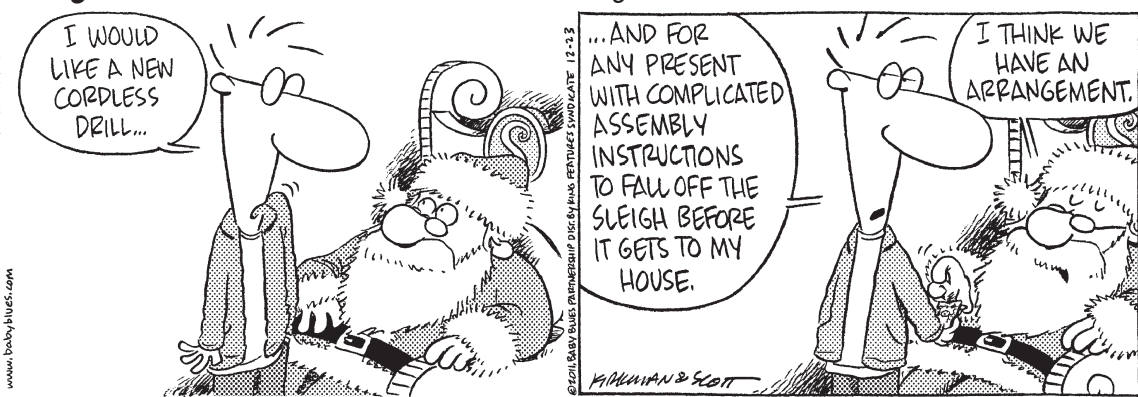
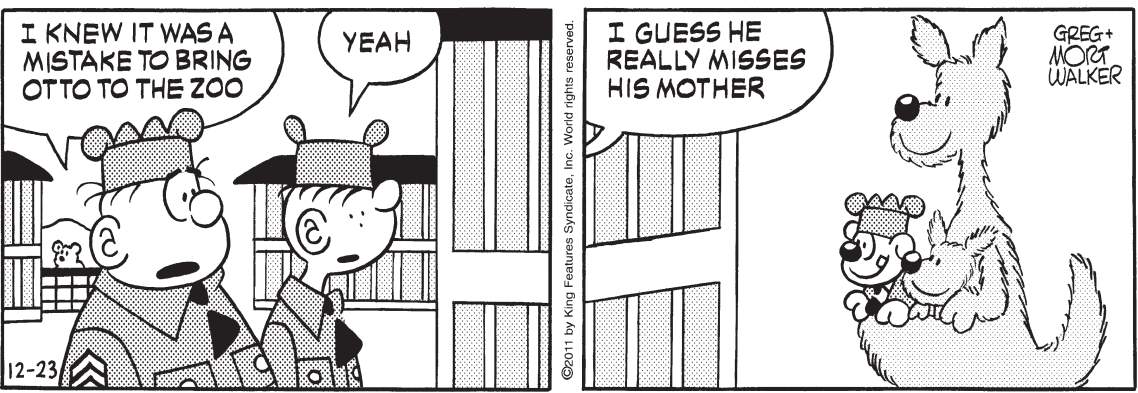


Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



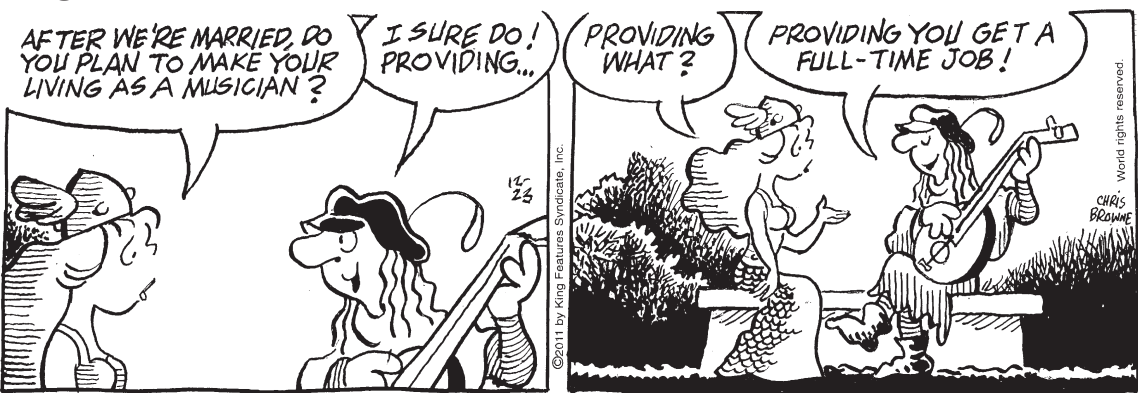
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Blondie • Chic Young



