

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

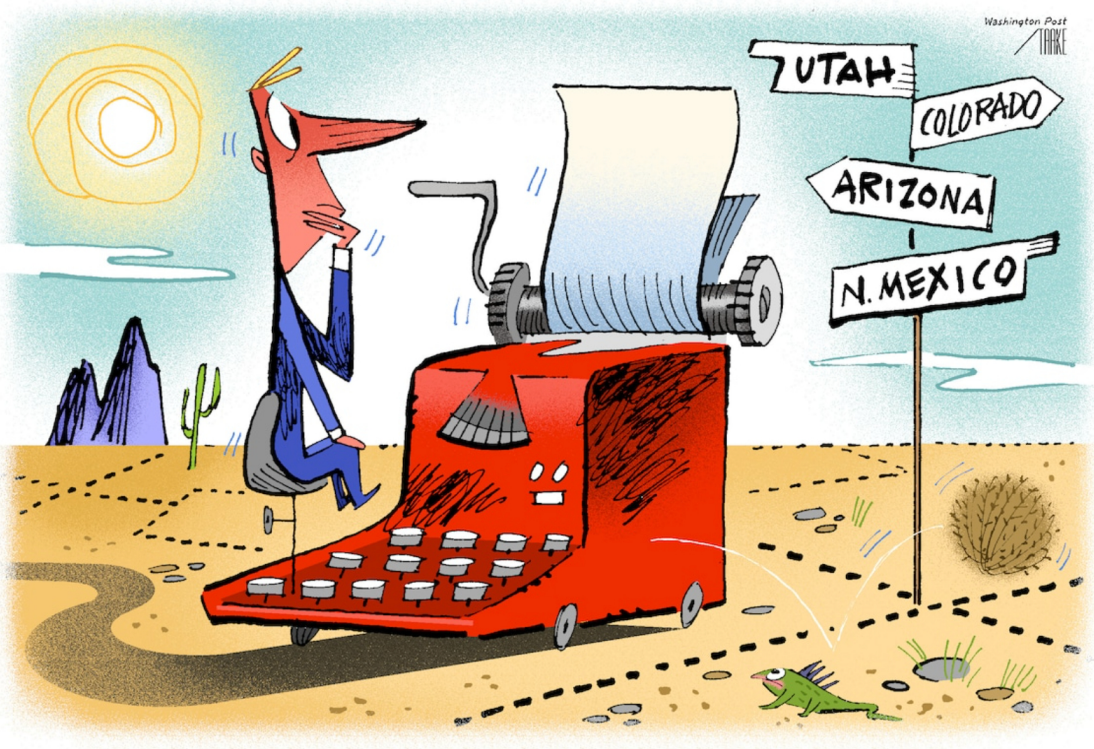
Style Invitational Week 1507: All over the map! Plus top food songs.

Make a state slogan with the first letters of nearby states. And another round of inking parodies and videos.



By [Pat Myers](#)

September 22, 2022 at 9:41 a.m. EDT



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MINNESOTA: We Must Insist On Politeness! (*Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania*)

IDAHO: We Now Make KETO-Organic Potatoes! (*Wyo., Neb., Mo., Ky., Ohio, Pa.*)

CALIFORNIA: A Noxious, Overbearing World Infested With Narcissists (*Ariz., Nev., Ore., Wash., Idaho, Wyo., Neb.*)

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The idea for this contest, Bob Staake told the Empress, came to him, fully formed, in a dream. Which makes it even more abundantly clear, far beyond his cartoons, that Bob is in his own Bobworld.

It's a little complicated to explain, but we think it'll be fun to do. Bear with us here. This week:

Choose one of the contiguous 48 U.S. states or D.C. Then write a funny slogan for that state by “traveling a route” from that state into several others. Use the first letters of the states in your route as the first letters of the words in your slogan, as in Bob’s examples above. (You may either use or skip the state you’re writing about.)

The route has to be an unbroken line, but it can twist and turn in every direction, and can cross the same state more than once.

You may add “a,” “an,” “the,” “and” and “or” anywhere in your slogan even if it doesn’t refer to the state you’re going through.

