

The Invitational Week 60: The Pepys Show

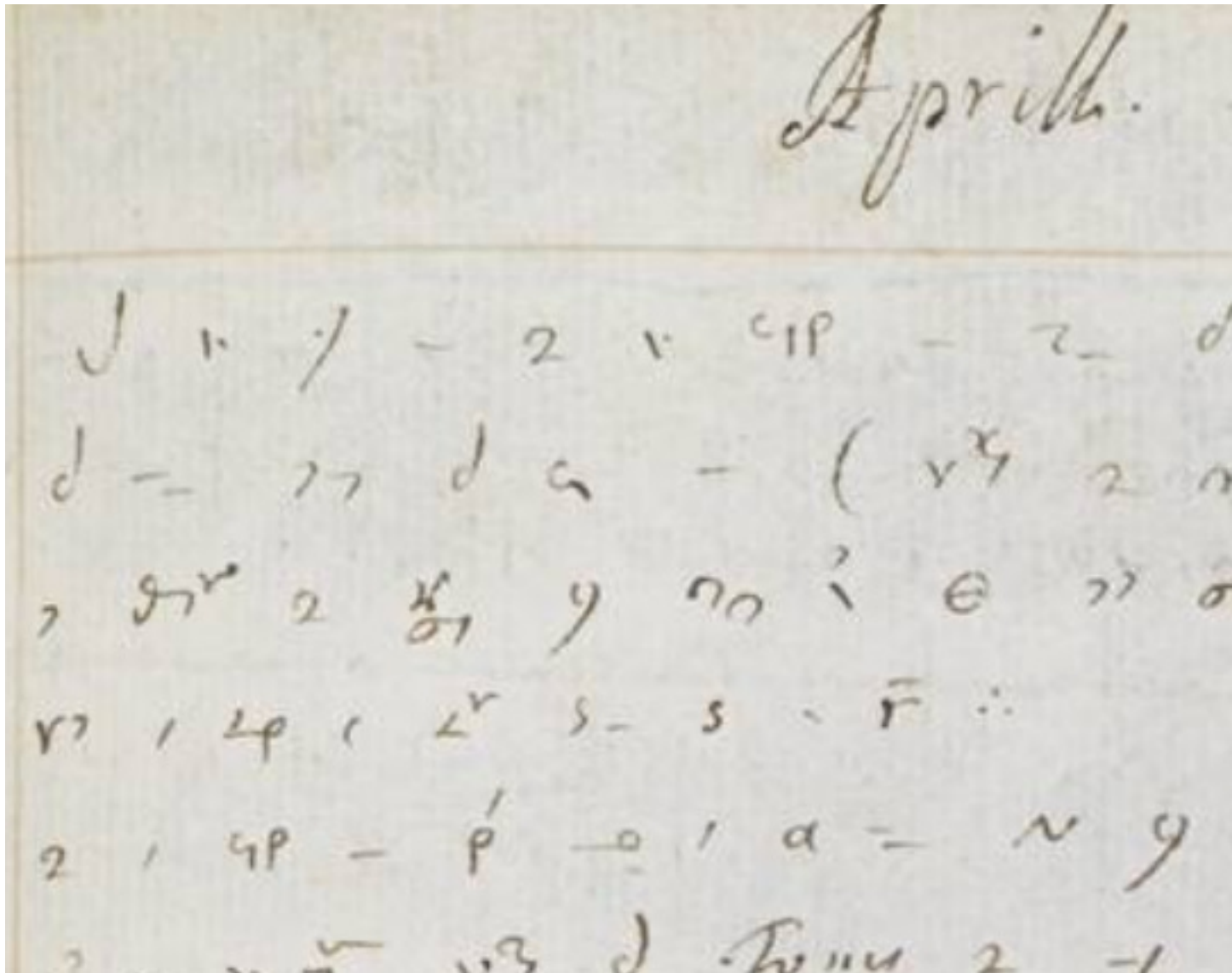
Give us a diary entry from anyone in history. Plus winning clickbait headlines for unexciting news.

