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E	O	O	T	C	N	R	I
E	I	U	R	R	T	C	
A	U	R	T	N	R	G	
E	U	U	L	N	S	C	

PAR SCORE 140-150
BEST SCORE 205

FOUR RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. Finally, 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All the words are in the Official SCRABBLE® Players Dictionary 5th Edition.

NON SEQUITUR by Wiley



BLONDIE by Dean Young and John Marshall



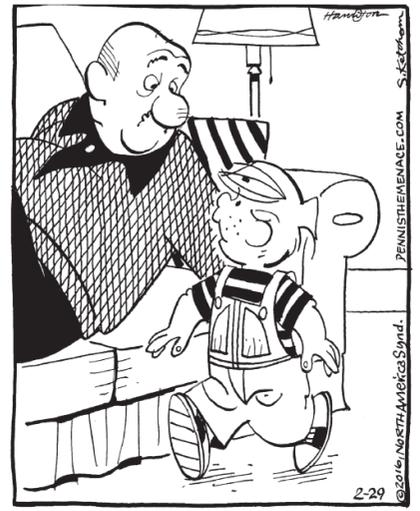
HI & LOIS by Chance Browne



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE by Chris Browne

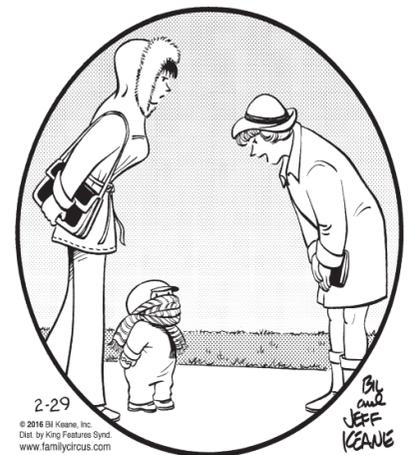


DENNIS THE MENACE by Hank Ketcham



“WAKE UP, MR. WILSON! IT'S LEAP YEAR! NOW WE GOT A WHOLE EXTRA DAY...SO YOU CAN EXPLAIN WHY.”

THE FAMILY CIRCUS by Bill Keane



“Oh, yes, I see the resemblance. He has your eyes.”

JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

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

RAYIN
 BILIA
 CATEPU
 GLERCY

Print your answer here: ○○○○○○

Answers tomorrow

Saturday's Jumbles: ONION TUMOR PASTOR UNPLUG
 Answer: Whether or not the cow's milk would be used to make cheddar or Swiss cheese was a — “MOO-T” POINT

Surgery decision needs consideration

Dear Dr. Roach: I am 87 and in fairly good health, except for some well-controlled high blood pressure and greater-than-average atherosclerosis.

DR. KEITH ROACH TO YOUR GOOD HEALTH

My question is how dangerous is the small size of the valve opening compared with the risk of an operation to replace the aortic valve? — R.P.

The decision to replace a valve needs to take a great deal into consideration, especially the symptoms a person is having, how severe the stenosis (narrowing) of the valve is and the overall surgical risk for the person.

Someone with symptoms, severe stenosis and an otherwise low risk for surgery is the best candidate for surgery. In your case, you have no symptoms, the narrowing of the valve is not very severe and your heart function is normal. “Severe” stenosis would be

represented by a valve area of less than 1 or a mean gradient of greater than 40. A normal ejection fraction is between 50 and 75 percent.

Heart surgeons do operate on people in their 80s, but the mortality risk is twice what it would be if you were 10 years younger.

I used an online calculator, which estimated your risk for death or a severe complication during surgery at 14 percent.

Given that, I agree with your cardiologist that surgery is not required nor recommended. This decision needs to be re-evaluated if you develop symptoms, and you should have periodic visits to check on the valve's anatomy.

Although there are no proven medical therapies to prevent the stenosis from worsening, the treatments that are appropriate for someone with blockages in the arteries may help with the valve disease as well.

Good control of blood pressure, especially with an ACE inhibitor or ARB, will reduce the likelihood of complications from aortic stenosis.

Dear Dr. Roach: My 5-year-old grandson loves monster trucks. A talented relative made him a monster truck bed with real rubber wheels.

Every time I go into his bedroom, there is a strong smell of rubber, even after more than a year with the bed.

I worry about the child sleeping and playing there, with the odor permeating his environment. Should I be concerned about this strong odor? — G.E.

Natural rubber causes allergic reactions in some people, but if he is having no symptoms, the consensus of the sources I read is that there is likely no health impact from the odors of natural rubber.

Bridge
 by Frank Stewart
Fall NABC in Denver

Attendance was down at the American Contract Bridge League's 10-day Fall Championships over Thanksgiving. The Fall NABC is the smallest of the ACBL's three “nationals,” and some players didn't want to travel to Denver in November.

A deal in the Life Master Pairs provided support for my view that players toss in bids without considering the possible consequences. When South opened 1NT, West tried two clubs, conventionally showing length in both majors. North bid 3NT, the most tempting matchpoint contract.

one heart, you bid two clubs and he jumps to three hearts. What do you say?

