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Style Invitational Week 1469: Post Mortems — our obit poem contest

Commemorate anyone who died in 2021. Plus we bring you the news from 2022.



(Bob Staake for The Washington Post)

By Pat Myers

December 30, 2021 at 9:59 a.m. EST



(Click [here](#) to skip down to our 2022 timeline of news predictions)

Baseball manager Tommy Lasorda (1927-2021)

Higgledy Piggledy
Tommy Lasorda was
Quite the field manager —
Smart, and with pluck.

Angry and colorful,
Vocabularically:
[\\$%&, %#!* and](#)
[#\\$!& and &!@\\$!](#)

Like death and taxes, there's, well, death. And lives to be commemorated Style Invitational-style, as we do at the top of every year. **This week: Write a poem of no longer than eight lines (plus an optional title) about someone who died in 2021**, as in the double dactyl above by Lover of Baseball, Double Dactyls and Bad Language Gene Weingarten. Google "deaths 2021" and you'll find many lists of our, alas, always crowded field of candidates for a witty elegy. Remember that the Invite is a humor/light-verse contest, so your verse should provoke a smile rather than a blubber; but it shouldn't be ghoulish or gloating. Don't cause pain.



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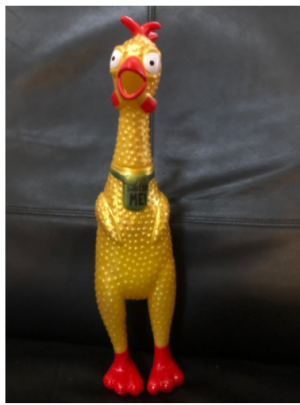
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Ask not for whom this chicken squawks. Because we'll tell you: It's for this week's second-place entry.



Submit up to 25 entries at wapo.st/enter-invite-1469 (no capitals in the Web address). Deadline is Monday, Jan. 10; results appear Jan. 30 in print, Jan. 27 online.

Winner gets the **Clowning Achievement**, our Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives **an especially garish and noisy rubber chicken**, a very thin one, as if Giacometti sculpted poultry; it's complete with metallic-yellow plucked-looking "skin," a sort of scolding demeanor, and an almost frightening bleat. Donated by Recidivist Prize Donor Dave Prevar.

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 new **lusted-after Loser magnets**, "A Small Jester of Appreciation" or "Close, but Ceci N'est Pas un Cigare." First Offenders receive only a smelly tree-shaped air "freshener" (**FirStink** for their first ink). See general contest rules and guidelines at wapo.st/inviteFAQ. The "Fauxcast" headline is by Chris Doyle; Beverley Sharp wrote the honorable-mentions subhead. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at on.fb.me/invdev; "like" the Style Invitational Ink of the Day on Facebook at bit.ly/inkofday; and follow [@StyleInvite](https://twitter.com/StyleInvite) on Twitter.



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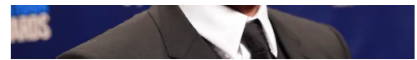
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The Style Conversational: The Empress's weekly online column discusses each new contest and set of results. See this week's (beginning late Thursday, Dec. 30), featuring classic Invite obit poems, at wapo.st/conv1469.

[And from The Style Invitational four weeks ago . . .](#)

Fauxcasts: The Losers' timeline of the news from 2022



1 James Franco speaks out about sexual misconduct allegations: 'I did sleep with students'

2 Now supply-chain woes have come for the color blue



3 Perspective 'Emily in Paris' is exactly as bad as you remember, which is perfect



4 'JFK' at 30: Oliver Stone and the lasting impact of America's most dangerous movie



5 'I spontaneously burst into tears': How 13 songwriters felt watching the new Beatles documentary



TOP STORIES



Going Global

Essential reporting and analysis from correspondents around the world.

Omicron could derail efforts to reverse vaccine inequality and end the pandemic, experts warn



HarperCollins apologizes to Russian billionaire over book claiming Putin



As we do each December, we asked the Losers to tell us about the news events of next year, and compiled the timeline below. Dozens of them reported that there were so many new variants that the CDC had to go to other alphabets, or hurricane names. (Some of the events below totally contradict each other; logic is *sooo* old-school.)

4th place:

Feb. 6: At the Beijing Olympics, Xi Jinping becomes the first supreme leader to win gold in the men's downhill after the other competitors all showed up at the wrong mountain. (*Jeff Shirley, Richmond, Va.*)

3rd place:

Nov. 8: Millions of Americans drive across newly renovated roads and bridges to vote out the Democrats. (*Ryan Martinez, Takoma Park, Md.*)

2nd place

and the *"I never fart" socks:*

April 11: President Biden appoints Donald Trump as U.S. ambassador to Elba. (*Milo Sauer, Fairfax, Va.*)

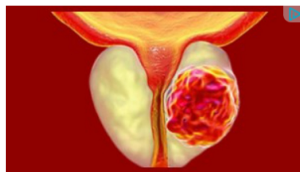
And the winner of the Clowning Achievement:

Jan. 6: Americans nationwide shatter the world record for collective breath-holding.

