

DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

‘Quick, read this from Week 1077!’ she said Swiftly

BY PAT MYERS

We got more than 2,000 entries responding to our call for Tom Swiftly (a.k.a. Swiftly) jokes, which pun on adverbs and verbs. Some of today’s results require you to use a little mental flexibility: Some are sound puns (e.g., “genuine”); some are visual puns (the first four letters of “beatifically”); and some require you to add a mental hyphen or capital letter (after “pro” in “probingly”).

The winner of the Inkin’ Memorial
“Every time you ask, you’ll get the same answer; I did not have sex with that woman,” **Bill Clinton said reliably.** (Greg Arnold, Herndon)

2nd place and the totally not Magic Poop and Chicken Poop Lip Balm:
“We may have to leave the Euro zone,” Merkel remarked. “Ditto,” added **Hollande** frankly. (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn)

3rd place
“There are delays on the Red Line,” the voice from the loudspeaker repeated **metronomically.** (David Litman, Arlington)

4th place
“#%*#!, #%*#!, #%*#!” the **former House majority leader effused.** (Jeff Shirley, Richmond)

Better luck next Tom: honorable mentions
“Everyone would agree that I am very tall, correct?” the **North Korean leader stated unambiguously.** (Todd DeLap, Fairfax)

“Microsoft’s search engine is better than Google’s,” **Bill Gates said probingly.** (Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase)

“I never so much as touched that woman,” said **Ike Turner beatifically.** (Beverly Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

“Gee, you’ve put on a lot of weight, Auntie,” said **Dorothy emphatically.** (Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.)

“Miss Aniston, you’ve defeated me,” said **Tom genuinely.** (Hugh Thirlway, The Hague)

“That last Old Spice commercial was pretty lame,” **Isaiah Mustafa said pitifully.** (Kevin Dopart, vacationing in Naxos, Greece)

“We got rid of all that diet beer,” said the **bartender delightedly.** (Kevin Dopart)

“Son, you have a right to know; I’ve decided to become a woman,” the father said **transparently.** (Greg Arnold; Ken Stern, New York, who got his only other blot of ink in 2003)

“I really don’t know what my most popular role was — perhaps **Nigel Tufnel**,” **Christopher guessed.** (Jeff Contompasis)

“I no longer travel abroad,” said **Chaz Bono.** (John McCooley, Rehoboth Beach, Del.)

“You’d better remember that my decisions determine what you’ll pay on your mortgage,” said **Janet Yellen irately.**(Harvey Smith, McLean)

“What anagrams can you make from ‘I am Lord Voldemort?’” **Tom Marvolo riddled.** (Jeff Contompasis)

“Woohoo — she’ll be off running the country for four whole years!” **Bill exhilarated.** (Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)

“Don’t worry. I go rock climbing by myself for days,” said **Aron Ralston disarmingly.** (Lynda Hoover, Shepherdstown, W.Va.)

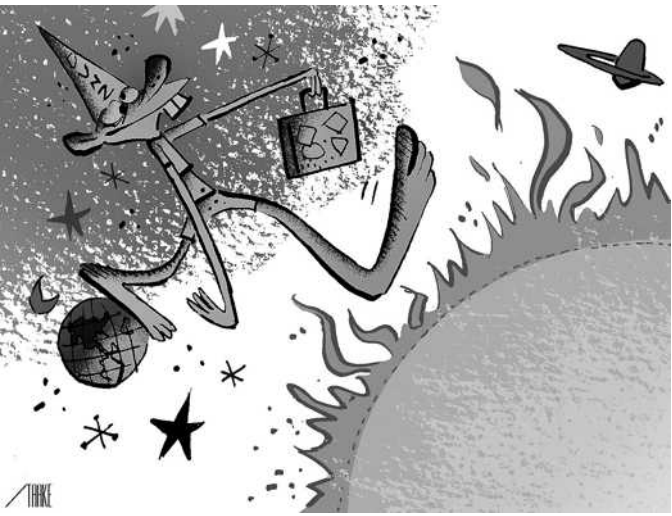
“Maybe raising eight kids was overly ambitious,” **Kate Gosselin brooded.** (Kate Sammons, Arlington, a First Offender)

“We do not use slurs to refer to our Asian workers,” Tom said **coolly.** (Chris Doyle)

“I think we’ve been making headway against this bacterial infection in our hospital,” the administrator said **mercifully.** (Mae Scanlan, Washington)

Yeah, to heck with this lethal injection spurr — we’re going back to Old Spaff,” **Rick Perry ruled concurrently.** (Gary Crockett)

“I had never in my life met such



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

New contest for Week 1081:
It’s the stupidity, stupid

“Do you think humans will ever walk on the sun? I was just daydreaming and thinking today and I thought about how crazy it was that a person has walked on the moon and Mars. I was just wondering if u think a person will ever walk on the sun too? Like I know it’s really hot but I am thinking if they went in the winter time when the sun is only like 30 degrees I bet they could do it.”