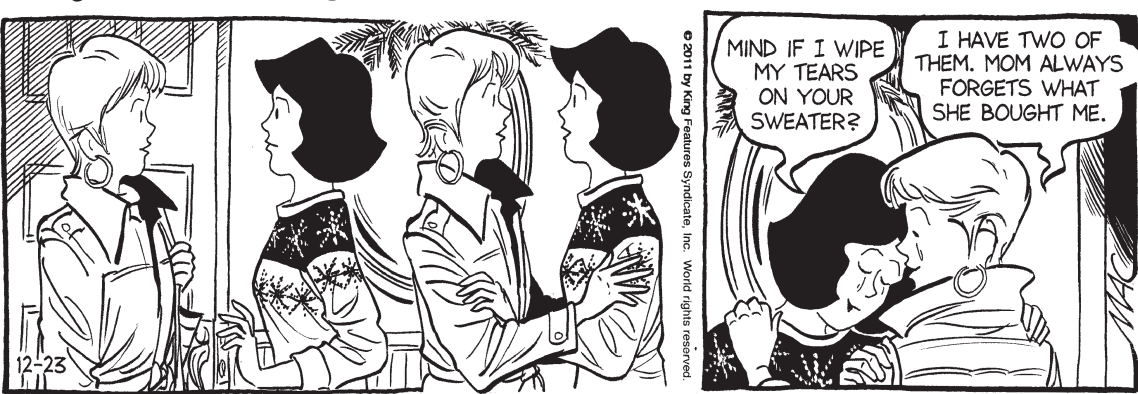
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Heloise

- Hints from Heloise

Solution for sticker adhesive

Dear Heloise: I bought pants that had a manufacturer's sticker on it. The residue will not come off when the garment is washed. Do you have any suggestions? -- Wonda from Mississippi

Good question, and I have a hint for you! I answered this very question in my Good Housekeeping magazine column earlier this year, so please read on.

Put the adhesive area facedown on a clean terry towel or washcloth and pour a little acetone-based nail-polish remover on the spot (it should be safe, since the garment is washable). Then rub with another clean towel to push the remover through the material. Turn the garment over to check that the adhesive is coming off; it may take several attempts. -- Heloise

HOLIDAY PET SAFETY

Dear Readers: With the holidays arriving, here are some hints to keep your pets safe:

- Cats love to chew on garland and swing at ornaments, so take note.
- Check extension cords so that pets can't chew on them!
- NEVER give pets turkey or chicken bones; they can splinter and puncture or become lodged in a pet's throat or digestive tract, or cause other serious medical issues.
- Consider putting your pets in a back room if the entry door will be opening and closing, to reduce the risk of an escapee.

"Woof, woof" from Cabbie, our mini schnauzer! -- Heloise

CLEANING PRODUCTS

Dear Readers: Using and storing cleaning products? Here are the DO'S and DON'TS of cleaning-product safety:

Always read and follow label directions to the letter. Store cleaning products out of the reach of children and pets.

DO NOT leave a bucket of water or water and cleaning solution anywhere, especially if you have a toddler around.

Don't mix cleaning products. This can cause dangerous fumes.

These hints are from one of my books, "Heloise Conquers Stinks and Stains," available online. -- Heloise

CERTIFICATE SAVER

Dear Heloise: Sometimes, my brothers and I get certificates or awards at school for doing something special. After a few days on the refrigerator, there is always a question of what to do with them.

