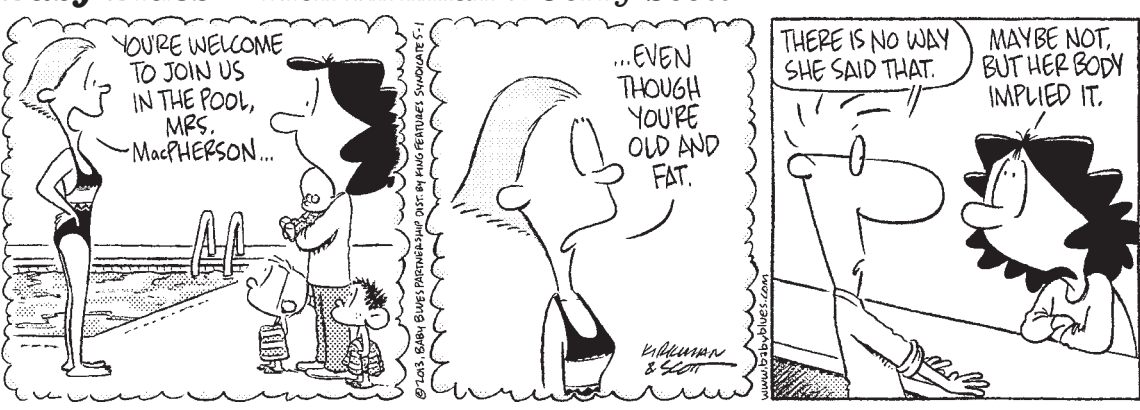
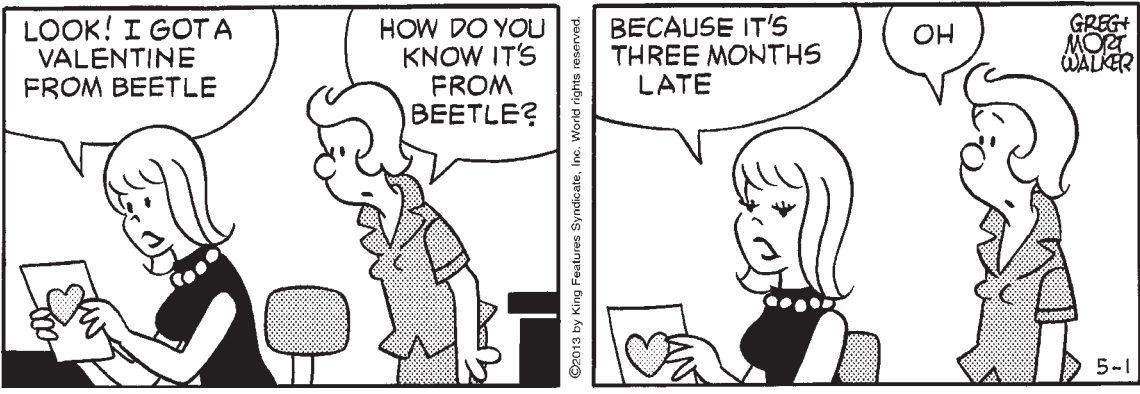


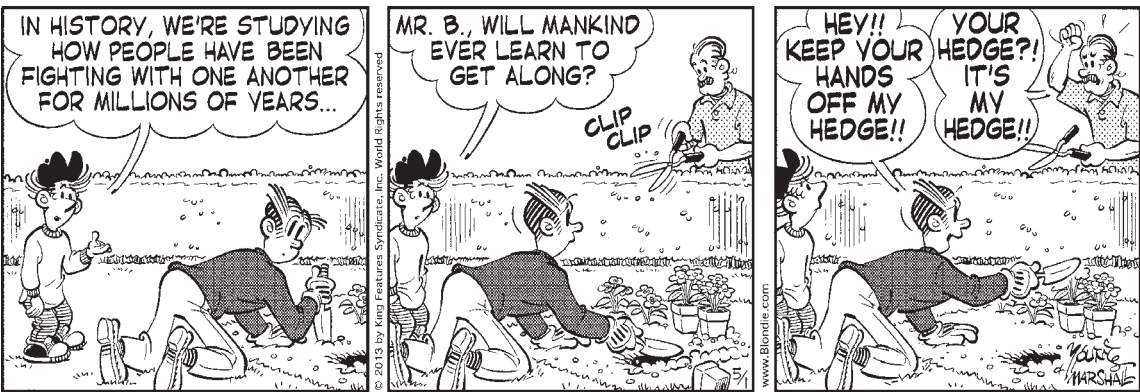
Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



