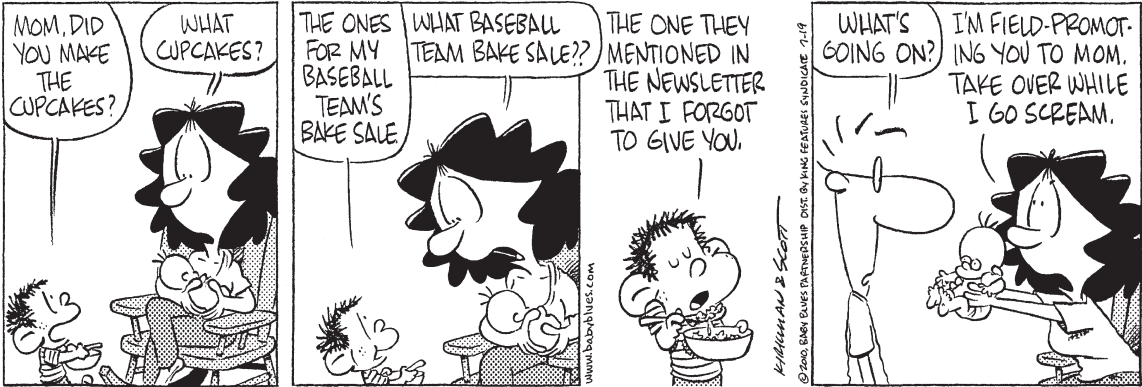
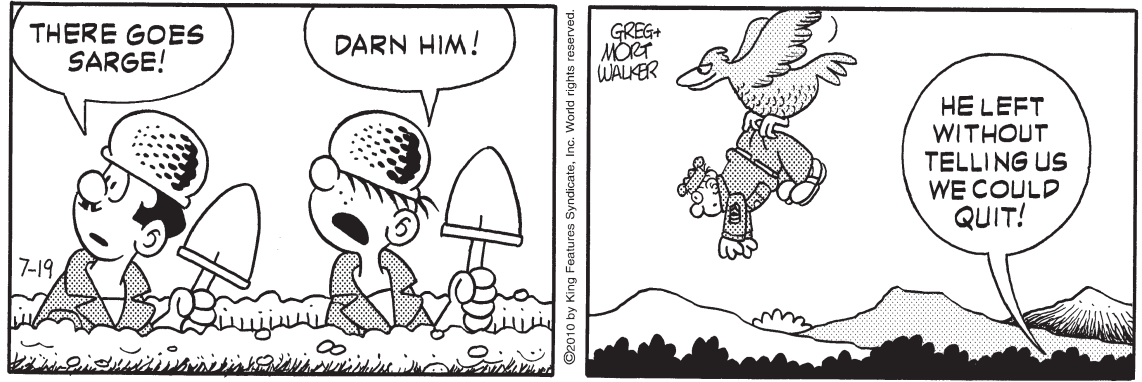


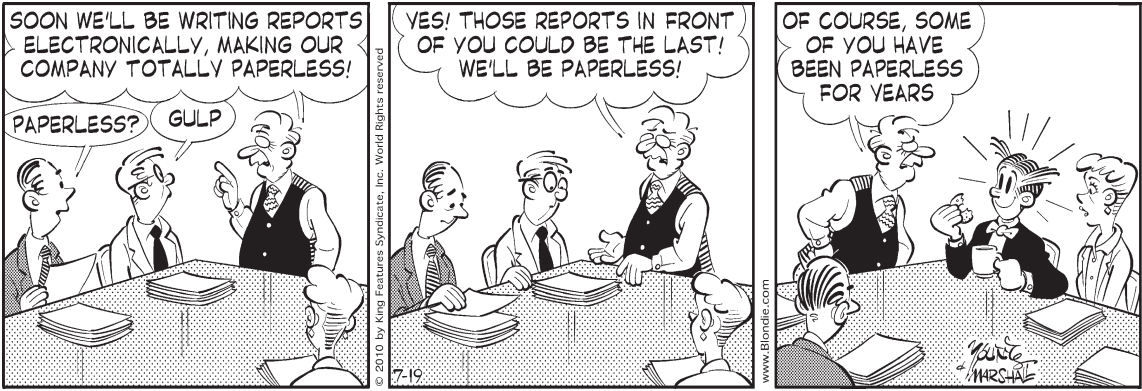
Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



