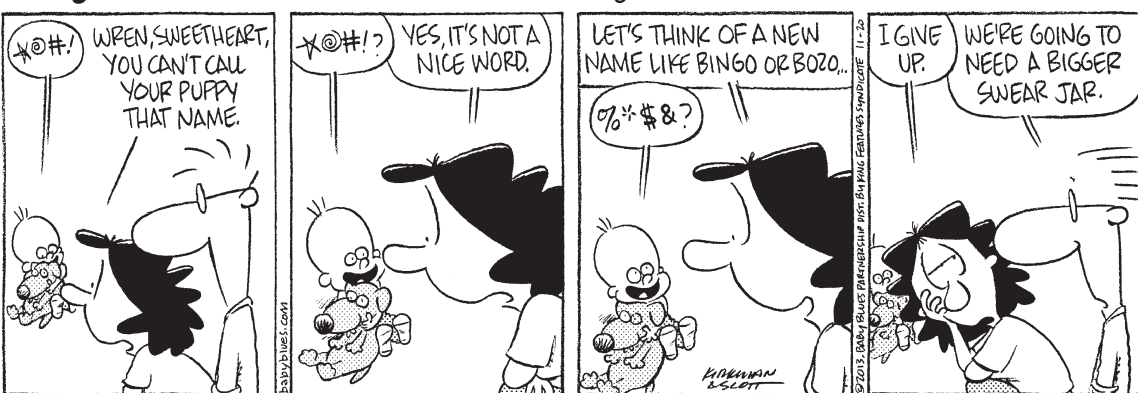
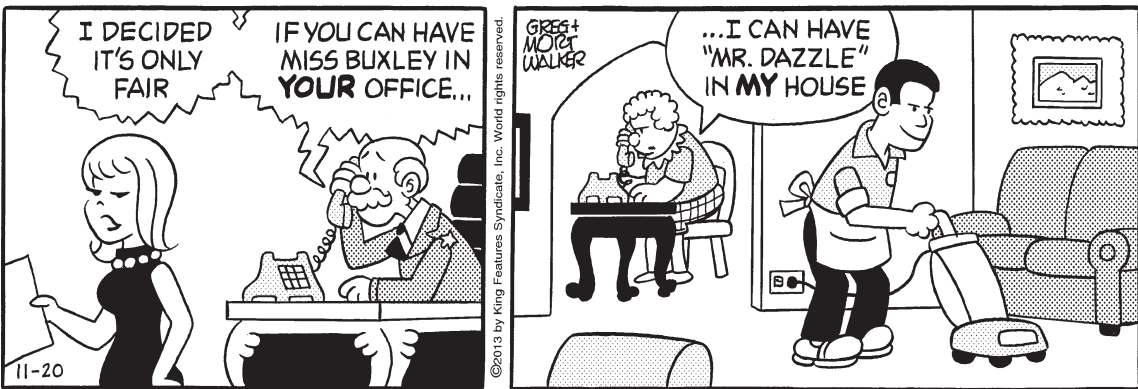


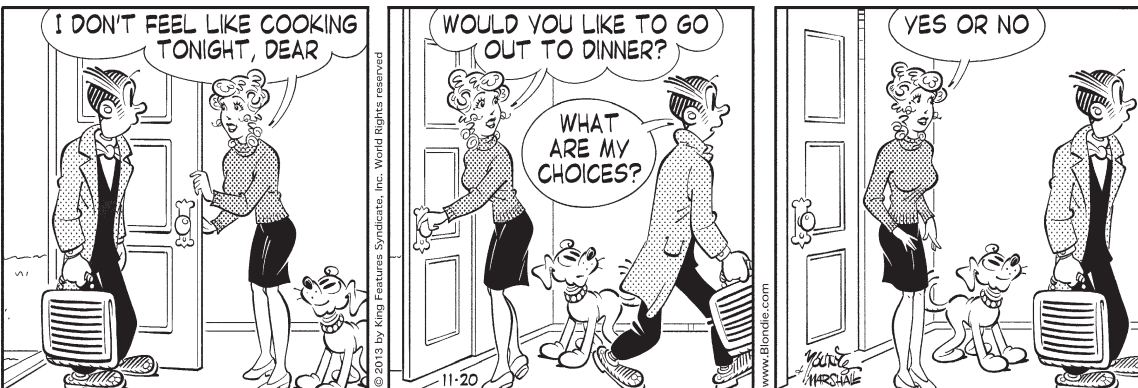
**Baby Blues** • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



