

DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

ABC'ing you: Report from Week 1179

BY PAT MYERS

In Week 1179 we asked for some fanciful ABC (or BAC, CBA, etc.) phrases. "Maniacal Noxious Orange: trending color in spray-on tans," by 155-time Loser Bird Waring, was certainly fanciful, but a tad alphabetically challenged. Loser.

4th place

**Business Class Alternative:** Leg-shortening surgery so you can fly comfortably in coach. (Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase, Md., who's about 6-6)

3rd place

**Carolina Bathroom Attendants:** "Our business is watching yours." (Jon Gearhart, Des Moines)

2nd place and the farting-grandpa bubble machine:

**Aryan Battle Cry:** "They're bringing drugs, they're bringing crime. They're rapists. . . ." (Melissa Balmain, Rochester, N.Y.)

And the winner of the Inkin' Memorial:

**Cot And Bagel:** A low-budget bed and breakfast. (Chris Damm, Charles Town, W.Va.)

A Cut Below: honorable mentions

**Concealing By Acronym:** A way of hiding one's true message, as in "MAKE AMERICA Get Really Exclusive And Terrifying AGAIN." (Jesse Frankovich, Lansing, Mich.)

**Assured Commercial Bankruptcy:** What was stamped on the business loan application for Leakies brand diapers. (David Kleinbard, Mamaroneck, N.Y.)

**Anesthesia by Clinton:** Box set of the candidate's favorite policy speeches. (Mark Raffman, Reston)

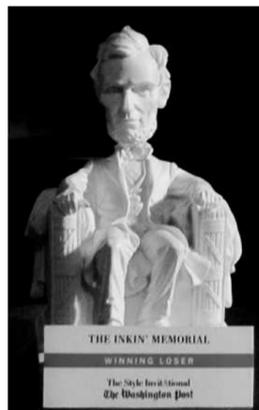
**Before Advent of Cellphones:** Term denoting ancient times. "Your mom's hairstyle is, like, BAC." (Edward Gordon, Austin)

**Aluminum Blocking Chapeau:** For those special occasions when your ordinary tinfoil hat just won't do. (Hildy Zampella, Falls Church, Va.)

**Agging-Brain Cramp:** Also known as a senior moment. (Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.)

**Audacious Brass Cojones:** A "presidential" quality required to utter phrases like "I am not a crook," "I did not have sexual relations with that woman" or "The Hispanics love me!" (Todd DeLap, Fairfax)

**Census Approximation Bureau:** The government's plan to save billions by hiring one guy to browse Google Maps on an iPhone. (Jeff Shirley, Richmond)



The best dishonesty-citer gets an Honest Abe bobblehead.

**Cummerbunds And Beansies:** Specialty fashion store that quickly fired its market research team. (Jeff Shirley)

**BBC And Chill:** The Anglophile's alternative to Netflix. (George-Ann Rosenberg, Washington)

**Bactrian Cataract Acupuncture:** An alternative medical procedure in which a needle is passed through the eye of a camel. (Chris Doyle)

**Below-Average Children:** Lake Wobegon's dirty little secret. (John Hutchins, Silver Spring)

**Certified Business Abomination:** The creep in accounting who wants to go over your travel claim with you in person. (Drew Bennett, West Plains, Mo.)

Beltway's Congested Again:



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

New contest for Week 1183: C'mon, be honest with us

If carmakers were more honest, they would be marketing automatic braking as "texting-enabling." (Chris Doyle)

If the prunes called Sunsweet Ones were sold more honestly, they would be called Twos. (Jeff Contompasis)

If graduate schools were more honest, they'd be called Holding Patterns. (Phil Frankenfeld)

This week's contest sprang from some Loserly musings a while back on the Style Invitational Devotees page on Facebook (yes, you too can join! on.fb.me/invdev — the Devotees will even anagram your name as a welcoming gift). Loser 4 Ever Jeff Contompasis had reported "a germ of a contest idea festering in my brain. If X were more Y it would be Z." Other Devotees, their brains perhaps similarly festering, weighed in with more ideas. We'll go with one of the suggested Y's: **This week: Write something in roughly the form of "If X were more honest, (then) Y,"** as in the examples above.

**NEW: No more emailing entries! Instead, submit them at this website: bit.ly/enter-invite-1183 (all lowercase).**

Winner gets the Inkin' Memorial, the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place

The Illumibowl, a battery-operated, motion-activated device that lights up your toilet bowl in your choice of six colors, or a continuous rotation. (At least yellow is not among them.) If you aspire to compose some blue humor for a future Invite, we gotcher inspiration-throne right here. Donated by That Very Same Jeff Contompasis.