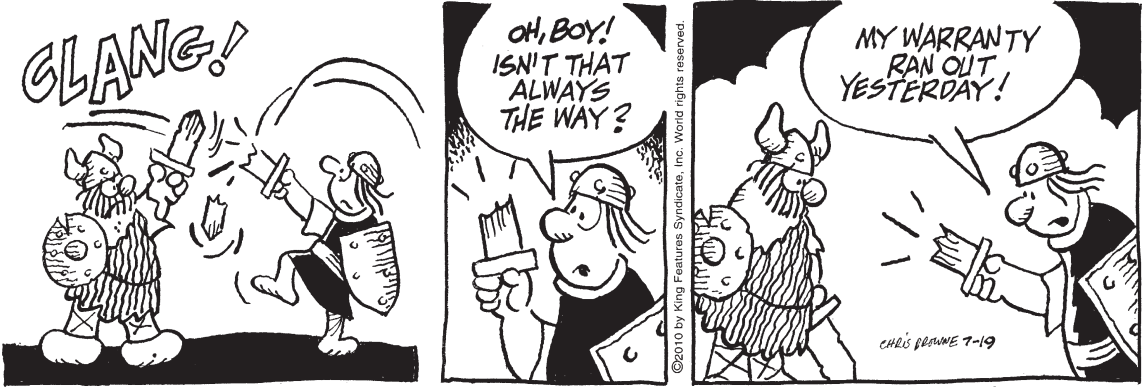
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



