

# The Washington Post

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## Style Invitational Week 1052: Clue Us In — a backward crossword; plus Ask Backwards

By [Pat Myers](#), Published: December 19

Exactly 100 years ago Saturday, the New York World published a diamond-shaped ["word-cross" puzzle](#) containing such clues as "a talon" and "the fibre of the gomuti palm," and untold millions of enthusiasts have been filling in little squares with the word for the fibre of the gomuti palm ("doh") ever since.

And exactly six years ago (well, six years ago this month) The Style Invitational published its first Clue Us In puzzle, and untold dozens of enthusiasts have sent us a list of clues for the words in an already filled-in grid.

But we still haven't used "doh." Maybe next time.

Above is the solution to a crossword by Bob Klahn that ran in The Post on Dec. 2. **This week: Come up with up to 25 creative, funny clues for the words and multi-word terms that appear in the grid.** (You can see Bob's actual creative clues at [bit.ly/grid1052](http://bit.ly/grid1052), along with a printable grid.) The clues should be very brief but don't have to be quite as short as required for a real crossword. You can see the results of our last backward crossword — winning entry: "RAH: The Egyptian god who demanded sacrifices of human pyramids," by Barbara Turner — at [bit.ly/invite1010](http://bit.ly/invite1010).

Winner gets the [Inkin' Memorial](#), the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives yet another of our prize bottles of Critter-Infused Elixir From the East: This one, brought to us directly from Vietnam by Hall of Fame Loser Stephen Dudzik, contains both a scorpion and a snake! ([This photo](#) is from Wikipedia, but it looks much like it.) Stephen is once again playing host to the Losers' Post-Holiday Party next month, so maybe it's a good thing we took this baby off his hands. (If you win and are not of drinking age, or if you live too far for us to ship it to you safely, or if you just don't want it, we'll substitute another prize.)

**Other runners-up** win their choice of a yearned-for [Loser Mug](#) or the ardently desired "Whole Fools" [Grossery Bag](#). Honorable mentions get a lusted-after Loser magnet, either the [Po' Wit Laureate](#) or [Puns of Steel](#). First Offenders receive a smelly tree-shaped air "freshener" ([FirStink](#) for their first ink). E-mail entries to [losers@washpost.com](mailto:losers@washpost.com) or fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Monday, Dec. 30; results published Jan. 19 (online Jan. 16). No more than 25 entries per entrant per week. Include "Week 1052" in your e-mail subject line or it might be ignored as spam. Include your real name, postal address and phone number with your entry. See contest rules and guidelines at [wapo.st/InvRules](http://wapo.st/InvRules). The subhead for this week's honorable mentions is by Tom Witte; the alternative headline in the "next week's results" line was suggested by both Kevin Dopart and Tom Witte. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group — new members get their names anagrammed as a welcome — on Facebook at [on.fb.me/invdev](http://on.fb.me/invdev), and click "like"

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on Style Invitational Ink of the Day at [bit.ly/inkofday](http://bit.ly/inkofday).

## Report from Week 1048

our perennial Ask Backwards contest, in which we offer up 12 answers and you supply the questions:

### The winner of the Inkin' Memorial

A. The Wicked Witch of the Waist

Q. Who said, "Bring me the girl, and the little dog, too — but substitute a small salad for the fries, and can I have the dressing on the side?"? (*Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.*)

### 2. Winner of the "[Biggest Loser](#)" and "[Christmas Pickle](#)" ornaments:

A. 140 characters on baloney

Q. What is: O baloney has a key job

Up hi upon the Hill

In a sea of fog it covers up

Each newly minted bill

U may get mad or even cry

My hope has never run so hi

The 535 Club all get by

On B A L O N E Y (*Barry Koch, Catlett, Va.*)

3. A. The Toronto mayor's latest revelation

Q. What is "I'm Marion Barry's secret son!"? (*Jeff Wolfson, Potomac, Md., who got his only previous Invite ink in 1998; Brad Alexander, Wanneroo, Australia*)

4. A. Two and a Half Wise Men

Q. Who brought gold, frankincense, and . . . Dude! Where's my myrrh? (*Jonathan Hardis, Gaithersburg, Md.*)

### Irrational enquirers: honorable mentions

#### 4 MILES, 27 POUNDS

How much spaghetti does Chris Christie eat in a week? (*Bird Waring, Larchmont, N.Y.*)

What distance must be walked, and how much door-knocking, for a mayoral candidate in Kasaan, Alaska, to reach all voters? (*Jim Stiles, Rockville, Md.*)

What are Olive Oyl's vital statistics? (*Roger Dalrymple, Gettysburg, Pa.*)

#### THE WICKED WITCH OF THE WAIST

Who terrified the Cowardly Loin? (*Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.*)

Whose one weird trick can melt away your extra holiday pounds using only a bucket of water? (*Dan Ramish, Washington*)

Who is the goblin who lives in your closet and shrinks your clothes at night? (*Robyn Carlson, Keyser, W.Va.*)

Who was the sworn enemy of Oz — and Lbs? (*Steve Honley, Washington*)

#### MEN AT TWERK

What do you call a group of 120-pound guys operating jackhammers? (*Mike Gips, Bethesda, Md.*)

