

DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

Har times ahead: New Year's resolutions from 2115

BY PAT MYERS

In Week 1106 the Empress asked for resolutions that you or someone else might make 100 years in the future. Dozens of Losers vowed to take an oceanside vacation on the Nevada coast, etc., as well as to get tickets for what's being billed as the final Rolling Stones or Cher tour.

4th place

I vow to put on my Grumpy Cat ears and take the family to MemeWorld. (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

3rd place

I resolve to finally learn how to get that blinking "12:00" off my video implant. (Stuart Denrich, Owings Mills, Md., a First Offender)



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

2nd place and the skunk hat

I resolve that every single day, I will read both pages of The Washington Post. (Beverly Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

And the winner of the Inkin' Memorial

I'm going to take the family out to Skyline Drive to watch the tree change colors. (Nancy Schwalb, Washington)

Lemon pledges: honorable mentions

We resolve to increase shareholder profits by reducing the stacking bench distance from 3 inches to 2.5 in all of our Economy Class travel pods. — DeltaUnitedAmerican Airlines (Nan Reiner, Alexandria)

I won't buy another bunch of replicants I don't need on Cyborg Monday. (Melissa Balmain, Rochester, N.Y.)

I resolve to step down on the occasion of Little George's 102nd-birthday Jubilee. — Elizabeth R (Carroll Reed, Centreville)

I resolve to stop nagging my car to pull over and ask for directions. (Art Grinath, Takoma Park)

I resolve not to make mocking cartoons of Prophet Bieber. (Jeff Shirley, Richmond)

I promise to start wearing some clothes when I enter other people's dreams. (Dan Steinbrocker, Los Angeles)

I vow not to cross the street just because a couple of Venusian kids are wearing hoodies. (George-Ann Rosenberg, Washington)

I will increase my birding life list to five. (Kevin Dopart)

No more drunk droning. (Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)

I'm going to plant some azaleas and tulips to provide food for the endangered white-tailed deer. (Nancy Schwalb)

Dang! I'm lonesome. This century, I resolve to get out more. — Gabriel Garcia Márquez, Heaven (Beverly Sharp)

Even if no relatives come to visit, I'll still take the kids into town to see the Museum of God's Natural Creatures and the National Gallery of Pornography, Blasphemy and Heretical Idolatry. (Frank Mann, Washington)

I vow to try six new ways to serve cockroach loaf, so we can have a different meal every day of the week. (Dayna Fellows, Bethesda)

I will suggest to the Treasury that it's really, really time to remove the penny from circulation. (David Kleinbard, Mamaroneck, N.Y.)

I'm going to be first in line when the D.C. streetcar route opens later this year. (Roy Ashley, Washington; Bill Lieberman, Ellicott City; Lee Mayer, Washington)

I resolve to commit the required number of criminal offenses so I can run successfully for the D.C. Council from Ward 8. — Marion Barry VI (Nan Reiner)

I vow to continue my great-grandfather's valiant efforts to repeal Obamacare. — Rep. Skippy Boeh-ner (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village)

This year, I resolve to eat only Diet Soylent Green. (Nan Reiner)

I resolve to exercise my First Amendment rights vigorously enough to be the winning bidder in at least 10 congressional eAuctions next year. (Mark Raffman, Reston)

This year I will not complain that we still don't have flying cars. (Bill Landau, Potomac, a First Offender; Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase)

I'm going to enact the next phase of our national push for technological superiority by issuing a Walkman to each North Korean citizen. — Kim Jung Umpteen (Michael Greene, Richmond)

Having finally wearied of disguise, I resume my own identity to tell

New contest for Week 1110: The mama of all humor

"Pope's momma so fat the bathroom scale just said 'High Mass.'"

"Pope's momma so dumb she asked for a papal bull at Sizzler."

"Pope's momma so fat they give her a poker chip instead of a Communion wafer."

Joking for a moment in a much more serious context last month, Pope Francis let it be known that "if someone says a curse word against my mother, he can expect a punch." Which immediately prompted the duo of Tom Scocca and Joe MacLeod to pen "A Selection of Jokes About the Pope's Momma" — including those above — on Gawker.

The list was brought to the attention of the Empress by one of Scocca's biggest fans: another Scocca, Tom's brother Dave. And Dave also had an idea, one that taps into a latter-day Invite tradition: **This week: Write a [Someone's] Mama joke for some well-known figure, past or present, real or fictional.** ("Mama" is The Post's usual spelling, so that's what we'll use.)

Winner gets the Inkin' Memorial, the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a festively painted Latin American-style clay statue depicting a troubled-looking man — understandably troubled-looking, since he's (a) straddling the top of a giant cactus, and (b) looking down at three polka-dotted dogs climbing the cactus after him. Donated by Cheryl Davis.

Other runners-up win their choice of a yearned-for Loser Mug or the ardently desired "Whole Fools" Grossery 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 or, if you were born in the 19th century, fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Monday, Feb. 16; results published March 8 (online March 5). You may submit up to 25 entries per contest. Include "Week 1110" 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. The headline for this week's results is by Chris Doyle; the honorable-mentions subhead is by Jeff Contompasis. Join the lively 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.

