

# DIVERSIONS

## THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

### ReviSitcoms: Updated TV series plots

BY PAT MYERS

In Week 1403 we asked you to describe an episode of a past or current TV show updated for our current age. Many Losers suggested plots for “The Invaders” or other ET shows in which the aliens take one look and hurry back into the mother ship.

#### 4th place:

**Marcus Welby, M.D.:** “I wish I could save your husband, Mrs. Johnson, but — oops, no more Obamacare.” (Jon Gearhart, Des Moines)

#### 3rd place:

**The Beverly Hillbillies:** The California wildfires threaten the Clampett mansion. Elly May flees to the cement pond, where she’s rescued by 600 firemen. (Allen Breon, Clarksville)

#### 2nd place and the tongue-sticking-out face mask:

Tonight on **MacGyver**, the world hangs in the balance trying to find a way to protect itself from covid-19. But Angus faces his most daunting challenge yet: He has only a square of cloth and two elastic bands. (Sue Lin Chong, Baltimore)

#### And the winner of the Lose Cannon:

**All in the Family:** After a change of heart, the bigoted guy from Queens lets his methead son-in-law be in charge of everything. (Brendan Beary, Great Mills, Md.)

#### Dreck to TV: Honorable mentions

**Candid Camera:** The president thinks he’s on the phone with Vladimir Putin, but it’s really Sacha Baron Cohen. “Smile!” (Jeffrey Schamis, Washington, a First Offender)

**Friends:** Furloughed during the pandemic, the gang moves into an even more luxurious apartment and has more disposable income. (Mike Gips, Bethesda)

**The Brady Bunch** misses out on first place in the neighborhood talent show with their imitation of a Zoom call because Alice doesn’t realize she is on mute. (Mike Phillips, Chevy Chase)

**Buffy the Vampire Slayer:** Our undead-battling heroine meets her match when Stephen Miller moves to town. (Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)

Since so many countries have banned U.S. travelers, this season’s **Amazing Race** will be filmed entirely on the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. (Lee Graham, Rockville)

Timmy falls down a well, and **Lassie** decides that he’s safer down there. (Pamela Love, Columbia)

In a reunion of **The Apprentice**, the contestants fail to develop a covid-19 vaccine before the 2020 election. Inexplicably, Trump fires Obama, who wasn’t even on the show. (Frank Mann, Washington)

**The Cosby Show:** Forty women accuse Dr. Huxtable of abuse. Police arrive at his house and shoot Theo. (Ben Aronin, Washington)

**Parks and Recreation:** Leslie and her staff try to come up with a zany new scheme to raise \$100 a week to supplement unemployment checks for half the town. (Matthew Blair, Washington, a First Offender)

**Star Trek:** Kirk, faced with losing his captaincy, agrees to a debate. Spock listens to him bluster and mutters, “That is not logical” 219 times. (Duncan Stevens)

**I Love Lucy:** Alex Jones (Jackie Gleason) hires Lucy to demonstrate his new covid-19 cure, “Superblue fluoride-free toothpaste infused with nano silver,” on live television. But neither realizes that it turns the user’s teeth — and face — bright blue. (Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)

**House Hunters:** An agent tries to find a house for a D.C. couple being evicted in January, when they’re more than \$400 million in debt. (Rob Cohen, Potomac)

**Sesame Street:** Elmo teaches kids how to avoid deep state Satan-worshippers. Brought to you by Q. (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

**Sesame Street:** The Count teaches children the numbers: “199,998 . . . 199,999 . . . 200,000!” (Jesse Rifkin, Arlington)

**The Flintstones:** Dino comes down with covid-19 after Fred screams “Wilma!” at the top of his



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

### New contest for Week 1407: Your ad space (or space ad) here

Did you hear that NASA is renting out its astronauts to take pictures of your product in space? Yup, Estee Lauder is paying \$17,500 an hour for them to photograph its moisturizer “serum” inside the International Space Station, for use in the company’s social media ads. As space station acting director Robyn Gatens told NPR, NASA hopes to “open up business opportunities for companies that may never have thought about doing activities in space.”

Ooh, we’ll help you think about it, companies! **This week: Come up with an idea for promoting some commercial product or service (a) in space, (b) in a prison, (c) at a kindergarten, (d) by a football team or (e) in the White House.** While the astronauts won’t be using the products or endorsing them as such, we know it won’t take 5 billion years for *that* to happen; go ahead and assume that the people there can use the product, sing a jingle, whatever.

Submit up to 25 entries at [wapo.st/enter-invite-1407](http://wapo.st/enter-invite-1407) (no capitals in the Web address). **Deadline is Monday, Nov. 2** (why, you think you’ll have something else on your mind that day?); results will appear Nov. 22 in print, Nov. 19 online.

