

## DIVERSIONS

## THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

## Tomb it may concern: The winning obit poems

BY PAT MYERS

Week 1105 marked our annual contest for poems about those who died in the previous year. For 2014, along with the many for Marion Barry and Joan Rivers and Mickey Rooney, numerous Losers turned to those who'd put themselves in the running for Darwin Awards for stupidity. More obit poems in the online Invite.

## 4th place

## Peng Fan, chef:

A Chinese chef was making soup in Foshan, so it's said; This dish required a cobra, so he first chopped off its head. In retrospect, he should have picked a less exotic item, 'Cause (holy smoke!) the head survived just long enough to bite him. Now poor Peng Fan is very dead. Perhaps Confucius should have said: "Make sure your main ingredient is more or less obedient." (Beverly Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

## 3rd place

When **Joseph Shivers** blessed the world with spandex, All other workout clothes turned into Brand X, And that was hailed as something truly beauteous, Not least among admirers of the gluteus. Yet, sometimes in this land of sloth and plenty, I wish that hindsight weren't 20/20. (Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)

## 2nd place

## and the outhouse-motif S&amp;P set

## Roger Easton, GPS inventor:

His loved ones pray that as he roamed the sky In search of angels waiting, He heard, "Your destination's here on high"— And not "Recalculating." (Melissa Balmain, Rochester, N.Y.)

## And the winner of the Inkin' Memorial

The radium wristwatch fell quickly from grace When it poisoned the women who painted its face. They ingested the poison while sharpening tips Of their brushes by twirling the points with their lips. But **Mae Keane** found that yucky, and quit the third day, Then lived ninety years more before passing away. So this last of the radium girls made her mark As the first one to die and not glow in the dark. (Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.)

## The meter's expired: honorable mentions

## Joan Rivers:

"Can we talk?" cackled Joan. "That old coot, The Almighty, is really a beaut! So, you're God? Okay, bub, Then don't dress like a schlub. Lose the robe! Shave the beard! Get a suit!" (Nan Reiner, Alexandria)

## Marion Barry (I):

It's a humorist's gift that continues its giving Even well after the subject stops living. He set himself up (other pols fail by half): That's why he's forever our Mayor for Laugh. (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

## Marion Barry (II):

The Mayor for Life's honorific is "late," But odds are next poll, he'll still capture Ward 8. (Mike Gips, Bethesda)

## Bob Hall:

A Globetrotter trick was to put up a finger And set there a b-ball and spin it. But now "Showboat" Hall spins a different way: Though he trotted the globe, he's now in it. (Christopher Lamora, Los Angeles)

## Wojciech Jaruzelski was the Kremlin-backed PM

Who locked horns with Solidarity in a Cold War stratagem. Both he and Lech Walesa were deliberate and smart, But when it came to politics, the two were Poles apart. (Brendan Beary, Great Mills, Md.)

## Mickey Rooney:

"You'll die shortly," he was told, Ever since he was a kid, And though he lived till he was old . . . That's exactly what he did. (Robert Schechter, Dix Hills, N.Y.)

## Anastasia Tutik &amp; Miguel Ramos

Two lovers loving on a balcony high. Two lovers falling, unable to fly. Their friends and neighbors now pay their respects. A chilling reminder to practice safe sex. (David Friedman, Arlington)

## Edmund Abel, Mr. Coffee inventor:

The guy who changed our morning brew Achieved a ripe old 92. His secret? Till he shuffled off he Never drank a drop of coffee. (Melissa Balmain)

## Zeus, world's tallest dog, you were a trouper!

Dog heaven's going to need a bigger scooper. (Frank Osen)

## Greater the Flamingo (the oldest known):

For eighty-three years since cracking his egg, Flamingodom he'd been commanding, And if he'd just tried the opposite leg, He very well might still be standing. (Nan Reiner)

## Sheila MacRae &amp; Ann B. Davis:

One played Ralph Krampen's pestered second spouse; The other brightly kept the Bradys' house. They each achieved a state we can't ignore: No, Alice doesn't live here anymore. (Kevin Dopart)

## The creator of the "Where's Spot?" books:

Where's **Eric Hill**? Is he under the sofa? No. Is he in the hamper? No. Is he under the bed? No. Is he in the coffin? There's Eric! (Rob Cohen, Potomac)



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

## Week 1109 contest: Fictoids of Columbia

In the native tongue of the Powhatan tribe, "Anacostia" means "River of the Floating Corpse."

The precocious Pierre L'Enfant (a.k.a. "Peter the Kid") was 6 years old when he laid out Washington's system of avenues and boulevards.

In the wake of the Citizens United decision, the D.C. Council voted to impose a sales tax on congressional elections.

