DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

Har Talk: Fake car trivia from Week 1075

BY PAT MYERS

The latest in our series of totally bogus trivia, this time about motor vehicles, roads, stuff like that. The Empress loves that old joke: In Texas you can drive across your ranch all day without reaching the boundary lines. . . . Vermonters have cars like that, too. But she wasn't so thrilled to see it sent to a contest for original humor. There might be other retreads in here as well; if you see one, just enjoy the ride, okay?

The winner of the Inkin' Memorial

Rather than producing an undignified beep when a driver neglects to fasten his seat belt, a Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow emits the sound of a discreetly clearing throat. (Robert Schechter, Dix Hills, N.Y.)

2nd place and "Heads of State," a book of memorabilia featuring presidents' crania:

So far, the Google self-driving car has passed its driving test only in Florida. (Martin Bancroft, Bellevue, Wash.)

3rd place

The name of Erik Prndl, inventor of the automatic transmission, is displayed on most cars' dashboards. (Edward Gordon, Austin; Jeff Shirley, Richmond)

4th place

To build its Garden State Parkway, the State of New Jersey paved over 351 gardens and 79 parks. (Mark Raffman, Reston)

Faux on the floor: honorable mentions

Factory-applied stain-proofing chemicals inadvertently cause car seat cushions to retain human flatulence for up to three weeks. This is why dogs prefer to ride with their heads out the window. (Kathleen DeBold, Burtonsville)

GM nearly sold off the Chevrolet brand because "it sounds too French." (Ken Gallant, Conway, Ark.)

The voice actress for the Garmin GPS made a guest appearance as an extra in the third season of "Lost." (David Friedman, Arlington)

It is well known that Pierre L'Enfant designed the layout of the streets of Washington, D.C., but few know that he was assisted by the Marquis de Sade. (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village)

West Virginia politicians are considering subsidies for coal-powered SUVs. (Ken Gallant; Peter Siegwald, Lauzerte, France)

"Tom and Ray," the hosts of public radio's "Car Talk," are actually one person who does two slightly different voices. He knows little about cars but was an early adopter of Google. (Robert Schechter)

The grille of the Ford Edsel was designed by Georgia O'Keeffe. (Mark Raffman)

In Florida, residents over age 80 must renew their driver's licenses every 10 years or 2,000 miles, whichever comes first. (Jeff Covel, Arlington)

The state of Massachusetts hired New England Patriots Coach Bill Belichick as a consultant to help train DMV employees how not to smile. (Rob Wolf, Gaithersburg)

Used-car dealers in Cuba are using American TV ads from the 1950s to promote their inventory. (Mark Raffman)

When shown a yellow light, 9 out of 10 test mice preferred the gas pedal to the brake pedal. (Jeff Covel)

By 2018 in California, all new cars will be fitted with a computer chip that detects if the vehicle is speeding, and then automatically deducts the fine from the driver's bank account. (Robert Schechter)

After intense lobbying by child safety groups about the dangers of prom night, Maryland now requires all limo passengers 18 and younger to wear safety harnesses — called "feet belts" — when standing in an open sunroof, waving their arms and yelling "Wooooh!" (Daniel Bender, Bethesda)

In D.C., the number of additional fees that may be added to a cab fare is capped at infinity. (Frank Mann, Washington)

Because of the high number of false alarms, new cars will be equipped with an additional sensor connected to a check check engine light light. (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn)

The word "car" came into vogue in the early 20th century as a shorthand term for "horseless carriage," once it was realized that "hor" was not going to work. (Mark Raffman)

Foreign versions of Punch Buggy — in which you hit your friend when you see a VW Beetle — include (in India) Purple Nurple Tata and (in Serbia) Crotch Pop Yugo. (Bird Waring, Larchmont, N.Y.)

"The Wheels on the Bus Go Round and Round" is based on a true story. (Jeff Shirley)

At a gift shop on Route 66 in Tulsa, the biggest seller is the set of souvenir shin guards. (Dave Leveton, Gainesville, Va.)

