

The Invitational Week 33: Ask Backwards XLII

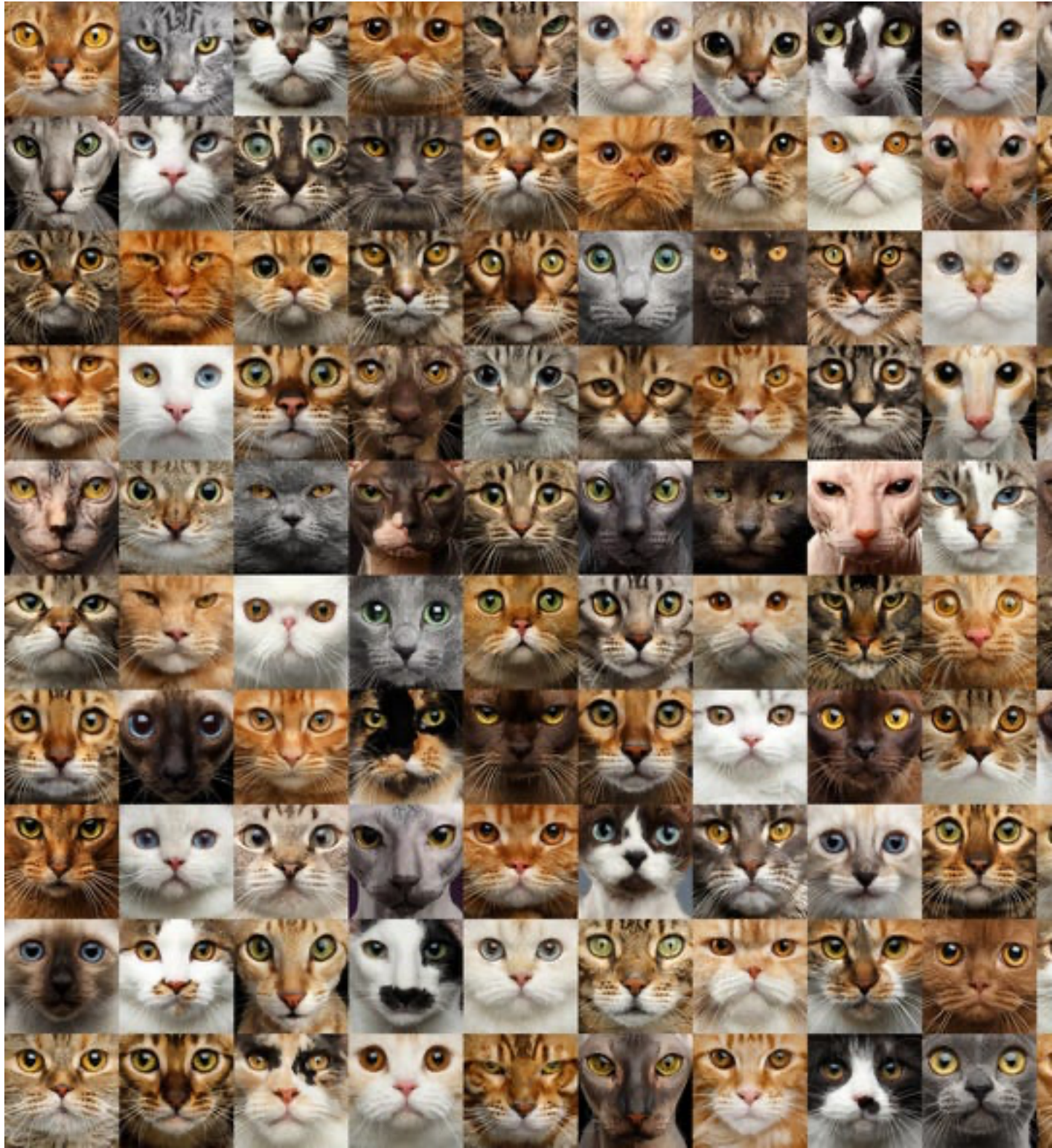
We give the answers. You give the questions. Plus winning neologisms.

[PAT MYERS](#)

AND

[GENE WEINGARTEN](#)

AUG 17, 2023



The answer: 100 cats in a two-bedroom apartment. What's the question? See below. (Collage/jigsaw puzzle by Sergey Taran, PXPuzzles.com)

Q Cards: It's Ask Backwards, Week 33

100 cats in a two-bedroom, one-bath apartment.

Only black licorice.

Barbie, Ken, and Kamala.

Ploppenheimer.

Oppenhopper.

No-Hit Wonder.

Heirloom Twinkies.

