

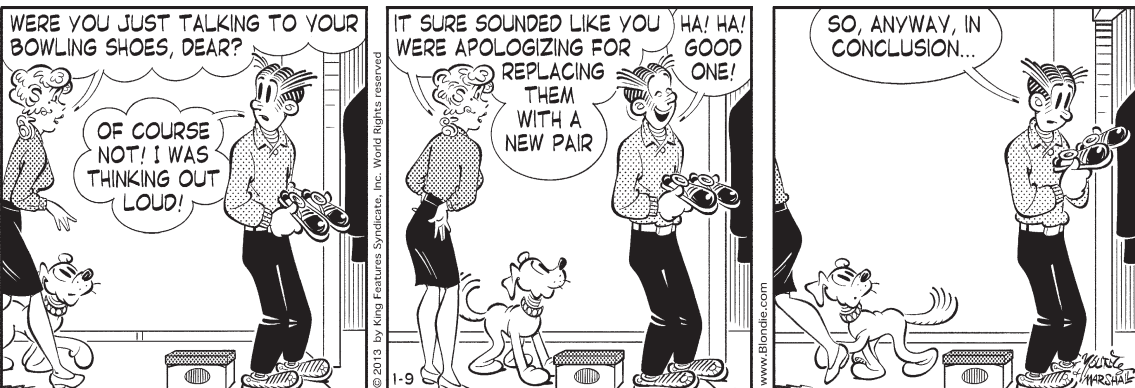
Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



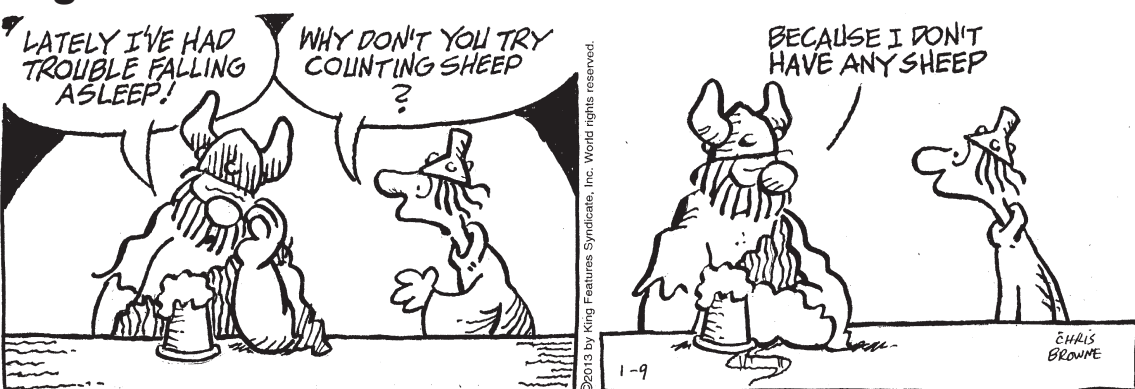
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



