

DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

A show of fours: Limerick prompts

BY PAT MYERS

In **Week 1276**, we asked you to write a limerick that ended in one of seven lines we supplied.

4th place

The front page I find to be vile,
While Metro just fills me with bile.

I'm a puppy in training,
but when I am straining
I just like to do things in Style.
(Kevin Tingley, Vienna, Va.)

3rd place

I give thanks to my papa and
mama,
George Bush, and Michelle R.
Obama —
Now don't hiss, jeer or boo;
This thing proves it's all true:
**A strategically placed Oxford
comma.**
(Sharon Neeman, Kiryat Shmona,
Israel, a First Offender)

2nd place and the Chia
Uncle Si plant
"sculpture":

A magician's assistant named Jen
Would be cut in half often, but then
She just disappeared
(With a stagehand, it's feared)
And they never saw her again.
(Dudley Thompson, Cary, N.C.)

And the winner of the
Lose Cannon:

Tweets, "There's two terms for me,
then I'm done,
Then Ivanka, then Jared, each son,
Then who? Was distressed
Till I met Kanye West,
But now I have found Fifty-one."
(Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)

Four on the floor:
Honorable mentions

With her, I did not go to bed!
I'll sue to demand lots of bread!
She disclosed our embrace,
Which, uh, never took place.
**Well, that's what the president
said.**
(Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)
Have your lawyer fork over a ton
So she won't speak a word of your
fun:
For leaving your lays,
Simon said "fifty ways,"
But now I have found fifty-one!
(Jesse Frankovich, Grand Ledge,
Mich.)

Was it dandruff? A stray bit of
thread?
Peut-être, a crumb of French bread?
Despite the strange dance
"It's NOT a bromance."
**(Well, that's what the president
said.)**
(John McCooley, Rehoboth Beach,
Del.)

I once made a face at my brother,
A gnarled, ugly face like no other!
Alas, it got stuck!
Now I look like a duck!
If only I'd listened to Mother!
(Robert Schechter, Dix Hills, N.Y.;
Jesse Frankovich sent an almost
identical limerick)

In view of all Trump's said and
done,
A State of Despair has begun.
Fifty States, I recall,
And that once was all;
But now I have found fifty-one.
(Hugh Thirlway, The Hague)

At the sperm bank I left them a ton
For the money and, yes, for the fun
I thought that there'd be
A new kid, maybe three —
But now I have found fifty-one.
(Bird Waring, Larchmont, N.Y.)

"Would you mind, while you're
making my bed,
Not inspiring our feelings of dread?
Though you work hard, that's true,
Who brings crime? Why, it's you!"

**(Well, that's what the president
said.)**
(Mark Raffman, Reston)

A tornado hit Twelve Hundred Penn
Wiping out just one small
soundproof den.
We have learned from the past,
Mother Nature bats last.
And they never saw Pruitt again.
(Beth Norcross, Arlington, a First
Offender)

Said the Donald, "I've met Kim Jong
Un,
And, believe me, I'm gaining a son.
Now we've married our fates,
We once had fifty states,
But now I have found fifty-one."
(Frank Osen)

The ER nurse told me, "Oh, brother!
Such filth, I've ne'er seen on
another.
Why didn't you care
To wear clean underwear?"
If only I'd listened to Mother.



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

New contest for Week 1280:
A la'ugh' a minute with 'air quotes'

- "Spa'ghetti: A plate of bean sprouts. (Melissa Balmain)
- iP'hon'e: "Dear, we should talk. Can you look at me when we talk?" (Ward Kay)
- Se'dated": Out for a romantic evening. — W. Cosby (Kevin Dopart)
- Su'perv'isor: The boss who believes too strongly in "hands-on management." (Brendan Beary)

Here's a contest we've done five times over the past 18 years in exactly the same way, but we never seem to run out of great material. So let's have at it one more time: **This week: Highlight part of a word, name or short phrase in "air quotes" to give it a new meaning or description, as in the examples above, which all got ink in 2015 (Brendan Beary's was the winner).** See this week's Style Conversational column for links to the previous sets of results.

Submit entries at the website wapo.st/enter-invite-1280 (all lowercase).

Winner gets the **Lose Cannon**, our Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a Double Whammy from our Invite Scatalogue: both the Farts in a Can noise machine, with "6 Fart Sounds" including "Loud and Proud," "Booty Bomb" and "The Squeaker"; and a roll of very thin toilet paper imprinted with 100-euro currency (okay, pale pictures of 100-euro currency). Donated, "respect'ively, by Nan Reiner and Roy Ashley.

