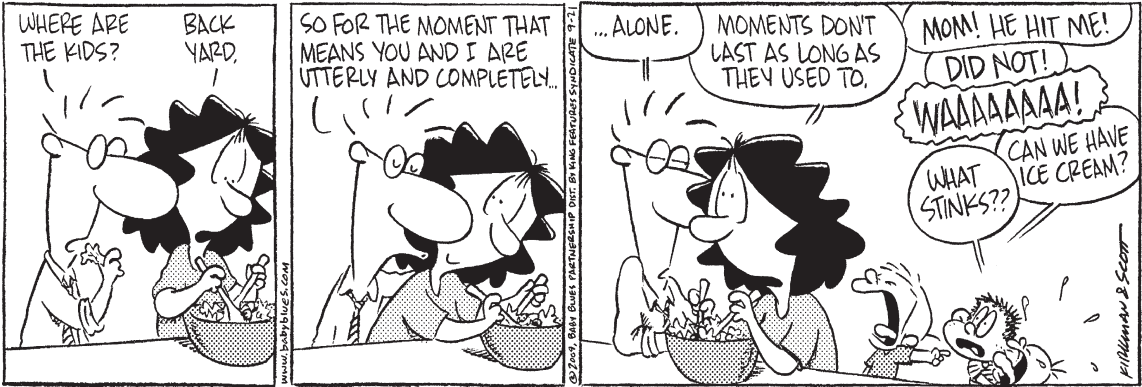


Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



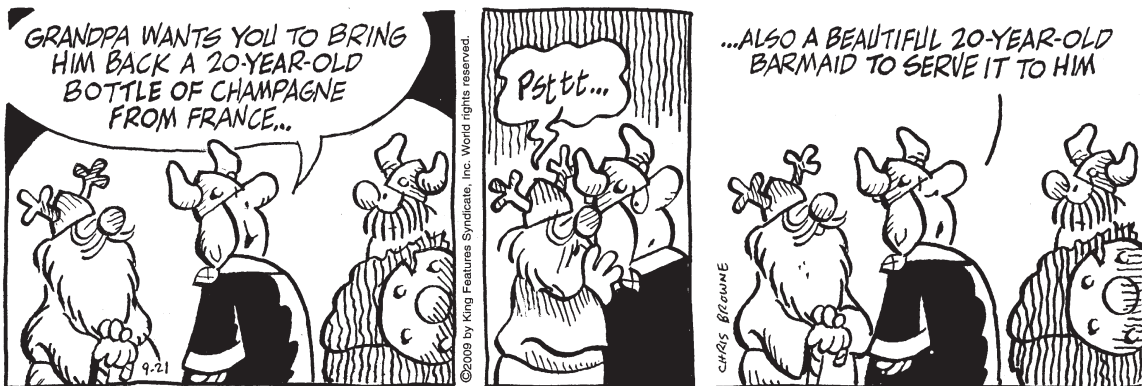
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Blondie • Chic Young



Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



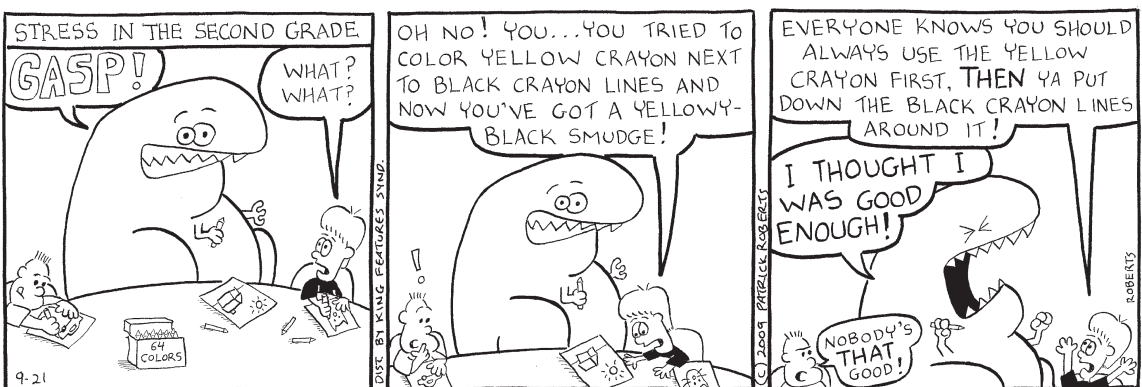
Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



