

## DIVERSIONS

## THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

## Wit's your sign: Week 1097's 'Clarified' horoscopes

BY PAT MYERS

In Week 1097 we invited you to "clarify" a horoscope from that week's print Post or the more expansive ones on [washingtonpost.com](http://washingtonpost.com):

## The winner of the Inkin' Memorial

**Cancer:** "Sprint as quickly as you can across the Field of Ambition, and then rest a while under the Tree of Contentment." But avoid the Port-a-Potty of Bad Metaphor. (Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)

## 2nd place and the euro-motif erasers and the \$100-bill tissues:

**Virgo:** "It's a good time to push for romance, too, if you feel the urge." No, not you, Mr. Cosby. Hey, are you even a Virgo? (Danielle Nowlin, Fairfax Station)

## 3rd place

**Aquarius:** "You are sure to score some points for pulling off this achievement."

Your scab is destined for the Guinness Book of Records. (Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.)

## 4th place

**Capricorn:** "You might seem strange to some people." The rest aren't very perceptive. (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

## Duncing with the stars: honorable mentions

**Pisces:** "Everyone around you is in an absolutely foul mood." Shouldn't that tell you something, you jerk? (Jon Gearhart, Des Moines)

**Cancer:** "It's the small stuff that counts the most today, so do your best to keep you eyes squinted and focused."

I know that's a lot harder for you these days, Ms. Zellweger. (Danielle Nowlin)

**Taurus:** "Being as clever as you are, you'll probably manage to do both at the same time!"

So put on those shoes, pop that gum into your mouth, and give it a go! (Larry Gray, Union Bridge, Md.)

**Pisces:** "Think of this as a game of chess."

No matter whether you're a king, queen or pawn — you still end up in a box when it's all over. (Frank Osen)

**Scorpio:** "After such a long, potent period of productivity, right now you would be wise to slow things down."

Really, don't you think 19 kids are enough, Mrs. Duggar? (Larry Neal, McLean; Tom Witte, Montgomery Village)

**Aries:** "So when and if something that's not quite fit for the public emerges, there's no reason for you to feel accountable."

When you gotta go, you gotta go. (Chris Doyle)

**Sagittarius:** "Others will seek you out, perhaps to encourage you to change or adjust your plans." Ignore the ones who are shouting, "Jump! Jump!" (Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase)

**Cancer:** "For the next few days — and maybe quite a while thereafter — you've got quite an intense social schedule."

Apparently, writing your name and number on the restroom wall still works. (Roger Dalrymple, Gettysburg, Pa.)

**Leo:** "There's nothing wrong with being indecisive." Yes, there is. No, there's not. Yes, there is. . . . (Nan Reiner, Alexandria)

**Cancer:** "A controlling loved one may be coaxed into releasing the reins for a brief time." But only if you remember the safe word. (Curtis Morrison, Chesapeake, Va.)

**Aquarius:** "A family member or loved one might wish that you would be a little more relaxed than you seem to be." Tell this person to \*\*\*\*. (Ed Flynn, Alexandria, a First Offender; Barry Koch, Catlett, Va.)

**Taurus:** "You're not sure what's up, but it doesn't feel like a good thing." As always, honesty is the best policy — tell the ER exactly how it got there. (Kevin Dopart)

**Leo:** "Take a hard look at your budget, as there is a possibility of an error." It does seem a little farfetched to plan on winning the Powerball jackpot twice in one year. (Ivars



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

## New contest for Week 1101: The year in redo

**Fundraising challenge for the Support Our Congress Trust: Each legislator asks constituents to dump a bucket of money over his head. (Frank Osen, winner of Week 1092)**

If at first you can't even succeed in losing . . .

Whether you didn't get around to entering a favorite Style Invitational contest from the past year, or you're new to the Invite, or you have a better idea for a contest you did enter, or you think the Empress flat-out robbed you and you think she'll think the same entry is funnier this time — well, carpe diem. **This week: Enter any Style Invitational contest from Week 1047 through Week 1097**, except for Week 1050, last year's do-over week. Use as few or many contests as you like, up to 25 entries total. You may refer to events that have occurred since the contest was published (except for the Week 1054 obit poems, which should still be about people who died in 2013); for contests that ask you to use that week's paper, use this week's. Where to find all these previous contests? There's a link to each one at [washingtonpost.com/styleinvitational](http://washingtonpost.com/styleinvitational) (click on "More News" at the bottom of the page to see the oldest few). If you're not an online subscriber and will "hit the payroll" if you look at more than 20 Post articles in the month, don't give up: You can also see all the contests on Loser Elden Carnahan's Master Contest List at [nrars.org](http://nrars.org), where he also keeps the unbelievably comprehensive Loser Stats. After you read the instructions of a contest you want to enter, be sure to check the results as well (four weeks later), to make sure your idea didn't already get ink.