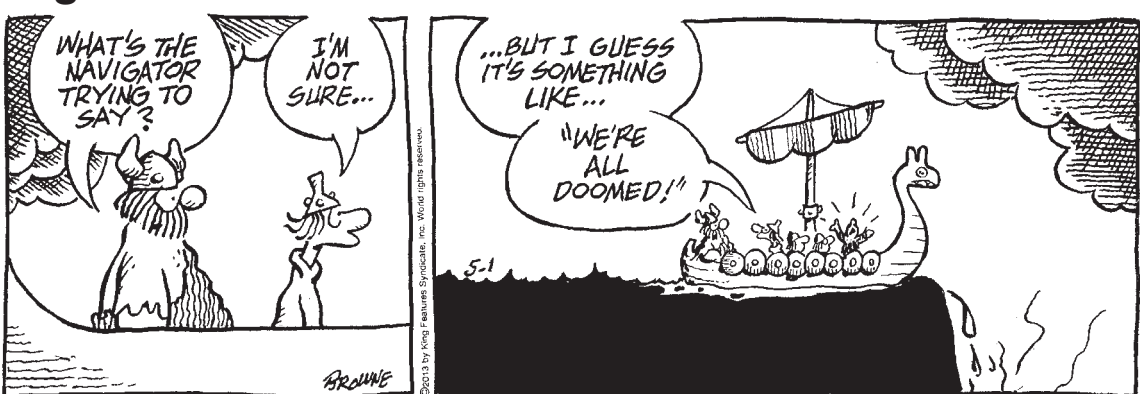
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



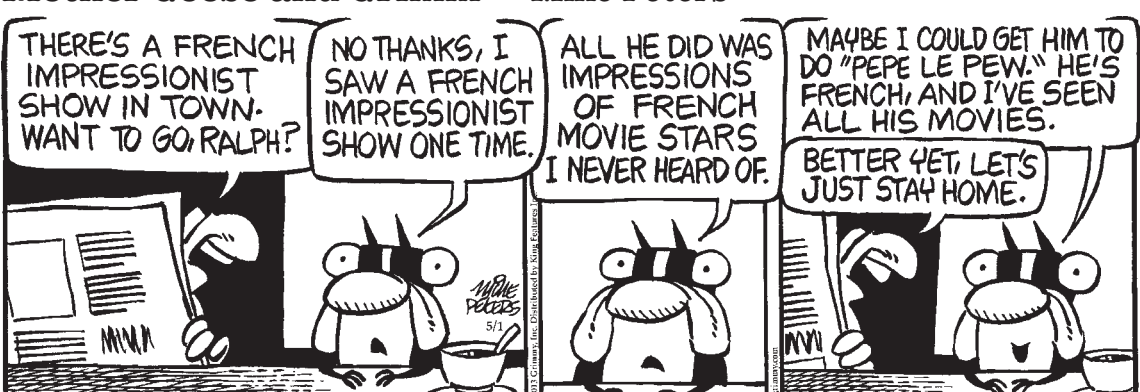
Blondie • Chic Young



Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



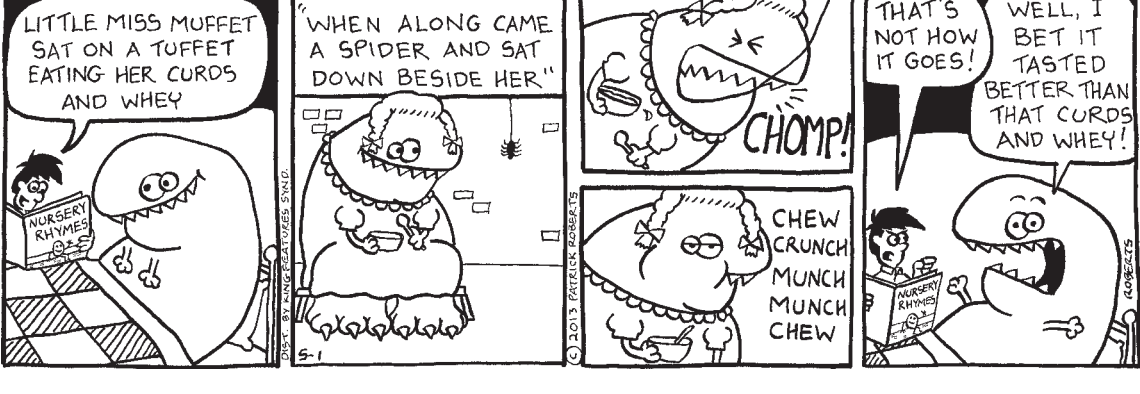
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Heloise

- Hints from Heloise

Italian 'al dente' says pasta's firm

Dear Heloise: What does the term "al dente" mean when you are cooking pasta? — Clark R., via e-mail

"Al dente" is an Italian term that translates as "to the bite" or "to the tooth," and it means the pasta is firm when you bite into it, but still a little tender. Just a few seconds can make the difference whether pasta is overcooked.

