

The Invitational Week 107: Twits' Twist — fun with anagrams

Plus our winning obit poems for the ex-folks of 2024.

[Pat Myers](#)

and

[Gene Weingarten](#)

Jan 16, 2025



Size doesn't matter: 4-7 sex therapist Ruth Westheimer, the subject of four varied obit poems in today's results.

Hello.

Have you thought much about Donald Trump, the anagrammatical president? He is both **evil** and **vile**, and he is **live**, but mostly in the sense of a grenade held in a bare hand with the pin removed; moreover, he hides behind a **veil** of treachery, just like **Levi**, the biblical character who duped the Shechemite men into getting circumcised, and then slaughtered them gleefully during their writhing agony.

When Gene ran [a similar sentence](#) in The Gene Pool a few days ago, we realized we had the makings of a contest: to anagram a word in multiple ways. On the other hand, we didn't want to exclude those virtuoso anagrams of longer phrases, like this classic by Chris Doyle that makes a sentence with no extra words: **The Invitational Losers ... have nostrils in a toilet.**"

So let's have it both ways:

For Invitational Week 107: Write an entertaining sentence or two that contain either:

(a) a word or name and two or more anagrams of it, as in Gene's example above; **or**

(b) a series of words and at least one anagram of it, as in Chris's. Your sentence(s) may include other words as well, but please make it clear to us where the anagram is (putting it in all capitals, for example). You may ignore spacing and punctuation when anagramming.

For longer anagrams, use Anu Garg's handy-dandy and fun Wordsmith [Anagram Checker](#) to make sure you've used all the letters in your phrase, and no others.

Deadline is Saturday, Jan. 25, 2025, at 9 p.m. ET. Results will run here in The Gene Pool on Thursday, Jan. 30. As usual, you may submit up to 25 entries for this week's contest, preferably all on the same form.

Formatting this week: It's just our standard request to write each entry as a single line (i.e., don't push Enter until you're finished that particular entry). That way we can shuffle all the anonymous entries.

[Click here for this week's entry form](#), or go to tinyurl.com/inv-form-107.

This week's winner receives something whose very existence is sure to prompt: "But why?" Well, because who wouldn't want to have fake pet-store bags of fake water containing fake goldfish hanging from their ears? The Empress fell so deeply in love with this fine jewelry that she bought her own pair, and her ears aren't even pierced; she'll include the same little clips she uses as adapters for her virgin lobes.



For a koi mistress: This week's prize earrings.

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.

The Late Edition: The obit poems of Week 105

In [Invitational Week 105](#) we made our usual invitation (it's in our name!) to celebrate in verse anyone who'd died last year. Of course we got lots for Jimmy Carter, who qualified for this year's contest by just two days, but none of them quite had the dead-on tone and wit that this week's inking obit poems possess.

Third runner-up:

Ruth Westheimer (1928-2024), sex therapist
Dr. Ruth's former patients paid their respects
And almost could hear her exclaim:
"It's vunderful to have enjoyed such success —
I'm so happy zat *all* of you came!"
(Sarah Walsh, Rockville, Md.)

Second runner-up:

Shigeichi Negishi (1923-2024)
Give a shout for Shigeichi Negishi,
Who brought us together with song.
For the man who invented the karaoke machine
A moment of silence seems wrong.
(Mary McNamara, Washington, D.C.)

First runner-up:

O.J. Simpson (1947-2024)
He ran through defenses with power and skill,
Through airports he ran as a rental car shill,
He ran from the law with the copters above,
Then he ran into luck with an ill-fitting glove.
He ran out of time, though, and now he's begun,
In a place he deserves, one last very long run.
(Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.)

And the winner of the "glow knife" that looks as if it's stuck through your head:

Robert Pickton (1949-2024), serial killer
Most hardworking humans who live on a farm
Would not be considered a cause for alarm.
But a cold-blooded killer (this poem explains)
Once nourished his piglets with human remains.
One after another he lured to their deaths;
He strangled those women— he stole their last breaths.
Police said he killed thirty-three of them (Lordy!)
Offended, he bragged, "It was way over forty!"
The world now is rid of him (so says our audit):
He no longer lives on that farm, 'cause he bought it.
(Beverley Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

Death Be Not Wowed: Honorable mentions

William Post (1927-2024), creator of Pop-Tarts
We've lost inventor William Post,
A businessman who gained acclaim

For making pastries we can toast
And upping Kellogg's breakfast game.
Now every year 3 billion sell,
Which brings in untold piles of gelt,
But folks keep asking why in hell
The Pop-Tart icing doesn't melt.

(Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.)