**Other runners-up** win their choice of a yearned-for Loser Mug, the older-model "This Is Your Brain on Mugs" mug or a vintage Loser T-shirt. Honorable mentions get one of our luste-after Loser magnets, "Magnet Dum Laude" or "Falling Jest Short." First Offenders receive a smelly tree-shaped air "freshener" (FirStink for their first ink). Deadline is Monday night, July 18; results published Aug. 7 (online Aug. 4). You may submit up to 25 entries per contest. See contest rules and guidelines at wapo.st/InvRules. The headline for this week's results and the honorable-mentions subhead are both by Jesse Frankovich. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at on.fb.me/invdev. "Like" the Style Invitational Ink of the Day on Facebook at bit.ly/inkofday; follow @StyleInvite on Twitter.

**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.

Metro's new slogan, replacing "Sometimes We're Not on Fire" (Alex Jeffrey, Columbia, Md.)

**"Arty! (Carnage! Boobs!)"**: How "Game of Thrones" was pitched to HBO. (Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)

**Boneless Chicken Association:** Raising rubbery, nugget-shaped birds since 1983. (Gordon Cobb, Marietta, Ga.)

**"A Bear!" (Crunch):** The final line in Quentin Tarantino's new Goldilocks film. (Amanda Yanovitch, Midlothian, Va.)

**Collective Boinking Agreement:** Needed when there are lots of friends with lots of benefits. (Duncan Stevens)

**Angry Birds Champion:** What you should not list under "Awards" on your résumé. (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn, Va.)

**Cows Blasting Aardvarks:** "Shouldn't we try to think of something other than another Angry Birds rip-off, boss?" "Whatever; just code something and get it out the door." (Will Cramer, Herndon, Va.)

**"A Bollywood Christmas":** The Hallmark Channel tries "diversity." (John Hutchins)

**Bunyan's Ax Conundrum:** Why is it that even though he's got the biggest tool, the best Babe he can get is an ox? (Mark Raffman)

**Carbon-Based Assistance:** Highly unusual phenomenon occurring when your call to customer service

is answered by an actual human. (Hildy Zampella)

**Cut And Bun:** A discount cosmetic surgery clinic. (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village, Md.)

**"Affairs, Being, Confusion":** How fifth-grade wiseacre Ethan Splunk responded when asked by his geography teacher to name three states. (Kimberly Baer, Woodbridge, Va.)

**Congressional Buyout Auction:** Where lobbyists do their bidding to ensure that Congress also does their bidding. (Alex Jeffrey)

**Anheuser-Busch Casket:** It's the king of beers! (Chris Doyle)

**And Last: Be Awarded Crap:** Motivational cheer for Style Invitational entrants. (Duncan Stevens)

**Still running — deadline Monday night, July 11: Our What3Words map discovery contest. See bit.ly/invite1182.**



DESIGN BY BOB STAAKE

If you place third or fourth, you can score one of these.

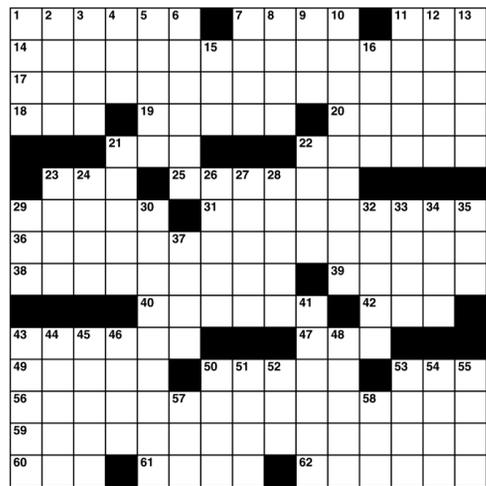
SUNDAY CHALLENGE

BY RANDOLPH ROSS © 2016 CROSSYNERGY SYNDICATE LLC

- ACROSS**
- 1 Sweet treat
  - 7 Humane org.
  - 11 "Nova" network
  - 14 Hinge holder
  - 17 Honor awarded to four U.S. presidents
  - 18 HBO alternative
  - 19 "O come, \_\_\_\_"
  - 20 Like some raincoats
  - 21 First prime
  - 22 Event in military history
  - 23 Plop preceider
  - 25 Sun of China
  - 29 Exuded
  - 31 Like some gardens
  - 36 Common recipe
- DOWN**
- 1 Tax IDs
  - 2 "Looks like trouble!"

- 3 Biblical peak
- 4 Low grade
- 5 Shingle words
- 6 Weld
- 7 Collar stiffener
- 8 Clip
- 9 Indians, on scoreboards
- 10 Like it should have
- 11 Word processing command
- 12 Rim on a Rolex
- 13 ABBA member, e.g.
- 15 Slippery sort
- 16 Brief review
- 21 Ashes, e.g.
- 22 Wally's little bro on a '50s sitcom

- 23 Department store magnate Max
- 24 Cornell of Cornell University
- 26 Chasm
- 27 Soy products
- 28 Michael of R.E.M.
- 29 Not requiring an Rx
- 30 Outlaw
- 32 Start of a famous boast
- 33 Yield
- 34 Desiccated
- 35 Mormons, initially
- 37 A little sweat
- 41 Jean of "Breathless"
- 43 Investigate
- 44 Moscow money



Answer to last week



HOROSCOPE

BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY** July 10: This year you have a lot to say, and you want to be heard. Your home life is always important, that is especially so this year. If you are single, you have a tendency to embrace potential suitors quickly. Slow down; you need to go through all the necessary steps to get to know someone well before you make a big commitment. If you are attached, the two of you might struggle with a difference of opinion regarding a change on the home front. Libra can be unusually gracious yet superficial at times.

