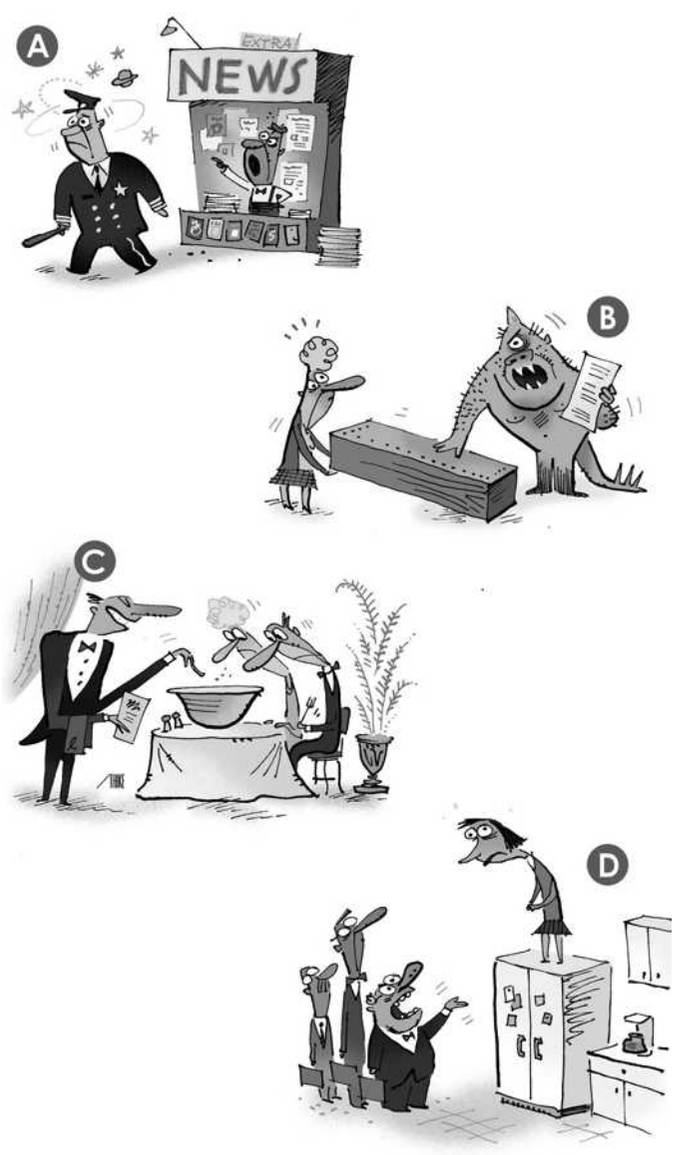
DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

Four-toon tellers: Winning captions

BY PAT MYERS

In **Week 1232** the Empress asked you, as she does two or three times a year, to write one or more captions for cartoons by Style Invitational Artist 4 Ever Bob Staake.



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

4th place

Picture D: **The office's production of "Romeo and Juliet" was hampered by a very small budget.** (Rob Huffman, Fredericksburg, Va.)

3rd place

Picture B: **"I told you your sister would just die if we announced our engagement!"** (Mark Raffman, Reston)

2nd place and the "Free Tommy Chong" T-shirt from 2003:

Picture C: **"For our lovely American visitors, tonight's special is "Pot de Chambre."** (John McCooey, Rehoboth Beach, Del.)

And the winner of the Inkin' Memorial:

Picture D: **"Good grief, Doris! Ailes and O'Reilly are gone, okay? Now get those sweet cheeks down here and pour us some coffee already."** (Jesse Frankovich, Grand Ledge, Mich.)

