

The Invitational Week 106: Heigh-ho!

Off to work you go: Give us some new dwarfs. Plus, fresh takes on recent contests.

[Pat Myers](#)

and

[Gene Weingarten](#)

Jan 09, 2025



Hello!

Question of the day: Is it “dwarfs” or “dwarves”?

Answer of the day: It is “dwarfs,” but “dwarves” is listed by most dictionaries as a secondary alternative.

Follow-up question of the day: Why both?

Follow-up answer of the day: Almost entirely because of J.R.R. Tolkien. Both *Snow White* and *The Hobbit* were released in 1937, and Tolkien evidently sought a distinction. A philologist, he later sheepishly admitted that “dwarves” was a made-up plural he called his “private bad grammar.” It caught on, possibly because it echoed other accepted such plurals of words ending in “f” — “shelf” and “shelves,” for example, and, more germanely, “elf” and “elves.” So.

Extraneous but patriotic fact of the day: *Snow White, the movie, was released fourscore and seven years ago.*

On to the contest.

Cheeky has a big behind, and he habitually butts into conversations.

Doxx is a real vindictive bastard.

Outie got rid of his beard. He feels that he finally can be his authentic self.

Creepy wears mirrors on the tops of his shoes and likes mixing and mingling at cocktail parties.

For Invitational Week 106: Create an eighth dwarf, à la those in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, and come up with a name and a sentence or two describing him (or her) as in the examples above. This contest was suggested by longtime Loser Stu Segal.

Important! It’s inevitable that with the many hundreds of entries we usually receive, some of you will think of the same names (or even use one of the names above, which is OK). So it might come down to the most entertaining descriptions.

Deadline is Saturday, Jan. 18, 2025, at 9 p.m. ET. Results will run here in The Gene Pool on Thursday, Jan. 23. As usual, you may submit up to 25 entries for this week’s contest, preferably all on the same form.

Formatting this week: Please begin each entry with the name you suggest, with the description following on the same line (i.e., don’t push Enter until you’re finished that particular entry). That way we can sort and compare similar entries.

[Click here for this week’s entry form](#), or go to tinyurl.com/inv-form-106.

This week’s winner receives a uterus — a little plush one that grips a winsome white ovary in each of her fallopian tubes. Offered up by Egg Donor Dave Prevar.



Perfect for Valentine's day in so many ways: This week's prize.

Runners-up get autographed fake money featuring the Czar or Empress, in one of [eight nifty designs](#). Honorable mentions get bupkis, except for a personal email from the E, plus the [Fir Stink for First Ink](#) for First Offenders.

Last call! The Loser Post-Holiday Party, our annual winter potluck/singalong/ yakfest for Invitational players and fans, will go down on **Sunday afternoon, Jan. 26**, at Mount Vermin, the Empress's dacha in suburban Maryland. Write to BrunchOfLosers@gmail.com for details; sign up by Jan. 15 so we can get a head count.

Jest a Second: New ink from last year's contests, Part 2

In [Invitational Week 104](#) we invited you to enter (or reenter) any of twenty-four Invite contests from the past six months or so. As in [last week's retrospective](#), some of this week's winners are highly inkworthy entries that we robbed of ink the first time around.

Third runner-up:

From Week 82, rhyme a Taylor Swift line with your own:

['Cause I'm a real tough kid I can handle my shit](#)

Which is what you have to do with this [Cologuard kit](#).

(William Kennard, Arlington, Va.)

Second runner-up:

From Week 84, to "improve" a sport:

Formula 1: On every lap, drivers would have to navigate around an elderly couple in a 2004 Oldsmobile. *(Steve Smith, Potomac, Md.)*

First runner-up:

From Week 87, to change a famous quote and attribute it to someone else:

“There but for the grace of God go me.” — Cookie Monster

(Lee Graham, Reston, Va.)

And the winner of the Dogs Pooping in Beautiful Places calendar:

From Week 87, change a quote:

“Weed the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union . . .” — Donald Trump

(Jon Gearhart, Des Moines)

Sequel Opportunity: Honorable mentions

Week 78, couplets about history

Columbus “discovered” America in 1492:

But that holiday in October, Chris, no longer mentions you. (Rob Cohen, Potomac, Md.)

Week 80, compare any two items on the random list supplied

A tube of Crest: Tastes great.

Shrinkflation: Less filling. (Neil Kurland, Elkridge, Md.)

A Chat GPT love letter vs. a tube of Crest: One is a product of florid prose, the other of fluoride pros. (Steve Smith)

Week 82, rhyme a Taylor Swift line with your own

Now I’m down bad, crying at the gym —

Fifteen minutes on the treadmill and I’m still not fit and slim!

(Jonathan Jensen, Baltimore)

No one in my small town thought I’d see the lights of Manhattan,

Yet here I am at Kansas State, studying code formattin’. (Pam Shermeyer, Lathrup Village, Mich.)

Somehow I brought home bedbugs from the Poconos.

Now I want to sell my house and set fire to all my clothes (Marni Penning Coleman, Falls Church, Va.)

Each night I dream about his schlong.

Is that a bad thing to say in a song?

(Judy Freed, Deerfield Beach, Fla.)

Week 83, define various nonsense phrases

Bang-whiz: Kraft Foods introduces its new, cheesier personal lubricant. (Stephen Dudzik, Olney, Md.)

