

DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

Wry-in candidates: Week 1184 winners

BY PAT MYERS

In Week 1184, noting the disappointment so many Americans say they feel about the two major-party presidential candidates, to suggest someone — or something — as a better alternative (we also allowed ideas for prez-veep tickets). Many of you power brokers nominated candidates on a common theme, including Ernest and Julio Gallo: **Make America Grape Again;** Tony the Tiger: **Make America Grrrreat Again;** a wheel of parmesan cheese: **Make America Grate Again;** Viagra: **Make America Mate Again;** Vladimir and Estragon: **Make America Wait Again;** and Beyoncé: **Make America Gyrate Again.**

4th place

Vote for **Torquemada:** Law and order and religious values — a twofer! (Steve Honley, Washington)

3rd place

A wad of cash: It's been in charge for a while already. (Jeff Contompassis, Ashburn, Va.)

2nd place and the doorstep that looks like a red splat of goo:

Mother Teresa, who presumably is in Heaven, would surely win — since so many voters say they'd prefer Nun of the Above. (Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase, Md.)

And the winner of the Inkin' Memorial:

Vote for the Cyclops/Kevin the Minion ticket to solve our nation's crisis: Eye Alone Can Fix It. (Annette Green, Lexington, Va.)

The system is rigged!: honorable mentions

Yes, I know that this potential candidate has fallen out of favor with women voters, and there are worries that a run would ruin the party. But America needs a leader strong enough to be in control at the top and can lend support to the masses at the bottom. Call me old-fashioned, but I'm going with **President Pantyhose!** (Hildy Zampella, Falls Church, Va.)

Wayne LaPierre would make a good president — but why would he want to give up so much power? (Warren Tanabe, Annapolis)

My fellow Americans, now is the time to elect the **Charles, Romano and Bolger families.** Because we really need to be improving Ray's relations. (Nan Reiner, Boca Raton, Fla.)

America should elect **Sisyphus:** He's been in training for this kind of job all his afterlife. (Jeff Hazle, San Antonio)

Vote for **Penn and Teller!** Wait — which one doesn't talk? Okay, make that Teller and Penn. (Hildy Zampella)

Nominate Bob Staake to draw **two cartoon characters** to run against each other. Oh, wait. (Frank Mann, Washington)

Siri/Watson 2016: All the benefits of unreliability and untrustworthiness without that awkward human element. (Ivrs Kuskevics, Takoma Park, Md.)

Melania Trump: She isn't afraid to stand up and say what Michelle Obama thinks. (Dave Zarrow, Reston)

Sitophilus granarius would be preferable to *Anthonomus grandis* for president, being the lesser of the two weevils. (Gary Crockett)

If we're going for a lady who can't reliably use her email, we ought to elect **my grandma.** Lots of people like her. (Danielle Nowlin, Fairfax Station, Va.)

Chris Christie is someone I think everybody could get behind. Literally. (Jon Gearhart, Des Moines)

Both of the nominees should reconsider their running mates and choose **Bill Clinton** for veep — after all, he's renowned as a president of vice. (Marty McCullen, Gettysburg, Pa.)

Vote **Vincent Orange/Fiona Apple:** They're incomparable. (David Lang, Olney, Md., who got his only previous ink 13 years ago)

My vote goes to the **Alan Dershowitz/Gloria Allred** celebrity-lawyer ticket: They're both passionate about defending stars in stripes. (Mike Gips, Bethesda, Md.)



Announcing the latest model of the Style Invitational Grocery Bag for runners-up; the slogan, by Tom Witte, got ink in the 2012 contest that also provided the slogans for our first two Grocery Bags. Third- and fourth- (and first-) place Losers can choose between this bag and one of the Loser mugs until the mugs run out; we'll get more of them in 2017.

New contest for Week 1188: Just short words, one more time

God told us, "Thou shalt not kill." We say sure, but it's fine to kill folks who don't like our God. God says, "No, thou shalt not kill." We say sure, but it's cool so long as it's just those guys who dress in rags and have beards. God says, "No, write this down. Thou shalt not kill." We say, "Sure. Now who is this "thou" guy you mean?" — Robert Carlisle, Week 495

These days, at least among tens of millions of U.S. citizens, the best way to impress people is to speak to them on a first-grade level, no matter how complicated the subject. Loser Matt Monitto recently reminded the Empress of a contest that her predecessor, the Czar, ran in 2003, and that the Empress had never tried: **This week: Explain some concept or philosophy entirely in words of one syllable,** as in the Week 495 runner-up above. (See the rest of the 2003 results in this week's Style Conversational column at bit.ly/conv1188. Maximum 100 words, but much shorter is also fine. **Submit entries at this website: bit.ly/enter-invite-1188.**

Winner gets the Inkin' Memorial, the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a two-pack of Groucho-type nose/glasses, each with a special enhancement: One has a wart-shaped knob on the nose; when you twist it, the attached eyebrows and mustache wiggle. The other is called Snot Nose Glasses and has a plastic blob hanging off it. Donated by Losers Nan Reiner and (long, long ago) Peter Metrinko, respectively.

