DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

Check your loco listings: TV spinoffs from Week 1127

BY PAT MYERS

In Week 1127 we asked you to think of a spinoff of a real TV series, past or present, and to describe the result, or include a snippet of the script. One zinger, by Bird Waring of Larchmont, N.Y., lacked a description but really didn't need it: **"The Cosby Show: SVU."**

4th place

House of Cardinals: After the mysterious demise of his predecessor, Pope Francis II takes control of the Vatican. (Mark Raffman, Reston)

3rd place

Original: "Walker, Texas Ranger"; Spinoff: **Pitcher, Houston Astro:** Chuck Norris heads farther south to become a crime-fighting major leaguer. He also catches his own pitches and ejects umpires from games. (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

2nd place and the pregnant-grandma salt and pepper shakers:

Sesame Towne Centre: Kermit buys the block and converts it to a vibrant retail/residential community, finding that it's easy making green. (Rob Cohen, Potomac)

And the winner of the Inkin' Memorial

Game of Throne 2016:
Lindsey Graham: "We must conquer the Seven Kingdoms — no, let's make it eight!"
Rand Paul: "Conquest is for fools, I say! And I will keep on saying . . ."
Hillary Clinton: "I shall decide later. First, bring me your gold." (Mark Raffman)

Teleflubbies: Honorable mentions

19 Counts and Kidding: Legal analysts trade quips about charges that might be brought against Josh Duggar and his parents. (Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.)

Original: "That Girl"; spinoff: **Phat Girl:** Never comfortable growing up in rural Montana, Rachel Dolezal moves to the Big City to live out her dream of being a Notable Black Person. (Doug Frank, Crosby, Tex.)

ERR: The drama moves down the hallway at County General to the nightmarish world of Medical Billing. (Jason Russo, Annandale)

Crib Your Enthusiasm: Larry David remarries and has a kid, and guess what — the baby looks just like him, and he can talk! "Have you noticed that the left one hangs a little lower than the right? It's easier for me to reach — so would you mind if we just stick with that one?" (Mark Raffman)

"Open Sesame" Street: Chinese tykes learn how to hack Internet passwords and are taught about spyware by the Cookies Monster. (Bruce Carlson, Alexandria)

Original: "The Beverly Hillbillies"; spinoff: **Cement Pondering:** Shrewdly gauging the 90210 market, Jethro becomes a New Age spiritual adviser. (Kevin Dopart)

House of Lards: Prequel historical fiction that chronicles the rise to power of Tip O'Neill. (Edward Gordon, Austin)

Mad Lib Men: Don (last name) makes (noun)s for large companies in the (decade number)s. He drinks a lot of (liquid) and smokes (noun)s . He sleeps with (number)s of (gender option)s. (Art Grinath, Takoma Park)

The Old and the Restful:
Grandpa: "I love you."
Grandma: "LINE?" (Dave Ferry, Purvis, Miss.)

The Big Bang Hypothesis: The prequel series follows the characters in their high school years. And you thought they were awkward now! (Danielle Nowlin, Fairfax Station)

Harpy Days: Chachi no longer loves Joanie. (John Kammer, South Riding)

Survivor: Cooperation: Participants face challenges in a harsh environment and are rewarded for working together rather than backstabbing each other. (Unsold pilot.) (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn)

Survivor: Gilligan's Island:
Skipper: Gilligan, little buddy, it looks like you're getting voted off the island.
Gilligan: Not if Mrs. Howell votes for Mr. Howell. [Laugh track: polite chuckle.]
Thurston Howell III: You'd never do such a thing, would you, Lovey? [Beat.]
[Laugh track: Big laugh, end-of-scene applause.] (Warren Tanabe, Annapolis)

Original: "Booknotes"; spinoff: **Pop-Up Book Notes**: The great literary minds of our day discuss old-school interactive stories.
Brian Lamb: "Tonight we explore the deeper significance of 'Tyra the Tyrannosaur Hunts Up Lunch.' "
Philip Roth: "I really enjoyed the pull thingy on Page 2 that makes the dinosaur's mouth open."
Donna Tartt: "And the skinny lizard that you pull the tab and it makes a fan? That was neat."
Don DeLillo: "Aren't we missing the greater significance of the sliding window that shows the effect of Tyra's bite on, on, the one with three horns?"
Tartt: "Triceratops."
Roth: "Wasn't that a stegosaurus?" (Lawrence McGuire, Waldorf)

Original: "Jeopardy!" Spinoff: Jeopardy. With new host Stephen Wright. (Rob Huffman, Fredericksburg)

Dancing With the D-list: Audience members who can identify any of the "stars" are invited to try out for the next season, "Dancing With the E-list." (Roger Dalrymple, Gettysburg, Pa.)

