



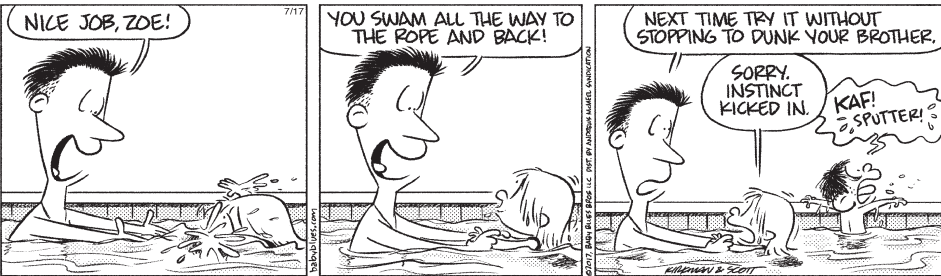
Frank & Ernest



Born Loser



Baby Blues



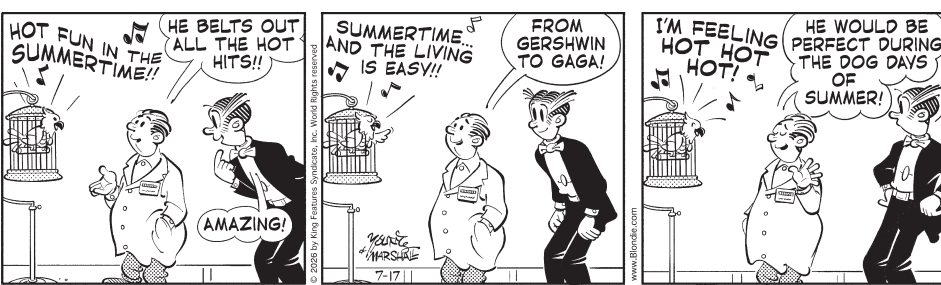
Mallard Fillmore



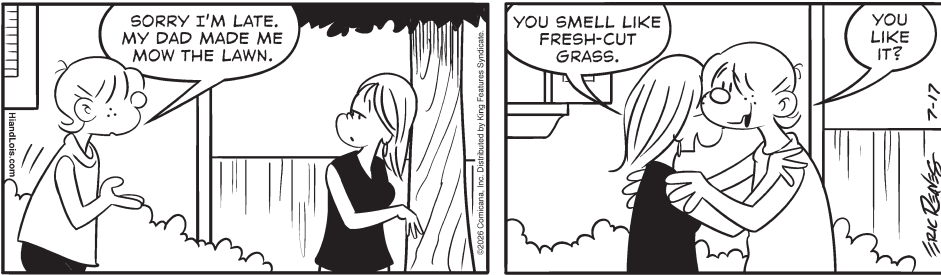
Tundra



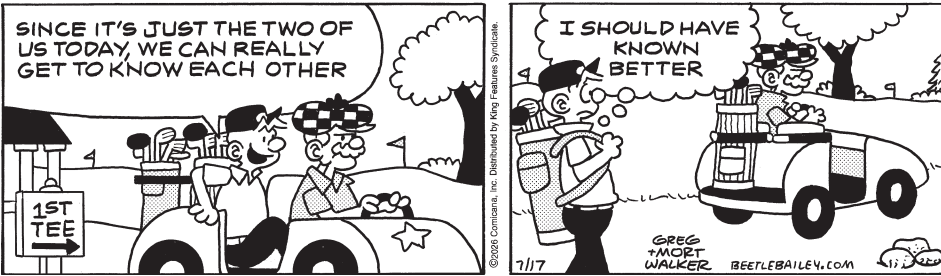
Hi & Lois



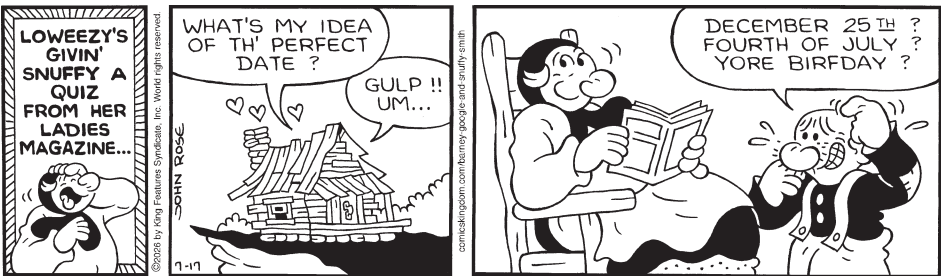
Beetle Bailey



Snuffy Smith



Zits



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•Card Games •Casino Games and MUCH MORE!

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Crossword — By Thomas Joseph

ACROSS

1 Witch trial town

2 Stationery buy

11 Sheepish

12 Brighten

13 Bulb units

14 "Wouldya like to?"