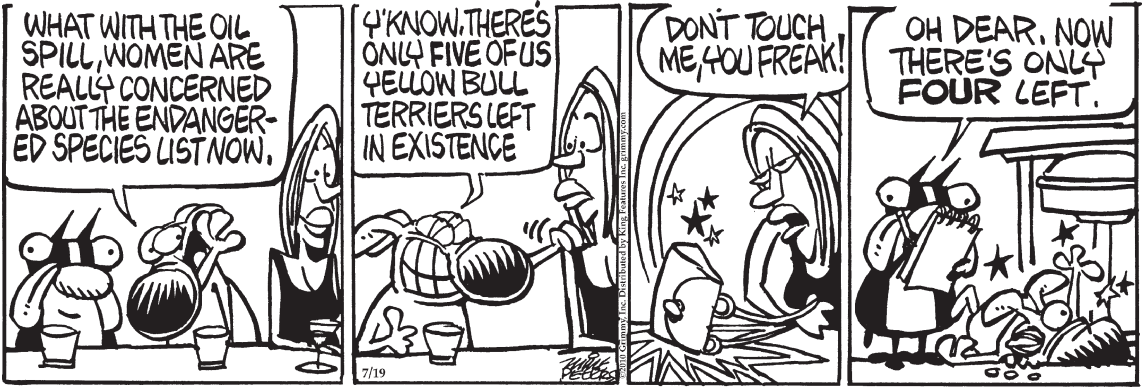
Blondie • Chic Young



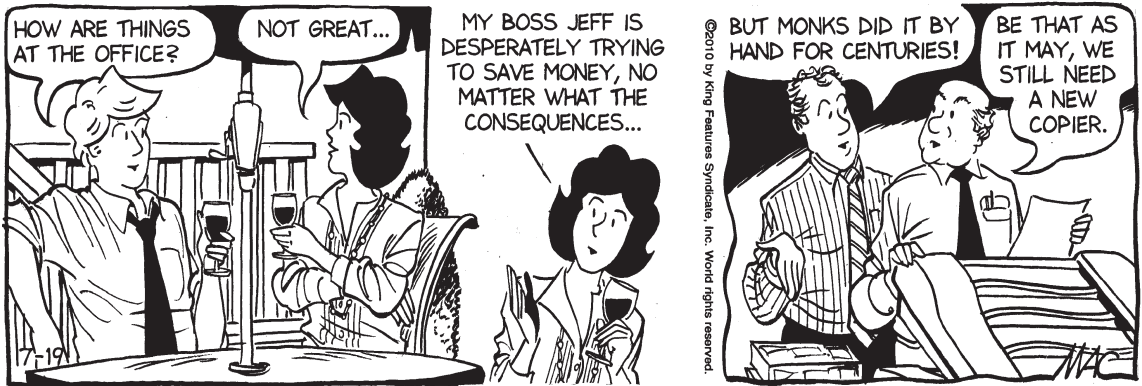
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



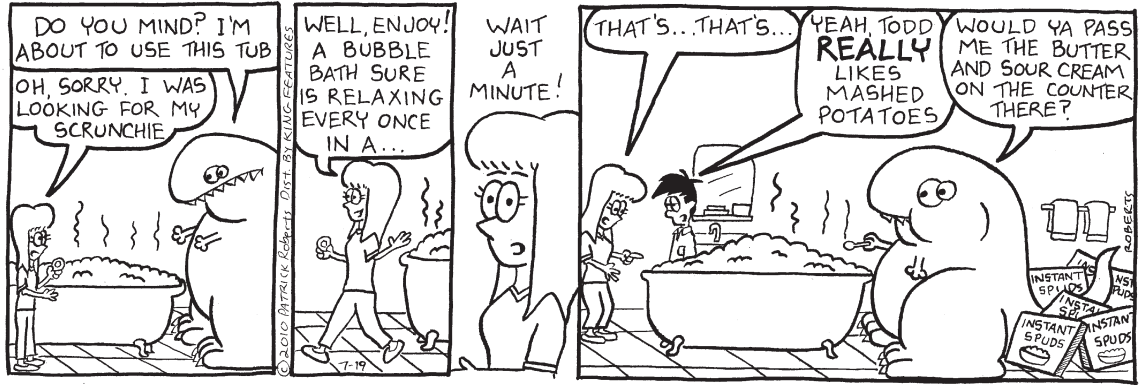
Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