MythTrusters:
Excitable Guy: Is it true that a broken mirror causes seven years of bad luck?
Calm Guy: I saw a YouTube video where somebody broke a mirror and then had 7 years of bad luck.
Excitable Guy: Good enough for me. (Art Grinath)

Leave IT to Beaver: Aging, embittered Vietnam vet Theodore Cleaver struggles with PTSD while working a tech support help desk. (Jeff Contompasis)

I Love Lucy's Lacies. Now it can be told . . .
Lucy: "Ricky, do you know why my bras and undies are all stretched out of shape?"
Ricky: "I guess I got some 'splaining to do . . ."
Lucy: "Waaaaaaah!" (Mark Raffman)

Still running — deadline Monday night, July 6: Our contest for wordplays on foreign terms. See bit.ly/invite1130.

BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

New contest for Week 1131: One man's trash

Asphalt roof shingles
Plastic hockey rink
Carpet tiles
Purple linen napkins
Odor-eater fabric
Plastic ballot boxes
Cargo parachutes
10-milliliter glass vials
Ski lift cable
Climbing rope
Bowling alley wood
Fire hose
Rubber sheets
Escalator handrail
Mineral oil
Street sweeper brushes
Synthetic turf

The Empress hates to do away with stuff until it's utterly used up, even if it's not her own — Losers sometimes receive their runner-up prizes in boxes and envelopes fished out of newsroom wastebaskets. So she was tickled to see the cool stuff the Royal Consort showed her on RepurposedMaterialsInc.com, one of several sites that sell surplus industrial objects with the hope that some imaginative, enterprising person with a very big truck could put them to a better use than to build up a landfill.

No, the Royal Consort didn't want the Empress to install a plastic hockey rink in the front yard (cool as that might be); he was just suggesting a contest. **This week: Suggest a humorous way to reuse one or more of the items listed above — or anything else advertised on RepurposedMaterialsInc.com** (click on "Products"). Writing a bit about your idea might enhance the humor, if you are a funny writer. Don't worry if it says "Out of Stock," "only one left," etc.; just assume there's an unlimited supply. You have to outdo reality, though; it seems the rotating street-sweeping brushes are the beloved back scratchers of itchy cows and pigs.

Winner gets the Inkin' Memorial, the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a, uhh, picturesque little ceramic sculpture of an outhouse, complete with a little ceramic door that swings open to reveal a little ceramic embarrassed person sitting there. A thrift shop discovery by Pie Snelson — ready to be repurposed.

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 night, July 13; results published Aug. 2 (online July 30). You may submit up to 25 entries per contest. Include "Week 1131" 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 Beverley Sharp. 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/THE WASHINGTON POST

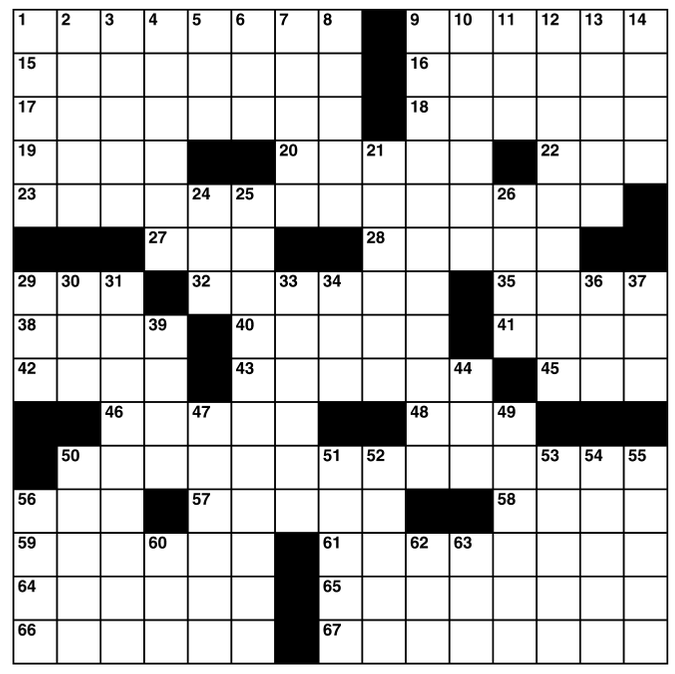
For our No. 2 winner this week, this lovely outhouse sculpture.

