

DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

DogGerel: The winning ‘ge-’ limericks

BY PAT MYERS

Week 1189 was our annual Limerixon, the contest for limericks featuring words from some sliver of the alphabet, this time “ge-” words. The Invite has been Limerixconning every year since 2004 in conjunction with OEDILF.com, an eternal project to create a full dictionary in which each word is described by a limerick; Week 1189 entrants, inking or not, are welcome to submit their entries there among the close to 100,000 limericks already included.

4th place

I committed a social monstrosity
When toasting my host’s
generosity.
“Thanks for sharing your house,
Your fine liquor, your spouse . . .”
Cue my exit at rapid velocity.
(Matt Monitto, Bristol, Conn.)

3rd place

“I know all about countries and
stuff —
I’m a **geopolitical** buff!”
Touted Trump’s latest boast,
Though it should be, for most,
That he left off the “-oon,” clear
enough.
(Jesse Frankovich, Lansing, Mich.)

2nd place and the antique copy of “The Last Days of Pompeii” by Edward Bulwer-Lytton:

The **gecko**, when stalked, can prevent
His assailant’s malicious intent:
His tail can detach!
That’s all that they catch.
He saves more than 15 percent.
(Joe Neff, Warrington, Pa.)

And the winner of the Inkin’ Memorial:

Shirley lied, “I’m just fat. I got
stressed, ate
More dining hall food than the rest
ate.”
Her mom jerked a thumb
At the freshman’s huge tum
Before bellowing, “Shirley, you
gestate!” (Melissa Balmain,
Rochester, N.Y.)

Out on a lim: honorable mentions

To the joys of the flesh let’s
surrender!
To my eager caresses please
tender
Your breasts — or your pecs!
(I’m addicted to sex,
But I’m simply indifferent to
gender.)
(Hugh Thirlway, The Hague)

If you can’t find your phone and
your keys or
Your dentures fall out when you
sneeze or
Your best conversations
Concern medications,
It’s a pretty good bet you’re a
geezer.
(Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)

In **Genesis**, all things began:
Day and Night, Sea and Sky, Beast
and Man.
God then tried to create
An obedient mate —
And that’s when His plan hit the
fan. (Jesse Frankovich)

A **generalizer’s** a fool.
Making sweeping pronouncements
ain’t cool.
And before you complain
That I’ve failed to abstain,
The exception, I’m told, proves the
rule. (Madeleine Begun Kane,
New York)

Are you **geared up** for shootin’ and
lootin’?
Then you might like to know we’re
recruitin’
To maintain our campaign
For domain in Ukraine.
Yours, in jugular vein, (Signed) V.
Putin.
(Stephen Gold, Glasgow, Scotland)

As I stood on the stage, in the spot,
They threw flowers; I wish they had
not.
The handsome **geranium**
That bounced off my cranium
(You guessed it) was still in a pot.
(Hugh Thirlway)

Get, n., a traditional Jewish divorce,
and also the success in booking
someone for a TV interview
The Tel Aviv talk show was set —
Its most coveted on-air guest yet!
The PM would discourse
On Israeli divorce —
Oh, the viewers that get-get will get!
(Perry Beider, Silver Spring, Md.)
From old China, a tale you should
know
Of an army done in by its foe:
Seems they took a big lickin’



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

New for Week 1193: Poedtry

Mom, a Jew. Pop, a WASP. Easter, Pesach, Christmas. Communion, tallises, Psychoanalysis.

(Roger L. Browdy, winner of Week 172, June 1996)
Just over 20 years ago, this humble space introduced “an entire poetic form, making its global debut in the Style Invitational.” It was dubbed the Poed, as in Poems by Ed, as in one Ed Hopkins of Davidsonville, Md., who’d suggested it.

