

DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

And 'so' wit was written: 'X is so Y . . .'

BY PAT MYERS

In **Week 1215** the Empress sought one-liners of the form "X is so Y that . . ." Once again, she didn't tell the Loser Community to sling gibes at our president, but once again, those are what mostly were slung, big league. Perhaps a dozen entries offered that Trump is so self-centered that he thought the song was about him.

4th place

The Trump White House is so brazen, it's offering foreign donors a night in the Putin Bedroom. (Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)

3rd place

My friend from Weight Watchers is so competitive that she always halves what I'm halving. (Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.)

2nd place and the toilet-shaped mug:

Donald Trump's hands are so tiny, the women he grabs don't even notice. (Brian Allgar, Paris)

And the winner of the Inkin' Memorial:

My chiropractor is so unscrupulous, he charges Paul Ryan the same price as people who have backbones. (Jeff Shirley, Richmond)

So close, yet so far: honorable mentions

"The Bachelor" is so fixed, it ought to be called "The Gelding." (Lawrence McGuire, Waldorf, Md.)

Kellyanne Conway's been so quiet lately that Richard Simmons is asking what's happened to her. (Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)

President Trump's skin tone is so unusual, nothing rhymes with it. (Jesse Frankovich, Lansing, Mich.)

John McCain is such a bold, independent-thinking maverick, he complains about Trump's nominees before voting for them. (Duncan Stevens)

Political correctness has gotten so out of control that the last time I ordered French toast at a diner, a millennial at the next table jumped up and started screaming, "Cultural appropriation! Cultural appropriation!" (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village, Md.)

Donald Trump is so great. #totallyriggedStyleInvitationalclaim sIbroketherules #aftereverythingIvedoneforthePost #suchanastyempress (Melissa Balmain, Rochester, N.Y.)

The crowd was so huge at Trump's inauguration that the Park Police considered setting up a second Porta-John. (Hildy Zampella, Falls Church, Va.)

Kim Jong Un is so paranoid that his food taster has a food taster. (John O'Byrne, Dublin)

America's lawyers have been getting so much love for their help fighting the immigration ban, cabbies are giving them free rides to chase ambulances. (Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.)

Mitch McConnell is such a negative guy that his bobblehead shakes its head no. (Pie Snelson, Silver Spring)

The insult was so trivial that even @realDonaldTrump wouldn't respond to it. (Jeff Hazle, San Antonio)

The movie was so awful that everyone in the theater stopped texting to watch in disbelief. (Hildy Zampella)

Trump is so out of shape, he gets tired in conversations with foreign officials just pressing their buttons. (Dan Helming)

Donald Trump is so reckless he asked Kim Jong Un to pick him up at the airport. (David Kleinbard, Mamaroneck, N.Y.)

Canadians are so angry about Trump's travel ban, they are asking politely that it be repealed. (Mark Raffman)

Donald Trump is such an inept fascist, he can't even make Metro run on time. (Mark Raffman)

The Old Woman in the Shoe had so many kids, she had to learn to multi-task. (Chris Doyle)

President Trump is so self-absorbed, he thinks the word "meme" has two syllables. (Jesse Frankovich)



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Your mug here? It's our fourth and latest Loser Mug design for third- and fourth-place finishers, designed once again by our own Bob Staake. The slogan "You Gotta Play to Lose" is by Loser Roy Ashley.

New contest for Week 1219: Cast your Bred upon us

my name is Cow, and wen its nite, or wen the moon is shiynig brite, and all the men haf gon to bed — i stay up late. i lik the bred.

— *Sam Garland, a.k.a. Poem for Your Sprog*

The sometimes mystifying social community Reddit has been enchanted hundreds of times over by Sam Garland, a postdoctoral student who took to posting comments on a wide variety of others' Reddit posts — in the form of rhyming poems. Last October someone posted an amusing anecdote about a cow that had made her way into the kitchen of a re-created French fortress and started licking all the loaves of bread — and Sprog responded with the faux-Chaucerian doggerel above.

Almost instantly, according to the website Know Your Meme, "i lik the bred" sparked a new genre, with parodies and similar verses popping up all over Reddit and Tumblr blogs, in topics ranging from kittens to Tudor history. So let's invite it: **Write a Lik the Bred verse about someone in the news lately**. For our own purposes, here are the parameters:

— It begins with "My name is . . ." or some other first-person introduction.

— It ends with "I [verb] the [noun]." You may substitute "we" for "I," and "a" or "my" for "the," etc.