My mom then came up with an idea. She got each of us a three-ring binder filled with plastic sheet savers. When we get a certificate, we slip it in the book. Now each of us has a special place to keep our awards, and they are kept nice and in order. -- Camden, via email

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Bridge • Steve Becker

You are South, and the bidding has gone:

North	East	South	West
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	2 ♠	Pass
2 NT	Pass	?	

What would you bid now with each of the following four hands?

- ♠ AJ97 ♥ 52 ♦ J8 ♣ KQ843
- ♠ AJ865 ♥ 10 ♦ 5 ♣ AQ9852
- ♠ KJ92 ♥ Q84 ♦ 7 ♣ AK763
- ♠ KQ74 ♥ Q7 ♦ 2 ♣ AJ9654

Bidding Quiz

1. Pass. There comes a time when you've shown all your values and there's nothing further to show. True, partner opened the bidding, but he has now signed off twice opposite your two forcing bids. Obviously, he must have a dead-minimum opening bid. He presumably would have shown more interest in game (such as bidding three notrump instead of two) if he had more than a dead-minimum. Since you have no values beyond those already indicated, it's high time to put a stop to the proceedings.

Another way to approach the situation is to apply the general principle that it normally takes at least a minimum opening bid to make a game opposite another minimum opening bid. Partner seems to have a minimum, and you have less than an opening bid, so the combined total comes to less than game.

2. Three spades. The purpose of this bid is to tell partner that you have 6-5 distribution. Partner knows you would not repeat your spades with only a four-card suit, so he will credit you with five spades. At the same time, he will realize that you must have at least six clubs, since you would have bid spades first with two suits of equal length.

3. Four hearts. Game is certain despite partner's two weak rebids. However, there's still a good chance for slam, and you can suggest this by jumping to four hearts, implying extra values while at the same time completing the description of your 4-3-1-5 distribution.

4. Three hearts. It is still not clear whether the best game contract lies in hearts, notrump or clubs. The best way of pinpointing your shortage in diamonds is by now showing heart support, which, in conjunction with your two previous bids, should make it easier for partner to choose the best final contract.

Ordinarily, Q-x is not adequate support for a suit partner has rebid only once, since the rebid might occasionally be based on only five cards. But in the great majority of cases, partner is far more likely to have a six-card suit, so a trial bid of three hearts (forcing) is clearly the best choice at this point.

Tomorrow: Assertiveness to the nth degree.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



"An old-fashioned Christmas means like they had back in the 1990s."

Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★ ★★

12/23

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.

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

Difficulty Level ★★ ★★

12/23

Cryptoquip

EG D GVNNU EPX'H LDBEXM

IEP IKLV FNVDX DXJ HEJC,

E UKYNJ PDC IV XVVJP

HK AEFB YA HIV ANDFV.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: HE CAREFULLY TRIED TO LURE THOSE FOLKS INTO AN ARGUING CONTEST, BUT THEY DIDN'T TAKE DEBATE.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: X equals N

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	39 Clean	2 Danger	23 Insinu-
1 Hot tub	Air Act	3 Cognizant	ating
4 Physi-	org.	4 Cookouts,	24 "— on a
cist's deg.	41 Send	for short	Grecian
7 Cut in two	forth	5 UFO,	Urn"
12 Chop	45 Pilfered	maybe	25 Church
13 Scrooge's	47 Insep-	6 Guitarist	seat
cry	arable	once wed	26 Storefront
14 Cross-	48 See	to Xavier	sign abbr.
wise,	35-Across	Cugat	28 Hearty

Solution time: 25 mins.

BAH	ALBA	BANG
AGE	FEEL	IMAM
GOALLINE	GIVE	
DUO	TRODDEN	
VULGAR	THE	
ANI	TIP	MAMBO
NINE	DOG	LAUD
STEED	PUP	ICE
	LYE	THANKS
INFLECT	OWL	
DELI	LIFELINE	
LEAK	ARAB	NOR
EDGE	TETE	EW

Yesterday's answer 12-23

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					52		
53					54			55		
56					57			58		