David Bouley (1953-2024), *superstar chef*

Saint Peter says to Chef Bouley,
"We're thrilled that you've arrived today.
An ample kitchen's here above
For you to make the things you love.
You'll have it all, and nothing want,
For your eternal restaurant."
"You have my thanks," the great chef says,
"But lots of luck to get a rez."

(Mark Raffman)

Peter Higgs (1929-2024), *who discovered the Higgs boson, a particle that binds the universe together*

I. Physics in the Trump Age

Can Peter's puny boson (science tells us it exists)
Unite the universe (which it's been doing from the start),
Despite a preening bozo who, at every turn, insists
On driving the inhabitants of Planet Earth apart?

(Melissa Balmain, Rochester, N.Y.)

II. Peter Higgs proposed a boson;

Now that gent no longer goes on.
Though his passing makes us sad,
Still, he two good half-lives had.

(Jesse Frankovich, Laingsburg, Mich.)

Jim Abrahams (1944-2024), *writer-director*

Jim Abrahams of *Airplane!* fame

Died at age 80 — too early.

Call him juvenile, tasteless, and lacking in shame
As long as you don't call him — James (he always hated that).

(Richard Wexler, Alexandria, Va.)

Kamala (c. 1974-2024), *an Asian elephant euthanized in November*

Kamala the Elephant lived at the National Zoo;

Kamala the Candidate? She lives in D.C., too.

They share a famous name — and more:

Both got bumped off in '24. *(Beverley Sharp)*

Richard Simmons (1948-2024), *exercise leader*

He got us all Sweatin' to the Oldies,

And sending him cash from our billfoldies.

(Roy Ashley, Washington, D.C.)

Liam Payne (1993-2024), *boy-band star:*

They mourn, the fans of erstwhile Liam,

That henceforth they will never see him.

From time, alas, there's no protection:

It moves in only One Direction.

(Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)

Julia Hawkins (1916-2024), *centenarian cycling and track athlete*

For Julia Hawkins, at a hundred and five,

Life was more than just thankfully being alive.

Breaking national times at that age in two dashes,

She **wowed on the track** and displayed what panache is.

Last year she succumbed at a hundred and eight,

Then blew right past Saint Peter and through heaven's gate. *(Chris Doyle)*

Jennell Jaquays (1956-2024), *video game artist*

Jennell Jaquays, her artistry in D&D we knew;

Her skills were seen in Donkey Kong, and soon the legend grew.

And when she passed, Saint Peter greeted her and said, "Come through

These pearly gates — the game goes on: You've now reached Level Two."

(Rob Cohen, Potomac, Md.)

Two unfortunate explorers in Washington state

Into the forest went two eager men,

Seeking out Bigfoot, that creature of lore.

But soon they got lost in a search for its den.

Found three days later, they'll hunt nevermore.

If Sasquatch exists, then our genes may be linked.

But if so, he is thriving. These guys are extinct.

(Pam Shermeyer, Lathrup Village, Mich.)

Ruth Westheimer (1928-2024), *sex therapist*

I. This 4-foot-7 powerhouse from heaven can report:

"Life is meant for pleasure, though at times we'll come up short."

She'd want us to be joyful, no faces sad and stony.

So, in her honor, celebrate your lingam and your yoni.

(Judy Freed, Deerfield Beach, Fla.)

II. Higgledy piggledy,

Dr. Ruth Westheimer,

News of her passing caused

Many to sniff.

Expert in sexual

Psychoanalysis,

Finally it was her

Turn to get stiff. *(Jesse Frankovich)*

III. On the air, she laughed, she taught, she soothed,
Some callers shared strange things.
Like the guy whose wife played ring toss
With his schlong and onion rings.
What a delight for a teen like me!
Each episode a treasure.
Thank you truly, Dr. Ruth—
It really was a pleasure.
(Leif Picoult, Rockville, Md.)

Juli Lynne Charlot (1922-2024), creator of the [poodle skirt](#):

'Twas the Fifties, and mavens of fashion all sighed,
“All our skirts are too bland — nothing’s making us smile.”
But then Juli Lynne Charlot stood up and replied,
“To spice everything up, let's all try doggy style!”
(Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase, Md.)

