

DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

The Pollyannals: Spinning bad news into good

BY PAT MYERS

In Week 1114, we asked for headlines that put “an optimistic perspective on some otherwise not-so-promising news” so it could fit in with the positive, inspirational articles featured in The Post’s e-mail newsletter the Optimist. We welcomed headlines from the past, present or future and got all three. The online version of the Invite, at bit.ly/invite1118, contains links to explain some of the references.

4th place
After Monster Storms Hit Vanuatu, 32 More People Know Where Vanuatu Is (Kathleen DeBold, Burtonsville)

3rd place
 1793: **How to stop head lice from spreading to the rest of the body: Marie Antoinette learns one quick trick** (Pie Snelson, Silver Spring)

2nd place and the candy-pooing leprechaun:
Adorable Hamster Survives Earthquake That Killed Thousands (Robert Schechter, Dix Hills, N.Y.)

And the winner of the Inkin’ Memorial
Milk Cartons Are Beautified With Youthful Portraits (Mark Raffman, Reston)

The floptimists:
Honorable mentions

A New Foreign ‘Pen Pal’ for 47 Senate Republicans (Jeff Shirley, Richmond)

Rising Income Gap Reduces Number of 1-Percenters to 0.5 Percent (Mark Raffman)

As RadioShack Goes Out of Business, Look for Deep Discounts on All Pong Games (Roy Ashley, Washington)

American Inventiveness: Four in 10 People Find Clever Ways to Live on Scant Resources (George-Ann Rosenberg, Washington)

Boko Haram Moves Girls Out of Poverty (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

O’Reilly, Williams Unhurt as Bombs Explode in Ukraine, Syria, Yemen (Robert Schechter)

D.C. Rabbi Proves That ‘Liberal-Arts’ Types Can Be Tech-Savvy, Too (Mark Raffman)

Record Number of Families Spotted at Disneyland (Kevin Dopart)

Get Ready for Swimsuit Weather with Miracle Sub-Saharan Diet (Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)

Falling Tree Unites Man With Great-Grandmother He Never Knew (Jon Gearhart, Des Moines)

Florida Bans ‘Climate Change’; Key West Now Safe From Flooding (Bird Waring, Larchmont, N.Y.)

You might be selected to get line-by-line personalized tax advice about your 2013 return (Pam Sweeney, Burlington, Mass.)

Town of Mariupol Hosts Russian Army Reunion (Warren Tanabe, Annapolis)

Over Past Year, Secret Service Made White House More Inviting to Visitors (Kevin Dopart)

Metro Riders Celebrate Less Crowded Trains With New ‘Survival of the Fittest’ Program (Nan Reiner, Alexandria)

Fat, Homely Northern White Rhino Soon to Cease Being an Eyesore (Jeff Shirley)

NSA Noted as a Leader in Internet-Based Learning (Warren Tanabe)

Women in Government: ‘Joe Biden Has Our Backs’ (Kevin Dopart)

Climbers Fertilize Mount Everest (Pam Sweeney)

Utah Aiming Not to Use Lethal-Injection Drugs (Kevin Dopart)

Happy headlines from the past — and future

1865: **‘Our American Cousin’ Knocks ‘em Dead at Ford’s** (James W. Hertsch III, Alexandria, a First Offender)

1961: **Berlin’s New Wall Offers Miles of Fresh ‘Canvas’ to Street Artists** (Mike Gips, Bethesda)

1937: **Sturdy N.J. Mooring Tower**



BOB STAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Breed ‘em and weep: Week 1118, our foal classic

Tradesman x Hold My Purse = Jenner Bender
Mubtaahij x Easy to Say = Easy for YOU to Say
Mr. Z x Vandalize = Cut It Out, Zorro
Ready Get Set x Punctuate = Ready, Get Set . . .

