

# Style Invitational

BY PAT MYERS

## Report from Week 966

in which we asked you to construct strings of words that change by one letter from the previous — adding, subtracting or substituting: Cleverness notwithstanding, there are only so many of these a body can read at once. So we offer some great entries from Week 962 that we didn't have room for last month.

THE  
WINNER  
OF THE  
INKIN'  
MEMORIAL

**MITT: "Mutt must muss, mess less. Let's let pet pee. See? Set? Get pet! Put pup up! Uh??? UGH!!!!"** (Dave Zarrow, Reston)

### 2 Winner of the little tin of Emergency Underpants:

CAIN, coin, corn, core, lore, lose, LOST!  
PAUL, pall, poll, pole, pose, lose, LOST!  
NEWT, next, text, test, jest, just, lust, LOST!  
RICK, risk, rise, rose, lose, LOST!  
(Neal Starkman, Seattle)

**3** OBAMA, 'Bama, bam, lam, slam, ISLAM — Rufus Boggs, Backwater, Ala. (Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.)

**4** PUTIN, poutin', spoutin', shoutin', shootin', hootin', hottin', rottin', rattin', ratin', pratin', prayin', payin', PALIN. (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

TUTU, tuts, tots, toes, toe, woe, won, win, twin, TWAIN. (Judy Blanchard, Novi, Mich.)

**Market Jitters**  
BULL, bell, sell, yell, help, heap, hear, fear, BEAR. (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn)

BEANS, beads, bends, wends, wands, warts, FARTS. (Craig Dykstra, Centreville)

**And Last:** LOSER, loner, boner, bone, bore, sore, swore, sworn, worn, morn, MORON. (Doug Frank, Crosby, Tex.)

**And Even Laster:** POO, loo, look, lock, luck, suck, sick, ick, INK. (Amanda Yanovitch)

From Week 962  
in which the Losers took a sentence from that week's Posts and came up with a question it could have answered:

A. You want to keep banging on him and stop him from jumping.  
Q. What's the first step in making Grasshopper Pie? (Beverley Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

A. "I've taken a recent liking to 'man toy.'"  
Q. Mr. President, do you have a nickname for Vice President Biden? (Melissa Yorks, Gaithersburg)

A. "I can't really pinpoint any actual conversation that we had."  
Q. Did your doctor say the medical marijuana is helping you? (David Genser)

A. They were rare birds indeed.  
Q. Is it true that the recent cases of food poisoning were caused by undercooked turkeys? (Larry Gray, Union Bridge, Md.)

**Still running — deadline Monday night — is our "grandfoals" contest: See wapo.st/StyleInv; click on "Week 969."**

Larry Powers, Falls Church, a First Offender)

YOUTH, mouth, south, soot, sooty, booty, booby, boomy, roomy, room, loom, loon, loony, looky, hooky, hoody, MOODY. (Dan Steinbrocker, Los Angeles)

NEWT, next, text, test, vest, vast, vase, case, ease, easel, WEASEL. (Veggo Larsen, Farmers Branch, Tex.)

EASTER, feaster, faster, master, masser, Mass o'er, Mass over, PASSOVER. (Mike Gips, Bethesda)

TRUMP, rump, ump, imp, simp, sim, him, ham, sham, shame, shave, have, hare, hire, FIRE. (Matt Monitto, Elon, N.C.)

Even more of a miracle?  
WATER: later, LAGER. (Kevin Dopart)

## Badder, sadder: honorable mentions

"CSI" (spoiler alert):  
GROPE, rope, rape, tape, tap, rap, trap, trip, grip, gripe, grime, CRIME. (Amanda Yanovitch, Midlothian, Va.)

GOP got God, DoD, Dad, Mad Man; ran Ron, WON! (Mike Caslin, Round Hill, Va.)

ObamaCare, ObamaScare, ObamaScar, ObamaSpar, ObamaSpat, ObamaSpit, ObamaSplit, ObamaSplat. (David Genser, Poway, Calif.)

"I didn't start with P":  
RICK rock; dock dork; pork; porky, perky PERRY. (Kevin Dopart)

RUSH, rash, rasp, grasp, grass, CRASS. (Edmund Conti, Raleigh, N.C.)