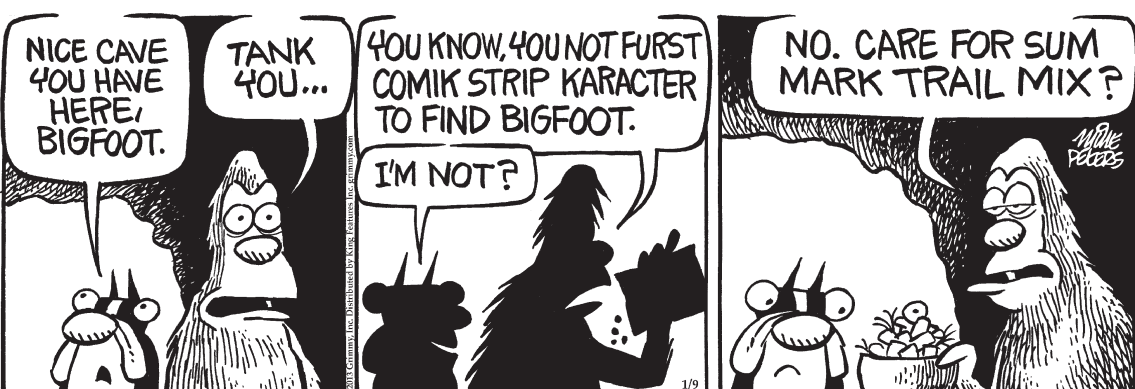
Blondie • Chic Young



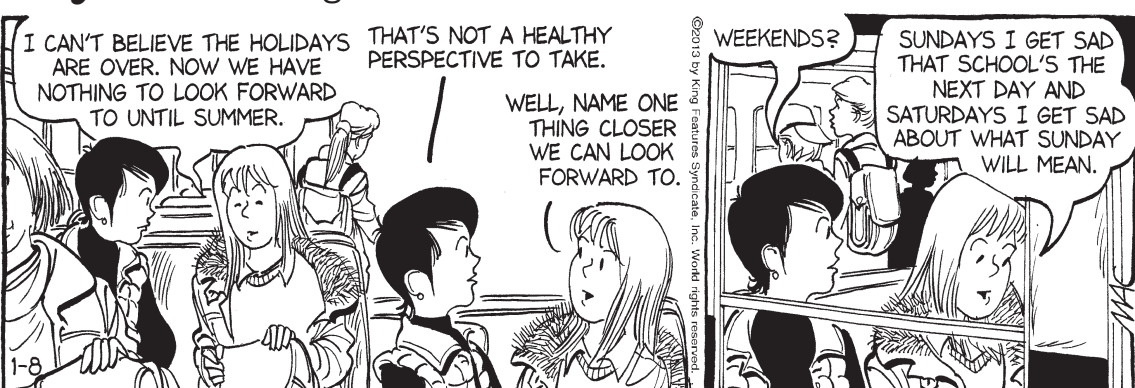
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



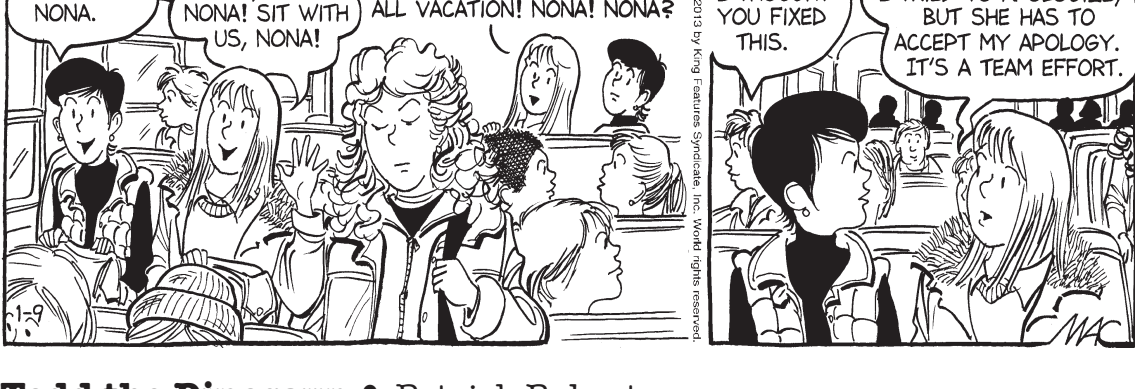
Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Heloise

• Hints from Heloise

Just how long will spices keep?

Dear Heloise: I read your column every day in *The (Fredericksburg, Va.) Free Lance-Star*. My question is about how long you should keep spices. I know that when spices were in tins, they couldn't be kept longer than a year, but now that they are in jars, does the same rule apply? – Virginia C., Stafford, Va.

Well, Virginia, there are still some spices in tins, but the majority are sold in glass or small plastic containers.

Here is a quick guide:

• Ground spices are good for two to three years.

• Whole spices, three to four years.

• Herbs, one to three years.

• Seasoning blends, one to three years.

To help keep the spices fresh, store them in a cool, dry place, and keep them out of direct light. If you are ever in doubt about spices, because the taste or color is off, replace the spice.

An added hint: Extracts usually are good for about four years. However, pure vanilla will last indefinitely! – Heloise

SEND A GREAT HINT TO:

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EVAPORATED MILK

Dear Heloise: Help! Will canned evaporated milk work as a substitute for milk when baking? – Sherril, via e-mail

Yes, evaporated milk can be used in place of milk in recipes. Many use it to add a richer, creamier flavor, so substitute it all you want! Added hint: Did you know evaporated milk is real milk? It is heated just enough to get rid of about half of the water in it. – Heloise

P.S.: Evaporated milk is available fat-free and is wonderful to use in coffee or hot tea to boot!

DRIED CRANBERRIES

Dear Heloise: I like to put some dried cranberries in my salad, and I really like the orange-flavored ones, but I can't seem to find them anymore. My solution is to add some grated fresh orange rinds to the newly opened package. This keeps just as well as ever, and I get my orange cranberries. -- Doris B., Spokane, Wash.

JUICING VEGETABLES

Dear Heloise: I love making fresh vegetable juice. It takes a lot of time, but is worth it. I have found ways to cut down on the work.

First, I clean and cut the veggies at night, put them in a plastic bag and place them in the refrigerator, and in the morning they are ready to go. I save time by putting a plastic bag as a liner in the receptacle that the roughage goes into. I take out the bag and place another in for the next day. I also use the same bags that the veggies come in so that I am recycling. – Nancy T. in New York

EASY CLEAN

Dear Heloise: After grilling steaks, burgers or other meat on your countertop grill, wet two paper towels, fold and lay on the unplugged grill. Close the lid, and by the time your meal is over, your grill will have steamed itself clean. Use the towels to wipe up the grill, and it's ready for next time. – R.D. in Kansas

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Bridge • Steve Becker

South dealer.
Both sides vulnerable.

