

DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

Switch-witters: Winning neologisms

BY PAT MYERS

In **Week 1307** we asked you to replace one letter of a word or name with another, then describe the result. One previously inkworthy neologism was disqualified by later events: Duncan Stevens's **"Unzinkable:** Able to hang on to a Cabinet position despite numerous embarrassing scandals." It zank.

4th place:

Sanka Claus: Bringer of unexciting presents. (Mark Raffman, Reston)

3rd place

Peerogative: Getting to use the bathroom of your chosen gender. (Steve Fahey, Kensington)

2nd place and the Christmas Carol Kazoo:

Braxit: An undergarment that was originally intended to separate, but has lost much support. (Frank Mullen III, Aledo, Ill.)

And the winner of the Lose Cannon:

Don compos mentis: Of very stable genius mind. (Jesse Frankovich, Grand Ledge, Mich.)

Left at the altar: Honorable mentions

Boinkmanship: Expertise in foreign affairs. (Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.)

Brittata: A brunch dish made with eggs, suet, blood sausage and turnips. (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn)

Foxic waste: Substance that poisons the national discourse. (Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)

Pursitis: What your shoulder gets for schlepping around eight pounds of who-knows-what in your handbag. (Phil Huffy, Rochester, N.Y., a First Offender)

Beto blocker: A nasty pill that may raise your blood pressure, marketed under the name Ted. (Jesse Frankovich)

Bureaucrazy: When a gang of idiots can't seem to understand that your 8-year-old, who broke her elbow playing soccer, really, really, really can't file a workers' compensation claim because she's 8 years old! (Yes, this really, really, really happened.) (Dave Airozo, Silver Spring)

Romeopathic medicine: A nicer name for ED drugs. (Tom Gleason, Lawrence, Kan.)

Swampede: The rush of administration officials to leave before the new Congress. (Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)

Southwash: A bidet. (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village)

Stetladder: It's used to put things back the way they were. (Pamela Love, Columbia)

The Star-Slanged Banner: Yo, say can you see . . . ? (Frank Mann, Washington)

Tony Snark: Irony Man. (Neil Hartbarger, Silver Spring, a First Offender)

Rake-believe: An imaginary way to prevent forest fires. (Jesse Frankovich)

Cameraderie: Those grimacing smiles you see in photos of people pretending to like each other. (Frank Osen)

Celibration: The joy of no sex. (Karl Koerber, Krestova, B.C.)

The touchy-feedy type: Someone who uses his hands to pick up the shrimp from the buffet line. (Beverly Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

Make America Greet Again: Struggling Hallmark's new slogan. (Neal Starkman, Seattle)

Haberlashery: Store for the discriminating S&M shopper. (Roy Ashley, Washington)

Aquus: The taxonomic genus of sea horses. Well, it should be. (Jeff Contompasis)

Ax-wife: The former Lorena Bobbitt. (Jeff Hazle, San Antonio)

"Douched by an Angel": The heartwarming family show that proves cleanliness is indeed next to godliness. (Dan O'Day, Alexandria)

Give Us Your Tired, your Pooh: Slogan of the Old Cartoon Characters Home. (Ken Gallant, Sequim, Wash.)

Godswallop: Televangelist



New contest for Week 1311: Nextra! Nextra! The year in preview

April 1, 2019: After record rainfall leads to massive flooding nationwide, President Trump insists that the damage would have been avoided if "people had used more umbrellas."

July 4, 2019: Melania Trump unveils her new initiative, #BeTheir, a program aimed at reducing misspellings on Twitter.

Aug. 28, 2019: Inspired by Great Britain, the governments of Spain and Portugal announce they will hold their own referendums on leaving the European Union, launching the unfortunate nicknames Spanxit and Porxit.

For the past two weeks, we in Loserland have been taking a look back at crazy ol' 2018, as the Empress invited you to enter any of 50 Style Invitational contests from the past year. Now it's time to take a look back at crazy ol' 2019, as we create our now-annual(ish) Year in Preview timeline. We appropriated (or inappropriated) the idea from 71-time Loser Malcolm Fleschner, who used to compose such pre-chronicles for his humor column in the San Jose Mercury News. Alas, Malcolm's column is no more, but the Invite soldiers on with fake news that hasn't even not-happened yet. **This week: Name some humorous news events to happen in 2019,** as in the examples above that Malcolm obligingly provided from his dusty crystal ball. Include a date only if it relates to the event (feel free to explain why); otherwise the Empress will add an arbitrary date, as above.

