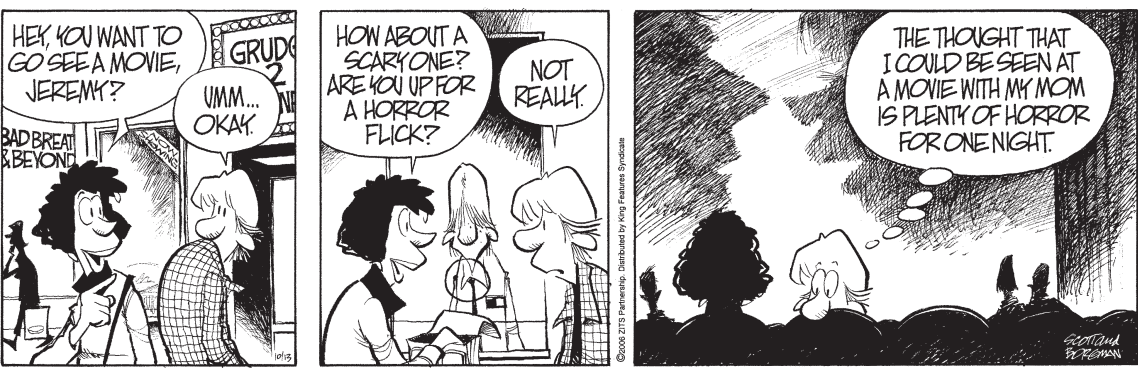
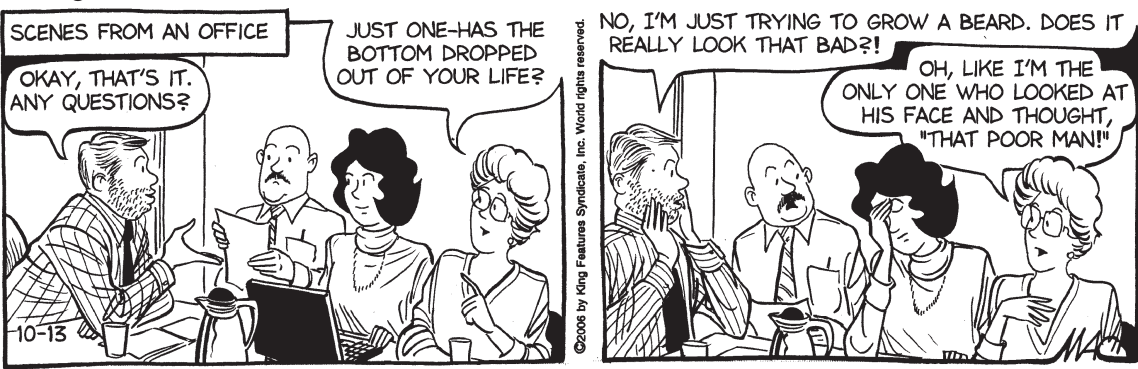


Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



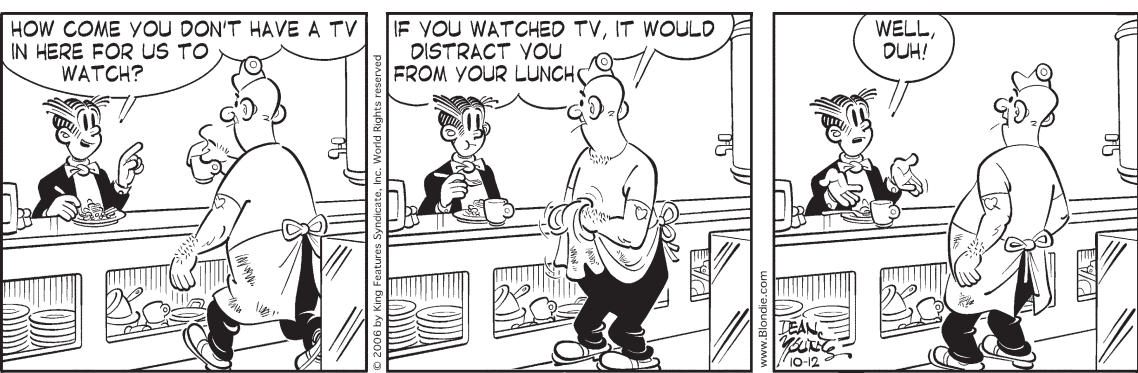
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