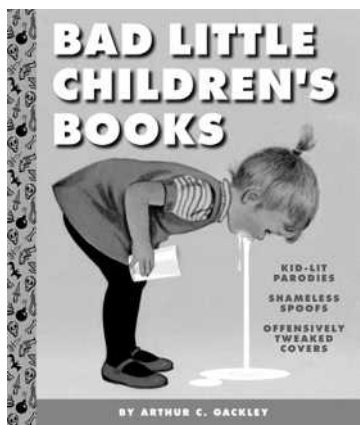
Since then, the form hasn’t exactly found its way onto the syllabuses of collegiate English departments everywhere; in fact, Google showed the Empress exactly zero other Poeds besides the collection of inking entries from Week 172. That may be because it’s a tall order, but we are talking about the Loser Community here. So let’s give Mr. Hopkins’s form a new lease on life:
This week: Write a Poed, which consists of four lines: The first line contains six one-syllable words. The second line contains three two-syllable words. The third line contains two three-syllable words. The fourth line contains one six-syllable word (or a name totaling six syllables); that’s the Empress’s one amendment to the original. And at least two of the lines must rhyme.
This contest is no doubt challenging, but the original did produce some pretty good results; see them in this week’s Style Conversational column at bit.ly/conv1193).

Submit entries at the website bit.ly/enter-invite-1193 (all lowercase).

Winner gets the Inkin’ Memorial, the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a signed copy of a brand-new collection called “**Bad Little Children’s Books,**” by one “Arthur C. Gackley.” The handsome, art-quality volume is filled with more than 100 old-time children’s-book covers that have been “offensively tweaked” with Photoshop skills. So a 1950s-ish cover featuring a little boy and girl examining a treasure chest becomes “Can You Still Breathe, Grandma?: Taffy and Tuffy Learn About Oxygen.” And that’s one of the less tasteless ones. The prize was donated by “a longtime supporter of bad taste, cheap parody and The Style Invitational who, for obvious reasons, prefers to remain anonymous.”

Other runners-up win their choice of a yearned-for Loser Mug, the older-model “This Is Your Brain on Mugs” mug or our new Grossery Bag, “I Got a B in Punishment.” Honorable mentions get one of our lusted-after Loser magnets, “Magnet Dum Laude” or “Falling Jest Short.” First Offenders receive a smelly tree-shaped air “freshener” (FirStink for their first ink). Deadline is Monday night, Sept. 26; results published Oct. 16 (online Oct. 13). See general contest rules and guidelines at wapo.st/InvRules. The headline for this week’s results is Tom Witte; 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; 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.



ABRAMS IMAGE BOOKS

This week’s second prize, which is not exactly a children’s book. Much as the Invite is not exactly a children’s feature.

‘Cause their leader was chicken —
Which is why we still know **General Tso.**
(Craig Dykstra, Centreville, Va.)

“I’m a **genius!**” declared my dear mate.
“I can program this thing, ain’t that great?”
You can call me the czar
Of this here VCR.”
I won’t tell him he’s 20 years late.
(Hildy Zampella, Falls Church, Va.)

As a **general** rule, avoid lyin’.
Down in Rio, the cops find it tryin’.
When in guile you dive deep,
The descent is so steep
Even gold will look cheap, trust me.
— Ryan (Stephen Gold)

A **genius** has wisdom to spare,
Pulls great insights out of the air,
Discerns hidden truths
When no more than a youth,
And fully understands limerick
rhyme and meter.
(Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)

“My wish,” the old man told the **genie**,
Is that you would just lengthen my
weenie.”
“I don’t think so,” she said,
“But I’ll do this instead.”
And, poof, made the rest of him
teeny. (Rob Cohen, Potomac)

Revelations caused Huma to scoff,
“Not again will you drink from that
trough.
You’re still up to your tricks
Texting **genital** pix?
Mister Weiner, I’m cutting you off.”
(Nan Reiner, Boca Raton, Fla.)

The Style Invitational’s real;
It’s never refined or **genteel**.
It’s often called sassy
But never called classy.
And that, folks, describes its
appeal.
(Mae Scanlan, Washington)

More honorable mentions in the online Invite at bit.ly/invite1193
Still running — deadline Monday night Sept. 19: our Ask Backwards contest, in which we give the answers and you give the funny questions. See bit.ly/invite1192.