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.



PAT MYERS

You wouldn't look too thrilled either if you were straddling a cactus and had backward-Dalmatians coming after you.

everyone where the dang thing is. — J. Ponce de Leon (Dave Prevar, Annapolis)

Once again I resolve to use the Orgasmatron only once a day. (Jeff Shirley; Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn)

I vow to start taking better care of myself — I really don't want to look 150 at 120. (George-Ann Rosenberg)

I will save enough money to get my spare head out of the pawnshop. (Steve Honley, Washington)

I vow to lose that last 50 and get back to my college weight of 425. (Drew Bennett, West Plains, Mo.)

I resolve to complete my definitive biography of the first president of the New Republic of Texas, Ted

Cruz. (Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.; Rob Cohen, Potomac)

I resolve to pillage neighboring walled compounds only if my own tribe dines on dust, or if I'm bored. (Lawrence McGuire, Waldorf)

I will follow Microsoft's security recommendation and change my password every three minutes. (Jeff Hazle, Woodbridge)

I resolve to stop playing Candy Crush after I beat level 2115. (Jeff Covell, Arlington)

We resolve to conduct next year's presidential campaign with all the dignity our ancestors would expect. — W.J. Clinton III and G. Bush XI (Mark Raffman)

I resolve to stop marrying heads that are too young for me. — the reanimated head of Larry King (Melissa Balmain)

Okay, this is the year when I'll buy one of those smartphone things. (Howard Walderman, Columbia)

I'm definitely going to redeem my unused PostPoints. (Roy Ashley)

I will continue to remain dead. — Francisco Franco (Robyn Carlson, Keyser, W.Va.)

I resolve to stop telling those hurtful and denigrating "Yo Clone" jokes. (Beverly Sharp)

And Last: I'm going to try to get as much Style Invitational electrophoretic display material as Kevin Dopart IV. (George-Ann Rosenberg)

Still running — deadline Monday: Our contest for bogus Washington trivia. See bit.ly/invite1109.

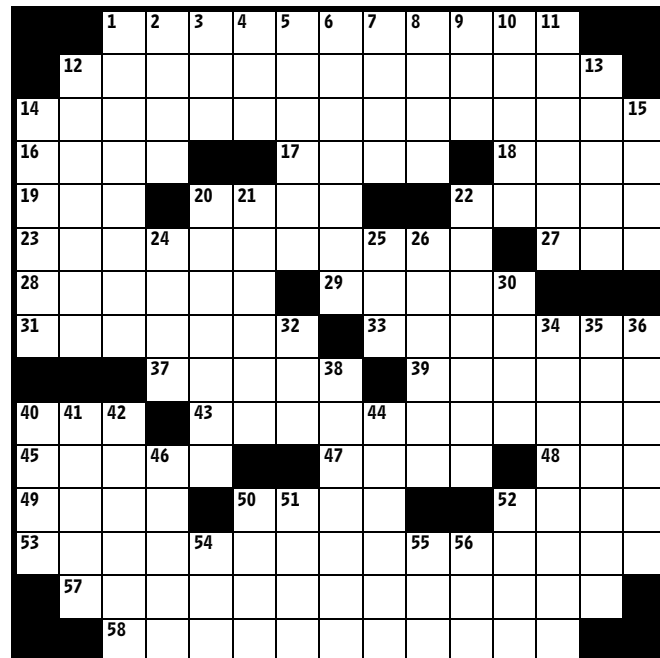
POST PUZZLER

No. 253

BY DOUG PETERSON EDITED BY PETER GORDON • FIREBALLCROSSWORDS.COM

- ACROSS**
1 Genetically modified tomatoes, say
12 Jenna or Barbara Bush, e.g.
14 "Nice try"
16 Julianne's "Nine Months" co-star
17 Set piece
18 Old roadside name
19 Digital syst. that originated in the 19th century
20 Blunt hit
22 Not at all curious
23 Pyramid builder
27 Gp. headquartered in Ramallah
28 Hamper
29 End of drive time, typically
31 Labor day proclamation?
33 Emily of TV's "Revenge"
- 37** Winner of three consecutive French Opens
39 Holiday celebrated by music fans
40 Swell
43 Honeycomb home
45 King Hussein International Airport city
47 1947 film noir about a counterfeiting ring
48 Didn't deny
49 "How ___!"
50 Old casino card game
52 Hammock holder
53 Bats
57 Some robocalls
58 Cultivated nature
- DOWN**
1 Bistro delicacy
2 Far from deliberate
3 Got down
4 Its motto is "Equality before the law": Abbr.

