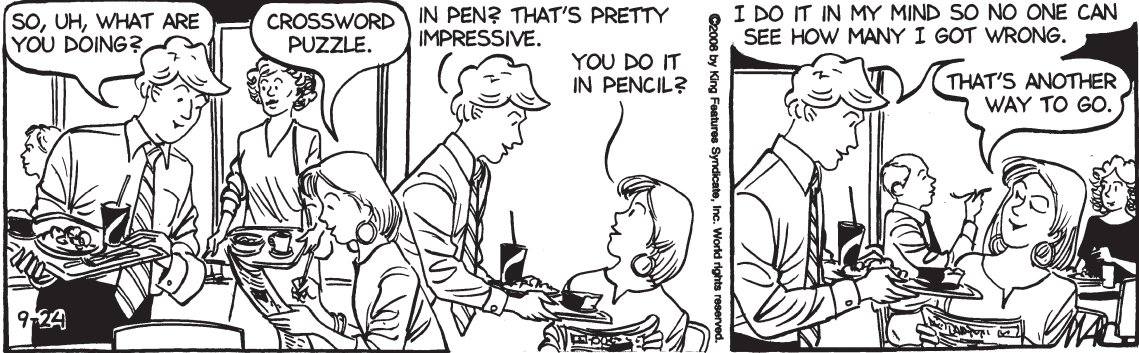
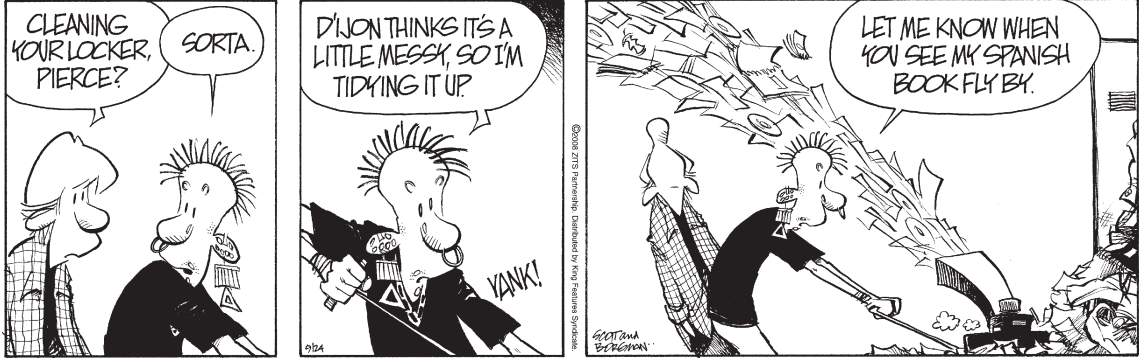


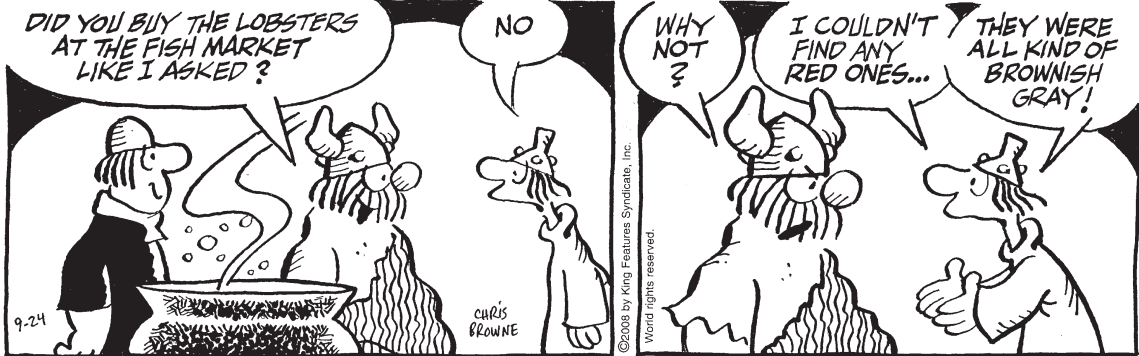
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



