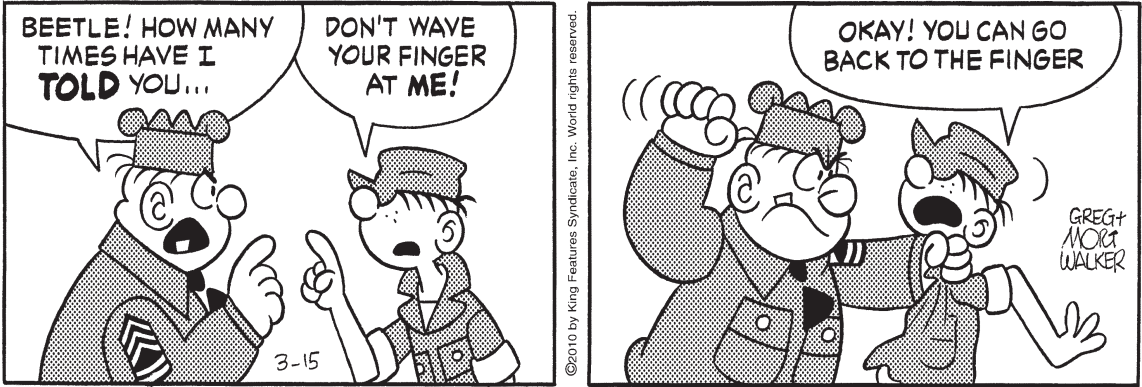


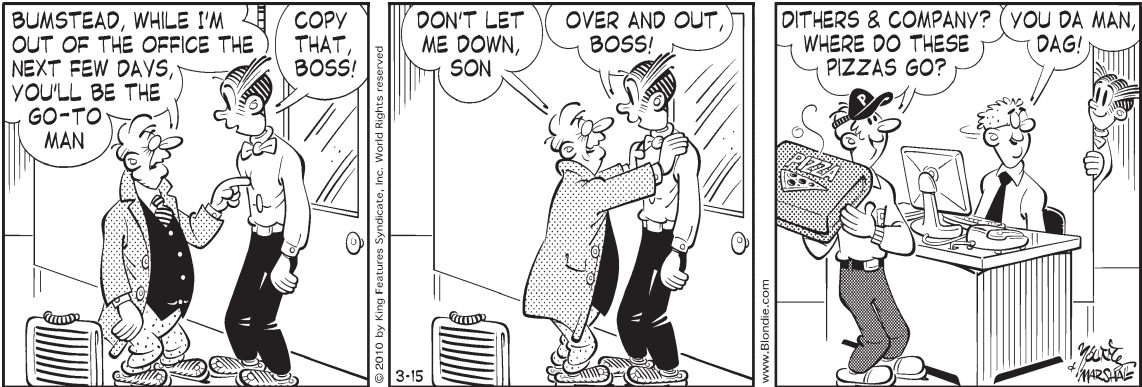
Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



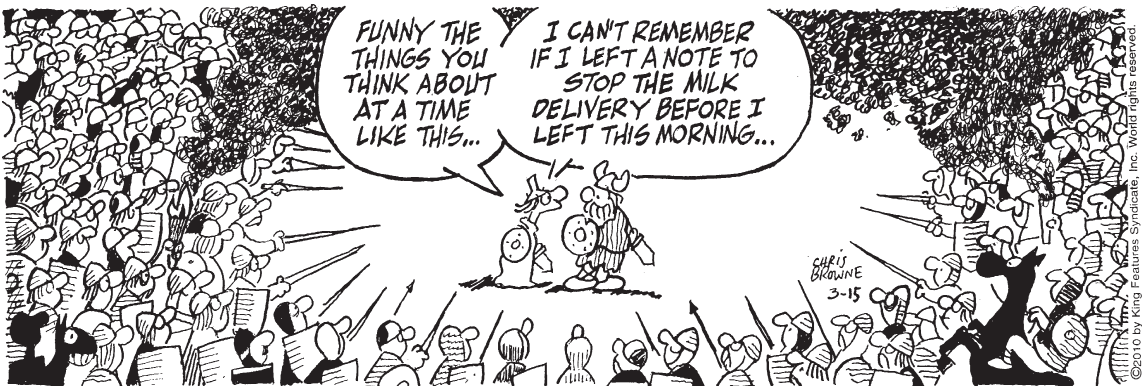
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