Donald Trump, PhD.

Arguably, they're the same.

The Dirty Baker's Dozen.

The 2024 Pantone Color of the Year.

Florida Dog.

A bad idea for an Invitational contest.

The last time The Invitational ran this contest, last November, it was unceremoniously yanked out from under us by The Washington Post — in a still unexplained rush to be rid of the Invite so quickly that we never had a chance to run the results.

We are indomitable. We fear nothing. We carry on. **For Week 33: Above are the new answers; you follow them with the funny questions. Please use this Jeopardy-ish format:** For each entry, first type the answer as above, followed by your question, in one long line; in other words, don't push "Enter" between the answer and the question.

[Click here for this week's entry form](#), or go to **bit.ly/inv-form-33**. As usual, you can submit up to 25 entries for this week's contest, preferably all on the same entry form.

Deadline is Saturday, Aug. 26, at 4 p.m. ET. Results will run here in The Gene Pool on Thursday, Aug. 31.

This week's winner gets a sloth tea infuser — the cutest li'l sleepy-looking baby sloth that hangs over the rim of your teacup, basically peeing in the pool. Donated by Dave Prevar.



Clearly it could use a little more tea. This week's prize. (harryanddavid.com)

Runners-up get autographed fake money featuring the Czar or Empress, in one of [ten nifty designs](#). Honorable mentions get bupkis, except for a sweet email from the E, plus the [Fir Stink for First Ink](#) for those who've just lost their Invite virginity.

The Rack Pack: New words from ScrabbleGrams letter sets

In **Week 31** we once again asked you to coin your own words and phrases of six or seven letters from **33 old “racks”** of the syndicated word game ScrabbleGrams. The Tile Invitational, we call it. Too many Losers to credit arranged **EEMPRTU** to **TRUMPEE**, variously described as a victim of scams, a victim of cruel policies, and toxic orange-tinged urine.

*Third runner-up: ADHINPS > **HIND SPA**: A bidet. (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village, Md.; Eric Nelkin, Silver Spring, Md.)*

*Second runner-up: DEFIILM > **DEMILF**: To make your mother less attractive to your friends. “Mom, where’s that bulky sweater with embroidered cats you look so good in?” (Jon Carter, Fredericksburg, Va.)*

*First runner-up: BEEGILL > **LL BEIGE**: The rap artist who wrote “Straight Outta Des Moines.” (Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)*

*And the winner of the **bananaduck**: AALMPSS > **LAMP-ASS**: What the cockroaches called the firefly. (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn, Va.)*

ABHSTUW > HAW BUST: Honorable mentions

AAGILMY > MAGA-LY: “The current crop of Republican candidates try to present themselves as MAGA-ly as possible.” (Diane Lucitt, Ellicott City, Md.)

AAGILMY > GAYMAIL: Not sure what it is, but you definitely can’t send or receive it in Florida. (Seth Christenfeld, Briarcliff Manor, N.Y.)

AALMPSS > A.M. SLAPS: An alarm clock for people who *really* have trouble waking up. No snooze button on this baby! (Tom Witte)

AALMPSS > ASS LAMP: What you need when you think maybe that’s your elbow. (Beverley Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

AALMPSS > LAP MASS: The male package. “I dated Ralph for a while, but he was lacking in lap mass.” (Tom Witte)

AALMPSS > **ALMPASS**: To surreptitiously move the collection plate along without adding to it. (*Jeff Contompasis*)

AALMPSS > **ASL-SPAM**: A novel way to annoy deaf people. (*Neil Kurland, Elkridge, Md.*)

AALMPSS > **MAP LASS**: The new Scots option on Siri. “Aye, Map Lass, find me the way to Gowkthrapple.” (*Steve Smith, Potomac, Md.*)

AAWHSND: **WAND ASH**: The unfortunate ending of “Harry Potter and the Attempt to Roast Marshmallows.” (*Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase, Md.*)

ABHSTUW > **WHAT USB?**: A question you never want to hear after your spouse has cleaned out your office. (*Karen Lambert, Chevy Chase, Md.*)

ABILLNP > **BALL-NIP**: A disqualifying combo touch when playing Twister. (*Jon Carter*)

ACCILNO > **COAL INC**: The conscience of Joe Manchin. (*Jonathan Jensen, Baltimore*)

ACCILNO > **LOIN AC**: A string bikini. (*Beverley Sharp*)

ADDILMN > **DAMNLID**: One of the many in your cabinet that fit no known container in your kitchen, but you don’t dare throw away in case you ever find their mates. (*Pam Sweeney, Burlington, Mass.*)