[PAT MYERS](#)

AND

[GENE WEINGARTEN](#)

FEB 22, 2024



From the famed diary of Samuel Pepys (rhymes with “bleeps”), April 10, 1663, written in shorthand. Please spell out your own entries for Week 60 in actual words. (From the Pepys Library, Magdelene College, Cambridge)

Captain's Log, 14 April, 1912: An uneventful day, which is a good thing on a maiden voyage. I must remember, however, to tell the stewards that the passengers want more ice. (*Russell Beland*)

June 20, '76: Working on draft of document for TJ. I've articulated two unalienable Rights — Life, and the Pursuit of Happiness — need a third. Well, it will come to me. — Sally (*Jeff Brechlin*)

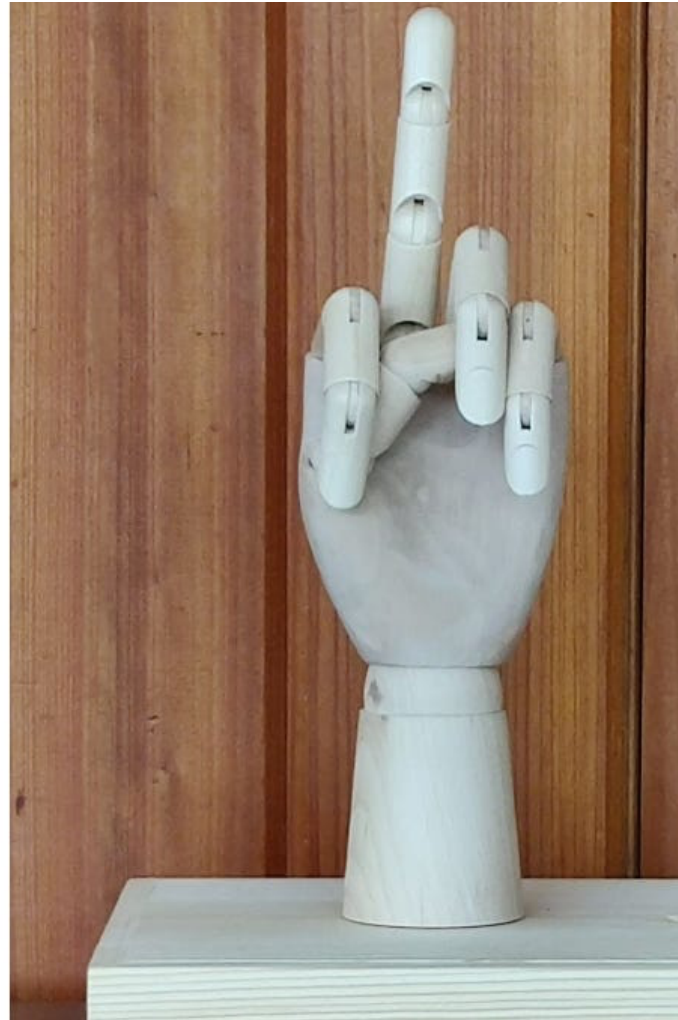
April 1, 1952: Drunk, spilled a can of paint on a fresh canvas today. Oh well, who'll know? — Jackson Pollock (*Jeff Brechlin*)

For Invitational Week 60: Write a humorous diary or journal entry for someone, famous or not, at any point in history, as in the examples above from a 2009 Invitational ([full results here](#)). Don't choose a fictional character. Anything over 50 words had better be worth keeping in its own library like the [Bibliotheca Pepysiana](#) at Cambridge.

[Click here for this week's entry form](#), or go to tinyURL.com/inv-form-60. As usual, you may submit up to 25 entries for this week's contest, preferably all on the same form. Also as usual, please submit each individual entry as a single continuous line; i.e., don't push Enter in the middle of your joke.

Deadline is Saturday, March 2, at 9 p.m. ET. Results will run here in The Gene Pool on Thursday, March 7.

The winner gets something that actually looks a little like a trophy: It's a **bendable jointed hand figurine**, which served as nothing but fancy packaging for a deck of cards, included in an expensive tutorial in doing card tricks. Fifty-two-time Loser Perry Beider helpfully showed how the hand might be displayed on your mantel, as a centerpiece at the Thanksgiving table, etc.



Take this card and ...: This week's first-place trophy of sorts.

Hey, we'd like your questions and observations, many of which we will respond to today in real time. Send them to this Gob:

[grotesque orange button](#)

Swollen Heads: Clickbait headlines from Week 58

In [Invitational Week 58](#), we asked you to find some actual, anodyne news item and give it a technically accurate but highly misleading clickbait headline. We were delighted to see that many of you turned to small local papers — so many of them fighting for survival — to find the articles; we're not suggesting, however, that they try to gain readers exactly this way.