POST PUZZLER

BY TONY ORBACH © 2015 CROSSYNERGY SYNDICATE LLC

ACROSS
1 Longshoreman's locale
9 Studio industry
15 Finishes a round, say
16 Syrup sources
17 Was
18 Chaney Jr. co-star in "Frankenstein Meets the Wolf Man"
19 Drop-down thing
20 Shore time, perhaps
22 Meet unit
23 1947 film with Deborah Kerr and Jean Simmons set in a converted Himalayan seraglio
27 Andalusian aunt
28 Still curing
29 Closest pal, initially
32 Role for Tommy Lee Jones opposite Will Smith
35 Sign word often accompanied by a silhouette
38 Wistful word
40 Adrien of cosmetics
41 Vacillate
42 Poacher's target in Africa
43 Shook up
45 Nexus
46 Turin ta-tas
48 Macs run it
50 Gaga fans
56 One of a pair of accessories in a Princess Leia costume
57 Liturgical source
58 Melville adventure
59 Amerindian of northeastern South America
61 Connected cruiser
64 Climactic part, often
65 Most inhumane
66 "Morning Train (Nine to Five)" singer Easton
67 Princess parts

DOWN
1 Thing that points downward for a dog
2 Golf club socket
3 Colleague of Clarence
4 Take away
5 German direction
6 Sweet talk
7 Coleridge's "_____ Khan"
8 Draft worker
9 Obsession promoter
10 Halfhearted agreement
11 Equine elder
12 Generational development
13 Badlands flattops
14 Take ____ (try some)
21 More severe
24 Soul maker
25 One of the world's hottest chili peppers (over 900 times hotter than Tabasco sauce), aka "ghost pepper"
26 "I'm bringing ____ back" (Justin Timberlake lyric)
29 Ball club
30 Seasonal strain
31 Enthrall
33 Pink Pearl, for one
34 "Piano Jazz" broadcaster
36 School served by the IRT and BMT subway lines
37 Salt
39 Sketch
44 Fashion column list
47 Reach
49 Seats at the bar
50 Gomez's butler
51 "Selma" feature
52 Actress Catherine of "Best in Show"
53 Run the show
54 Comic tribute
55 Classifies
56 Herd sounds
60 2011 Solheim Cup teammate of Inkster and Lincicome
62 Press for past due payments
63 Roadside bomb, for short



Answer to last week

W	E	E	D	S		U	P	O	N		D	A	B	S
A	L	L	O	T		P	A	N	E		E	L	A	L
L	A	W	P	A	R	T	N	E	R		C	A	N	E
S	T	A	Y	B	E	H	I	N	D		O	B	I	E
H	E	Y			D	E	C	O	Y	S		A	S	P
			C	U	B	A			P	A	S	T	E	
		B	A	N	A	N	A	S	F	O	S	T	E	R
	P	A	T	E	N	T	L	E	A	T	H	E	R	
P	A	N	C	A	K	E	B	A	T	T	E	R		
H	I	G	H	S				R	H	Y	S			
I	R	A		E	F	F	A	C	E			M	A	A
D	E	L	I		A	R	C	H	R	I	V	A	L	S
I	D	O	S		L	A	T	E	S	T	A	G	E	S
A	U	R	A		C	U	E	R		E	N	D	U	E
S	P	E	W		O	D	D	S		M	E	A	T	S

HOROSCOPE

BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY | JULY 5: This year you will learn how to control your reactions to events and people. Detachment will help you see situations from a new perspective. If you are single, someone from a distance may walk into your life and steal your heart. If you are attached, the two of you view your finances differently. Consider having separate accounts. As a couple, you might travel to a place that neither of you has been to.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19)*
Your affection for a child or loved one will color your plans. A partner may be touchy or difficult. Follow your instincts when dealing with a temper tantrum. Remain upbeat.