And we have room for one more song parody from Week 1074: The contest was to write a song about a stage or screen musical, using the tune of a different musical:

"The Wizard of Oz"
Sung to "Do-Re-Mi" from "The Sound of Music"
So, young dear, what have we here?
Hey, it seems you're on the run!
See, the blame is on yourself;
Ha! But killing can be fun!
Oh, one sister squashed and dead;
Ah, the other melts like snow;
Gee, those poppies messed your head —
Please just grab your mutt and go!
(oh oh oh) (Jeff Shirley, Richmond)

Still running — deadline Monday night: Our Hyphen the Terrible neologism contest. See bit.ly/invite1078.

BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

New contest for Week 1079
Little piddle riddle

Q. What medication can last twice as long?
A. Cyclops eyedrops. (Sue Lin Chong)
Q. I was in a coma — how did "Survivor" turn out, anyway?
A. Shrewd rude nude dude out-IQ'd multitude. (David Genser)
Q. What do users of Viagra hope for?
Never-fail-ya genitalia. (Sue Lin Chong)

Given the multitudinous lists of rules for some recent contests, this week's couldn't be simpler: It's one that we've done just once before (in this form, anyway), 14 years ago in Week *365*. **This week: Ask a question and answer it with a rhyme,** as in the examples above from 2000. You may rhyme more than two words, but they all have to be the same rhyme. Loser Matt Monitto says his family used to play a similar game called Inky Pinky, but we're guessing that Matt's family didn't use the edgy, sometimes highbrow, often topical rhymes that tend to get Invite ink (and did so last time). You can see all the Week *365* winners at bit.ly/invite*365* (scroll down past that week's new contest).

Note that while the Empress has her standards on what counts as a rhyme — we're using the classic "perfect rhymes" — she will do her best to accept that not everyone pronounces vowels the way they're spoken in her native Philadelphia, that "berry" and "marry" more or less rhyme in less enlightened dialects, for example. And today's headline? While the *tt* and *dd* of "little" and "riddle" are pronounced very differently in Britain, in American English the *tt* in "little" is what's called the "American flap" — closer to a D than a T — and close enough for us.

Winner gets the Inkin' Memorial, the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a fabulous addition to any formal dinner table: a set of little ceramic salt and pepper shakers, of a lady and a dog; there's a tiny magnet on the muzzle of the dog, and another on the backside of the lady. Donated by 243-time Loser Dave Prevar.

Other runners-up win their choice of a yearned-for Loser Mug or the ardently desired "Whole Fools" Grossery Bag. Honorable mentions get a lusted-after Loser magnet, either the Po' Wit Laureate or Puns of Steel. First Offenders receive a smelly tree-shaped air "freshener" (FirStink for their first ink). E-mail entries to losers@washpost.com or, if you were born in the 19th century, fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Monday, July 14; results published Aug. 3 (online July 31). No more than 25 entries per entrant per contest. Include "Week 1079" 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/InvRules*. This week's honorable-mentions subhead is by Kevin Dopart. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at *on.fb.me/invdev,* and click "like" on Style Invitational Ink of the Day at *bit.ly/inkofday*.

STYLE CONVERSATIONAL The Empress's weekly online column discusses each new contest and set of results. Especially if you plan to enter, check it out at wapo.st/styleconv.

These ever-so-decorous salt and pepper shakers are this week's 2nd prize.