Other runners-up win their choice of the brand-new Grocery Bag we show this week; 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 lusted-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, Aug. 22; results published, oh boy, Sept. 11 (online Sept. 8). 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 is by Tom Witte; the honorable-mentions subhead is 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.



For this week's second-place finisher, two essential looks for maximum Loserosity.

Homer Simpson/ Ned Flanders, because nothing says "America" like a narcissistic, ignorant blowhard teamed with a religious zealot. Um . . . (Ed Sobansky, Bowie, Md.)

John Wall — and let Mexico pay his salary. (Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.)

Elect the **bigmouth know-it-all from the break room at work:** First, they already know what is wrong with everything and how to fix it. Second, it would get them out of the break room at work. (Robyn Carlson, Keyser, W.Va.)

Speedy the Alka-Seltzer kid: Americans need look no further than this tiny titan of the business world, the perfect (over-the) counter-candidate. Loved by millions for his odd combination of fizzy optimism and deflationary policies. And globally respected for his relief work. (Dave McCord, Bel Air, Md., a First Offender)

America needs a guy who understands the need for security

— elect **Linus van Pelt!** (Jane Auerbach, Los Angeles)

If you put 18 Republicans and some bacon grease in a blender, run it on high and then let it stand for a few minutes, the bacon grease will float to the top and coagulate. So, apparently **bacon grease** would make a good president. (Warren Tanabe)

Shaquille O'Neal would make a good president — have you seen the size of his hands? (Rob Wolf, Gaithersburg, Md.)

Bozo the Clown should be president because . . . oh wait, you said you wanted an *alternative* candidate. (Jesse Frankovich, Lansing, Mich.)

Finally, a candidate that will stand firm, with a long history of supporting senior citizens. **Viagra** for president! (John Hutchins, Silver Spring, Md.)

For president and VP: **writers for "Law and Order,"** because they can solve any problem in 44 minutes. (Joanne Free, Clifton, Va.)

What about **Dan Quayle?** I mean, he was at least harmless. Anybody got his number? (David Ballard, Reston, Va.)

Vote for **Chuck Norris** — or else. (Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.)

Still running — deadline Monday night, Aug. 15: our contest to drop the last letter from a word and describe the result. See bit.ly/invite1187.

SUNDAY CHALLENGE

BY MARTIN ASHWOOD-SMITH © 2016 CROSSYNERGY SYNDICATE LLC

ACROSS

- 1 "Out!"
- 7 Honoree, of a sort
- 15 Each
- 16 Spiny anteaters
- 17 Run across, with "with"
- 19 Team mates?
- 20 Last innings, typically
- 21 Okra unit
- 22 "Science Guy" Bill
- 23 Cowhand handle
- 24 Tre + tre
- 26 AMA members
- 27 Drillmaster's word
- 29 Senate figure
- 33 Chilling, maybe
- 38 Orly neighbor
- 39 Poor accommodation
- 40 Dairy product with a red coat
- 41 Angkor (Cambodian landmark)

DOWN

- 1 Strips for breakfast
- 2 Bond that's not 007
- 3 "Friday Night Lights" actress Teegarden
- 4 It can follow six or seven, but not five

ACROSS

- 5 Either way you look at it, it's here in France
- 6 Easy-gaited saddle horse
- 7 Ex-boxer Spinks
- 8 Passport no.
- 9 "Oops!"
- 10 Cycle down at the laundry
- 11 Erie summer hrs.
- 12 Took (snoozed)
- 13 Cantina munchie
- 14 Cornerstone abbr.
- 18 B'way purchases
- 23 Forum troublemaker
- 25 "Sounds like a plan to me"

DOWN

- 27 Possessed, biblically
- 28 A Swiss Army Knife has lots of them
- 30 George Eliot's "Felix (the Radical)"
- 31 Castaway's domain
- 32 Pressure applicator?
- 33 Rue the run, maybe
- 34 Flip-flopped?
- 35 Priest from the East
- 36 She, in Salerno
- 37 Erse speakers
- 44 Masked assassin
- 45 Flavor enhancer initials
- 46 Joltless joe
- 47 Stand and deliver?
- 48 Like some athletes' wrists
- 49 (North Carolina state motto) videri
- 50 Wrathful Kirk foe
- 51 Drops the ball
- 53 Like much early TV
- 54 Baseball's Slaughter
- 55 He has the will to succeed
- 57 Actor McKellen
- 58 PC core

