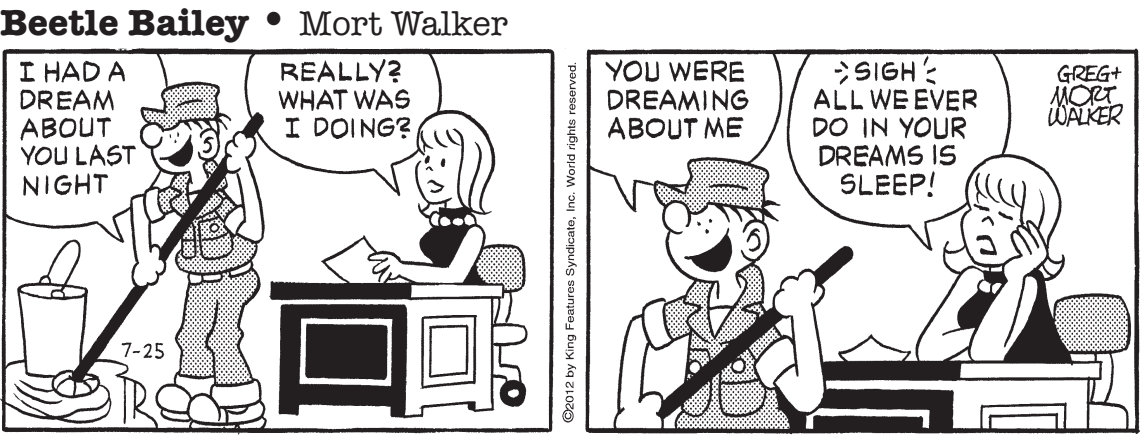
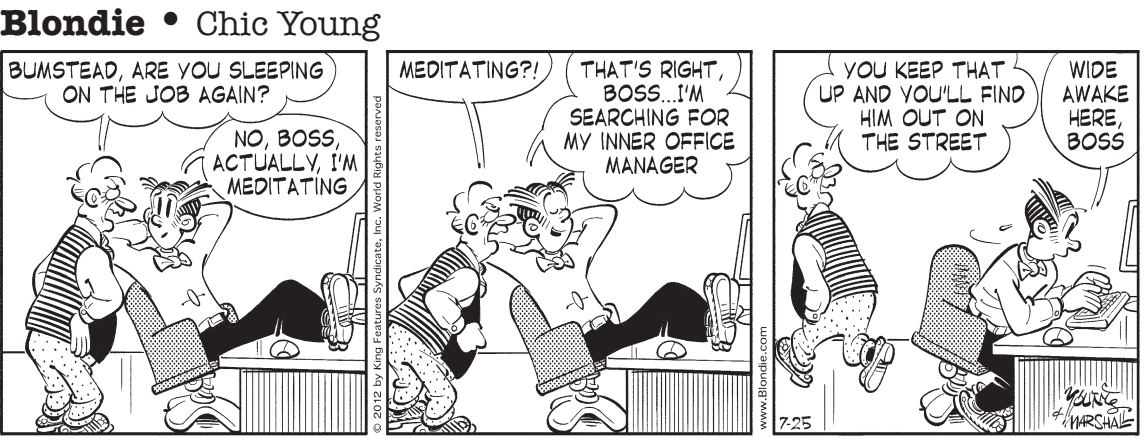
Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