ANSWER: This decision is close. Partner's second-round jump in his own suit is game-invitational, not forcing. If he had a stronger hand, he could have bid four hearts or forced with a “fourth-suit” bid of two spades. If vulnerable, bid four hearts. He may hold K 4 3, K Q 10 8 6 2, 3, K 9 3.

East dealer
 N-S vulnerable

NORTH			
♠	Q 10		
♥	A 7		
♦	A J 10 9 7		
♣	Q 10 7 6		
WEST			
♠	8 7 6 5 3		
♥	K J 8 6 4		
♦	6		
♣	K 2		
EAST			
♠	9 4 2		
♥	Q 9 5 2		
♦	Q 5 2		
♣	J 8 3		
SOUTH			
♠	A K J		
♥	10 3		
♦	K 8 4 3		
♣	A 9 5 4		

East Pass South 1NT West 2♣ North 3NT
 All Pass

Opening lead — ♥ 6

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The Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

- ACROSS**
- Rain check
 - Ridiculously incongruous
 - Tree-ring indication
 - Was dressed in
 - Riot squad's quarry
 - A Stooze
 - Projection on a basilica
 - Tropical fruit
 - Popular ISP
 - Loud weather
 - Actor Holbrook
 - Checkers side
 - Overcast and clear, e.g.
 - Actor Keach
 - Minor quarrel
 - Frivolity
 - Assist
 - Dunkable treat
 - T-shirt size
 - Demonstrate animalistic weather
 - Pacino and Hirt
 - Baseball stats
 - Sri Lankan export
 - Men only
 - Long march
 - Miniature
 - City west of Venice
 - U.S. collection agcy.
 - Greek letter
 - Prolonged weather
 - Formal address
 - Jipijapa hat
 - Move along slowly
 - One of the Gershwins

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			59		
	60				61	62	63				64		
65					66						67		
68					69						70		
71					72						73		

- Visit: ADailyCrossword.com
- 69 Had ants in the pants
 70 Scottish dance
 71 Mas' men
 72 Swindles
 73 Wee whirlpool
 31 Palindromic constellation
 32 Circus structure
 35 Flit
 37 “The ___ File”
 39 Hoarse sound
 40 Spanish cave with Paleolithic art
 41 Duncan and others
 42 Roofer's gunk
 43 Grand Coulee or Hoover, e.g.
 48 Firearm
 50 Fate
 52 Made amends
 53 Made an incision
 54 Profusely
 56 Meat jelly
 58 Acts the bookworm
 61 Legally binding pledge
 62 Nursery rhyme opener
 63 Okinawa city
 64 Royal address
 65 Tentative taste

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

P	C	S		S	T	R	A	T	E	G	I	N	S	T	S	
L	A	C		P	A	S	S	I	V	E	N	E	S	S		
E	P	A		E	X	A	S	P	E	R	A	T	E	S		
B	I	P	E	D						N	E	R				
I	T	E	M		S	W	I	F	T		M	A	P	P		
S	A	G	I	T		T	A	R	I	U	S		E	R	O	
C	L	R		O	R	T	O	L	A	N		R	E	O		
I	L	A		M	A	E		C	T	A		O	T	B		
T	E	C		A	I	R	S	H	I	P		S	A	L		
E	V	E		S	T	E	R	E	O	S		S	C	O	P	E
S	Y	S	T		L	E	A	R	N		G	L	O	M		
				A	V	A					L	I	B	R	A	
O	V	E	R		A	C	H	I	E	V	E		S	O	E	T
P	I	N	E		N	E	E	D	L	E	S		M	E	I	
P	A	S	S	E	D	B	A	L	L	S		B	R	C		

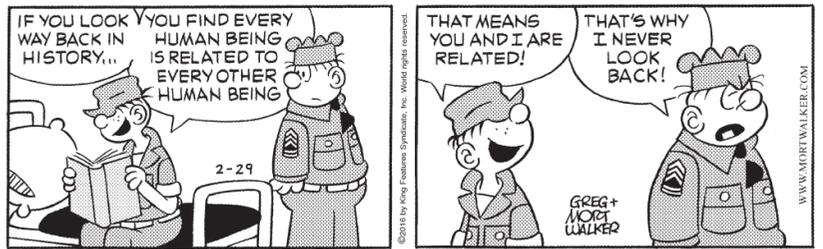
- DOWN**
- Mower's paths
 - Astaire/Rogers classic
 - Address or LeGuin
 - Has—
 - “A Delicate Balance” playwright
 - Planks
 - “___ and Lovers”
 - Cedar Breaks location
 - Splitsville
 - Ties
 - City in the Texas panhandle
 - Zero
 - Slippery catch
 - Solid carbon dioxide
 - Med. lines
 - Visualizes
 - Give the boot to
 - Sheriff's band

Scrabble Solution

PAR SCORE 140-150
 BEST SCORE 205

S	U	L	T	R	I	N
B	I	L	I	A		
C	A	T	E	P	U	
A	U	R	I	T		
E	U	U	L	N	S	C

BEETLE BAILEY by Mort Walker



SNUFFY SMITH by Fred Lasswell



Conceptis Sudoku

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

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's Puzzle Solved

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