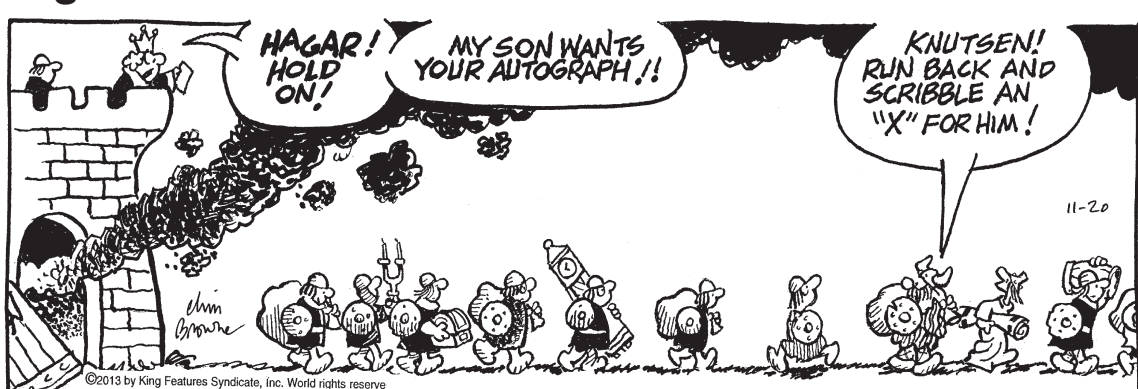
**Beetle Bailey** • Mort Walker



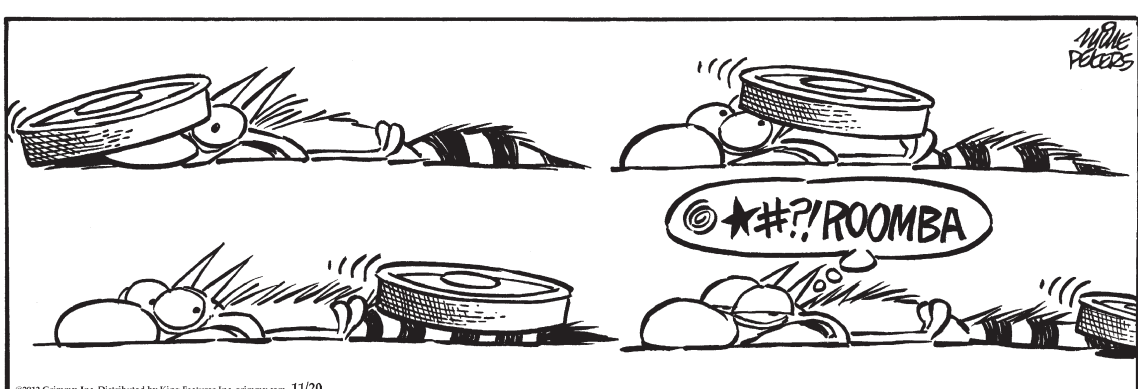
**Blondie** • Chic Young



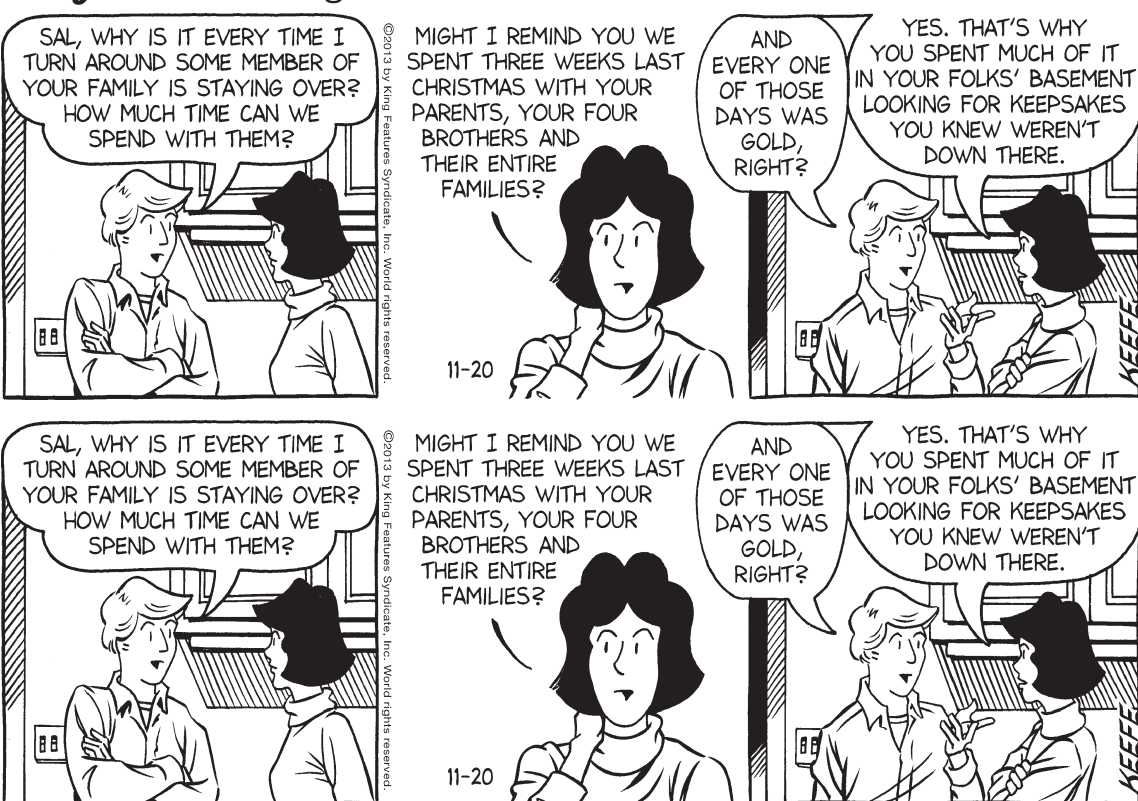
**Hagar the Horrible** • Chris Browne



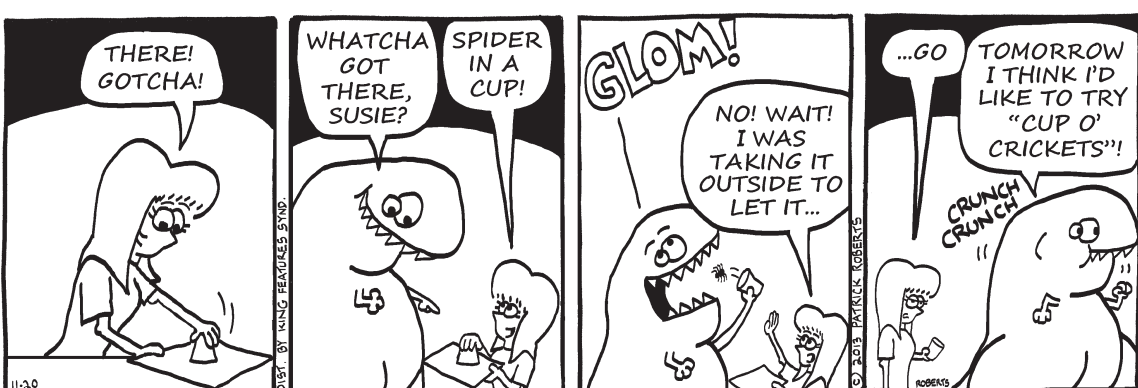
**Mother Goose and Grimm** • Mike Peters



**Sally Forth** • Greg Howard



**Todd the Dinosaur** • Patrick Roberts



**Zits** • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



**Heloise**

- Hints from Heloise

**Be careful – keep hot pad dry**

Dear Heloise: I recently badly burned my fingers while baking cookies because I failed to notice that my hot pad had gotten damp in the process of washing and reusing the cookie sheets. I knew that a damp hot pad or kitchen towel would allow you to be burned, but I was working too quickly that day to notice.