Droopy draws: Honorable mentions

PICTURE A

Sal emphatically "explained" to Officer Pupp that "free press" does NOT refer to the sale price. (Larry McClemons, Annandale)

"Don't blame me, Officer McGregor; I told you it was hard-hitting coverage." (David Ballard, Reston; Bill Lieberman, Ellicott City)

"You're looking for a 'cop on the beat' deal? How about a 'beat on the cop'?" (Brad Alexander, Wanneroo, Australia)

"A cop on duty should not be toking a giant blunt!" (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn)

Astronomers marveled at the discovery of two very large planets, one shaped like a policeman and the other a newsstand, in the vicinity of Saturn. (Mark Raffman)

An example of one of those "Noxious Emissions Widely Spewed" stands that have been popping up since the election. (Bill Lieberman)

And Last: **"I don't care how long you've been asleep, Officer van Winkle, here in 2017 the Sunday Washington Post costs $3.50 a pop, and it still runs The Style Invitational."** (John Hutchins, Silver Spring)

PICTURE B

"Dang, I shouldn't have advertised for undertakers on Monster.com." (James Scarborough, McLean, a First Offender)

"My orders are to recover the monolith we placed on your world eons ago, not an Ikea bookcase." (Jeff Contompasis)

"Mom! You know I only eat living bodies . . ." (Rob Huffman)

"No way, Helen! It says I get all the coffins right here in our prenup." (Jesse Frankovich)

"Not so fast, Mom. We shouldn't play Giant Jenga until we've read the instructions." (Jesse Frankovich)

"On Jupiter, we require a written contract for the sale of half a Kit Kat bar." (Mark Raffman)

"Whoa, whoa, whoa . . . Where in the script does it say I have a love scene with Carol Channing?" (Bird Waring, Larchmont, N.Y.)

"No, Org ask you bring me BEER!" (Jesse Frankovich)

All that Granny could think about on encountering the lizardlike, one-eyed, spike-tailed undertaker was: Why does he have nipples? (Mark Raffman)

PICTURE C

". . . and the fly is gluten-free." (Marni Penning Coleman, Falls Church)

"Actually, he's doing the 100-centimeter individual medley." (Jason Russo, Annandale)

"Out of respect, you should wait for these two to finish mating." (Dave Prevar, Annapolis)

Gaspard's strong accent led many diners to reject their complimentary bowls of the chef's Special Golden Chowder. (Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)

"Permit me to stir it with my umbrella." (Marty McCullen, Gettysburg, Pa.)

"I think your first course just ate the second." (Frank Mann, Washington)

"Just close your eyes and imagine they're noodles." (Jesse Frankovich)

To the diners' dismay, Google translate confirmed that "soupe avec élan" could mean either "soup with zest" OR "soup with moose." (Jeff Contompasis)

PICTURE D

Fine, Ms. Jenkins, you win. Come down and we'll allow you to make seventy-EIGHT percent of what we do. (Art Grinath, Takoma Park, Md.; Jason Russo)

"Calm down, Marge. When I said 'foursome,' I meant golf." (Warren Tanabe, Annapolis)

When the traps baited with $100 bills didn't work, Mrs. Johnson realized grimly that her kitchen was not infested with ordinary lawyers, but rather with LOBBYISTS. (John Hutchins)

Unfortunately, one of the characters on Lizzie's Loser magnets resembled the CEO of the firm. (Dave Prevar)

Still running — deadline is also Monday, July 24: our song parody contest for lyrics about science and technology. See wapo.st/invite1235.

New contest for Week 1236: Portmanteaux faux

AMEN: A combination of "abominable" and "yes-men." Example: "Do you love our president? Let's hear an Amen!"
DEGREE: Combines "degrading" and "twee." "So what was it like to defend your dissertation in front of Professor Pomposity?" "Totally the third degree."

This week's contest, suggested by classics scholar *and* 87-time Loser Ann Martin, combines a couple of the Invitational's frequent contest themes: It incorporates the idea of a portmanteau word, a word that's coined by combining two other words, along with our beloved practice of promulgating totally bogus explanations. **This week: Explain — inaccurately but amusingly — how a real word is a combination of two or more words,** with an illustrative sentence, as in the examples above, or some other funny way.