Other runners-up win our "You Gotta Play to Lose" Loser Mug or our Grossery Bag, "I Got a B in Punmanship." Honorable mentions get one of our lusted-after Loser magnets, "We've Seen Better" or "IDiot Card." First Offenders receive only a smelly tree-shaped air "freshener" (FirStink for their first ink). **Deadline is Tuesday night, May 29** (go ahead, enjoy your Memorial Day); results published June 17 (online June 14). See general contest rules and guidelines at wapo.st/InvRules. The headline "A Show of Fours" is by Chris Doyle; Kevin Dopart wrote the honorable-mentions subhead. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at on.fb.me/invdev. "Like" Style Invitational Ink of the Day on Facebook at bit.ly/inkofiday; follow @StyleInvite on Twitter.

THE STYLE CONVERSATIONAL The Empress's weekly online column discusses each new contest and set of results. Especially if you plan to enter, check it out at wapo.st/styleconv.



PHOTOS BY PAT MYERS/THE WASHINGTON POST

For second place, a double from our Scatalogue.



For first place, heavy artillery.

(Rob Cohen, Potomac)

It's '36, Chelsea's not calm:
Her campaign's just been hit by a bomb:
Their brain wave discussions
Got leaked by the Russians —
"If only I'd listened to Mom!"
(Duncan Stevens)

Fat Tuesday in N'Awlins? The bomb!
But today I roulayed les bon temps
Without aspirin to squeeze
'Tween my knees. Jeez Louise,
If only I'd listened to Mom!
(Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.)

There was a young Fräulein, a cutie,
Who met a young prince from Djibouti.
"Der Prinz was divine,
But he's left me, das Schwein!
If only I'd listened to Mutti."
(Ed Edwards, Worcester Park, Surrey, England)

My friends tried indulging their yen

For Spike Jonze flicks at Cinema 10,
But romantic sci-fi
Left them both high and dry.
And they never saw "Her" again.
(Chris Doyle)

Nicolas Cage, who had captured a wren
Put the poor little bird in a pen,
But he felt so contrite
As it chirped through the night,
And they never saw Nic cage again.
(Frank Osen)

The grammarians' Ball features drama,
As at last year's big Grammararama,
Where one prof dressed for sin,
Clad, it seems, only in
A strategically placed Oxford comma.
(Frank Osen)

Fun with anagrams:
DETER SPIN! That Times story you read
IS PRETEND! Try some Fox News instead.

Fair and balanced, Sean Hannity
ENDS TRIPE, restores sanity!
(Well, that's what the PRESIDENT said.)
(Jesse Frankovich)

Two Welsh fellows, Trevor and Ken,
Had been sentenced to life in the pen.
They were busted in Swansea
For running a Ponzi,
And they never saw
Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrnd
robwlillantysiliogogoch **again.**
(Brendan Beary, Great Mills, Md.)

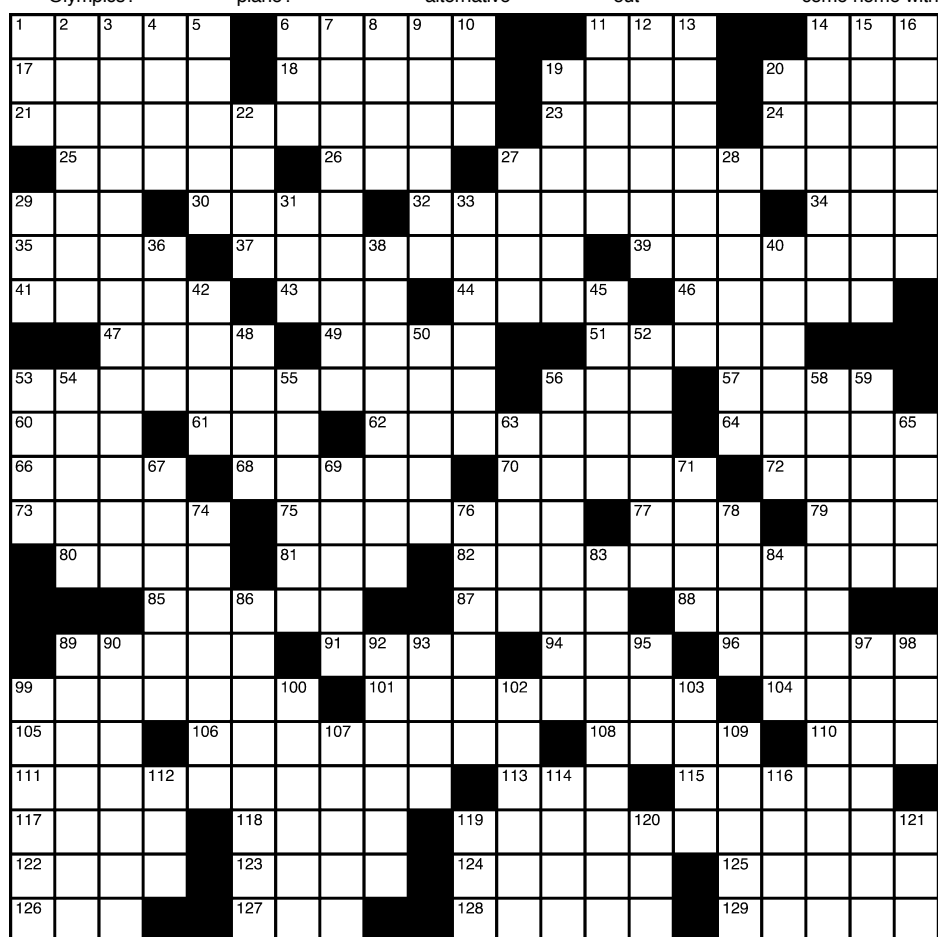
And Last: Though they be without
rhyme or reason,
I write the best limericks and tweets
Cause I ignore the rules
Which are only for others.
**Well, that's what the president
said.**
(Howard Walderman, Columbia)

