

## DIVERSIONS

## THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

## The Ask Capades: Inking questions

BY PAT MYERS

**Week 1383** was an installment of our Questionable Journalism contest, in which readers chose a sentence from The Post or another paper and paired it with a question — totally out of context — that the sentence could answer.

## 4th place:

A. "Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life."  
Q. What advice is not usually given at drama school orientation? (*Tom Witte, Montgomery Village*)

## 3rd place:

A. "It is a great transportation option for folks as states and localities start to reopen."  
Q. Why are car manufacturers eagerly announcing new lines of hearses? (*Sam Mertens, Silver Spring*)

## 2nd place and the Japanese version of Dave Barry's American history book:

A. "Will some people be affected badly?"  
Q. Stephen Miller, what goal do you set for yourself at the start of each workday? (*Kevin Dopot, Washington*)

## And the winner of the Lose Cannon:

A. "The District will open 20 voting centers from May 22 to June 2 so voters can stagger the days they go to the polls."  
Q. What's being done to encourage drunks to vote? (*Ellen Raphaeli, Falls Church*)

## Who chose THESE? Honorable mentions

A. It received a \$10 million loan.  
Q. How is the pandemic affecting the Kushner tots' lemonade stand? (*Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.*)

A. At the moment, social distancing is the only effective countermeasure.

Q. How do I get my parents to stop asking me when I'm going to give them grandchildren? (*Hannah Seidel, Alexandria, a First Offender*)

A. "I'm just a big lump," he yells out. "Poopyhead. Poopyhead!"  
Q. How is the president practicing for this fall's debates? (*Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.*)

A. "If you don't need it, don't apply."  
Q. What instructions are on every bottle of Three-Alarm Habanero Crab Lice Ointment? (*Mark Raffman, Reston*)

A. There would still be time for hockey on the trampoline.  
Q. What's a line from "The Love Song of Salvador Dali"? (*Duncan Stevens*)

A. It's become a movement.  
Q. Mr. President, how is your famed gut instinct today? (*Kevin Dopot*)

A. "I nap more than I ever did before."  
Q. Jen O'Malley Dillon, what's it like being Joe Biden's campaign manager? (*Steve Smith, Potomac*)

A. "He eventually dumped me, and with distance and perspective I saw that he was obviously a terrible match for me — and one who treated me poorly in public."  
Q. What sentence appears simultaneously in the memoirs of Jeff Sessions, Sarah Sanders, Rick Perry, Kirsten Nielsen, John Kelly, James Mattis, Rex Tillerson . . . (*Tom Panther, Sharps, Va.*)

A. 52 percent agreed there is a "significant" reproducibility crisis in science.  
Q. Do most physicists and biologists report having too little sex? (*John Hutchins, Silver Spring*)

A. This is close to a carbon copy — maybe just a few degrees cooler."  
Q. Isn't this newfangled mimeograph machine awesome? (*Adrienne Cadik, Alexandria*)

A. "You do need to do that dance — how far away can I stand without you being able to reach the thing?"  
Q. How did Adam remember his early awkwardness with Eve? (*Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase*)

A. Add cilantro to the pot.  
Q. How does one stretch one's stash while in isolation? (Asking for a friend.) (*Sue Lin Chong, Baltimore*)

A. "This is a humbling job."  
Q. What tweet immediately led the FBI to realize that the president's Twitter feed had been hacked? (*John Hutchins*)



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

## New for Week 1387: Movie clips — drop letters from the middle of a title

**FINDING (N)EMO:** A father tries to reconcile with his estranged son by pretending to love angst teenage music.

**THE (L)EGO MOVIE:** "Everything is Awesome" about the Dear Leader. Brought to you by Fox News.

**BA(b)E: PIG IN THE CITY:** A Manhattan millennial introduces her boyfriend from Flyover Country to her snotty parents.

Just over a year ago, the Empress ran a contest asking readers to delete letters from the beginning or end of a movie title to make a new film. Now, at the suggestion of Hopelessly Addicted to Loserdom Duncan Stevens, we present the sequel. **This week: Delete one or more letters (they must be consecutive) from the middle of a movie title, and describe the resulting new movie, as in Duncan's suggestions above. You may change spacing, capitalization and punctuation.**

