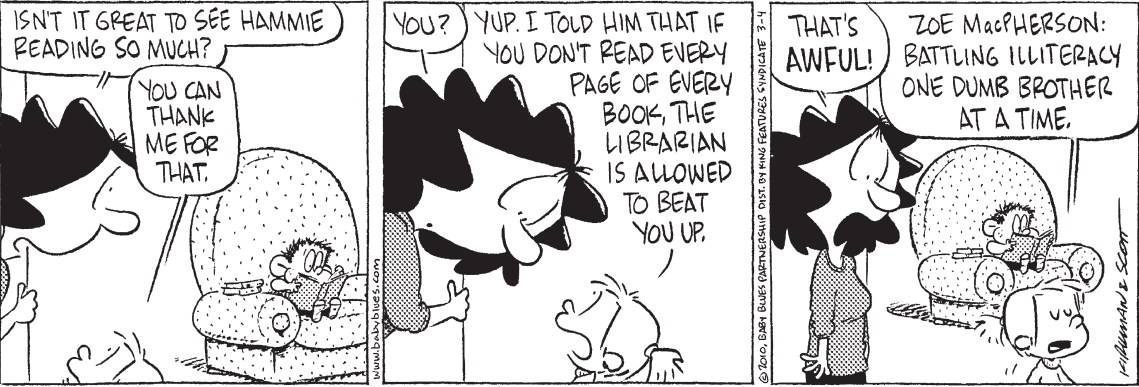


Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



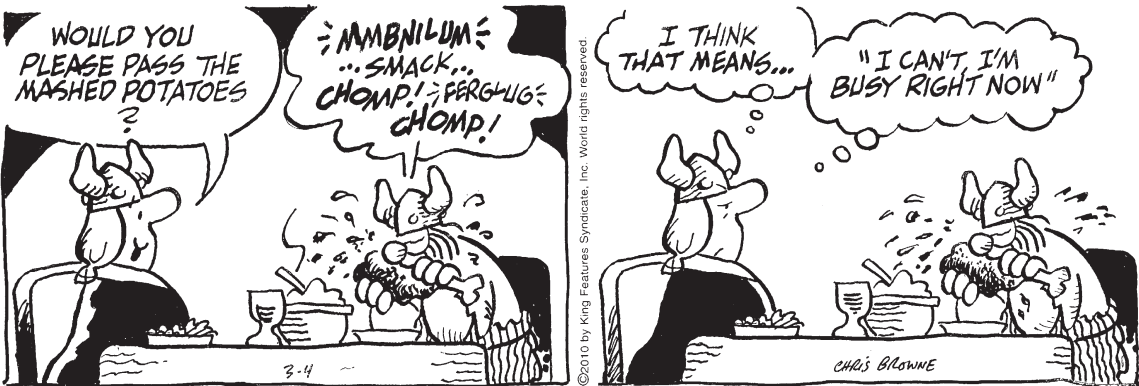
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Blondie • Chic Young



Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



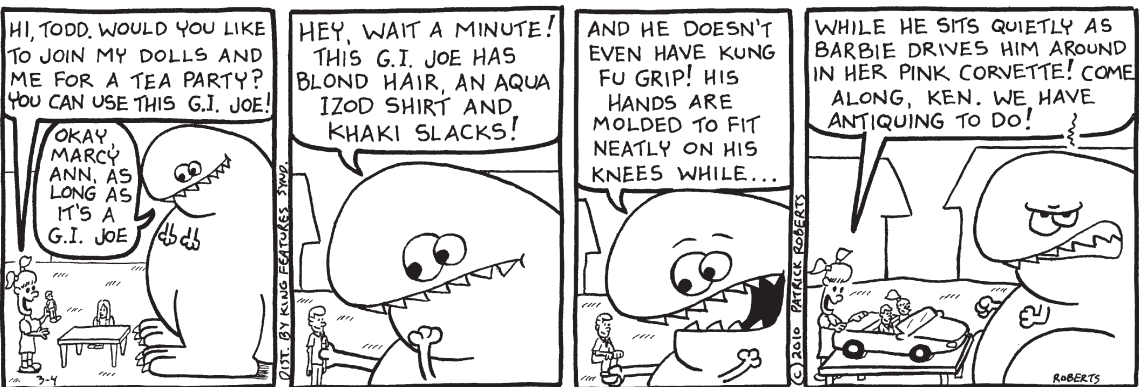
Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Dr. Joyce Brothers • Ask Dr. Brothers