Jan. 7: "The Great Exhale" sparks a nationwide frenzy for mouthwash. (*Dave Airozo, Silver Spring, Md.*)

More headlines: Honorable mentions

January: Astronomers announce the discovery of an Earth-size planet orbiting the star Proxima Centauri. Texas officials immediately designate it as the voting location for all of the state's minority neighborhoods. (*Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.*)



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Elon Musk polls Twitter for name suggestions for his [next baby](#). The winner is "X/EA-12 McX/EA-12face." (*Kevin Dopart, Washington*)

After shouting "Kill all Democrats" on the House floor, Rep. Paul Gosar is [censured again](#) in a straight party line vote. (*Drew Bennett, Rogers, Ark.*)

February: Amid rising disapproval for ignoring multiple scandals, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson vows to start combing his hair. (*Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.*)

Feb. 6: Queen Elizabeth II celebrates 70 years on the throne by throwing down 50 one-armed push-ups and running a lap around Buckingham Palace. (*Dan Helming, Whitmarsh, Pa.*)

To dissociate itself from an enslaver, the D.C. NFL franchise is renamed the National Capital Football Team. (*Jesse Frankovich, Lansing, Mich.*)

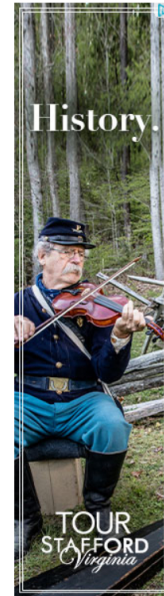
Amazon's ever-green streaming service ordered Chelsea soccer team purchase



'Burn it all down': How Myanmar's military razed villages to crush a growing resistance



[Try a different topic](#)



MOST READ



1 With omicron, many vaccinated Americans will at some point test positive. Here's what to do.

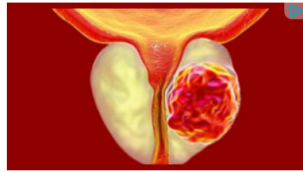
2 Jury finds officer who fatally shot Daunte Wright guilty of manslaughter



3 A UPS driver left a kind message for a family. They put it on Instagram, and strangers showered the driver's baby with gifts.



March: Dr. Fauci finally activates the microchips in the [coronavirus](#) vaccine. Donations to charity skyrocket, and millions of people volunteer at soup kitchens. *(David Young, Falmouth, Mass.)*



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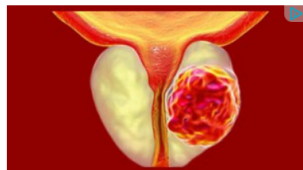
The Supreme Court simultaneously overturns *Roe v. Wade* and *Brown v. Board of Education* and reinstates the Dred Scott decision. Writing for the majority, Justice Kavanaugh opines, “Precedent, schmecedent.” *(Jon Ketzner, Cumberland, Md.)*

April: Throwing out the first pitch on Opening Day, President Biden whizzes a fastball down the middle. The Nats instantly sign him as a starter. *(Daniel Helming)*

Democrats introduce a \$10 trillion inflation relief bill. *(Jesse Frankovich)*

Following criticism that she’s aloof, Vice President Harris holds an interview and is then condemned as an attention-seeking megalomaniac. *(Frank Osen)*

May: During a test flight, a driverless flying car crashes into [the stands at a Miami Marlins game](#), destroying an entire seating section. No one is hurt. *(Coleman Glenn, Huntingdon Valley, Pa.)*



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Russia sends 150,000 armed “ambassadors” to Ukraine for “peace negotiations.” *(Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.)*

June: President Biden orders a chocolate cone at an ice cream parlor. Fox News denounces the “War on Vanilla.” *(Hannah Seidel, Alexandria, Va.)*

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis bans shirt mandates. *(Leif Picoult, Rockville, Md.)*

July: On National Postal Worker Day, the USPS confirms that the “Forever” stamps refer to the amount of time expected to deliver a letter. *(Bruce Carlson, Alexandria, Va.)*

Costco launches Costcoin, a high-quality Kirkland branded cryptocurrency. Consumers just wish it didn’t come in such huge jars. *(Bill Dörner, Indianapolis)*

