

DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

Jest four fun: Tour de Fours winners

BY PAT MYERS

Week 1201 was our annual Tour de Fours neologism contest, in which you coin a new term that includes a block of four given letters — this week, **OVEN** — in any order, but with no other letters between them. Many in the Greater Loser Community found ways to lament the events of this past **NOVE**mber.

4th place

Menevolent: Beneficial only to the male half of the population. "Our boss is positively menevolent with the arctic thermostat settings in the office." (Danielle Nowlin, Fairfax Station, Va.)

3rd place

Wonton Eve: Traditional night before Christmas for Jewish families. (Jeff Shirley, Richmond)

2nd place and the cow-spotted ceramic mug with an udder:

Venommmm: Something you know is very bad for you but tastes oh so very good. (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village, Md.)

And the winner of the Inkin' Memorial:

Havenous: Desperate for more and more acquisitions. "Vicky's still shopping — we went by Tiffany's and she got all havenous." (Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)

Fair ENOV: honorable mentions

Nov-embers: What's left of many people's hope after the election. (Andy Promisel, Fairfax, Va.)

Intravenous de Milo: Tragic victim of Greece's first blood drive. (Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.)

Supine ova: How biologists order eggs sunny side up. (Jon Gearhart, Des Moines)

RefuseToMoveOn.org: Perhaps a better name for the sender of those recourt petitions. (Annette Green, Lexington, Va.)

L'oven spoonful: That last bite of raw dough before you bake the cookies. (Cindi Rae Caron, Blowing Rock, N.C.)

Un-evolve: Who'd have thought that mankind would start to do this? (Mae Scanlan, Washington)

Neo-vent: The "new one" that some people threaten to tear. (Tom Witte)

Heave-Not: A member of Bulimics Anonymous. (Chris Doyle)

"On, venison!": Santa's cry that left the reindeer team on edge. (Beverly Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

Heaven on Deck: Purgatory. (Steve Fahey, Kensington, Md.)

Beano Evil: The fourth wise monkey, depicted with his hands over his rear end. (Chris Doyle)

Big Apple Turnover: The requisite chaos whenever our new president comes home for the weekend. (Nathanael Dewhurst, Lynn, Mass.)

Cup o' Venom: Instant lunch at the Breitbart cafeteria. (Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.)

Everyone v. Donald J. Trump: Future class action? (Jesse Frankovich, Lansing, Mich.)

Evonka Holdings: Suspiciously named firm designated to manage the "blind trust." (David Ballard, Reston, Va.)

IV-oenophile: An extreme wine lover. (Jack McBroom, Fort Valley, Va.)

Oenovile: A connoisseur of Ripple. (Chris Doyle)

Molotov enema: When a gentle laxative just isn't doing the trick. (Gordon Cobb, Marietta, Ga.)

No-Environment: The mission of the next EPA chief? (William Joyner, Chapel Hill, N.C.)

Novellatwep: All 140 characters. (Dudley Thompson, Cary, N.C.)

Ovenator: Me during menopause (according to my husband). (Cindi Rae Caron)

#HaveNoShame: Hashtag appropriated daily by the next administration. (William Joyner)

Vote, then vomit: Exorcise your franchise! (Dudley Thompson)

Slovenial: Type of pardonable sin, such as posing in the nude, working without the right visa, etc. (Ann Martin, Falls Church, Va.)



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

New contest for Week 1205: Could we just have a do-over? Yes, we could.

The winner of Week 1173, food puns: **Phlegm in meringue pie: What you get when you're nasty to your waitress.** (Jon Gearhart)
 Winner of Week 1162, Onion-style headlines: **ISIS Now Offering Tote Bag With 5-Year Membership** (Neal Starkman)
 Winner of Week 1161, bogus trivia about politicians: **To add some levity to his second inauguration, President Clinton added "in bed" under his breath to the phrases he repeated taking the oath of office.** (Jeff Shirley)

At least with The Style Invitational, if you really screwed it up the first time, you can try it again without having to wait till 2020: Our annual retrospective contest lets you enter one or more contests from the past year. Not surprisingly, the Empress is overrun each year with worthy entries spanning the scope of some 50 contests, and so this year, for the first time, you get *two* chances:

This week AND next week: Enter (or re-enter) any Style Invitational contest from Week 1149 to 1201, except for Week 1152, last year's do-over. (Next week you can also try Week 1202.) You may enter more than one contest as long as you don't submit more than 25 entries in all. For contests asking you to use that week's paper, use papers and online articles dated Dec. 8-19. For the obit poems, continue to write about people who died in 2015. Yes, you may resubmit non-inking entries from earlier contests.

