

DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

Q cards: Our Ask Backwards winners

BY PAT MYERS

Like Hyphen the Terrible, the **Ask Backwards** contest has been an Invitational fave since the earliest days of the Empress's predecessor, the Czar. In Week 1192 we gave 15 "answers," some of which sounded good but didn't generate much in the way of questions (which is why we give 15 answers). Funny but too frequently submitted: "a \$27 donation" as Trump's charitable giving; the National Postal Museum being closed in rain, gloom, etc.; and "Florida Man's Résumé" listing several Darwin Awards — never mind that those go to people who end up dead or sterilized.

4th place

A. Cockroach milk.
Q. What is slightly more appetizing than Leeches and Cream? (Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.)

3rd place

A. Donald Trump's birth certificate.
Q. What is marked "Return to Sender"? (Beverly Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

2nd place and the electric YES! button:

A. Lobster roll trucks on every corner.
Q. What does Lobster do when "LOBSTER ANGRY!"? (Danielle Nowlin, Fairfax Station, Va.)

And the winner of the Inkin' Memorial:

A. Waist-slimming compression wrap.
Q. What could possibly top last year's new laundry basket as a Mother's Day present? (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn, Va.)

Ask-its of deplorables: honorable mentions

COCKROACH MILK
What is the second ingredient in lice pudding? (Gary Kappus, Washington)

What goes well in a cup of Chock Full o' Nits? (Jeff Contompasis)

Why do so many cockroaches have tiny white mustaches? (Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase, Md.)

What "free-range, locally sourced" item is being put on menus to thwart health inspectors? (John Hutchins, Silver Spring, Md.)

AN ELEVATOR AND AN ALLIGATOR, BUT NOT A WAITER
What doesn't expect a big tip for squeezing in a few more people right before closing? (Hildy Zampella, Falls Church, Va.)

What might you check inside to find a missing resident of Miami? (Dudley Thompson, Cary, N.C.)

RYAN LOCHTE'S URINE SAMPLE
What gives new meaning to "dope test"? (Jonathan Hardis, Gaithersburg, Md.; Chris Doyle)

Senhor, what's the title of that mural at your gas station? (Melissa Balmain, Rochester, N.Y.)

What's the only thing Ryan Lochte didn't drink in Rio? (Bruce Niedt, Cherry Hill, N.J.)

149 YARDS RUSHING
What can my landscapers complete each week that the Redskins can't? (Theresa Kowal, Silver Spring, Md.)

In the "Macbeth in the Suburbs" adaptation, what does Macbeth see instead of a forest walking? (Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)

What won't cut it when you're 150 yards from your camper when you spot a bear? (Pam Sweeney, Burlington, Mass.)

A \$27 DONATION
What is the price of an acre in Utopia? (Jack Turner, Milford, Del., a First Offender)

What do you call it when a politician gets caught with his hand in a stripper's G-string? (Bird Waring, Larchmont, N.Y.)

SWISS CHARD BUT NOT A SWISS BANK ACCOUNT
What can you use if you're out of lettuce? (Pam Sweeney)

What grows best with lots of sunshine? (Gary Crockett)

What can \$27 get you in Georgetown? (Warren Tanabe, Annapolis, Md.)

DONALD TRUMP'S BIRTH CERTIFICATE
What has two especially tiny handprints? (Danielle Nowlin; Joe Neff, Warminster, Pa.)



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

New contest for Week 1196: Hyphen the Terrible

ALBums + COLOGNE: Al-logne: Perfume that's guaranteed to keep you from being bothered. (Kevin Dopart)

AMERica + disproPORTIONATELY: Ameri-portionately: Super-sized. (Pam Sweeney)
EFFort + AfGHANISTAN: Ef-ghanistan: What Americans reply when they're asked about our longest war. (Chris Doyle)

It's a neologism contest that the Invite has done 17 times, but not in more than two years: **Combine either half of a hyphenated word or compound term with either half of another such term to create a new hyphenated term, and describe the result humorously**, as in the runners-up above from Week 1078, the last time we ran this contest. Feel free to use it in a funny sentence. And there's a hitch, but it's not all that hitchy; the Empress is feeling magnanimous: **Both halves of the term must come from the same issue of The Washington Post or another print newspaper, or published the same day on washingtonpost.com, from Oct. 6 through Oct. 17.** Please include the source and the date, e.g., "Post, Oct. 10"; "Post website, 10/14"; "Podunk Daily Fishwrap, 10-8." Your neologisms don't all have to come from the same day's paper.

Submit entries at this website: bit.ly/enter-invite-1196 (all lowercase).

Winner gets the Inkin' Memorial, the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives the fabulous battery-operated Donald Talking Pen, donated by Loser Dave Prevar: You push on Donald's head and get any of eight actual recorded phrases, such as "I will be the greatest president that God ever created." There's a fascinating story that ran in The Post in August about the creation of this pen and what happened when its designer, a fan named Jay Kamhi, showed it to Donald Trump; see it at bit.ly/trump-pen. (Dave promises us a Hillary pen soon.)

