

Style Invitational

BY PAT MYERS

Report from Week 953

in which we printed this filled-in crossword grid, by Bob Klahn of CrosSynergy syndicate, and asked for creative clues to the words and phrases: Some of the words are omitted below, while others get more than one definition. Just as for many challenging crosswords, you have to use mental flexibility to get some of the clues; for example, the clue for ISH requires you to read it as "I 'sh.'" More clues, along with some help in figuring out the trickier entries, appear in the online Invite at washingtonpost.com/styleinvitational.

THE
WINNER
OF THE
INKER

ADA: Dyslexics Association of America (Seth Brown, North Adams, Mass.)

2 Winner of the Tupac and animal-poo decks of cards:

ACADEMY: Last word in the song "My Aca Lies Over the Ocean" (Barbara Turner, Takoma Park)

3 WHATAMESS: GOP mantra — drop second "A" for Democrats' version (Barry Koch, Catlett, Va.)

4 GAY: Baby name not in the top 1,000 since 1969 (Robert Gallagher, Charleston, S.C.)

Boxed out: honorable mentions

ESPERANTO: Even Rosetta Stone won't claim you'll speak it like a native (David Ballard, Reston)

COHAN: Solo double (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn)

WHATAMESS: A female whatam. (Jim Lubell, Mechanicsville, Md.)

ALITO: What a neon RIOLES sign needs (Nick Yokanovich, Arnold, Md., a First Offender)

YARD: Having only three feet, this critter needs constant care (Beverley Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

MALLE: Where to find Ye Olde Navy and Milord & Taylor (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

NEE: An unfulfilled need (Jeff Contompasis)

NEE: Identity thief's favorite word in your mom's obit (Pam Sweeney, Burlington, Mass.)



BY BOB KLAHN

ATE: Common reaction to Cockney pub food (Barr Weiner, Washington)

ODIE: Specialized tool for making Cheerios. (Cathy Lamaze, North Potomac)

ARTGUM: Holder of the Carney cuspids. (Mae Scanlan, Washington)

SOS: Italy's national slogan (Benjamin Yeager, Alexandria, a First Offender)

SOS: Iron Man's exfoliation pad. (Barbara Turner)

SOS: Proposed currency to replace the euro (Robert Schechter, Dix Hills, N.Y.)

SOS: Conclusions about your old man (Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.)

SURETY: Answers Cobb's question "Did you file my spikes nice and sharp?" (Harold Mantle, Lafayette, Calif.)

AUK: Texting shorthand for "Hey, are you all right?" (Dave Prevar, Annapolis; Lee Giesecke, Annandale, who last got Invite ink in 1994)

ERIN: What Irish politicians will never admit to (John O'Byrne, Dublin)

SUPPER: Friendly 'hood resident (Brian Cohen, Lexington, Va.)

BILE: Popular mouthwash on Capitol Hill (Barr Weiner)

HOW: Word missing from campaign promises (Dave Prevar)

FOG: Hazy recollection found in fogies (Larry Yungk, Arlington)

ISH: One of my tasks as a librarian (Tom Murphy, Bowie)

ONE: Can live as cheaply as one. (Dixon Wragg, Santa Rosa, Calif.)

THINASARAIL: Metro's margin of error in cold weather (Steve Glomb, Alexandria)

REUTERS: Reverses a hysterectomy (David Garratt, Glenn Dale; Nan Reiner, Alexandria)

MONONGAHELA: Medical condition in which you have only one ngahela. (Larry Gray, Union Bridge, Md.)

EDBEGLEY: Ed Begley Jr.'s father's name (Ted Weitzman, Olney)

SORTA: Mattress doubling as filing cabinet (Lawrence McGuire, Waldorf)

NIL: What most of us remember from Latin class. (Beverley Sharp)

Next week: Fight Call, or Tiff Competition

THIS WEEK'S CONTEST: WEEK 957



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Fearful symmetry

"He who hath smelt likely dealt this, too, eh?"

A couple of years ago, in Week 848, we broadened your vocabulary — the Style Invitational, after all, is The Post's go-to source for intellectual edification — with a contest for rhopal sentences: ones in which each word was one letter longer than the previous one. Four weeks later we turned the process around; that time, the successive words were shorter. Now, Loser Craig Dykstra suggests one more variation: **Write a clever passage whose successive words are one letter longer until the middle of the passage, and then become one letter shorter, as in Craig's 2-3-4-5-6-5-4-3-2 example above — or vice versa.** The passages may be of any length and may be more than one sentence. Compound words joined with hyphens may count as either one or multiple words. A contraction is one word; punctuation doesn't count as a letter. If the line has an even number of words, the two words in the middle will be of the same length; if it's an odd number, the longest/shortest word will be right in the middle.

Winner gets the Inker, the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a genuine copy of Playboy — in braille — which the Library of Congress distributes. It is big and plain white, except for the name and bunny logo on the cover, and it's one that you do read for the articles — no braille pictures.

Other runners-up win their choice of a coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt or yearned-for Loser Mug. Honorable mentions get a lusted-after Loser magnet. First Offenders get a tree-shaped air "freshener" (FirStink for their first ink). E-mail entries to losers@washpost.com or fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Monday, Feb. 13; results published March 4 (March 2 online). No more than 25 entries per entrant per week. Include "Week 957" in your e-mail subject line or it may be ignored as spam. Include your real name, postal address and phone number with your entry. See contest rules and guidelines at washingtonpost.com/styleinvitational. The revised title for next week is by Tom Witte; the subhead for this week's honorable mentions is by Jeff Contompasis. Join the Style Invitational Devotees on Facebook at on.fb.me/invdev



STYLE CONVERSATIONAL Have a question for the Empress or want to talk to some real Losers? Join us at washingtonpost.com/stylconversational.



ALEXANDER JOE/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE VIA GETTY IMAGES

FRANTIC ENERGY: Rap-rave outfit Die Antwoord, including Ninja, left, and Yo-Landi Vi\$\$er, aims to regain some buzz with "Ten\$ion."

POP CD REVIEW

Die Antwoord TEN\$ION



South African rap-rave outfit Die Antwoord got noticed in what has become the usual way, with a viral video that led to a major-label deal and a corresponding amount of blogosphere buzz.

The deal fizzled, the blogosphere moved on, and Die Antwoord, a Cape Town-based trio made up of a DJ, a female singer and an energetically nutty frontman, must now use their

second official disc, "Ten\$ion," to address a nagging question: Are they a serious-ish post-post-modern party band, or LMFAO for hipsters?

A little bit of both, as it turns out. "Ten\$ion" is an all-encompassing party album that's better than it needs to be, but not as good as it thinks it is. It doesn't explore different dance subgenres so much as roll over them in a tank and glitter bomb the ruins. "Ten\$ion" is an aural eyesore of Euro-pop, beatboxes, Afro-pop, rave and hit-or-miss skits.

Even the simplest songs are hopelessly complex, with two vocalists (high-voiced, childlike Yo-Landi Vi\$\$er, who sings, and

the group's supremely confident frontman Ninja, born Watkin Tudor Jones, who raps) performing in two languages, English and the South African language of Afrikaans.

For all its frenetic over-busyness, "Ten\$ion" is peppered with great moments, like the primal, percussive "Fatty Boom Boom" ("Taking over America / Blowing up everything," they enthuse, a trifle optimistically), the trance-y "I Fink U Frecky," featuring one of Ninja's trademark halting raps (He loves. Unlikely. Pauses.) or the techno explosion "Baby's on Fire," with lyrics so dirty we can't even quote them in Afrikaans.

— Allison Stewart