumpkin pie

Dear Heloise: I read your column every day in the (Rochester, Minn.) *Post-Bulletin*. I know you printed a recipe for pumpkin pie spice, but I lost it. Could you please reprint it? – Anna F. in Minnesota

This is a good recipe to have during the holidays, because it makes enough spice for one pumpkin pie. Feel free to double or triple it if making more than one pie. Gather the following ingredients:

- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
 - 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
 - 1/8 teaspoon allspice
 - 1/8 teaspoon nutmeg
- Store the spice blend in a labeled container until ready to use. I like to make my own spice mixes at home, which is why I created my Heloise's Seasonings, Sauces and Substitutes pamphlet. To receive a copy, send \$3 and a long, self-addressed, stamped (65 cents) envelope to: Heloise/SSS, P.O. Box 795001, San Antonio, TX 78279-5001. Need just a touch of milk, but have none on hand? Mix some water and coffee creamer together. – Heloise

DRY MILK

Dear Heloise: I live alone and sometimes have a problem of wasting food due to having to purchase more than I need because of packaging. Cereal is the only thing I need low-fat milk for, but I can use only a cup or so out of a quart, with the rest going bad after a while. I got a small box of dry milk, and I make 1 cup, which is sufficient for the cereal. I don't know if all brands use the same ratio, but I use heaping 1/4 cup dry milk to 1 cup cold water and stir well! – Dena in Silver Spring, Md.

EASY POUR

Dear Heloise: I always liked the syrup dispenser with a spring-loaded lever found on the table at my favorite breakfast restaurant. I was so excited when I saw a couple for sale at a garage sale! I, of course, keep syrup in one, but I have milk in the other to add to my morning coffee! – Betty G. in New Jersey

I love these dispensers, too! I bought one in a thrift store, and I keep milk or creamer in it for my coffee, just like you do. It is so convenient! If you can't find one in a thrift store, garage sale or specialty kitchen store, go online to buy one. – Heloise

DRAINING SPINACH

Dear Heloise: I've found an easy and fast way to drain frozen spinach. I put a couple of layers of cheesecloth over the disc in my ricer, add the thawed spinach and press. The excess water drains into a bowl, and I'm left with dried spinach to add to my quiche recipe. – Joyce in Vienna, W.Va.

POP-OUT PATTIES

Dear Heloise: I use a muffin tin, coated with cooking spray, to form patties from my mix of hot and mild sausage. Two pounds of mix fill the 12 pockets. The tin goes in the freezer, and after a day, the patties pop out. – R.G. in Ohio

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Bridge • Steve Becker

South dealer. Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH	
♠	Q 8 3
♥	K Q J 2
♦	Q 6 3
♣	Q 6 5

WEST	EAST
♠	A 9 7 5 4 2
♥	10 7 4 3
♦	J
♣	7 4

SOUTH	
♠	K J
♥	A
♦	A 10 9 7 4
♣	A K J 10 2

The bidding:

South	West	North	East
1 ♦	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
3 ♦	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
6 ♦			

Opening lead — ace of spades.

The Most Important Trick

All too often, a faulty play by declarer on the first trick can cost him the contract. Take this case where South wound up in a horrendous six-diamond contract missing a cashable ace and the K-J-8-x-x of trumps. The blame can be assigned mainly to North, whose leap to four diamonds in an attempt to show extra values led South to credit his partner with much stronger trump support.

This left South to grapple with the problem of how to make six diamonds after West led the ace and another spade. The trouble was that South's grappling did not begin until after he had taken the second spade with his king, at which point it was, sadly, already too late. No matter how he continued, there was no lie of the cards that would permit him to make the contract.

Had South taken more time at trick one to picture a lie of the opposing diamonds that would allow him to succeed, he would have realized that there was only one possibility — the singleton jack in the West hand. No other lie, including the singleton king in either hand, could avert a trump loser.

To get home safely, however, South would need two entries to dummy. Accordingly, he should have dropped the spade king under the ace at trick one and taken the second spade with dummy's queen.

The queen of diamonds is then led, leaving the defense without recourse. If East refuses to cover, declarer next leads a diamond to the ten, crosses to the queen of clubs and leads a diamond to the nine. If East instead covers the diamond queen with the king, declarer wins, leads a club to the queen and finesses the diamond seven to make the slam.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★ ★

12/26

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

Difficulty Level ★

Cryptoquip

PROH XS UQMOHJ UMHWGGSS

NOKWXO W KOGONQMFS

GMBO XO, M RWJ FD WEB

RMX "PRD'E EFWQQS HDP?"

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: CLASSIC SEASONAL SONG ABOUT A LITTLE FELLOW WHO EATS LAMB: "I'M GETTIN' MUTTON FOR CHRISTMAS."

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: U equals F

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| ACROSS | DOWN |
| 1 Impale | 1 Unrivaled |
| 5 Go up and down | 2 Walked (on) |
| 8 Fellow | 3 Zits |
| 12 Killer whale | 4 Collector for the mob |
| 13 Ram's mate | 5 Arthur or Lillie |
| 14 Patriot Nathan | 6 Possess |
| 15 Cursive writing | 7 Hotel furniture |
| 17 Privy to | 8 Scold |
| 18 Plant swelling | 9 Yield |
| 19 Turn blue? | 10 Lotion additive |
| 21 From the top | 11 Teller's partner |
| 24 Writer Buscaglia | 16 Solo of "Star Wars" |
| 25 Fairy tale preposition | |
| 28 Pepsi rival | |
| 30 Namely (Abbr.) | |
| 33 Ford Explorer, e.g. | |
| 34 Bell creation | |
| 35 First lady | |
| 36 Gorilla | |

GET	MALAR	FAR
ARE	ASIDE	ICE
BEACH	HEAD	SRA
	ALT	MOSHED
MEWLER	SETH	
ARI	RAW	SOOTH
MITT	YEA	PORE
ACHED	BUS	KER
	HEAR	RAISED
SCONCE	ICC	
ILL	HITCHHIKE	
LTD	AGILE	REF
OPS	SNEER	ANT

Yesterday's answer 12-26

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
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		