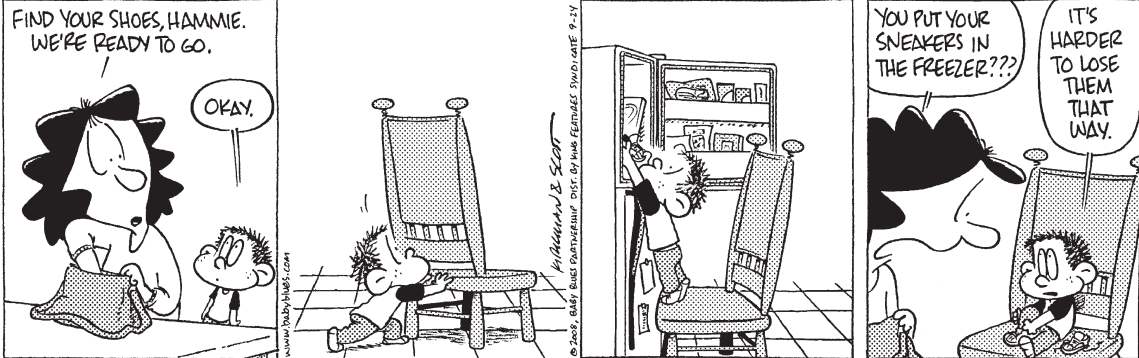
Blondie • Chic Young



Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



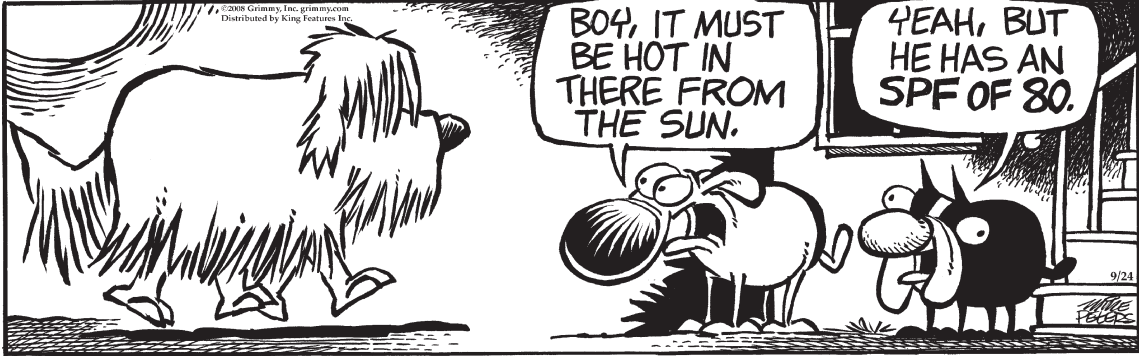
Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



Tod the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



Cryptoquip

YV B TEMOYMP FBHORM PEG
CAHA CYSW BJREO FTRFRSBOA
FBMWG, CRESW TA JA
MBQAW ASQAH VEWPA?
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THE WELL-OFF MONARCH FROM PRAGUE REALIZED THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO OPEN A CZECH KING ACCOUNT.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: F equals C

JIZMMQJ MFE O ZGFCY
MFLKGFVP'M RUKEJA RUQKEV
HQKTKV CEVKU Z EQOAYYQLK
OIFT: "LFFE FHKU LP ZLQ."
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A HUNTING CARTOON GUY WERE WILD ABOUT CHOCOLATE CANDY, WOULD HE BE NAMED ELMER FUDGE?
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: E equals N

Crossword

ACROSS

1 Ballet leap

5 Suitcase

8 Dad

12 On

13 Before

14 "American —"

15 New Mexican tribe

16 Do figure eights, e.g.

18 Slaloms

20 Analyze grammar

21 Rhyming tribute

22 "A mouse!"

23 Bolivian metropolis

26 "Have a —!"

30 "—"

31 Yankee Doodle ..."

32 Enthusiast

33 Eggs

34 Sovereign's representative

36 Slumber

38 Mouth part

39 Coloring

40 Reacted to fire-works

43 Emulator

47 Result of "once bitten"

49 Uninteresting

50 Campsite structure

51 Storm center

52 Cupid's alias

53 Probability

54 Foolish one

55 Anger

3 Grip ice from a bucket

4 External parasites

5 Ecru

6 Curved lines

7 "Golly!"

8 Jasmine relative

9 Hebrew month

10 Cookware

11 Sheltered

17 Detail, for short

19 Wood-shaping tool

22 One (Ger.)

23 Actress Ullmann

24 Parisian pal

25 — -10 Conference

26 Aye celer

27 Female deer

28 "Hail, Caesar!"

29 Shriek bark

31 Dandy

34 Votes into office

35 Carnival attraction

36 Morning star

37 "... nor a — be"

39 19th president

40 Director Premier

41 Didn't pay yet

42 Rear

43 Wherefores' partners

44 Atmosphere

45 Online journal

46 Otherwise

48 Vast expanse

Solution time: 21 mins.