“Is throwing your hair in the garbage safe? I wanted to be sure because in biology we learned it has DNA and stuff so is it safe?”

“Last year I was Catholic but I’m bored with that now. How can I change my race to Chinese or Russian?” — Questions posted on Yahoo Answers

Whoever said there are no stupid questions hasn’t been anywhere near an Internet. The three questions above were posted in recent years on the Yahoo Answers site, in which the reading public may answer them helpfully or unhelpfully, and were compiled, along with 35 others, by Buzzfeed.com, and passed on to the Empress by 63-time Loser Fred Dawson. They’re all still online at Yahoo Answers; we’ve fixed the spelling and capitalization a bit to make them halfway readable (part of the first question actually reads, “. . . if u think a person will ever walk on the sun to? like i kno its really hot . . .”).

Your mission is obvious: **Write us stupid questions that will make us laugh**, like the probably serious ones above. Bad grammar or spelling doesn’t make us laugh; that just makes us weary. The sun-walk example is 82 words, but aim for closer to 50, or fewer.

Winner gets the Inkin’ Memorial, the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives another in our series of bad-taste ceramic mugs: This one is called the Big Sipper, and it’s clearly designed to be filled with milk, given that on one side is an udderly feminine swelling where the drinker imbibes. (If by chance the winner has any propriety or is a kid, we will substitute something else.) Brought all the way from Seattle by visiting Loser P. Diane Schneider, who donates it from her personal collection.

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 “fresher” (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 28; results published Aug. 17 (online Aug. 14). No more than 25 entries per entrant per contest. Include “Week 1081” 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 Brendan Beary. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at [on.fb.me/invdev](https://www.facebook.com/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.

rude people until I reached Copenhagen.,” grumbled **Tom disdainfully.** (Sheila Blume, South Setauket, N.Y.)

“Oh, by the way, **Dagwood, the dog died,**” **Blondie said lackadaisically.** (Nancy Schwalb, Washington)

“You’re funny — just not ‘SNL’ funny,” explained the assistant producer **forlornly.** (Rob Huffman, Fredericksburg)

“Can we just finish shooting the \$&@% movie!” huffed **Jenna Jameson crotchetedly.** (Rob Huffman)

“If I hear that blasted “Happy” song one more time, I’m going to lose it!” snarled the record producer **ferally.** (Rob Huffman)

“The secret of my success was to never stop swinging,” **Muhammad Ali explained bashfully.** (Todd DeLap)

“Well, Little Monsters, the good news is that the Wizards made the playoffs,” **Lady Gaga said disconcertingly.** (Jordi Parry, Arlington, a First Offender)

“I admit I made a few mistakes,” sniffed the Mayor for Life. (Scott Weinstein, Montreal)

“Let me give you a little hug,” the python hissed coyly. (Bill Rippey, Montgomery Village; Tom Witte, Montgomery Village)

“I won the eBay auction for the shrunkn head!” Tom said **morbidly.** (Dayna Fellows, Bethesda)

“Just because I don’t want him anymore doesn’t mean anyone else can have him!” she

exclaimed. (Tom Witte)

“I’m the only one who ever cleans up the clogged toilets,” the janitor **deduced.** (Warren Tanabe, Annapolis)

“I wrote the song ‘Death and the Maiden,’” **Beethoven lied.** (Ann Martin, London)

“There’s only one solution,” **Dick Cheney inveighed.** (Nancy Schwalb; Brendan Beary, Great Mills)

“Aah, what’s Baal ever done for me?” the Caananite asked **idly.** (Lawrence McGuire, Waldorf)

“To this day, I’m still creeped out by that one scene in ‘Alien,’” Tom said **abjectly.** (Brendan Beary)

“Say, mate, let’s travel around to Britain’s most oddly pronounced places,” Tom said **Cholmondeley.** (Brendan Beary)

I’ve got a sure-fire way of becoming famous,” **Monica said successfully.** (Laurie Morrison, Rockville)

“Russell Crowe should never be allowed around a musical again,” said Les **miserably.** (Brendan O’Byrne, Regina, Saskatchewan)

“Oh, sure, there are NO words that contain all the vowels in order,” she said **facetiously.** (Craig Dykstra, Centerville)

“It should be ‘whom,’ not ‘who,’” the copy editor **objected.** (Robert Schechter, Dix Hills, N.Y.)