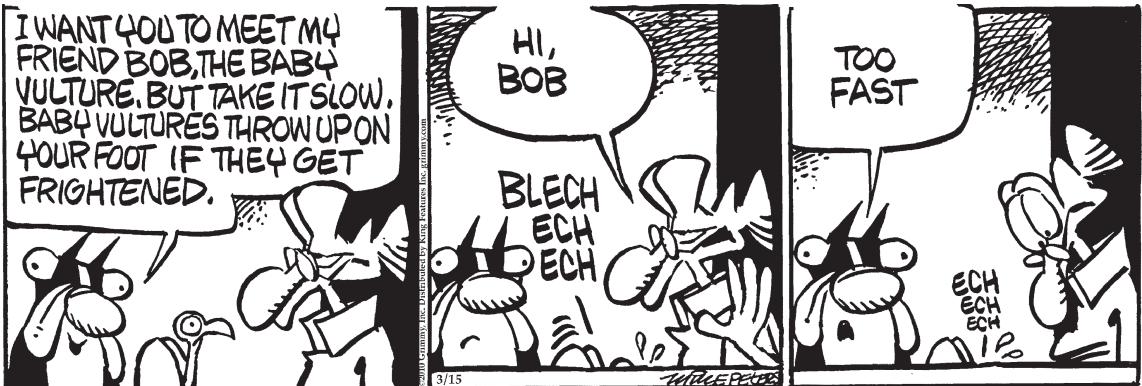
Blondie • Chic Young



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

Former priest has no direction

Dear Dr. Brothers: Ever since he was 12 years old, my deeply religious son wanted to be a priest. But now, after five years, he has left the priesthood. He's always been self-assured, knowing what to do next with great conviction. But now he seems so lost. I really get upset when he talks about having no plans for the future. I'm very worried. What, if anything, can I do? – N.G.

Dear N.G.: It must have been a very traumatic decision for your son when it came to leaving the priesthood, especially after imagining the course of his life so vividly. If this leave-taking has just happened, I believe you will need to give him some time to heal without pressuring him to make decisions about his next step. Almost like a rebound romance after a marital breakup, any impulsive moves now could come back to hurt him even more. So I wouldn't be too worried right now, in terms of career advice. But of course you can be supportive in other ways.

You can offer him a place to live, money to get started with something else – if you can spare it – or just the assurance that you are there. If he hasn't explained why he left the priesthood, don't pry. You may never really know the reason. That would be OK – only he has to be comfortable with it. Offer to attend church with him. Ask him if he'd like you to help him explore options. He probably has lost a lot of confidence in his own judgment, so be there to back him up. The best you can do is just keep standing in his corner.

Dear Dr. Brothers: My daughter wants to go to medical school. She is a compassionate person, but I'm worried about her grades. It almost seems too late in her academic life to get the kind of glowing grades needed. I'm concerned she might be prevented from realizing her goal. It makes me very sad. How do I cope? – T.H.

Dear T.H.: If your daughter can do well on the exam required for medical school, she will have a chance of getting in someplace. But the odds are tough – about 42,000 very good candidates for only 18,000 slots. Being a compassionate person may not be enough without something to show for it – not just mastery of the material, but work history or activities showing her capabilities, as well as great essays and letters of recommendation.

As to what makes a good doctor these days, there are some interesting findings that would seem encouraging to those who don't test so well. If they can make it into medical school, they may struggle at first as the academic load increases, but they do better as they go along because of more hands-on experience with the sick and injured – and where they can show off their compassionate bedside manner. A study in the Journal of Applied Psychology showed that an examination of 600 medical students found that those who tested strongly for personality traits such as conscientiousness and extraversion had a good chance at success even if their cognitive skills were not as high. So if your daughter can get her foot in the door, that's a good first step. How you can cope is by letting her do her own thing.

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Bridge • Steve Becker

North dealer. Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ 10 5 3
♥ A K 7 6 2
♦ A 5 2
♣ A 6

WEST
♠ 10 5 4
♥ J 8 7 6
♦ Q J 10 8 5 3
♣ Q J 10 8 5 3

EAST
♠ J 9 8 2
♥ J 9 8 3
♦ 4
♣ K 9 4 2

SOUTH
♠ A K Q 7 6 4
♥ Q
♦ A K Q 10 9
♣ 7

The bidding:
North: 1♥ Pass
East: 2♣ Pass
South: 3♥ Pass
West: 4♦ Pass
Opening lead — queen of clubs.