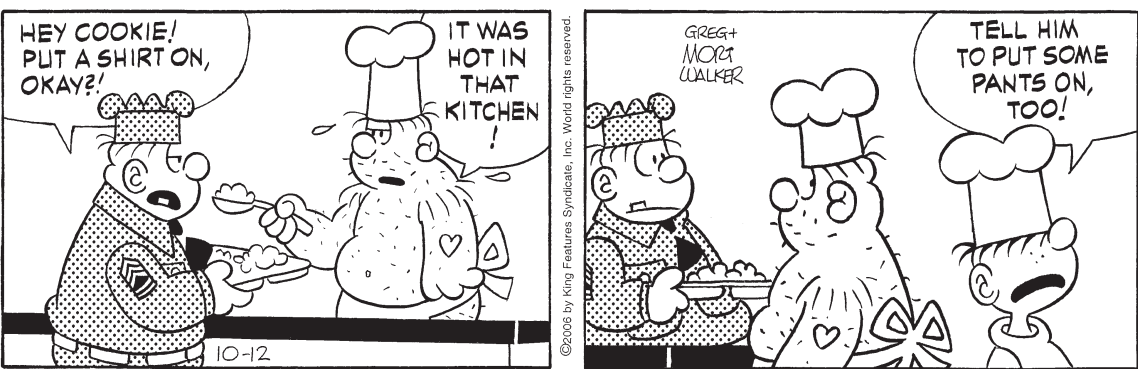
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



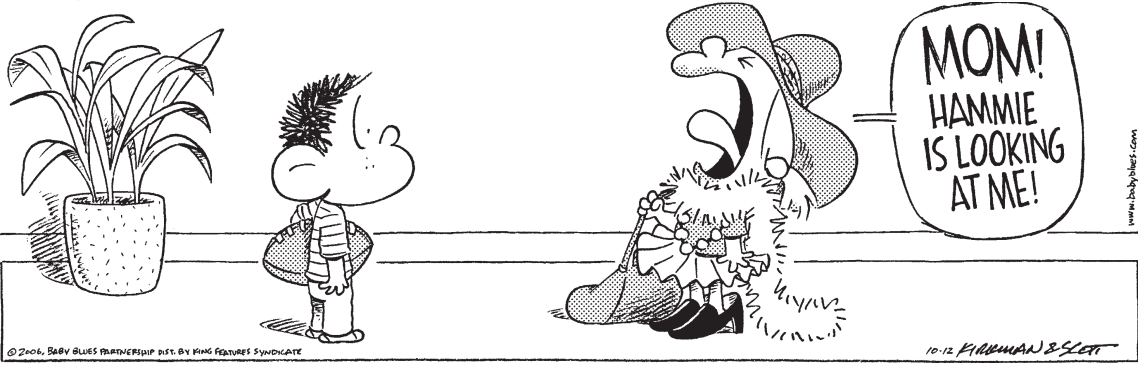
Blondie • Chic Young



Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



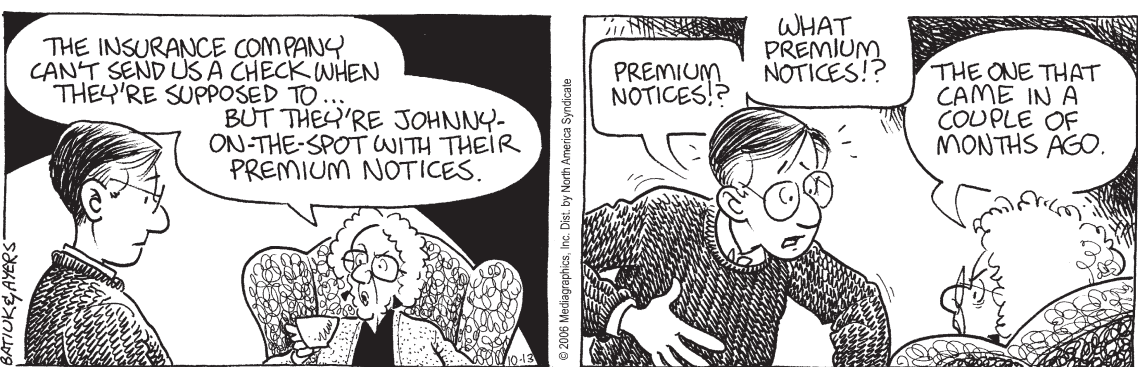
Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



Crankshaft • Tom Batiuk and Chuck Ayers



Crankshaft • Tom Batiuk and Chuck Ayers



Cryptoquip

MDFBS WRDWHJGLDN CFY

LFJDC FB G AKV, FL'C BK

VKBND A F MDSGB LK

DYODAFDBWD WRDCC OGFB.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF YOU HAPPEN TO LOVE COOLING DEVICES, YOU SHOULD DEFINITELY BELONG TO A FAN CLUB.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: C equals S