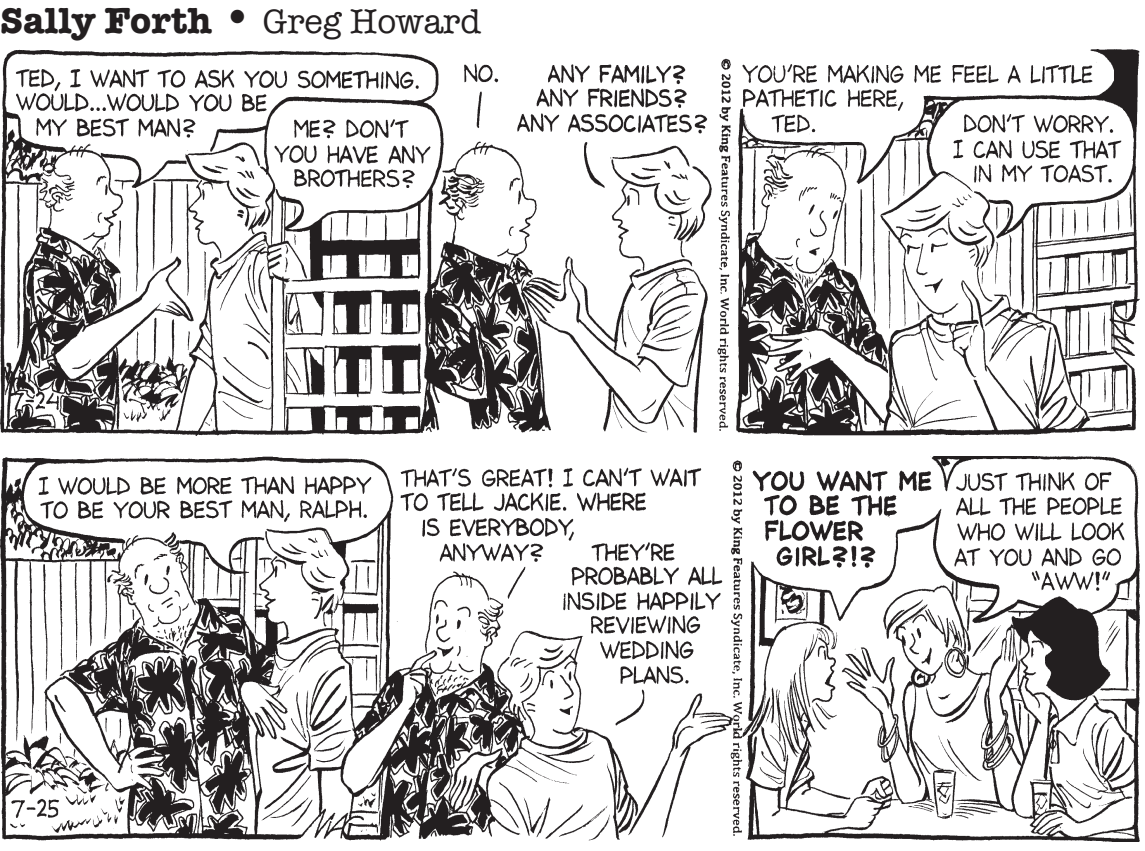
Blondie • Chic Young



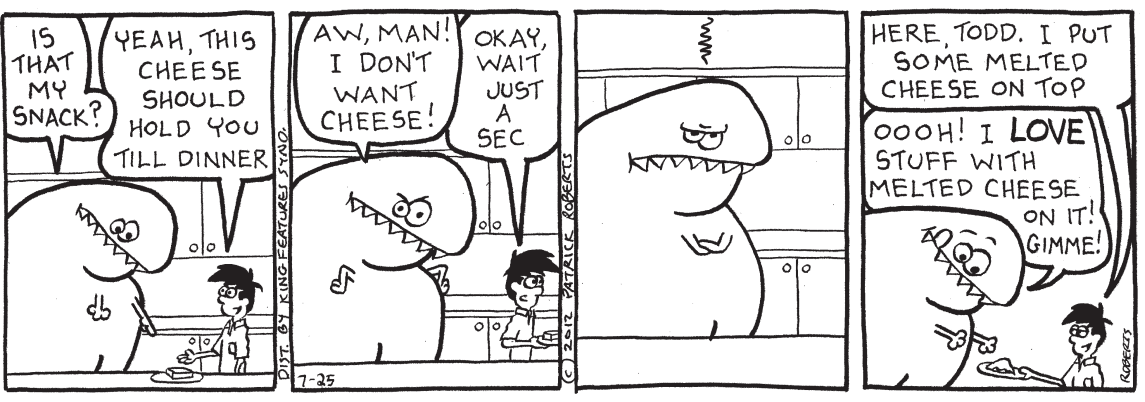
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne

Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters

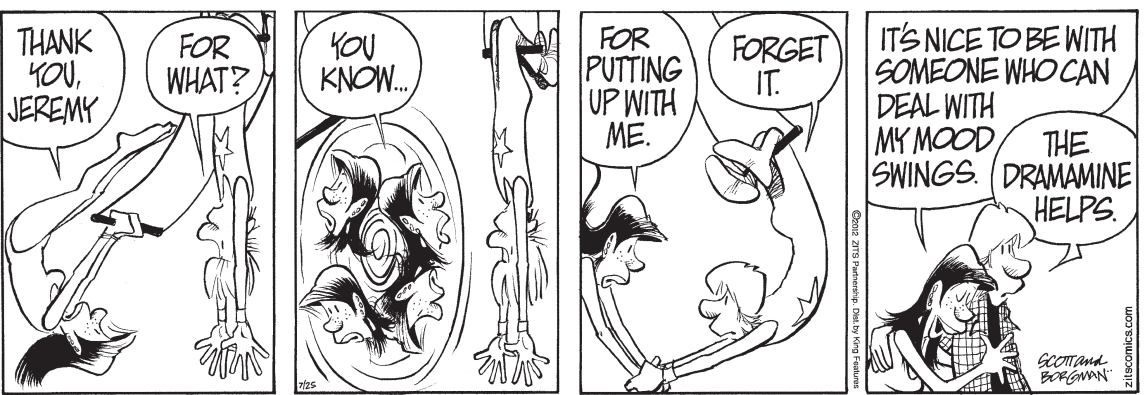
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Heloise