Added Sept. 23 in response to questions: **If the state name consists of two words (or three, for District of Columbia), you may use *either* the first letters of both words or just the first letter. So for South Dakota, you could use either an S-word followed by a D-word, or just an S-word.**

Submit up to 25 entries at wapo.st/enter-invite-1507 (no capitals in the Web address). Deadline is Monday night, Oct. 3; results appear Oct. 23 in print, Oct. 20 online.

Winner gets the [Clowning Achievement](#), our Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a genuine [whoopee cushion](#), that venerable, ever-so-droll idiocy aid that emits a “braaap!” fart noise when it’s sat on. Nanoseconds of hilarity ensue! Donated by 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 [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 headline “Kitchen Sing” is by Chris Doyle; William Kennard wrote the honorable-mentions subhead. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at on.fb.me/invdev; follow the Style Invitational Ink

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of the Day on Facebook at bit.ly/inkofday; follow [@StyleInvite](https://twitter.com/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, Sept. 22, at wapo.st/conv1507.

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

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Kitchen sing: Food-themed parodies from Week 1503

In [Week 1503](#) we asked for songs about food — growing it, buying it, cooking it, eating it. And wouldn't you know, the Loser Community had to add digesting it — and egesting it — as subjects among the hundreds of songs entered, both in text and video. If you're not familiar with a particular tune being parodied, click on the link in the title to hear the original — and sing along.



*Honorable mention: our favorite video this week: **Chinese Buffet (To “YMCA”)**: By Marty, Sam and Nora Gold (a First Offender); featuring Marty, kids Ari and Nora, and pooch Pumpernickel Gold (watch the end), Arlington, Va. (If you're not seeing the video above, [click here.](#))*

4th place:

To **“Downtown”**

What brings me joy when life is really annoying? I can always throw Ketchup!

All of my crudeness just brings out my dudeness when I make it flow.
Ketchup!

There's nothing else that I can do that's quite as satisfying
As flinging out my arm and making condiments go flying.
Such a big thrill!
I like to throw different kinds.
Get me a jar of Del Monte, a bottle of Heinz.
I throw ketchup when I am feeling cross!
Ketchup! This is my favorite sauce.
Ketchup! Makes me feel like a boss now.
(Barbara Sarshik, Vienna, Va.)

3rd place:

To “Yesterday”

Yesterday, how I pigged out at the free buffet
Now the nausea won't go away
I should have dined home yesterday.

Sirloin steak, then the double-chocolate layer cake
Topped with ice cream, was a big mistake
Will I survive this stomachache?

And the apple pie, my oh my, it was delish!
But now I could die, don't know why — maybe the knish?

Saturday, hope my diarrhea goes away
There's a wedding up in Rockaway
I hear they have a great buffet.
(Rob Cohen, Potomac, Md.)

2nd place and the souvenir bags of chocolate 'poop':

“Eye of the Tiger”

Fifty-plus, hardly petite,
Out of sorts, constipated.
Now I know I have to watch what I eat,
For a chance just to reach sixty-five.
So I'll add, at every repast,
Something raw and organic,
And I pray the Lord will let it work fast,

'Cause I need that relief to arrive ...
It's a high-fiber diet that will loosen what's tight,
Clear me out! (Else I fear for my survival).
Unmilled bran? Yeah, I'll try it!
And I'll savor each bite,
'Cause I'm changing my life with a high-fiber diet!
(*Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.*)

And the winner of the Clowning Achievement:

“Wouldn't It Be Nice”

Pumpkin-flavored spice in your espresso,
Nutmeg, ginger, cloves there, in your mug.
“Just what you were wanting!” Um, I guess so;
Not the kind of blend I've really dug.
Do you maybe find it disconcerting?
Autumn means your loins you'd best be girding:
Pumpkin-flavored spice in Belgian waffle,
Pumpkin-flavored spice potato chips,
Pumpkin-flavored burgers — that's just awful!
Pumpkin-flavored Spam? Not on my lips!
You know, I think I'm now prepared for winter;
Six feet deep I'd like this blend to inter.
That too-pervasive spice!
(*Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.*)

Cordon Blah: Honorable mentions

“If I Only Had a Brain”

(*“sung” by Count Dracula*)

I could while away an hour
And happily devour
A magnum of champagne;
Better yet (and delicious!)
Would be blood (it's quite nutritious!),
If I only had a vein.
I would love to taste your plasma;
(Might even help my asthma!);
I know it sounds insane;
Have a heart! Did I mention

That my thirst I could be quenched,
If I only had a vein.