Let’s sound the Loseaphone, the official Style Invitational bugle — it’s Post time: It’s the 21st annual running of The Style Invitational’s horse name “breeding” contest (not counting its spinoffs), which always draws thousands of entries in competition for a bobblehead, a \$4 mug, a flimsy bag or a paper-thin magnet that hundreds of entrants will fail to win. On the other hand, while the Kentucky Derby charges owners at least \$50,000 to walk a colt or filly into the starting gate, we’ll let you in for the price of a double-spaced e-mail. **Below is a list of 100 of the more than 400 racehorses nominated for this year’s Triple Crown events; your job is to “breed” any two of them and name the “foal” to reflect both names, as in the examples above.** No, it doesn’t matter that almost all of the horses in the list are male; this isn’t Indiana, for cryin’ out loud. **A name may not exceed 18 characters including spaces, as in the real racehorse world, but one or more of the characters may be punctuation marks or numerals.** You may run words together to make the name fit if it’s simply hilarious, but the name still should be easy to read. **Make sure to spell the original horse name correctly in your entry,** or the Empress might not find it as she clicks her search button for the progeny of each horse on the list. As always, you may send as many as 25 entries, and they can all be on the same e-mail; in fact, the E would like that.

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|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Acceptance | Easy to Say | Mr. Z |
| Action Hero | El Kabeir | Mubtaahij |
| American Pharaoh | Equilibrium | My Point Exactly |
| Apollo Eleven | Escalate | Nasa |
| Armored Car | Fantasy Pain | No Problem |
| Baloney Mike | Far From Over | Ocho Ocho Ocho |
| Battle of Marathon | Far Right | Overcontrol |
| Because I’m Happy | Firing Line | Pain and Misery |
| Big Ben | Flashy Jewel | Prospect Park |
| Black Lab | Frat Boy | Puca |
| Blame Jim | Frosted | Punctuate |
| Bold Papa | Gangster | Pure Excitement |
| Bolo | Giant Story | Quality Bird |
| Bourbon | Great Stuff | Ready Get Set |
| Commander | Harmonic | Richard the Great |
| Calculator | Help From Heaven | Royal Squeeze |
| California Coast | Hero of Humor | Scamp |
| Carpe Diem | Hold My Purse | Shaken Not Stirred |
| Changing Direction | How You | Skill Not Luck |
| Classy Class | Ideal | Squeegee |
| Cold Spice | In the Pocket | Super Surfer |
| Colonel Fish | International Star | Take Charge Brandi |
| Comfort | Itsaknockout | Texas Red |
| Condo Commando | Just Kidding | The Man |
| Crafted | Kid Zip | Tough Customer |
| Cross the Line | Killingit | Tradesman |
| Danny Boy | Kiss the Road | Ultra Sharp |
| Daredevil | Leave the Light On | Upstart |
| Data Driven | Letuspray | Vandalize |
| Defined | March | Will Did It |
| Dirt Monster | Mighty Mousse | Willing to Travel |
| Dortmund | Moon River | Wisecracker |
| Dubai Sky | Mr. Jordan | Your Thoughts |
| Eagle | | Zip N Bayou |

These 100 horses are among this year’s more than 400 Triple Crown nominees on a list published by BloodHorse.com.

Winner gets the Inkin’ Memorial, the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a genuine owl pellet, a blob of stuff that an owl coughed up after snarfing down a baby bird or little mouse. Pull at it with tweezers and you can find bits of bones and feathers and sundry other ex-animal parts. Donated by Mike Creveling. 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, April 13; results published May 3, on Derby Weekend (online April 30). You may submit up to 25 entries per contest. Include “Week 1118” 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 “Pollyannals” headline is by Tom Witte; the honorable-mentions subhead was submitted separately by Beverley Sharp, Dave Prevar and Jeff Shirley. 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.

Withstands Blow From Dirigible (Jeff Shirley)

Distant Past: **Boat Family Survives 40-Day Flood by Eating Griffls, Unicorns** (Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.)

Distant (?) Future: **Robotic Overlords Acquiesce to Our**

Demands: Friday’s Nutro-Goo Injections Now to Be Pizza-Flavored (John Kammer, South Riding)

Still running — deadline Monday night, April 6: our encore song parody contest. See bit.ly/invite1117.

