

Style Invitational Week 1176: Let 'er RIP – write a funny line for someone's obituary

Plus: What happened when we asked you to write things using only words from 'American Pie'



(Bob Staake for The Washington Post)

By Pat Myers • Entertainment May 19 

(Click [here to skip down](#) to the results of the contest to write things using only the words in “American Pie.”)

Ms. Johnson had spent three decades as a successful executive in the cable television industry. The funeral service will be next Saturday, sometime between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m.

A lifelong Redskins fan, Mr. Smith wanted his ashes spread on FedEx Field, just short of the goal line.



Raisin. The Dead: These 1980s ceramic things, second prize for this week's obit-line contest. (Pat Myers/The Washington Post)

Every January, The Style Invitational runs a contest for poems in memory of particular notables who have died in the previous year. New Loser John Hutchins, who's clearly caught the Invite bug, wrote to the Empress to suggest another idea: **This week: Write a humorous line or two for someone's obituary — either for a particular person (dead or not) or for a fictional or generic one, as in John's examples above.**

NEW: No more emailed entries! Instead, submit them at this website: subpl.at/INVITE1176. It's super-easy.

Winner gets the [Inkin' Memorial](#), the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Speaking of Shriveled Beings No Longer With Us: Second place receives a pair of ceramic California Raisins figurines, part of that weird 1980s promotion featuring Claymation fruit depicted as blues singers. Donated by Sam Laudenslager.

Other runners-up win their choice of a yearned-for [Loser Mug](#), the older-model ["This Is Your Brain on Mugs"](#) mug or a vintage Loser T-shirt. Honorable mentions get one of our lusted-after Loser magnets, ["Magnet Dum Laude"](#) or ["Falling Jest"](#)

[Short.](#) First Offenders receive a smelly tree-shaped air “freshener” ([FirStink](#) for their first ink). Deadline is Tuesday, May 31 (for this obit contest, an extra day for Memorial Day); results published June 26 (online June 23). You may submit up to 25 entries per contest. See contest rules and guidelines at wapo.st/InvRules. The headline for this week’s results is by Danielle Nowlin, Jon Gearhart and Jesse Frankovich; Danielle did the honorable-mentions subhead, too, as did William Kennard. “Let ’er RIP” is by John Hutchins. Join the Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at on.fb.me/invdev. “Like” the Style Invitational Ink of the Day on Facebook at bit.ly/inkofday; follow [@StyleInvite](https://twitter.com/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.

[And the results of the Style Invitational contest posted four weeks ago . . .](#)

THE LEVITY WAS DRY: ‘PIE’ SPLICES FROM WEEK 1172

Week 1172 was one of our word-bank contests: to write something using only the words in the song “[American Pie](#)”; you could add punctuation but couldn’t use a word more often than it appears in the song. (The entry deadline was the day before Ted Cruz dropped out of the presidential race.) Outstanding stuff here; I don’t want to think about how much time these people used on this contest. The Empress thanks, enormously, Loser Gary Crockett, who ran these entries through a validating program he’d created to make sure there weren’t any words that aren’t in the song or were used too frequently; details are in this week’s [Style Conversational column](#).

4th place:

“To love me well with your candlestick,
Oh Jack! Be nimble — but not that quick.” (Danielle Nowlin, Fairfax Station, Va.)

3rd place:

We all watched on the news when that bad man — Oh-James, who long ago played on the field — went Broncin’. How did his bride die? We know how! So, when we saw the verdict, we all screamed and cried (well, most people . . .). But before long, he stole and got caught, and was tried, and now he is off the streets for good. And that’s only just. (Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.)

2nd place

and the [mug depicting Princess Leia as Rosie the Riveter](#):

One time, I did write “your” in place of “you’re” and the “word lovers” caught it and went off on me. Those people? There just not well. (Jeff Shirley, Richmond, Va.)

And the winner of the Inkin’ Memorial:

The Quartet Looking for the American Crown

On the left:

The Queen — bride of a man we recall; did write a book; knew sergeants died.

The Pink-oh — off the Marx; children admire him.

On the rite:

The Jester: in tune with American rage; can fire every one; fat hands; foul.

And last, **the Bible Lover’s Man:** not American-born; singin’ “no levee”; no friend, no chance.

