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# Style Invitational Week 1414: Divining comedy – the year in preview

Give us humorous predictions for 2021. And see our totally false facts about autumn.



(Bob Staake for The Washington Post)

By Pat Myers

Dec. 10, 2020 at 9:55 a.m. EST

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(Click [here](#) to skip down to the fictoids about fall)

**Jan. 20:** At the inauguration, Trump’s attempt to rush the stage and be sworn in instead is thwarted when Kanye West gets there first.

**June 13:** In an effort to appeal to younger citizens, President Biden announces his new infrastructure plan via TikTok dance.

**July 23:** The Olympic cauldron-lighting is interrupted by a crazed Rudy Giuliani, who claims the fire is being fueled by thousands of stolen Trump ballots.

Among other developments, last December the Loser Community predicted the following: (a) that the “Redskins” would draft three punters in the first round, for their primary offensive play; (b) that, in lieu of the U.S. Olympic team, the United States would be represented in Tokyo by Rudy Giuliani; and (c) that Mike Pence would acknowledge that he was gray.



When Hallmark does poop, it is sparkly poop. This week’s second prize.



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For composer Molly Jong-Basch, disability is no





## The easy way to make healthier holiday desserts

50% of Americans look forward to their favorite holiday treats. Here's how to make a nutritious version of yours.

We just didn't have enough imagination, I guess, for 2020.

So as we rush to bring out our new wall calendar as if it will magically shut the door on the woes filling every square of this one, let's give it our annual try: **Name some humorous news event to happen in 2021**, as in the examples above by Longtime Loser Malcolm Flechner, who used to write his own Years in Preview in a newspaper column back when more newspapers had columns. Include a date for the event only if it's relevant to the joke (feel free to explain why); otherwise the Empress will add an arbitrary one to fill out the calendar. Submit up to 25 entries at [wapo.st/enter-invite-1414](http://wapo.st/enter-invite-1414) (no capitals in the Web address). **Deadline is Monday, Dec. 21**; results appear Jan. 10 in print, Jan. 7 online.

**Winner gets the Clowning Achievement**, our new Style Invitational trophy. Second place wins — just in time to be too late for Christmas — a genuine Hallmark brand Poop Emoji ornament — but it's not your American standard variety: This one is Sparkle Swirl: it's in iridescent rainbow colors, and caked with glitter (you mean *yours* doesn't glitter?). Donated by Poop Emoji Prize Donor Jeff Contompasis. We'll even throw in some Rainbow Poop Emoji lip balm ("Doo-lightfull").

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**Other runners-up** win their choice of our "For Best Results, Pour Into Top End" Loser Mug or our "Whole Fools" Grossery Bag. Honorable mentions get one of our lusted-after Loser magnets, "No 'Bility" or "Punderachiever." First Offenders receive only a smelly tree-shaped air "fresher" (FirStink for their first ink). See general contest rules and guidelines at [wapo.st/InvRules](http://wapo.st/InvRules). The headline "Fallsities" was submitted by both Jesse Frankovich and Kevin Dopart; Jeff Contompasis wrote the honorable-mentions subhead. Join the lively 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](http://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, published late Thursday, Dec. 10, at [wapo.st/convi1414](http://wapo.st/convi1414).

**The "You're Invited" podcast:** Seven half-hour episodes, including dish from the Empress and the Czar, and tips from top Losers. See [bit.ly/invite-podcast](http://bit.ly/invite-podcast).

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And from The Style Invitational four weeks ago . . .

## Fallsities: Fake trivia about autumn from Week 1410

In our fourth contest in the past year for bogus trivia about the seasons, we got around to fall in Week 1410. Many Losers told about that one other Spice Girl, Pumpkin Spice.

4 For Contompasis many jokes, creativity is the barrier to virtuosity



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## 4th place:

The number of **rings around the cranberry sauce** indicates how many years it was in the pantry. (*Jesse Frankovich, Lansing, Mich.*)

## 3rd place:

**Fall cicadas** emerge around Nov. 1 each year. You probably haven't noticed them because their humming sounds exactly like leaf blowers. (*Erik Devereux, Silver Spring, Md., a First Offender*)

## 2nd place

and the *Dress-Up Squirrel*:

President Eisenhower **replaced Armistice Day with Veterans Day** after wife Mamie complained that it sounded like "our mistress day," an unfortunate reminder of Ike's alleged wartime dalliance. (*Steve Fahey, Olney, Md.*)

## And the winner of the Clowning Achievement:

In September 1864 — immediately after Gen. Sherman telegraphed Lincoln, "Atlanta is ours, and fairly won" — **Robert E. Lee declared** that the Confederacy had won the Civil War. (*Steve Smith, Potomac, Md.*)

## Least o' fall: Honorable mentions

At the current exchange rate, **Canadian fall colours** are only 76 percent as beautiful as U.S. fall colors. (*Bill Dörner, Indianapolis*)



CONTENT FROM SAFEWAY ⓘ

### How to add a wholesome twist to classic holiday desserts

Thanks to ingredients like natural sweeteners and plant-based butters, festive treats can be nutritious.

The **Munich Oktoberfest** makes more money on pay toilets than it does on beer. (*Jonathan Jensen, Baltimore*)

Botanists concur that **trees can communicate** with each other and that they all agreed to drop their leaves in your yard. (*Chris Yahnke, Stevens Point, Wis., a First Offender*)

Historians now believe that President Lincoln gave a much longer **speech at Gettysburg** in November 1863, but people little noted nor long remembered what he said. (*Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.*)

**September is named in honor of** the septum. Before it was invented, everyone just had one big floppy nostril. (*Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase, Md.*)

At the first Thanksgiving, Native Americans and Pilgrims feasted on **North American tofurkey**. The bird proved so popular that it was hunted out of existence, and now we have to make do with cheap foreign hybrids. (*Roy Ashley, Washington*)



CONTENT FROM SAFEWAY ⓘ

### A guide to making healthy holiday desserts in 2020

All you need to know about making wholesome renditions of your favorite sweets.

