

DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

Second fiddling: The 2018 redo, Part 1

BY PAT MYERS

Week 1309 was Part 1 of our yearly retrospective; we invited you to enter (or reenter) Style Invitational contests from the first half of the past year. We could fill this page up again with just song parodies or even fool names from this time around, but the Empress aimed for the 'Vite Variety Pak.

4th place:

Week 1255, words including the letter block S-A-N-T in any order: Sycophantize: To dream of working for the president. (Jesse Frankovich, Grand Ledge, Mich.)

3rd place:

Week 1268, bogus trivia about the news media and publishing: Ancient Rome's town crier, Alphonsius Rokerus, was the first to proclaim "Traffic and Weather Together on the Villis." (Bill Dorner, Indianapolis)

2nd place and the Ukrainian toilet paper with Putin's face:

Week 1280, "air quotes": Nondiscl"o""sure": "This legal agreement guarantees that everything will remain absolutely private." (Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)

And the winner of the Lose Cannon:

Week 1272: Create a new curse: May you fill the next vacant Cabinet position — and never quiiiiite get fired. (Ellen Ryan, Rockville)

#ReDo: Honorable mentions

Week 1255, SANT neologisms: Natsphyxiate: To choke in the playoffs. (Hildy Zampella, Alexandria)

Bombensation: A symptom of missile envy. (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village)

Week 1259, euphemisms: For cliché-ridden: "Filled with classical references." (Kathy El-Assal, Middleton, Wis.)

Week 1264, Yelp reviews: Heaven help the unsuspecting concertgoer attending Elm Street Preschool's holiday sing! Several of the vocalists were off pitch, the production values were slipshod, and Kevin in the second row needs to stop picking his nose. Two stars. (Frank Osen)

Week 1265, song parodies about education: High School Gym Class (to "Help!" by the Beatles)

Help, I'm in the bleachers! Help, chased by burly creatures! Help, go and get the teachers — help!

When I was younger, I feared no one while at play, I always handled any kid who dared get in my way. But now I scan the gym, and everywhere I see, Muscled guys with tree-trunk thighs who all look 23.

Most days I don't really need to shave, And my scrawny bacon I would like to save, Send those troglodytes back to their cave! Won't you please, please help me.

And now my life has changed, Mom fears that I'll be scarred, She buys me Lotrimin and gallons of Right Guard. I feel so insecure, a transfer would be cool, But my folks say there's just no way to pay for private school.

Help me if you can to find my clothes. They've been hidden by some sophomores, I suppose. These dumb gym shorts sag down to my toes! Someone please, please save me, free me, help me! (Barry Koch, Catlett, Va.)

Week 1266, neologisms from ScrabbleGrams "racks": FIMNORS > INFROM: Where you want to be during a storm. (J. Larry Schott, West Plains, Mo.)

DEFGITY > DEGIFT: To keep a Christmas present you'd bought for someone else. (Lynne Larkin, Vero Beach, Fla.)

Week 1267, ill-advised product spokesmen: Mitt Romney for the ASPCA: "Pets are like family. Sometimes, I



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Philip Roth wrote with poise; His prose made you shiver. He explained Jews to goys (Plus new uses for liver).

We embrace 2019 with our annual exhibition of the level of taste and decorum for which The Style Invitational is famed. **This week: Write a poem of no longer than eight lines about someone who died in 2018,** as in the example above by "Portnoy's Complaint" acolyte Gene Weingarten. You can find lots of lists of notable ex-people by Googling "deaths 2018." The Invite is a humor and light-verse contest, and so the Empress is not looking for sappy odes. But neither does she welcome nasty salvos-in-rhyme that rejoice over the person's death or predict an afterlife among the Hadeans just because the decedent voted incorrectly or produced crappy music: We have no interest in causing pain; Lord knows you don't have to look far elsewhere to get your quota of that.

Submit entries at wapo.st/enter-invite-1313 (all lowercase).

Winner gets the **Lose Cannon**, our new Style Invitational trophy.

Second place receives a set of **three genuine dried scorpions** — along with a black-light flashlight that, when trained upon the desiccated critters, is supposed to make them glow. And they're perfectly edible, according to the package — and surely I wouldn't think twice about doubting the safety advice printed on the shrink wrap of an item promising to "Amaze Your Friends!" Maybe we can write a poem about you next January. Donated by Loser and chronic prize-donor Dave Prevar.