# Promotion presents new problems

Dear Dr. Brothers: I recently was promoted from an hourly pay position to a yearly salary at my office. I'm pretty young (28), and I have plans to keep rising in the company. But my problem is the working hours. When I punched a time clock, I had my nine (actually eight and a half) hours set, and on some occasions I would be asked to stay an extra hour or two to help with inventory. Now I am having trouble adjusting to freedom from the clock. I notice that most of my colleagues put in well over nine hours, but I have a newborn baby and a wife at home. Am I cheating by leaving on time?

— T.E.

Dear T.E.: You are having some typical psychological reactions to climbing the ladder at work — and it will take a little time to adjust to your new status. Since you feel that you would like to keep going in this same direction and see if it can lead to career success, I hope you will take a deep breath and try to relax a little.

Everyone knows you have been promoted because of your abilities and the hard work you have already put in — or you would still be punching the clock. They probably also know about your baby, and it's too bad you don't have paternity leave in your benefits package (have you checked?), but surely your employer and co-workers will cut you a little slack at this time. In the future, you might want to spend a little more time at work once or twice a week, just to show that you don't have that old time-clock mentality going! Talk it over with your wife and see what she is comfortable with, if it makes you feel like a better father and husband. Don't forget — those come first!

Dear Dr. Brothers: My husband



## Dr. Joyce Brothers

### Ask Dr. Brothers

and I are proud parents of a bright little boy. He has excelled in preschool and has always been "ahead of the curve" when it comes to games, puzzles and educational video games. The problem is that he is young — at the very bottom of the cutoff age for going to kindergarten — and we are wondering if this should be a factor in deciding whether to send him this year. We know that academically, he can handle anything, but we don't know much about psychological factors. Can you enlighten us?

— P.O.

Dear P.O.: Start by asking the preschool teachers if there have been any social problems surrounding your son and the kids he would be moving into kindergarten with as his peers. If he has already found a place in this peer group, you might feel confident in sending him on. However, if he has few friends or is the subject of bullying by bigger kids, you need to think about keeping him in preschool for another year.

A study was done in England, in which teachers, parents and 10,000 schoolchildren were surveyed to assess mental health. The youngest children in the class were found to have significantly more psychiatric symptoms and disorders. While it isn't clear whether the stress that causes such reactions comes from academic challenges or bullying, it is something for parents of "youngsters" to consider. One extra thought: If you hold him back, he will be among the first to get his

driver's license when the time comes — quite a social coup! At any rate, you know your child — follow your instincts.

Dear Dr. Brothers: I have a 13-year-old son who needs to have the old "sex talk," but I can't seem to make myself do it. I have this horrible feeling that whatever I say will be turned against me, or that he will start asking me about my own sexual experiences as a kid (don't ask!), or that I won't even know what is appropriate information for his age and experience — not that he has any yet, I hope. What should I do? His dad refuses to deal with it at all.

Dear A.V.: First of all, take a deep breath. I doubt that your son is going to pry into your sexual history. He is probably going to be more embarrassed than you are to be delving into the topic. Also, remember that kids are notorious for finding the idea that their parents are or were ever sexually active quite horrifying.

Your son probably has had some basic sex education in school. If you don't know what has been covered, a good way to initiate the talk might be to ask him what he has learned in health class — or whatever it is called in his school. File that information away for later, and try to approach the subject in a topical way — taking your cue from a TV show or another topic he might come into contact with in our sex-saturated world. Once you start a dialogue — which you should have done many years ago, but never mind — the conversations should start to get a tiny bit easier. And ask your husband to step up to the plate and do some of the talking — young men desperately need involved fathers, especially in this area.

## Bridge

South dealer.

Neither side vulnerable.

**NORTH**

♠ 7 5 4 3  
♥ 7 6 5  
♦ A Q 5 3  
♣ 10 3

**WEST**

♠ 2  
♥ 10 3  
♦ 10 9 8  
♣ A Q J 9 8 7 6

**EAST**

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

**SOUTH**

♠ K J 10 9 8  
♥ A K 8  
♦ K J 4 2  
♣ K

The bidding:

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	3 ♣	Pass	Pass
Dble	Pass	4 ♠	

Opening lead — ten of diamonds.

## Delicate Declarer Play

There are plays that seem to make no sense whatever but have lots of wisdom behind them. Consider this deal from a team-of-four match where the contract at both tables was four spades.