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

## THIS WEEK'S CONTEST

# Week 970: Couple it

**Those parts of thee that the world's eye doth view** (William Shakespeare)  
**Are thanks to Dr. Young, Park Avenue.** (Frank Osen)

**Turning and turning in the widening gyre,** (W.B. Yeats)  
**My clothes are almost ready for the dryer.** (Robert Schechter)

The examples above by two of our most poetic Losers (not Shakespeare and Yeats; *those* guys never won a T-shirt) are from a 2006 edition of the light-verse journal Bumbershoot, which calls them tailgaters. Robert suggested recently on the Style Invitational Devotees page on Facebook that we try for more. **This week: Take a line from any well-known poem and pair it with your own second line to make a humorous couplet.** I'm not going to say they *must* rhyme and have consistent meter, but my hunch is that rhyming, scanning couplets would be much funnier and cleverer. You can find innumerable poems online by Googling "famous poems" and whatnot.

Winner gets the Inkin' Memorial, the Lincoln-statue bobblehead that is the new Style Invitational trophy. Second place, in accordance with the literary theme, receives a Lil William (Shakespeare) "posable figure," if you like your human figures posed as human Transformers; he's a bit blocky. However, he is indeed lil — about three inches tall. He also seems to be wearing a Speedo. Donated by Loser Brunch coordinator Pie Snelson.

**Other runners-up** win their choice of a coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt, a yearned-for Loser Mug or the new, ardently desired Grossery Bag. Honorable mentions get a lusted-after Loser magnet. First Offenders get a smelly, tree-shaped air "freshener" (Fir Stink for their first ink). E-mail entries to losers@washpost.com or fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Monday, May 14; results published June 3 (online June 1). No more than 25 entries per entrant per week. Include "Week 970" in your e-mail subject line or it might be ignored as spam. Include your real name, postal address and phone number with your entry. See contest rules and guidelines at wapo.st/StyleInv. The subhead for this week's honorable mentions is by Roy Ashley. Join the Style Invitational Devotees on Facebook at on.fb.me/invdev.



**STYLE CONVERSATIONAL** Have a question for the Empress or want to talk to some real Losers? Join us at washingtonpost.com/stylconversational.

## TELEVISION

# Quarterback Eli Manning to host 'Saturday Night Live'

BY RACHEL COHEN

Eli Manning sensed his brother's shadow even as a comedic actor.

"Saturday Night Live" producers invited the New York Giants quarterback to host after he won his first Super Bowl in 2008. One of the reasons he declined was that Peyton Manning had hosted the show a year earlier after his own championship.

"I did not want to have to go up against a tough competition and the great job that he performed," Eli said last week.

Manning recalled he sent word back that perhaps he'd host if he won another title. Sure enough, he said yes after his second ring and will star in the late-night sketches this Saturday.

"I had not proven myself as much as I wanted to," he said of that initial offer four years ago.

Manning and SNL chief Lorne Michaels took part in a conference call Wednesday, hours before the quarterback would start acting out 40-45 skits to whittle down to 12 or 13 to be potentially performed in front of a live television audience.

He made the short trip into Manhattan from Hoboken, N.J., on Monday and Tuesday to meet with writers and cast members at NBC's Rockefeller Center studios. Wednesday would be the first time Manning saw the scripts and rehearsed, and he was eager to get going.

He sat in the audience, laughing along, when Peyton hosted in

2007, an episode that included a sketch lampooning the NFL's United Way commercials.

Eli sought his brother's advice before accepting the invitation. Peyton told him: "The one thing you are used to doing is live — that's something you do every week during the football season."

"We know how Eli reacts both under pressure and also with changing things quickly," Michaels said. "I don't think we're making any other kinds of concession because it's an athlete over an actor, comedian or singer — or politician, for that matter."

Former NFL coach and broad-

caster John Madden, who hosted in 1982, called Manning and offered the same counsel that Peyton did, encouraging him to savor working with the writers and cast members during the week.

"The good thing about 'Saturday Night Live' is you can come in and maybe express the different sides that people don't see," Eli said. "Maybe that's not you at all times, but for this night you can kind of let loose."

Rihanna is Saturday's musical guest, and Michaels said he'd like to include her in a skit.

Asked which Manning brother is funnier, the SNL creator replied, "We won't really know that til Saturday."

— Associated Press



Eli Manning