Later, when explaining to my friends and family how the burn happened, I was surprised to hear that some of them didn't know you could be burned by using a damp pad to pick up something very hot. The extreme heat turns the moisture immediately to steam, and the burn can be quite bad.

Please let readers know to watch out for this and never use a damp pad or towel to pick up anything really hot. — Bonnie P. in Houston

Ouch! But in truth, I've done the same thing! Once learned, never again. — Heloise

SEND A GREAT HINT TO:

Heloise  
P.O. Box 795000  
San Antonio, TX 78279-5000  
Email: Heloise(at)Heloise.com  
**FREEZING AVOCADOS**

Dear Heloise: To always have fresh avocados on hand, I peel the avocados, cut them in half and remove the seed. I put the avocado halves in a vacuum-sealed bag and place in the freezer. When I want an avocado, I simply open the bag and take out what I want. I reseed the avocado in the vacuum bag and return to the freezer. They thaw quickly and taste fresh. — Lynda in Amarillo, Texas

For those readers who do not own a vacuum sealer, after removing the seed, press plastic wrap against the avocado flesh. Put the seed back in (to keep the avocado flesh from getting mushy) on top of the plastic and place the entire half, seed included, in a freezer zip-top bag. Store avocado in the refrigerator or the freezer until needed. — Heloise

P.S.: You may want to "double-bag" the avocado just to be safe.

**RANCH POPCORN**

Dear Heloise: I know people put seasonings or cheese on popcorn. Not being a huge popcorn fan, I have yet to try it. My daughter puts dry ranch dressing on popcorn for her kids. Needless to say, the family insisted I try it. It's delicious. I thought it would make an excellent hint, since I would have never thought of it. — D.H. in New Jersey

**GRATED BUTTER**

When you get ready to bake and the butter is in the freezer or refrigerator, just grab the cheese grater and grate it. Now, I never soften the butter before baking. — Virginia D., Moody, Texas

**CAKE CHECK**

Dear Heloise: I was baking a cake and found a simple way to check to see if the cake was done. Instead of a toothpick, I wanted something long enough so I wouldn't burn myself and could check without having to get the cake out of the oven. I used a piece of raw spaghetti. — T.A., via email.

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**Bridge** • Steve Becker

South dealer.  
Both sides vulnerable.  
**NORTH**  
♠ 4 2  
♥ A K Q 9 8  
♦ 7 6 3  
♣ A 8 3  
**WEST**  
♠ J 5  
♥ 10 5 4 3  
♦ J 10 9 8  
♣ Q 6 4  
**EAST**  
♠ 9 8 7 6 3  
♥ 16  
♦ A 5 4 2  
♣ 10 5  
**SOUTH**  
♠ A K Q 10  
♥ 7 2  
♦ K Q  
♣ K J 9 7 2  
The bidding:  
South West North East  
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♥ Pass  
1 ♣ Pass 3 ♠ Pass  
4 ♣ Pass 5 ♣ Pass  
6 ♣  
Opening lead — jack of diamonds.

**Card-Reading**

It isn't difficult to make six clubs on this deal if you peek at the opposing cards. You simply lead the jack of clubs from your hand at some point and let it ride if West follows low.

But that is far from the normal thing to do. Percentage-wise, it is much better to lead a club to the ace and finesse the jack on the way back. This would fail in the actual deal, and declarer, having already lost a diamond on the first trick, would be down one.

However, when the deal was played many years ago by all-time great Waldemar von Zedtwitz, he made the slam. Never one to simply settle for the obvious play, von Zedtwitz decided to postpone tackling trumps until he could gain more information about the opposing distribution.