Winner gets the Inkin' Memorial, the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives, appropriately, a do-over prize: a fabulous little set of ceramic salt-and-pepper shakers depicting a Martha Stewart-looking woman (or little girl) and a little spotted dog; and there are tiny magnets on (a) the dog's nose and (b) the back of Martha's skirt. This prize was declined by the second-place finisher of Week 1079, the renowned Mae Scanlan, perhaps because she's also won 22 other first-place and runner-up prizes, not to mention more than 100 magnets and bumper stickers. (Surely it couldn't be because she wouldn't want it on her Thanksgiving table. . . .)

**Other runners-up** win their choice of a yearned-for Loser Mug or the ardently desired "Whole Fools" Grocery Bag. Honorable mentions get a lusted-after Loser magnet designed by Bob Staake: either "The Wit Hit the Fan" or "Hardly Har-Har." First Offenders receive a smelly tree-shaped air "freshener" (FirStink for their first ink). E-mail entries to [losers@washpost.com](mailto:losers@washpost.com) or, if you were born in the 19th century, fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Monday, Dec. 15; results published Jan. 4 (online Dec. 31). Include "Week 1101" in your e-mail subject line or it might be ignored as spam. Include your real name, postal address and phone number with your entry. See contest rules and guidelines at [wapo.st/InvRules](http://wapo.st/InvRules). The headline for this week's results was submitted by both Beverley Sharp and Tom Witte, the honorable-mentions subhead by Mae Scanlan. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at [on.fb.me/invdev](http://on.fb.me/invdev), and click "like" on Style Invitational Ink of the Day at [bit.ly/inkofday](http://bit.ly/inkofday).

**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](http://wapo.st/styleconv).

Kuskevics, Takoma Park)

**Leo:** "Investigate some investment options you were considering." There are 11 brand-new senators for sale! (Nan Reiner)

**Gemini:** "Throughout your life, your heart and mind take turns at the wheel."

While your libido and your ego fight over the gas pedal. (Frank Osen)

**Gemini:** "Your charm attracts many people."

So be prepared to explain why you wear a dead sparrow hanging from a chain around your neck. (Ken Schwartz, Burke)

**Capricorn:** "The good news is that your new grumpiness is not long term."

The bad news is that you have two months to live. (Mae Scanlan, Washington)

**Taurus:** "It's time to stretch your expectations of yourself." You CAN get out of bed! You CAN write that novel! You CAN jump out that window and fly! (Neal Starkman, Seattle)

**Libra:** "It's also a great time to head outdoors with your friends, if that can be managed." The prison break is a go. (Howard Walderman, Columbia)

**Leo:** "Investigate some investment options you were considering in the back of your mind." Let's face it, who else is going to invest in the back of your mind? (Andy Bassett, New Plymouth, New Zealand)

**Aquarius:** "You will feel the pressure of the full moon." You will sit next to an extremely hefty person on an airplane. (William Kennard, Arlington)

**Leo:** "You may be slow to get going, but once you do, you'll be unstoppable." So it's best to stay home during colonoscopy prep day. (Curtis Morrison)

**Aries:** "The trick will be to avoid a power play." If you happen to play for the Capitals, you've mastered this already. (Mike Gips, Bethesda)

**Sagittarius:** "Details are everything today — make sure that you've got them totally covered!" But it's better if you don't keep checking your fly throughout the interview. (Brad Alexander, Wanneroo, Australia)

**Taurus:** "You might experience a need to make your home more 'yours.'" Check with your cellmate, however, before hanging that Justin Bieber poster. (Jeff Shirley, Richmond)

**Leo:** "Your humor helps others relax." You can tell by their snoring. (Gary Crockett)

**Capricorn:** "Perhaps the reason has to do with them witnessing your adaptability." Not everyone can grow gills on demand. (Lawrence McGuire, Waldorf)

**And Last: Gemini:** "You may want to express yourself, but be careful — you don't want to offend anyone." Unless, of course, you might get a refrigerator magnet out of it. (Terri Berg Smith, Rockville)

**Still running — deadline Monday night: Our contest for Monday stories that end in puns. See [bit.ly/invite1100](http://bit.ly/invite1100).**