Submit entries at wapo.st/enter-invite-1311 (all lowercase).

Winner gets the **Lose Cannon**, our new Style Invitational trophy.

Second place receives one of the strangest promotional materials the Empress has ever discovered on the newsroom giveaway table: It's the **Oreo Music Box**, which consists of a four-inch-square cardboard box . . . that contains a wee electronic turntable, on which you place . . . an Oreo cookie. Move the "tone arm" into place and the cookie starts to spin, seeming to produce one of several futuristic electro-tunes that sound, I don't know, like something an Oreo cookie would play. I think it also will record your voice, but we don't have the directions. We will even throw in the Oreo cookie (regular version) that came with it, no doubt matured in flavor by sitting out for 4½ weeks. **Other runners-up** win our "You Gotta Play to Lose" Loser Mug or our "Whole Fools" Grocery Bag. Honorable mentions get one of our lusted-after Loser magnets, "We've Seen Better" or "Idiot Card." First Offenders receive only a smelly tree-shaped air "freshener" (FirStink for their first ink). **Deadline is Monday night, Dec. 31** — what, you have someplace to go? Results published Jan. 20 (online Thursday, Jan. 17). See general contest rules and guidelines at wapo.st/InvRules. The headline for this week's results is by Jesse Frankovich; Jeff Contompasis wrote the honorable-mentions subhead. Join the Style Invitational Devotees on Facebook at on.fb.me/invdev. "Like" 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.



PAT MYERS/THE WASHINGTON POST
This music box spins a real Oreo but does not play "C Is for Cookie."

claptrap, like Pat Robertson blaming the Haitian earthquake on "a pact with the Devil." (Michael Noonan, Fredericksburg, a First Offender)

Locabore: A dining companion who insists on telling you which farmers market every mouthful came from. (Frank Mullen III)

Pizza Hot: A type of pizza that cannot be delivered. (John Kupiec, Fairfax)

Lumph nodes: Cellulite. (Brendan Beary, Great Mills, Md.)

Lyft and separate: The 51st and 52nd ways to leave your lover. (John McCooley, Rehoboth Beach, Del.)

GrossFit: Exercise studio that does not have showers. (Mark Raffman)

Grudent: Practicing extreme caution, as in running the ball on

third and 12. (Ira Allen, Bethesda)

HALmart: A store where the self-checkout machine says, "I'm afraid I can't let you buy that, Dave." (Jesse Frankovich)

Hashtug: The compulsion to constantly check your phone for retweets. (Mike Gips, Bethesda)

Indignify: Humiliate while honoring. "The band indignified Trump's arrival by playing 'Hail to the Chief' on kazooos." (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

Mequel: Junior. (Jeff Contompasis)

Nap year: The first year of retirement. Actually, every year of retirement. (Ellen Raphaeli, Falls Church)

Neologasm: What happens when you think of the perfect word for this contest. (Bill Dorner, Indianapolis)

Paywail: Your indignant rant when you realize that the article you wanted to read online isn't free. (Mike Gips)

Pot Myers: The Hempress of the Style Invitational. (Gregory Koch, Falls Church)

Fail accompli: I'm a Loser this week! (Chris Doyle)

More honorable mentions in the online Invite at wapo.st/invite1311.

Still running — deadline Monday night, Dec. 24: Part 2 of our Year in Redo contest. See wapo.st/invite1310.

L.A. TIMES SUNDAY PUZZLE

EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

"QUICK VISIT" By C.C. BURNIKEL

ACROSS

1 Bowling pin wood
6 Princess Charlotte, to Harry
11 Hornets, e.g.
16 2008 TARP beneficiary
19 Think tank nuggets
20 "The Thin Blue Line" director Morris
21 Mexican month
22 Stage coach Hagen
23 "Chances that slipped away
26 Tricky bit
27 Type of well
28 Fulda tributary
29 Griller's flipper
31 Bird hangout
32 Romance novelist Hilderbrand
34 Gate datum: Abbr.
35 Windows forerunner
36 Type of jam in Sacher tortes
39 One of the original Warner Bros.
41 Sporty car roof
44 Long story
46 Way to go: Abbr.
48 Frees
52 Platform site: Abbr.
53 Twitter forwards, on Twitter
56 Kings Peak state
58 Just ___ bit
59 Ramallah-based org.
60 Make an ad spicier, say
62 "True view
65 Shower unit?
67 Gives someone a hand
68 Flake or Duckworth: Abbr.
69 Gin flavor
70 "Often the best choice, in retrospect
74 Catcher's place
77 Good times
79 Bring down
80 One often includes a colon
82 "Swindlers
87 Hearing range
88 Surreal ending?
89 ___ song
90 Trash
91 Pronoun for a princess
92 "Mr. Blue Sky" band