— It consists of four rhyming lines, A-A-B-B (Sprog breaks them into eight, but we will probably use a four-line format to save space). Thirty-two syllables total.

— The meter is strongly iambic: ba-DUMP ba-DUMP ba-DUMP ba-DUMP. (My NAME is COW . . .)

— The spelling *may* be faux Middle English but could also be modern; the Empress hopes to run both types. Either way, the verse shouldn't be a slog to read.

Submit entries at this website: bit.ly/enter-invite-1219 (all lowercase).

Winner gets the Inkin' Memorial, the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a brand-new **Kreep-E**, a two-inch-long, bright green electronic insectoid that scurries around with "realistic bug movement." Well, it at least vibrates a lot. Donated by Loser Nan Reiner, who no doubt, like the Kreep-E, "self-corrects when flipped."

Other runners-up win the new mug announced today or our Grossery Bag, "I Got a B in Punmanship." Honorable mentions get one of our new lusted-after Loser magnets, "No Childishness Left Behind" or "Magnum Dopus." First Offenders receive only a smelly tree-shaped air "freshener" (FirStink for their first ink). Deadline is Monday night, March 27; results published April 16 (online April 13). See general contest rules and guidelines at wapo.st/InvRules. The headline for this week's results is by Jesse Frankovich; the honorable-mentions subhead is by Roger Dalrymple. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at on.fb.me/invdev. "Like" 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.

Chuck Norris is so tough, his shower floor is strewn with Legos. (Chris Doyle)

The Democrats have been so shut out of the governing process, they're writing letters to their congressmen. (Dan Helming, Maplewood, N.J.)

The suspect's rap sheet was so long that the police had to print it on the back of a CVS receipt. (Hildy Zampella)

Kids are so ungenerous these days that mine always want me to pay them back every time I borrow a couple hundred dollars for beer and cigarettes. (Ivars Kuskevics, Takoma Park, Md.)

Facebook is so polluted with political vitriol that my friends who voted for Trump and RUINED OUR COUNTRY (HOPE YOU'RE HAPPY NOW) don't even pay attention to my posts anymore. (Mark Raffman)

Donald Trump's hands are so large that his skin has to stretch really thin to cover them. (Steve Glomb, Alexandria)

Betty White is so old that when she says she saw "Hamilton," she saw Hamilton. (Ira Allen, Bethesda)

The night was so dark, democracy died. (Jeff Hazle)

Your Mama's been used so much that even this contest doesn't want to touch her. (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

Keira Knightley is so thin, she could pass as Monday's Washington Post. (Kevin Dopart)

The Style Invitational's readership is comprised of people so nitpicky that they've already mentally corrected the first part of this sentence to "composed of." (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn, Va.)

And Last: The Empress is so objective that she reads entries with a blindfold on. (Kel Nagel, Salisbury, Md.)

Still running — deadline Monday night, March 20: our perennial Mess With Our Heads contest to reinterpret headlines. See bit.ly/invite-1218.

L.A. TIMES SUNDAY PUZZLE

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Nichols Lewis

"BIG APPETITE"
By **CHERI KEDROWSKI** and **VICTOR BAROCCAS**

ACROSS
1 Plymouth
5 Seliant, e.g.
9 Spanish cathedral city
13 Flakes in geology class
17 Language that gave us "bard"
18 Magazine founder Eric
19 Graceful leap
20 Wasn't plumb
22 Practice good web courtesy?
25 With merchandise, say, as payments
26 Snack cake that can be deep-fried
27 Author Morrison
28 Bening of "The Kids Are All Right"
29 Proof-reading abbr.30 Description of the start of some Road Runner cartoons?

33 Foot bone
36 Graceful leap
37 Clarifying words
38 Non-discriminatory hiring abbr.
39 Et
40 Cruised through
41 Cool play area, maybe
43 "Erie Canal" mule
45 Frequent mother-and-child painter
47 Last verb in the Gettysburg Address
49 Bar game
53 Nibbles on Friskies?
56 Supreme Roman
58 Pamplona's kingdom
59 '70s extremist gp.
60 Boast opener
61 Warning for a snoopy
68 Scads
69 Chilean pronoun
70 Cellphone setting
71 Rock band member
73 Treatment for a milk hangover?
78 1921 Valentino role