The verdict: not good. (Mary Kappus, Washington)

Jesters on the sidelines: honorable mentions

Do you remember all the fallout from that time when Miss Jack-son revealed something real quick in her half-time dance on air while just about every American watched? Now that was a news *flash!* (Jesse Frankovich, Lansing, Mich.)

The space people came down from above and my “can” was (well, you know what they do). I clenched and cried but, good news! I’d dreamed it! Man, I can *never* be drinking perfume again before night time. (Jeff Shirley)

“Admire my hands!” said the man on the stage. No. Just No. (Todd DeLap, Fairfax, Va.)

I was looking for some one who can teach me: What is that “broncin’ ” word? I asked three people and all I got was:

— “Hell if I know.”

— “Just ‘broken,’ but more so, maybe?”

— “Come off it, son — you been drinking?” (Brendan Beary, Great Mills, Md.)

It was so sweet when the Dancin’ Candlestick died, the cast of the play sang “Be Our Ghost.” (Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)

He: “Every time we made love, I saw to it that we practiced what the Holy Father and the church said to, and now we have ten children — all born in the last eight years!”

She: “He was into rhythm and I got the blues.” (Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.)

Jester: “What can I do for you?”

Jack: “Whiskey.”

Jester: “We have Bad Luck Whiskey, Deep Do Do Whiskey, Ole Gym Shoes Whiskey, and Die Slow and Lonely Whiskey.”

Jack:

Jester: “Well?”

Jack: “Hell with it, make it a can of Carnation.” (Jeff Shirley)

The one you were born from is so fat, she could be used as a levee! (Jesse Frankovich)

“Holy hell, that’s some good grass, man! Now for more whiskey . . .”

“No, no — time for church, Father James!” (Brendan Beary)

I came, I saw, I couldn’t

Be for that man. I wouldn’t.

We just can’t have that you-know-who

As our crown god, for me and you.

There was a dig about his hands;

So be it. His, a jester dance.

That man is for the birds, write I;

The Devil’s own. For him, bye-bye. (Mae Scanlan, Washington)

Music of the Met: People die singing, and they take a long, long time to do so. (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

Me: “Did you just flash the bride?”

My friend: “Well, I wouldn’t have, but I saw her admire my hands.” (Mark Raffman)

Helter-me, skelter-me,

Satan, the King of Hell,

Down in the flames with the

Most dark of men,

Is he as foul as that

Rage-touched-American

Man who could make the place

So good again? (Jesse Frankovich)

He helter and clenched her can, but she screamed and kicked him in the bells. "Buck you!" he cried. (Frank Osen)

Miss: "Jack, take me now and make me shiver with delight!"

Jack: "Miss? I do not know you, and what is more, James and I, we've been happy lovers for a while."

Miss: "Oh. My bad." (Jeff Shirley)

I was a king, but you kicked me out. Now you have Satan made mortal. Who is laughing now? (J. Boehner, Cincinnati)
(Todd DeLap)

"How come you got ten years for just a broken light on your Chevy?"

"Oh, well, there was some more: I 'borrowed' that truck; I was high and had been drinking; and I was caught with what turned out to be the sergeant's bride." (John Hutchins, Silver Spring, Md.)

"We used to make love all day long," the bride said to her friend. "But now the only real chance I have is when he tells me, 'Half-time maybe ...'" (Chris Doyle)

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In my teenage years, I was in a band. I was high on grass and into drinking. And practiced in love as well — every night a pickup! Do my children know that? No! They only take me for a fat father from a played-out generation. (Mark Raffman)

People die every day, but for some who we admire for the music they made . . . man oh man, could we slow it down some? It is as if God got lonely and went looking for one hell of a rhythm-and-blues band. (Craig Dykstra, Centreville, Va.)

And Last: Miss My-years (that's how you spell it, no?): If I read the paper and you have not used one of my own again, just know that this'll make me die inside. (Jesse Frankovich, who gets to live inside at least one more week)

Still running — deadline Monday night, May 23: Our contest to create new words totaling 13 Scrabble points.
See bit.ly/invite1175.

Remember, to enter the Week 1176 obit-line contest above, submit your entry or entries at subpl.at/INVITE1176 .

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