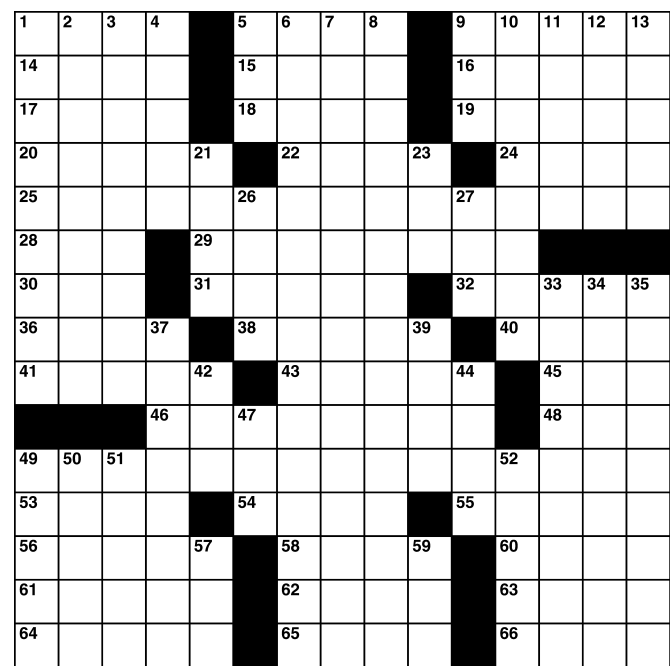
SUNDAY CHALLENGE

BY MARTIN ASHWOOD-SMITH © 2016 CROSSNERGY SYNDICATE LLC

- ACROSS**
- 1 Declares off-limits
- 5 Give-and-take
- 9 Axis predator
- 14 Gray’s specialty, briefly
- 15 Vegas attraction
- 16 Hit, in the Bible
- 17 Vajrayana teacher
- 18 Piedmont province
- 19 Like some wheels
- 20 Military state?
- 22 Oodles
- 24 Audition, as for a part
- 25 Washington force
- 28 Alternative to JFK
- 29 Chemist’s table?
- 30 Archer’s asset
- 31 Sequel starter, sometimes
- 32 It’s a laugh
- 36 Savvy pair?
- 38 “___ deal!”
- 40 Conciliatory gifts
- 41 Miner test
- 43 Painter of Zola’s portrait
- 45 Keg attachment
- 46 Scrapbook items
- 48 Brexit subj.
- 49 Fifth Republic founder
- 53 “The King of Queens” actress Remini
- 54 “___ Gyn!”
- 55 Country singer with the 1997 triple platinum hit “How Do I Live?”
- 56 Pot ingredients?
- 58 Corner
- 60 DC squad
- 61 Dear book?
- 62 Piece of work

- 63 Mambo king
- 64 Went sniggling
- 65 Punta del ___, Uruguay
- 66 Some pitcherfuls
- DOWN**
- 1 Skier’s headgear
- 2 Bases of comparison
- 3 Sing, in a way
- 4 Maze word
- 5 Calypso cousin
- 6 Ham and onions offering
- 7 2003 Pancho Villa portrayer
- 8 Cause for many a stop
- 9 NATO charter member
- 10 Some off-road competitions
- 11 Edmonton pro athlete
- 12 Starting squad
- 13 Good seller in bear markets?
- 21 Sirloin servings
- 23 Hangdog
- 26 It’s a gas
- 27 Beyond tipsy
- 33 Maker of many beds

- 34 French Foreign Legion’s shoulder decoration
- 35 They really get steamed
- 37 “Ditto!”
- 39 Mercator’s sci.
- 42 “Now ___ talkin’!”
- 44 Boris Godunov, e.g.
- 47 GPS display
- 49 Sylvan clearing
- 50 Counting-off word
- 51 Birth-related
- 52 Utah’s ___ National Forest
- 57 Rock guitarist Barrett
- 59 Squeeze (out)



Answer to last week



HOROSCOPE

BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY | Sept. 18: This year you are organized and prepared for whatever you think might happen in various areas of your life. Certain events and situations will enlighten you to dealing with the unexpected and not worrying about it. If you are single, someone special could be right around the corner. If you are attached, the two of you have carefully planned certain areas of your life, yet the unexpected is likely to throw those plans into the air. Adjust and you will enjoy the results. Aries knows how to trigger you.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
Exciting dreams might leave you feeling edgy in the morning. The unexpected plays out in your plans. You could be the source of some unpredictability, whether it comes directly from you or from those whom you have chosen to be in your life.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
Recognize what is happening behind the scenes. You don’t have as much control as you might think you do. Some people are keeping their opinions to themselves; their withholding is likely to irk you.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
Your plans suddenly might change. You can choose to be either upset or delighted about needing to adjust. Perhaps you have been wanting some time to make a special visit.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
You’ll feel as if little shock waves are running through your day. When you’re out and about, you might be stunned by someone else’s demeanor.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
Check out a new part of town or