• Hints from Heloise

Better burgers get a little extra

Dear Readers: Summer is in full swing, and that means barbecues, picnics, camping and visits to parks. These usually include hamburgers and hot dogs. Here are a couple of hints to help make a better burger, and with a twist:

• Add taco seasoning to the meat, then add Monterey Jack or jalapeno cheese. Serve with salsa, jalapeno slices, guacamole or sour cream as condiments.

• Add a dry ranch or Italian dressing mix to the meat. Serve with blue-cheese crumbles, roasted garlic and red onions.

• Add bits of Italian sausage, Parmesan and minced garlic to the meat. Serve with tomato sauce or pesto and mozzarella cheese.

Give one (or all) of these a try! If you have a special "recipe" you would like to share, please send it in, and I'll try to print some of the most unusual. – Heloise

SEND A GREAT HINT TO:

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San Antonio, TX 78279-5000
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CARROT HINTS

Dear Heloise: I have always wondered if carrots should be peeled before eating. – Sonya D. in Cincinnati

Well, this is a question that does not have a definitive answer. If you are eating a raw carrot, scrubbing the carrot well under running water and peeling should suffice. If the carrots are certified organic, the peel can be left on.

It is recommended by major producers of carrots to always wash and peel carrots before eating; the only exception is organic carrots or baby carrots (which are actually regular carrots, peeled and cut down to a small size).

Since most of the vitamins are not in the skin, peeling does not really affect the nutrition. Another interesting carrot hint: More vitamin A is released when you cook carrots than when you eat them raw! – Heloise

EASY OPEN

Dear Heloise: This hint saves time and avoids a mess when opening cans of refried beans, thick (condensed – Heloise) soups, tomato paste, etc. After removing the top, turn the can upside down in a bowl. Using a bottle opener, puncture the bottom of the can. The contents of the can will slide right out. – Liz S., via e-mail

NO SLIDE

Dear Heloise: To prevent hard-boiled eggs from sliding around on a plate, put lettuce leaves on the plate under the eggs. It looks pretty and keeps the eggs in place. This works well when transporting a dish to a potluck dinner or picnic. – Ruth F., via e-mail

COVERED CARDBOARDS

Dear Heloise: I save the round or square cardboards from frozen pizzas. I cover them with aluminum foil and use for occasions when I want to transport a cake to a gathering or surprise someone with a home-baked dessert. This eliminates any confusion about returning the dish to the right person. – T.W. in Florida

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Bridge • Steve Becker

North dealer.
East-West vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ 10 4
♥ Q 10 9 5 3
♦ A K J 6
♣ 10 3

WEST
♠ K Q 7 3
♥ —
♦ 10 7 5 3 2
♣ A 8 6 2

EAST
♠ J 9 8 6 2
♥ K 7
♦ 8
♣ Q J 9 5 4

SOUTH
♠ A 5
♥ A J 8 6 4 2
♦ Q 9 4
♣ K 7

The bidding:

North	East	South	West
Pass	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
3 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	

Opening lead — king of spades.

Sound Technique

Bridge is in large part a game of rules, but it also offers great opportunity for innovation. While general rules might suffice in most situations, a player must also be willing to abandon a rule when common sense dictates that he do so.

For example, assume you're declarer at four hearts on this deal and West leads the king of spades. How would you proceed?

To begin with, even before you make a play from dummy, you should assess your overall prospects. You conclude that it's possible to lose four tricks – a spade, a heart and two clubs. Granted, you'd have to be unlucky for all of this to occur, but since it's possible, you start looking for a way to prevent this from happening.

You begin by allowing West's king to hold the first trick. This assures that East will never gain the lead in spades, a move that can do you no harm and might eventually do you some good.

West continues with a spade to your ace, whereupon you enter dummy with a diamond and lead the queen of trumps, on which East produces the seven. The question now is whether it's better to finesse or play the ace.

In general, when missing only the K-x of a suit, it's slightly better to play the ace. Mathematically, the two missing cards will be divided 1-1 about 52 percent of the time.