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

WEST
♠ A J 7 5 2
♥ Q 5
♦ J 4
♣ Q 10 8 4

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

SOUTH
♠ K Q 10
♥ 4 2
♦ A K 9 3
♣ A K 7 6

The bidding:
South West North East
1♦ Pass 1♥ Pass
2NT Pass 3NT
Opening lead — five of spades.

Second-Hand Low?

Playing second-hand low on defense is generally a sound practice, but, as with all generalities, there are occasional exceptions.

West led the five of spades against three notrump, taken by South with the ten. With only eight tricks in view, the most promising source of a ninth trick obviously lay in the heart suit. So at trick two, declarer led a heart and finessed the eight after West followed low.

East won with the jack -- he could have saved a trick by ducking -- and returned a spade. Eventually South scored 10 tricks consisting of four hearts, two spades, two diamonds and two clubs.

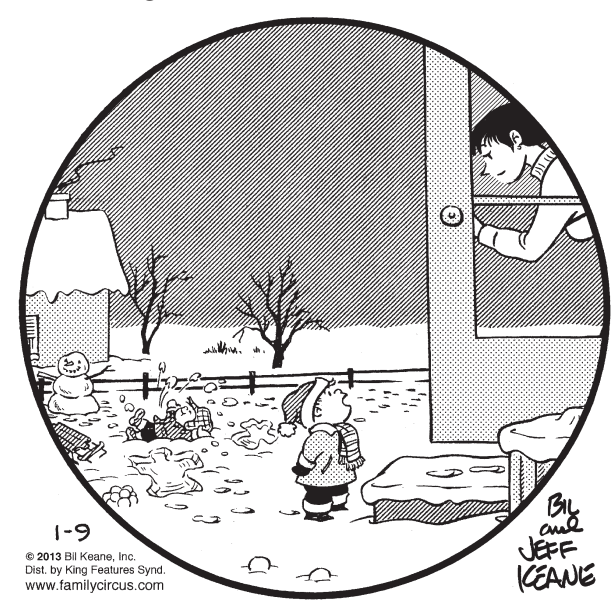
However, West could have beaten the contract by playing the queen on the first heart lead instead of mechanically following low. This could not have cost him a trick. If declarer had the jack, all five of dummy's hearts would be tricks anyway, while if East had the jack, the queen play might limit dummy to two tricks. South could not have recovered from this play and would have finished down one, scoring only two tricks in each suit.

It is true that a defender usually follows low when he is second-hand and seldom plays a high card in order to force a higher one from dummy (or declarer). But here the queen is clearly the right play, since it is very likely that if West plays low on the first heart lead, declarer will also play low from dummy.

It follows that if it is to declarer's advantage to play low if West does, it must be to West's disadvantage to allow him to do so. West should therefore put up the queen.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★★ 1/09

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.

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

Cryptoquip

CN JPOUX EPGHU HCZF DP
BSLJWF CJD P DSLD SLHHPFFF
BPTDGQF, CD'HH OF XPGMT
NPM DSF QLTZCJW.

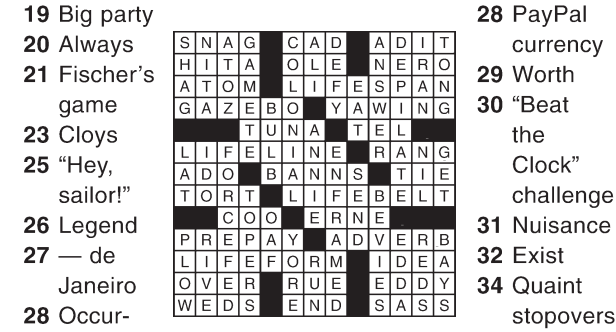
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHICH CLIMATE CONDITION DO YOU THINK TOADS WOULD LOOK FORWARD TO THE MOST? FROGGY WEATHER.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: D equals T

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Chaps
4 Insane
7 Location
8 Skeptical sort
10 Original
"Trivial Pursuit" edition
11 Traitor
Benedict
13 Monopoly
avenue
neighbor-
ing
"Go"
16 Wine-
house or
Poehler
17 Wooden
strips
18 I love
(Lat.)
19 Big party
20 Always
21 Fischer's
game
23 Cloys
25 "Hey,
sailor!"
26 Legend
27 — de
Janeiro
28 Occur-
rence

DOWN
3 Gets
snug and
cozy
4 Gift
down
15 Neither
mate
19 "30
Rock"
star
20 Biblical
verb
ending
21 Main
22 Sweat-
shirt that
can cover
your
head
23 Harmoni-
zation
24 Try
25 Upper
limb
26 Brawl
28 PayPal
currency
29 Worth
30 "Beat
the
Clock"
challenge
31 Nuisance
32 Exist
34 Quaint
stopovers
35 Middy



Yesterday's answer 1-9