Mentor seeks deep connection

Dear Dr. Brothers: I have begun a new volunteer activity I just love. It involves mentoring a young girl at the local elementary school, where many parents are unable to spend time with their own kids. My "mentoree" is nice, but distant. I don't have kids, but I have a way with them, so I am frustrated by her lack of warmth. I just want to care for her! How can I make this work? – L.G.

Dear L.G.: It is admirable of you to want to mentor someone who does not have much of a home life and can use some guidance and the interest of a kind older person. I don't know what procedure is used in your community to match people with youngsters, but I trust that the school takes care to make sure the volunteers are paired with kids appropriately and that the activities you undertake are worthwhile ones. I wonder, though, if there is much training on the part of the mentor when it comes to managing feelings about your student and the relationship you might develop. It seems you are a bit confused as to what your role should be, or where this whole venture is going.

I am sure you want to keep in mind the work you are doing is meant to be for the benefit of the child, and anything you do should be aimed at making her experience more successful and enjoyable. If she has social needs and self-esteem problems, you can help in a general way with strategies to be more successful and encouragement. Just be careful about what motivates you. If you are looking for someone to love you, this might not be the best outlet for your efforts. The child is a little standoffish, I imagine, because she has her own family – don't try to take its place.

Dear Dr. Brothers: My son is turning into a couch potato. He doesn't like anything that involves exercise. The reason, he tells me, is that he had a bad experience at school when at recess. The boys his age (8) were picking out teams for some game, and he was the last one chosen. Now he doesn't even want to participate. I didn't know he was so sensitive. What can I say? – B.T.

Dear B.T.: It is too bad your child had to experience being picked last. It is always hurtful for a child, especially if it also relates to popularity. Some kids laugh it off, but others are turned off sports after a bad experience. Many schools have put a stop to games in which kids can find themselves chosen last, targeted for elimination and other formerly taken-for-granted competitions. But childhood games will always be played informally, meaning anything goes, unless an adult intervenes to make things run fairly.

I hope you encourage your son to find something physical he likes to do and pursue it until he has some mastery of the basics. This should help his confidence, popularity, fitness and mental toughness. He might be suited to an individual sport at which he can choose his pace. Anything you do to encourage him to persevere will be a plus.

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Bridge • Steve Becker

South dealer. Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH: ♠ A Q 9 2, ♥ 7, ♦ K Q J, ♣ K Q J 10 6

WEST: ♠ 8 5, ♥ A K Q J 10 9 5 2, ♦ 8 5 3, ♣ —

EAST: ♠ 6 3, ♥ 5 6 3, ♦ 7 4, ♣ 9 7 5 4 3 2

SOUTH: ♠ K J 10 7 4, ♥ 4, ♦ A 10 9 6 2, ♣ A 8

The bidding: South 1♥, West 4♥, North 4NT, East Pass. Opening lead — ?

The Almighty Deuce

One of the best gadgets ever devised is the Blackwood Convention, which enables a partnership to learn how many aces and kings it has. The great disadvantage of Blackwood is that players tend to overuse it. They show such an abiding interest in aces and kings that they lose sight of the main objective – namely, how many tricks can be made.

Blackwood should be used only in cases where knowledge of how many aces and kings partner has will determine the best final contract. If other factors are more relevant – such as distribution, secondary controls, intermediate cards, trump length and so on – the convention should not be used.

For a clear case of the proper use of Blackwood, consider North's four-notrump bid in this deal. If partner has two aces, North wants to be in six spades; if South has three aces, North can consider undertaking seven spades; and if South has only one ace, North plans to stop at five spades. Blackwood is therefore entirely appropriate in this case.