**Still running — deadline Monday
night, May 21: Our contest for
"accurate" directions to use
some product or complete a
task. See wapo.st/invite1279.**

L.A. TIMES SUNDAY PUZZLE

EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

- "SHIFTING" By C.C. BURNIKEL
- 80 Snippy retort
- 81 Occurrence
- 82 Layin' off
- 83 Layin' off
- 84 Layin' off
- 85 Unrefined
- 86 Custardy pastry
- 87 Voice-activated meas.
- 88 iPad app
- 89 Blink, say
- 90 Sign word
- 91 Canadian driver
- 92 Waze lines:
- 93 Surprise in a bottle
- 94 & Chandon
- 95 In an edgy way
- 96 Pigs with four tusks
- 97 Petri dish
- 98 Sounds gelatin
- 99 Blur in a tabloid pic
- 100 "Cheers" actress Bebe
- 101 Escalator handle?
- 102 Cape Town locale: Abbr.
- 103 Takin' first place at the Olympics?
- 104 Phase out
- 105 First king of Crete
- 106 Mushroomed
- 107 Brownie, maybe
- 108 Muttered
- 109 Complaint about a toe woe that's really hurtin'?
- 110 Yale's Ingalls
- 111 Rink designer
- 112 Saarinens
- 113 Males who meow
- 114 "Nothing for me"
- 115 Cause for a pause
- 116 "L.A. Law" actress
- 117 CDC overseer
- 118 Sounds shocked
- 119 Big Bertha's birthplace
- 120 Hopkins' role in "Thor"
- 121 Johnson Space Center humanoid project
- 122 Put faith in Dunham and Horne
- 123 Disallow
- 124 "Cool it!"
- 125 Great Lakes natives
- 126 Beaufort scale word
- 127 Pol. neighbor
- 128 ___ wait: lurk
- 129 Result of tossin' an old mitt on the fire?
- 130 Chinese ethnic group that's the world's largest
- 131 Org. seeking far-out life
- 132 Physicians' org.
- 133 50% of MIV
- 134 Fledgling
- 135 Goat sound?
- 136 2007 National Soccer Hall of Fame inductee
- 137 1995 Stallone title role
- 138 Stand for a canvas
- 139 Base information?
- 140 Energize
- 141 Split into thirds
- 142 Gym exercise unit
- 143 ___ the Senate!": Darth Sidious
- 144 "My Way" lyricist
- 145 It flows below the Pont Neuf
- 146 Droop
- 147 Slider option
- 148 "I don't give ___"
- 149 Granola morsel
- 150 Job application no.
- 151 Former Senator
- 152 Lott
- 153 Witnessed visiting
- 154 Purebred family tree
- 155 "You missed it"
- 156 Reduces in rank
- 157 prunes
- 158 Former Pakistani prime minister Benazir
- 159 Chinese sauce
- 160 additive
- 161 In the area
- 162 Beat soundly
- 163 Keep healthy
- 164 D.C. dealmaker
- 165 One may be choked back
- 166 Lettin' the family elder onto the plane?
- 167 Chip topper
- 168 "Nothing Compares 2 U" singer O'Connor
- 169 Dove into home, say
- 170 Prepares (for)
- 171 Geraint's (for) beloved
- 172 Show stoppers
- 173 Trainee
- 174 Island band The ___ Men
- 175 Fish sauce taste
- 176 Saddle bands
- 177 Summer itch
- 178 cause
- 179 "Preparin' husbands-to-be?"
- 180 Luggage tie-on
- 181 Director DeMille
- 182 Up for it
- 183 Mideast capital
- 184 Wipe clean
- 185 Centipede's many
- 186 Popular soup mushroom
- 187 Fuddy-duddy
- 188 Unable to back out
- 189 58.4 square miles, for Minneapolis
- 190 Verbosely
- 191 Foul caller
- 192 Arcane stuff
- 193 Gulps down
- 194 Reddish-brown chalcodony
- 195 SFPD rank
- 196 Postulate starter
- 197 Nolan Ryan's 1.69 in 1981: Abbr.
- 198 Pulled
- 199 Manga series about gaming
- 200 Louise's pal
- 201 Valley
- 202 They often get hooked
- 203 From that time
- 204 Quantity in a brace
- 205 Capone
- 206 adversary
- 207 Oxfam and PETA, for two
- 208 Trending
- 209 Hoops stat: Abbr.
- 210 What a Hawaii vacationer may come home with



