

DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

Headlyin' news: Media fictoids

BY PAT MYERS

In **Week 1268**, as part of The Style Invitational's relentless crusade to unenlighten our readers with bogus trivia, we asked for fictoids about the news media and the publishing industry. Despite his obvious qualifications for this contest, the president of the United States failed to enter and therefore gets no ink.

4th place

The scrolling ticker at the bottom of a newscast screen is called a crawl because it originally required someone to wriggle across the studio dragging a hand-painted sign. (Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)

3rd place

The term "yellow journalism" derives from the 19th-century tradition of newsboys urinating on stacks of their rivals' papers. (Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)

2nd place and the shirt that makes you look as if your torso has been sliced away:

Communications major Baboon Blitzer wisely opted to change his name. (Margaret L. Welsh, Oakton, Va.)

And the winner of the Lose Cannon:

Jeff Bezos meant to buy only a single issue of The Washington Post, but he didn't have any small bills on him at the time. (Robert Schechter, Dix Hills, N.Y.)

Ha off the presses: Honorable mentions

The German word for "break wind" is *Blog*. (Duncan Stevens)

A newspaper reporter signals that he's working a story by pulling his tie down to his shirt's second button. (Lawrence McGuire, Waldorf, Md.)

Until he was forced to pick a name short enough for TV listings, Rupert Murdoch planned to call his U.S. cable channel Rabid Badger News. (Melissa Balmain, Rochester, N.Y.)

A reluctant Bloomsbury publishing house agreed to print the **Harry Potter books** only after J.K. Rowling's judicious use of the Imperius Curse. (Duncan Stevens)

The real **Alfred E. Neuman** required treatment for anxiety disorder throughout his life. (Mark Raffman, Reston)

The Honolulu Star-Advertiser was created by the merger of the Hono Star and the Lulu Advertiser. (Randy Lee, Burke)

In its LEED Gold-certified newsroom, **the digital Washington Post** uses 100 percent recycled pixels. (Dudley Thompson, Cary, N.C.)

The first "hostile work environment" lawsuit was filed in 1940 by female employees of the Daily Planet, who cited reporter Clark Kent's frequent comments about the color and condition of their underwear. (Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase, Md.)

Katie Couric's colonoscopy was faked in the same studio as the moon landing. (Jeff Shirley, Richmond)

A newspaper article's second paragraph is traditionally called the "nut graf," because it's where lunatics stop reading to start dictating angry rebuttals. (Lawrence McGuire)

After producing his historic Bible, **Gutenberg gained much more financial success** with his next publication, a set of amusing prints of cats. (Larry McClemons, Annandale)

The HVAC system at **NPR's new headquarters** is engineered to circulate a vaporized suffusion of Valium. (Bill Spencer, Cockeysville, Md.)

Had it not been for **Chet's last-second switch** from "rock" to "scissors," many of us would have grown up watching the "The Brinkley-Huntley Report." (Hildy Zampella, Alexandria)

The initial proposal for The Post's new slogan was "In the dark, democracy trips over the sleeping cat of tyranny and bangs its shin painfully on the bedpost of complacency." (Gary Crockett)

Andy Rooney's career only took



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

New contest for Week 1272: The hex files: creative curses

May you lose all your teeth except one, so you can still get a toothache. — old Yiddish curse

May you be a contestant on "Jeopardy!" playing against my 7-year-old son and the only categories are Power Rangers, X-Men and fart noises. — Jean Sorensen, Style Invitational Week 75, 1994

May you always get up from your computer with your headphones still attached. — Thunder Dungeon

May your cookie always be slightly too large to fit inside your glass of milk. — Thunder Dungeon

Telling someone to "go #\$%& off" is so uncivilized and so unimaginative — not to mention that it's really hard to pronounce — "I'm sorry." So, to the rescue, we're bringing back one of our oldest contests, prompted by a recent series of Facebook posts by the Toronto comedy team Thunder Dungeon, which were brought to our attention by Style Invitational Devotee Kathy Hughes: **This week: Come up with an imaginative curse**, as in the examples above from our 1994 contest and from one of the Thunder Dungeon curses.

Submit entries at the website wapo.st/enter-invite-1272 (all lowercase).

Winner gets the **Lose Cannon**, our Style Invitational trophy. And to celebrate the start of baseball season, we'll give second place an **electronic chip-and-dip bowl in the shape of an outside glove and ball**: Press a button and the top of the ball not only swings open to liberate the salsa, but also plays "Take Me Out to the Ball Game." The package guarantees it to be "great entertainment for your next party," so I'm sorry about your parties. See a video of the bowl in action at wapo.st/singing-bowl. Found by the Royal Consort in the recesses of an abandoned office.