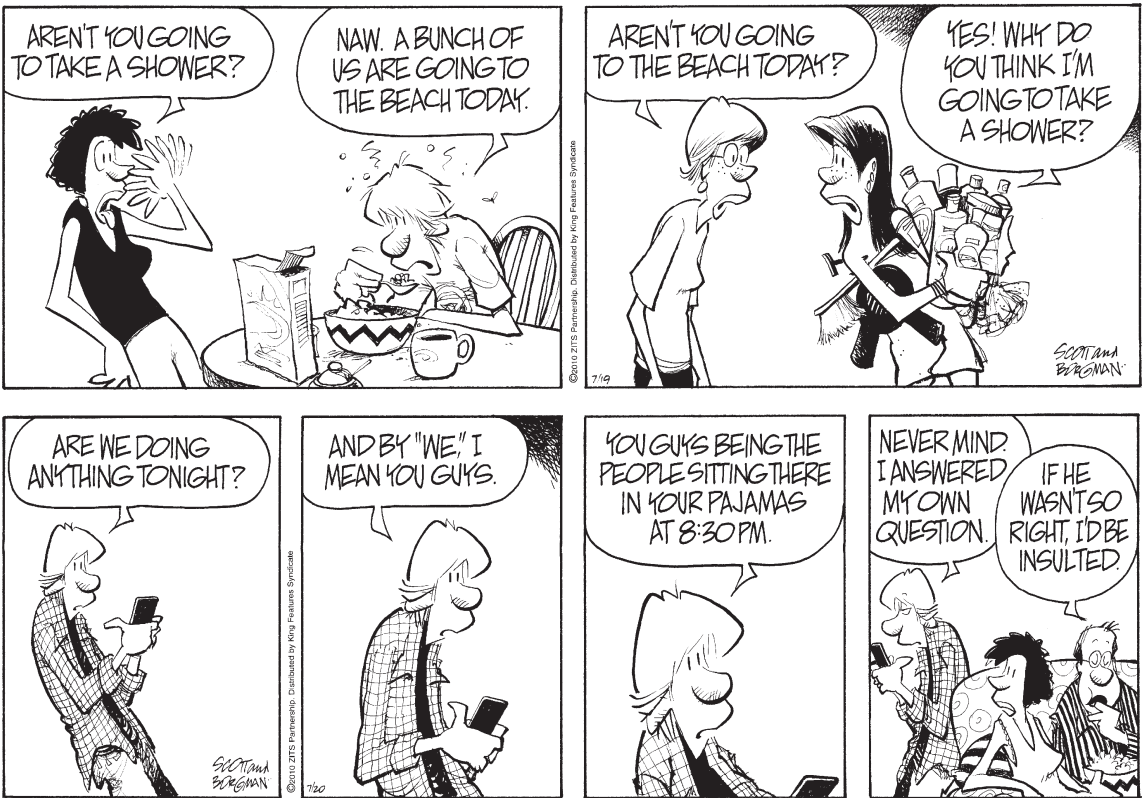
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Dr. Joyce Brothers • Ask Dr. Brothers

How proud is proud enough?

Dear Dr. Brothers: This Memorial Day, my neighbor went all out. American flags on each corner of his porch, a bald eagle with its wings splayed over his door. He even sprayed the stars and stripes onto his lawn. When I went for my paper, he asked where my decorations were and if I wasn't honoring our troops. I had nothing. I thought he was going too far, and it raises the question, Can one be too proud? – E.H.

Dear E.H.: I wouldn't confuse overdecorating with being too proud. So the short answer is no – one cannot be too proud of honoring fallen soldiers on Memorial Day. But your question raises underlying issues. Is it correct to equate putting up American flags with your level of patriotism? How did it make you feel when your neighbor questioned yours? He was making as superficial a judgment as you were. The flag as a symbol has, from time to time, been claimed by various groups. It is, unfortunately, sometimes seen as a political symbol that divides us.

Ideally, the flag will be displayed according to proper procedures: not allowed to touch the ground, replaced when it is tattered and so forth. More important, it can be flown by all Americans at any time during the year. If you are worried about your neighbor being too proud, consider what harm his display is doing – it makes him and others feel good, especially military families, whose sacrifice is often ignored. But you needn't be defensive about having no decorations – perhaps you show your pride in your own way.

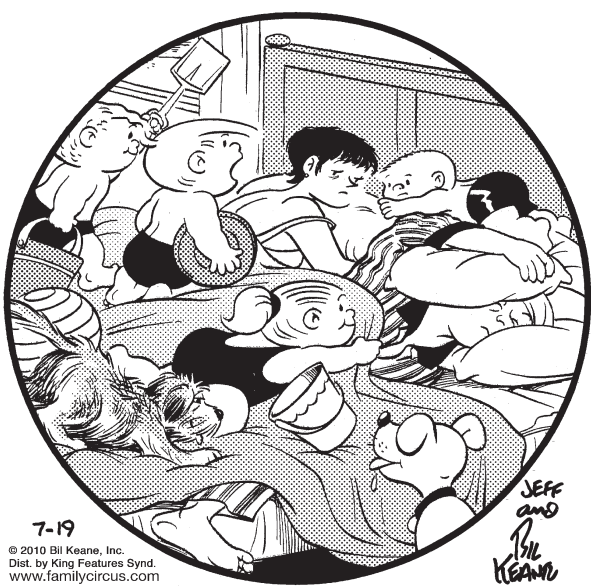
Dear Dr. Brothers: I don't know how other people do it. I see them making small talk with cashiers, mailmen and co-workers. I, on the other hand, feel like some kind of caveman as I stammer out a "Good morning" or a "Thanks." That's all I can spit out! How do people have this talent for being friendly to strangers, when the last thing I want to do is make conversation? – L.R.