Submit up to 25 entries at [wapo.st/enter-invite-1387](http://wapo.st/enter-invite-1387) (no capitals in the Web address). Indicate the deleted letter(s) in parentheses; don't use contrasting typefaces, strike-throughs, etc.; the entry form's primitive little brain can't handle them. **Deadline is Monday, June 15; results will appear July 5 in print, July 2 online.**

**Winner gets the Lose Cannon, our Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a genuine big Bush-Quayle campaign button, from either 1988 or 1992, so it was for either a winning effort or a losing one. Picked up by the Empress at an estate sale, it's sure to evoke a little nostalgia even from your lefties for An Era of Some Sanity.**

**Other runners-up** win their choice of our "For Best Results, Pour Into Top End" Loser Mug or our "Whole Fools" Grocery Bag. Honorable mentions get one of our lusted-after Loser magnets, "Too-Weak Notice" or "Certificate of (de) Merit." First Offenders receive only a smelly tree-shaped air "freshener" (FirStink for their first ink). See general contest rules and guidelines at [wapo.st/InvRules](http://wapo.st/InvRules). The headline "Ask Capades" is by Chris Doyle; Roy Ashley wrote the honorable-mentions subhead. Join the Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at [on.fb.me/invdev](https://www.facebook.com/invdev); "like" the Style Invitational Ink of the Day on Facebook at [bit.ly/inkofday](https://www.facebook.com/bit.ly/inkofday); follow @StyleInvite on Twitter.

**The Style Conversational:** The Empress's weekly online column reviews each new contest and set of results. See [wapo.st/conv1387](http://wapo.st/conv1387).



The GOP in the Before Times: This week's second prize.

A. Now here we are in our homes, and we have to face the domestic sphere.

Q. So has your spouse gained any weight during the lockdown? (*Duncan Stevens*)

A. "Despite its smaller size, it had better airflow and speed."  
Q. How did John Bobbitt see the silver lining? (*Chris Damm, Charles Town, W.Va.*)

A. You'll love the way people light up around you.  
Q. What's the best thing about cleaning up a nuclear plant after an accident? (*Beverly Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.*)

A. Jehovah's Witnesses are not knocking on doors right now. They stopped back in March.  
Q. Why have two women been standing on my front porch for three months? (*Steve Smith*)

A. "Write down everything you've done today starting from the moment you woke up."  
Q. What did your bride say on the second day of your marriage that made you say "whuh-oh"? (*Chris Doyle*)

A. Fifty arms, no brain at all.  
Q. So who showed up at the Michigan capitol to protest the stay-at-home order? (*Chris Doyle; the*

original was describing certain starfish)

A. In key ways, America's representatives in Washington aren't much like America.

Q. Did you know that most members of Congress can name their district's member of Congress? (*Jesse Rifkin, Arlington*)

A. "If you can change the world, why can't you change your appearance?"

Q. What was the one question everyone wanted to ask Bill Gates? (*Alex Steelsmith, Kailua, Hawaii*)

A. To the delight of the kids, the family decided to add more concrete.

Q. What creative solution did the Smiths use to win the world record for the heaviest stuffed turkey? (*Drew Bennett, West Plains, Mo.*)

A. Depending on market conditions, it could also be at or even below fair market rental value.

Q. Why shouldn't I supplement my income by selling my body to the night? (*Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn*)

A. A flexible putty knife, a stiff brush and a vacuum might be helpful.

Q. "I need to fill in for the president's valet and do his hair and makeup! How will I even start?" (*Frank Mann, Washington*)

A. "Some of us could make a party of just the fried appetizers."

Q. What did the alligators say about the people flocking to Florida beaches? (*Jesse Frankovich, Lansing, Mich.*)

A. "This is not a joke."  
Q. What does the Empress say about most of my Invite entries? (*Sam Mertens*)

Still running — deadline Monday night, June 8: Our annual "grandfoals" contest. See [wapo.st/invite1386](http://wapo.st/invite1386).