## POST PUZZLER

## No. 244

BY JEFFREY HARRIS EDITED BY PETER GORDON • FIREBALLCROSSWORDS.COM

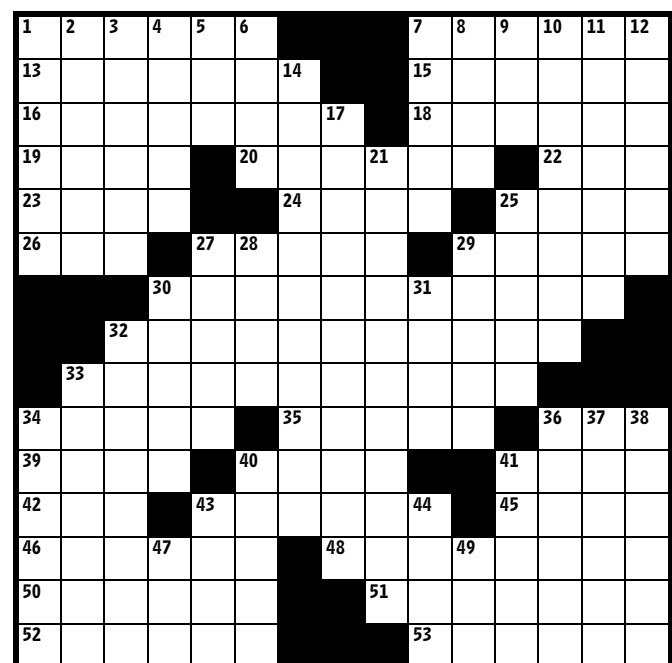
**ACROSS**  
1 Ecumenical council subjects  
7 Gum source  
13 Tumbler  
15 Worthless  
16 Milton Bradley game involving yes-or-no questions  
18 Best Actress winner the year Tatum won Best Supporting Actress  
19 Orders at the local  
20 Like some robes and ropes  
22 \_\_\_ leaf  
23 Contemporary of Filene  
24 Word with butt or drunk  
25 Move slowly  
26 Often-abbreviated word in texts  
27 'Vette, e.g.  
29 Puts into alignment  
30 Imminent

**32** Many a Vietnam War protester  
**33** They're capped at the front  
**34** Breakfast bowlful  
**35** Picker-uppers?  
**36** Hot  
**39** One of Bill's Supreme Court nominees  
**40** Driven bunch  
**41** "Naughty Naughty" singer John  
**42** Shapeshifter on "Star Trek: Deep Space Nine"  
**43** Speaker of the line "The quality of mercy is not strain'd"  
**45** 2012 film banned in Iran  
**46** "Red" actor  
**48** Glazed treat  
**50** Functioning  
**51** Uncle Ben's co-creator  
**52** Course of action?  
**53** Mounts

Answer to last week, No. 243

C	H	E	S	T	B	U	M	P	N	A	T	A	L	
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A	G	A	I	N	D	I	L	L	T	A	J			
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**DOWN**  
1 Figure on the 5,000-escudo note  
2 Of the eyes  
3 2010 bailout recipient  
4 Unlike a rolling stone?  
5 Some are chiseled  
6 Horror franchise installment of 2008  
7 Brat's antithesis  
8 Mitsubishi model  
9 Number that never decreases  
10 Bewilder  
11 Like some salt  
12 Fortune cookie fortunes, often  
14 1971 western about an embittered Army officer  
17 Host of the former Fox News Channel series "War Stories"  
21 Literally, "go with God"  
25 Would-be doctors' exams  
27 Hoofbeats  
28 First winner of the NHL Lifetime Achievement Award  
29 Dilutes  
30 It may gather dust  
31 \_\_\_ Life (former hip-hop group)  
32 PepsiCo division  
33 Easily embarrassed, perhaps  
34 "Stop being such a baby!"  
36 Medium for Michelangelo  
37 Made a case (for)  
38 Engine sounds  
40 Cheated, in slang  
41 Fictional NYPD detective Max who's the title character in a series of video games  
43 Plush feature  
44 Raid targets, maybe  
47 Abbr. on an elevator sign  
49 Down the pike, say



## HOROSCOPE

BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY | DEC. 7:** This year you go with the flow rather than start a crusade over each issue. You will be a lot happier if you refuse to get uptight. It is important to understand different perspectives. If you are single, you might have difficulty settling down with one person. Someone very different may stop you in your tracks. If you are attached, you enjoy teasing your significant other. Be more sensitive to this person's needs. Humor will help lighten the mood.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19)**  
Your keen perception gives you a broader vision of what is happening around you. Communicating your thoughts may be difficult, as others don't seem to have the same bank of knowledge.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20)**  
You might be overly concerned about your holiday budget. Do whatever you need to do to relax. If you have to balance your checkbook or redo your shopping list, do it.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20)**  
You might have a certain idea for how you want to indulge a loved one, only to discover that he or she would prefer something different. Express your caring in a way that is meaningful to this person.