Other runners-up win our "You Gotta Play to Lose" Loser Mug or our "Whole Fools" Grocery Bag. 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, Jan. 14;** results published Feb. 3 (online Thursday, Jan. 31). See general contest rules and guidelines at wapo.st/InvRules. The headline for this week's results is by Dave Prevar; Kevin Dopart wrote the honorable-mentions subhead. Join the Style Invitational Devotees on Facebook at on.fb.me/invdev. "Like" Style Invitational Ink of the Day on Facebook at bit.ly/inkoftheday; follow @StyleInvite on Twitter.

THE STYLE CONVERSATIONAL The Empress's weekly online column, published late Thursday afternoon, discusses each new contest and set of results. Especially if you plan to enter, check it out at wapo.st/styleconv.



Week 1281, googly-eyes photos: (Lee Graham, Derwood, Md.)

even put my dog above my family." (David Peckarsky, Tucson)

Kevin Spacey for Home Depot: "How do you rebuild after your House of Cards collapses?" (Hildy Zampella)

Paul Manafort for Rolex: "We do time!" (Mark Raffman, Reston)

Week 1269, bank headlines: Real headline: America's worst serial killer Bank head: Hapless psychopath claimed just 2 skinned knees, 1 wet willie in 40 years (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

America's greatest export is hurting 'Nobody inflicts pain like us,' Trump affirms (Mark Raffman)

Week 1272, new curses: May you be cryogenically frozen and awaken during Kanye West's third term. (Frank Osen)

May your doctor give you the nickname "Ka-ching." (Lawrence McGuire, Waldorf)

May you be known as "a person of interest" in whatever city you reside or visit. (Howard Walderman, Columbia, Md.)

Week 1273, new federal posts: Mick Jagger as Secretary of Fossil Energy. (Frank Osen)

C-3PO for White House communications director: He's fluent in more than 6 million forms of it, and the president really likes shiny gold things. (Jesse Frankovich)

Week 1274, "foals" from the names of two Kentucky Derby nominees: Call a Cop x Old Time Revival=Criminal in Tent (Hildy Zampella)

Mt. Rushmore x Magnum Moon = Mt. Tushmore (J. Larry Schott)

Biblical x Replicator = Torah Torah Torah (Jesse Frankovich)

Week 1275, pair a Shakespeare quote with a question:

A. "Here will be an old abusing of God's patience and the king's English" ("The Merry Wives of Windsor")

Q. What do you think he's going to tweet next? (William Kennard, Arlington, Va.)

A. "Away, you three inch fool." ("The Taming of the Shrew")

Q. What did Stormy say the next time? (Jon Ketzner, Cumberland, Md.)

A. O, my offense is rank, it smells to heaven. ("Hamlet")

Q. What did the Redskins coach say after yet another interception? (Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)

Week 1280, "air quotes": S'unrise: The morning after four glasses of wine. (David Peckarsky)

India "nap"olis: The most exciting city between Columbus and Peoria. (Ellen Ryan)

B'atty: What Rudy Giuliani is. (Jesse Frankovich)

Absen"tMI"nded: "Oh, did I tell you already about our sex therapy session?" (Kathy El-Assal)

Still running — deadline Monday night, Jan. 7: our contest for new words containing the letter block "TOUR" (in any order). See wapo.st/invite1312.

L.A. TIMES SUNDAY PUZZLE

EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

"BUT IS IT ART?" By GARRY MORSE

ACROSS

- 1 Ohm reciprocal
- 8 With 123-Across, speaker of the quip
- 14 Hybrid tableware
- 19 Black Sea country
- 20 Poke holes in, as a lawn
- 21 Judge of the Yankees
- 22 Start of a quip
- 23 Beauty goddesses
- 24 Crunchy snack
- 25 Big Apple restaurateur
- 26 Chef's amts.
- 28 Dexterity
- 30 "Wedding Bell Blues" soloist
- 32 Org. with an Acid Rain Program
- 35 Three before kappa
- 36 Quip, part 2
- 45 Monotony metaphor
- 46 Heads of the Sorbonne
- 47 Sticker
- 48 Evil Luthor
- 49 Bring out
- 52 NYC line that stops at Yankee Stadium, familiarly
- 53 Truce
- 55 Quip, part 3
- 58 Glee club member
- 59 Expected results
- 60 "... so you!"
- 61 Out of shape
- 62 Boise's st.
- 65 Email afterthoughts
- 66 Quip, part 4
- 68 Short alias?
- 71 European carrier
- 72 Kilauea Point National Wildlife Refuge denizen
- 74 Safari beast
- 75 Maestro Ozawa
- 77 Shrek creator
- William
- 79 Quip, part 5
- 85 "My mom's gonna kill me!"
- 87 Air traffic mgmt. group