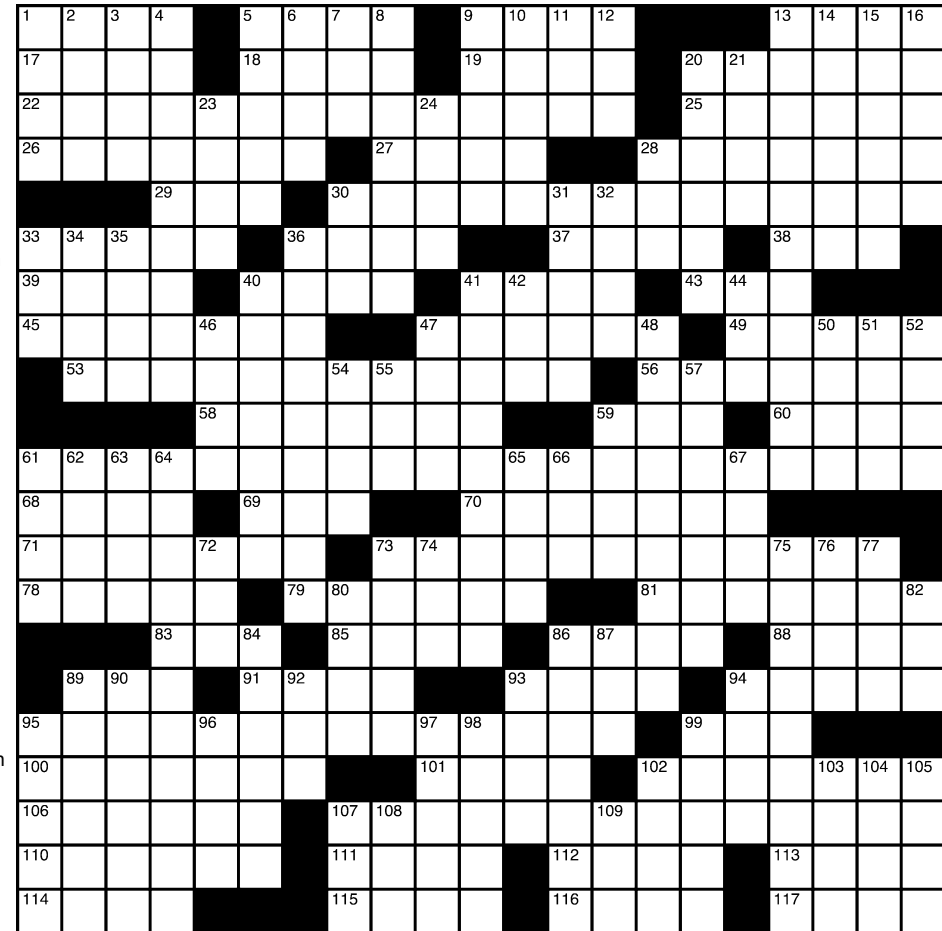
111 Level
112 Humor that evokes wincing
113 Myrtle or hazel
114 Thing to do
115 Postulates
116 Joint for jumping
117 Large septet

DOWN
1 Surrey neighbor
2 Fox's fabled flavor
3 Middle X, in a game
4 Italian sparkler
5 Burger successor
6 Kitchen Leslie extension?
7 Bump-log link
8 Snugly situated
9 Muslim spirit
10 Make anew, as a trench
11 Downed
12 Lang. of Luther
13 Pretend
14 Ab ___ from the start
15 Middle of England?
16 Threw in
20 Housekeeping concern

21 Sicilian province or its capital
23 Maui music makers
24 Combine
28 Port-au-Prince
30 Pink-slip
31 "That's enough!"
32 Poses
33 Middle X, in a game
34 Roman wings
35 Hall of Fame
36 Corp. raider's
37 extension?
38 Ones seeking change
40 Books with legends
41 Warehouse job
42 Savings plan letters
44 European peak
46 "This comes ___ surprise"
47 Leave in the garage
48 Kept down
50 Sitcom with the episode "Stable for Three"

51 Lead singer on "The Joshua Tree"
52 Not a copy: Abbr.
54 Green Hornet's driver
55 Trick ending?
57 First book of the New Testament
59 Feudal peasant
61 Pickup artists?
62 Bountiful locale
63 Left the ground
64 Advantage
65 Turkish coin
66 Corp. raider's
67 Cad
72 Devastating 2008 hurricane
73 Comic strip mother of Hamlet and Honi
74 "You ___; Lionel
75 Fichie hit
76 Lauches
78 Departure notice?
79 Emulated Arachne
80 Word with musical or muscle