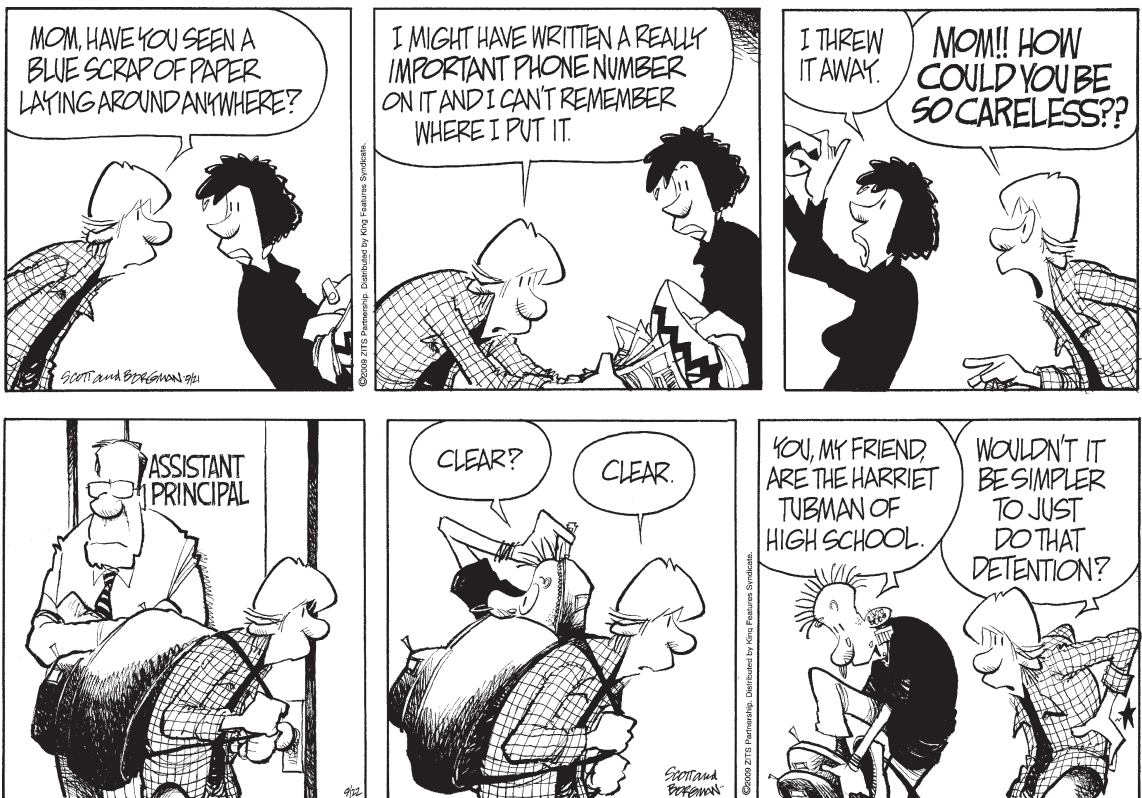
Sally Forth • Greg Howard




Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott





Dr. Joyce Brothers

• Ask Dr. Brothers

Employee can't make deadlines

Dear Dr. Brothers: My new employee is a very accomplished person. She has lots of good, creative ideas, and comes highly recommended. The problem is that she has a big problem with meeting deadlines. She always hands things in hours or even days late, and always has a reason why it was impossible to get done on time. The reasons sound plausible, but I see a pattern here. How do I deal with this growing issue? – D.B.

Dear D.B.: It definitely sounds like you have a decision to make. Since her behavior is unlikely to change, you have to ask yourself what's more important to you – the quality of her work, or the timeliness. An employee can get away with murder if she can be relied upon to eventually produce exceptional stuff – and the price you pay for having it may be not getting it when it's due.

You want to be careful, though. Setting up different rules for different employees can come back to bite you. Another tardy employee can confront you with "Well, she is never on time," and you won't have a leg to stand on. Tell your new hire about the situation she's backed you into. Her reasons for being late may be plausible, but she may need a reminder that she's part of a team. She's probably not even aware she's getting special treatment, and may start to be on time. But remember, you're the boss. If you feel like you're being taken advantage of, you probably are. If all else fails, you might want to try the manager's trick of the false deadline: Tell her a project is due days before it's actually needed, and you'll most likely get your work finished on time.

Dear Dr. Brothers: I have a problem with a woman who is on several school committees with me. She knows I don't like to have my picture taken. I am one of those people who always looks like a gargoyle in photographs. Despite my reminding her, she is constantly taking photos to send to the newspaper for publicity, and I always just happen to be the focus of them. Several pictures have been truly awful. How do you handle someone so mean? – J.H.