Third runner-up: **SCANDINAVIANS URGE YOUNG TEENS TO
DISPLAY CURVES**

Norwegian researchers say schools should encourage cursive writing through middle school. (*Tom Witte, Montgomery Village, Md.*)

Second runner-up: **N.Y. FAMILY ENCOURAGES WHIZ IN POOL**

Article about a top junior billiards player. (*Jesse Frankovich, Laingsburg, Mich.*)

First runner-up: **PAMELA ANDERSON TAKES IT ALL OFF IN
SHOCKING DISPLAY OF SKIN**

The “Baywatch” actress says she’s stopped wearing makeup. (*Judy Freed, Deerfield Beach, Fla.*)

And the winner of [the bacon and egg earrings](#):

BIDEN SEEN DRINKING ON THE JOB

President drinks the water in East Palestine, Ohio, praises ‘Herculean’ cleanup after train derailment (*Jon Gearhart, Des Moines, Iowa*)

Stunners-Up: Honorable mentions

KING OF POP ALIVE AND WELL!

Coca-Cola ‘confident momentum will continue,’ CEO says (*Jesse Frankovich*)

CHICKEN SICKENS THOUSANDS OF PARISIANS

Many residents don’t like the golden rooster ornament atop the new spire at Notre Dame. (*Karen Lambert, Chevy Chase, Md.*)

LARGE SUMS OF MONEY FOUND IN HUMAN WASTE

Staggering Rise in Catheter Bills Suggests Medicare Scam (*Lee Graham, Reston, Va.*)

BLACK CHILD TO BE GIVEN THE CHAIR

A new Charlie Brown TV special will finally allow Franklin to sit with his friends. (*Gregory Koch, Falls Church, Va.*)

STORM TROOPERS SEPARATE CRYING BABE FROM MOTHER, DRIVE BOTH INTO BLIZZARD

New Jersey cops helped deliver a baby on the highway during a snowstorm. (*Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.*)

TAYLOR BADLY BEATEN AS HORRIFIED FANS WATCH Lincoln Park overpowers Taylor High, 79-44 (*Jesse Frankovich*)

BIZARRE COW SURVIVES WITH HEART IN FOREHEAD

Calf with [heart-shaped mark on forehead](#) melts hearts online (*Kevin Dopart, Washington, D.C.*)

PRINCE HARRY CAN'T KEEP HIS HANDS TO HIMSELF, WOMAN CLAIMS Journalist gripes that he's always holding Meghan's hand (*Judy Freed*)

WEDDING INTERLOPER INTERRUPTS VOWS, SHACKS UP WITH BRIDE AND GROOM

Hudson Valley newlyweds adopted a cat that wandered into their outdoor wedding. (*Sam Mertens, Silver Spring, Md.*)

WHY CUTTING THE CHEESE COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE

Raw-milk cheddar was linked to E. coli illnesses in four states. (*Jon Gearhart*)

AUTHORITIES: OUR TOWN IS FOLLOWING A PATH INTO DARKNESS

Monroe, Mich., will be in the trajectory of April's total solar eclipse. (*Pam Shermeyer, Lathrup Village, Mich.*)

DETROIT'S SOLUTION FOR TROUBLED YOUTHS? MORE ARMS.

Tigers sign more pitchers to keep games close in case young hitters slump. (*Pam Shermeyer*)

D.C. SLASHER STILL NOT FOUND

Federal Reserve Chairman Jay Powell hesitates to cut interest rates (*Leif Picoult, Rockville, Md.*)

FLORIDA MAN STICKS NEEDLE THROUGH TONGUE

Lakeland, Fla., cobbler posts shoe repair videos (*Roy Ashley, Washington, D.C.*)

SENIOR SUCCUMBS AFTER MAKING IT WITH TART

Bill Post, creator of the Pop-Tart, died at age 96. (*Jesse Frankovich; William Kennard, Arlington, Va.*)

50-YEAR-OLD MAN TRIES TO LURE CHILDREN TO HIS SPECIALLY BUILT HOME

Actor Christian Bale breaks ground on Southern California foster home project (*Frank Osen*)

MASS DISAPPEARANCE OF LATCHKEY KIDS!

More parents are making an effort to be home for their kids after school. (*Jon Ketzner, Cumberland, Md.*)

ARLINGTON OFFICIALS PROMOTE MONOPOLY ECONOMY

The city's chamber of commerce is selling a parody board game called Arlingtonopoly. (*Kevin Dopart*)

NAKED AUSTRALIAN TAKEN INTO CUSTODY IN FLA.

