

Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Blondie • Chic Young



Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



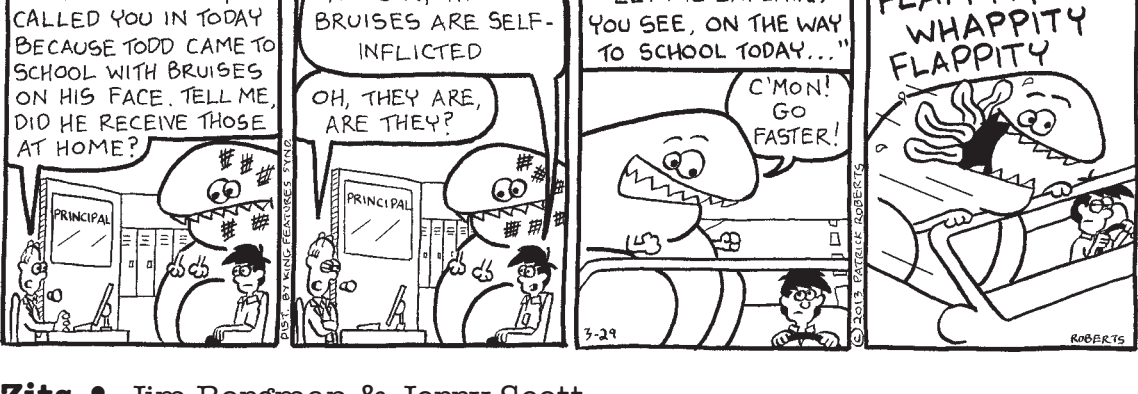
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Heloise

- Hints from Heloise

Steps to prevent unwanted offers

Dear Readers: Here is an update on one of my recent columns about how to prevent unsolicited credit-card and insurance offers.

Many wrote saying they were concerned about some of the personal information being asked, especially a Social Security number and date of birth. And rightly so – you want to be sure this private and important information is safe. Yes, it is safe for you to give it in this instance. First, the service to opt out of prescreen solicitations is offered by the major credit-reporting companies. The Federal Trade Commission recommends using this service to help stop this annoying mail!

Here is what you do. You can call (888) 5-OPT-OUT – (888) 567-8688 – or go online to www.OptOutPrescreen.com and register. The information you provide is only used to process this request. You have initiated the call or online request, so you can feel comfortable giving your identifying information. They, or anyone else, should not call you and ask for personal financial information. The main reason to ask for a Social Security number is that this number is how most services locate and file your information. There may be several Ted or Tara Thomases living in Texarkana, Texas.

However, if you are still leery about your Social Security number, you can opt out of giving it.

After dialing the phone number, you will be prompted to give your Social Security number. Do not say anything, and the recorded message will move on to the next prompt, for your date of birth. Don't say anything, and you can move to the next prompt.

But, if there are variations of your name (e.g., Mrs. Ted Thomas, Tara Thomas, T. Thomas or Tara T. Thomas), a Social Security number will cut through all of the confusion.

Please give it a try, and as always, let me hear from you! How did the system work? – Your friend, Heloise, aka Heloise Hints, Heloise, Heloise Heloise, H. Heloise

P.S.: You should see the many different ways my name is mangled on mailing lists!

Sometimes, when ordering something via phone or online, I'll use initials or my dog's nickname just to see who sells the list!

PATIENT FORMS

Dear Heloise: A lot of doctor's offices have websites, and many now put patient forms on them that can be printed out before the appointment. This helps, especially if you are a new patient and are seeing a doctor for the first time. It saves a lot of time. My veterinary clinic even does this. – Still Learning, via e-mail

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Bridge • Steve Becker

1. You are West defending against Three Notrump, South having opened one notrump (12 to 14 points) and North having bid three notrump. You lead the four of spades, and South takes your partner's king with the ace. South then returns the nine of spades. Plan your defense.

- North**
 ♠ 8 3 2
 ♥ A 10
 ♦ A J 8 7 5
 ♣ Q 7 2

- West**
 ♠ J 7 5 4
 ♥ J 7
 ♦ 9 6 3
 ♣ A J 8 5

2. You are declarer with the West hand at Three Notrump. North leads the six of clubs, and you win South's eight with the jack. How would you play the hand?

- West**
 ♠ Q 10 8 3
 ♥ A 8
 ♦ A 10 9 2
 ♣ K J 7
- East**
 ♠ A J 9
 ♥ K J 10 9
 ♦ K Q J
 ♣ 5 3 2

Test Your Play

1. You shouldn't assume that South has lost his mind when he leads a spade; he's probably trying to put something over on you. For his play to make sense, he must have started with the A-Q-10-9. Furthermore, having disregarded dummy's diamonds, declarer probably has the K-Q. If these assumptions are correct, it would be fatal to duck the nine of spades, because South would then have nine tricks consisting of three spades, five diamonds and a heart.