**Winner gets the Lose Cannon**, our Style Invitational trophy — or possibly its replacement (TBA). Second place receives the best promotional stuffed mascot we’ve offered since Fleet’s Eneman: It’s **Petey P. Cup**, a cuddly toy urine-sample beaker complete with little splashy-looking yellow sides, representing cuddly HealthPartners insurance. Donated by 48-time Loser Marleen May.

**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, “No ‘Bility” or “Punder-achiever.” 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 “ReviSitcoms” is by Jon Gearhart; Chris Doyle wrote the honorable-mentions subhead. Join the Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at [on.fb.me/invdev](https://on.fb.me/invdev); “like” the Style Invitational Ink of the Day on Facebook at [bit.ly/inkofday](https://bit.ly/inkofday); and follow @StyleInvite on Twitter.

● **The Style Conversational:** The Empress’s weekly online column discusses each new contest and set of results. See this week’s at [wapo.st/conv1407](http://wapo.st/conv1407).



#### Ironically, our number two prize this week: A cuddly plush urine-sample beaker.

lungs. This leads to a most unfortunate ending for the world’s dinosaur population. (Larry Gomberg, Lake Frederick, Va., a First Offender)

**Fawty Towers:** Innkeeper Basil Fawty locks horns with a loudmouthed American guest in a MAGA hat. Just as Fawty orders him to leave, the U.K. institutes a mandatory 14-day quarantine for U.S. visitors. (Jonathan Jensen, Baltimore)

**Seinfeld:** Responding to the pandemic, the four buddies reprise “The Contest” to determine who can go the longest without touching their faces. (Andrew Rosenberg, New York, a First Offender; Bruce Carlson, Alexandria)

**Downton Abbey:** Lord and Lady Grantham struggle with the challenges created by social distancing — especially dressing themselves. (Jonathan Jensen)

On the reboot of **Dragnet**, Sgt. Friday’s opening says: “This is the city, Los Angeles, California. I work here. I carry a badge. And full riot gear. And several cans of tear gas. And a rifle that shoots rubber bullets. And a fire hose. And a body camera that works, sometimes.” (Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase)

**The Dick Van Dyke Show:** Alan Brady blames Laura when the straps of the mask she sewed for him dislodge his toupee on national television. (Robert Schechter, Dix Hills, N.Y.)

**Bill Nye the Science Guy:** This show has been canceled as unpatriotic by executive order. (Beverly Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

**All in the Family:** Archie loses his job, comes down with covid-19, and still votes for Trump. (Mark Raffman, Reston)

Under mask-wearing and social distancing requirements, **The Bachelor** offers roses to women based on the compatibility of their reading tastes and moral philosophies. (Wendy Shang, Falls Church)

**The Andy Griffith Show:** Under political pressure to defund the sheriff’s office, Mayberry authorities make Barney Fife turn over the bullet that he has to keep in his shirt pocket. (Mike Gips)

**Mary Tyler Moore:** When WJM-TV is acquired by Fox, Mary is issued a “Make America Great Again” hat that she gaily tosses into Lake Minnetonka. (Frank Mann)

**Wonder Woman:** Diana starts a lucrative side hustle renting out her Lasso of Truth to the White House press corps. (Sam Mertens, Silver Spring)

**Beverly Hills 90210:** Brandon and Kelly, tired of California wildfires, decide to relocate. Next season: “Wichita 67210.” (Duncan Stevens)

**The Twilight Zone:** Imagine, if you will, a world where you’re giving a big work presentation and you don’t have to imagine everyone is in their underwear, because they actually are . . . (Jesse Frankovich, Lansing, Mich.)

**Welcome Back, Kotter:** Class gets off to a rocky start when Horsack incessantly clicks “Raise Hand” and types “OH! OH!” in the chat box. (Eric Nelkin, Silver Spring)

**Ellen** announces she has covid-19, but her staff is safe, as they are never permitted to breathe the same air. (Steve Smith, Potomac)

**Still running — deadline Monday night, Oct. 26: our contest for acrostic poems about the news. See [wapo.st/invite1406](http://wapo.st/invite1406).**