Still running — deadline Monday night: Our contest for bad poetry: See bit.ly/invite1080.

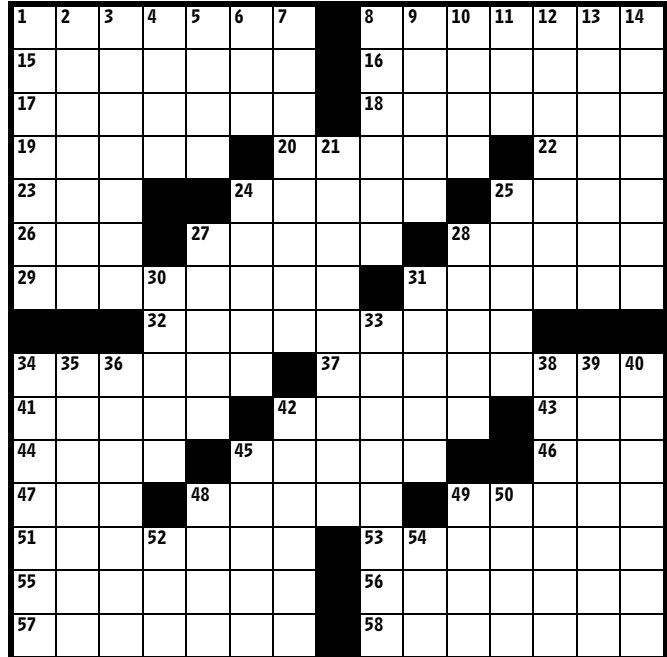
POST PUZZLER

No. 224

BY MIKE NOTHNAGEL EDITED BY PETER GORDON • FIREBALLCROSSWORDS.COM

- ACROSS**
- 1 Way better than average
 - 8 Dish with a variation called a golden buck
 - 15 Part of a flea-flicker
 - 16 Cut it out?
 - 17 Early developmental period
 - 18 Technique that puts people under pressure
 - 19 Irish politician de Valera
 - 20 “Bis!”
 - 22 “I Can Has Cheezburger?” image
 - 23 Gp. that hands out fines for “flopping”
 - 24 McCarthy colleague
 - 25 Baja beach destination
 - 26 Heavy weight
 - 27 Shrine honoree
 - 28 Like a lattice piecrust
 - 29 Leading
 - 31 West Pointers, e.g.
 - 32 Grounding, maybe
 - 34 Word with public and law
- DOWN**
- 37 Tests that people look forward to?
 - 41 Four thirds, for example
 - 42 Districts that might be gerrymandered
 - 43 Big name in dyes
 - 44 Go ____ (hit a dingy)
 - 45 Basis for measuring yaw, often
 - 46 Conclusion of a dean’s address
 - 47 Post-op pampering, say
 - 48 Like the calendar stone called the Sun Stone
 - 49 Father
 - 51 In need of some manscaping, perhaps
 - 53 Ruler succeeded by Yusuf Lule
 - 55 Where some Quechua speakers live
 - 56 Home to the Institute of American Indian Arts
 - 57 Savage advice?
 - 58 Prepubescent

- DOWN**
- 1 Not a part of, as a way of life
 - 2 Silk variety
 - 3 Character who shared top billing with Secret Squirrel in the 1960s
 - 4 Figure in the Plato dialogue “Parmenides”
 - 5 Country that can trace its history to the Proto-Elamite period
 - 6 Badger
 - 7 Collecting slowly
 - 8 It’s divided into mysteries
 - 9 Plant louse
 - 10 Tack component
 - 11 Stat with a “defense-independent” version
 - 12 Hideout for masked men
 - 13 “Count me in on that action!”
 - 14 Old Germans
 - 21 Be canned
 - 24 Location of a 2010 G-20 summit
 - 25 Antique manuscript
 - 27 Dickens orphan
 - 28 See 49-Down
 - 30 Calif. base closed in 1994
 - 31 Non-unisex unis, e.g.
 - 33 Bernie Taupin, for one
 - 34 Tools with curved blades
 - 35 Religious vessel
 - 36 Receptacle for part of a soul, in the Harry Potter books
 - 38 Subject of many Onion news stories
 - 39 Labor force member?
 - 40 Knockout
 - 42 Fills with tears
 - 45 Group with the 1973 album “Tres Hombres”
 - 48 Company whose logo represents a 1932 merger of four car manufacturers
 - 49 With 28-Down, oscilloscope output
 - 50 Terrine filler
 - 52 Parked it
 - 54 Rook relative



