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



Q: I inherited four Gothic Revival side chairs attributed to J. and J.W. Meeks. I was told they once belonged to the White House and were used in Abraham Lincoln's Cabinet Room. How can I establish authenticity?

A: It probably is impossible for you to determine that the chairs were used in the White House during Lincoln's administration (1861-65).

It is known that during the Polk administration (1845-49), as many as 24 black walnut Gothic Revival chairs made by J. and J.W. Meeks of New York City were purchased for the White House. Lincoln used some of the chairs in his Cabinet Room (now the "Lincoln Bedroom"). The chairs are shown in the painting, "First Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation of President Lincoln." Four chairs are still in the White House collection.

First see if your chairs match those shown in the painting, on display at the U.S. Capitol (the image can be found online). If the chairs match, at least you can say your chairs are identical to those in the White House and were made by Meeks. But without any additional history, it's unlikely you can ever prove the chairs were once owned by the White House.

Q: We have an ax with a square hole in the blade. A small square piece with a circular hole in one end fits into the square hole in the blade. The words "Bell System" are stamped on the ax. Do you know what it was used for?

A: This type of ax was used by Bell Telephone linemen to cut notches into utility poles. The blunt end of the blade could be used as a hammer, and the square hole could be used as a wrench for turning square nuts. When the "small piece" is inserted into the square hole, it can be used as a wrench on round nuts.

Old-timers say the ax also was used to set insulators on poles or to install metal "steps" up the side of poles. Value: about \$50.

Q: I'm preparing a program on piano babies for our doll club and have read several articles that say if the hole on the baby's bottom is big, the baby is "fake" and not original to Germany. Is this true?

A: There are several clues to spotting "fake" or reproduction piano babies or other ceramic figures.

Early pottery and porcelain pieces have a smaller hole in the bottom than later reproductions. The hole let gas out so the figurine didn't explode during firing.

Older porcelain figures are heavier than newer reproductions because more clay was used to make them.

Reproduction figures, made from a mold cast from an original, are smaller because the material shrinks as it cools.

Terry Kovel answers as many questions as possible through the column. The volume of mail makes personal answers or appraisals impossible. Write to Kovels, Colby Free Press, King Features Syndicate, 300 W. 57th St., New York,

Family Circus • Bil Keane



"I REALLY need a hug and a cookie.'

Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green



Difficulty Level ★ ★

This is a logic-based number placement puzzle. The goal is to enter a num-

ber, 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.

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5	4	6	8	7	2	1	9	3	22013 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.
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Cryptoquip

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Today's Cryptoquip Clue: V equals L



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



NY 10019.

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Bridge • Steve Becker

North de North-Sc	outh vulne	RTH 5 3 4	
WES			AST
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2 🎔	Pass	5 NT	Pass
7 🎔 .	Pass	7 🛧	
Opening	lead — s	even of sp	ades.

A Guide to Good Bidding

Players who deride artificial conventions must occasionally bite the bullet and acknowledge that there are times when artificial bidding methods 24 Lo are more effective than hit-or-miss methods.

Consider this deal where North-South got to 27 P a laydown grand slam in spades. North opened one notrump, showing a balanced hand of 15 to 17 high-card points. South's two-club bid was Stayman, an artificial bid asking North to bid a four- or five-card major if he had one, and North showed his hearts.

From South's point of view, the two-heart response was ideal, as there was a bid available that would allow him to find out about the quality of his partner's hearts. Accordingly, South leaped to five notrump!

This was also an artificial bid, the so-called grand slam force, implying that hearts were trump and directing North to bid seven hearts if he held two of the top three trump honors.

North obediently leaped to seven hearts, which South then converted to seven spades in the interests of greater safety. South was concerned that his partner might not have the jack of hearts, in which case seven spades would almost surely be a better contract. As it turned out, seven spades was cold, and seven hearts would have gone down one because of the 4-1 heart division.

There is no doubt that many partnerships, for one reason or another, would fail to reach seven spades. They might instead wind up in six hearts, six spades or seven hearts, all inferior contracts considering that 13 tricks in spades was a virtual certainty.

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Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	36 Anat. or	2 Orchard	20 Clumsy
1 Church	biol.	fruit	craft
section	37 Fermi's	3 Ganges	22 Parade
5 Gang-	bit	garment	23 Opposed
ster's	38 Nothing	4 Repre-	24 Society
girlfriend	40 My group	senta-	newbie
9 GPS	41 Money	tives	25 401(k)
forerun-	under the	5 Guy	alterna-
ner?	table	6 Plata	tive
12 Con-	43 Star-	partner	26 Almond
temptible	related	7 Lucy of	confec-
13 Met	47 Knock	"Elemen-	tion
melody	48 Bread	tary"	27 Variety
14 Expert	spread	8 Cow	of 2-
15 Grand	51 Greek H	catcher	Down
17 Scooted	52 Reed	9 Strict	29 "Where
18 Baltimore	instru-	discipli-	did —
athlete	ment	narian	wrong?"
19 Luxurious	53 Lotion	10 "Super-	30 Huck's
fabric	additive	food"	pal
21 Rocky	54 Lair	berry	35 Baby's
Balboa's	55 Collars	11 Teller's	cover-up
greeting	56 Longings	partner	37 Off
22 Native	0.0	16 ["] Xanadu"	39 Lousy
New Zea-	DOWN	band.	car
lander	1 Magazine	for	40 "Born
24 Lowers	contents	short	in the
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27 Proscrip-	S C A M J A	BOVAL	41 Raised
tion	ULNAOR		42 Assess
28 Make a	BUOYANC		43 Census
sweater	SENATE NOS	LEARNS ETNA	statistics
31 Historic	RED PEP		44 Anger
time	PROPSI	BACNE	45 Unsigned
32 Table	MERLE G		(Abbr.)
scrap		ZED INROAD	46 Dregs
33 ld coun-		QUANCY	49 Lawyers'
terpart	MACHSO	UPEEN	org.
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