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, "We've Seen Better" or "IDiot Card." First Offenders receive only a smelly tree-shaped air "freshener" (FirStink for their first ink). **Deadline is Monday night, April 2**; results published April 22 in print, April 19 online. See general contest rules and guidelines at wapo.st/InvRules. The headline for this week's results is by Kevin Dopart; Chris Doyle wrote the honorable-mentions subhead. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at on.fb.me/invdev.

THE STYLE CONVERSATIONAL The Empress's weekly online column discusses the new contest and results. Especially if you plan to enter, check it out at wapo.st/styleconv; this week the E shares the results of our previous curse contests.



If you don't win it's a shame, but you might get this prize.

off once he started getting eyebrow extensions. (Andy Gefen, Bethesda, a First Offender)

Contrary to what is depicted in "The Post," the sandwiches Mrs. Bradlee served the reporters going through the boxes of Pentagon Papers contained cucumber and watercress, NOT ham and cheese! Washington hostesses still had standards back then. — Judith "Miss Manners" Martin (Steve Honley, Washington)

Donald Trump's first paying job was as a paperboy delivering Pravda. (Jeff Shirley)

From 1973 to 1978, the Pulitzer Prizes were made of fabric in bright floral prints. (Noah Meyerson, Washington)

Garry Cleveland Myers, the creator of "**Goofus and Gallant**" in Highlights for Children, was a family friend of both Fred Trump and Robert Mueller Sr. (Randy Lee)

News scribes in ancient Mesopotamia structured their articles in the inverted-zigurat format. (Mike Gips, Bethesda)

Fox News runs so many ads for catheters because, after housing and autos, urinary supplies are the third-largest segment of the U.S. economy. (David Kleinbard, Mamaroneck, N.Y.)

In the 18th century, "**national**

public town criers" relied on contributions from their listeners and offered burlap bags as "thank-you gifts." (Gary Crockett)

Before achieving fame as a broadcaster, a **young, studly Walter Cronkite** was known to friends as "The Most Trysted Man in America." (Jeff Shirley)

Ralph Nader unsuccessfully sued the producers of "60 Minutes" under truth-in-advertising laws, demanding that the show change its name to "46 Minutes." (Seth Tucker, Washington)

Connie Chung turned down an offer from NBC News when executives insisted on pronouncing her name "Chang" because it sounded "cleaner." (Joshua Rokach, Silver Spring, a First Offender)

The Reuters wire service was unable to operate in Germany until 1881 because umlauts couldn't be transmitted in Morse code. (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

The copyright trial between the National Journal of Actuarial Science and the American Actuarial Society Journal had to be postponed when all 12 jurors fell asleep. (Mark Raffman)

Despite its accuracy, **The Style Invitational's constant reportage** about my diet and sexual habits borders on cruel. — Your Mama (John Hutchins, Silver Spring)

Still running — deadline Monday, March 26: our contest for neologisms including a D, O, Y, L and E. See wapo.st/invite1271.

L.A. TIMES SUNDAY PUZZLE

EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

"WORD FOR WORDS" By C.C. BURNIKEL

- ACROSS**
- 1 Did a triathlon leg
- 6 Pepper spray alternative
- 10 At full speed
- 15 Slightly
- 19 Taste enhanced by shrimp paste
- 20 Otherworldly glow
- 21 Multi-colored spring bloomer
- 22 Bugs or Forky
- 23 Put Airways security device?
- 25 Narrative from novelist Levin?
- 27 MIT, for one
- 28 Govt. investment
- 29 Grand Mosque locale
- 30 Luxury hotel chain
- 31 Essence
- 33 Pyrex sister brand
- 35 It precedes Flames' home games
- 37 The Yankees during the Babe Ruth era?
- 40 True
- 43 Chicago Blackhawks' broadcaster
- 44 Give
- 45 Wine glass-making component?
- 50 "Your point being?"
- 51 Betel nut tree
- 53 Church reading
- 54 Memorable Louis
- 55 A/C measures
- 57 Agenda
- 59 Dress policy at some fancy restaurants
- 62 Enzyme ending
- 64 Shot at a bar anti-itch cream
- 66 Slow-cooked dishes
- 69 Alley designation?
- 72 The Highwayman" poet
- 73 "Don't sweat it"
- 75 "Of course!"
- 76 ___ Paese cheese
- 77 Like some celestial paths
- 78 Isn't being used
- 81 Dust jacket ID