Famous Hand
Assume you're in six spades and West leads a club. After taking dummy's ace, what would you do next?

You might start drawing trumps, expecting to make seven, but when West showed out, you'd begin to have doubts about even making six. And if you stopped drawing trumps in order to test the diamonds by playing the A-K, your worst fears would be realized when East ruffed the second diamond and returned a club. You'd ruff, of course, but could not avoid going down one.

You could attribute the result to bad luck, and you'd certainly have a case since your chances of going down are less than 1-in-20. However, close analysis reveals that the contract is ice-cold.

When the deal was played many years ago by Harry Fishbein, he made the slam in a perfectly simple way. He won the club with the ace and ruffed a club at trick two.

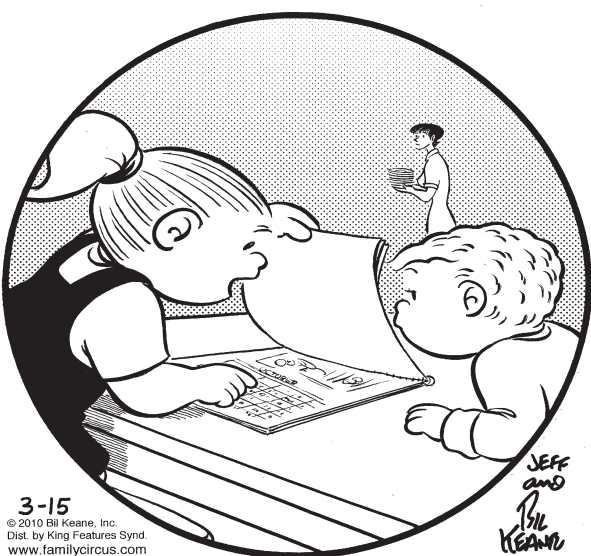
This innocent play made all the difference between making the slam and going down. When he next played the ace of spades and West showed out, Fishbein cashed the queen of hearts before playing the A-K of diamonds.

The long-range effect of the club ruff at trick two now became apparent when East had to decide whether to ruff the king of diamonds. If he ruffed, he would have to put dummy on lead whatever he returned, and Fishbein would then be able to discard the 10-9 of diamonds on the A-K of hearts.

When East declined to ruff, Fishbein persisted with the queen of diamonds, and East discarded again. Fishbein thereupon ruffed the nine of diamonds in dummy, establishing his ten, and although East overruffed, that was the only trick the defense could score.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



“See! Mommy's birthday's in March and Daddy's is in October, so Mommy's OLDER!”

Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★ 3/15

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

EDBOL ZGDE DZLC DE ZVV

PUJKL ZV RDZ OVC RVJZUQPM

VB ZGL EGLPR, D'W EUM

DZ'E DP-PLWKL-DQPL.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: YOU WOULD THINK THE MERCHANDISE SOLD BY A HOSIER SHOULD REALLY BE KNOWN AS HIS SOCK-IN-TRADE.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: V equals O

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Odds and —
5 Cigar residue
8 Campus hangout
12 Hawaiian volcano
14 — Minor (constellation)
15 Kathleen of the Obama cabinet
16 Hebrew month
17 Sternward
18 Unexpected
20 Winter garment
23 Dalmatian detail
24 Cause a surfest
25 Ken of the Obama cabinet
28 — Aviv
29 Felonious monk in "The Da Vinci Code"
30 Ump
32 Hillary of the Obama cabinet

DOWN
1 Type squares denial
2 Dundee
3 Fix the soundtrack
4 Furtive
5 Settled down
6 Old French coin
7 Knows what to do, maybe
8 Watch crystal, maybe
9 Language of Pakistan
10 Pronto, on a memo
11 Blowgun ammo
13 — Romeo (sports car)
19 Feathery neckwear
20 Portion (Abbr.)
21 Guinness or Baldwin
22 Hot dog holder
23 Chic shop
25 Be acceptable
26 Vicinity
27 Posterior
29 Cold-shoulder
31 Aviate
33 Roma's land
34 Hindu preserver god
36 Information
37 Curds' partner
38 Car
39 Hit hard
40 Lettuce variety
43 Water (Fr.)
44 Trawler need
45 Historic time
46 "Go, team!"

Solution time: 27 mins.

Saturday's answer 3-15

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12										
15										
20	21	22								
24										
28										
37	38	39								
41										
47										
49										