PAT MYERS

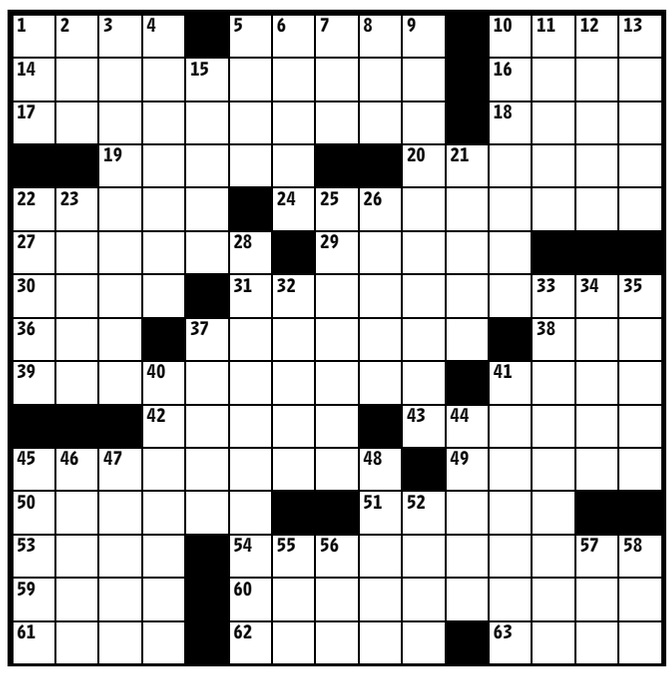
POST PUZZLER

No. 222

BY FRANK LONGO EDITED BY PETER GORDON • FIREBALLCROSSWORDS.COM

ACROSS
1 Reed who voiced Fred Flintstone
5 Bad thing to drop when reporting live
10 Like lines indicating trills
14 1994 National League Manager of the Year
16 County south of Niagara
17 Follower of Mary
18 City south of Delray
19 Whatsoever
20 Firm cheeses
22 Bolt
24 Quick determiner of credibility
27 Vespiary resident
29 1972 hit from the soul album "Still Bill"
30 Part-owner of Craigslist
31 Salt Lake City suburb
36 Former White House press secretary Fleischer
37 Rough patches for men
38 Material for a first-place medalla
39 Reason to go back to the block
41 Like many old thrillers
42 Pure
43 They're studied in aerobiology
45 Features of some damaged locks
49 Plump
50 President's place
51 One who's not big on largesse
53 List in a mission statement
54 Corn inspector
59 Gentrification candidate
60 Nickname in climate control?
61 Loser in a legendary upset
62 2001 title role for Gyllenhaal
63 Supposed beast of the East

DOWN
1 Group founded by Samuel Gompers: Abbr.
2 Aloha shirt accompanier
3 Place for Communion recipients
4 ____ Lions (Big Ten team from the Keystone State)
5 Have a hands-on experience?
6 Rolling pin hitters
7 Motor additive?
8 Expert in pop psychology?
9 Printer options
10 Massachusetts town on Lake Chargoggagoggmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg
11 Appeared
12 Subjects of many New Year's resolutions
13 Passover no-no
15 Novak outed her in 2003
21 "Stand and Deliver" Oscar nominee
22 Quiverful of arrows
23 King of the jungle?
25 Frank request
26 Barbiturate, e.g.
28 Did a certain duple-meter dance
32 Like things that have been packed away
33 Incentive to attend a function
34 "Tricksy spirit" of literature
35 Longship sailors, e.g.
37 Rile
40 "I'm good with it"
41 Lack of any softness
44 Far from rubicund
45 Pack away
46 Setting of Drexel U.
47 Madagascar primate
48 Indication of self-satisfaction
52 Parrot in "Aladdin"
55 ____ crusade
56 Article used by Freud
57 Rested on the bottom?
58 Linear lead-in



Answer to last week, No. 221

G	A	S	M	A	S	K			F	R	A	M	E	D
A	R	T	T	H	I	E	F		S	O	L	A	C	E
S	C	A	V	E	N	G	E		T	O	P	G	U	N
K	A	Y		M	U	G	S	H	O	T		N	A	M
E	D	D	Y		S	E	T	U	P		L	E	D	A
T	I	R	E	S		R	E	M		M	O	T	O	R
S	A	Y	S	H	I		R	O	P	E	W	O	R	K
			M	I	M	E		R	U	T	S			
C	A	S	A	N	O	V	A		G	R	A	S	P	S
A	L	L	A	Y		I	D	S		E	L	K	I	N
P	L	U	M		B	A	R	A	K		T	Y	C	O
E	D	M		M	I	N	I	V	A	N		M	A	W
C	O	B	W	E	B		F	O	R	E	H	A	N	D
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D	E	R	I	D	E			S	T	A	N	L	E	Y

HOROSCOPE

BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY | JULY 6: This year you might feel as if you need to make a decision for the group. Pressure to deal with the outside world may conflict with your personal life. A physical move is a strong possibility. If you are single, you will have an opportunity to stop thinking about a former love. Get to know a new love interest well before getting too involved. If you are attached, the two of you might make a major change on the home front. Learn how to compromise.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19)*
Allow a loved one to steal the stage. You have a strong personality that can outshine many people. Tonight, cater to someone else's needs.