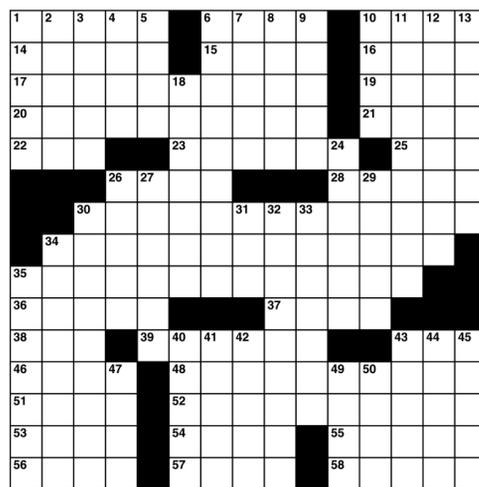
SUNDAY CHALLENGE

Today we launch a new Sunday Arts&Style puzzle, the Sunday Challenge from CrosSynergy, our daily crossword supplier. Fans of the former Post Puzzler can check out editor Peter Gordon’s brain-teasers at his Web site, www.fireballcrosswords.com.

BY BOB KLAHN

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|--|---|---|---|---|
| ACROSS | 34 1957 Ray Bradbury title that serves as a metaphor for packing all the joys of summer into a single bottle | 56 Stress test tests | 9 Graphic beginning | 33 Obtain without effort |
| 1 Gorillas | 35 Chimera-like | 57 Digest digests | 10 Longabaugh’s Place | 34 Scale whose pitches can be obtained using a chain of six perfect fifths |
| 6 Trim | 36 Grade made in the shade | 58 “Lost Generation” coiner | 11 Fly down the road | 35 Showcase |
| 10 Pound impounded at Pisa | 37 Determined | DOWN | 12 First African-American U.S. poet laureate | 40 Northern |
| 14 Betty in “Nurse Betty” | 38 Took advantage of the spread | 1 Fighting finish | 13 Classic so-long song | 41 Rudimentary |
| 15 Edward G.’s “Little Caesar” gangster | 39 “Last of the Red-Hot Mamas” nanny | 2 Dr. Jekyll’s first name | 18 Egg examiner | 42 Japanese colony from 1910 until 1945 |
| 16 Grind | 40 Out of bounds | 3 Ill-deserved | 24 Doubly good, in a way | 43 “Mostly Ghostly” series author |
| 17 Secret | 41 Complex part? | 4 Gambling tips? | 26 Chief Justice in the Dred Scott case | 44 De Niro co-star in three Scorsese films |
| 19 Bike basket barker | 42 Rigid austerity | 5 Rockefeller Center muralist | 27 Dracula’s mother-in-law? | 45 Spot market pros |
| 20 Barnacle, e.g. | 43 Twist, essentially | 6 ___ cracking (form of asphalt pavement distress) | 29 Fleeting flash | 47 Short yardsticks |
| 21 “The Joy Luck Club” | 44 Whence Sagan’s dragons | 7 Captivate | 30 Sagacious | 49 Mahjong suit |
| 22 There’s one on a one | 45 Whence Sagan’s dragons | 8 Sound maker | 31 Purpose, the fifth of the seven principles of Kwanzaa | 50 Approve, briefly |
| 23 Putting-off words that are often off-putting | 46 They’re out on a limb | | | |
| 25 “Cold Mountain” heroine | 47 Out of bounds | | | |
| 26 Broadway’s barbaric barber | 48 Complex part? | | | |
| 28 Cool place to live | 49 Rigid austerity | | | |
| 30 1984 Streep-De Niro romance | 50 Whence Sagan’s dragons | | | |
| | 51 Whence Sagan’s dragons | | | |
| | 52 Whence Sagan’s dragons | | | |
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| | 56 Whence Sagan’s dragons | | | |
| | 57 Whence Sagan’s dragons | | | |
| | 58 Whence Sagan’s dragons | | | |