- 5** Officer in "West Side Story"
6 Petition
7 Inverse of giga-
8 Turn preceder in Texas hold 'em
9 Letters for some securities
10 Bactine targets, slangily
11 Spades, say
12 Source of immunity
13 Country descriptor, sometimes
14 Title character in a "Happy Days" spinoff
15 ___ Minis (Hershey's offering)
- 20** Area named for its shape and location
21 Copa Mundial cry
22 Like Titania and Oberon, astronomically
24 Touchdown stats
25 Patel of "The Newsroom"
26 Provide power to
30 Mid-12th-century date
32 "Get ___ Ya-Ya's Out!" (Rolling Stones album)
34 Concession speech deliverers
35 Octet on the eighth day of Christmas
36 River that flows into Winyah Bay
- 38** Stable charge
40 Stock holder
41 Marine shades
42 Reprimand to a biter
44 Unlikely to judge
46 Street with the Brass Note Walk of Fame
50 Checker's concern, maybe
51 Cognac confidante
52 ___ Stone (signature on the Declaration of Independence)
54 "Tis no ___ for a man to labour in his vocation": Falstaff
55 UPS delivery
56 Really move



Answer to last week, No. 252



HOROSCOPE

BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY | FEB. 8: This year you have a lot going for you, and you'll be able to do more of what you want. You let go of the past and free up. Greet the unexpected with a smile, as you typically gain in these situations. If you are single, the potential for meeting someone of importance is high through summer. Be open and enjoy getting to know this person. If you are attached, the two of you act like new lovers. Others enjoy seeing you interact, as you remind them of how a couple can relate with ease.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
 Allow your creativity to flourish, even if you have to change plans to make something work. Let others voice their concerns about what is going on. Say yes to an invitation.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
 Pace yourself, and you'll accomplish a lot. You may be surprised by everything that is going on. You'll gain insight if you remain open.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
 A friend may set off a rally of fun and easy laughter. A loved one might feel threatened by what is going on. Make a point of bringing this person into the moment.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
 Be a homebody, if that makes you happy. You might want to meet up with family members for

a late brunch or early dinner. Catching up on everyone's news may keep you busy.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
 Start your day in the most organized way possible. Make all your calls in the morning, and try to contact a friend whom you rarely have time to speak with. Make a point of getting some exercise.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
 Be careful when handling funds. A loved one will be difficult until you make enough time for him or her. Your creativity will allow greater give-and-take.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
 Today you are a force that simply can't be stopped. Understand that you can't make someone reveal what he or she is thinking. A friend proves to be lucky for you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
 Understand what is expected of you if you go to a certain event. Make it okay to stay close to home and not push so hard. Tonight: Hang out, but only if you want to.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
 Even if you are motivated, you'll still get an extra push from a loved one or friends. You will enjoy yourself at a certain event far more than you thought possible.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
 You might be surprised by what a younger person does as he or she tries to emulate you. You will delight in seeing a key friend or loved one open up and no longer be so tense.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
 Be direct in how you handle a trip that involves getting together with a special person. The other party needs to know how much you care. Listen to feedback.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
 A discussion about an investment might be more significant than you realize. Understand where everyone else is coming from. Stay on top of what is occurring.
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Greedy offspring need a talking-to

Ask Amy

AMY DICKINSON

Dear Amy: My older brother recently passed away. Among the assets he left was a life insurance policy that names our son (age 45) and daughter (age 42) as equal beneficiaries.

Our son and daughter were unaware of this policy until I discovered it among his papers. The policy was purchased with a single premium of \$40,000, purchased from his savings, which at the date of policy issue was close to his annual salary. My brother was single, with no children, and was not close with our children, nor did our children reach out to him very often. Most interaction was at family holiday gatherings a few times each year.

The benefit payable to each will be approximately \$36,000. When I advised our children of this unexpected windfall, the first response from each was, "How much am I getting?" I was expecting to hear something like, "I appreciate the generosity of my uncle for leaving me this money. To honor his memory I will use it wisely."

It was very disappointing and hurtful to me that neither one had the decency to make a

statement of appreciation before the greed kicked in.

Am I correct in feeling disappointed by my children's failure to express simple appreciation for their uncle's generosity? If you agree, how do you suggest I let each one know of my disappointment? I do not want to create any hard feelings, but I want to make it clear I expected better from two intelligent, educated people.

Disappointed and Confused

Surely you don't need me to confirm that this episode is, in fact, disappointing.

You raised these people. I suggest you give them the full benefit of your honest reaction to their behavior. Your worry about creating any "hard feelings" is a sign that you are more fearful of upsetting them than you are willing to be an honest parent. This attitude on your part contributes to their attitudes now. Sometimes hard truths cause hard feelings. So be it.

If you decide to be honest with your offspring, do so knowing that your honesty may not have any impact on their behavior. Once the check clears, they will likely move on, willfully oblivious. But maybe, just maybe, it will make them think. And it's

never too late for that.

Dear Amy: I gave my girlfriend \$250 for her birthday. She used it to have her hair done.

When she got home, she didn't like the color. She is going back this weekend. It probably won't be free, so who should pay?

Darryl

You gave your girlfriend a gift, not a colorfast guarantee. She should negotiate a fix with the salon. For that amount of money, I'd assume they would fix it. If not, she should pony up.

Dear Amy: "Plan B Grab Bag" described holiday gift-giving in which each adult basically gave him- or herself a wrapped gift (according to a set price limit) and unwrapped the gift in the presence of others, explaining why it was chosen.

You asked for reader reaction to this idea. I like it!

Reader

Others do, too.

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