Submit entries at this website: **wapo.st/enter-invite-1236** (all lowercase).

Winner gets the **Inkin' Memorial,** the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy — one of the last few before we come out with a new design. Second place receives, actually in season for once, a **raft-size triangular brown pool float** — in this case, we should call it a floater — depicting the now-famous poop emoji. The triangle's long sides are almost five feet long. Donated by Hall of Fame Loser Jeff Contompasis.

Other runners-up win our "You Gotta Play to Lose" Loser Mug or our Grossery Bag, "I Got a B in Punmanship." Honorable mentions get one of our 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, July 24; results published Aug. 13 (online Aug. 10). See general contest rules and guidelines at wapo.st/InvRules. The headline for this week's results is by Jeff Contompasis; the honorable-mentions subhead is by Chris Doyle. Join the Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at on.fb.me/invdev. "Like" Style Invitational Ink of the Day on Facebook at bit.ly/inkofday.

THE STYLE CONVERSATIONAL The Empress's weekly online column discusses each new contest and set of results. Especially for song parody guidance this week, check it out at wapo.st/styleconv.

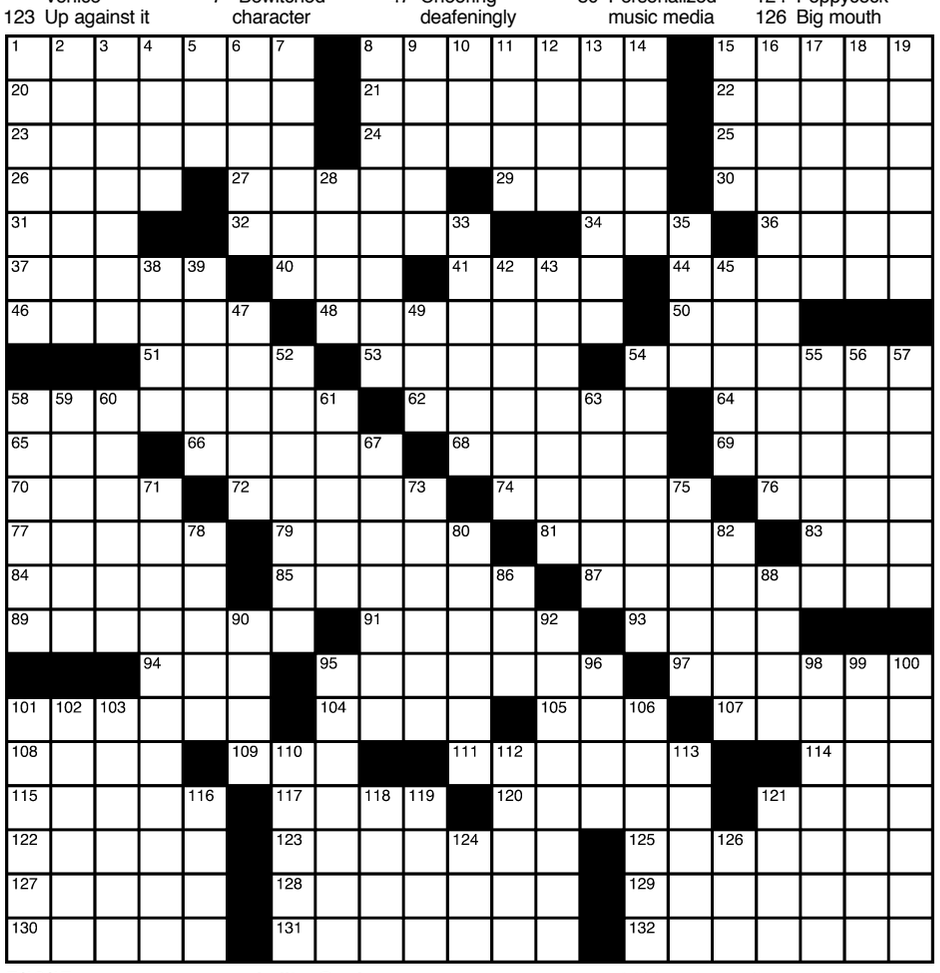
L.A. TIMES SUNDAY PUZZLE

EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

"SHARE AND SHARE ALIKE" By BRUCE HAIGHT

ACROSS
1 Like many a postcard scene
8 Imminently dangerous situation
15 Achilles' heel
20 "The NFL Today" analyst
21 Transfers, as a T-shirt design
22 Girl in Byron's "Don Juan"
23 Get back (to)
24 Company that merged with Konica
25 Jason's shipbuilder
26 Big party
27 Gross fraction
29 Brews for socials
30 Hook wigglers
31 Artist's talent
32 Caribbean islander
34 Not just any old
36 Trig ratio
37 Hollowed out
40 Mayo is in it
41 Behold, to Brutus
44 Knowledge of spiritual matters
46 North Pole feature
48 [Yawn]
50 Come together
51 City on Lake Michigan
53 Casually arrive, in slang
54 "Need assistance?"
58 One of dozens, for millions
62 Classic VW
64 Had the nerve
65 Tiny messenger
66 Wise ones
68 Way to hit?
69 Timed perfectly
70 Lightning particles
72 Japanese noodle dish
