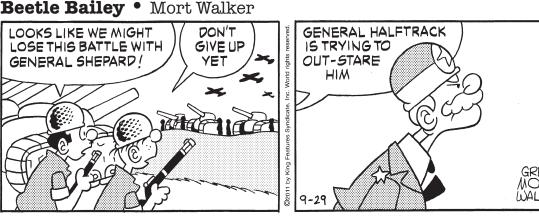
# Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott





### **Blondie •** Chic Young



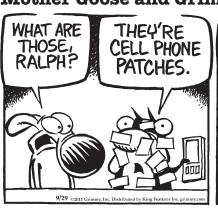




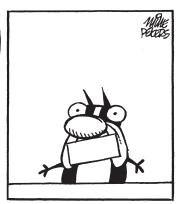
### **Hagar the Horrible** • Chris Browne



### **Mother Goose and Grimm** • Mike Peters







CAN WE GET

# Sally Forth • Greg Howard





### **Todd the Dinosaur** • Patrick Roberts







**Zits** • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



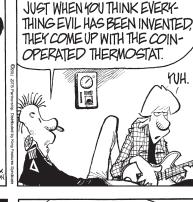
JEREMY, WHAT KIND OF NEW

SOMETHING

COMPUTER WOULD YOU GET

IF YOU WERE ME?











# Dr. Joyce **Brothers**

Ask Dr. Brothers

# Aunt says read to baby

Dear Dr. Brothers: I just had my first child, and my aunt keeps encouraging me to read to her. I barely have time to think, much less read stories to my baby, who can't understand even the simplest book. I know starting education early is helpful for kids, but it seems like overkill before they can even talk. Is there any point to reading to babies when they don't understand? – V.H.

Dear V.H.: You may be underestimating not only your baby's ability to learn and understand, but your own ability to teach your daughter with your actions. What parents do with their kids before they learn to talk actually can have more of an effect on whether they're ready when they enter school than their social background. Kids who are taken to the library or own many books as 2-year-olds score higher on tests when they enter elementary school. So, you're teaching them that books and learning are valued in your family. Your daughter is still quite young, but this

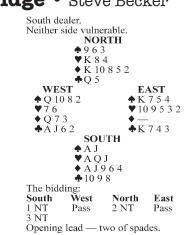
gives you a chance to prepare the best possible early-childhood education for her to be ready for school. Preschool can be particularly beneficial when she reaches the right age. But even now, exposing her to a wide range of activities will set her up for success. In addition, reading together - even if it's something (appropriate) you'd be reading anyway, not necessarily a kids' book can promote bonding and help her learn vocabulary and speech. She'll learn how to express herself and communicate earlier, and this will guard against problems integrating into school later.

Dear Dr. Brothers: I have two teenage boys, and I'm nervous about them playing sports. I'm afraid they're going to get hurt or get into trouble. They both insist that not only do they love playing, but it helps them relax and get out their anger and frustration in a useful and perfectly legal way. To me, this sounds like an excuse their coaches told them to sell me on, but I can't be sure. Does playing sports really help kids get out their aggression and anger in a positive way? – D.J.

**Dear D.J.:** While there are things to worry about when your kids play sports, the benefits outweigh the harm. First, you have to take into account fitness and a healthy lifestyle. But there also are cognitive, emotional and behavioral benefits, as your sons can attest to. Being part of a team can help kids improve self-control and discipline, as well as decrease anger and aggression. Not only do sports require concentration and focus, but training can decrease the negative emotions that lead to outbursts and misbehavior.

Interestingly, boys have a stronger positive response to sports than girls do. There is little change in girls' aggression after playing sports, but that's likely because they don't have as many problems with anger management in their teen years as boys do. The main thing is finding activity your kids are passionate about that is productive and requires focus and commitment. A strong connection with any kind of activity - whether sports or painting or music – can give kids a sense of purpose that decreases misbehavior.

# **Bridge** • Steve Becker



### From the Mailbox

Dear Mr. Becker: You have said many times that the best players seldom misguess the location of a missing queen. I don't doubt that this is true, or you wouldn't say it, but just the same, I wonder how you'd solve the diamond problem in this deal without seeing the opponents' cards.

I was South in three notrump, and West led the deuce of spades. I took East's king with the ace and could see that I had nine tricks if the diamonds were divided 2-1. I also realized that if the diamonds were divided 3-0, I could still make the contract by guessing which opponent had the

If East had three diamonds, I could trap the queen by initially leading a low diamond to dummy's king; if West had them, I'd have to play the ace of diamonds first. Unfortunately, I played low to the king and ended up down four! Should I have guessed how to play the diamonds? Sincerely yours, Miserable in Missoula. Dear M in M: I think so, but first let's study

the problem. It seems best to start by making two fairly reasonable assumptions. First, that West's deuce-of-spades lead is truly fourth-best, giving him only four spades, and second, that he would have led from a five-card suit if he had one. It follows that West cannot be void of dia-

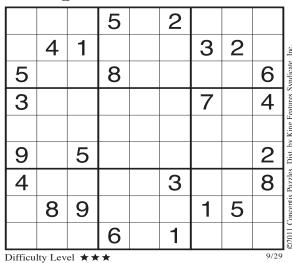
monds, because he would then have a five-card club or heart suit. It also follows that if West does not have a diamond void, he is the only one who can have all the missing diamonds. Therefore, you should have cashed the ace at trick two. It is, of course, always possible that West led his fifth-best spade and has two other four-card

### Family Circus • Bil Keane



nutritional info for these burgers and fries you made for us?"

### Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green



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.

							9129	
8	2	1	4	3	5	6	9	7
9	4	6	8	2	7	1	3	5
7	3	5	1	9	6	2	4	8
5	7	8	2	1	9	4	6	3
3	1	9	6	8	4	7	5	2
4	6	2	5	7	3	9	8	1
6	8	4	7	5	2	3	1	9
2	5	3	9	4	1	8	7	6
1	9	7	3	6	8	5	2	4
Difficulty Level ★★★								

### Cryptoquip

GOJVNC V D FΖB SEUC

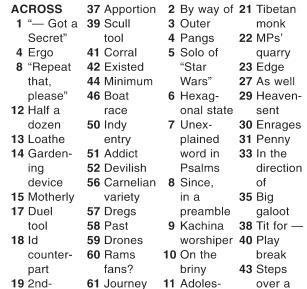
NZNEM NSEN FΖB YVUC

GBOOZJN NZ, V'H GEF NSEN'G

DCLHVLY DZJ ZLC'G CMD. Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN THEY DECIDED TO STOP CRYING, THE WEEPING TREES SUCCEEDED THROUGH SHEER FORCE OF WILLOW

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: N equals T

# (c) 2011 by King Features Syndicate **Crossword** • Eugene Sheffer



Roman emperor **21** Not as **DOWN** 1 Doctrine small 24 Shade 25 Plant

bristle 26 Perch 28 Fundamental 32 Castle

century

protection 34 Cattle call?

36 Doubtless

Solution time: 25 mins.

segment

49 Over again 53 Entry payment 54 Time of your life? 55 Journal Yesterday's answer 9-29

cent

20 Fix the

sound-

track

**16** Early bird? **45** "— and

over a

fence

Peace"

brother

46 Hurry

47 Jacob's

48 Bacteri-

suits, or even a second five-card suit. But, as a practical matter, you should assume that West made a normal lead, not an abnormal one. Hope this answers your question, S.B. (c)2011 King Features Syndicate Inc.