Answer to last week

I	C	E	C	U	B	E	I	N	Q	U	I	R	E
B	A	N	A	N	A	S	V	A	U	N	T	E	D
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S	C	A	N	T	E	R	N	Z	E	S	T	Y	
E	E	R	T	U	N	E	C	P	R				
S	L	O	S	H	B	O	H	R	P	C	S		
S	U	P	E	R	M	A	R	I	O	K	A	R	T
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T	H	E	R	M	A	L	R	O	M	A	N	C	E
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A	P	L	E	N	T	Y	Y	A	N	K	E	E	S

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61									62				

HOROSCOPE

BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY | Aug. 14: This year you come to a unique conclusion about your social life. Test out your theory without becoming demanding. If you are single, you will feel far more complete as a duo. You will have many potential suitors to choose from. If you are attached, you love being with your sweetie. Capricorn is as savvy as you are with business, but perhaps not as good with love.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) A friend may not want to add to the craziness of the moment, but he or she will appreciate your thoughtfulness. You could feel inspired to persuade this person to join you.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) Reach out to someone at a distance. You often have a good time with this person. Decide to meet halfway. Not only will you get to see your pal, but you also will get to take a break from the here and now.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) You would be wise to tune in to someone's fantasies and make them a reality, if possible. One-on-one relating is transforming into a new set of skills that is likely to help many of your relationships.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) What becomes clear is that you don't have the control you desire. Your mind could be drifting to faraway lands. It will be rewarding to take off and enjoy visiting with those who live nearby.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) After the craziness of the past few days, you might need to indulge in a lazy day or two. You could be too tired to keep pushing so hard. Take a break.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) Your imagination will enchant a loved one. You may have difficulty finding someone who has comparable values to yours. Understand that the outcome of a personal matter is dependent upon the time you are willing to put in.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) Take a day just for you; you will need it after a hectic few days. You might not be sure about the best way to proceed. Ask for more of what you want, yet be willing to accept no as an answer.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) Communication flourishes if you are willing to take a risk and get beyond ordinary feelings. You could be in a situation where it would behoove you to be more open-minded.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) Be aware of the costs of continuing as you have been. By calling a halt to recent excuses and chaotic events, you are likely to permit a more open dialogue between you and someone whom you care a lot about.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) Your ability to move a situation forward is likely to emerge. Others will observe how you handle a conflict between two different parties. You will be able to tell whether there can be a meeting of the minds.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) A problem surrounds you, and clearing it out could take time. Honor a fast change of pace. If you are prepared and can accept that you can't control others, the next few days could be unusually rewarding.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) Your creativity emerges, especially when in a long-overdue conversation with a dear friend. Your imagination knows no limits, and today is no different. Plug your ingenuity into recent conflicts.

Survivor wants to avoid her abusers

Ask Amy Dear Amy: About 16 years ago, I decided to sever all contact with my two brothers. This decision was based on the fact that as a child, I was mentally, physically and sexually abused by both of them.

Since that time, my sister and I have held holiday celebrations without including them. Four years ago my mother decided that I needed to get over this. She chose to invite these brothers to the family Christmas party without telling me.

I walked in and was blindsided by the fact that they were there. I felt like I was being abused all over again. I had a nervous breakdown in front of all of my aunts, uncles and cousins.

It took many months to recover. During this time I had very limited contact with my mother. However, I eventually resumed contact with her. It is now my mother's turn to host an annual family party. My sister confided that my mother has invited these brothers and that they are coming.

My mother has told me that I am never to tell the relatives what happened to me as a child. I am not allowed to tell them why I had a breakdown in front of them four years ago (she told everyone I had a sudden migraine and was leaving). I feel betrayed by her. I also feel that if she can so easily betray me, shouldn't I have the right to tell whomever I want about what they did to me?

Wounded Your mother is reacting in a way that parents and grandparents sometimes behave toward family abuse survivors — it's like she's watching the clock and has declared that it is time for you to get over something you obviously won't be "getting over."

Remember that these men are her sons, and she sees it as in her best interests to control the narrative. Because she has declared this "over," you should assume that she will continue to undermine your wishes and include them when she wants to.

Your mother does not get to control how you feel, how you act, whom you see or whom you

tell about this abuse. She is eager to silence you, but using your voice will help to set you free.

You will tell your story in the way you choose, not to retaliate against your mother, but because it is your life.

Surviving, thriving and having healthy relationships is how you demonstrate that you have healed.

Your sister sounds supportive, but professional counseling is necessary for you.

A book that might help you is "It Wasn't Your Fault: Freeing Yourself From the Shame of Childhood Abuse With the Power of Self-Compassion" by Beverly Engel (2015, New Harbinger). Be aware that sometimes reading about trauma can trigger painful memories and reactions for survivors.

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