15 Waiting aid

17 Racket

18 Sacred

20 "Lonely Boy" singer

22 Serpent's victim

23 Address

26 Push off

28 Unmoving

29 Outdoor theater

31 Track act

32 Map dot

33 Sub spread

34 Imitation

36 Shoelace problem

38 Not struck

40 Weasel's cousin

43 Play part

44 Shorthand pro

45 Suit fabric

46 Neigh sayer

DOWN

1 Boar's mate

2 Director DuVernay

3 Youngster, humorously

4 Contest form

5 Butte's kin

6 Chapel seat

7 Sitka native

8 Breakfast mix

9 Sicilian peak

10 Stationery buy

16 Sound from a pound

18 Grazing group

19 Finished

21 Dresden denial

23 Whole lot

24 Low card

25 "Beetle Bailey" dog

27 Drawing out

30 Quill need

33 Catch-phrase

34 Dis-arrange

35 Formerly

37 Have a snack

39 Golf bag item

41 USN rank

42 Surgeon eggs

PODS

MANUEL

AVON

EXACTA

PAGE

AIRBAG

ALGERNON

IRA

MISDO

CREST

SALON

RIB

ELM

ITALO

ORATE

BEGUN

FEZ

MEATLESS

GASBAG

ABLE

UNLACE

TAUT

SNORTS

EGGS

Yesterday's answer

1 Boar's mate

2 Director DuVernay

3 Youngster, humorously

4 Contest form

5 Butte's kin

6 Chapel seat

7 Sitka native

8 Breakfast mix

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39 Golf bag item

41 USN rank

42 Surgeon eggs

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

7-17

Bridge — By Steven Becker

Test your play

1. You are declarer with the West hand at Three Notrump, and North leads the queen of diamonds. How would you play the hand?

West East
♠ 3 ♠ J 10 9 6
♥ Q 8 7 2 ♥ K J 5
♦ A 8 5 ♦ K 3
♣ A K Q 9 3 ♣ 7 6 5 2

2. You are declarer with the West hand at Four Hearts, and North leads the jack of clubs. How would you play the hand?

West East
♠ K 8 6 5 ♠ A 7 2
♥ A Q 10 8 3 2 ♥ K J 9 4
♦ K J ♦ 9 6 3
♣ 7 ♣ K Q 5

1. You are certain to make the contract if the opposing clubs are divided 2-2 or 3-1, so your only real concern is a possible 4-0 club division. If North has all the missing clubs, there's nothing you can do about it, and you'll surely go down one or two tricks. But if South has all four clubs, something can be done, so you should shape your play to deal with that possibility.

The key play comes at trick one, when you should win the queen of diamonds with the ace. You then cash the ace of clubs, and if North shows out, you are in full control of the situation. You next lead a low

heart toward the K-J-x, and regardless of which opponent has the ace, you will be able to lead clubs twice from dummy through South's J-10-8 to assure five club tricks and the contract.

2. Let's first assume that you cover the jack with dummy's queen, losing to the ace, and that South shifts to a low diamond. Whatever you choose to do, you might lose two diamonds, a club and a spade and go down one.

To avoid this eventuality, your best shot is to play low from dummy on the opening lead! South almost surely has the ace, in which case you're virtually certain to make the contract by ducking the jack.

Regardless of which suit North plays next, you plan to draw trump, ending in dummy, then lead the king of clubs and ruff out South's ace to establish a club trick on which you can discard the jack of diamonds. At worst, you lose a club, a diamond and a spade, trumping your fourth spade in dummy if the opposing spades don't break 3-3.

Note that South can't harm you even if he decides to overtake the jack of clubs with the ace in order to lead a diamond. If he does that, dummy's K-Q of clubs both become tricks on which you can later discard the 6-5 of spades.

Tomorrow: Solution to a predicament.

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DAILY CRYPTOQUOTES — HERE'S HOW TO WORK IT:

A X Y D L B A A X R
is L O N G F E L L O W

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

7-17 CRYPTOQUOTE

D Z A V G R K F M X V N P I V F Y Z O

H V Z H P V C X Z D L U ' M F K U T .

— D X O K F O Z D Q

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: I'VE FOUND THAT THERE IS ALWAYS SOME BEAUTY LEFT — IN NATURE, SUNSHINE, FREEDOM, IN YOURSELF; THESE CAN ALL HELP YOU. — ANNE FRANK

Word Sleuth

WORD SLEUTH

WORDS STARTING WITH DOUBLE LETTERS

W S P L I E A X T Q N J G C Z

W A T Q N J G D A X U R O L J

M A A G D A X V S P N K I F C

P R A A A X H G V S Q O L J H

E D O C R A N G N X V H E T R

P V N W L O E E R I E P T J H

F A M A L L N D H A Z M I L B

Y R X O V E T A R C A O L P O

M K O K I G E E L D A O O B Z

X W U T R Q O N L L Y A O P J

I G F D C A S E L D O O Y X S

Thursday's unlisted clue: GRAND SLAM

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

Friday's unlisted clue hint: — OF NOODLES

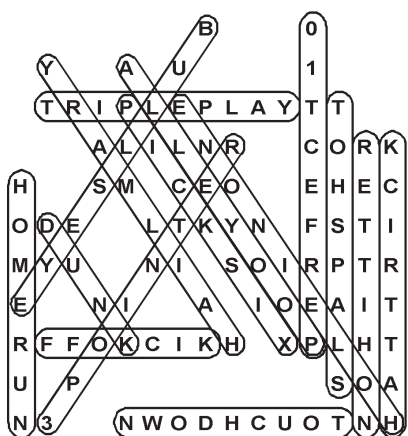
Aachen Aardvark Aargh Aaron AARP Eelworm Aargh Llama Oomph Ooops Oozing

