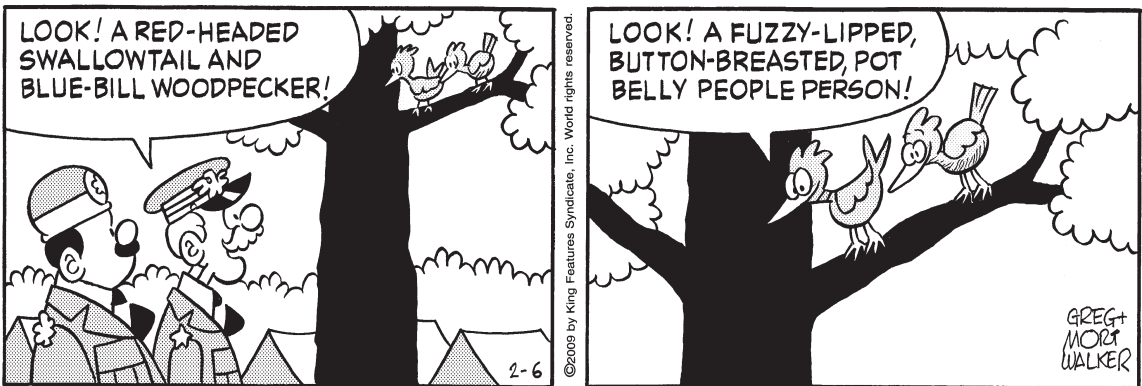


Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Blondie • Chic Young



Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



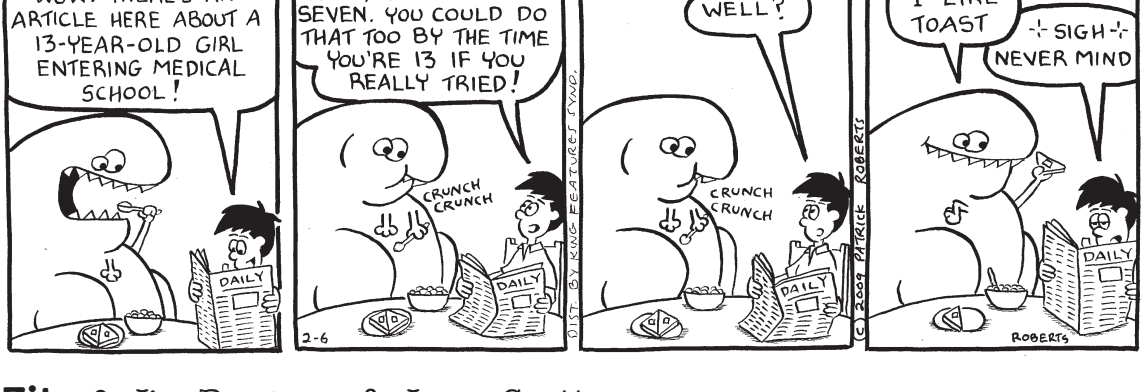
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Heloise

- Hints from Heloise

Make your own fireplace logs

Paper Logs

Dear Heloise: A few years ago, I clipped out your column on how to reuse newspapers to MAKE FIREPLACE LOGS. This year, I am finally going to try it, but my question is how wet should the newspaper be – should I dampen them or saturate them in a tub of water? – Jan R., via e-mail

This money-saving hint for making your own fireplace logs is easy to do. So, here are the steps for everyone to use:

- Get a big bundle of old newspapers. Use empty cans that can be opened at both ends, and remove the labels. Tuna and cat-food cans work well because they are short and make a nice, thin metal band.
- Don't use glossy inserts or color comics of the papers.
- Grab an inch or so of newspapers and stack them together, alternating the folds. Roll the stack tightly, then slide a can over it and to the middle of the roll.
- Take the banded newspaper rolls outside and use a hose to SOAK them with water. Let the logs dry completely; this will take time. The papers will compress.
- Burn the "log" with can on just like you would a regular log. After it finishes and the ashes are cool, use tongs to remove the can (it may still be hot).

SEND A GREAT HINT TO:

Heloise
P.O. Box 795000
San Antonio, TX 78279-5000
Fax: 210-HELOISE
E-mail: Heloise(at)Heloise.com

GIFT-CARD COMMENT

Dear Heloise: I read in your column in the (San Angelo, Texas) Standard-Times about the frustration people have when trying to use a small amount left on a gift card.

When you try to use the card with a small balance, the register tries to put the entire amount on the card and therefore declines the transaction.

Instead, I tell the cashier the amount on the card, the cashier will enter that, then the register will deduct only the available amount from the card and then show me a balance due. – Traci Asebedo, San Angelo, Texas

HANDY BINDER CLIPS

Dear Heloise: I was tired of paying for plastic chip clips that break. My solution was to visit the stationery department and purchase some of those heavy black binder clips. They work great for chips, bread and any other bag item you have. I keep a box in my kitchen drawer. – Dawn, via e-mail

(c)2009 by King Features Syndicate Inc.

Bridge • Steve Becker

You are South, both sides vulnerable. The bidding has gone:
West North East South
1 ♠ Pass Pass ?