How to find all these contests: Go to washingtonpost.com/styleinvitational and click on each contest (click on View More if you stop seeing contests). See this week's Style Conversational column for other options. And be sure to check the results of that week's contest (usually four weeks later) to make sure your idea didn't already get ink. Be sure to give the week number of the contest you're using.

Submit entries at this website: bit.ly/enter-invite-1205 (all lowercase).

Winner gets the Inkin' Memorial, the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives this **fantastic tote bag**, donated by Loser Barbara Turner. The Arabic description translates as "This text has no other purpose than to terrify those who are afraid of the Arabic language."

Other runners-up win the yearned-for "This Is Your Brain on Mugs" Loser mug or our 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, Dec. 19; results published Jan. 8 (online Jan. 5). See general contest rules and guidelines at wapo.st/InvRules. The headline for this week's results is by Beverly Sharp; the honorable-mentions subhead is by Jesse Frankovich. 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 results. Especially if you plan to enter, see wapo.st/styleconv.



PAT MYERS/THE WASHINGTON POST

"This text has no other purpose than to terrify those who are afraid of the Arabic language." It's this week's second prize.

Pornovese: A huge enterprise that would be nothing without the big bang. (Jesse Frankovich)

Ten over: What comes right before "You're fired" in a message from Donald's divorce lawyer. (Nan Reiner, Boca Raton, Fla.)

Venomenon: A prodigy at nastiness. "Little Donnie has already cursed out all the other kindergartners — and the teacher, too." (Matt Monitto, Bristol, Conn.)

And Last: Neovite: A Style Invitational First Offender. (Jeff Hazle, San Antonio; Kevin Dopart, Washington; Rob Cohen, Potomac)

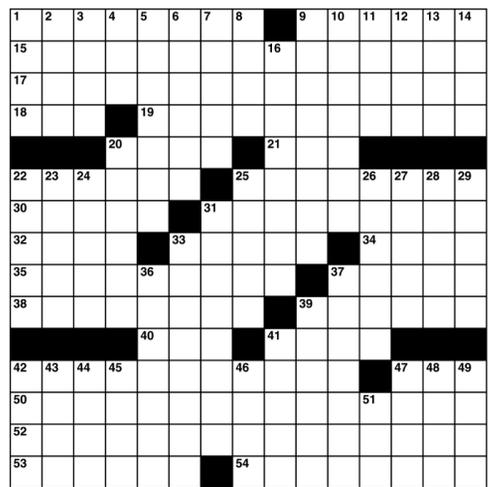
Still running — deadline Monday night, Dec. 12: Our contest for "silver linings" to comfort (or "comfort") someone who's not thrilled about the election results. See bit.ly/invite-1204.

SUNDAY CHALLENGE

BY RANDOLPH ROSS © 2016 CROSSYENERGY SYNDICATE LLC

- ACROSS**
- 1 Strong sock
 - 9 Ovid's love poetry
 - 15 Certainly no cynic
 - 17 Path with the fewest problems
 - 18 Indifferent evaluation
 - 19 Currency
 - 20 Just say no
 - 21 Pro
 - 22 Bowers
 - 25 Company announcement
 - 30 Denver's Museo _____ Americas
 - 31 Risktaker
 - 32 Key of Brahms' Symphony No. 2
 - 33 Lies out in the sun too long
 - 34 Pie perch
 - 35 Protected, as a document
 - 37 Investment
 - 38 Scriptural analyses
 - 39 Some are precious
 - 40 He supplied the voice for Sylvester
 - 41 Top Tatar
 - 42 Animal resting place
 - 47 Govt. financial assistance
 - 50 Bribes
 - 52 Trainee of Obi Wan Kenobi
 - 53 Miffed to the max
 - 54 Section of Manhattan
- DOWN**
- 1 Bridge site
 - 2 Suit to _____

- 3 "Sure"
- 4 Miss after marriage
- 5 Deer defenses
- 6 Carpenter and Black
- 7 Plaintive piece
- 8 Sub follower?
- 9 Available in malls
- 10 Like a cornered joint
- 11 Arabian sultanate
- 12 Marmalade ingredient
- 13 Suffix with opal
- 14 Trick ending?
- 16 Lifted
- 20 Celebrate by dancing
- 22 Discombobulate
- 23 Rival of Century 21
- 24 Kind of game
- 25 Tornado paths
- 26 Ben-Hur portrayer
- 27 Aquafina alternative
- 28 Poet from Prague
- 29 Nice ladies
- 31 Alone at the prom
- 33 Place to find a bargain
- 36 Unbeatable foe
- 37 Spends the night in
- 39 Nags
- 41 Birthplace of Obama Sr.
- 42 Tourneys played in Aug.
- 43 Cubic Rubik
- 44 Shed item
- 45 Take the _____
- 46 Puff
- 47 "The Open Window" writer
- 48 Go downhill
- 49 Nagy of Hungary
- 51 TV's text counterpart



