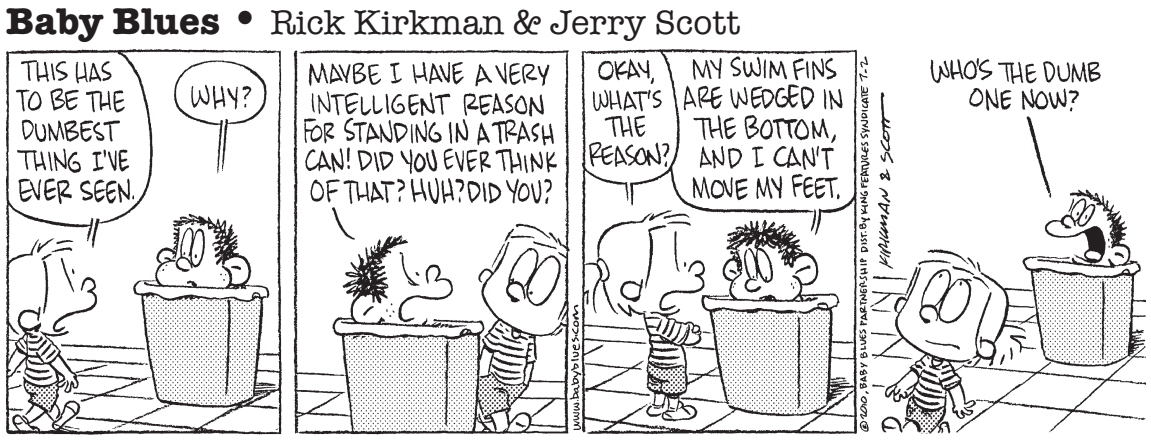
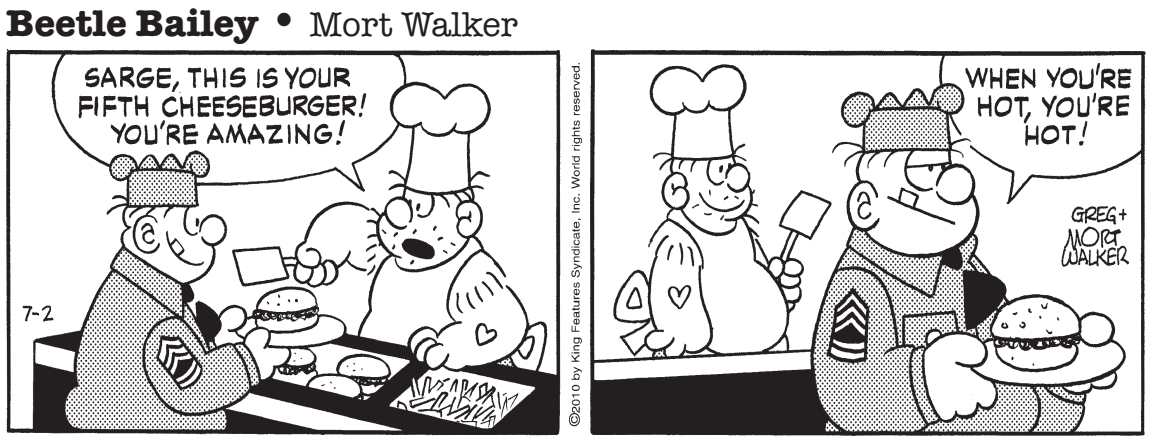
Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