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20)*
Allow someone else to take the lead for a change, and all you'll have to do is respond. You may gain a sudden insight into a close loved one.

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20)*
Start working on a project that you have been putting off for way too long. Loosen up, and enjoy some downtime. A friend easily could surprise you with an offer you can't say no to.

CANCER *(June 21-July 22)*
A loved one might entice you into going on an adventure. Don't make a judgment; just be willing to revise your plans. Spontaneity can add a delightful element to your day.

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22)*
You'll make your point easily, especially if you are relaxed. Zero in on what is important for friends when choosing plans. Tonight, make it a quiet night at home.

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22)*
You'll perk up by midafternoon. Return calls, and you might be surprised by some of the news you hear. A loved one is likely to react in his or her normally quirky way.

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22)*
Relax and enjoy a more easygoing pace. Your sensitivity and openness might make all the difference in an interaction. Be spontaneous.

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21)*
You may feel energized in the afternoon, which will bring you out of a funk that has been plaguing you for a while. Reach out to someone at a distance whom you care about.

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21)*
You might be dealing with someone who wants to control others. You can try to explain that one cannot control others, but if this person is set on using manipulation, then your words are likely to be powerless.

CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19)*
Now that some of the weekend craziness has died down, reach out to a pal you go out with often. Catch up on each other's news.

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18)*
Reach out to someone who you weren't able to spend time with this weekend. Your conversation might involve an unexpected twist, so be sure to listen carefully.

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20)*
Be willing to indulge a loved one, but be careful, as you could pull the wild card financially. Anything can happen when it comes to money.

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Jewish mom puzzled over Mass cards

Ask Amy

AMY DICKINSON

Dear Amy: My sister-in-law *has been sending cards for "the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass" to our Jewish family for holidays.*

She sent one to my 11-year-old son for his birthday. Fortunately, I had a feeling it might be something like this and opened it before he did. I will tell him about it, but it is not something he would want and it is confusing.

Should I ask her to stop sending this to our family or just continue to preview the mail? I'm not sure whether to accept it as an inappropriate blessing or be deeply offended.

Confused Mom

This is a teachable issue for your son. At the age of 11, he should be aware that people come from different cultures and have different faith practices.

This gesture from your sister-in-law is confusing to you and so you should ask her about it. Here's a start: "Cathleen, you know we are Jewish, right? I'm afraid I don't know what a Mass card is or why you are sending them to us. Can you explain this?" After that, then yes, if you don't want to receive these cards, you can say, "Can I ask you not to send these to us? It's really in conflict with our religion."

My understanding is that Mass cards are most often sent in memory of a deceased family member, although sometimes people also send them for birthdays or other special occasions.

Understand that once you have respectfully explored this and asked her to stop, she may continue because she sees this as an important part of her faith practice. I vote for tolerance, but if you don't want these Mass cards coming into the house then you should intercept them fresh out of the mailbox.

Dear Amy: I have fallen in love *with a funny, smart, kind man who is good to me. He is the love of my life, and we want to plan a future together. There's only one problem: In the five years we've known each other, he hasn't kept any job for very long. He's also in school, and is not super successful at that.*

I have worked hard and have gone into debt to be where I am. I have a steady job, but I don't make much money and I won't be able to support us both.

I find it hard to bring up my fears about our financial future. I don't want money to be the reason we can't be together, and I'm embarrassed to say it's important to me, but its importance has already made itself known. Should I tell him I can't be with him until he can succeed financially?

Distraught

Five years of being with someone should tell you everything important you need to know. Your guy is funny, smart and kind. You love him.

If you two are going to be together very long-term, you will be the breadwinner. This means that you will have to get a different job where you make enough to support both of you while he does what he can to supplement this with temporary excursions into the job force. This reality isn't the end of the world — men have been taking on the breadwinner role for eons, and if you make a family with your guy, you can do it too.

Amy's column appears seven days a week at www.washingtonpost.com/advice. Write to Amy Dickinson at *askamy@tribune.com.*