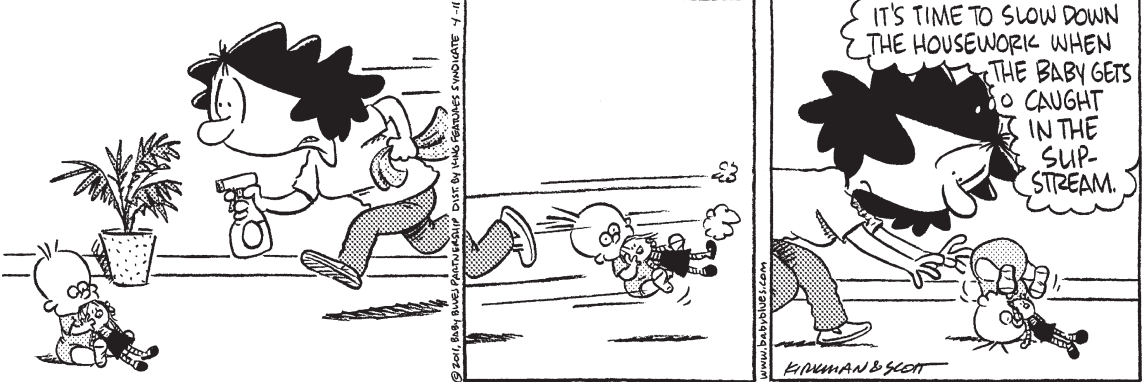
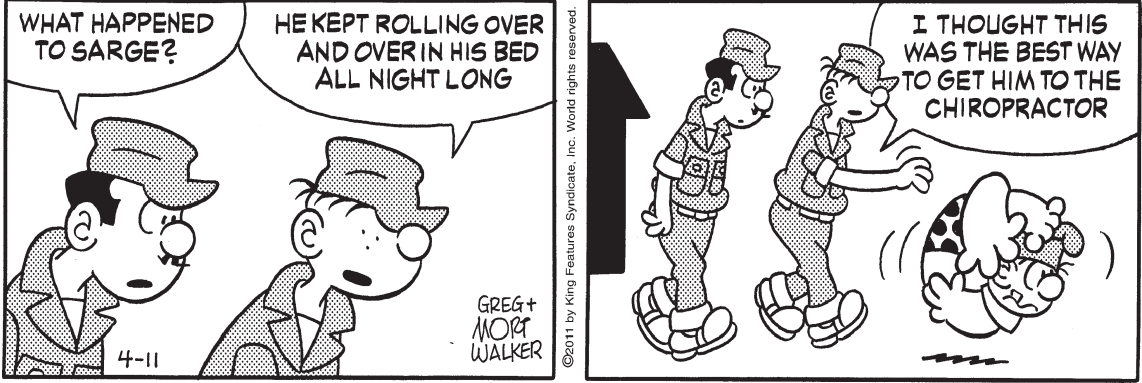


Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Blondie • Chic Young



Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



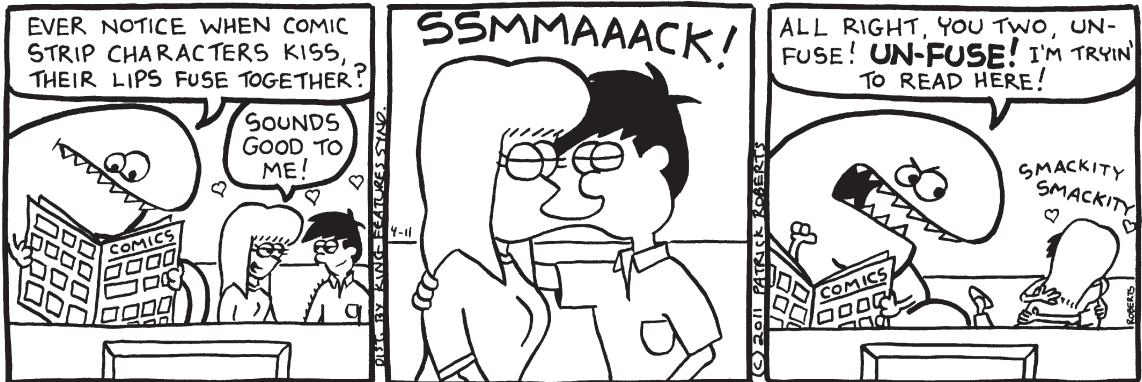
Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