What would you bid with each of the following five hands?
1. ♠ 73 ♥ Q962 ♦ KJ8 ♣ AJ75
2. ♠ QJ84 ♥ A73 ♦ K92 ♣ K43
3. ♠ 6 ♥ A4 ♦ AKQ874 ♣ K952
4. ♠ 85 ♥ AKJ83 ♦ Q96 ♣ AQ7
5. ♠ J9863 ♥ A9 ♦ AJ5 ♣ Q84

Bidding Quiz

You are South, both sides vulnerable. The bidding has gone:

1. Double. Whenever the bidding stops at a low level, the last player to speak – who is said to be in "the balancing position" – may shade his bid somewhat on the assumption that the opponents hold limited strength. In effect, he credits partner with some of the values that are missing and acts in accordance with the type of hand he holds.

In this case, a takeout double is in order to ask partner to choose a suit. Before he acts, partner should take into account that you are in the balancing seat and may therefore not have full values for your double.

2. One notrump. This is an extension of the same principle. Ordinarily, a one-notrump overcall promises 15 to 18 points, but when the bid is made in the balancing position, it may be shaded by as many as four or five points. A double would not be proper with this hand because you are not interested in encouraging partner to bid a suit.

3. Three diamonds. In the balancing seat, a jump-overcall shows a strong hand with a strong suit. Here, the jump to three diamonds encourages partner to bid three notrump with a spade stopper and a smattering of other values. You could also double, but it would be dangerous to do so with only a doubleton heart, as partner will assume you have better support for that suit and may insist on playing there. Three diamonds paints a far better picture of your hand.

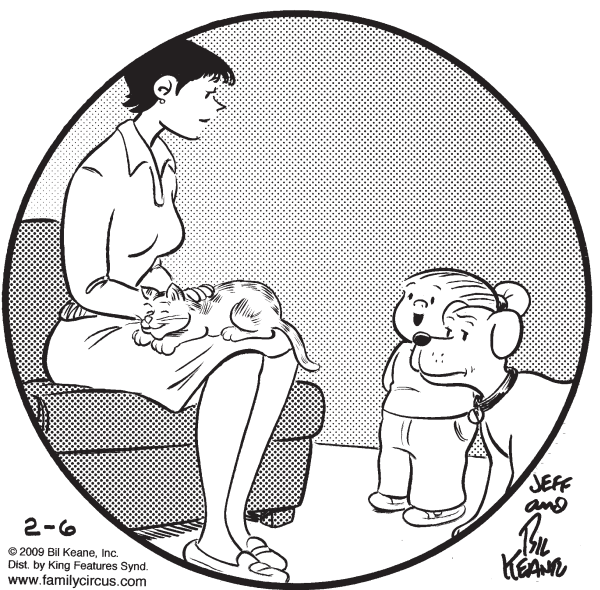
4. Double. The balancing player sometimes has values with which he would double even if he were not in the protective position. When this occurs, he doubles, as usual, planning to take further action at his next turn to show he was not merely competing for a partscore. With a weaker hand – say, without the ace of clubs – South would simply bid two hearts.

5. Pass. There is no obligation to bid in the balancing seat if you think you can get a better result by passing. In the present case, you have good defense against a spade contract, so there is no good reason to bid.

Against any other suit bid by West, South's high-card values would justify some form of protective action, but here a pass offers the most promising way of showing a profit.

(c)2009 King Features Syndicate Inc.

Family Circus • Bil Keane



"I bet Barfy wishes he didn't grow too big for laps."

Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★ ★★

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.

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

Difficulty Level ★★ ★★

Cryptoquip

IWK LJS EWZJWE VI KLJGL

FWVFXW EMXEM MIN SMIUV

KJSL EMJXVZE: "NMIGJIU

KJSL SLW SMZE."

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I SUPPOSE YOU COULD SAY AN ELECTRICIAN IS A PERSON VERY INTERESTED IN CURRENT EVENTS.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: L equals H

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS**
1 The girl
4 Scoot
8 Calculator symbol
12 Parcel of land
13 Ethereal
14 Prevalent
15 Hardly a fussy eater?
17 "Once — a time, ..."
18 Light-house
19 Blue
21 Timecard abbr.
22 Brunch entree
26 Pal of D'Artagnan
29 Use
35-Across
30 "That feels so good!"
31 Yonder, to an old salt
32 Shade
33 Remedy
34 Mal de —
35 Stovetop item
36 Move laterally

DOWN
37 Greek con-cluders
39 One for the road?
40 Egos' counter-parts
41 Empha-size
45 Crony
48 Navel
50 Hair salon request
51 Diligence
52 Mud bath site
53 Actress
54 Hathaway
55 Always, in verse
1 Unkempt one
- ACROSS**
2 Base runner's goal
3 Sicilian spouter
4 Party-goers' mementos
5 They have their pride
6 Mess up
7 Unpleasant sight
8 Overly decorous one
9 Back talk
10 Martian craft
11 Sun Yat —
16 Blood of the gods

DOWN
20 Rocker
21 Wine-house
23 Praise to the skies
24 Count counter-part
25 Quaker's address
26 Prefix with "sphere"
27 Outsiders
28 Aesopian also-ran
29 Enjoyment
32 Footstool
33 Approximately
35 Cushion
36 Potpourri pouch
38 Greedy kid's cry
39 Pants style named for an island
42 Differently
43 "Unh-unh"
44 Despot
45 Book-keeper (Abbr.)
46 Female lobster
47 Coffee vessel
49 Fellow

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

Yesterday's answer 2-6

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