You should therefore take the spade nine with the jack and shift to a club, but not just any club. To give yourself the best chance, you should lead the jack of clubs, playing declarer for something like:

- ♠ A Q 10 9
 ♥ Q 8 2
 ♦ K Q 2
 ♣ 10 6 3

Such a holding would be consistent with his one-notrump bid and his spade play at trick two. Note that if you lead any club other than the jack at trick three, South can make the contract with proper play.

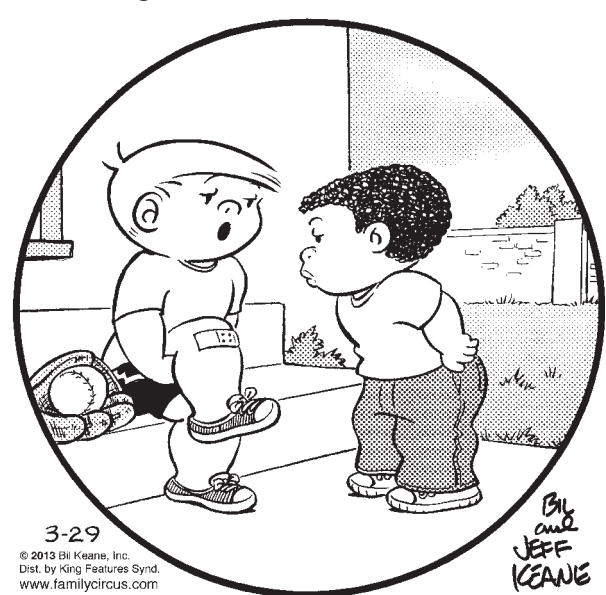
2. To ensure the contract beyond the shadow of a doubt, lead a diamond to the jack, play the nine of hearts and let it ride. Even if the finesse loses, you are certain of at least nine tricks -- one spade, three hearts, four diamonds and a club.

You cannot afford to take a spade finesse at trick two because South might win with the king and return a club, and you'd finish behind the eight ball if North started with the A-Q-10-x-x of clubs.

Note that the two-way heart finesse is taken against South, so it can lose only to North, who cannot harm you with any return.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



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Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★★ 3/29

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.

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

Cryptoquip

EPY AWEEYT'M ZSKCTJ ZM

KCME W LWZTUJ OZSIT ISY,

AYDWCMY PY ISUJ MCMEWZSYF

A C S E - L I T D Y E T W C O W .

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A GROUP OF SENATE MESSENGERS ARE ALL SCAREDY-CATS, I WOULD CALL THEM THE YELLOW PAGES.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: P equals H

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS**
- 1 Fruity spread
 - 4 Scrabble piece
 - 8 Tarzan's clique
 - 12 "The — Daba Honey-moon"
 - 13 Valhalla VIP
 - 14 Existed
 - 15 Troop group
 - 17 Release
 - 18 Is frugal
 - 19 Ostrich's cousin
 - 21 Cauldron
 - 22 Let up
 - 26 Photo book
 - 29 Ever-green type
 - 30 Pond carp
 - 31 Sudden shock
 - 32 Blue
 - 33 Desirous look
 - 34 Fuss
 - 35 Arctic diver
 - 36 Move laterally
 - 37 New
- DOWN**
- 1 Super-market lineup
 - 3 Creche trio
 - 4 Long, narrow drum
 - 5 That is (Lat.)
 - 6 Jeremy of
 - 7 Went in
 - 8 Terrible
 - 9 For one ingredient
 - 10 Preceding
 - 11 Diocese
 - 16 Suggestions
 - 20 Kitten's comment
 - 23 — out (supple-mented)
 - 24 Yuletide refrain
 - 25 Grow weary
 - 26 Open slightly
 - 27 Source of riches
 - 28 United nations
 - 29 Talk on and on
 - 32 Surgical stitching
 - 33 Queued (up)
 - 35 Curry or Coulter
 - 36 Cubes, spheres, et al.
 - 38 Incite
 - 39 English composition
 - 42 Take out of context?
 - 43 Summer-time pest
 - 44 Leave a lasting impression
 - 45 Bake sale org.
 - 46 Aries
 - 47 Lemieux milieu
 - 49 Swelled head

Solution time: 25 mins.

A	P	S	E	M	O	L	L	M	A	P
M	E	A	N	A	R	I	A	C	E	
M	A	R	V	E	L	O	U	S	R	A
O	R	I	O	L	E	S	A	T	I	N
	Y	O	M	A	O	R	I			
D	I	M	S	B	A	N	K	N	I	T
E	R	A		O	R	T		E	G	O
B	A	R	B	S	C	I	A	T	O	M
		Z	I	L	C	H	U	S		
B	R	I	B	E		A	S	T	R	A
R	A	P		M	A	R	G	A	R	I
E	T	A		N	O	B	E	A	L	O
D	E	N		N	A	B	S		V	E

Yesterday's answer 3-29

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		