August: Because of raging inflation, Dollar Tree stores are renamed Five and Dime stores, where a bottle of shampoo now costs \$5.10. *(Milo Sauer)*




4 Trump’s newest business partner: A Chinese firm with a history of SEC investigations



5 Joan Didion, who chronicled American decadence and hypocrisy, dies at 87



 Metalworking Tools
Travers

Andrew and Chris Cuomo enter show business as tag team wrestlers. *(Greg Dobbins, Boynton Beach, Fla.)*

Environmentalists suspect that climate change may be accelerating when longtime denier Sen. James Inhofe, in what many view as a surprising concession, melts. *(Duncan Stevens)*

September: Florida Gov. DeSantis makes it illegal to ask children to look both ways before crossing the street. *(Larry Rifkin, Glastonbury, Conn.)*

More than a year after his official portrait was completed, the National Portrait Gallery still can't get Mike Pence to agree on the date for a hanging ceremony. *(Frank Osen)*

The Major League Baseball lockout ends just in time for the playoffs, in which every team is included except the Orioles, because come on. *(Mark Raffinan)*

The Federal Trade Commission narrowly votes to approve Facebook's acquisition of its [fifth Infinity Stone](#). *(Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase, Md.)*



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October: The Houston Space Center aborts a launch after six seconds. Thousands of Texans sue in hopes of getting \$10,000. *(Gary Crockett)*

The nation is shocked when [Rep. Matt Gaetz](#) is discovered to be cheating on his wife with a woman of legal age. *(Sam Mertens, Silver Spring, Md.)*

November: Texas Gov. Greg Abbott says he is "dumbfounded" about the huge increase in number of infants entering the state's welfare system over the past year. *(Bird Waring, Larchmont N.Y.)*

Britney Spears's father is given conservatorship over Rudy Giuliani. *(David Young)*

Nov. 9: Incoming House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy announces plans to impeach Joe Biden, Kamala Harris, Hillary Clinton, George Soros, Hunter Biden, Jill Biden, Anthony Fauci and Big Bird. *(Duncan Stevens)*

Nov. 22: JFK Jr. returns from the dead to Dealey Plaza just to tell [QAnon followers](#) they are all idiots. *(Art Grinath, Takoma Park, Md.)*

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December: Trump announces his candidacy for 2024 by shooting a man on Fifth Avenue. *(Sam Mertens)*

Anticipating another skirmish in the War on Christmas, Fox News sets up a machine gun nest on Sixth Avenue to protect its Christmas tree. *(Ward Kay, Vienna, Va.)*

Pantone introduces the Color of the Year: a greenish brown-gray called Meh. *(Wendy Shang, Falls Church, Va.)*

Sen. Joe Manchin introduces a bill requiring Santa to deliver a bag of coal to every child, not just the naughty ones. *(Lee Graham, Rockville, Md.)*

Peter Jackson unveils a 18-hour documentary produced from security camera footage of the Beatles arguing in a parking garage. *(Frank Osen)*

Dec. 25: At NASA's annual Deep State Hanukkah Party, Jewish scientists fire up one space laser, then use that one to fire up eight other space lasers. *(Marty Gold, Arlington, Va.)*

And Last: The Empress comes down with a breakthrough case of the upsilon variant and loses her senses of taste and humor. No one notices. *(Tom Witte, Montgomery Village, Md.)*

Still running — deadline Monday night, Jan. 3: A chance to enter any of 25 earlier contests. See wapo.st/invite1468.

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

Gift Article



By 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. [Twitter](#)

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Where I went wrong in a covid year of column writing

Opinion · Dec. 31, 2021



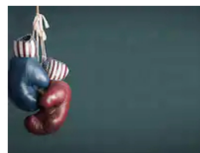
I read a weeks' worth of newspapers from 1921. It was comforting how wrong they were about what mattered.

Opinion · Today at 8:00 a.m. EST



Secession might seem like the lesser of two evils. It's also the less likely.

Perspective · Dec. 31, 2021



Biden administration concerned about U.S. investments in Chinese tech companies with military or surveillance ties

Dec. 16, 2021



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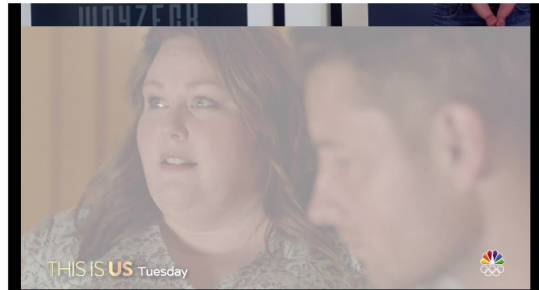
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