And keep in mind, it will continue to "cook" (and soften up) after removing from the heat. So, if you are cooking it and it's going to be a short while until it's served, I think it's wise to undercook it a little. Here's how to tell:

When the pasta starts to soften, take out a piece and bite into it or pinch it in half. As soon as it is tender to bite through, with just a dot of the white starch showing in the middle, it will be al dente when served a little later. If serving immediately, pinch a piece, and if you see no white dot, it's done!

Some may disagree with me about the cooking until done, but think about it — if you cook until done, wait a few minutes to drain, add hot gravy or sauce and serve in only five to 10 minutes, it's still cooking! — Heloise

SEND A GREAT HINT TO:

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TEST YOUR HINT IQ

Dear Readers: Which of the following fruits has the most fiber per serving?

- A) One medium apple (with peel)
- B) One medium orange
- C) 1 cup blueberries
- D) 1 cup raspberries

The answer is D, raspberries, with 8 grams of fiber per cup. Blueberries have 3.5 grams, an orange 3.4 grams and an apple 3.3 grams. Fiber is important in your diet, so grab your favorite fruits and add fiber plus great taste to your diet today! — Heloise

P.S.: You may be getting your fruits and vegetables by drinking a liquid, but are you getting fiber? Check the labels, folks!

SPRINKLE SHAKER

Dear Heloise: My 3-year-old grandson loves to bake with me. When making cutout cookies, I frost them, but I had to find something "easy" for him to put sprinkles on the cookies. As I buy the sprinkles in tubs, I needed a shaker he could use.

I tried salt and pepper shakers, but they had too many holes to make the cookies look good. I have a small, plastic toothpick canister with one hole in the top. It's great, and if he drops it, no broken glass. He can shake the sprinkles, and just enough comes out, with minimum mess. We have had many wonderful baking days together, and he does a great job! — Kathleen A. in New York

UNPOPPED KERNELS

Dear Heloise: Here is a hint for when using microwave popcorn envelopes: Once the bag of popcorn has popped, cut the tip of the corner off at the bottom and let all the unpoped kernels drain out before opening. (Be careful of the hot steam. — Heloise). — Leola B. in Montana

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Bridge • Steve Becker

South dealer.
Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ A 9 6
♥ J 10 5
♦ A 7 3
♣ 7 4

EAST
♠ K Q 10 5 3 2
♥ Q 9 6 3 2
♦ 4
♣ 5

WEST
♠ 8 4
♥ A K 7 4
♦ 5 2
♣ Q J 9 6 2

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

The bidding:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♣ Pass
2 ♣ Pass 3 ♣ Pass
4 NT Pass 5 ♣ Pass
6 ♣
Opening lead: king of hearts.

The Pause That Refreshes

A conscientious declarer tries to guard against all possible distributions of the adverse cards. Even when a contract seems certain, he asks himself, "What can defeat me?"

This habitually cautious approach can pay handsome dividends. Had South been a practicing member of this school, he would have made six diamonds on today's deal instead of going down one.

West led the K-A of hearts. Declarer ruffed the second heart, drew two rounds of trumps and cashed the A-K of clubs. When East showed out on the second club, declarer was in trouble. He couldn't ruff his three club losers with dummy's two remaining trumps, so he eventually lost a club and went down one.

By drawing two rounds of trumps, South in effect staked the outcome on a 4-2 or 3-3 club division — an 84 percent probability. But it did not protect against a 5-1 club division, which occurs 15 percent of the time.