Dear J.H.: While your friend should respect your wishes – especially after so many reminders – you should question whether she really intends to be mean. She most likely thinks your dislike of being photographed is no big deal, when it upsets you greatly. She may even be trying to help you get over your camera-shyness. What you may want to focus on is the root problem of why you have an aversion to being photographed.

Try as you might, you can't really control who takes a picture of you. Unless you want to give up on the committee or wear a disguise, there's always a chance you will be captured on film. Begin to learn to be OK with that. Ask yourself why you think you look like a gargoyle in photos. No one approves of most pictures of themselves, but bad pictures are a part of life. Just as we cringe when we hear our recorded voice, we often are unhappy with that weird stranger in a photo. It's only human. What you can change is your expression, so try smiling once in a while!

(c) 2009 by King Features Syndicate

Bridge • Steve Becker

West dealer.
East-West vulnerable.

NORTH

♦ 4 2
—
♦ A K J 10 4
♦ A K J 10 4 3

WEST

♦ K 10 6
♦ A K Q J 10 8 7 6 4
♦ 8

EAST

♦ A 5 3
♦ 9 5 3 2
♦ 8 6 3
♦ 6 5

SOUTH

♦ Q 1 9 8 7
♥ —
♥ Q 7 5 2
♥ Q 9 7 2

The bidding:

West 1♥
North 2 NT
East Pass
South 5♦
Opening lead — king of hearts.

Famous Hand

Some hands are loaded with dynamite. For example, take this one from the 1984 national men's team championship.

At the first table, with Eric Rodwell and Jeff Meckstroth sitting North-South, the bidding went as shown. The two-notrump overcall by North was "unusual" and indicated at least five cards in each of the minor suits.

After Meckstroth jumped to five diamonds and West bid five hearts, Rodwell tried six diamonds, which East doubled. A spade or club lead would have defeated the contract, but unfortunately for his side, West led a heart. Declarer discarded a spade from dummy, ruffed in his hand and so made the slam for a score of 1,090 points.

At the second table, the bidding was opened by West with four clubs, a conventional bid indicating a hand that most players would open with four hearts. North overcalled with four notrump, showing length in the minors, and East bid five hearts. South now bid five notrump, in effect announcing he could support either minor suit. After West bid six hearts, North ventured seven clubs, which East (Larry Cohen, playing with Marty Bergen) doubled.

East led the ace of spades, on which West played his lowest spade, the six, whereupon East shifted to a diamond, which he knew from the bidding his partner would ruff. The spade king then provided another trick for the defense, and declarer wound up down three.

Cohen and Bergen were thus plus 500 with the East-West cards at their table, and this, added to the 1,090 points their teammates scored at the other table, produced a total gain of 1,590 points on the deal. With the aid of several similar results on other deals, their team went on to win the championship.

(c)2009 King Features Syndicate Inc.

Family Circus • Bil Keane



Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★

9/21

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.

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

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

9/21

Cryptoquip

RE IXP DRRZRMI KRQ N
YMEBX RK UJNDD JADZ
BNQIREU, IXP ORDABP OMI
RMI NE NDD-OAEIU YMDDPIAE.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A CERTAIN HERB IS USED IN MAKING MEALS FOR THE DOG SHELTER, COULD THAT BE KENNEL FENNEL?

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: D equals L

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Fashion abbr.

5 Remote man?

8 Leading device

12 Bargain

13 Easter event

14 Black-mailer's specialty

15 Pupil's cover?

18 Rotational force

21 "My bad"

23 Thee

24 Emergency seat's purpose

28 Unuttered "alas"

31 Miss Piggy's pronoun

32 Top grade

34 Hatchery supply

35 Harmonization, briefly

37 Land-lord's threat

39 Try the tea

41 Birthright barterer

42 Subordinate

45 Greyhound alternative

49 November event

51 Yorkshire river

52 Track star

53 Twitch

54 Cambodian money

55 "Rule, Britannia" composer

56 Hearty brew

57 Break suddenly

DOWN

1 Guy

2 Fine

3 Thinness comparison

4 As a whole

5 Organ component

6 Phone transmission

7 "Phooey!"

8 Houston team

9 Rum recipe

10 Matty of baseball

11 Biblical handwriting word

17 Coquettish

19 Tittle

22 Figure out

24 Type squares

25 Bliss

26 Genius personified

27 Pest

29 Sticky stuff

30 Coop occupant

33 Con game

36 It never ends

38 Private instructors

40 Butter serving

42 Mortal Kombat maker

43 Winged

44 Pocket bread

46 Destroy

47 On the briny

48 Seaweed that gives us iodine

50 Lubricate

Solution time: 27 mins.

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

Saturday's answer 9-21