Dear L.R.: You obviously find your lack of a glib personal style to be a major failing. It isn't, but since it causes you distress, it would be a good idea to remedy this situation. Once making small talk becomes second nature to you – and I believe that if you work at it you'll master it – you may change your life for the better. How? By turning small conversations into bigger ones, and bigger ones into relationships, and relationships into friendships or romances. As of right now, that's very unlikely to happen. So let's get to work.

One way to make yourself less self-conscious and awkward is to focus your attention on the other person. It's hard to have meaningful conversations based on small talk, but you may actually know a lot about the people you see regularly but haven't talked with much. Comment on a story in the newspaper. Ask them how they like their new car. Take the emphasis off your shyness, and put it on getting to know them. There's nothing wrong with starting with a simple "How's your day going?" And listen to the answer. As others respond to your efforts, you'll get the knack of talking to strangers. Take it at your own pace, and I'll bet your social circle will start to expand.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

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.

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

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

Cryptoquip

LZXW DZX YBEDX NXYM JN
KJHOWS UJEM ZYWPRYS
BYEHXH UJE DJ HLXYD, LJEKP
DZYD RX VEMHX-VOMYDOJW?

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: COMMON WORDS FROM FOLKS WHO COMPLETELY ADORE ITALY'S CAPITAL: "THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE ROME."

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: U equals Y

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	46 Old anes- chair thetic	3 Ms. Spelling of reality	19 Tease
1 Take a	50 Unkempt	4 Sprite	21 Fuss
4 Recede	one	5 Rosary	23 Corn on the —
7 Employer	53 Court	5 Leak	25 Deli salad
11 Handle	55 Leak	6 Pack	26 Unrivaled
13 Romanian	currency	7 Deadpan	27 Mimicked
14 Troop	56 KFC	8 Insepa- rable	28 Obama
15 Beige	flavor	9 Half	predecessor
16 Distant	enhancer	10 Pigs'	29 Norway's
17 Alluring	57 To the —	11 Swimming	capital
18 Egg-	degree	12 Swamp	30 Ca-
beating	58 Standard	13 Half	comedies
59 Bygone	compos-	14 Pigs'	boose's
tool	ment	15 Pigs'	position
20 "Phooey!"	60 "Of	16 Pigs'	31 Scratch
22 — -tac-	course"	17 Pigs'	35 Hair goo
toe	61 Salary	18 Pigs'	38 Family
24 Texas city		19 Pigs'	40 Born
28 Ennu	DOWN	20 Pigs'	42 Fabric
32 Ship's	1 Distort	21 Pigs'	softener
lowest	the facts	22 Pigs'	brand
deck	2 Foot	23 Pigs'	45 Memo
33 Addict	fraction	24 Pigs'	47 Barrel
34 Satchel		25 Pigs'	part
36 Hardy	Solution time: 27 mins.	26 Pigs'	48 Pound of
cabbage		27 Pigs'	poetry
37 Loose		28 Pigs'	49 "Rata-
39 Ordered		29 Pigs'	ouille"
more		30 Pigs'	rat
maga-		31 Pigs'	50 Bashful
zines		32 Pigs'	51 Zodiac
41 Shocking		33 Pigs'	sign
43 Meadow		34 Pigs'	52 Bobby of
44 Soon, in		35 Pigs'	hockey
verse		36 Pigs'	54 Surprise
		37 Pigs'	cries

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
28	29	30			31		32		
33				34		35		36	
37				38		39		40	
41				42		43			
		44			45		46	47	48
50	51	52		53		54		55	
56				57				58	
59				60				61	