

Entertainment

Style Invitational Week 1381: Let’s get equinoxious with fictoids

+ Add to list

Tell us some false trivia about spring. Plus winning and Losing quarantine project ideas.



(Bob Staake for The Washington Post)



(Bob Staake for The Washington Post)

By **Pat Myers**

April 23, 2020 at 9:56 a.m. EDT

(Click [here to skip down](#) to this week’s quarantine projects and activities)

In Australia, children hunt eggs laid by the Easter Platypus.

In April 1862, Union Gen. George McClellan was unable to mount an assault on Richmond because of a huge tactical error: He attempted to move south from D.C. through Fairfax County on a Friday evening.

Contrary to widespread misinformation, a 13-year analysis of foreign material in raindrops that fell in April revealed a total absence of May flowers.

We continue this week with our series of four contests, suggested by Hall of Fame Loser Jeff Contompasis, for total BS about the seasons. We started with “Lyin’ in Winter”; **this week, tell us some untrue trivia about springtime or things that happen or happened in the spring**, as in the examples above. The first was by the Empress’s handy-dandy Royal Consort, Mark Holt; the second is an inking entry by Nan Reiner from an earlier fictoid contest; the third is just your typical fake news out of The Washington Post.

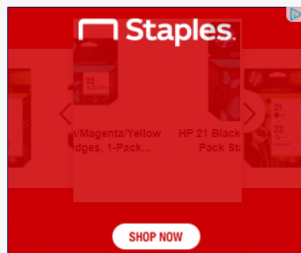




Hey, wait! In Australia, Easter's in autumn! Well, it's spring *here*. Where it counts — Amurca. (*Good catch nevertheless by Jeff Contompasis, who pointed that out to the Empress after we published this morning. That is classic JefCon.*)

Submit up to a total of 25 entries at wapo.st/enter-invite-1381 (no capitals in the Web address). Deadline is Monday, May 4; results will appear May 24 in print, May 21 online.

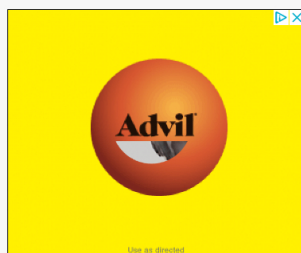
Winner gets the Lose Cannon, our Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives some food that's a game! Or, more precisely, "food" that's a "game": It's **Bean Boozled** — fifth edition! — a box of Jelly Belly jelly beans in both regular and "weird & wild flavors." So you flick a spinner and get a bean that's either Peach or Barf; Coconut or Spoiled Milk; Toasted Marshmallow or (new!) Stink Bug. And oh so many more. Donated by Loser Mike Gips.



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. The headline "The Hunker Games" was submitted independently by Kevin Dopart, Tom Witte and Beverley Sharp; Jesse Frankovich wrote the honorable-mentions subhead. Join the 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, published late Thursday afternoon, April 23, reviews each new contest and set of results. This week, the announcement of the Year 27 Loser of the Year, an honor usually announced at the Losers' own banquet, the now-postponed Flushies. Check out the Convo at wapo.st/conv1381.

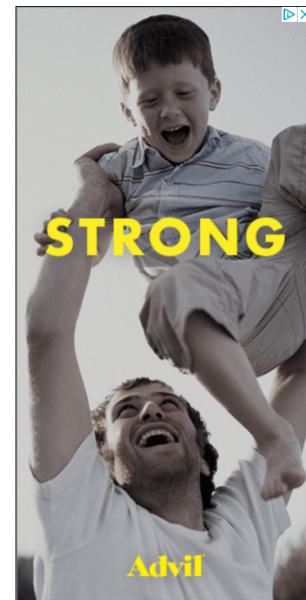
And from *The Style Invitational* four weeks ago . . .



In **Week 1377** we asked for humorous ideas for games and projects that homebound

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No one will ever see this play, and no actors are coming either. But the show will go on. 



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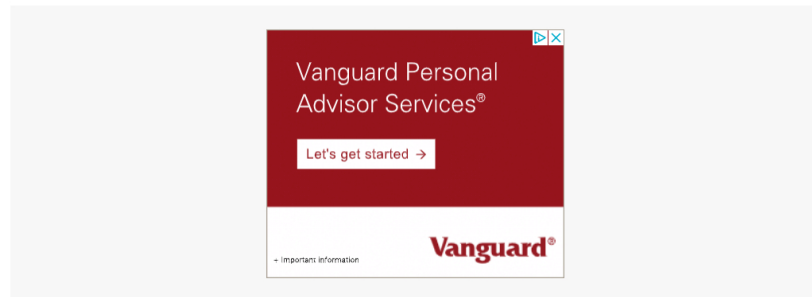
families could do with stuff that was lying around the house. **Trump Briefing Bingo** seems to be right up there with numerous activities involving empty wine bottles and putting the pets on a Roomba. One person suggested a game of **Pee Jumping**, to see how high an arc another person could jump over. That person was a man.