Oh, I can't tell you why
It's blood that I adore;
After biting, when my collar's stained with gore,
I spray with Shout! (That's what it's for!)
Though my pointy teeth may pain ya,

We'll fly to Transylvania —
I'm sure they have a plane;
We'd be sitting by the campfire —
You would get to be a vampire,
If I only had a vein!
(*Beverley Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.*)



Portions of a Pie (To “Corner of the Sky” from “Pippin”): By Judy Freed, Deerfield Beach, Fla., a First Offender (If you're not seeing the video above, [click here.](#))

24-Carrot Magic

To “24K Magic” by Bruno Mars

Crunch, crunch, it's orange / Tasty / Plus it's good for you
You haven't heard? / You didn't know? / That Bugs Bunny recommends
it, too?
I'm cutting pieces for / A hot stew or / Perhaps a British mincemeat pie
Don't look too hard, but you won't need to / They say carrots help you
see at night
Oh, snap!
I'm a real healthy man when a carrot's what I'm eating (eat up)
No more Milky Ways for me next month when I'm out trick-or-treating

(eat up)

It's my new favorite food, "What's up, doc?" is my new greeting (eat up)

Vegans only!

Throw the celery out of the room!

Chefs! Toss those turnips, too!

24-carrot magic in the air...

(Jesse Rifkin, Arlington, Va.)

To **"My Sharona"**

Open up the package and grease a pan,

Brownin' up the pasta in Rice-a-Roni!

Add the spices from the foil, water boil,

Whippin' up a batch of that Rice-a-Roni!

San Francisco treat, can't be beat,

Such a starchy side, it goes with any meat,

To complete all your meals with pride ...

Aye-aye-aye-aye Wooo! Rice-a-Roni! *(Mark Raffman)*



My Nutella (To "Bus Stop" by the Hollies): *By Sandy Riccardi, Asheville, N.C. (If you're not seeing the video above, [click here.](#))*

Two to **"Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious"**

Because we were afraid to eat a fish that sounded bad,

PR types gave its name a tweak — which soon became a fad.

Now toothfish, slimehead, yelloweye and witch are swallowed whole

As "sea bass," "roughy," "snapper" and of course the "Torbay sole."

Yes super-clever marketers can make things seem less crummy —

Still, there is a limit to the stuff that we'll find yummy.

Listen, spin docs: Quit rebranding pols who've acted scummy!

They're the kind of bottom-feeders who upset the tummy.

(Melissa Balmain, Rochester, N.Y.)

Super-smart refrigerator, what an innovation!
Tells you how much food you have and dates of expiration
If it can do one more thing, it gets my admiration:
Super fridge if you're so smart, please cook — I'm on vacation!
(Hildy Zampella, Vienna, Va.)

The Hovering Waiter

To “[Moon River](#)”

Big menu, 20 pages long.
My love and I'll be strong and say:
“Oh, waiter, come back later
We need time to think, so just please go away.”
Two diners out to get a meal, a meal that's eaten leisurely
We're after some food that tastes good
And we think we could,
If the waiter would
Spare my love and me.

They wait till you begin to chew,
Then they come up to you and ask
How things things are tasting
But they're wasting
Their time 'cause we're not there to give a review.
Meal's over, here he comes again
Only time will tell us when he'll ask,
“Are you still working on that?”
We'll just tell him, “Scat”
We'll stay just where we're at
Right here where we got sat
That's my love and me.
(Rick Bromberg, Fairfax, Va.)





It's Not Easy Eating Beans (To "It's Not Easy Being Green"):

By Jonathan Jensen, Baltimore (If you're not seeing the video above, [click here](#))

To "My Favorite Things"

Passion fruit smoothie with Brussels sprout topper,
Food that can never taste good as a Whopper,
Bean sprouts and quinoa, we're so out of touch;
These are the things that we don't like so much.
Cucumber-melon does not go together;
We need more substance to get through this weather.
Shiitake tacos taste just like they sound,
I guess we're forever resigned to be round.
When my spouse cooks with no cookbook,
We'll be eating in,
We simply keep eating our favorite things,
So maybe we're not . . . so thin.