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7/17

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

EXCITING SPORTS MOMENTS



Jumble

JUMBLE

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

NRRUE

DCLHI

EYLWKE

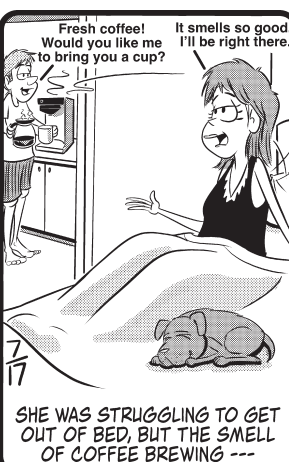
ERPPAA

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THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek



SHE WAS STRUGGLING TO GET OUT OF BED, BUT THE SMELL OF COFFEE BREWING ---

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: HASTY GRUNT DELETE VANISH
Answer: He was trying to talk his girlfriend into camping, but she was — "RESIST-TENT"

Horoscope

— By Georgia Nichols

Happy Birthday for Friday, July 17, 2026:

You're friendly, easygoing and tenacious. You're also strong-willed, sympathetic and focused. This is a year of learning and teaching. Take time to renew your spiritual or religious beliefs. Explore philosophies that will give you a better self-awareness and get you closer to the true meaning of your life.

The Stars Show the Kind of Day You'll Have: 5-Dynamic; 4-Positive; 3-Average; 2-So-so; 1-Difficult

ARIES (March 21-April 19) ★★ This is an excellent day to work and be productive. Use the energy of Mercury retrograde to finish old projects and wrap up loose ends, and you will be surprised at how swiftly the job will go. Don't be bossy. Stay focused. Tonight: How is your health?

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ Today is full of creative opportunities, especially if you work in a creative field or you make art. It's also a great day to socialize. In particular, sports events and fun activities

with kids will appeal. Romance is blessed. Tonight: Play!

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★ With Mars in your sign now, you have a lot of energy to get things done. Admittedly, Mercury is still retrograde; however, you can use this energy to finish old projects. Meanwhile, today focus on home and family. Enjoy entertaining, redecorating or both. Tonight: Relax at home.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ This is a great day to schmooze with everyone! Enjoy talking to siblings, neighbors and relatives. You'll also have interesting interactions with new faces. In fact, you're so keen to reach out to your immediate environment. Look around you, because you will appreciate your daily surroundings. Tonight: Enjoy discussions.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★ Today you will enjoy buying beautiful things for yourself and loved ones. (Especially art objects, jewelry and lovely clothing.) You also might have some good moneymaking ideas. Group activities, especially related to sports and physical competition, might appeal. Tonight: Maintain your belongings.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★ Today the Moon is in your

sign lined up with beautiful Venus, which makes you cheerful, sociable, warm and friendly. It's a great day to socialize! You will also enjoy making anything around you more beautiful, especially your home. Enjoy wardrobe shopping as well. Tonight: You're strong.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★ Today is full of contradictions, because in one way, you are in the spotlight of the Sun, which is flattering to you. This is why you might be asked to take on increased responsibilities. However, today in particular you might want to hide or be low-key. It's your choice. Tonight: Enjoy time alone.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★ Friendships are important to you today. In fact, someone in particular might be very special, perhaps to the point that a platonic friendship turns romantic. Travel plans also might be in the picture. Meanwhile, you will also be productive today. Get busy! Tonight: Friendships.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★ Today people notice you to the degree that some people know personal details about your private life. Be aware of this, especially if you have to do some damage control. This could create problems with a spouse,

partner or friend. Tonight: Be modest.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★ Today you want to break free of your routine and do something different. Ideally, of course, you would love to travel and get a change of scenery. But if you cannot travel, you can still be a tourist in your own city. Explore your surroundings. Meet new people. See new places. Give a lift to your day! Tonight: Explore and learn.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★ Although Mercury retrograde might create delays and silly mistakes in your work, today you can use it to your advantage. Work to wrap up loose ends, especially regarding shared property, taxes, debt, inheritances and anything that you own jointly with someone else. Money might come your way. Tonight: Check your finances.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ This is a playful, romantic time for you. However, your home scene might be somewhat busy dealing with guests, increased activity, even chaos. Do your best to make things run as smoothly as possible. Old flames might be back in the picture creating some excitement. Try to have fun today. Enjoy the company of children and perhaps romantic partners. Tonight: Show genuine interest.