

## DIVERSIONS

## THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

## It's a tanka gas: The top TankaWanka news poems

BY PAT MYERS

In **Week 1148** we presented our second annual contest for TankaWanka poems on the news. The TankaWanka — a form the Empress named so nobody could accuse us of doing it wrong — is a variation on tanka, a classic Japanese poetry form. Like tanka, the TW has five lines of 5-7-5-7-7 syllables (like a haiku that forgot to stop), but it also contains at least one rhyme.

## 4th place

## Ben Carson believes Egyptian pyramids were used by biblical Joseph

Carson: Pyramids  
Were for the storage of grain.  
Evidence for this:  
They're sealed against the outside.  
Much like Dr. Carson's brain?  
(Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase, Md.)

## 3rd place

## Coywolf, coyote-wolf hybrid, sees population boom

Wolf, in search of mate,  
Struck out, then said, "You know what?  
Coyotes look great!"  
Fairy tale changes wryly  
When Riding Hood meets Wile E.  
(Beverly Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

## 2nd place and the "Jewjitsu" T-shirt plus Christian-themed jellybeans:

## Nationals lose manager choice over too-low offer

"Bud Black is our guy!  
He can run our pitching staff!"  
But they made a gaffe  
With their offer so mulish—  
Penny-wise and mound-foolish.  
(Perry Beider, Silver Spring)

## And the winner of the Inkin' Memorial

## Google self-driving car pulled over for driving too slowly, impeding traffic

California fuzz  
Stopped a car, and found it was  
Driving by itself.  
Gave a warning, didn't cite.  
Need I say the car was white?  
(Nan Reiner, Boca Raton, Fla.)

## Pro-pain tanka: honorable mentions

## Christian groups protest lack of Christmas symbols on Starbucks cups

Time to get riled up!  
Hang a plain red Starbucks cup  
On the highest bough,  
And have yourself a merry  
Little War on Christmas now.  
(Nan Reiner)

## San Diego SeaWorld ends killer-whale shows but keeps whales

Folks cry: "Free Shamu!"  
SeaWorld has a different view.  
Stubborn, they say no:  
"How could we, in good  
conscience,  
Let eleven killers go?"  
(Beverly Sharp)

## Trump calls Mexican immigrants "rapists"

"Sending their rapists"  
Makes it clear, for goodness' sake,  
That Donald Trump's yen  
Is to be the prez who'll make  
America hate again.  
(Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.)

## Carson's home features a large double portrait

We thought the Donald  
Possessed the biggest ego  
Of them all, but then  
This painting came to seize us:  
It pictures Ben with Jesus.  
(Ward Kay, Vienna, Va.)

## Inclusion in GOP debates depends on latest poll

Poll ranking dictates  
Which of umpteen candidates  
Make the next debates,  
Based on this week's ups and  
downs.  
Open car; reshuffle clowns.  
(Nan Reiner)

## "Star Wars: Episode VII"

I. "The Force Awakens"  
All of geekdom rejoices.  
As we revisit  
A galaxy that's far far,  
Let us hope there's no Jar Jar.  
(Jeff Contompassis, Ashburn, Va.)

## II. "The Force Awakens":

A movie for which we'll queue.  
For Disney, huge sums.  
And in handy Yoda comes  
When verse rhyming try we do.  
(George-Ann Rosenberg,  
Washington)

## Former Russian official found dead in Dupont Circle hotel

Could be very bad  
If you get on outs with Vlad.  
You haf "heart attack."  
This case, upon scrutiny,



## New contest for Week 1151: Oops? You do it again.

Didn't get your paper on July 23? Did you miss the deadline for Week 1105? Did the Empress rob you *again* for Weeks 1120, 1121 and 1122? Stop complaining already — here's your chance to do something about it: our annual retrospective contest. **This week: Enter any Style Invitational contest from Week 1098 through Week 1148, except for Week 1101, last year's do-over.** 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 (exception: the Week 1105 obit poems should still be about people who died in 2014); for contests that ask you to use that week's paper, use Dec. 3-14 of this year. You may submit an entry you've already sent, but remember that it's the same old lady judging them. 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). You can also see all the contests on Loser Elden Carnahan's Master Contest List at [nrars.org](http://nrars.org). After you read the instructions of a contest you want to enter, don't forget to check the results as well (usually four weeks later) to be sure you're not repeating an inking entry.