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 Punmanship." 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, Oct. 17; results published Nov. 6 (online Nov. 3). You may submit up to 25 entries per contest. See contest rules and guidelines at wapo.st/InvRules. The "Q cards" headline was sent by both Nan Reiner and Kevin Dopart; Kevin also wrote the honorable-mentions subhead. 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.



PHOTO COURTESY OF JAY KAMHI

The best talking pen ever created: this week's 2nd prize.

What bears the notation "8 lb. 11 oz. incl. silv. spoon"? (Chris Doyle)

What document is stamped "Under Audit"? (William Kennard, Arlington, Peter Jenkins, Bethesda)

THE NATIONAL POSTAL MUSEUM
Where is the United States' largest collection of snails? (Joanne Free, Clifton, Va.)

What museum houses the largest collection of tourists looking for other museums? (John Hutchins)
What is a nicer-sounding term than Dead Letter Office? (Jon Gearhart, Des Moines)

What did they call that exhibit of confiscated weapons at St. Elizabeths Hospital? (Dottie Gray, Alexandria, Va.)

WAIST-SLIMMING COMPRESSION WRAP

What's less comfortable than a middle seat in coach? (Pam Sweeney)

What, if worn too tightly, might also be called "waste-slimming"? (Kelly Ronayne, Alexandria, Va.)

What's the most ordered lunch at the Miss America contestants' snack bar? (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

FLORIDA MAN'S RÉSUMÉ
What references 87 guest appearances on "Cops"? (Gordon Cobb, Marietta, Ga.)

What says "Education: Redacted by request of school attended"? (Hildy Zampella)

Where does the list of references include Jack Daniel and Johnnie Walker? (Christina Courtney, Gettysburg, Pa.)

What includes a stint as a salesman hawking Burmese pythons as "waist-slimming compression wraps"? (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village, Md.)

THE MALTESE PARAKEET
What film marked the debut of detective Sam Teaspoon? (Nan Reiner, Boca Raton, Fla.)

2,002 OLD EMAILS
If Proust were writing today, what would his masterpiece be called? (Melissa Balmain)

Why is Congress investigating Hillary's alleged ties to Nigerian royalty? (Pam Sweeney)

Still running — deadline Monday night, Oct. 10: our contest to change a movie title without changing any letters. See bit.ly/invite1195.

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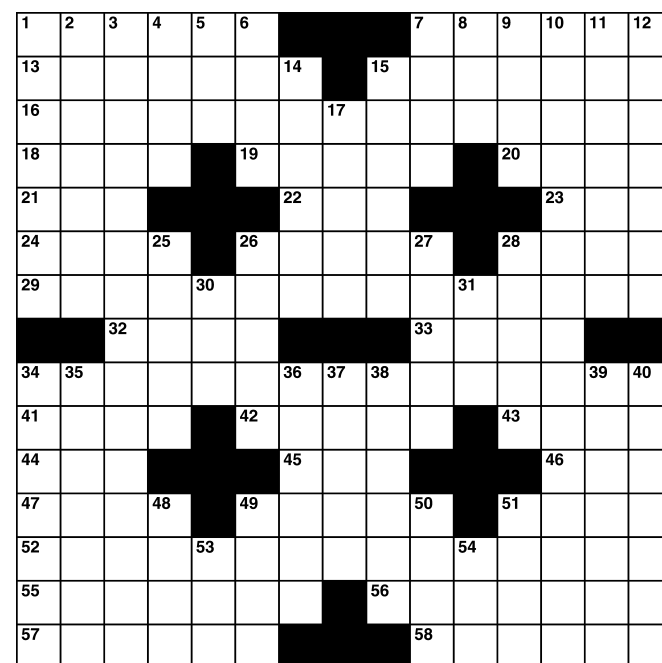
ACROSS
1 Not on time for
7 One of the Brady bunch
13 Devoted fans
15 Frolics
16 Was completely indifferent
18 Ending for insist or persist
19 Brothers at the O.K. Corral
20 Big wheels in Russia
21 Supportive shout
22 Indigo Girls, say
23 Host
24 Deadlocked
26 Peace Corps kin
28 Jane, to Bridget
29 Community college offering
32 Small knot
33 Stub

34 It may enhance one's performance
41 Bygone TV series about plane crash survivors
42 See eye to eye
43 Old Spice competitor
44 Meadow mama
45 MoMA setting
46 Bottom line?
47 The best seats, to some
49 Handle final details of
51 Song from Dylan's "Desire"
52 Seasonal convenience
55 Connoisseur
56 Attached, in hotel lingo
57 Ready, as leftovers
58 Like some glasses

DOWN
1 The Lizard constellation
2 Shelley's elegy to Keats
3 Contacts
4 First name in mysteries
5 ___ Talks
6 River through Normandy
7 Matt Damon's locale in a 2015 film
8 Caesar's greeting
9 Casino action
10 Predictable sort