An escaped kangaroo was found hopping around in a Tampa apartment complex. (*Beverley Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.; Barbara Turner, Takoma Park, Md.*)

BEEFY MAN SHEDS FAT FAST

Oklahoman competes in National Meat Cutting Challenge (*Pam Shermeyer*)

DIRECTORS SEEK WELL-HUNG STUDS

Ad agencies enjoy working with the Budweiser Clydesdales. (*Leif Picoult*)

BIG FOOT SPOTTED IN MISSOURI

This teen wears a size 23 shoe. It's stopping him from living a normal life. (*Jon Gearhart*)

BIG SEWER BLOWOUT IN DELAWARE TOWN

Lewes stitchers to celebrate 100th quilting bee (*Jesse Frankovich*)

BRAZIL REPORTS STAGGERING RISE IN NEEDLE USE

Japan has sent millions of vaccines to fight dengue fever in Brazil. (*Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.*)

QUEEN'S HOME ATTACKED, DRONES SWARM

Beehives were stolen from an almond orchard. (*Leif Picoult*)

CITY SET TO RESTRICT MOST RIGHTS

Assembly proposal would ban right-on-red turns in much of downtown Anchorage. (*Frank Osen*)

COLLEGE STUDENTS HAUNTED BY MURDER

Large flock of crows descends on the Grinnell College campus (*Jesse Frankovich*)

CABINET MEMBER CONFINED FOR LEAKING

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin is hospitalized with bladder issue (*Jesse Frankovich; Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.*)

DRUG DEALERS SPREADING ACROSS MARYLAND

179 cannabis licenses to be awarded by state-run lottery (*Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn, Va.*)

TRUMP-ENDORSED CANDIDATE PROMOTES PUBLIC URINATION

North Carolina Lt. Gov. Mark Robinson denied trans voters bathroom access. (*Judy Freed*)

FAT WHITE GUYS CAN'T TAKE THE HEAT

Study finds polar bears unlikely to adapt to longer summers (*Jesse Frankovich*)

GROUP OF WELSHMEN PLOTS TO ATTACK FINLAND

Wales's national soccer team prepares for a Euro 2024 playoff match. *(Gregory Koch)*

HE GRABBED HER BODY PART AND SHE LIKED IT

Why people enjoy holding hands. *(Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.)*

HOCKEY TOURNAMENT ORGANIZER RUNS WILD

The Minnesota Wild's general manager will oversee an upcoming competition. *(Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)*

HOW TO SHRINK YOUR KIDS

Tips for choosing a reliable therapist for your children. *(Jesse Frankovich)*

HUNGER-STRICKEN LOCALS RESORT TO EATING ROOTS

Review of an upscale Potomac, Md., restaurant that features ginger in many dishes. *(Karen Lambert)*

KILLER CLOWN THREATENS TO BURN REPORTERS

SNL's Colin Jost set to host White House Correspondents' Association dinner *(Leif Picoult)*

KNIFE-WIELDING MAN'S LIFE IS CUT SHORT

Renowned chef David Bouley dies of cardiac arrest at 70. *(Pam Shermeyer)*

MORE THAN 1,000 SUDDENLY REPORT SUFFERING FROM DEPRESSION

1,180 pothole reports from the public since Sunday, according to the Los Angeles Department of Public Works *(Frank Osen)*

MURDERER TO GO SCOT-FREE

Cold case closed after 90 years *(Frank Osen)*

NICOLE KIDMAN ESCAPES MASS SHOOTING

Prior commitments kept the actress away from the 40-celebrity photo shoot for this month's Vogue cover. *(Judy Freed)*

ONLY 7 OF 16 CHRISTIANS SURVIVE TRIP TO BALTIMORE

Seven students on the Living Grace Christian School team advanced to the finals at a spelling bee in Baltimore. *(Tom Witte)*

OUTDOOR THREESOME IN FLA. SHOCKS LOCAL MAN

Resident snaps photo of osprey catching three fish at once *(Tom Witte)*

Seniors cheat death by eating THIS!

Older folks are learning about healthier diets. *(Mark Raffman)*

THEY WANT MORE KIDS ON DRUGS!

Lifesaving medication is underprescribed, doctors say *(Duncan Stevens)*

THOUSANDS BLINDED IN THE DMV!

Ad for 3 Day Blinds *(William Kennard)*

PHOTOS SURFACE OF MINISTERS RUBBING MEN, WOMEN, GIRLS, BOYS

Ash Wednesday services around the world *(Jon Gearhart)*

CALIF. SHOW MIGHT FEATURE UNION OF GIRL AND RODENT

Disneyland's Cinderella and Mickey Mouse performers may unionize. *(Frank Osen)*

The headline "Swollen Heads" is by Beverley Sharp; Jesse Frankovich wrote the honorable-mentions subhead.

Still running — deadline 9 p.m. ET Saturday, Feb. 24: Our Week 59 contest for humorous outside-the-box ideas for The Washington Post's new "Why Not" feature. Click on the link below.