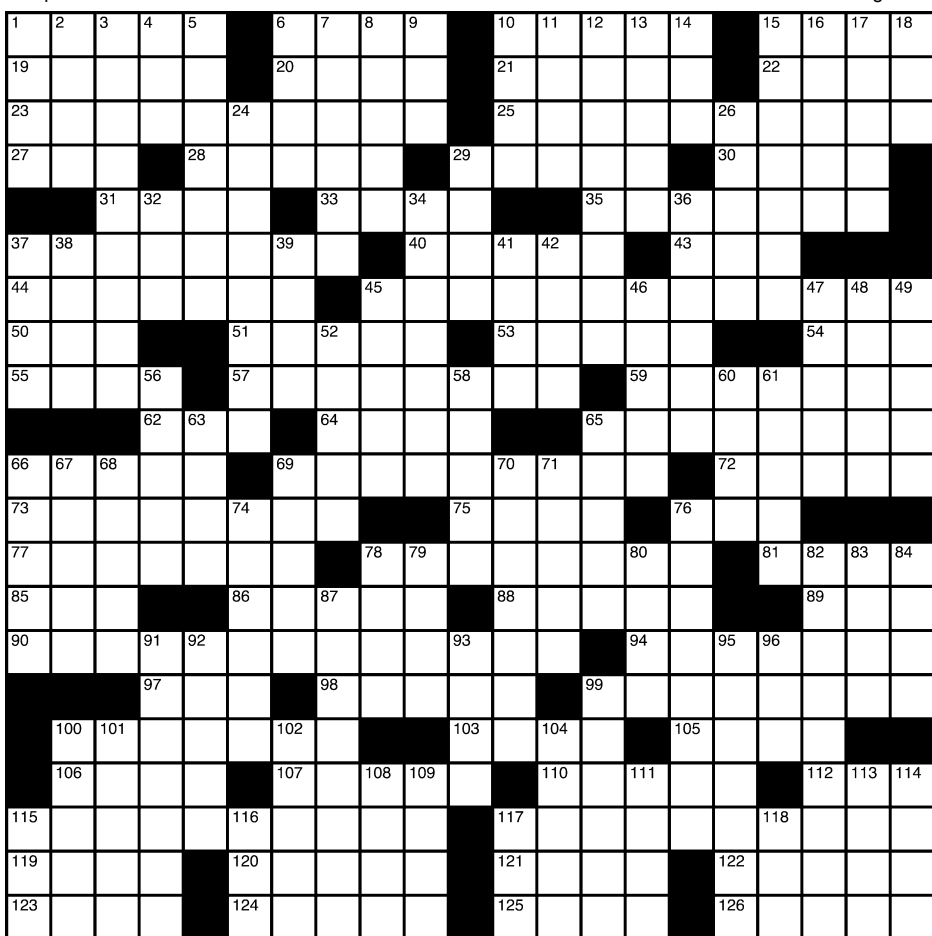
- 85 City bus path: Abbr.
- 86 Expose
- 88 Where ___
- 89 Green Day drummer ___
- 90 Seminar on Hughes' poetry?
- 94 "Amen to that!"
- 97 Inseparable
- 98 Utterly lost
- 99 Hockey contract negotiator?
- 100 Solo performance
- 103 Actor Cumming
- 105 Lat. and Ukr., formerly
- 106 SpaceX CEO Musk
- 107 Put a damper on
- 110 Memorize things, maybe
- 112 Part of U.S.
- 115 Association of gamblers?
- 117 Injury treatment for a top pitcher?

- 119 Not worth ___
- 120 Resort rental
- 121 Apple Watch assistant
- 122 Exposed
- 123 Body imperfection
- 124 Dover souls
- 125 Warmhearted
- 126 Plot spoilers?

- DOWN**
- 1 Tampa NFLers
- 2 Apple since 1998
- 3 Nepal Airlines headquarters
- 4 First-responder letters
- 5 Call the shots
- 6 Hand, to Jorge
- 7 Uncle Henry's wife
- 8 Wading spot
- 9 Corn holder
- 10 Cap ___ from head to toe
- 11 Jacobs of fashion
- 12 Jungle crusher
- 13 Genesis father of twins
- 14 1785-'90 U.S. capital
- 15 Ferocious Flea foe
- 16 Like hardcovers
- 17 Ancient neighbor of Lydia
- 18 Big bang producer
- 24 Come before
- 26 Dance in a line
- 29 Beauty mark
- 32 And so on: Abbr.
- 34 Language of Andorra
- 36 "It'll be fun!"
- 37 Striker's bane
- 38 Habit
- 39 Flying start?
- 41 Little devils
- 42 Daring exploit
- 45 Reject with contempt
- 46 Forearm-related
- 47 Slangy rejection
- 48 Like critters counted at night
- 49 City in southern France

- 52 One of the Van Halens
- 56 2005 horror sequel
- 58 "If ___": "So be it!"
- 60 Hamlet, for one
- 61 Alfalfa sprouts concern
- 63 USMC rank
- 65 West Yorkshire's largest city
- 66 Show contempt
- 67 Sacher dessert
- 68 Receded
- 69 Rissotto relative
- 70 Show with numbers
- 71 Shiny, in adspak
- 74 January birthstone
- 76 Home to the Congressional Country Club
- 78 Variety
- 79 "___ of My Soul": Isabel Allende novel
- 80 Not of the cloth