Bong bong bong boing: The death knell of Big Ben. (Neil Kurland)

Tock-Tick Tock-Tick: Project 2025's mission to turn back time. (Judy Freed)

Gliddy glub gloopy, nubby nobby noopy: From the Ancient Book of Spells, Constipation Section, what precedes “bring forth now a giant poopy”? (Jon Ketzner, Cumberland, Md.)

Week 84, ‘improve’ a sport

NASCAR: Race with your choice of iPhone, ceramic coffee mug, or child’s car seat on top of your car roof. DQ if it falls. (Stephen Dudzik)

Replace the batons in Olympic track relays with something reflecting the host city or country: In Paris, they pass the baguettes; Los Angeles, the Oscars; Amsterdam, the dildos. (*Jeff Rackow, Bethesda, Md.*)

Week 85, limericks featuring a word beginning ‘hu-’ or ‘hy-’

Robert Mapplethorpe’s praises are sung,
But my ma? Well, she just bit her tongue.
Saw his work on my wall
And her face said it all
Save this comment: “At least it’s well hung.”

(*Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.*)

The Hulk looks disturbingly trim;
He’s cut down on his trips to the gym.
To the shock of his fans,
This green monster has plans
To become the Incredible Slim.

(*Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.*)

Week 86, names for pets

Porcupine: Anita Hug (*Pam Shermeyer*)

Badger: Hector (*Roy Ashley, Washington, D.C.*)

Snake: Henry Wadsworth. (*Jesse Frankovich, Laingsburg, Mich.*)

Frog: Rosie the Ribbiter. (*Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.*)

Pigeon: Coup Coup Bird, one of the peaceful doves that shit on the Capitol. (*Kevin Doport, Naxos, Greece*)

Week 87, change a quote and attribute it to someone else

“Genius is 1 percent inspiration and 99 percent immigration.” — Elon Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy (*Mark Raffman*)

“You billed my father. Prepare to die.” — Luigi Mangione (*Judy Freed*)

“Now is the winter of our disconnect.” — Comcast subscriber (*William Kennard*)

“You’re gonna need a bigger coat.” — Your mother (*Eric Nelkin, Silver Spring, Md.*)

“You’re gonna need a bigger boa.” — RuPaul (*Rob Cohen*)

“The People United Will Never Be Defecated!” — Detective Robert Thorn of “Soylent Green” (*Stephen Dudzik*)

Week 89, compare two people with the same initials

Tommy Tutone: Phone number 867-5309. Tommy Tuberville: IQ 8.675309. (*Duncan Stevens*)

Week 91, tips on being thrifty

Forgo condoms. Jeez, they’re up to more than a dollar each these days. (*Jesse Rifkin, Arlington, Va.*)

When your kid needs wheels for building a toy car, remember — shopping carts are only a quarter at Aldi. (*Jon Gearhart*)

Week 92, haiku about current events

They found Gaetz paid for
Sex and drugs — and that’s just the

Tip of the viceberg.

(Jesse Frankovich)

Week 93, Ask Backwards: Follow one of the ‘answers’ with a question

A. A children’s book by RFK Jr.

Q. What is “Brown Bear, Brown Bear, Then Bake 45 Minutes?” *(Duncan Stevens)*

A. Bond. Percival Bond.

Q. Who did MI6 assign to keep an eye on Her Majesty's silver service? *(Chris Doyle)*

Week 94, jokes that require erudite or specialized knowledge

Q. Why did Bullwinkle seek counseling?

A. His assapanick was out of control.*

*Assapanick is another name for a flying squirrel. *(Mark Raffman)*

Q. What might a classics professor say if you ask him for a conjugal moment?

A. “I decline.”*

*Different noun forms in classical languages are called declensions, and enumerating the various cases within them is called declining; verb families are called conjugations. *(Duncan Stevens)*

Week 96, coin a word from a 7-letter ‘rack’ from the ScrabbleGrams game

AANSWYY > YAY, SWAN: Inappropriate response to a swan song *(Duncan Stevens)*

Week 99, change the meaning of a headline by adding a ‘bank head’

Real headline: Apple agrees to \$95 million settlement

Bank head: Banana on wall demands \$89 million more *(William Kennard)*

The Container Store files for bankruptcy amid stiff competition

Box biz snuffed by casket biz *(Dan Steinbrocker, Los Angeles)*

The pain of giving up on Ye

Colonial Williamsburg actors reluctantly agree to call visitors ‘you’ instead *(Duncan Stevens)*

A year without Ye

Ar

(Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn, Va.)

Should you trust an AI-assisted doctor?

Sure, says our AI bank head generator *(Jeff Contompasis)*

How to calm your mind with breathing, according to science

Not breathing causes stress, agitation in most humans, study finds *(Mark Raffman)*

Week 100, predictions for the year 2124

Service droids sigh every time Alexa tells them: “When I was your age, I could speak only when spoken to!” *(Steve Smith)*

Week 101, ‘X is so Y ...’ jokes

X is so evil, even Elphaba has moved to Bluesky. *(Marni Penning Coleman)*

Week 102, predictions for 2025

Jan. 20, 2025: A 7.1 magnitude earthquake rocks the Mid-Atlantic region. Its epicenter is traced to George Washington’s grave. *(Steve Smith)*

And Last

Week 89, people with the same initials:

Paul McCartney: “Maybe I’m Amazed.”

Pat Myers: Maybe I’m amused. (*Jesse Frankovich*)

The headline “Jest a Second” is by Judy Freed; Kevin Doport wrote the honorable-mentions subhead.

Still running — deadline 9 p.m. ET Saturday, Jan. 11: our Week 105 contest, to write a humorous poem about someone who died in 2024. Click on the link below.