Winner gets the Inkin' Memorial, the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place, just in time to be several weeks late for Hanukkah, a giant inflatable dreidel, donated by Loser Diane Wah. It's actually sort of round, so if it lands on the wrong side, you can discreetly nudge it to a better letter.

**Other runners-up** win their choice of a yearned-for Loser Mug, the older-model "This Is Your Brain on Mugs" mug or the ardently desired "Whole Fools" Grossery Bag. Honorable mentions get one of our brand-new Loser magnets, "Magnet Dum Laude" or "Falling Jest Short." First Offenders receive a smelly tree-shaped air "freshener" (FirStink for their first ink). Email 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 night, Dec. 14; results published Jan. 3 (online Dec. 31 or maybe 30). You may submit up to 25 entries per contest. Include "Week 1152" in your email 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 is by Danielle Nowlin; the honorable-mentions subhead is by Jeff Shirley. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at [on.fb.me/invdev](http://on.fb.me/invdev). "Like" the Style Invitational Ink of the Day on Facebook at [bit.ly/inkofday](http://bit.ly/inkofday); follow @StyleInvite on Twitter.

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

Looking very Putiny. (Nan Reiner)

## Asian leaders meet

China's Xi Jinping  
And Taiwan's Ma Ying-Jeou met;  
There should be an ad:  
"Spacious meeting room to let —  
The historic Ma-Xi pad."  
(Brendan Beary, Great Mills, Md.)

## Pitcher insists on finishing World Series game, loses it

Matt Harvey, Mets ace,  
Demands, "I'll pitch the ninth  
frame  
For a complete game!"  
Soon the game, Mets fans would  
see,  
Was complete, over, *finis*.  
(Brendan Beary)

## Politicians exploit Paris attacks

Carnage in Paris  
Leaves us sad and dejected  
Except for a few  
Asking the age-old question:  
Can this get me elected?  
(Frank Mann, Washington)

## Water discovered on Mars

Evidence showing

There's liquid water flowing  
On the planet Mars  
Has made scientists zealous —  
And Californians jealous.  
(Jesse Frankovich, Lansing, Mich.)

## "Gum Wall" gets a cleaning

Have you heard the news?  
Seattle has a problem:  
A sticky issue —  
On a wall, not a tissue.  
More gum control laws needed!  
(Andrea Dewhurst, Lynn, Mass., a  
First Offender)

## George H.W. Bush criticizes Cheney, Rumsfeld in memoir

George Bush the first, you  
Paterfamiliosly,  
And biliously,  
Trashed two top aides to Dubya —  
Only now do they trulyba?  
(Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.)

## New baby panda

The National Zoo  
Pulled the new panda handler  
Aside to warn her  
That nobody — NOBODY! —  
Puts Bei Bei in the corner.  
(Chris Doyle)

## Feminist Germaine Greer rants that sex change surgery doesn't make a man a woman\*

So says Germaine Greer:  
"You can lop off your penis,  
And good luck, my dear,  
But, no matter your keenness,  
You're not a woman, I fear."  
(Michael Rolfe, Cape Town, South  
Africa, a First Offender) [\*Greer  
actually used much cruder language in  
her rant]

## D.C. rated the "snobbiest city on the East Coast"

Look — some new website  
Gave D.C. a top-10-ranked  
Snooty ratio!  
San Francisco ranks first, though  
...  
(Left-Coasters. What do THEY  
know?) (Nan Reiner)

**Still running — deadline Monday night, Dec. 7: our contest to rant at a rhymes-with-"glassbowl." See [bit.ly/invite1151](http://bit.ly/invite1151).**



PAT MYERS/THE WASHINGTON POST  
**Be gelty, gelty, gelty with a beach ball-like blow-up dreidel, this week's second prize.**