But the correct play in the present case is the deuce. The reason is a very good one: If the finesse wins, you are sure to score 11 tricks, while if it loses, you can't make less than 10. But if you don't finesse, you might – and in the actual deal would – go down one.

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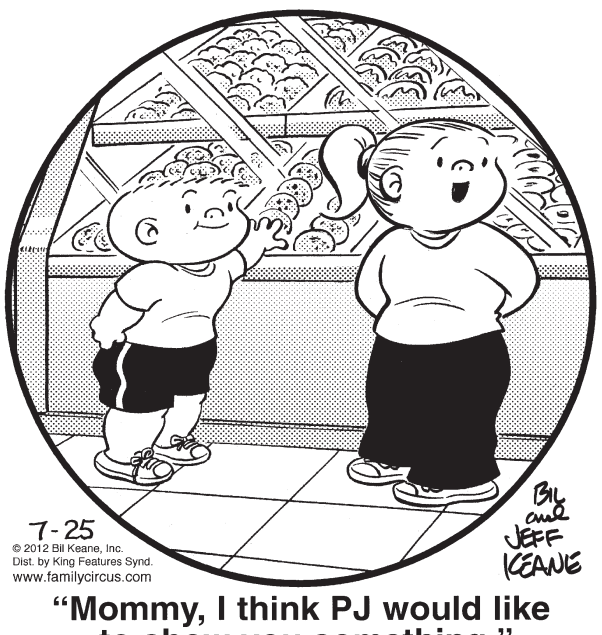
Family Circus • Bil Keane



"Mommy, I think PJ would like to show you something."

Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★★ 7/25

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

Difficulty Level ★ 7/23

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Cryptoquip

G GNTLGJD QZTQ QZD TCUSMHQD CDUQ YHQ SA NDTQ AXSN T XSTXGJL CDTUQ YSHMP CD QZD QDJPDXMGSJ.

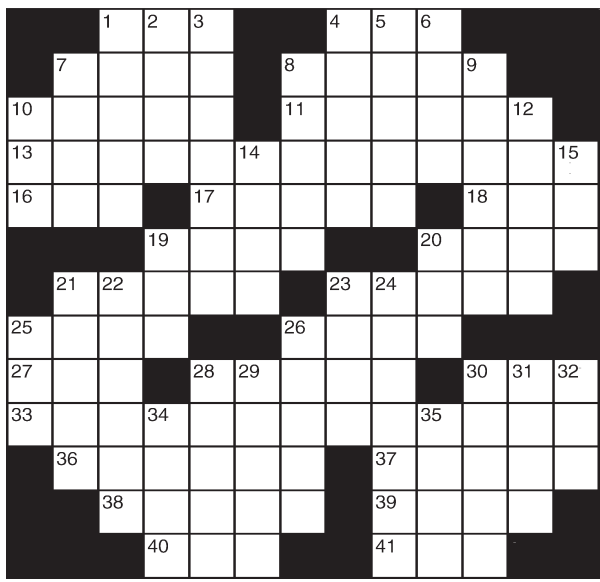
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: NOVEL ABOUT AN AVIAN MIMICKER THAT ADORES THE LIQUOR IN MARGARITAS: "TEQUILA MOCKINGBIRD."

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: C equals B

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Legislation
4 Cooking-spray brand
7 Hint
8 Overseas money
10 Plant life
11 Psychological injury
13 Easy task comparison
16 Toss in
17 Grant's successor
18 Letter after pi
19 Phone inventor
20 Mulligan, e.g.
21 Dodge
23 Magnetic induction unit
25 Unescorted
26 Cartoonist Goldberg
27 Branch
28 Surmise
30 Macabre author
33 Easy task comparison
36 Central German city
37 Soap opera extra, often
38 Beat
39 Advertising award
40 Dog's doc
41 Golfer Ernie

DOWN
1 Frank — Wright
2 Emanation
3 Newscast segment
4 Blender setting
5 Large part of Al-Jazeera's audience
6 Small grimace
7 Dressed (in)
8 — alcohol
9 Stings
10 Rx watchdog org.
12 Liniment targets
14 Converse
15 Explanation
19 Huge
20 Take to court
21 Sucker
22 Shakespeare title role
23 Spew like Old Faithful
24 "Perfect attendance" spoiler
25 Witnessed
26 So old it's new again
28 Greedy kid's demand
29 Inappropriate
30 Hilton heiress
31 Roughly
32 — out a living
34 Ukraine's capital
35 Yank

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

Yesterday's answer 7-25