take off to a favorite place where you can hike and visit with a loved one at the same time. You relax best when you leave your troubles at home and change your setting.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
You might have your day scheduled, only to have a friend show up and disrupt your plans. Your initial response has nothing to do with the delight you will experience from hanging out together.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
Your sense of what is appropriate will override what could be a shocking statement or a surprising act. Others will pick up on your knee-jerk reaction. Be open to having a discussion, but avoid giving a lecture; otherwise, people will close down.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
You know the importance of feeling good. Refuse to go to extremes right now, whether it involves exercising or enjoying a meal with a loved one.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
You don’t often show how enthusiastic you feel, but you no

longer can contain your happiness and your love of the unexpected. What started out as a normal Sunday could evolve into a memorable happening, especially if you invite a friend to join you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
You could be experiencing some confusion and might not understand where it is coming from. As a result, you will decide to stay close to home, as there is a lot going on in your domestic life.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
Your sense of what is appropriate will override what could be a shocking statement or a surprising act. Others will pick up on your knee-jerk reaction. Be open to having a discussion, but avoid giving a lecture; otherwise, people will close down.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
You have seen the effect that unexpected events have had on your schedule and your finances. Remain direct, and observe what is happening. Ask someone who has dealt with this type of experience before for some guidance and insight.

Daughter left out of dad’s will is hurt

Ask Amy

AMY DICKINSON

Dear Amy: During a recent visit with my father (age 75) and my stepmother (age 64), my father

told me that I would be the executor of his will.

His will states that in the event of his death, everything would go to his wife (not my mother) and, subsequently, upon her death, anything remaining would go to me.

Being that I am his only child/daughter and we have a good relationship, I cannot help but feel hurt and angry.

My children (his only grandchildren, whom he professes to love so much) are not mentioned in his will, either.

Being that he is his wife’s sole provider and that she is 11 years his junior, I understand the practical side of this decision, however I can’t get over the fact that I will receive nothing from my father after his death.

Although I am to get “everything” remaining upon her death, the reality is that I will get nothing because when he dies, she will move back to Europe, possibly remarry, and anything left will just get absorbed into her new life.

Although I am married and financially stable, I am having a very hard time processing this news. I know it’s his money, so he can do with it what he chooses, but being his only daughter, I can’t help but feel hurt. How do I get past this?

Left Out

Left Out: You seem to be viewing this from the perspective that your father could die soon, leaving his current assets behind. But his wife could end up caring for him for 20 years. This is the challenging underside of being the younger spouse.

You seem to equate your father’s financial assets with how much he loves you and your children, but his assets are there to pay for his life until his death, and his wife’s life afterward.

Consider yourself lucky that he has planned and done well enough not to be a financial burden to you, his only child.

It would be great if he would leave something specific (aside from money) to your children. Ask him if he would be willing to pick out something for them.

Dear Amy: “Stumped” wrote to you about sharing the cost of a meal when out on a date.

He should look beyond the question of sharing the cost, to the dynamics of dating.

It is the very function of dating to discover each other, and the best way to do that is to share information, reactions and responses. As you converse, you’re constantly testing each other to find links and dead ends. In that context, asking if the other person is willing to split the cost is a way to invite them to reveal their attitudes about dating obligations.

If you’re lucky, it opens up the subject of money, gender roles and expectations. You may grow closer if you can discuss these things, or you may get a red flag if the answer, or no answer, troubles you. Take the chance and ask!

Voice of Experience

Voice of Experience: I like the way you described this dynamic and appreciate the advice. Thank you.

Amy’s column appears seven days a week at washingtonpost.com/advice. Write to askamy@amydickinson.com or Amy Dickinson, Tribune Content Agency, 16650 Westgrove Dr., Suite 175, Addison, Tex. 75001. You can also follow her @askingamy.