## SUNDAY CHALLENGE

BY TONY ORBACH © 2015 CROSSYENERGY SYNDICATE LLC

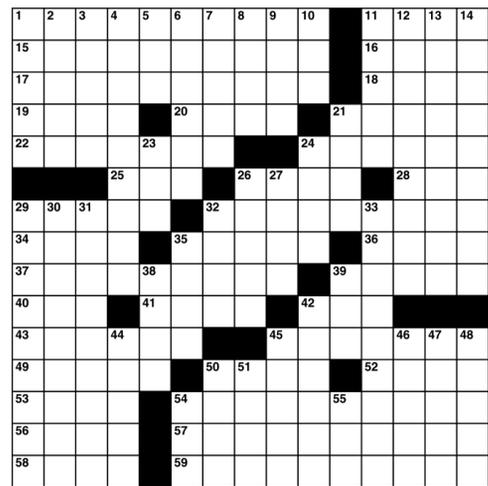
**ACROSS**  
1 Connect with unexpectedly  
11 Borderline word, perhaps  
15 Delusional  
16 South Pacific sequel  
17 One of a pair of brothers who held world heavy-weight championships  
18 Post-nouveau style  
19 Award for Viola Davis for "How to Get Away with Murder"  
20 She, in Sardinia  
21 Netanyahu's successor  
22 Suss, in slang  
24 Chocolatier whose logo is a woman on horseback  
25 Reddi-\_\_\_\_  
26 Take a chorus or two  
28 Cygnet's father  
29 "Midnight at the Oasis" beast  
32 Comedian who played the cook on "Archie Bunker's Place"

**DOWN**  
34 Hydrocarbon suffixes  
35 Share  
36 Without \_\_\_\_  
37 Across all counties  
39 Secret  
40 "If we say we have no \_\_\_\_ we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (L John 1:8)  
41 Pen  
42 \_\_\_\_ matter  
43 Teeming  
45 Mortal  
49 '60s collar style  
50 Sixers' competition  
52 Elation, in Ile-de-France  
53 Smidgen  
54 Where errors can be found  
56 Kempt  
57 Comically undersized prop in "This Is Spinal Tap"  
58 Home to Jack Trice Stadium  
59 Faded by design

**DOWN**  
1 In a mound  
2 "\_\_\_\_ Time" (70s musical)  
3 Walk to be heard  
4 Bane of Beck and Taylor Swift, at awards shows  
5 2002 British Open champion  
6 Prepare for a bout  
7 Kathy Griffin's domain  
8 McKellen and McShane  
9 "(You're) Having My Baby" singer  
10 SLC-based group  
11 Person given a thumbs-down when surf's up

12 Grammy genre for which Levon Helm and Mavis Staples have won awards  
13 Farm-to-table advocates  
14 Didn't recoup, say  
21 "Bam!"  
23 Emulsion component, often  
24 What saying "Yay!" might indicate  
26 Sardonic  
27 2007 movie with the Oscar-winning song "Falling Slowly"  
29 Ignored prophet of Troy  
30 It provides immunity  
31 Word that might precede a change of scenery

32 Sacha Baron Cohen alter ego  
33 Iconic road sign  
35 Crawled, maybe  
38 Neutral tone  
39 Titular Poirot role  
42 Options specialist?  
44 "We have the meats" advertiser  
45 Main thing?  
46 Dilemma feature, idiomatically speaking  
47 Vassal  
48 Gave a sycophantic answer  
50 \_\_\_\_ Field  
51 Years, in Iberia  
54 Dropped stuff?  
55 Leader in a beret



Answer to last week

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

## HOROSCOPE

BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY | DEC. 6:** This year, you have an unusually strong drive to manifest more of what you want. As a result, you will expand your inner circle and meet many new people, which will create even more opportunities. If you are single, you will meet someone who might encourage you to change your status. If you are attached, the two of you enjoy each other's company enormously. Libra can be extremely charming.

## ARIES (March 21-April 19)

You have a big effect on a loved one. You know how to turn this person's world upside down. You might wonder whether to share a special confidence. You are likely to spill the beans today, or perhaps you'll give someone an early Christmas gift.

## TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

You have a lot of plans to make this holiday work for others. Your pace could become quite hectic and demanding. If you need to stop, do. Christmas is not as close as it seems to be. A partner will be highly responsive.

## GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

You might feel invigorated by an interaction with a loved one. Somehow, when you're around this person, you lose your sense of responsibility for a short while. You become more childlike, and anything could happen.

## CANCER (June 21-July 22)

Stay on top of what needs to happen. A meeting in the morning will make you consider the holidays and your responsibility to make them as

close to perfect as possible. Be careful with a difficult person who might try to start a revolution.

## LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

The romantic nature of the holidays flows into your life. If you are attached, you can't seem to find enough mistletoe for you and your sweetie to stand under. If you are single, you'll share eggnog with quite a few interesting people.

## VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

Your more possessive side emerges, especially if you feel that you are not getting the attention you want or that someone is slighting you in some way. Your playfulness causes you to be more concerned with a child or loved one than you typically are.

## LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

You might be on a collision course with a family member, but you'll find a way around it. You have a style about you that appeals to most people and prevents difficult scenes from happening.

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

Continue playing it low-key for a

few days by doing what you want and not necessarily what you should. Your lightness and caring ways trigger others to be somewhat critical and perhaps even demanding. Know when to say "enough."

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

Where you find a friend demanding a lot from you is probably where you want to be, once this person calms down. Your vision of what is possible is very different than the vision of many others. Be aware of the costs of your thinking.

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

Take charge and share your feelings with an important person in your life. You are unlikely to be on the same page, no matter how much you discuss an issue. Pressure builds from the strangest issues; perhaps you should handle them in a different way.

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

Reach out to someone at a distance whom you care a lot about. Your conversation will have a touching tone that draws the two of you even closer together. A friend could play a substantial role in a decision and in your plans.

## PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

You could be at a point where you simply want to relax and enjoy a very special person in your life. Though a call could distract you, this individual knows how to pull you back into his or her thoughts and away from the world.

## Husband making it tough for diabetic

## Ask Amy

AMY DICKINSON

**Dear Amy:** I am in my 60s. I have Type 2 diabetes and am on oral medication.

I have always been very active and try to eat healthfully. I am always battling urges for chocolate and sweets.

The problem is that my husband is constantly buying ice cream, cupcakes, chocolate cakes, candy, etc. He feels that he should not have to be deprived because I have diabetes. I do not eat most of the sweets that he brings into the house, but too frequently I break down.

At that moment, I truly believe that I can take "just a little piece" and then eat the whole thing . . . and more.

I know that I should be the one in control of what I put in my mouth, but sometimes I cannot control the urge. I have spoken to him about this, but it falls on deaf ears. I compare it to an alcoholic who is constantly being teased by a bottle of alcohol on the counter and being told that "you just need more willpower." I know that my future health is

being greatly compromised. Do you have any suggestions?  
*Diabetic*

**Diabetic:** The difference between someone who is addicted to food and someone addicted to alcohol is that human beings have to eat, and because of this we are surrounded by the triggers you are so eager to avoid.

Your husband is not helping, of course. He either has no idea of how challenging this is for you or he is actively sabotaging your efforts. This might be either deliberate or unconscious on his part, but it is surprising how often family members will actively disable a loved one's efforts to be healthy.

One obvious solution would be for you to install a lock on a cabinet, where he can store his stash of sweets. You also need to continue to work on your own eating habits, however, because these temptations abound — especially during the holidays.

Visit your local library or do some online research on how to handle your food cravings.

Meditation and mindfulness might be very useful for you.

**Dear Amy:** So many horrible events have taken place around the world lately. As a mother, I feel sad and overwhelmed and worried about my children. Can you suggest a way to explain these violent and tragic happenings to young children?  
*Upset Mother*

**Upset Mother:** Protect young children from graphic and violent imagery — both fictional and actual. Explain that sometimes people get hurt, that it's not their fault and that it makes all of us sad. Also make sure to pass along this timeless wisdom from Fred Rogers: "When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, 'Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.'"

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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