- 82 Took a course under duress?
- 83 ___ Mawr College
- 84 In order
- 87 "Madam Secretary" star
- 91 Almond Joy ingredient
- 92 Cat ___ tails
- 93 Close
- 95 "Hold your horses"
- 96 Cabinet dept.
- 99 Apprentice
- 100 Creator of tasty cups
- 101 John of rock
- 102 Ugly marketing battle
- 104 Computer acronym
- 108 Home run pace
- 109 Scrapes (out)
- 111 eBay competitor
- 113 Like fine cheese
- 114 Doc's orders
- 115 Unenvious
- 116 Doing the job, briefly
- 117 "Don't ___ me!"
- 118 Deserving



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Answers to last week's puzzle below.

HOROSCOPE

BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY | March 25: This year, you open up to a more creative yet demanding side of your personality. You will learn how much ingenuity you want to mix into your life. If you are single, you could stumble from one romance to another. Look to fall for the introduction of someone who could be the one. If you are attached, the two of you build a strong relationship that continues to grow. Dote on your sweetie more often. Cancer's emotions run as deep as yours do.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) Others have a tendency to be demanding yet full of information. Listen to what is going on around you. You do not need to make a judgment; just pay attention to what is being said.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) Your creativity emerges when you have a talk with a loved one. Working as a team might take some effort, especially as you might be dealing with a difficult person. Relax and keep the faith that you could open up to accept someone quite different.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) You might be unusually possessive and will do whatever is necessary to manifest more of what you want. Opportunities come through your daily life and patterns. You will find that others are overthinking.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) Your mood changes rapidly. You are getting more information and will have an opportunity to air out a difference of opinion. As a result, you can make your varied personality fit into the moment.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) You'll want to go off and enjoy your Sunday with whoever is available. You might need to be more resourceful than you normally are when coming up with plans. As the result of your spontaneity, funny moments seem to keep recurring.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) You often feel as if a loved one is becoming more open to new and inspirational ideas. You find that this person has a tendency to act impulsively. Actually, you might want to consider using a dash of his or her adventurous style.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) A friend could be frantic about a problem. Try to help calm this person down and go through their

options. This talk could lead to strong ideas and solutions. You have the ability to ground this individual in a way that no one else can.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) Your intense looks draw others toward you. You could feel as if too many admirers surround you. If you view this group as friends, you'll feel better. You will know when more exists between you and another person.

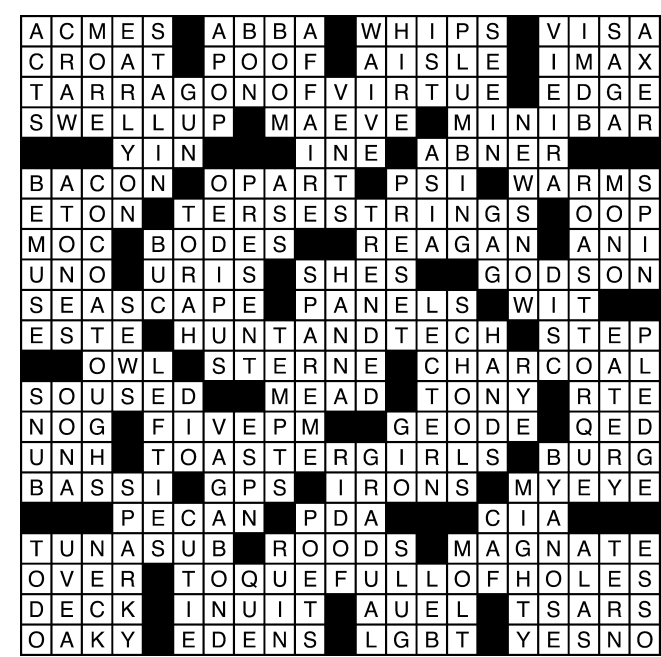
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) There is a difference between taking risks and going overboard, both of which you have a tendency to participate in. A friend might be irritating, as you could be unusually tired. Listen to this person's ideas while weighing the pros and cons.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) You find that others don't hesitate to challenge you. You often take ideas and make them stronger. You might disappoint a friend when you change your plans. Consider inviting this person to join you.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) You might want to visit someone who lives nearby. Make sure that this person is in the mood for some socializing. Otherwise, your efforts could be wasted. You might be okay with spending some time alone.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) You can be quite emotional when dealing with those around you. A child evokes some thoughts about what you want for your life and where you can make adjustments. Assess your choices after getting some exercise.

Answers to last week's puzzle.



3/18/18