**CANCER (June 21-July 22)**  
Make it okay for you to be unavailable; detailed explanations

won't be necessary. When you meet up with family or friends later in the day with a smile on your face, they will understand.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)**  
Zero in on what you want to do as opposed to what you think you should do. Your mood will be more upbeat as a result.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)**  
Afternoon plans will probably involve friends. Whether you are at an informal gathering or out playing racquetball, it is the company that makes the difference.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)**  
Reach out to a distant friend who loves to chat and visit with you. Consider meeting each other halfway sometime during the next few months.

## Friends' care packages are not helpful

## Ask Amy

AMY DICKINSON

**Dear Amy: I'm 63 and barely survive on Social Security. I often run dry days before my benefit check arrives, which means no food for me.**

*I have a couple of old friends who send me care packages at Christmas, which contain things I just don't eat such as candy, odd cookies and canned meat products. I honestly wish they'd just send cash so I can pay overdue bills or buy medications. How can I communicate this to them? Or am I just being ungrateful?*

*Overly Gifted in the Catskills*

**Your situation highlights** the ongoing problem of hunger in this country. According to the anti-poverty group Feeding America, in 2011, 4.8 million seniors (over age 60) were food insecure.

I hope you are doing everything possible to find sources of healthy food in your community. The Feeding America Web site ([feedingamerica.org](http://feedingamerica.org)) has a pull-down menu listing state-by-state food resources. Many local churches host weekly food giveaways where you can pick up staples. A social worker can work

with you to qualify for other benefits, including heating assistance and help with your medications.

In terms of your generous friends, I think you should express your gratitude, and also do what you can to direct their giving in ways that will be more useful to you.

You can express to them, "Every year you are generous and send me a care package at Christmastime. I appreciate it so much. This year, I'm hoping to receive gifts that will help tide me over during the very lean times. I'd really appreciate a grocery gift card or help with my utility bill during these cold months. Regardless of what you choose to do, I know the winter will be less cold because of your kindness."

**Dear Amy: I met a really nice man about a month ago and we have been going out. We did not have our first kiss until our fifth date, and we were both drunk when it happened.**

*We spent almost the whole weekend together (no sex) this past weekend and it was a lot of fun. He sent roses to my office on Monday. However, I feel like a jerk because I am still not sure about this.*

*I am about to graduate with a master's degree and he didn't go*

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)**

You have a naughty side that tends to emerge around one particular person. The fun and laughter that stem from this interaction will erase any tension.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)**

Like or not, you'll need to continue deferring to a partner and/or friends. If you do, you will feel better, as you might have too much on your plate right now.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)**

Pace yourself. You demand a lot from yourself, and you have a lot of responsibilities on your shoulders. Use the morning for chores and leave the afternoon open to be with friends.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)**

You can't seem to contain yourself in your present mood. Is there really a reason to? Make the most of your Sunday. You might consider doing some holiday decorating in the afternoon.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)**

You might want to stay close to home, especially in the morning. Your afternoon plans might involve a dear friend or loved one.

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*to college. I know it shouldn't matter. He has a great job. However, I always have seen myself with someone who has an education.*

*He is a momma's boy, and that scares me. He tells his mother everything. While we were on our date, on our train ride home at 1 a.m., I fell asleep on his shoulder. He took a "selfie" of me but did not tell me. He sent the picture to his mom and I found out from her (I have never met her) the next day. Should I be creeped out by this?*

Broken

**It is definitely NOT COOL** to take a photo of someone who is sleeping and then share it without permission.

This is a giant red flag. He may be a very sweet guy, but he should know better than to violate your privacy like this. Yikes!

I would push all of your other reservations to the side and put this one at the very front.

Amy's column appears seven days a week at [www.washingtonpost.com/advice](http://www.washingtonpost.com/advice). Write to Amy Dickinson at [askamy@tribune.com](mailto:askamy@tribune.com) or Ask Amy, Chicago Tribune, TT500, 435 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60611.

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