**ARIES** (March 21-April 19) Others simply need to have their voices heard. Listen more and speak less, or you might find that others aren't being as attentive as you would like them to be.

**TAURUS** (April 20-May 20) You might want some time to yourself to get a personal project done or to get some extra sleep. A child or loved one wants your attention and is likely to seek you out for a variety of reasons.

**GEMINI** (May 21-June 20) You might want to approach a personal matter differently, especially if you don't like the present situation or results. Others have their concerns, too. Be more careful with your finances and spending.

**CANCER** (June 21-July 22) You have a tendency to state your case strongly. You might want to discuss a matter involving a loved one. Step back and consider what is happening around you. Examine your surroundings when you are out.

**LEO** (July 23-Aug. 22) Read between the lines with a loved one. Ask yourself why this person is holding back and not being as open as he or she could be. A family member could be causing some uproar. Find out what is going on.

**VIRGO** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) Others will try to listen to what you have to say, but a meeting or a special event could take precedence. You'll enjoy yourself far more than you thought you would. Resist making a sarcastic comment.

**LIBRA** (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) Don't overthink a problem and make it bigger than it really is. Getting agreement might be difficult. An older person or someone who carries a lot of weight in your life could make his or her views known.

**SCORPIO** (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) No one can deny how much energy you have put into a particular issue. Touch base with others at a distance. You could find a friend to be contentious. Find out what ails this person.

**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) You might want to try to get a project done, yet your friends and loved ones seem to want your company and will do whatever is necessary to achieve that result. Curb some anger or frustration that might arise from out of the blue.

**CAPRICORN** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) You might try to make plans with a friend only to be greeted with anger or sarcasm. Avoid taking this person's attitude personally; instead, find out what is wrong and have a discussion.

**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) You might be in the mood to recover from recent socializing. Take a nap, then get a head start on a project. A loved one will support you in achieving a goal.

**PISCES** (Feb. 19-March 20) You suddenly might notice your anger, which could be reflected in a loved one's attitude. Don't allow these feelings to continue. The sooner you deal with the issue at hand, the better off everyone will be. Relating to others directly will prove to be effective.

Couple's graduate-level study of a tough mom

**Ask Amy** **Dear Amy:** My boyfriend and I (23 and 24) have been dating for the past seven months. We recently decided to move in together after being accepted into graduate schools in the same city.

My whole family is extremely happy for us. They love my boyfriend and want only the best for us. They have even offered to help us financially if we need it, though we hope we won't. However, since we announced the move, his mother has become increasingly cold toward me. At first I ignored it and just tried harder to befriend her and bond with her.

On a recent trip to a cottage with his whole family, I noticed how rude and snappy she was being toward both of us. Everything I did offended her or caused her to roll her eyes. Shocked and upset, my boyfriend confronted her about it after the trip.

She explained that she does not like me and continued to berate him about how controlling and manipulative I was, and how upset she was that

my family had money to be able to help us out and she didn't (we have never expected nor asked for any financial assistance from her). She didn't have one nice thing to say about me.

My boyfriend and I are very upset about this. He completely disagrees with his mother and tells her she is being unfair by not giving me a chance.

I don't even feel welcomed in their home anymore (which is in a different city). We are still moving in together, as this situation hasn't affected our love or respect for each other. We just don't know how to react to his mother's dislike toward me (and perhaps soon-to-be dislike from other family members, as his mother is the dominating presence over his family).

I am scared of what the future brings; should I still try to communicate and fix things with his mother, or should I remain distant?

Worried

**Worried:** Your boyfriend did the right thing to confront his mother over her behavior toward you. You could try to "fix" things but only do so

knowing that she might respond poorly.

You should always be polite toward her, and you should never initiate any criticism of her to your boyfriend. You two should also not discuss any financial matters with his mother, since she seems to take information innocently offered and turn it into ammunition.

The challenge here is for you to recognize that this puts your guy in a tough spot. If he is choosing you as his partner, he will have to defy his mother. You must let him do this in his own way. You should never compare your family to his, and you should be supportive of him through this challenge, without criticizing or harshly judging his family.

His mother might be passing through a tough transition of her own, as her son resolutely chooses his own path. Unfortunately, she is reacting in a way almost guaranteed to alienate him.

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