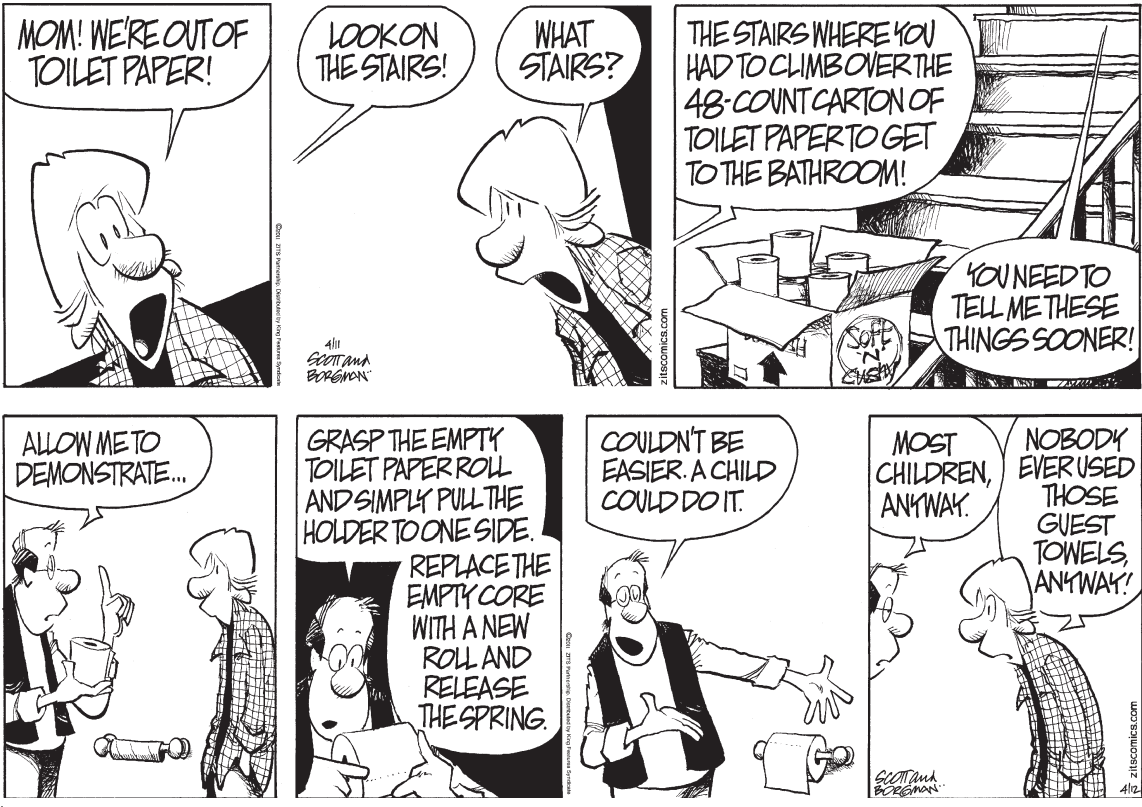
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Dr. Joyce Brothers • Ask Dr. Brothers

Mom says she's 'expired'

Dear Dr. Brothers: My 58-year-old mom refuses to date. Anytime I talk to her about it, she laughs and tells me she's "past her expiration date." She doesn't act depressed, but has to be lonely. She was mortified when I sat her down to show her online dating sites. She can't believe that people "actually do stuff like that." I'm at my wits' end. Is there anything I can do? – F.F.

Dear F.F.: It may be time for you to help your mother stop feeling like a loaf of bread left on the shelf! Whether she is lonely because of a breakup, being widowed or a long single-motherhood doesn't matter much. The problem is she feels so unappealing she isn't thinking in terms of meeting people and going out as a couple. If she has never had experience on the computer, it is understandable the Internet-dating craze has passed her by. Perhaps you can get her started if she needs help with interacting online. Practice with her – try instant messaging, tweeting, e-mails, message boards. Show her the computer has a social side!

The most natural starting place would be with some hobby or activity she enjoys or would like to learn. Every municipality has senior activities and ways for older people to connect. So sit down with her and see if she and a friend would like to attend some functions nearby. (Make sure the functions include men!) She may never progress to Internet dating, but she can use the computer as a way of finding out about community activities, volunteer opportunities, nature walks or poetry readings. Dates may soon follow.

Dear Dr. Brothers: My best friend since grade school is planning to visit me during the summer. We haven't seen each other in years, and I was looking forward to it – until I heard he is bringing his wife. Last time they both visited, it was a nightmare. She's high-maintenance and needed constant attention from my friend. Anytime we started to have fun together, she would pout. How can I tell him that he should come alone? – B.C.

Dear B.C.: Well, unless he feels the same way about his wife you do, you may have a hard time with this one. And if he did feel the same way, he'd have ditched her or found his own way to get out of the house without her. So it sounds as though he either has little say in the matter, or he's fine with it. In either case, it might be best to suggest once or twice a "guys only" weekend – to which you invite a couple of other old pals – or plan entertainment for his wife. The less bored she is, the less she will spend demand attention.

You don't mention whether you have a woman in your life. But if you do – or can round up a female friend or two – surely you can come up with ideas about how to occupy one visiting high-maintenance wife. After all, it's her vacation too, and she probably doesn't want to just watch you and her husband talking about third grade. So, now you know what it's like if you do nothing, take these matters into your own hands and make sure you don't end up with another nightmare. But don't be afraid to ask your friend first whether he could see his way clear to coming down alone and suggesting his wife do something with girlfriends. It's worth a try!