## L.A. TIMES SUNDAY PUZZLE

EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

"CASE IN POINT"		81 Garfield's foil		115 "Neon" fish		14 Truckers' cargoes		52 So-so mark		80 Title for Gaga	
By MARK McCLAIN		82 Place for a nest		116 After that		15 High-hat challenge of a conviction?		53 Firm belief		83 Pole, for one	
ACROSS		84 Vishnu's quartet		117 Scientist deGrasse Tyson		17 Little shavers		54 Genesis patriarch		86 Farm workers of old	
1 Jousting's wear		85 Solemn promise		118 Alan in old films		20 Goes for oil		55 Town across the Thames from Windsor		88 Canterbury's county	
6 Language of 100,000+ Canadians		86 Get a hard copy		119 "My bad, Francesca"		24 Foster with Oscars		58 Composer Weill		89 Companion of Dorothy	
10 "Waterloo" group		87 Persian hunting dogs		DOWN		29 Bounder		61 Makes available to		90 Camel cousin	
14 Jr. challenge		88 Sing the praises of		1 Clemson's NCAA div.		30 Tiler's calculation		63 Hole-making tools		91 O'Connor who played Gabrielle on "Xena"	
18 Early "Masterpiece Theatre" host		89 Turn into cash		2 Large cross		32 Sickly		64 Pen part		93 Italian treats	
Alistair		90 Scott in an 1857 case		3 Pouty face		34 Flaxen, as hair		65 Milne creation		94 Handy	
19 Got the news		91 Satisfaction for a prosecuting attorney?		4 Often-fried veggie		35 Speed gauge		66 Control		95 Selling for, with "at"	
21 Champagne word		92 Mustard town		5 Upgrade technologically		36 Question in Matthew		67 Wagon road features		96 Waited in hiding	
22 Toy owner in "Toy Story" films		93 Blow a gasket		6 blank: Loire Valley wine		37 Heart and soul		68 Biblical scribe		97 First appearance	
23 Bailiff who keeps the jury in stitches?		102 Aggressive singers		7 Take exception to		38 "Titans"		69 Magistrate who specializes in agricultural litigation?		98 "Fighting" Indiana team	
25 Hotel unit		107 one's time: wait		8 Digs in		39 Not as much		70 "Cheers" bartender		99 Lofly home	
26 Egg-white omelet's lack		108 Tennis great		9 Prior to, in verse		42 Female lobster		71 URL element		100 World Cup org.	
27 Close friends, say		109 Action brought by a cowardly plaintiff?		10 Out of the country		43 "Would ___ to you?"		72 "Ta-ta, Thierry!"		101 Tiny bit of a min.	
28 Dramatic technique		112 Links org.		11 Literary Yorkshire family name		44 Pestors		73 Big ship		102 Titles of respect	
30 "The Sandbox" playwright		113 In ___: unmoved		12 Channel markers		46 Refreshes, with "out"		74 "I can do that"		103 Family Feud reruns channel	
31 Frigg's spouse		114 Spot cost		13 Drive-thru device		47 Walgreens rival		77 Carefully timed operation		104 "Good" cholesterol initials	
32 Parade features		115		14		48 Way over yonder		78 E-file org.		110 Mai ___	
33 Bull alligator sounds		116		15		49 Filmmaker		79 Awkward sorts		111	
34 Music played between attorneys' arguments?		117		16		Gibson		80		112	
39 Faithful spring?		118		17				81		113	
40 Pal played her in early films		119		18				82		114	
41 Invitation encl.		120		19				83		115	
42 First of an alley's 10		121		20				84		116	
45 Tribute creator		122		21				85		117	
46 Palm species		123		22				86		118	
48 Home of the Big 12's Cyclones		124		23				87		119	
50 Actress Ward		125		24				88		120	
51 "The Great" detective of kid-lit		126		25				89		121	
52 Polite argument on behalf of the accused?		127		26				90		122	
56 Ins. giant		128		27				91		123	
57 Bar group		129		28				92		124	
59 Toyota logo shape		130		29				93		125	
60 Chaucer works		131		30				94		126	
62 Prompts on stage		132		31				95		127	
63 Steam up		133		32				96		128	
65 Vanishing act word		134		33				97		129	
67 Send (to)		135		34				98		130	
70 Do the crawl, e.g.		136		35				99		131	
71 Cause of ruination		137		36				100		132	
75 Action film shooter		138		37				101		133	
76 Cartoon dialogue introduced as evidence?		139		38				102		134	
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