Answer to last week

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

BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY Dec. 11: This year ideas fly left and right between you and others. You often feel as if you have too many decisions to make. You do, as a result of brainstorming and free will. Look at your choices carefully, as some of them will affect you greatly. If you are single, you could meet someone who seems too good to be true. Take your time getting to know this person. If you are attached, the two of you often enjoy working together. Taurus can be touchy yet provocative.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
 You could be in the position of discovering how a personal matter can be given an outside perspective. A conversation could be a real eye-opener, if not for you, then for the other party.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
 Your ability to read between the lines helps you see where others are coming from. Greet change positively and try not to fight it so much. You know what to do with a money matter that baffles someone else.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
 You could be wondering which way to go. Recognize when you have had enough. You can't change a demand that someone else makes, but you can change the way in which you handle it.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
 Express your preferences when making plans. You could find yourself in a social situation that you did not anticipate getting involved in. Keep it light. Trust that a friend will facilitate your exit, if need be.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
 You could be mired in a difficult situation. Understand that you can blame only yourself for being in such a position. Complete what you must, re-energize yourself and break past any barriers.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
 Reach out to someone at a distance. You will enjoy catching up on this person's news. Consider completing all your holiday calls, especially the long-distance ones.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
 Your sense of direction becomes a high priority, especially if you are going to squeeze in certain obligations. A loved one might want to share their vision of a long-term commitment.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
 Your perspective is very much in demand right now. Calls come in from left and right. Do not be surprised to hear a sudden knock on your door. Go along with the moment.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
 You have the wherewithal to complete a lot of holiday errands. Adapt your budget to accommodate unexpected needs. You will do better if you sit down and think about your options first.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
 Allow your creativity to emerge when dealing with a younger person or when trying to make an important decision. You will discover that everything will be a lot easier if you do.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
 Stay close to home, as you could be more tired than you realize. You might enjoy a day off reading the Sunday paper and taking an extra snooze here and there. Do not allow guilt or a past judgment to color your day.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
 Your ability to honor demands and ask for feedback is likely to be very helpful. Your situation is subject to radical change if you would like to inject some new energy into it.

Ex-friend can't finagle invite with gift

Ask Amy

AMY DICKINSON

Dear Amy: I have a former friend, "Debbie." Our friendship ended due to her

constant criticism, gossiping, backstabbing and passive-aggressive behavior toward my family. She does this to everyone, not just us. Over the years, Debbie was very critical (behind our backs) of us home-schooling our daughters and our family hobby of playing music. So when we hosted an elaborate home-school graduation ceremony, concert and party for my daughters a few years ago, we did not invite her, thinking that she would not be interested, since she disapproved of our home schooling and my daughters' musical performances. When Debbie heard about our graduation party, she sent each of my daughters a check for \$100 (money is no obstacle to her) as graduation gifts. After we received the checks, we felt that we had to send her an invitation, but we later regretted this when she wrote a nasty letter criticizing our daughters' music performances and circulated it among our

friends (a friend gave us a copy of the letter).

Now one of my daughters is about to get engaged. We don't want to invite her to the wedding, but we are afraid that she will do the same thing she did regarding the graduation party, that is, send an expensive gift in order to force us to send her an invitation. She might even go so far as to invite herself to a wedding shower hosted by another mutual friend, or even co-host a wedding shower with one of our mutual friends.

So my question is, how do my daughter and I handle it if she tries to force an invitation to my daughter's wedding by sending a gift or co-hosting a shower? Are we obligated to send her an invitation if she sends a gift and/or hosts a wedding shower without our asking?

Wondering

Wondering: If sending a gift guaranteed a wedding invitation, then those potholders I sent to Kate and Prince William would have yielded a trip to Buckingham Palace.

The only necessary response to a gift is a written "thank you."

You sound afraid of this social viper. So practice saying "no" in the mirror. She wants to host a wedding shower? "No, thank you." If she co-hosts a shower with a friend of yours, you need only thank her for her trouble. If she angles for a wedding invitation (why would she, since there is probably going to be music), just tell her, "No. We won't be inviting you."

Dear Amy: "Sad" told a story about her father promising her large sums of money and never delivering it.

I was so glad you cautioned her to stay away from him and his wallet. My father did the same thing to me, and his "riches" turned out to be complete fiction.

Taken In

Taken In: Talk is (definitely) cheap.

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.