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Bridge • Steve Becker

East dealer. Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ K 2
♥ K J 9 7 5 4 3
♦ K
♣ J 10 3

WEST
♠ 10 9 8 7
♥ A 6
♦ 9 8 7 6 5 2
♣ 2

EAST
♠ Q 10 8 2
♥ J 4 3
♦ A K Q 9 8 7
♣ A

SOUTH
♠ A Q J 6 5 4 3
♥ A
♦ A Q 10
♣ 6 5 4

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

Famous Hand

This deal appeared in a British par contest many years ago. The par for North-South was to reach four spades; the par for East-West was to defeat the contract.

The bidding shown, which includes a strong jump-overcall by South, was the popular route to four spades at that time. Since most players now use the jump-overcall as pre-emptive, the spade game would be reached today by a different sequence of bids. One possibility would be for South to bid four spades directly over one club.

In the play, West leads a club, and East promptly collects the Q-K-A. It is West's discards on the second and third clubs that determine the outcome.

If West throws two diamonds, or a heart and a diamond, on the high clubs, South will inevitably score seven spades and three diamonds for 10 tricks. The only way for West to defeat the contract is to discard the six and ace of hearts! East then returns a heart at trick four, assuring West of a spade trick regardless of how declarer proceeds.

While it is highly unusual for a defender to toss an ace away, West should reason that he has nothing to lose and possibly much to gain by discarding both of his hearts.

If South is void in hearts, the heart discards are necessary to promote a trump trick. Even if declarer has a heart, West will be able to ruff East's heart return at trick four as South follows suit.

Thus, West should conclude that discarding both hearts cannot fail to set the contract no matter what declarer's hand actually is. Though this conclusion necessitates throwing an ace to the winds, the deed must be done.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★

4/11

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.

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

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

Cryptoquip

CJ UPKMPZM OXZWU WP KXQM

X SXUQMWSXRR VCW ZPWVCZF

SLW ZMW, C ULYYPUM

WVXW'U UOCUVJLR WVCZQCZF.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: BY YEARNING FOR THE DAYS WHEN A CERTAIN CARD GAME WAS POPULAR, I SUPPOSE I'M BEING WHISTFUL.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: W equals T

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS
- 1 Slightly open
 - 5 On in years
 - 8 Venomous vipers
 - 12 Piranha, for one
 - 14 Road Runner's noise
 - 15 French menu phrase
 - 16 Exposed
 - 17 "— Gratia Artis" (motto of MGM)
 - 18 Very, very tiny
 - 20 — -Saxon
 - 23 Superdry, as champagne
 - 24 Swimming venue
 - 25 Bush successor ... and vice versa
 - 28 Mess up
 - 29 Football coaching legend
 - 30 — Moines
 - 32 Whodunit
- DOWN
- 3 Lion's share
 - 35 Piano array
 - 36 Two score
 - 37 Dig up
 - 40 Help
 - 41 Press
 - 42 Freeway sign
 - 47 File's partner
 - 48 Inventor of basketball
 - 49 Potato buds
 - 50 Hosp. sections
 - 51 Location
 - 1 Pump up the volume
- 31 Pickle container
- 3 Blackbird
- 4 Drugstore chain begun in 1902
- 5 Elevator name
- 6 Super-man foe
- 7 With listlessness
- 8 Costello's partner
- 9 Fashion line?
- 10 "Frasier" actress
- 11 Detail, for short
- 13 Frizzy hairstyle
- 19 Albacore, e.g.
- 20 Gorilla
- 21 Standard
- 22 Not for the faint of heart
- 23 Unclear images
- 25 Capital of Wyoming
- 26 33-
- 27 Down's protection
- 27 Birds' home
- 29 Goblet part
- 31 Pigpen
- 33 Black-and-white kin of weasels
- 34 PC peripherals
- 36 Isn't too tight or too loose
- 37 Ireland
- 38 Inside picture?
- 39 Sharpen
- 40 Line of symmetry
- 43 Listener
- 44 Twelve
- 45 Addams cousin
- 46 Definite article

Solution time: 27 mins.

| | | |
|--------|----------|------|
| EMS | DAZE | XRAY |
| BOO | RUIN | AIDA |
| BOY | COTTS | NEAP |
| BRIO | BALMS | |
| CLEAT | SPUD | |
| ROAM | CELLULAR | |
| URN | DOWEL | OB |
| DESTIN | DYES | |
| USER | ORATE | |
| CLERK | DUAL | |
| LIMB | JOYSTICK | |
| ARIA | ANNE | SHE |
| WARN | REEL | TIN |

Saturday's answer 4-11

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 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 |
| 47 | | | | 48 | | | | | | |
| 49 | | | | 50 | | | | 51 | | |