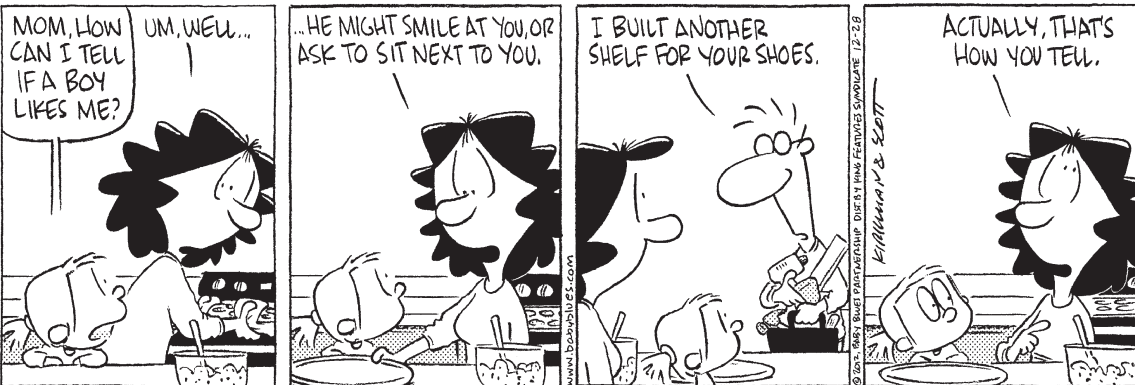
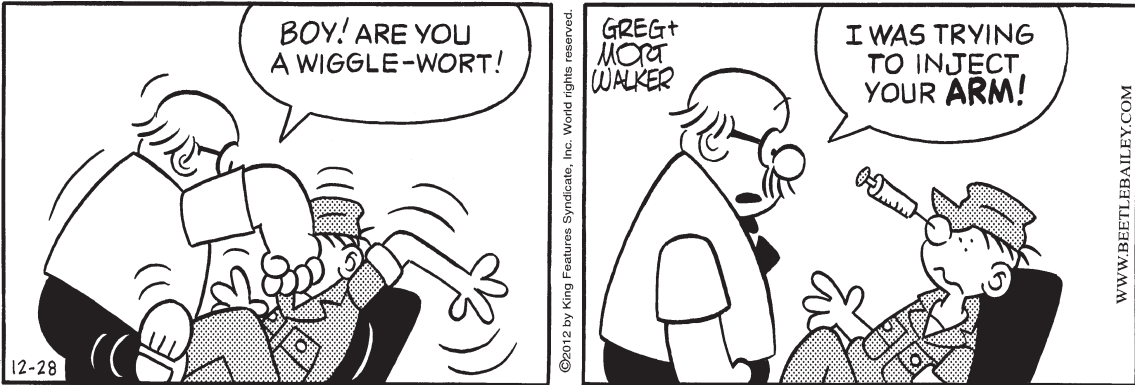


Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



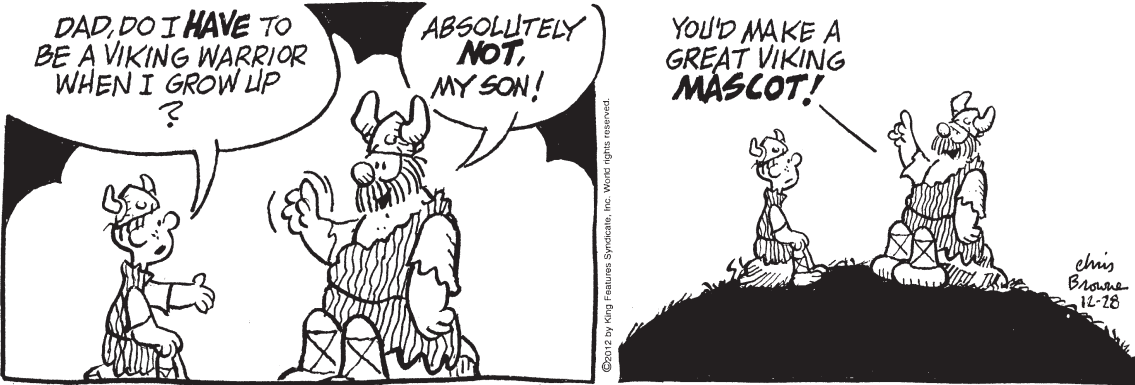
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Blondie • Chic Young