**Black Friday's origins** date to ancient Rome, where after the Feast of the Turcia, plebes would line up outside Maximus Buy for a clay tablet and fight each other to the death. (*Joe McManus, Silver Spring, Md.*)

**Nov. 26, 2020**, will henceforth be known as Covidsgiving Day. (*Kevin Dopart, Washington*)

**If a weasel sees its shadow** on a golf course in November, that means six more weeks of denial. (*Amanda Yanovitch, Midlothian, Va.*)

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In an attempt to sow divisiveness among Americans, **Russian operatives infiltrated the U.S. food industry** in the early 2000s, introducing a large range of pumpkin-spiced products. *(Terri Berg Smith, Rockville, Md.)*

**In France, trick-or-treaters** get cigarettes. *(Sam Mertens, Silver Spring, Md.)*

**It takes up to eight months** to train a cable to knit a sweater. *(Daniel Galef, Tallahassee)*



Content from Visit Montgomery, MD ⓘ

### A trip to this county is like stepping into a holiday card

Just ask the locals: It's the most festive place near D.C. for a holiday getaway.

It's predicted that by 2025, 30 percent of those who celebrate **Cyber Monday and Giving Tuesday** will also observe Ransomware Wednesday. *(Eric Nelkin, Silver Spring, Md.)*

On its return voyage to England, **the Mayflower** was stocked with Thanksgiving leftovers. *(Greg Dobbins, Boynton Beach, Fla.)*

Botanists at a leading university once developed **an oak tree that would not shed its leaves**, but production efforts were stymied through intense lobbying of Congress by the National Garden Rake Association. *(David Shombert, Harrisonburg, Va.)*

**Pumpkin Chunkin**, a competition of hurling pumpkins across fields with a catapult, is based on the ancient Saxon practice of shooting back the heads of their enemies, originally known as Noggin Floggin. *(Mike Caslin, Round Hill, Va.)*

Purists still insist on using the term **"maizeucopia."** *(Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn, Va.)*



CONTENT FROM BRANDYWINE LIVING ⓘ

### Settling down for life

Find luxury and safety during the sunset years at this soon-to-open senior living community in Md.

Starting next Thanksgiving, police in Montgomery County will set up **tryptophan checkpoints** to catch drivers who are overly drowsy from turkey consumption. *(Tom Witte, Montgomery Village)*

The first Thanksgiving meal was nearly ruined by a wild cat. Which is why we have the tradition of **Someone Beating the Lions** before Thanksgiving dinner. *(former Detroiters Ward Kay, Vienna, Va.)*

The Jamestown settlers faced starvation in the fall of 1609 until **Pocahontas** told them she had a plan for that. *(Steve Smith)*

The **Marine Corps Marathon**, run every October, has a drill sergeant stationed at each of the last 10 miles to encourage lagging runners by barking "You better not die, maggot!" *(Chuck Smith, Woodbridge, Va.)*

When **daylight saving time** ends in November, all of the saved daylight is gathered up and stored in a small zip-lock bag at the National Weather Service. *(Mark Calandra, Wenham, Mass.)*



CONTENT FROM BERKELEY SPRINGS, WV ⓘ

### Keep kids engaged in learning with an educational vacation

One West Virginia town has everything a family needs to plan their own field trip.

There were no turkeys in Massachusetts in 1621. Actually, the first Thanksgiving's main dish was **ganducken**, a male goose stuffed with a mallard. *(Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.)*

While schoolchildren are taught that **the Pilgrims left England** in search of religious freedom, they also left because, according to one account, "King Jamef waf alwayf up in our bufyneff and unmatched in his defyre for mycromanagynyng." *(Wendy Shang, Falls Church, Va.)*



In rural Tuscany, **the land of Rudy Giuliani's ancestors**, harvest time used to be so grueling that farmers toiled until the hair dye ran down their faces. *(Duncan Stevens)*

While the venue was widely viewed as a comical mistake, **Rudy Giuliani's scheduling assistant** knew that 54.3 percent of Trump supporters shopped for shrubs and sex toys in early November. *(Doug Montgomery, North Potomac, Md.)*

The fall term at **Rod Stewart's tony boarding school** [did not begin until Oct. 1](#). *(Steve Smith)*

Masquerading as a news broadcast, the 1938 Halloween radio drama "**War of the Worlds**" caused panicked citizens to flee their homes. Fortunately this was the last time that large numbers of people were wildly misled by fake news. *(Jonathan Jensen)*

"**Trick-or-treating**" originated in a Berlin brothel, where the madam offered patrons either the usual fare or an apple strudel. *(Steve Fahey)*

For the past four years autumn leaves in the United States have been **redder than usual** and redder than leaves in other countries; botanists have concluded it is due to embarrassment. *(Gary Crockett)*

When **Gunpowder Plot** supporters sought leniency "for Fawkes' sake" in November 1605, little did they know it would become a maxim of exasperation for generations to come. *(Steve Smith)*

**Still running — deadline Monday night, Dec. 14: our contest for short poems featuring this year's new dictionary words. See [wapo.st/invite1413](https://wapo.st/invite1413).**

**DON'T MISS AN INVITE!** [Sign up here](#) to receive a once-a-week email from the Empress as soon as The Style Invitational and Style Conversational go online every Thursday, complete with links to the columns.

1 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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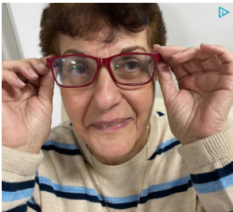
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