ADEGMNU > **UGMEND**: To add something awful. “The cake would have tasted great if she hadn’t ugmended it with fennel seeds.” (*Pam Shermeyer, Lathrup Village, Mich.*)

ADEIMTY > **DIET YAM**: What can you serve along with Tofurky to ensure no one attends Thanksgiving at your house? (*April Musser, Georgia*)

ADHINPS > **HADSNIP**: Term for a neutered dog. “He’s now a hadsnip, so he’s happy to lie around the house even when the poodle across the street comes out.” (*Sarah Walsh, Rockville, Md.*)

ADHINPS > **ANDSHIP**: A polyamorous liaison. “My cousin Bob is married but also in a serious andship with a woman from the office.” (*Karen Lambert*)

ADHINPS > **NADSHIP**: A fraternity. (*Neil Kurland*)

AENNRTT > **RANT, TEN**: Part A of a review of a diatribe. “Rudy’s hair-dye-dripping news conference received a ‘Rant, ten; looks, three’ from the press.” (*Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.*)

AEUKLPM > **PALM UKE**: Instrument that Hawaiian teenage boys play instead of choking a chicken. (*Roy Ashley, Washington, D.C.*)

AINOORT > **TOON AIR**: Unique weather condition in which the atmosphere can suspend a large animal over the ground right up to the moment when it foolishly looks down. (*Lee Graham, Reston, Va.*)

AINRSTT > **ARNTIST**: Someone who’s not exactly the second coming of Van Gogh: “My, your son’s paintings are the work of a true arntist.” (*Frank Osen; Karen Lambert*)

AINRSTT > **TIN STAR**: “What we should give to CAPTURED soldiers!” – D.J.T. (*Steve Smith*)

AMOOPT > **ARMPOOT**: “Mom, look what Jimmy taught me today during recess!” (*Sarah Walsh*)

AUYDLRN > **YALDUN**: What a Southern waitress asks before clearing your table. (*Jesse Frankovich, Laingsburg, Mich.*)

BEEGILL > **LE BILGE**: What the wine snob deemed the chardonnay you served at dinner. (*Jonathan Jensen*)

BEEGILL > **LIB GLEE:** According to the GOP, the emotion experienced while grooming children, witch hunting, and destroying America. (*Karen Lambert*)

BEHINOP > **HI. NOPE!:** The world's shortest blind date. (*Jonathan Jensen*)

BEHINOP > **HOPE BIN:** The box of clothing where you put the clothes that you're sure will fit again next year. (*Pam Sweeney*)

BEHORTT > **THORBET:** The best-selling frozen treat in Barcelona. (*Jon Carter*)

BEHORTT > **THROBE:** Garment designed to discreetly cover swelling genitalia. (*Judy Freed, Deerfield Beach, Fla.*)

CDEIISU > **SUIDICE:** A game whose goal is crapping out — permanently. (*Jon Gearhart, Des Moines*)

DEFIILM > **DeMILF:** A softcore schlock director. "With 'Roller Derby Nymphos,' Arturo officially became a Cecil B. DeMilf." (*Frank Osen*)

EGIMOST > **SOGTIME:** The period between combining milk with cereal and the latter turning to mush; with Rice Krispies, approximately 10 seconds. (*Jeff Contompasis*)

AOOPRTT > **TOTO-RAP:**

"You got the rains in Africa? I bless 'em
A hundred men or more could not repress 'em
So hear the drums, don't tell me my mind's narrow
I know the Serengeti ain't near Kilimanjaro." (*Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.*)

AOOPRTT > **TOTO-RAP:**

So proud to be my owner's pet
You mess wit' her, you might get wet
She'll melt your ass before she's through
So step off, witch, from her little dog too. (*Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.*)

Because of a big ol' goof by the Empress, for about six hours after we posted this contest, the list of letter sets we offered was *last year's*. But that was just long enough for Janet Hlatky of Herndon, Va., to send in a whole list of entries, including this eminently inkworthy one: ABBMOST > **BM BOAST**: “Hello, Guinness Records? I’ve just made the biggest . . .” Janet earns a Fir Stink for her first ink.

The headline “The Rack Pack” is by Jesse Frankovich; “Q Cards,” submitted by both Kevin Dopart and Nan Reiner, was the headline for the results of an earlier Ask Backwards contest. Jeff Contompasis wrote the honorable-mentions subhead.

Still running — deadline 4 p.m. ET Saturday, Aug. 19: **Our Week 32 Limerixicon contest for limericks featuring words beginning “ho-.”** [Click here](#) or type in bit.ly/inv-week-31.