D	A	T	A	N	A	M	S	C	A	B
I	R	E	S	U	S	A	T	A	M	E
S	E	A	S	T	H	R	E	A	T	E
C	A	L	I	P	H	E	R	R	A	N
S	I	A	M	G	E	L				
C	H	R	I	S	T	E	N	D	Y	E
B	E	E	A	C	L	U	E	S	K	I
S	W	A	B	H	E	I	G	H	T	E
G	O	D	E	S	A	U				
A	M	E	N	D	S		A	D	M	I
T	U	N	G	S	T	E	N	B	R	A
O	T	T	O	E	E	C		L	O	N
M	E	S	S	P	R	E		E	N	T

Yesterday's answer 9-23

Bridge

South dealer.
Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH

♠ 9 8 5
♥ Q 9 3
♦ K Q 7
♣ K Q 10 6

WEST

♠ A K J 10 3
♥ A 6 5 4
♦ 9 5
♣ 9 2

EAST

♠ Q 7 2
♥ 7
♦ 10 8 6 4 3 2
♣ 8 5 4

SOUTH

♠ 6 4
♥ K J 10 8 2
♦ A J
♣ A J 7 3

The bidding:

South 1 ♥
3 ♣

West 1 ♣
Pass

North 2 ♣
3 ♥

East Pass
Pass

Things Are Not What They Seem

One of the great advantages of playing a hand in a suit contract rather than in notrump is that the defenders cannot run their long suit. The trumps act as stoppers and neutralize the tricks that the defenders would otherwise be able to score.

But this advantage does not protect declarer in every case. If the defenders persist in leading their long suit, they may ultimately run declarer out of trumps and then be able to score whatever cards remain in their suit.

Consider this deal where West starts with three rounds of spades, forcing declarer to ruff. Superficially, it would seem that South is on solid ground, since he has four sure trump winners, three top diamonds and four top clubs. Nevertheless, South is doomed if the defense functions properly.

At trick four, declarer leads the king of hearts. If West takes it with the ace, South waltzes home with the contract. But if West ducks the king, leaving himself with A-6-5 while South still has J-10-8, he retains control of trumps.

When South continues with the jack, West ducks again, sealing declarer's fate. South now cannot afford to lead another trump because West would take the ace and return a spade to force declarer's last trump and so put the contract down two.

The best South can do after West twice refuses to take the ace is to try to cash as many winners as he can in diamonds and clubs. Eventually, West ruffs one of them with his low trump to defeat the contract one trick.

Tomorrow: Insurance to the nth degree.
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West dealer.
Neither side vulnerable.

NORTH

♠ 7 5
♥ 8 4
♦ 9 3
♣ A K J 7 6 5 2

WEST

♠ J 8 4
♥ K 6
♦ J 10 7 4
♣ Q 10 9 8

EAST

♠ Q 10 9 6 2
♥ Q J 9 3
♦ K 8 5 2
♣ —

SOUTH

♠ A K 3
♥ A 10 7 5 2
♦ A Q 6
♣ 4 3

The bidding:

West 3 ♣
Pass

North 3 ♣
Pass

East 3 NT
Pass

Opening lead — four of diamonds.

Insurance to the Nth Degree

Safety plays come in so many different forms that it is better to understand the rationale behind them than to try to memorize them separately.

Consider this case where West leads a diamond against three notrump. Declarer takes East's king with the ace and sees at once that by far his best chance of scoring nine tricks lies in utilizing dummy's club suit.

Since dummy has no side entries, South realizes it would be folly to simply cash the A-K of clubs, hoping to drop the queen. If the queen did not fall, he would most likely finish with only the top tricks he started with.

Declarer can therefore greatly improve his chances by leading a club to the jack at trick two. Whether the finesse wins or loses, he is then assured of at least six club tricks against a 2-2 or 3-1 division of the missing clubs.

This approach certainly constitutes a vast improvement over the rash play of immediately cashing the A-K of clubs. However, good as it is, the fact remains that there is an even better safety play available -- one that also makes allowance for the possibility of a 4-0 split.

Accordingly, when he leads a club at trick two and West plays either the eight, nine, ten or queen, South should duck completely! If East follows suit, six club tricks become automatic; if, as in the actual deal, East shows out, declarer also scores six club tricks. Once West produces a club at trick two, whatever its size, South can ensure 11 tricks by allowing him to hold the trick.

A first-round finesse of the jack is certainly a good safety play, but permitting West to win the first club lead is the super safety play.

Tomorrow: Ffred does it with flair.
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Family Circus • Bill Keane

