

Style Invitational Week 1194: Nyetymologies

Plus the results of our name-chain contest



You didn't know that "commodore" comes from the French "commode d'or," or "golden chamber pot"? Well, that's good. (Bob Staake for The Washington Post)

By Pat Myers • Entertainment September 22

(Click [here to skip down](#) to the winning name chains from Week 1190)

Commodore: During the reign of Charles VIII (the Affable), a perquisite of senior officers in the French Navy was the golden chamber pot, *une commode d'or*. (Joseph F. Wilkerson, New York Magazine Competition, 1999)

Persecute (Middle English *purse*, pocketbook, + cute): To torment a man for wearing an attractive handbag. (Lauren Foley, *ibid.*)

Four weeks ago we paid tribute to the late Mary Ann Madden, editor of the long-running New York Magazine Competition, by shamelessly using one of her favorite contest formats: the name chains that appear today. This week we'll rip off Ms. Madden one more time, thanks to Loser John O'Byrne, who sent the Empress a scanned copy of the [results of NYMag Competition](#), from Jan. 18, 1999 — near the end of the competition's three-decade run in print. **This week: Provide a humorously untrue explanation for the derivation of a word**, as in the bogus etymologies above, both of them Madden honorable mentions for Week 927. Don't explain a whole expression; the Invite has done

that contest fairly recently.

Submit entries at the website bit.ly/enter-invite-1194 (all lowercase).

Winner gets the [Inkin' Memorial](#), the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives "[Maybe He's Dead, and Other Hilarious Results of New York Magazine Competitions](#)," a 1981 paperback collection donated by Alfred Lubran. (No, there's no corresponding book for the Invite, but you can see every past contest on the [Master Contest List](#) at the Losers' own website, NRARS.org.)

Other runners-up win their choice of a yearned-for [Loser Mug](#), the older-model "[This Is Your Brain on Mugs](#)" mug or our new Grossery Bag, "[I Got a B in Punmanship](#)." 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 Monday night, Oct. 3; results published Oct. 23 (online Oct. 20). You may submit up to 25 entries per contest. See general contest rules and guidelines at wapo.st/InvRules. The headline for this week's results is Danielle Nowlin; the honorable-mentions subhead is by Jon Gearhart. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at on.fb.me/inudev. "Like" the Style Invitational Ink of the Day on Facebook at bit.ly/inkofday; follow [@StyleInvite](#) on Twitter.

The Style Conversational The Empress's weekly online column, published late Thursday afternoon, discusses each new contest and set of results. Especially if you plan to enter, check it out at wapo.st/styleconv.

[And from The Style Invitational four weeks ago . . .](#)

WIT TO BE TIED: THE WINNING NAME CHAINS OF WEEK 1190

In Week 1190 we asked you to make a string of up to 15 names, each connected to the next in some way, to end up either at the name you started with or at an opposite one. Often, the funniest links are those that take a little thought to figure out — but if you don't get them, they're just a big HUH. The Empress did a lot of HUH last week, but did get the entries below. Some are just similar names; some play off the names, like Tinker-Taylor; and some refer to the people themselves. The results contain some explanatory links to click on; there will also probably be a lot of hashing out on the [Style Invitational Devotees](#) page on Facebook.

4th place

Aly Raisman; [Lazarus](#); "Deadpool"; Ryan Reynolds; Blake Lively; Robert Blake; "Baretta"; Wayne LaPierre, "Wayne's World"; [Aurora, Ill.](#); "[Sleeping Beauty](#)"; Prince; "Let's Go Crazy"; Jim Beam, **Aly Raisman**. (Sue Lin Chong, Baltimore)

3rd place

Kim Kardashian; Lil Kim; Little Richard; "Good Golly Miss Molly"; Molly Shannon; Shannon, Ireland; Kathy Ireland; Christie Brinkley; Billy Joel; "Allentown"; Steve Allen; Merv Griffin; [Eva Gabor](#); Eddie Albert; **Albert Einstein**. (Hildy Zampella, Falls Church, Va.)