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Answers to last week's puzzle below.

HOROSCOPE

BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY | May 20: This year, you gain poise, no matter what you do or when you do it. Others see this transformation in you. As a result, your popularity soars. If you are single, someone who has never displayed any interest in you suddenly becomes intensely concerned with you. Enjoy the attention but speak up if there are any mixed messages involved. If you are attached, the two of you love being seen out on the town together. Leo loves romance.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
You can't be any more dynamic than you already are. Your repertoire of stories and funny incidents delights nearly anyone you share them with. You like what is happening with others who decide to communicate openly.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
Be more forthright with your family. You might be overwhelmed by an enticing offer from a partner or various loved ones. Misunderstandings easily could come forward, which is likely to cause you confusion over what is going on.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
Change direction and know your limits. How you deal with a friend could change because of their confusing behavior. Getting a discussion started could be close to impossible. Friends play a successful role in your life.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
Be aware of the costs of proceeding as you have been. Try to keep your budget reasonable and under control. You'll find that you will be happier in the long run if you do. A friend or loved one expresses their feelings for you. Listen well.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
Listen carefully to what someone shares. You might need to ask more questions to find the correct solution or to help this person find the right path. A friend might be vested in not telling you the whole truth. Try to get them to open up.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
You might come to a better understanding once you get a clearer sense of direction. You'll see life with new vigor and happiness once you clear the air with someone else.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
Be aware of the expectations that someone has for you. You might be overly aware of certain habits you have or indulge in that work against you. Remain content and willing to make a positive difference in others' lives.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
Stay on top of your work. Others have strong expectations of you. Working late today might be a drag, but ultimately you will benefit from it. Discussions with a partner point to a new direction and possibly an adjustment to your lifestyle.

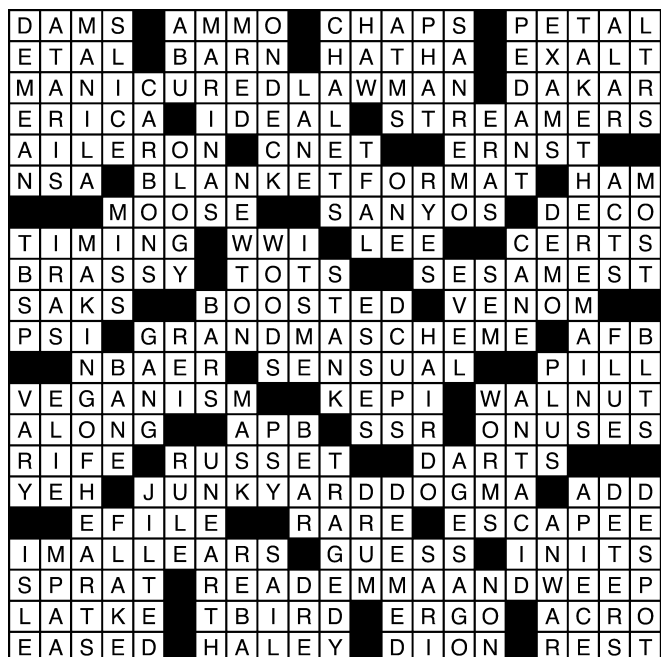
SAGITTARIUS (Dec. 22-Dec. 21)
If you are not getting a clear understanding of what others expect, you could feel confused or as if you have no clear path. Your determination to clear the air, listen and come to an understanding will save the day.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
One-on-one relating becomes a source of happiness. Zero in on common interests when having a discussion with a friend. You might wonder what mutual hobbies you share. Stay easygoing when dealing with this person.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
Your ability to relate emerges. You could be overly tired because of all the recent activity and socializing, yet you'll come through like a champ. How you see a personal matter could change.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
You might be in work mode today and try to get a head start on a project. You could find it difficult to be light and easy. Others seem to be seeking you out for help. You feel good pitching in.

Answers to last week's puzzle.



5/13/18