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20)*
A loved one might let you know that he or she has had enough of you being so available to everyone. Take the message as being sincere, and focus on your inner circle.

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20)*
You have a lot of friends, but they often fall to the wayside. Don't forget to call a loved one to catch up on news. In fact, you are likely to visit this person, as you have not seen him or her in a while.

CANCER *(June 21-July 22)*
You might be very direct at this moment and not even be aware of it. Ask yourself if you are angry at someone you are around. The time has come to clear the air.

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22)*
Make plans for a quieter day with a family member or loved one. The two of you will be able to relax, and you will return home feeling refreshed.

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22)*
A close friend wants you to take a break and enjoy the leisurely holiday weekend pace. Make yourself more available.

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22)*
Reach out to someone you care a lot about. In fact, use the earlier part of the day to catch up with friends on the phone and see what they have been doing. Get some exercise.

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21)*
You might want to relax some, but a child or new friend will make it clear that he or she wants your time. Relaxing will look quite different to this person, but make the adjustment.

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21)*
Someone might throw a fit because he or she wants more of your time. In the long run, the smart move will be to indulge this person rather than create drama.

CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19)*
Honor a request from a close relative or neighbor. You might not understand this person's reasoning, but avoid asking questions for now, as he or she may become easily angered.

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18)*
Get past a problem that has been nagging at you. Fortunately, you have enough energy to do all you want and still handle this issue.

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20)*
Get as much R&R as possible. You might be more tired than you expected to be. The pace of the past few days has been hectic.

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Daughter's drinking is out of control

Ask Amy
AMY DICKINSON

Dear Amy: I'm the mother *of a wonderful 27-year-old woman who has everything going for her — looks, intelligence, a great personality and compassion. She's gainfully employed and has many friends.*

During the week she sticks to a strict routine, but on the weekends she often engages in binge drinking. Her friends think she's the life of the party. While drunk, she's lost things, done things she can't remember and injured herself. Since she's always able to recover, she doesn't think she has a problem.

I think she has a HUGE problem, but I don't know what to do about it. Expressing disapproval and concern seems to only have a short-term effect.

She lives far away from us now and we don't want to sever contact with her. Suggestions?

Mom Who's Losing Sleep

Of course you don't want to sever contact with your daughter. Honest, non-judgmental communication is exactly what your relationship needs, even if this produces challenges on both sides.

You should not be afraid to voice your concern, but she is an adult and she is making her own choices. Her behavior has many risks associated with it — and she is experiencing some of these consequences already.

You and your husband could benefit from attending Al-Anon meetings (al-anon.org), to help you to cope with your anxiety and to accept your powerlessness to control her, even if you continue to worry about her.

Dear Amy: Years ago *when I was in my early 30s, I landed a great job with an excellent company. I've been very happy here all this time, except in the past 15 months or so.*

My good friend retired and a young woman in her mid-20s was hired to take her place. When she's in the office, she has all of our co-workers rallying around her, trying to prop her up and help her with every little thing, from using the computer to covering for her many sick days.

Most of the time she's out of the office, claiming some horrible illness or recovery from surgery. My co-workers are nice people but from my vantage point, they are a bunch of suckers and she's laughing at their gullibility while they cover for her.

Recently, my frustration got the better of me and I started complaining about her absences. Someone overheard me and clued her in. I apologized and promised I wouldn't talk about her again, but now it's tense with her and I'm even more unhappy.

This unfortunate breakdown of mine turned me into a "mean girl" and she is the victim. It's so frustrating I don't know how to handle it. I don't really have proof that she's lying about her illnesses; it's just a hunch.

I don't have to deal with her directly and her excuses and absences don't really affect my work. Any suggestions?

(Not Really a) Mean Girl

Your retired friend might be a good person to talk to about this; she knows you and understands the personalities and dynamic at work. I'm also going to suggest a brave and radical option, which has helped many a "mean girl" turn things around: Get to know this co-worker better. Would she be willing to have coffee with you? Who knows, you might see what the fuss is all about. Regardless of the outcome, you will have done everything possible to make this right. I think you will be happier if you do.

Write to Amy Dickinson at askamy@tribpub.com or Ask Amy, Chicago Tribune, TT500, 435 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60611.