By what name is the all-male fan club called the Wrecking Balls also known? (*Rob Huffman, Fredericksburg, Va.*)

Who sang, "I come from a gland Down Under"? (*Chris Doyle*)

What is the title of the long lost film clip of Fred Astaire and Gene Kelly dancing cheek to cheek? (*Cheryl Davis, Arlington, Va.*)

What was the name of the band One Direction before someone realized no actual men were involved? (*Todd DeLap, Fairfax, Va.*)

### **TWO AND A HALF WISE MEN**

Now do you see, Billy, why we do not roughhouse next to the Christmas decorations? (*Heather Spence, New York*)

Who said "Hail, King of the Jews," "We come to offer Thee homage" and "I think you need to change the kid's diaper"? (*Brian Allgar, Paris*)

What was on the menu for the Donner Christmas Party? (*Bird Waring*)

What was the unfortunate result when Amahl left his crutch in the doorway where someone could trip over it? (*Heather Spence*)

### **140 CHARACTERS ON BALONEY**

What is the final exam at Sailor Jerry's Tattoo School? (*Bird Waring*)

What show was shelved in favor of Disney on Ice? (*Cheryl Davis*)

What comes from [Tweets & Watson](#)? (*Jonathan Hardis*)

What is even less titillating than one character tweeting his salami? (*Michael Jacobs, Columbia, Md.*)

What do they call lunch break at the [Pirandello play](#) festival auditions? (*Ward Kay, Vienna, Va.*)

### **FOIE GRAS ICE CREAM**

Why shouldn't France have been given the recipe for ice? (*Michael Polillo, Stevensville, Md., a First Offender*)

What flavor is Ben and Jerry's "It Ain't Chopped Liver"? (*Ward Kay*)

What dessert is so delicious you just want to force it down your esophagus? (*Dan Ramish*)

Which French export are economists predicting will be as successful in America as Renault? (*Lawrence McGuire, Waldorf, Md.*)

What delicacy was mistakenly created when an American frozen treat company instructed a French supplier: "Deliver immediately!" (*Beverley Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.*)

### **RGX**

Who's the overhyped starting quarterbot for the 2160 Washington Snyders? (*Rob Huffman*)

What the name of the new Mazda model that runs well but has trouble passing? (*Ward Kay*)

### **OMAHA BIN LADEN**

Who sells afterlife-virgins insurance? (*David Patch, Toledo, Ohio, a First Offender*)

What movie trailer opens with the line "The steaks have never been more deadly"? (*Damon Thompson, Washington*)

Who set up his headquarters in a cave in Boring Boring? (*Ira Allen, Bethesda, Md.*)

What is the CIA's name for an "enhanced interrogation" technique involving an ear of corn? (*Mark Raffman*)

Who put the "gee" in jihad? (*Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase, Md.*)

### **A PANINI, A PINEAPPLE AND A PINCUSHION**

You're out of TP. In what order would you use these items? (*Heather Spence; Steve Honley*)

What props did Miley try and discard in favor of the foam finger? (*Paul Edlund, Frederick, Md., a First Offender; Andy Bassett, New Plymouth, New Zealand*)

What's in the swag bag for the Italian Hawaiian Cross-Stitchers' annual luncheon? (*Marni Penning Coleman, Falls Church, Va.*)

In Zimbabwe, what three items are you required to eat before you can register as an opposition candidate? (*Andy Bassett*)

### **THE TORONTO MAYOR'S LATEST REVELATION**

What is the admission that he doesn't like hockey, beer, maple syrup OR Gordon Lightfoot? (*Rob Huffman; Tom Witte, Montgomery Village, Md.*)

What is "When I'm really drunk, I snort the white lines on city streets"? (*Chris Doyle*)

What will push an Iranian nuclear explosion off the front page? (*Doug Hamilton, College Park, Md.*)

What is that his real first name is Edsel? (*Tom Witte*)

### **AN ANSWER FOR THE NEXT ASK BACKWARDS:**

What will cause you to invent several genuinely funny entries while reading the results of the next Ask Backwards? (*Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.*)

### **THE EMPRESS'S BIRTHDAY**

What drove candle wax futures to an all time high? (*Jeff Hazle, Woodbridge, Va.*)

In the fart-control underwear industry, Black Friday falls immediately before what date? (*Frank Osen*)

What day are the [Moscow stables](#) closed? (*Ward Kay*)

**Still running — deadline Monday night: Our anagram contest; see [bit.ly/invite1051](http://bit.ly/invite1051).**

See the Empress's online column [The Style Conversational](#) (published late Thursday), in which she discusses today's new contest and results along with news about the Loser Community — and you can vote for your favorite among the inking entries, since you no doubt figured the Empress chose the wrong winner. If you'd like an e-mail notification each week when the Invitational and Conversational are posted online, [sign up here](#) or write to the Empress at [losers@washpost.com](mailto:losers@washpost.com) (note that in the subject line) and she'll add you to the mailing list. And on Facebook, join the far more lively group [Style Invitational Devotees](#) and chime in there.

**Next week's results: Be Rating, or For Immature Audiences Only**, our contest for new movie ratings to warn viewers of particular bothersome qualities. See [bit.ly/invite1049](http://bit.ly/invite1049).

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