2nd place and the DVD of “The Losers”:

Debbie Wasserman Schultz; Charles Schulz; “Peanuts”; Cracker Jack; Marion Barry; Muriel Bowser; [Sha Na Na](#); Woodstock; Snoopy; Julian Assange; WikiLeaks; Depends; Bill Clinton; Hillary Clinton; **Debbie Wasserman Schultz**. (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn, Va.)

And the winner of the Inkin’ Memorial:

Colin Kaepernick; [“QB VII”](#); Leon Uris; Leon Panetta; Caspar Weinberger; Casper the Friendly Ghost; the Holy Ghost; God; Pope Francis; Francis Scott Key; “The Star-Spangled Banner”; **Colin Kaepernick** (Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.)

Jest ligature selves:

honorable mentions

Jeb Bush; Jed Clampett; “The Beverly Hillbillies”; Los Angeles; Griffith Park; “MacArthur Park”; Donna Summer; Donna Tartt; Don Ho; “Tiny Bubbles”; **Donald Trump**. (Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)

Anthony Weiner; Oscar Mayer; Oscar De La Hoya; [Georgetown University](#); Big East; Big Easy; New Orleans Saints; Joan of Arc; Noah; David; Goliath; “Giant”; James Dean; [Jimmy Dean](#); **Anthony Weiner**. (Jeff Contompasis)

Donald Trump; Mike Pence; Ezra Pound; [Minnesota Fats](#); Q; “Skyfall”; [Chicken Little](#); Colonel Sanders; [Husky Tools](#); **Donald Trump**. (Matt Monitto, Bristol, Conn.)

John Deere; Buck Owens; “Hee Haw”; Donkey Kong; Pac-Man; Sheldon Adelson; Sheldon Cooper; Stephen Hawking; Peter Sellers; “The Pink Panther”; David Niven; David Letterman; **Deere, John**. (Chris Doyle)

David Letterman; “The Postman Always Rings Twice”; James M. Cain; James Monroe; Marilyn Monroe; Joe DiMaggio; the New York Yankees; Yogi Berra; Yogi Bear; **Stephen Colbert**. (Robert Schechter, Dix Hills, N.Y.)

Donald Trump; “The Art of the Deal”; Art Garfunkel; “The Sound of Silence”; [the Wall of Sound](#); Jerry Garcia; Ben & Jerry’s; [Phish Food](#); [Luca Brasi](#); [Khartoum](#); Benghazi; **Hillary Clinton**. (Gregory Dunn, Alexandria, Va.)

Jon Hamm; Mayo Clinic; [Rochester](#); [Jack Benny](#); Benny Hill; Frankie Valli; Four Seasons; Paris Hilton; France; [“The Coneheads”](#); Jane Curtin; Don Draper; **Jon Hamm**. (Pam Sweeney, Burlington, Mass.)

Justin Trudeau; “O! Canada”; Baltimore Orioles; Earl Weaver; Spider-Man; Peter Parker; Trey Parker; “Blame Canada”; **Justin Bieber**. (Chris Doyle)

Mitch McConnell; the Kentucky Creation Museum; God; Zeus; Dr. Seuss; “Yertle the Turtle”; [Mitch McConnell](#).

(Chris Doyle)

Vladimir Putin; Vlad the Impaler; Lance Armstrong; Sir Lancelot; “Camelot”; Lawrence of Arabia; Superstorm Sandy; “The Desert Song”; Sigmund Romberg; Whoopi Goldberg; Whoopee Cushion; **Vladimir Putin**. (Beverly Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

Pampers; Baby Face Nelson; Nelson Eddy; Jeanette MacDonald; the Golden Arches; Archie Bunker; Edith Bunker; Edith Piaf; “April in Paris”; [June Allyson](#); **Depends**. (Mae Scanlan, Washington)

Julian Assange; Golden Snitch; [Nimbus 2000](#); Styx; Sharon Stone; “[The Mending Wall](#)”; [Pink Floyd](#); Floyd Mayweather; “April Showers”; “[The Cruellest Month](#)”; T.S. Eliot; “The Waste Land”; the Internet; WikiLeaks; **Julian Assange**. (Phyllis Reinhard, East Fallowfield, Pa.)