(Nancy McWhorter, Isle of Palms, S.C.)



This S'more That I'm Eating (To "More Than a Feeling") :

By Sarah Walsh, Rockville, Md., with daughter Ziva (If you're not seeing the video above, [click here](#))

To "Desperado"

Guacamole, you appeal to my senses,
I've got no defenses against you at all;
You're so tasty and so perfectly seasoned

it's like I'm unreasoned when I hear you call.

Oh they're shipped from the Southern Hemisphere
By boats, planes, trains and trucks to here
'Cause we want avocados for our own.
And though the cost is mostly freight
We just don't care that half the weight is stone.

Guacamole, you ain't getting' no fresher,
And I know that there's pressure to change as you please --
ah, but changes, oh changes, that's New York foodies jivin' --
And you'll be survivin' these new recipes.

Don't you go bad fast in the summertime
Your green turns brown from a lack of lime
And it's hard to miss that slight hint of decay.
It won't be long that you'll postpone
the time that you find you'll be thrown away.

Guacamole, I think we've come to our senses;
Those sweet pea pretenses just don't taste as great.
And I am aiming with a chip poised above you
I'm gonna show you that I love you ... before it's too late.
(Marcus Bales, Elyria, Ohio)

Vegans (To “Feelings”) : By Marni Penning Coleman, Falls Church, Va. (If you’re not seeing the video above, [click here](#))

We’re Eating Our Mistakes: Song of the Covid Incarcerees
To “I’ve Got a Little List”

As every day it happens that our three meals must be cooked
One boils and broils and bakes, one boils and broils and bakes
But when cooking skills were given out, we both were overlooked
So we’re eating our mistakes, we’re eating our mistakes—
Our meatballs and spaghetti wound up sticking to the pot
You’re s’posed to stir it now and then, but both of us forgot
The cookies burned and now they look like sooty little coals
And what went in as pita bread came out as dinner rolls
We overmixed some batter, so it’s bricks instead of cakes
We’re eating our mistakes, we’re eating our mistakes.
Chorus: One boils and broils and bakes, one boils and broils and bakes
And we’re eating our mistakes, we’re eating our mistakes.

It’s bread dough needs the handling, not pie crust—well, who knew?
We’ve strata now, not flakes, we’ve strata now, not flakes
And I’m amazed—it seems that one can overcook a stew
We’re eating our mistakes, we’re eating our mistakes—
Our sourdough has never worked, it doesn’t rise, it sinks
The kimchi we fermented went and rotted, now it stinks
The fritters fizzled in the oil, dessert’s a soggy mess
And I forget what’s on that plate—I couldn’t even guess
And looking in that pot of soup’s like looking down a jakes
We’re eating our mistakes, we’re eating our mistakes.
(Chorus)

The flour’s almost gone now, but no matter—there’s no yeast
Who cares, for goodness’ sakes? Who cares, for goodness’ sakes?
We’ve made another liquor run, we don’t care in the least
We’re eating our mistakes, we’re eating our mistakes—
If ever we emerge into the sunshine from this plague
I’m going to take a #\$\$%ing bath in #\$\$%ing Haig and Haig
Then visit every rest’rant in the city with the miz
Like Whatshisname’s and You-Know-Who’s—I hope they’re still in biz
But it really doesn’t matter, ’cause till then, my stomach aches

From eating our mistakes, from eating our mistakes. (*Shelley Posen, Ottawa, a First Offender*)

Still running — deadline Tuesday night, Sept. 27: Our contest to use any of 32 new dictionary words in a short, funny poem. See wapo.st/invite1506.

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.

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By [Pat Myers](#)

Pat Myers is the "Empress" of The Style Invitational, The Washington Post's famed contest for clever, edgy, wacky humor and wordplay. In the role since 2003 – 900-plus contests ago – she writes the column and is its only judge. She also writes the weekly Style Conversational column and runs the Style Invitational Devotees page on Facebook. [Twitter](#)