DOWN

1 Lombardy's capital
2 Place on a pedestal
3 Raid targets
4 Reason to challenge an out call
5 Those, in Tabasco
6 Sherpa, usually
7 Like a typical O. Henry story
8 Boot the ball
9 Dove's digs
10 Slip past
11 "Mandatory Fun" parodist, familiarly
12 Red or army follower
13 Earthshaking event
14 Gets ready
15 "Such a pity"
16 "Former Chilean dictator
17 Leaning type: Abbr.
18 Lady on stage
24 Place to tie up
25 Court dividers
30 "... and your little dog, too!" dog
33 "Ya think?"
37 Medicare prescription drug section
38 Jackson 5 member
40 Hearty pastry
42 Capital on a fjord
43 Menial laborer
44 Big bargain
45 "Bending over backward, say
47 Spiteful
49 Masters Tournament
50 Qtr.-ending month
51 Luau souvenirs
52 Much of Eastern Eur.: once
54 Tough's territory
55 Unwelcome giveaways
57 Emergency menu
61 Butterfingered
63 Tended tots
64 Classic grape sodas
66 Divide fairly
71 Giant among low-cost carriers: Abbr.
72 Four: Prefix
73 Biblical builder
75 Dough
76 Opposite of exo-
78 Like comfy slippers
81 "Three Coins ..." fountain
82 Punch deliverer
83 Venomous
84 "The Black Cat" author
85 "On the Bus With Rosa Parks" poet
86 Sights
88 Nicholas, for one
89 Bet money an "all in" player can't win
98 Loafer's quality
101 Actress Gilbert
103 Visit briefly ... and a hint to the answers to starred clues
104 Bigelow alternative
105 Lead-in to girl or boy
107 "Scarface" setting
108 '60s-'70s weep
109 ___ vocc: softly
111 Twangy-sounding
114 Tuckered out
115 Man with a code
116 Nagano-based printer giant
117 Provide fake cover for, e.g.
118 Sleeper agent
120 Texas MLBer
122 To be, to Benoit
125 Non-neutral atom
126 "Wish Tree" artist

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12/23/18 xwordeditor@aol.com ©2018 Tribune Content Agency, LLC.

Answers to last week's puzzle below.

HOROSCOPE

BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY | Dec. 23: This year you have the ability to see both sides of an issue. The challenge remains to find a solution that is workable for you and the other party involved. If you are single, it is hoped that you won't want to get into petty fights. You become more and more capable of having a quality bond with someone. If you are attached, the two of you could be working out some important issues. Leo loves to remind you of the fun of kissing and making up.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) You could feel pushed to perform or act in a certain way. Emotions may be intense and touchy. You mean to express your feelings in the most agreeable way for another person to hear. Do not be surprised by this person's strong stance.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) Reach out to a loved one you really care about. You might need to have a conversation with a person you care about but who can be inordinately cold or withdrawn. Avoid an ultimatum, if possible.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) A discussion in the morning will encourage you and a partner to clear up the remaining holiday details. By midafternoon, the holiday spirit hits you. Put on some music while you finish up any wrapping you have to do.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) Your mood appears to be contagious. You will need to jump over an obstacle that involves a loved one's resistance. Run errands and catch up on calls. Touch base with friends and start swapping good wishes for the holiday.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) You sense some rumbling behind the scenes. Your mind could be working overtime. You might feel as if you cannot come to a solution or find a good response. Caring exists between you and another person.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) Honor what is going on with a parent or older relative. An unanticipated expense emerges from out of the blue, which will encourage you to curb any frivolous spending. Still, you might opt to buy some small items for last-minute presents.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) You'll express the fervor of the holidays and encourage others to join in. A loved one could be cantankerous at best, but you'll help even this person out. Whatever you do naturally pleases others.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) You'll be thinking ahead with the understanding that a roadblock is about to appear. You will move through your errands efficiently. You instinctively might recognize that someone has been left out. Do some backtracking.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) You express unusual vitality and excitement about the next few days. Your creativity seems to feed off the holiday. You will delight a loved one just by sharing your thoughts and feelings.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) You could be off-kilter and not sure how to handle a difference of opinion between you and a significant other. You could feel pushed beyond what you can deal with. Maintain a sense of humor, and you'll be okay.

AQUARIUS</