82 Reel partner
84 With 92-Down, Monopoly prop. bordering the Electric Company
86 Russian Civil War fighter
87 Maximilian I's realm: Abbr.
89 Chihuahua neighbor
90 Ben and Sam
92 See 84-Down
93 Gathered steam
94 Affectionate
95 Bed cover
96 Playwright Moss
97 Baklava
98 sweetener
99 Glade targets
100 "The Wrong Sort of Bees" author
102 Seconds
103 Shipping deduction
104 Planning session input
105 Positive words
107 "___ Not Easy Being Green"
108 Soul seller
109 Nantes negative



3/19/17 xwordeditor@aol.com ©2017 Tribune Content Agency, I.L.C.

Answers to last week's puzzle below.

HOROSCOPE

BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY/March 19: This year you open up to new opportunities that often come through your professional or community commitments. If you remain diligent, you will gain in stature. If you are single, you could fall madly in love. Know that this experience is likely to occur when you least expect it to. If you are attached, never lose sight of the importance of your significant other. Sagittarius has a very special quality, but you become tense around them.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
Only your mental outlook could mar this close-to-perfect day. Don't allow yourself to overthink a problem; instead, welcome a new approach. Let go of hassles, and be grateful for what feels great right now.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
You might be overly focused on one individual, to the point of being possessive. Ask yourself what draws you to this person. Make choices that build your sense of well-being.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
You might feel as if you are somewhat responsible for someone else's mood, as they become more difficult the longer they're in your presence. Consider moving to a mellower environment for now.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
You could be more in touch with your feelings than many others seem to be. Honor your boundaries, but don't become withholding with your immediate circle.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
Today is an excellent example of how playful you can be. Be reasonable about what you take on, and remember your true age. Nevertheless, you'll delight a loved one to no end.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
Don't be surprised that tension mounts. You might not be sure which way to go with a certain issue. Hang close to home, or at least be near the person with whom you need to resolve this problem.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
A friend or loved one might appreciate your bond if you made an effort to reach out more. A

neighbor also might seek you out, as they have some news to share. Be sure to sort fact from gossip when speaking with this person.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
Be more aware of the costs of continuing as you have been. You seem bent on diversion and might be careless with your budget. Stop and consider how you will feel tomorrow.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
You could be touched by how a friend comes through for you. This person is nothing but lucky for you. Think back on your many experiences with them, and you'll see that this is true. A child demands some time; make it your pleasure.

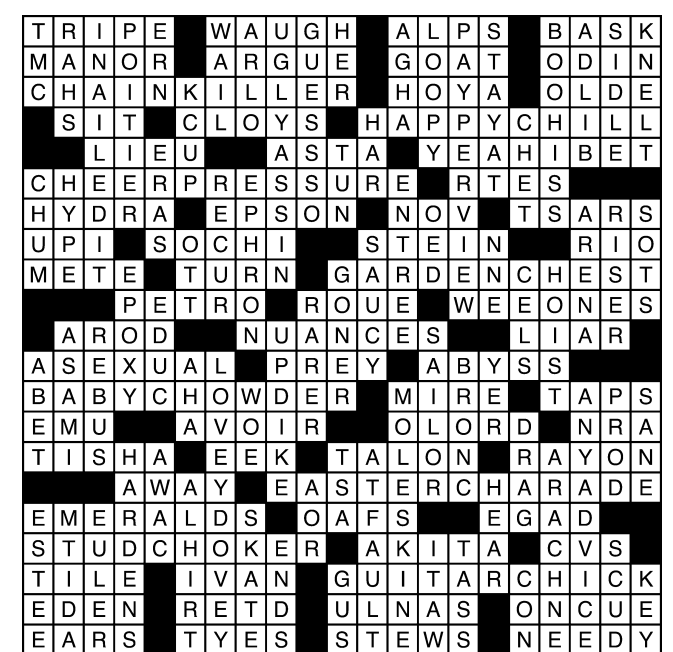
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

You are likely to become more in touch with your inner voice than you have been in a long time. Try to give up judgments for now, and gently attempt to change or break a pattern. A family member will help you sort through your different thoughts.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
You feel closer to a friend at a distance than you have in a while. Make plans to get together in the near future. Just planning the get-together changes your mental frame of mind.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
You might want to cocoon at home, but an immediate responsibility demands your attention. Know that you will feel better once you are in the midst of carrying out this particular task.

Answers to last week's puzzle.



3/12/17