Answer to last week, No. 223



HOROSCOPE

BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY | JULY 20: This year you open up to many new ideas. You are willing to let go of rigid, outdated philosophies and embrace new concepts. If you are single, you might meet someone of interest in the next few months. You need to explore whether a relationship exists there. If you are attached, the two of you connect on a more profound level. What had been a barrier is no longer there. Both of you express a greater sense of fulfillment when relating to each other.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
A restrictive situation will move forward in the next few days. Still, your patience may be tested. Be open to a conversation about change.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
Your words carry magic and energy to others, with the exception of one person. This individual’s lack of receptivity might have more to do with someone else than with you.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
Slow down and take some much-needed personal time. You might feel out of touch with many of the people around you. Don’t allow a feeling of being overwhelmed to get the best of you.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
You might need to rethink a

personal relationship, whether it is with a child or a loved one. You will sense a change in the next few days. Relax and worry less.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
Honor a friend’s needs. Your visits tend to lift his or her spirits. You might have second thoughts about a family matter, but an insight will force you to stop and reevaluate.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
Make an effort to explore a new area, and leave your worries at home. A day escape will help you gain a fresh perspective of your life.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
A partner or close associate has a habit of making heavy demands. Today, you will be able to juggle this person’s different needs without a problem.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
You might wonder how best to warm up a relationship. Don’t make any decisions just yet. Go along with someone else’s suggestion.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
Remain in touch with your needs. You might want to take care of certain issues or run some errands that you have been putting off. Do what you want for a change.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
Today is one of those days when you can’t seem to contain your thoughts. Share some of your more whimsical ideas with friends.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
You might want to stay home and play it low-key. You will sense an impending change heading your way. Meanwhile, enjoy the easy pace.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
You will feel as if you can’t make a decision about a certain issue just yet. New information is likely to come forward in the very near future. Be smart and play the waiting game.

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Kids running wild put elderly at risk

Ask Amy

AMY DICKINSON

Dear Amy: **Kinfolk came to visit for my 92nd birthday. We went to church together. After**

worship there was a social hour: people talking pleasantly with one another.

One knee-high little boy would cling to his father’s legs, but periodically whirl around the room and then head back to his dad. Not a good arrangement with older people present. I tried to get the man’s attention, but he was engrossed in conversation.

When it came time for us to leave, sure enough — here came the little boy, racing toward me. Down I went. Forewarned, I was able to brace myself for the fall and avoided anything serious.

Many 20-something parents seem oblivious to such problems. Older people are vulnerable in these circumstances. Amy, could you pass the word along?

Older, Wiser Gentleman

I am happy to help. I hope that congregations will clip this and post it in their reception halls.

I admit to my own oblivion as a younger parent, but then I started spending time around elderly and frail people. It has been an eye-opening experience to see how vulnerable older people can be — but also how

relatively nimble and resilient they can be because of wise strategizing about how to stay safe. You were smart to be prepared for this whirling dervish hazard in your midst.

I also need to add my own (semirelated) gripe: Parents — at a group gathering such as coffee hour after church or a dish-to-pass community meal — please model graceful and good behavior by waiting with your children until the elders in your group are served and seated. Not only is this polite, it helps eliminate some of the hazards that arise when people crowd around the casseroles.

And if parents are really going to introduce order (as well as model good behavior) they might ask the kids ages 7 and older to pour drinks for the elders before the meal. Kids do better if they have a valuable job to do.

Dear Amy: I am a businesswoman in my mid 50s, and I will no longer shake hands with men. My hand has been brutalized for the last time, just yesterday by a man who clinched down on it like a vice.
If he thought for one moment that he was impressing me, he was correct, but it wasn’t the impression he wanted to leave. These people need to assess

their recipient (victim) and decide what amount of pressure needs to be applied. It’s not necessary to be limp — you can have a firm handshake and still not cause pain. My hand still hurts today.

Hurting for Certain

Men are not the only people to engage a vice-grip greeting. People need to be aware of the impact of such a squeeze. Those of us with very small hands and/ or arthritis can be injured.

In the future, you might save this off by pre-emptively offering your business card in your right hand.

Dear Amy: I appreciated your answer to “Clean Jean,” who wondered about disclosing her ex-husband’s long ago bad behavior to their grown children. You suggested she ask herself, “What good would come of it?” That question comes in handy in lots of situations.
Faithful Reader

Thank you. It’s a classic — because it works.

Write to Amy Dickinson at askamy@tribune.com or Ask Amy, Chicago Tribune, TT500, 435 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60611.

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