In the tradition of the Invitational's promulgation of totally bogus trivia — but of course totally counter to the reputation of Washington as a place where you'll always hear the truth — 183-time Loser Mark Raffman suggests this latest round of fictoids: **Tell us some humorously untrue "facts" about Washington, D.C., and the surrounding area.** We realize that out-of-towners — not to mention out-of-countriers — are at something of a disadvantage this week. But the jokes don't have to be terribly local; jokes about the federal government are welcome as well. (However, they may not include references to politicians creating "hot air." Ever again.) Winner gets the Inkin' Memorial, the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives two books, by different authors, titled "The Book of Useless Information," 2006 ("The harmonica is the world's most popular instrument"), and "The Book of Totally Useless Information," 1993 ("Why do we call 12:00 p.m. 'noon'?"). In the Google era, these might as well be titled "The Useless Books of Information," except to inspire our fake-trivia contests. Donated by Cheryl White.

**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 designed by Bob Staake: either "The Wit Hit the Fan" or "Hardly Har-Har." 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 Feb. 9; results published March 1 (online Feb. 26). You may submit up to 25 entries per contest. Include "Week 1109" 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](http://wapo.st/InvRules). The headline for this week's results is by Beverly Sharp; the honorable-mentions subhead is by Jeff Contompasis. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at [on.fb.me/invdev](http://on.fb.me/invdev). "Like" the Style Invitational Ink of the Day on Facebook at [bit.ly/inkofday](http://bit.ly/inkofday).

**THE 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](http://wapo.st/styleconv).

The two-faced cat named **Frank and Louie**

Always looked extremely screwy. In feline heaven he arrives Upon expending 18 lives. (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn)

**Stephanie Kwolek**, inventor of Kevlar:

Poly-paraphenylene terephthalamide: Thanks to Steph, we've got this stuff to keep our guts inside. (Melissa Balmain)

Animator **Arthur Rankin Jr.:**

In "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer," He showed his craft devotion. He's now become an example Of permanent stop-motion. (Howard Walderman, Columbia)

**Countess Anne Dorte** of Rosenberg (Denmark):

Cute as a button and common as coal, she wed into a royal clan. Her husband, a prince, had to lower his rank to marry this nobody, Anne. His kin, while noble, were plain as potatoes, there's no sugarcoating the truth — What these blue bloods were lacking in the chin, they more than made up for in tooth. Anne added nice-looking heirs to the line, proving when it comes to genetics, It's smarter to dip outside the pool, if you want to enhance the aesthetics. (George-Ann Rosenberg — no relation, Washington)

More honorable mentions in the online Invite at [bit.ly/invite1109](http://bit.ly/invite1109).

**Still running — deadline Monday night: Our contest for valentines. See [bit.ly/invite1108](http://bit.ly/invite1108).**

## POST PUZZLER

## No. 252

BY JEFFREY HARRIS EDITED BY PETER GORDON • FIREBALLCROSSWORDS.COM

**ACROSS**  
1 Showcases  
6 Rio sound  
15 Unimprovable  
16 Like character attacks  
17 2015 Ford vehicle, informally?  
19 Bit of ink  
20 Station for a DJ  
21 Replace with ellipses, say  
22 Middle-earth horde  
24 Naval acad. grad  
25 Offer commiserations to  
27 Ceases to be dormant  
29 Put on a jury  
30 Tamboura relative  
31 Range  
33 Supercentenarian, e.g.  
38 "Awesome!"  
39 Maze runner?  
41 With audacity  
45 Holy places  
46 Virgilian hero

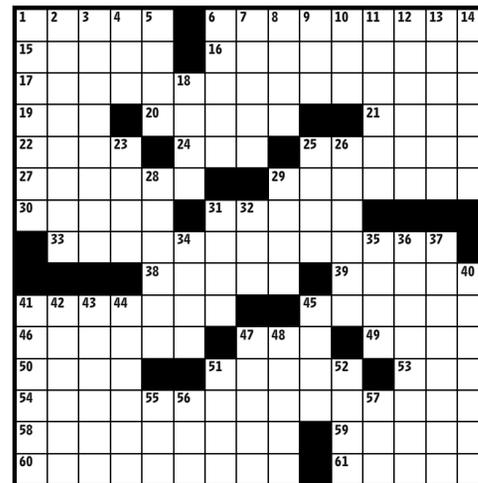
## DOWN

1 Repeats verbatim  
2 "Pollock" director  
3 Romantic comedy trope  
4 Bumbler  
5 One who often leaves things out  
6 Ingredient in clams casino

7 Hart contemporary  
8 Pahlavi's title  
9 Spread  
10 Reddit Q&A thread  
11 "War of Currents" figure's first name  
12 Like some bands and shows  
13 City associated with water and Polo  
14 Heineken brand  
18 Common deer  
23 Range  
25 Tom Lehrer song with the lyric "I've never quibbled / If it was ribald"

26 Kia model  
28 Country singer  
Yearwood  
29 Exude  
31 2015 title role for Dornan  
32 Quick point  
34 Barn perchers  
35 Dandruff shampoo component  
36 "Check \_\_\_\_" (the two most beautiful words in English, facetiously)  
37 "Keep in mind ..."  
40 Writers of tough crosswords, some say  
41 Butters up?

42 Undated?  
43 Part of a rack  
44 Grave  
45 It's rigged  
47 Canine-using canine?  
48 Arm & Hammer targets  
51 Level to the ground  
52 Second baseman Charlie who got the first RBI in Mets history  
55 Links letters  
56 "I Don't Know How to Love \_\_\_\_" ("Jesus Christ Superstar" song)  
57 Eddie Eagle's org.