74 Water collectors
76 1986 #1 hit for Starship
77 Gush on stage
79 Saw
81 Spanish royalty
83 Poppycock
84 West Coast NFLer
85 Musical Keys
87 Stock maker's flavor enhancer
89 Short-lived Mormon state
91 Chihuahua neighbor
93 Manual reader
94 Deli delicacy
95 Poppycock, with "a"
97 Make busts, say
101 Bad person to share appetizers with?
104 Copied
105 Taoist force
107 Unsettling look
108 "Bus Stop" playwright
109 Berkeley school, familiarly
111 Sickly-looking
114 Rouge ou blanc
115 Rings
117 Like 45 records
120 Kate of "Th1rteen R3asons Why"
121 Mr. Spock forte
122 Bridges, in Venice
123 Up against it
125 __ cheese sandwich, popular Augusta National menu item sold for $1.50
127 Wrapped up
128 Product of ocean evaporation
129 Pisa party?
130 English novelist Charles
131 Nerve junction
132 Ones handing out cigars, stereotypically

DOWN
2 Poker phrase
3 Rain storage tank
4 Record, in a way
5 GI morale booster
6 Mixed martial artist Rousey
7 "Bewitched" character
9 One of Chekhov's "Three Sisters"
10 Fleece
11 Shoestring hassle
12 "Land ho!" prompter
13 Wrote, as music
14 Grind
16 Spray sources
17 Fertile Crescent waterway
18 Grads
19 Misses
28 Pueblo people
33 Virtual human companion
35 Name that might pop up during a breakfast conversation
38 Just beat
39 Idiomatic bits
42 Old yellers
43 Biform beast
45 Changing of the locks
47 Cheering deafeningly
49 Move up and down
52 Surface for stretching
55 Five-time Kentucky Derby winning jockey
56 Impulse-conducting cell
57 Brainstorm
59 Breakdown of social norms
60 Fundamental rules
61 First Turkish president __ Atatürk
63 Twists in a bar
67 Add pizazz to an ad, say
71 Kind of radial tire
73 Christianity's __ Creed
75 Grinch creator
78 "The Fog of War" director Morris
80 Personalized music media
82 Contractor's details
86 Something to say to a dentist
88 Champagne choice
90 Suit
92 Trendy coffee order
96 Leave no room in
98 Wife of Aeneas
99 Spot in a newspaper
100 Muscle-to-bone connectors
102 Common soccer score
103 Kampala is its capital
106 Unbiased
110 Out of whack
112 Base runners?
113 Snow __
116 Fries, usually
118 Tandoori bread
119 Peak in Thessaly
124 Poppycock
126 Big mouth



7/16/17 xwordeditor@aol.com ©2017 Tribune Content Agency, LLC.