Teri Garr (1944–2024)

It's true, Teri Garr has been taken away
At the end, it was MS that took her
And yet she's immortal, for who else could say,
“He would have an enormous Schwanzstucker!” *(Gary Crockett)*

Grant Page (1939-2024)

If you needed a stuntman Down Under,
You knew Grant Page would bring on the thunder
For both film and TV
Till his car hit a tree
In an unplanned ironical blunder.
(Elliott Shevin, Efrat, West Bank)

Willie Mays (1931-2024) and **Orlando Cepeda** (1937-2024), *Hall of Fame* baseball players

They wowed many a fan
In New York and San Fran,
And on them their teams placed reliance.
If those who came later
Had stats that were greater,
They stood on the shoulders of Giants. *(Duncan Stevens)*

Rickey Henderson (1958-2024), *Hall of Fame* baseball star

A cloud of dust in heaven: Rickey's scored!
It's clear he's safe up there; we won't appeal it.
He really should have known, though, that the Lord
Would call him home. He didn't have to steal it. *(Duncan Stevens)*

Anita Bryant (1940-2024), singer, orange juice spokeswoman, and anti-LGBT activist

Saint Peter stands at heaven's gate
And weighs Anita Bryant's fate.
Her Oklahoma pageant win
And OJ ads won't get her in.

But entertaining soldiers on
Eight Bob Hope tours around the globe
May help offset her biggest con:

That she's a vicious homophobe. *(Chris Doyle)*

Arthur Frommer (1929-2024), *budget travel writer*

Frommer's latest guide, his loved ones pray,
Is Paradise on Zero Bucks a Day. *(Melissa Balmain)*

Peter Schickele (1935-2024), *musical satirist and creator of P.D.Q. Bach*

Peter Schickele set out to give a sharp poke
At the snobbery classical music was full of.
With pastiche and parody, genius and joke,
Tossed the classical china shop he was the bull of.

He "discovered" a son of the great J.S. Bach:

P.D.Q., who tried every manner of work
(Between benders and stupors and being in hock),
Twisting eras and touchstones, naive and berserk.

For fifty-plus years he continued his shtick,
And to classical music new followers led.

Although P.D.Q. was once Pretty Damned Quick,

Peter Schickele, sadly, is pretty damned dead.

(David Franks, Washington County, Ark.)

Phil Lesh (1940–2024), *Grateful Dead bassist*

Phil Lesh went to the afterlife without the normal fears,

Because he'd been among the Dead for nearly sixty years. *(Jesse Frankovich)*

Mr. Greedy (1991-2024), *African penguin at the Maryland Zoo*

Dad to many chicks was Mr. Greedy

Credit him with being extra seedy

Fruitful penguin, hardy, hale, and breedy

Saved his threatened species, yes indeedy.

(Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn, Va.)

Vladimir Shklyarov (1985-2024)

No Russian official is willing to answer

Why Vladimir Shklyarov, a principal dancer

And star in a prominent troupe of ballet,

Plunged five stories performing his last grand jeté. *(Chris Doyle)*

Natalia Larina (1974-2024), *judge*

Valentina Bondarenko (1942-2024), *economist*

Dzianis Sidarenka (1976-2024), *diplomat*

Mikhail Rogachev (1960-2024), *oil oligarch*

Four people took their final breaths

In falls from buildings to their deaths.

A noted judge, economist,

Belarussian diplomat

And Yukos oil exec all pissed

Off Vlad and wound up dead — kersplat! *(Chris Doyle)*

Morgan Spurlock (1970-2024), maker of “Super Size Me,” a documentary about fast food

This mission-driven man has sadly now met his demise.

Although he’ll film no more, his legacy is super-size.

He took his share of risks and surely learned from his mistakes.

He’d want us all to know a fast-food life is no great shakes. *(Judy Freed)*

Si Spiegel (1924-2024), who transformed the manufacture of fake Christmas trees

What to do as a war-hero pilot

If, in peacetime, the bigoted bosses

[Won’t let Jews fly a plane?](#) Cut your losses:

Take their holiday tree and restyle it!

Soon your greenery’s earning such green,

You soar high as a B-17. *(Melissa Balmain)*

Peggy Ann Jones (1939–2024), opera singer

Quincy Jones (1933–2024), record producer

Lewis Jones (1931–2024), rugby player

Ignatius Jones (1957–2024), actor and shock-rock singer

Parnelli Jones (1933–2024), Indianapolis 500 winner

Jacoby Jones (1984–2024), NFL wide receiver

James Earl Jones (1931–2024), actor

Peggy Ann, Quincy, Lewis, Ignatius, Parnelli, Jacoby, and James Earl supplied

Just a part of the list from last year for the folks keeping up with the Joneses who

died. *(Jesse Frankovich)*

The headline “The Late Edition” is by Jeff Contompasis; Kevin Dopart wrote the honorable-mentions subhead.

Still running — deadline 9 p.m. ET Saturday, Jan. 18: our Week 106 contest to name and describe an Eighth Dwarf. Click on the link below.