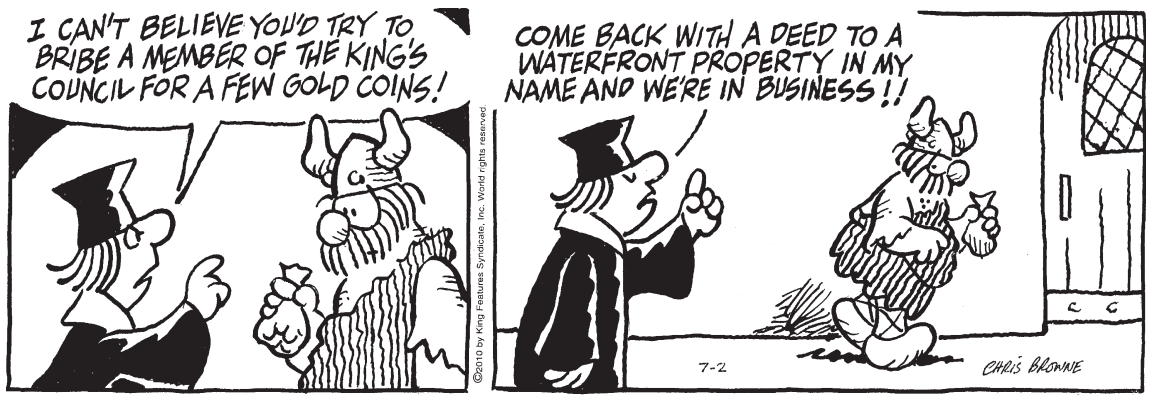


Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Blondie • Chic Young

Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne

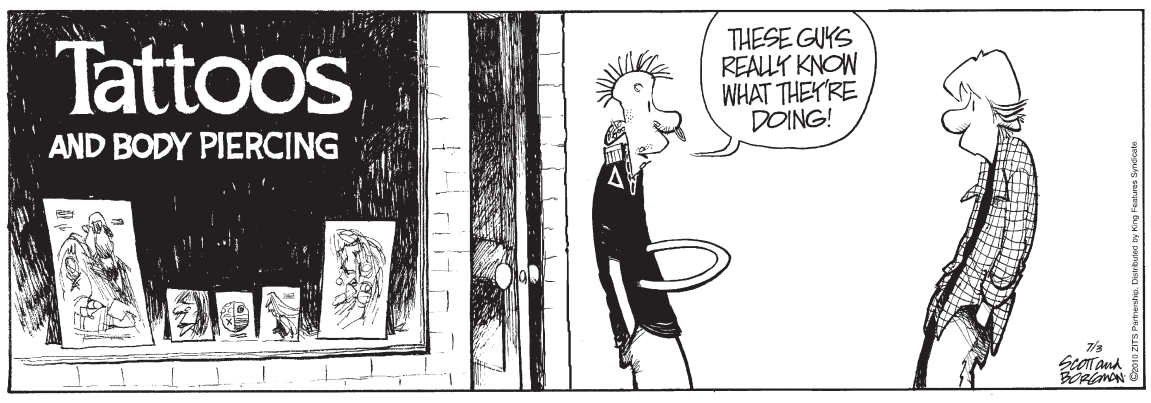


Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters

Sally Forth • Greg Howard

Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts

Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Heloise

• Hints from Heloise

Vinegar, soda clean drains fast

Dear Heloise: Can you please respond with your DRAIN-CLEANING RECIPE using white vinegar and baking soda? I lost the proportions and don't like using harsh drain-cleaning products. Thank you. – Suzanne S., via e-mail

Suzanne, this is one of my most popular "recipes" for cleaning and freshening the drain. First, pour about 1/2 cup of baking soda down the drain, then follow with 1 to 2 cups of white or apple-cider vinegar. The chemical reaction will cause lots of bubbling and fizzing! Let this work for five minutes or so. Then rinse the drain with hot water for at least 30 seconds, followed by cold water to push everything through the plumbing system. One caveat: Letting the mixture sit longer is not better, and this will NOT remove a clog. Vinegar is a workhorse cleaning product, and I have a six-page pamphlet with the best cleaning and freshening hints using vinegar. If you would like one, send $5 and a long, self-addressed, stamped (61 cents) envelope to: Heloise/Vinegar, Box 795001, San Antonio, TX 78279-5001. Squelch cooking odors by boiling 1-2 tablespoons of vinegar and 1 cup of water on the stove top. – Heloise

JEWELRY ORGANIZATION

Dear Heloise: I have lots of costume jewelry. To keep it organized, I put each set in a plastic bag, then put the bags into a larger bag, according to colors. This makes it easy to find something to match. – T.K.D., Tupelo, Miss.

Don't you just love those zip bags for all kinds of storage? I was in your charming city last year doing a presentation on green living at the Lee County Library, and I met so many wonderful people. Stop in and tell the library employees I said hello! Visit your library for all kinds of help and free resources. – Heloise

EASY TO REMEMBER

Dear Heloise: I wanted to pass along a hint that helps me remember to take items home from the office refrigerator. I often do minor grocery shopping on my lunch hour. I would purchase perishable items, only remembering after I got home that I had put them in the break-room refrigerator. Now, I drop my car keys into the bag before placing it into the refrigerator. Even if I make it to my car after work, I can't leave the office without my keys or my perishables. – Wendy in Kentucky

This is an oldie, but a goodie! I've been told every time I print this hint that there seems to be a profusion of keys found in office refrigerators! – Heloise

STEP STOOL

Dear Heloise: I have a folding, two-step stool to reach up to the tree in the backyard. When the ground was damp, the legs would sink in. By putting the stool on a bathmat or such, the legs can't sink into the soft ground. – B.C., via e-mail

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Bridge • Steve Becker

Below are six unrelated bidding sequences. Where the question mark appears in each case, indicate whether you consider the last bid made in each sequence as forcing (compelling you to bid again) or nonforcing (permitting you to pass). If the last bid merely urges but does not compel you to bid again, treat it as nonforcing.