Answers to last week's puzzle below.

HOROSCOPE

BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY | July 16: This year you'll want to get plenty of exercise to work through stress and minimize tension. Practice supporting yourself more often. If you are single, you could meet someone at work, at the bank or maybe even at the gym. You probably will meet this person sometime after summer. If you are attached, the two of you decide to participate in a new activity that will help you both relax. Aries proves to be provocative when brainstorming.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
An older friend or relative is likely to get under your skin. Pressure builds to establish more defined boundaries. You might not be able to get past an obstacle or some kind of resistance at the moment, but eventually you will.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
You know that you are not getting the full story. Someone you care about pulls you away from a loved one who might be upset. Try to put a halt on this situation before it affects your relationship.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
You finally could be letting loose and enjoying this part of the weekend. Your frustration might emerge when visiting with a friend who can be a bit rigid. The smart play is to postpone plans, especially if you feel your volatility easily emerging.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
Accept an invitation to join others for brunch at a favorite spot. You might not believe how much fun you'll have. You'll probably want to make this type of event a regular happening.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
You have the capacity to embrace very different scenes. Open up to an adventure that is exciting and new. As a result, your mind will be exposed to unique ideas.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
Defer to someone who clearly wants to be in control. You will find that you are capable of adjusting to a provocative situation. One-on-one relating can be very satisfying because of your social skills.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
Listen to what is being shared by a strong-willed partner. Recognize that this person is reflecting their own inner tension. Reach out to someone at a distance who is controversial yet always makes you laugh.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
You could be on edge balancing a lot of different needs, including your own. Stay cool, and don't lose your temper; otherwise, you will have others running away from you. A loved one also might be handling an issue regarding your joint finances.

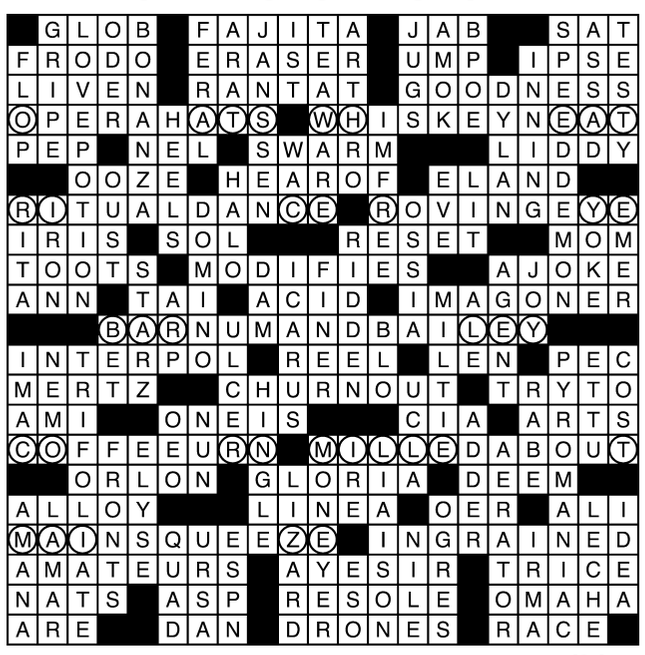
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
You come up with unusual but relevant solutions. Are you willing to try one out? You actually could be delighted by the results. In any case, the willingness to take a risk and be open is what counts.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
Don't get locked in to rigid thinking, which could be a liability for you. Be more willing to get involved in an activity with which you have little expertise. Remain open to experimentation. Take up a new hobby.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
Make calls and see what your friends are up to. You might decide to join a loved one on a fun adventure, but perhaps you would prefer being in a group setting. What is wrong with trying to squeeze in both?

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
You might have decided to treat a friend to a special day. Some of you will indulge your love of shopping, whereas others can be found at an amusement or water park. You will be over-the-moon happy when you finally get to do what you love.

Answers to last week's puzzle.



7/9/17