## L.A. TIMES SUNDAY PUZZLE

EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

### “A SERIES OF MISSTEPS”

By ALAN OLSCHWANG

#### ACROSS

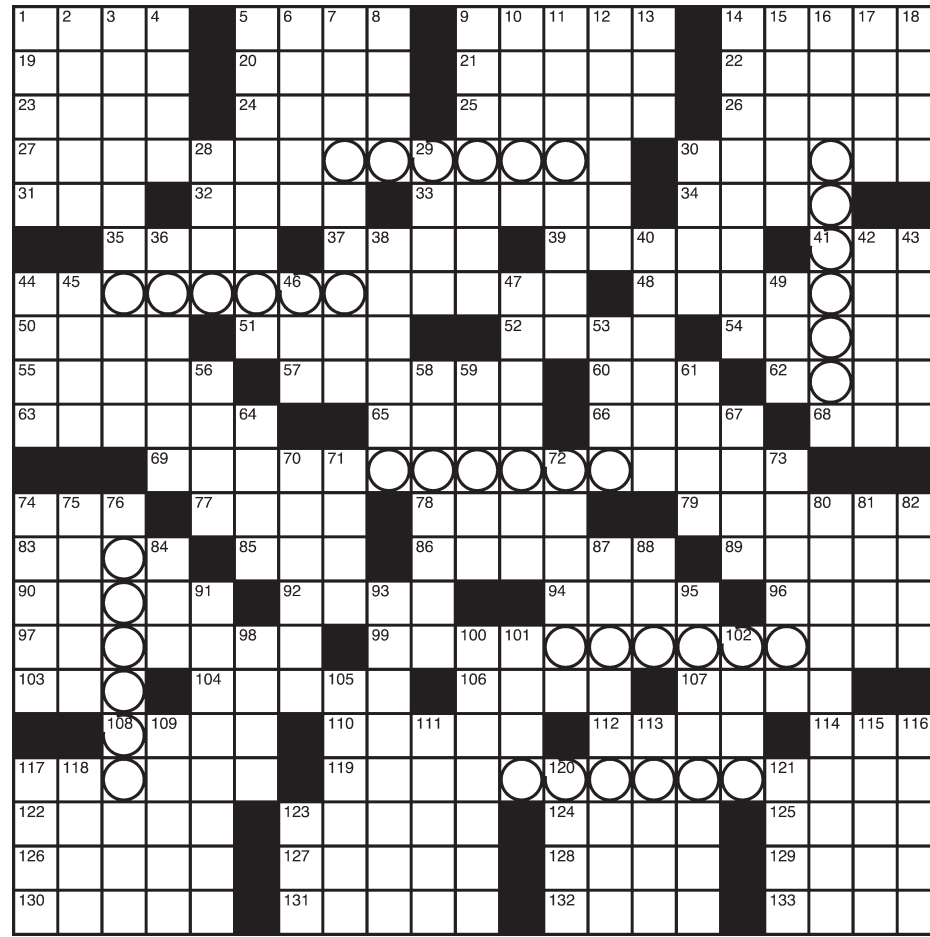
- 1 South American rodent
- 5 “Little Man \_\_\_\_”
- 9 Minor cuts
- 14 Blot with a tissue
- 19 God with a quiver
- 20 Times often named for music genres
- 21 Refined, as skills
- 22 Seed-to-be
- 23 One
- 24 It’s rarely paid to a car dealer
- 25 Big game name
- 26 Richest person in the world before Bezos
- 27 Many an investment
- 30 Treats with malice
- 31 Sr.-supporting component
- 32 Encl. with postage
- 33 I-opening company?
- 34 Revolutionary War name
- 35 Cambodian cash
- 37 Flag
- 39 Slothful sort
- 41 Some colas
- 44 MTV Video Music Award category
- 48 Invited to the penthouse
- 50 Loss nos., perhaps
- 51 British Isles tongue
- 52 Pride letters
- 54 Skyline feature
- 55 Store
- 57 Rice, e.g.
- 60 Sushi serving
- 62 K2 locale
- 63 “Wanna bet?”
- 65 Southernmost of the Marianas
- 66 Goddess of marriage and family
- 68 LBJ beagle
- 69 Where many scenes are presented
- 74 Cornfield call
- 77 Up start or follower
- 78 For fear that
- 79 Apply forcefully, as the brakes
- 83 Subway fare?
- 85 West Coast pro
- 86 Newspaper supplement, maybe

- 89 Fern seed
- 90 First of 12
- 92 Zap
- 94 Cab category
- 96 Corporate honcho
- 97 Meat-curing compound
- 99 Used one’s clout
- 103 Summer wear
- 104 69-Across presentation
- 106 Simplify
- 107 Family reunion attendee
- 108 Arcade game word
- 110 Preferred group on the field
- 112 Do a rest stop machine’s job
- 114 You, in Germany
- 117 Dark-colored cigar
- 119 Freegan’s activity
- 122 Cell terminal
- 123 Anaheim athletes, in local sportscastrs
- 124 Banned orchard spray

#### DOWN

- 1 “Goodfellas” Oscar winner
- 2 Loudly cheering
- 3 Formal outfit accessory
- 4 “Just \_\_\_\_”
- 5 Fudge, perhaps
- 6 La Scala solos
- 7 Pepsi Challenge
- 8 Uruguy’s
- 9 Chinese dog breed
- 10 Waiter’s disappointment