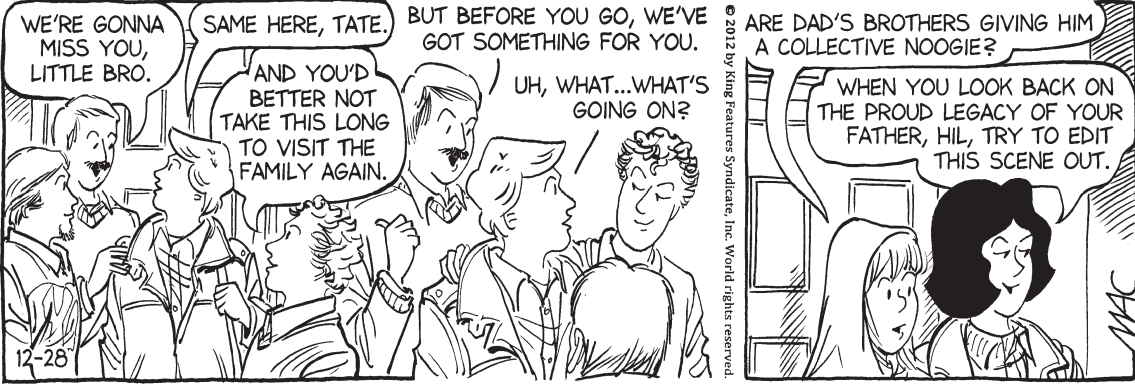
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts

Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Heloise

- Hints from Heloise

Nonstop flights faster than direct

Dear Heloise: Is there a difference between nonstop and direct flights? I am trying to book a flight and am a little confused. – Tanya in Texas

There is a BIG difference between nonstop and direct flights.

Direct flights can have any number of stops, but you do not change planes.

Nonstop flights are just that. There are no stops between your departure city and your destination. Hope this helps making your plans! – Heloise

P.S.: A travel hint from a longtime road warrior: Never take the last flight out! If there is a weather delay or mechanical problem, you're stuck.

SEND A GREAT HINT TO:

Heloise
P.O. Box 795000
San Antonio, TX 78279-5000
E-mail: Heloise@Heloise.com

DECORATION PACKING

Dear Heloise: At the end of a holiday season, I make a list of things I need to replenish – for example, wrapping paper and gift tags. I take my list the next time I go shopping and try to purchase everything I need during after-holiday sales.

If I am unable to purchase something, I make a new list and place it on my calendar for November of next year. – C.C. in New York

SPOT-PROOF TOWELS

Dear Heloise: I am writing in response to your follow-up column on "mystery bleach spots" on towels. I had this problem and discovered that it was from my teenager's acne face cleanser. I bought some new towels and noticed a label on them claiming that they will not bleach out from benzoyl peroxide, so it must be a fairly common problem. – Mary A. in Centerville, Ohio

Mary, this is interesting, and you are right! Some manufacturers are now producing towels supposed to be benzoyl-peroxide-proof or -resistant. If bleach spots are a problem, try looking for these kinds of towels. – Heloise

WIDE AWAKE

Dear Heloise: While driving between two cities, I found a new way to stay alert. I carry my lunch with me with a blue ice pack. I take off my left shoe and sock, and put the ice pack on the floor. When I get a little droopy, I press my foot on the ice pack. I also have one for my face.

Works great! – Sharon P., via e-mail

We love your hint, as long as the ice pack doesn't slip and cause a wreck. – Heloise

NAIL CLIPPING

Dear Readers: Have you ever wondered what is the best way to clip fingernails? Many people use curved clippers and trim in a single clip. This can damage the nails, because it flattens them out, which can cause cracking.

Best is to use straight clippers and trim the nails in three to seven small clips, working from the outside in. When done, just smooth out using a nail file. – Heloise

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Bridge • Steve Becker

You are South, and the bidding has gone:

| East | South | West | North |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1 ♦ | Dble | 1 ♠ | Pass |
| Pass | ? | | |

What would you bid now with each of the following four hands?

1. ♠A7 ♥KQ98 ♦K3 ♣AK542
2. ♠K1073 ♥A85 ♦Q94 ♣AJ2
3. ♠K82 ♥AK8 ♦6 ♣AKQ943
4. ♠AQ3 ♥K92 ♦AJ8 ♣KQJ5

Bidding Quiz

1. Double. This is a takeout double, just as your previous one was. Basically, this double asks partner to bid hearts or clubs, the two suits the opponents haven't bid. At the same time, the second double tells partner you have values well beyond those implied by the initial double.

A two-club bid, instead of a second double, would be wrong on two counts. First, it would understate your actual values. Second, it could also result in winding up in the wrong suit, clubs, instead of the right suit, hearts. The best way to find the proper contract is to double again and let partner choose the suit.

2. Pass. You have no extra values beyond those already indicated, so you should pass one spade. Your partner had a chance to bid voluntarily over one spade and turned it down. If you were to bid one notrump at this stage, you'd be looking for trouble. Besides, West might have difficulty making one spade, since he will be playing the hand in your best suit.