4th place:

Fill a latex glove with warm water and shake hands with it to remember what human contact was like. (*Sam Mertens, Silver Spring, Md.*)

3rd place:

Easter may be over, but it's not too late for a hunt that the whole family will be eager to participate in. Just change your home WiFi password, write it on a slip of paper (or the inside of a rubber glove) and hide it somewhere in your house! (*Kevin Dopart, Washington*)



2nd place

and the *cute little erasers in the shape of dim sum*:

Socially Distant Twister on individual mats. (*Daniel Helming, Trenton, N.J.*)

And the winner of the Lose Cannon:

Finally, you have time to deal with those dings and splotches on the dining room wall: Just get a few picture frames and hang them around the problem areas. When you can have visitors again, they'll admire your collection of contemporary art. (*John O'Byrne, Dublin*)

Home moaners: Honorable mentions

Dump the contents of all your jigsaw puzzles into one box and create a single picture. If the pieces don't exactly fit, just push really hard, or tear them a little. So much less frustrating! (*Stephen Dudzik, Olney, Md.*)

No toilet paper? No problem! With a few short steps, you can repurpose an ordinary garden hose into a high-powered bidet! (*Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.*)



The game of Eternity: Four players sit six feet apart and watch a clock. (*Lawrence*



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McGuire, Waldorf, Md.)

Below: **Cut out chains of properly distanced paper dolls.** Fold them back up for a “reopen” protest. (Kevin Dopart)



(Honorable mention: Kevin Dopart, Washington)

How to conserve toilet paper: Before going to the bathroom, use duct tape to cover any areas that might become soiled. Afterward, simply rip off the tape and you'll have perfectly clean skin without wasting a single square! (Jesse Frankovich, Lansing, Mich.)

Grow out your armpit hair and tie on two sets of wind chimes. Great for alerting people that you're approaching on the sidewalk. (Frank Mann, Washington)

Exercise challenge: Cue up a workout video and compete to tally the most “workout units” — your choice of beer, pork rinds, Pop-Tarts, etc. — consumed on the couch before the video ends. (Allen Haywood, Washington)

Below: **After reading yet another Tolkien novel**, envision your kitchen in a whole new way. (Teenager and First Offender Bruce Yanovitch, “imprisoned at home with my family,” Midlothian, Va.)



Hey, guys with a particular fetish: Now is your chance to wear women's underwear on your head all the time, claiming it's a face mask. Wear a different pretty color each day! (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village, Md.)

An advertisement for Office Depot and OfficeMax. It features three products: an HP 62XL ink cartridge for \$61.89, an HP printer for \$329.99 (reduced from \$329.99 to \$229.99), and an HP 57 ink cartridge for \$67.89. A "Shop Now" button is located at the bottom right of the ad.

Make paper airplanes out of your unused plane tickets. *(Mark Raffinan, Reston, Va.)*

Why buy those expensive Lincoln Logs? Instead, use your imagination to build all kinds of structures with used swabs from the covid-19 testing site in the FedEx Field parking lot. *(Jonathan Solomon, Rockville, Md., a First Offender)*

Rig up a Toilet Paper Quota Enforcer!



Sam Mertens

Create the Perfect Office Environment: 1. Find a quiet room in your home. 2. Furnish it with your most comfortable chair, a small desk, a computer and a large video monitor. 3. Close the door and put on noise-canceling headphones. 4. Create an auto-reply saying you're out sick. 5. Relax in comfort as you binge-watch every episode of "The Office." *(Steve Smith, Potomac, Md.)*

Photo below: **When I used to go for a walk, I** sometimes forgot to take the necessary precautions. That's why I made Warning Man and put him outside my front door. With the help of a tripod, a coat hanger, googly eyes and a few other items, WM reminds me to stay on guard. People keep a good social distance from my house, too. *(Dave Prevar, Annapolis, Md.)*



(Honorable mention: Dave Prevar)

Fine-art project: Take all your plastic bags that used to be recycled but now are dumped in landfills. Stuff them into one of the bags, roll them into a tight cylinder, then stick it on your wall with duct tape. This is better than taping a banana to the wall: It doesn't waste food, and of course plastic lasts forever. *(Douglas Goralski, Takoma Park, Md.)*

Budminton: It's a mix of hot potato and catch: You toss a can of beer from one family member to another, and whoever's holding it when the music stops has to pop it open and get a faceful of suds. Fun for Mom, Pop and Junior, too! *(Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)*

Hold a home-school parent-teacher night where you explain what you're doing wrong with your children. *(Frank Osen)*

Home Sweet Home Scavenger Hunt: You search every inch of the house for any type of paper. The person who finds the most paper gets to sit in the bathroom reading Great-Grandpa's diary before repurposing the paper. (*Robyn Carlson, Keyser, W.Va.*)

Unsettlers of Catan: In this variation on the classic game, an emperor, his son-in-law and assorted sycophants distribute a harvest of misinformation. Meanwhile, the settlers spend each turn quaking in their huts. (*Lawrence McGuire*)

Photo below: **Since it's just the family at dinner**, but you want to dress up the table a little, some recent excess purchases can set the perfect mood. (*Alex Steelsmith, Kailua, Hawaii*)



Honorable mention: Alex Steelsmith, with one of 13 different TP thing-holder photos he submitted.

Build a toilet-papier-mâché Mount Flushmore of "all the best" presidents: Franklin Pierce, Andrew Johnson, James Buchanan and of course . . . (*Kevin Dopart*)

AD

Can-die Land: Kids of all ages will enjoy navigating their way through the Gun-Hoarding Mountains and Forest of Questionable Door Handles to the only-relative safety of Can-die Castle. (*Rob Huffman, Fredericksburg, Va.*)


Still running — deadline Monday night, April 27: Our contest to delete letters from a word to reveal a related word. See wapo.st/invite1380.

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0 Comments



Pat Myers

Pat Myers is editor and judge of The Style Invitational, The Washington Post's page for clever, edgy humor and wordplay. In the role since December 2003, she has posted and judged more than 700 contests. She also writes the weekly Style Conversational column and runs the Style Invitational Devotees page on Facebook. Follow 

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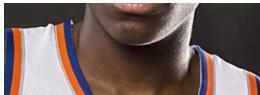
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