11 "I'm finished!"
12 "The Mambo Kings" costar
14 Sports arenas
15 Oscar-winning role for a Hoffman
17 Chutzpah
25 Feel unsure of
26 Noted Mexican revolutionary
27 "It's ___!"
28 Old meeting place
30 Zagreb's land, to the IOC
31 When Nancy sizzles

34 Siren, say
35 Holding one's own
36 Snub
37 It may be no one's vault but your own
38 Nail down
39 Stress, in a way
40 Marked down, maybe
48 Ibuprofen target
49 Big name in apple products
50 House opening?
51 Render openmouthed
53 White, in Waikiki
54 "Do-do" link



Answer to last week

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

HOROSCOPE

BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY | Oct. 9: This year you touch base with many old friends. How much you share of your personal life depends on your choices. Inspirational ideas just seem to come to you. Nevertheless, first test them out on someone you can be blunt with you. If you are single, you could meet someone you immediately want to draw in closer. If you are attached, the two of you often plan on spending time together at home. Capricorn feels as if he or she knows more than you.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

Take charge of the moment. Caring exists between you and a friend; it would be wise not to be so reactive to this person's every action, which is your natural tendency.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

Reach out to someone who can help you gain a better understanding of what is going on. You may have an unexpected insight that initially makes you uncomfortable. Know that this vision will empower you later.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

One-on-one relating opens doors and makes a change possible. Once you gain passage, you actually may decide that you don't need to walk through the door.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

Defer to others, and you'll get the response you desire. You may not be as sure of yourself as you'd like to be. Hiding your insecurities from the majority of people might work, but not with those to whom you are closest.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

You have had many aspirations for your weekend. Today, for your own mental well-being, you find that you must prioritize and complete one task or project at a time. News from a distance could force a change of plans.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

Allow your imagination to lead the way. Make sure that others are on the same page as you. You could take for granted that a loved one wants the same outcome you desire. Show your appreciation for this person's support.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

You may be wondering which direction you should head in. A family matter dominates the day, which is likely to add to the confusion. Recognize that you must handle this immediate crisis before you do anything else.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

Pick up the phone and call a friend you adore but rarely make time to chat with. Catching up on one another's news will make you both happy. The unexpected takes you down an unusual path.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

You could cause yourself significant angst if you don't rein in your spending. You might want to buy a token of appreciation for a loved one; keep your budget in mind, and you won't have a problem.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

Your fiery personality comes out when you let go of your work life and heavy responsibilities. Be a kid again, and enjoy the moment. You care enormously about a close loved one.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

Step back and observe. Throwing yourself into a community matter will take your mind off a difficult situation. You tend to do something surprising when others least expect it; make sure you assess whether this will be well received.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

You might upset the apple cart by being self-indulgent. It might not be possible for you to reverse what has been done. However, you can tap into your self-discipline to prevent any further damage.

Should she try to contact half-siblings?

Ask Amy

Dear Amy: I was adopted as an infant, and through an agency I tried to contact each of my biological parents.

I have not heard back from either of my birth parents and am respecting their decision not to contact me.

I assume my contact might have come as a shock, especially to my biological father, who might not realize he had fathered a child. I am okay with not hearing from them.

What I am confused about is the issue with my half-siblings. As far as I know, these siblings do not know I exist.

While part of me thinks that is unfair and that they should be able to decide on their own whether to communicate with me, another part of me says I shouldn't contact them (even though they are adults like me). I don't want to create stress or tension in their families.

Is my adoption my "secret" to share with a potential half-sibling?

I don't want to upset anyone, but family is very important to me and I know I would want a half-sibling to find me, but maybe that's just me.

Conflicted

Conflicted: You should walk this journey carefully, and with professional, friend, and family help and support.

You have the right to try to locate and contact any family members, and with the onset of social media, as well as companies that can decode your DNA, there is a dramatically increased interest in finding bio-relatives, even among people who were not separated by adoption.

There is no right answer here, and you are appropriately sensitive to the potential impact on siblings, but you should also be mindful of the impact on you.

Are you prepared for more silence or possible outright rejection from others who are biologically related to you? If so, then you should gingerly reach out with an open heart and mind. I hope your queries are received enthusiastically and with affection, but as you know from reading this column, families are complicated.

Dear Amy: In one of your columns, you responded to a question from a reader by citing young boys punching girls in the arm as "flirting."

Reader responses, which have

accused you of sanctioning "abuse," expose an interesting trend.

We are attaching very adult words and motivations to children's behavior. Children should be taught not to hit each other, but it is not abuse. When children do this, it is because they don't understand how to express their feelings in words.

A child should not be labeled an "abuser," but should be taught how to express him or herself in a socially appropriate way.

Faithful Fan

Faithful Fan: I agree with your take on this, and thank you.

In my childhood, I was a bit punchy when I liked a boy — so it isn't only boys who need to be taught that punching isn't cool.

Labeling this sort of physical contact between children as "abuse" is inappropriate.

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.

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