3. Three clubs. This bid, in conjunction with your earlier double, indicates pretty closely the values you have. It shows that your hand was not only too good for a two-club bid on the previous round, but also too good for a two-club bid now, even after having doubled.

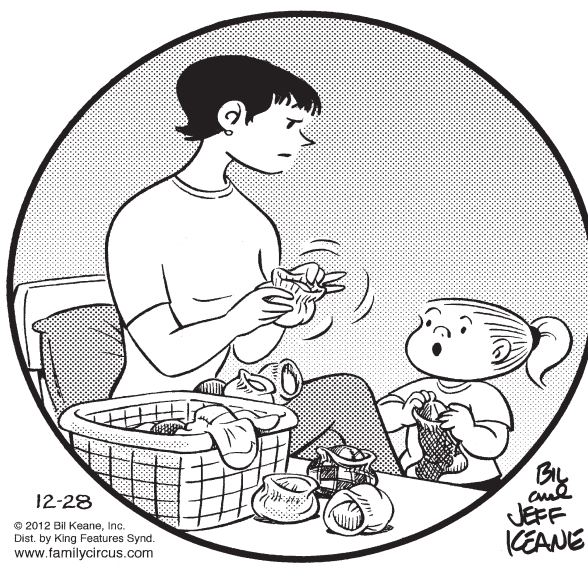
Three clubs urges partner to bid three notrump with a diamond stopper and very little more, since you've guaranteed a strong club suit and an excellent all-around hand.

4. One notrump. This might seem a gross underbid given your 20 high-card points, but you must face the realities of the situation. The chance of finding your partner with six or more points is almost nil; he is much more likely to be in the zero- to three-point range. You should therefore restrain yourself and try to reach the safest partscore contract possible.

Note that in the present case, as contrasted with the first problem, you don't double for takeout a second time. This is because your distribution here is notrump-oriented rather than suit-oriented. Besides, your partner still has the option of bidding a five-card (or longer) heart or club suit at this stage if he is so inclined.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★ ★★

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

Cryptoquip

DXOTNY TY WPX JGKAGYR UPXDY

XHXDMJNQMN UNVKQ KTAGX WN

WGAX NY G RVFXDHTRTYO

F N R T W T N Y : J N R R - Y T G .

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: BECAUSE I SAID "I DISLIKE MOST LENDING INSTITUTIONS," ONE MIGHT CALL THAT A BANK STATEMENT.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: N equals O

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| ACROSS | 38 Barbecue venue | 2 Wall climber | 19 Code name? |
| 1 Eldrick Woods' alias | 41 Army member? | 3 "Coming through!" | 21 "Indeed" |
| 6 Cornfield cry | 43 Homer's neighbor | 4 List-ending abbr. | 22 Coach Par-seghian |
| 9 Egyptian boy king | 44 Rotated | 5 Detox and such | 24 DVR fore-runner |
| 12 Egg-shaped | 45 Acerbic | 6 Road Runner's foe | 26 Betsy Ross' skill |
| 13 Son-gun link | 47 "Wheel of Fortune" inspiration | 7 Somewhere out there | 28 Representative |
| 14 Inseparable | 49 Gathered leaves | 8 Pale | 30 Sigma preceder |
| 15 Talking bird | 52 Expert | 9 Clan symbol | 32 Thailand's capital |
| 16 Chinese river | 53 Tramcar contents | 10 Decompress a computer file | 33 Recline |
| 18 Alluring beauty (Var.) | 54 Bring forth | 11 Adolescents | 34 TV announcer Hall |
| 20 Check | 55 Marry | 17 Preacher Billy | 36 Poured |
| 21 Deviate off course | 56 Conclusion | | 38 "Nuts!" |
| 23 Automation, briefly | 57 Comedian Wanda | | 39 Quickly |
| 24 Sirens | | | 40 Fixed a piano |
| 25 Baseball stats | | | 42 Garage stack |
| 27 Get to | | | 45 Horse house |
| 29 Lord Wimsey's creator | | | 46 Almost black |
| 31 Famed WWII pin-up girl | | | 48 Larry's pal |
| 35 Tourist's query | | | 50 — out a living |
| 37 Hotel staffer | | | 51 Moines lead-in |

Solution time: 25 mins.

| | | |
|----------|----------|------|
| AURA | PAS | SPOT |
| CRAB | ELL | PERE |
| NANA | NEO | INCA |
| ELICIT | BOREAL | |
| USA | NIL | |
| ALPS | CAPETOWN | |
| NEE | LYE | PIA |
| NINETEEN | METS | |
| DNA | AGA | |
| CAUCUS | LOITER | |
| OSLO | TAI | DIME |
| TIME | ADZ | ENID |
| | ROE | NERO |

Yesterday's answer 12-28

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 12 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 15 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 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 | | | |