Michael Jackson, [Bubbles](#), Alka-Seltzer, Alcatraz, [Dwayne Johnson](#), John Holmes, Watson, [Ken Jennings](#); Movie Star Barbie; “Toy Story”; Buzz Lightyear; Neil Armstrong; **Michael Jackson**. (Todd DeLap, Fairfax, Va.)

Anthony Weiner; Snickers; Mars; “Lost in Space”; [Will Robinson](#); Carlos Danger; **Anthony Weiner**. (Mary Kappus, Washington)

God; Eva Marie Saint; “North by Northwest”; Delta Burke; Atlanta; Rhett Butler; [Lee Daniels](#); Charlie Daniels; **the Devil** (Ward Kay, Vienna, Va.)

JFK; Marilyn Monroe; Eminem; Mars; [Spirit](#); St. Louis; Cardinals; Pope Francis; Francis Bacon; Kevin Bacon; Tom Hanks; “The Terminal”; **JFK**. (Todd DeLap)

Kim Kardashian; Caitlyn Jenner; “Victor/Victoria”; Julie Andrews; Eliza Doolittle; “Doctor Dolittle”; Dr. Scholl’s; Paul Bunyan; Lizzie Borden; Elsie the Cow; [Mike Bossy](#); Puck; [Bottom](#); **Kim Kardashian**. (Chris Doyle)

Donald Trump; Megyn Kelly; Grace Kelly, Princess of Monaco; “The Princess Bride”; [ROUS](#); **Donald Trump**. (Warren Tanabe, Annapolis, Md.)

Yasser Arafat; Fat Albert; the Pillsbury Doughboy; “The Danish Girl”; “[The Little Mermaid](#)”; **Ariel Sharon**. (Nathanael Dewhurst, Lynn, Mass.)

Michael Phelps; “M. Butterfly”; Jeremy Irons; Tiger Woods; Forrest Gump; Tom Hanks; Sheriff Woody; Buzz Lightyear; Buzz Aldrin; Project Apollo; Apollo Creed; Joe Louis; Louis B. Mayer; Samuel Goldwyn; **Michael Phelps**. (Chris Doyle)

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Abraham Lincoln; Penny Marshall; Rob Reiner; Anthony Weiner; Oscar Mayer; Oscar the Grouch; Triumph the Insult Comic Dog; Arc de Triomphe; Paris Hilton; “Hotel California”; the Eagles; Philadelphia; Gettysburg; **Abraham Lincoln**. (Hildy Zampella)

Sarah Palin; “The Russia House”; John le Carré; [Corry Nation](#); A.A. Milne; Winnie-the-Pooh; Bear Grylls; [George Foreman](#); Barbara Boxer; Boxing Day; Christmas; Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer; Caribou Barbie; **Sarah Palin.** (Chris Doyle)

Elizabeth Warren; Warren Harding; Richard Nixon; “All the President’s Men”; Woodward and Bernstein; Katharine Graham; [A.O. Sulzberger](#); Punch and Judy; Howdy Doody; Buffalo Bob Smith; John Smith; Pocahontas; **Elizabeth Warren.** (Chris Doyle)

And Last: [The Czar](#); Gene Wilder; Dr. Frankenstein; Dr. Frank Burns; Trapper John; John Madden; Mary Ann Madden; “[Gilligan’s Island](#)”; “Fantasy Island”; [Tattoo](#), [Tattooine](#), Jabba the Hutt, the Playboy Mansion; “Pat the Bunny,” [the Empress](#). (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

Still running — deadline Monday night, Sept. 26: our Poeds contest. See bit.ly/invite1193.

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