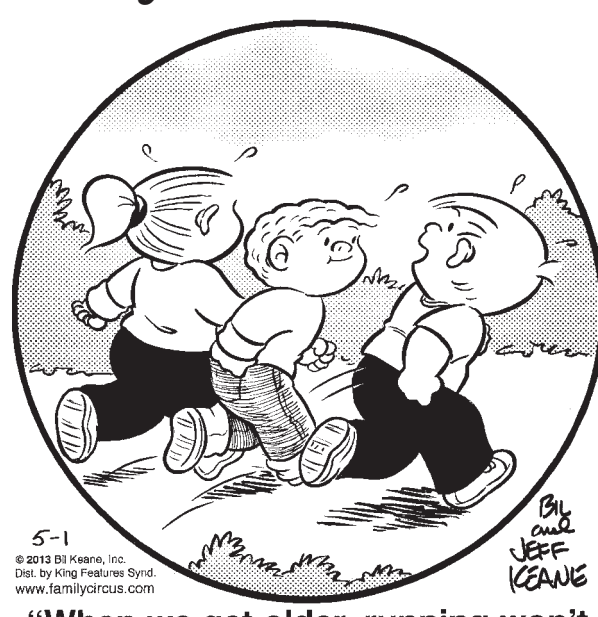
To guard against this possibility, declarer should have drawn only one round of trumps and then played the A-K of clubs. Had he done this, he could have ruffed three clubs in dummy and made the slam.

The basis for choosing this line of play is that only a bad club break can defeat the slam. But if the player with the singleton club started with only one trump, the slam can still be made.

It is true that if the defender with one club has more than one trump, this line of play will fail. But in that case, the slam is highly unlikely to make no matter how declarer proceeds.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★★ 5/01

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.

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

Cryptoquip

J C S Q Y G V E I L I D Z G W

J K U Q R R J E G I C Q S Q L R Y K I C N J R

N Q Z Z J E G I P D C I Z W U Q Z Z J V O I

J C ' R P D W C Q Q O Z Y I G J L O

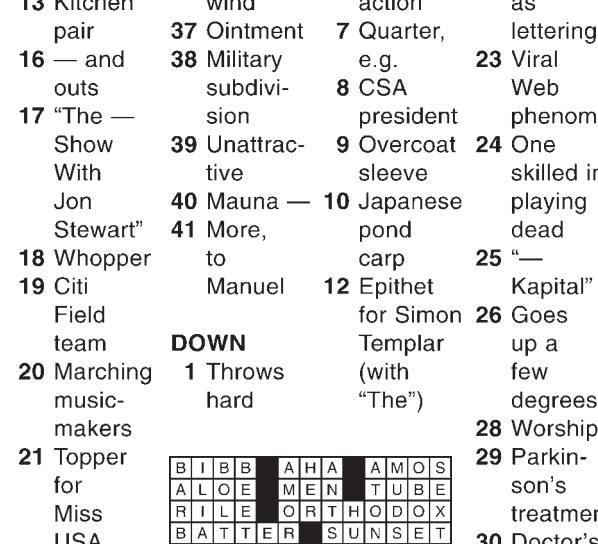
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: FOR AN AIRPLANE TO GET OFF THE GROUND, I SUPPOSE IT NEEDS TO HAVE FLYABILITY VIABILITY.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: C equals T

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS**
- 1 Pos-sesses
 - 4 Cribbage scorer
 - 7 Ringlet
 - 8 Preclude
 - 10 "M*A*S*H" setting
 - 11 Scents
 - 13 Kitchen pair
 - 16 — and outs
 - 17 "The — Show With Jon Stewart"
 - 18 Whopper
 - 19 Citi Field team
 - 20 Marching music-makers
 - 21 Topper for Miss USA
 - 23 Rush-mo-rain or Rainier
 - 25 Responsibility
 - 26 Cried
 - 27 Lawyers' org.
- DOWN**
- 2 Memorable mission
 - 3 —
 - 4 Danger
 - 5 Black wood
 - 6 Ready for action
 - 7 Quarter, e.g.
 - 8 CSA president
 - 9 Overcoat sleeve
 - 10 Japanese pond carp
 - 12 Epithet for Simon Templar (with "The")
 - 14 Informa-tion
 - 15 Scarlet
 - 19 Spring month
 - 20 On the other hand
 - 21 Big brass
 - 22 Slanted, as lettering
 - 23 Viral
 - 24 One skilled in playing dead
 - 25 "— Kapital"
 - 26 Goes up a few degrees
 - 28 Worship
 - 29 Parkin-son's treatment
 - 30 Doctor's orders?
 - 31 Jealousy
 - 32 Iron or Bronze
 - 34 Out of control
 - 35 Long story

Yesterday's answer 5-1



10 13 16 21 22 25 27 33 36 38 40

7 8 9 11 12 14 15 17 18 19 20 23 24 26 28 29 30 31 32 34 35 37 39 41