- 11 Like many an injured arm
- 12 Brewed
- 13 Star Wars initials
- 14 Places to walk with best friends?
- 15 Be of use to
- 16 It’s often passed at family meals
- 17 On the protected side
- 18 Melanie’s “Working Girl” role
- 28 Secondhand
- 29 Quick movement
- 30 “\_\_\_\_ the One”: 1996 Aniston/Diaz movie
- 36 “We’re good to go”
- 38 Long cold spell
- 40 Tizzy
- 42 First female Nobelist
- 43 Asparagus unit
- 44 Kiss, in Cancun
- 45 Bk. before Job
- 46 Monopoly props.
- 47 The Rebels of the SEC, familiarly
- 49 Eco-conscious org.
- 53 Thai dough
- 56 Expressions of skepticism
- 58 Regular hangout
- 59 Encumbered
- 61 \_\_\_\_ West, wife of DC Comics’ Flash
- 64 One who gets what’s coming
- 67 They may be torn on the field: Abbr.
- 70 Augusta National shrub
- 71 Musical motif, to Verdi
- 72 Firewood units
- 73 Finishes up on the green
- 74 Stands sound
- 75 Eagle’s home
- 76 Records
- 80 Biblical peak
- 81 Not a dup.
- 82 Takes in and keeps
- 84 Poetic contraction
- 87 Improve, as an urban area
- 88 NFL “sixes”
- 91 Determined by the stars, as time
- 93 Pancake-making aids
- 95 Brother of Peter, briefly
- 98 Early smartphone
- 100 Doesn’t bother to check the water first
- 101 Hightails it
- 102 Fashion’s Gerreich
- 105 Chair titles
- 109 Invasive vine
- 111 Ham it up
- 113 Rub off
- 115 Anatomical button type
- 116 “Yipes!”
- 117 Uxmal danizen
- 118 Auth. unknown
- 120 Summer shades
- 121 Grand Canyon adjective
- 123 “Scots Wha \_\_\_\_”: patriotic song



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Answers to last week’s puzzle below.

## HOROSCOPE

BY MADALYN ASLAN

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY | Oct. 25:** Creative, physical and self-sufficient, you hammer away at an idea until it manifests. This year, you surpass even your previous successes. If single, the sooner you find an affectionate, responsive and understanding life partner the better. If attached, if a tie has outlived its usefulness, this is the time to let go. If not, your bond only becomes more passionate. Leo loves life.

**ARIES** (March 21-April 19) Membership in an organization can be a catalyst for happiness and accomplishment. And on this laziest day, you are not very lazy. You get motivated and galvanized by your new connection and go about making exciting new plans.

**TAURUS** (April 20-May 20) Creative ideas help you today. An admirer gives you a positive recommendation. Dedication to a worthwhile mutual interest could enhance a love bond. There are so many positive projects and relationships brightening the hours.

**GEMINI** (May 21-June 20) Today accents a special link to the long-ago and faraway. A recollection by a grandparent shared with a grandchild can play a part in your awakening, and you get back in touch with friends from long ago and at a distance.

**CANCER** (June 21-July 22) Listen to others’ viewpoints. Compromise and negotiate. Today promises surprises, and you might even find that a whole new lifestyle is beginning and an old lifestyle is ending. Be receptive to the unexpected.

**LEO** (July 23-Aug. 22) Your social prospects will be really promising. A relationship with someone a little older or younger could be very successful. A dream offers surprising new insights about a relationship. Stay comfortable and get plenty of rest.

**VIRGO** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) Today has a message about your health. Take time to rest and nourish your body. Listen to its needs. Make any necessary changes related to wellness and all will be fine. Writing is favored.

**LIBRA** (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) A really nurturing and promising

relationship is likely to become a part of your life. Today is especially good for either investing in an existing relationship or seeking a new one. Artistic Libra loves museums or art galleries.

**SCORPIO** (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) It’s a good day for lounging around at home, with all the week’s pressures off. Today might find you making plans for residential changes, such as redecorating or repair work, and brings wonderful opportunities therein.

**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) Rapid responses are the path to success. Answer all correspondence and return all phone calls. It will actually be quite a busy Sunday, with lots of connecting and laughter. Let a partner have his or her bad mood if they want it.

**CAPRICORN** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) Conversations will revolve around business and earning powers. A creative talent or project can have income-producing potential. Much can be accomplished today. A sense of camaraderie builds, and you’re truly thankful for your friends.

**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) Your personality and appearance impress others. Perfect your ability in a sport, audition for a role in community theater, or take a special trip. You can acquire a deeper understanding of an important subject.

**PISCES** (Feb. 19-March 20) Today will probe the depths of your mysterious 12th house. Suddenly, you’ll cherish your privacy. And discretion is more important than usual. You’ll also be alone more than usual. There’s so much that can be accomplished.

### Answers to last week’s puzzle.