Answer to last week, No. 260



HOROSCOPE

BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY | APRIL 5: This year you demonstrate the vitality and sharpness that your sign is known for. You tend to be idealistic. Be more understanding of others. You will be more contemplative than you’ve been in the past. If you are single, you might meet someone who makes you daydream. Take your time dating this person to be sure he or she is right for you. If you are attached, the two of you often disagree. Agree to disagree on various topics to avoid making a big deal out of your differences.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
 Loved ones surround you. One person will request some extra time with you. Make it your pleasure, but schedule the visit for later in the day.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
 Remember, Sunday is a day of rest. You easily may find your temper rising, so schedule the perfect day for you, and make sure to spend time with an adored group of friends.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
 You’ll sparkle in the morning, and others will respond accordingly. A loved one might take offense if he or she doesn’t get enough time with you.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
 Make plans to join a loved one for a late brunch and a movie. You might find that a partner or

associate feels left out. You might be surprised by the firework display that results.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
 Speak your mind, and consider a different outlook. Trust in your ability to bring others over to your way of thinking.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
 Even if you just decide to run out the door for breakfast, make sure you know where you stand financially. Use this morning and early evening to work on your budget.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
 Be spontaneous, and go for what you want. A loved one might be equally impulsive. Hopefully your paths are not on a collision course! Dote on a child or loved one in the late afternoon.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
 Sleep in as late as you want, or dedicate your morning to a special activity. Make plans for later in the day. For your sign, relaxation is very important to your well-being.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
 Use the morning to touch base with various people at a distance whom you don’t get to see often. You might hear news that will make you rethink a decision. Take the afternoon just for you, whether you need time to go shopping or do your taxes.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
 Keep reaching out to someone at a distance whom you care about. This person is important to your well-being. Be careful about giving flak to someone you live with.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
 Tap into your imagination when deciding what to do. You might decide to head out for a day trip. If so, get out of town ASAP. Expect someone to put in a demand at the last minute.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
 Make special time for a loved one. Do what this person wants, and watch as he or she lights up. Stay on top of your finances.

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Boyfriend’s family may be dealbreaker

Ask Amy

AMY DICKINSON

Dear Amy: I have been with a wonderful man for more than four years and have a healthy relationship with him. Despite our happiness together, I am contemplating whether to leave him because of his family.

They are racist and rude. He is white and I’m Middle Eastern. They have made racist comments to me, called me foul names, and his mother even telephoned me to say she wishes and prays that her son breaks up with me.

He has tried talking to them but at this point it’s so awkward; he just wants me to get over it. They are paying for his living expenses while he is in school, so he feels he owes them, and they’re “the good guys” now.

I don’t know if I can forgive them after four years of torture. I try to be polite and say nothing, but secretly I want to scream and walk out.

Should I forgive and forget? I feel like I have to choose between a good guy with a horrible family or nothing at all.

Sad

I vote for screaming and walking. Here’s why: They are his family. They are also his blank check. In not expecting and/or demanding respectful treatment of his partner, he is actually aligning with them — demonstrated by his choice to tolerate their disrespect in exchange for support.

Your guy has “tried talking to them” when he should have Shut. It. Down.

His loyalty is to his family first; you get whatever is left. This might be almost understandable or forgivable if not for the fact that he somehow expects you to get over something that is not resolved.

I suggest you answer his mother’s prayers and find someone who comes from a better family.

Dear Amy: Over time I have received repeated invitations for dinner, a play, a special event, etc., from acquaintances whose company and activities I don’t enjoy.

If I meet them on the street or in the neighborhood, a few minutes of pleasant conversation is fine. Otherwise I find them boring,

high-pressure and totally involved in things I don’t care about or want to spend my time on.

If I accept invitations, I feel an obligation to reciprocate, which is annoying.

I don’t enjoy their interests (opera, travel, expensive trips, constant socializing and their high-octane chatter) or company, so is it reasonable just to say, “That’s not something I really enjoy and need to pass up at this time. But thank you for thinking of me?”

It seems harsh but I am tired of making lame excuses that serve no purpose long term.

Dreading Those Invitations

Your suggested wording is so much less harsh than your estimation of these people that I’d say go for it.

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

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