Answer to last week, No. 251

PITMAN PLASMATV  
ONIONY HELLENS  
REMOTE AGLISTEN  
CREDIT TWOCINA  
STRIPSTOWERBI  
NAILERS GARP  
WOODSTORK MEDIA  
REMIT SXANADU  
INIGO AUNATUREL  
SOSO SILENTF  
TPSPERSE SLUSH  
SHINEDAT FTERIE  
LIBERACE LOCKER  
ALLEITER INTEND  
PEERLESSTESLAS

## HOROSCOPE

BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY | FEB. 1:** This year you express more compassion to those around you. You'll stop and ask others how they are and mean it sincerely. Your circle of friends will expand as a result. Be aware that you also can become demanding. Lighten up, and let go of having such high expectations. If you are single, you have the ability to lure potential suitors. If you are attached, the two of you like participating in each other's lives more than many couples do.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

Remain calm when dealing with an important person in your life. You might let the situation develop into a struggle of wills, but is it really worth it?

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

Keep asking questions, and you will get a better grasp of a situation and how it works. A friend is likely to share a wonderful idea and some fun plans.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

Someone close to you may have a problem. You might not understand when this person is coming from, and he or she might not want to share. A conversation must happen to mend the rift.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

Events that normally might upset you will slide right off of you. Observe a close friend or loved

one who seems to need more control than ever. For the moment, let him or her be.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

Honor a need to get away from all the fuss. Knowing when enough is enough is more important than you realize. A loved one might go out of his or her way to do you a favor.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

Someone might initiate a conversation that delights you. A friend may give you an unexpected jolt, but you can't complain of boredom when you are around him or her.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

Know what is possible between you and someone else. Your ability to move forward with grace might irk this person, as he or she can't seem to let go.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

If you follow your gut, you may be surprised by what happens. Don't allow your intellect to override this sensitivity on a deeper level.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

Allow yourself to relate directly to a special person in your life. The two of you seem to benefit from being with each other. Make time to catch up on important news.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

You may be overwhelmed by the many people seeking you out. Try not to be so closed off, especially if someone asks for a favor. You might be coming on too strong for someone else's taste.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

You might be taken aback by everything you need to do. Consider making a list of priorities. Couldn't you use a nap? Tonight: Binge-watch.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

Assess everything you must do to make someone else content. Be honest with yourself, and recognize that you really do want to make him or her happy. Reach out to a loved one at a distance.

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## Adopted dog making noisy adjustment

## Ask Amy

AMY DICKINSON

**Dear Amy: I live in a condo that has six other units. The walls and floors are well insulated but definitely not soundproof. We recently adopted a dog, "Princess," from a family friend.**

Princess is still young (2 years old) and she's a sweet dog who is (mostly) wonderful when we are home. If we are around, she's extremely quiet.

Recently I left Princess alone. The next day my neighbor below told me that the dog barked for almost three hours. I apologized profusely and she assured me that it wasn't a problem for her. Since Princess is kennel-trained, I thought that kenneling her when we are gone would solve the problem.

Two weeks later I learned that the dog continues to bark when she's alone (albeit for a shorter period of time). Again I apologized and promised to work on training.

However, training will take time. No other neighbors have complained, but Princess is a rather large dog with a ferocious-sounding bark, and (though she's not) she looks like a restricted breed.

On one hand, I want to leave

notes for my other neighbors apologizing for the noise (assuming they hear her) and asking for their patience. On the other hand, I worry that someone will use it against me and complain to animal control (or the authorities).

What would you do? If I leave a note, do you have suggested wording?

Puppy Parents

If your primary concern is that your note will notify your neighbors that you have an unhappy dog held hostage in your apartment, I'd say that you needn't worry about that; they are probably aware of it. If you are worried that a note from you will serve as evidence that your dog is not in the right home and might prompt calls to animal control, then shame on you.

Be as upfront and courteous in your note as you were to the neighbor who complained. Thank them for their indulgence while your dog adjusts, assure them you are working on it, and leave your cellphone number so they can call you with any concerns.

As committed as you are, your apartment might not be the right place for this young, large and active dog. If you

aren't around during the day, you may have to take her to doggy day care or hire a walker to exercise and keep her stimulated and happy when you aren't home.

**Dear Amy: Regarding "Miffed,"** the people who have their paper stolen in their condo building, I had the same problem years ago in an apartment. I figured it was a kid who was being paid to go get a paper at the store but pocketing the money and taking ours.

One morning I woke up early and replaced the paper with last week's paper. I left the current front page so the thief wouldn't know until someone found a note explaining that I was on to the scheme. That was the last time our paper was stolen.

Sean

**This is an ingenious solution to a sticky issue.**

Amy's column appears seven days a week at [washingtonpost.com/advice](http://washingtonpost.com/advice). Write to Amy Dickinson at [askamy@tribune.com](mailto:askamy@tribune.com) or Ask Amy, Chicago Tribune, TT500, 435 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60611.

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