	North	South
1.	1 ♣	1 ♦
	1 ♥	?
2.	1 ♣	1 ♥
	2 ♣	2 ♦
	?	
3.	1 ♦	1 ♥
	3 ♥	?
4.	1 ♦	3 ♣
	?	
5.	1 ♣	2 ♣
	2 ♥	?
6.	1 ♣	1 ♦
	3 ♣	3 ♦
	?	

* * *

Forcing or Nonforcing?

1. Nonforcing. North might have a minimum opening bid and South might have a minimum response, so it would not make sense to treat one heart as forcing. If North wanted to assure another response, he would have to bid two hearts (a jump-shift) over one diamond.

2. Forcing. When the responder (as distinguished from the opening bidder) names a new suit, opener cannot pass. Thus, one heart was forcing, and two diamonds is equally forcing.

3. Nonforcing. A jump-raise by opener is merely invitational, allowing South to pass if he has a very weak hand.

4. Nonforcing. One spade would be forcing, and two spades (a jump-shift) would also be forcing, but three spades is a different kettle of fish. Unless you have a specific agreement to the contrary (such as that three spades in this sequence is a splinter bid, showing shortness in spades), three spades is a pre-emptive bid, pure and simple, and might consist of something like seven spades to the K-Q-J and nothing else. North may therefore pass if he feels game prospects are poor.

5. Forcing. When responder has raised opener's suit and opener then bids a new suit, responder must bid again. Here, North is probing for a game, possibly a slam, so South cannot pass.

6. Forcing. Once South bids over three clubs (which is invitational and not forcing), his side is committed to reaching game. South might have only a game in diamonds, clubs or notrump in mind, or he might be thinking of slam and be marking time to allow North to further define his hand. But whatever South's intentions are, North can't pass until at least a game is reached.

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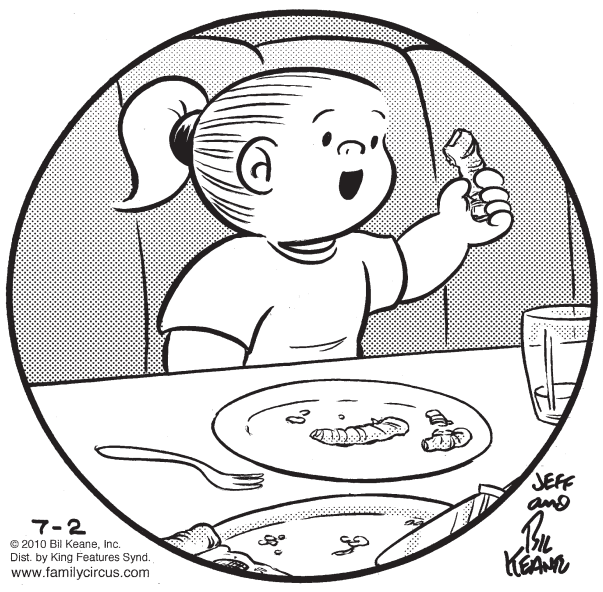
Family Circus • Bil Keane



"All that's left of my pizza are the bones."

Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 7/02

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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.

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

Difficulty Level ★★★ 7/01

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Cryptoquip

OICM ZCALTXM GSFXLXZTF GTALR JCJKCAU OCTA ITXAGXCZCU, X UPGGSUC LICR JXQIL KC OIXQU' OXQU.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A GROUP OF THREE BABIES WERE BORN ON A FAMOUS VEGAS BOULEVARD, I WOULD NAME THEM STRIPLETS.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: K equals B

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Snapshot
4 Unrivaled
8 Lairs
12 Mound stat
13 Fairy tale preposition
14 List-ending abbr.
15 "See ya"
17 Island near Florida
18 Satan's specialty
19 Spare tire's place?
20 Cut wood
22 Abound
24 Persia, now
25 Join in
29 Abner's adjective
30 Wept
31 Cattle call?
32 Grasp
34 Chamber
35 They last for hours
36 Stoppers
37 Adult
40 Attempt
41 Stromboli spillage
42 Relax
46 24/7
47 Director Kazan
48 Last letter
49 "Big Bang Theory" type
50 Captain Jack Sparrow portrayer
51 Kin of 14-Across

DOWN
1 Favorite
2 George's brother
3 One-sided contest
4 Crystal-clear
5 October birthstone
6 Neither mate
7 Away from WSW
8 Leave suddenly
9 Needle case
10 Catches
11 Bed-frame part
16 Squared
19 Garden intruder
20 Riverbed buildup
21 Met melody
22 Coin-toss call
23 — out (managed)
25 Helen's home
26 Pay off gradually
27 Castle
28 Male turkeys
30 Sleuth Charlie
33 1936 abdicator
34 Santa's runway
36 Inexpensive
37 Singer Campbell
38 Carry on
39 Finished
40 Omit
42 Turner or Nugent
43 Hearty brew
44 Old hand
45 Common Mkt.

Solution time: 25 mins.

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

Yesterday's answer 7-2

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		