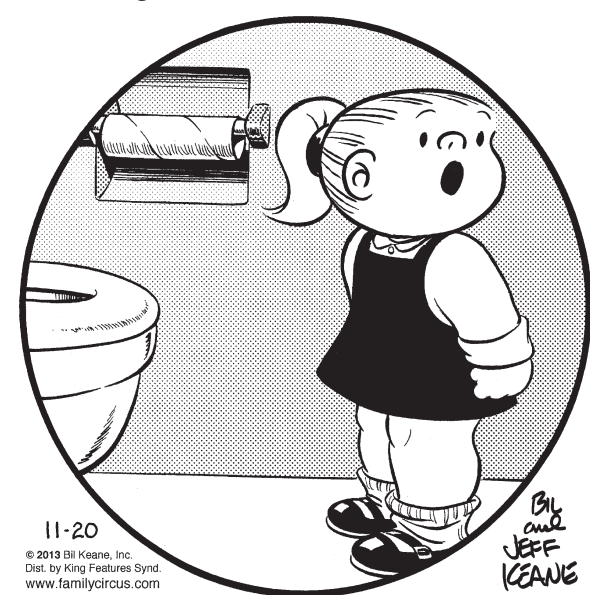
After winning East's diamond return at trick two, he cashed the A-K of spades, noting with interest the fall of West's jack. This was the opening von Zedtwitz was looking for, and he exploited it to the hilt.

At trick five, he continued with the queen of spades, on which West discarded a diamond. Convinced that West would have trumped the queen if he had worthless clubs, and also that West would probably have trumped with the ten if he had it, von Zedtwitz placed West with the queen of clubs.

Accordingly, he next led the jack of clubs, and it was curtains for the defense. In practice, West ducked the jack, von Zedtwitz played low from dummy, and the slam was home. It would not have helped West to cover the jack. Either way, the queen was a goner.

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**Family Circus** • Bil Keane



11-20  
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www.familycircus.com

**Conceptis Sudoku** • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★ ★ 11/20

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

**Cryptoquip**

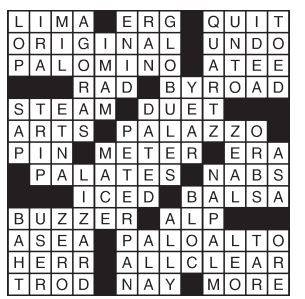
N SKUL ZSUZ PBXZBLF QNOSZ  
FZULZ ZBRZNTU U ZBJJKK  
XUTPV MUL MKXURFK NZ  
SUF QUTV SKUZS MKTKJNZF.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN A GROUP OF RELIGIOUS FOLKS DWELL IN AN ABBEY, I ASSUME THEY NEED TO PAY THE MONKLY RENT.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Z equals T

**Crossword** • Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS**
- 1 Track circuit
  - 4 "Star —"
  - 8 Dissolve
  - 12 Ailing
  - 13 Red gem
  - 14 Met melody
  - 15 Extinct New Zealand bird
  - 16 Musical accompaniment
  - 18 1974 movie dog
  - 20 Kreskin's claim
  - 21 Guitars' kin
  - 24 Naval academy student
  - 28 Hurdle
  - 32 Franc replacement
  - 33 Expert
  - 34 Quaint contraction
  - 36 Scratch powder
  - 37 Bath powder
  - 39 Stubborn
  - 41 Bend over
- DOWN**
- 2 Lotion additive
  - 3 Blueprint
  - 4 Three-somes in charge
  - 5 Abrade
  - 6 Recede
  - 7 "South Park" kid
  - 8 Heckle or Jeckle
  - 9 Geological period
  - 10 Torched
  - 11 Eastern "way"
  - 17 Doctrine
  - 19 Stick out
  - 22 Reverberate
  - 23 Thick slices
  - 25 Russian legislative assembly
  - 26 "Phooey!"
  - 27 Bygone times
  - 28 Chooses (for)
  - 29 Pesky kid
  - 30 Diva's piece
  - 31 Within (Pref.)
  - 35 Showbiz flops
  - 38 Universe
  - 40 Sleep phenom
  - 42 Shell game need
  - 45 Performances
  - 47 Throat-clearing sound
  - 48 Sitarist's rendition
  - 49 Pairs
  - 50 Scull prop
  - 51 Purchase
  - 52 Consumed
  - 53 "Eureka!"
  - 54 Rule, for short



Yesterday's answer 11-20

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					60			61		