West's three-club bid was pre-emptive and indicated a weak hand with lots of clubs. Both Norths passed — they were slightly short of a voluntary three-spade bid. But when South then doubled for takeout, indicating a powerful hand, both Norths jumped to four spades to show greater strength than a three-spade bid would have shown.

At the first table, West led the diamond ten, East playing the seven on the ace to start a high-low signal. Declarer returned a trump from dummy and, after successfully finessing the jack, led a diamond to dummy's queen on which East played the six.

On the next trump lead from dummy, East went up with the ace and returned a club to West's ace. West thereupon led a third diamond, ruffed by East, and declarer later lost a heart trick to go down one.

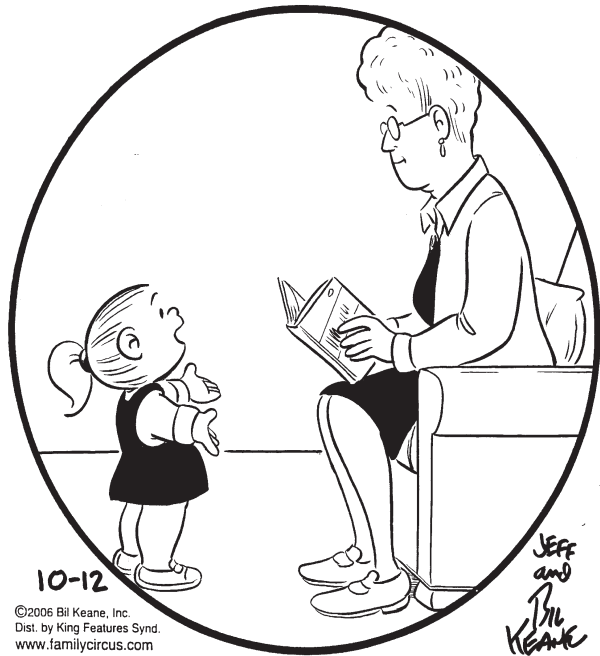
At the second table, after the ace of diamonds and jack of spades also won the first two tricks, declarer made a peculiar play at trick three. Instead of returning to dummy with a second diamond as his counterpart had done, he led the king of clubs! This apparently senseless move proved to be just what the doctor ordered.

West took the king with the ace and played a second diamond. But, with the enemy's only line of communication having been severed, declarer was now in the driver's seat.

He won the diamond with dummy's queen and led a trump. East won with the ace, but he had no way to reach his partner for a diamond ruff. South thus lost only a spade, a heart and a club, and his shrewd king-of-clubs play — known as a "scissors coup" — was justly rewarded.

Tomorrow: Bidding quiz.  
(c)2006 King Features Syndicate Inc.

## Family Circus • Bil Keane



"Grandma, if I sing a song, will you clap and whistle when I finish?"

## Crossword

**ACROSS**

1 Insurrection

5 Light application

8 Logical

12 Start a hand

13 Under the weather

14 Shuffleboard sticks

15 Condescending type

16 Romanian money

17 Big deals

18 Jipijapa hat

20 Winter weasel

22 Snitch

23 Choose

24 Moolah

27 Speeches

32 Eggs

33 Prot. or Cath.

34 Wish otherwise

35 False friend's action

38 Bobcat

39 Many millennia

**DOWN**

1 Grate

2 Kournikova of tennis

3 Pour — (exaggerate)

4 Go ashore

5 Causing delay

6 Pub mugful

7 Off-color

8 Shrimp recipe

9 Perceived by hearing

10 Night light

11 Existence (Lat.)

**Solution time: 25 mins.**

ALMS	APT	PROD			
NOEL	KEY	LOBE			
TOMAHAWK	ASIA				
EMOTE	EXCEED				
	ERST	REB			
BALD	NOVA	OLD			
UTE	DOPEY	WOO			
YEN	OBIT	BLUE			
	GAM	COAL			
SITTER	BOWIE				
HOHO	TINES	CROW			
OWEN	SAW	KITE			
WANE	EYE	STAR			

Yesterday's answer 10-12

57 Give it a go

58 Vortex

19 Mid-May honoree

21 Decay

24 Exemplar of patience

25 St.

26 "Jeopardy!" choice

28 Stephen of "The Crying Game"

29 Symbolic tale

30 Conventional

31 Driver's license datum

36 Bout segments

37 Literary collection

38 Venue

41 "Monopoly" corner

42 Triangular sails

43 Met melody

44 Litter's littiest

46 Insatiable

47 Tear in two

48 Deuce beater

51 In favor of

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