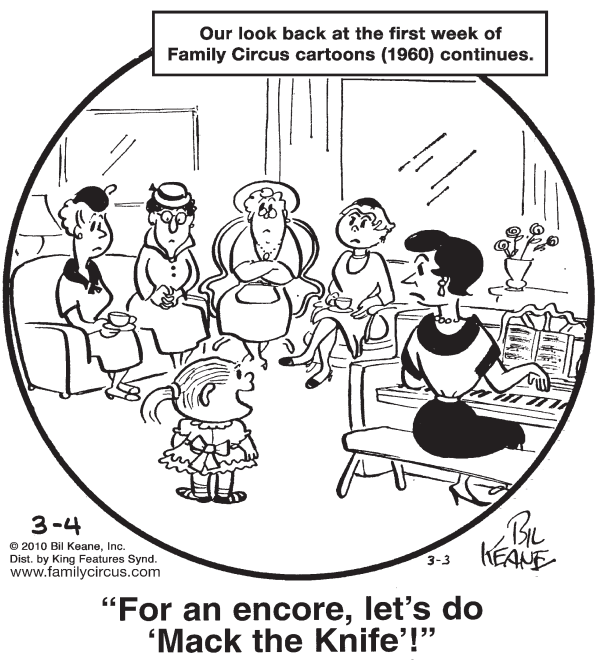
When the deal occurred, South responded to four notrump with five hearts, showing two aces. North correctly leaped to six spades, an excellent slam that ordinarily would have made easily. But West, who had listened attentively to the bidding, decided that normal defense would not stop the contract.

It seemed to West that if he led a high heart and it won, his side would probably take no more tricks. His opponents had bid much too confidently for him to expect his partner to come up with a second trick. So West decided to stake the outcome on the possibility that East had the eight of hearts.

Accordingly, he led the heart deuce! East, much to his surprise, won the trick with the eight and had no trouble whatever finding the killing club return.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Cryptoquip

XQGT DT HTODTS MSDZSM

ATCGZMSDTCHTJ XQE QHM

ODSQGZ HM, H MANNEMG HS'M

IDRRGC CDCD NZEIGMMHTJ.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I WOULD SAY THAT WHOEVER INVENTED THE FRISBEE MOST CERTAINLY MADE A FABULOUS DISC-OVERY.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: H equals I

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 False god

5 Unruly groups

9 Anti-quoted

12 Pond organism

13 The same as above

14 Airport overseer org.

15 Regulated by traffic lights

17 Ever-green type

18 Render helpless

19 Express gratitude

21 On the other hand

22 Blackjack component, sometimes

24 Liner, e.g.

27 Fellow

28 Tend texts

31 A billion years

32 Moreover

33 Eggs

34 Blue hue

36 Bachelors' last words

37 Recognized

38 Bellini opera

40 Hello

41 Sill

43 She had some bad hair days

47 UN workers' org.

48 Baseball tactic

51 Winter woe

52 Related

53 "— She Lovely"

54 NYC hrs.

55 Part of N.B.

56 Relaxation

DOWN

1 Hit hard

2 Singing voice

3 Enthusiastic

4 Computer style

5 Go for the gold?

6 Strange

7 Plead

8 Struck

9 Occasionally

10 Reclined

11 Unlit

16 Melody

20 "— Haw"

22 Informal interview

23 Destroy

24 Collection

25 Weeding tool

26 Quick, as an errand

27 Cripple

29 "— had it!"

30 Playing marble

35 Journal

37 Tyke

39 12-step program

40 Coop occupant

41 Biography

42 Right angles

43 Lion's pride

44 — Minor

45 Catches some rays

46 Initial chip

49 Presidential nickname

50 Stannum

Solution time: 25 mins.

URAL CBS SHUT SOLO HUE SHUT STANFORD AREA RESELL AORTAS RAER NERF AMP BRA ROOTS BAIT ARP WRIT COCOA MAP DEY KURD NRA UNFREE COWPEA GOON CRAWFORD LORE AUK URGE INDY LEE LEON

Yesterday's answer 3-4