- 88 Arts section regular
- 89 -fi
- 90 Frayed
- 91 Either of two hearth borders?
- 93 Altar constellation
- 94 Quip, part 6
- 99 Rhyming boxer
- 100 Work with thread
- 101 Calrissian of "Star Wars" films
- 102 Putting out
- 106 Laker or Raptor, briefly
- 109 Bass-baritone Simon
- 113 Trolley sound
- 114 Lowest points
- 117 End of the quip
- 119 "War of the Worlds" target
- 120 Play areas
- 121 Entered stealthily, perhaps

- 122 ___ tie
- 123 See 8-Across
- 124 Letters-to-the-editor writers

DOWN

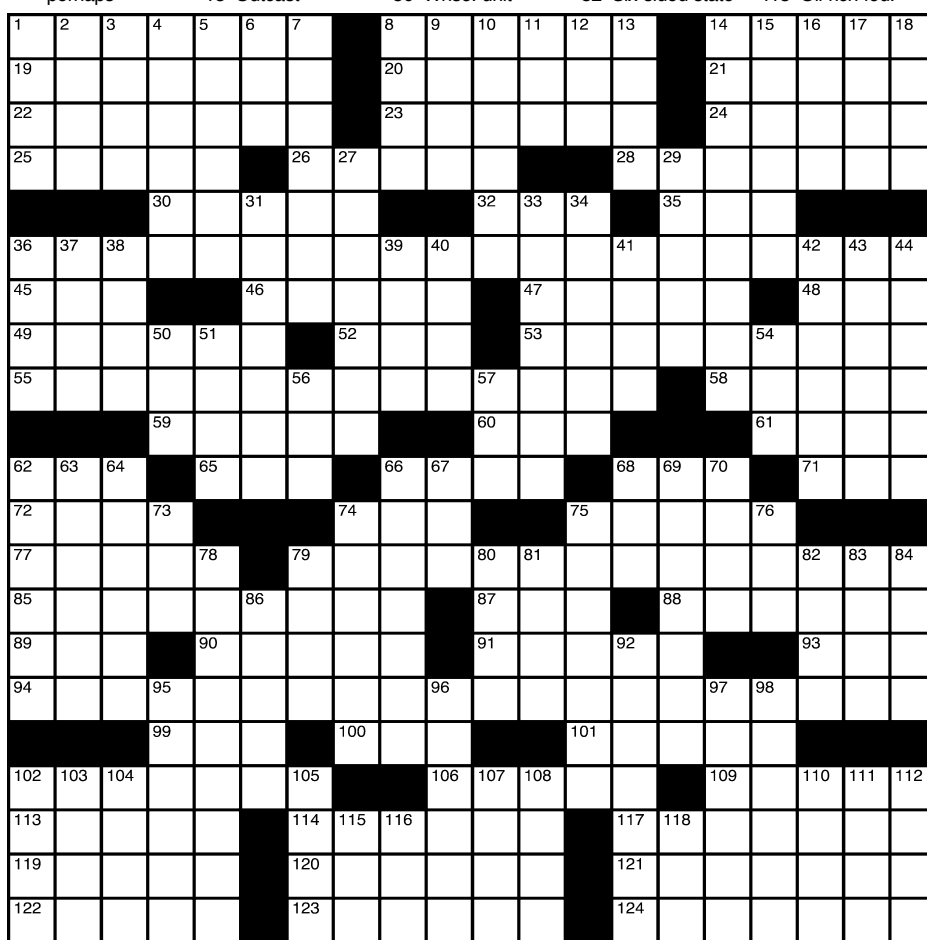
- 1 Indian titles
- 2 State admitted to the Union after Texas
- 3 Hosp. "room"
- 4 400+ million of them are produced daily
- 5 Draw in
- 6 Insignificant point
- 7 Principe's island partner
- 8 Droops
- 9 Former ACC Cavalier rival
- 10 Old-fashioned editing tool
- 11 Little sucker?
- 12 Seine summer
- 13 Loch with a legend
- 14 Circus security
- 15 Outcast

- 16 One may be left in a copier: Abbr.
- 17 ___IRA
- 18 One in a sailor's repertoire

- 51 Chain with syrup choices
- 54 Shortest mo.
- 56 Eng. ship title
- 57 ___City:

- computer game
- 62 Refuse to bargain
- 63 Separate
- 64 Lethargy cause
- 66 Pain reliever
- 67 Daiquiri liquor
- 68 DDE opponent
- 69 Cooking show title word
- 70 Barely open
- 73 Köln cooler
- 74 Free
- 75 Mariner's home
- 76 "Lord, is ___?": Matthew
- 78 Matchless one's question
- 79 Many a political party
- 80 Giant in nonstick pans
- 81 Call from the curb
- 82 Six-sided state

- 83 Country name that includes its own abbreviation
- 84 Permanent mark
- 86 "Spish Splash" singer
- 92 Con artist, often
- 95 Jeers
- 96 Street shader
- 97 City east of El Paso
- 98 How uncut grass goes
- 102 "Law & Order: SVU" actor
- 103 Sandwich side
- 104 Indian garment
- 105 Work on, as a bone
- 107 Buddy, in slang
- 108 No. 2
- 110 Bit of defiance, in slang
- 111 Gulf States prince
- 112 "Last four" ID verifiers
- 115 Sea-Tac abbr.
- 116 Agnus ___
- 118 Oil-rich fed.



1/6/19

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Answers to last week's puzzle below.

HOROSCOPE

BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY | Jan. 6: This year, you might be overly focused on one particular area of your life. Sometimes, others walk away from you because they cannot relate to this intensity. Know that this situation will endure for a while, but not forever. If you are single, you could meet several potential sweeties. The question remains: Do any of them make your heart flutter? If you are attached, you could become more dominant than your significant other likes. A fellow Capricorn holds you back.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) Yesterday's eclipse might have drained you more than you realized. Fatigue could make you highly reactive when the unexpected occurs. You do not have a reputation for being patient; right now, if someone crosses you, they had better watch out.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) Maintain a focused perspective, especially if you find that a situation seems unpredictable. You suddenly might understand a quality of a loved one that you wish you hadn't. You will be able to clear the air sooner rather than later.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) You generally cherish spending special time with a loved one. You enjoy the long conversations and this person's quick-witted responses. What you see or the impression you receive could shake you up. Do not act on it; rather, continue to observe.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) You could be in the position of needing to reconsider what is occurring around you. Your laughter and sense of humor do not allow others to see what is really going on in your mind. For now, remain subtle.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) You see what must be done. Although you might not be going to work, a project that needs to be finalized will feel like work. Your attitude could reflect your need for more fun and excitement.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) You know what is going on. You sense that a loved one is being unusually reactive, but there seems to be little you can do about it. Allow yourself to stumble into a fun project or to go with a child to enjoy some kind of winter activity.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) Your focus is on your home and on the possible need for change. Whether this need is felt by you alone or is a general feeling among your family and friends, you could decide to shake up the status quo. Others might not agree.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) Speak your mind, but don't expect others to be positive or to agree with you. You might even shock a loved one with what you share. Give this person time to reevaluate and process what you have said. Incorporate a stress-buster into your day.

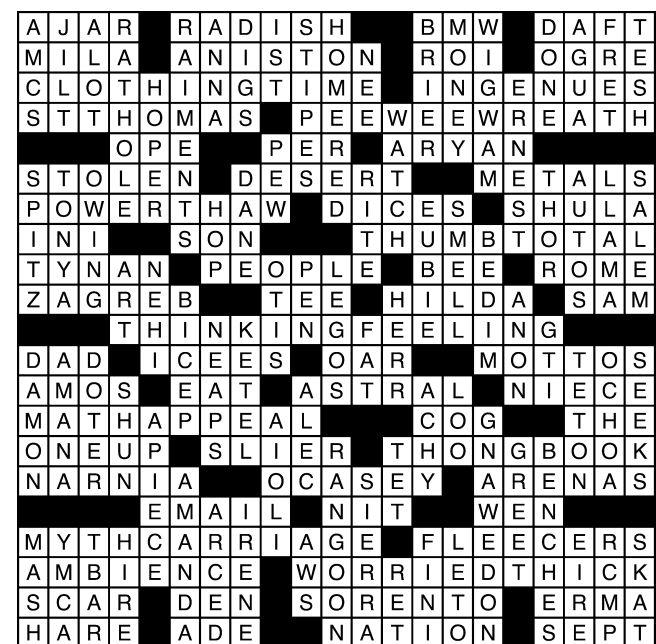
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) Pressure builds; unfortunately, this tension revolves around your budget and spending. Someone close to you might not see eye to eye with you. Consider separating your mutual financial investments. If you do, the two of you will be better friends.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) You could be off-kilter and want to do something in a different way. For now, decide to maintain your natural role and support the status quo. Someone in the same situation will give you all the reasons you need to reverse your mind-set.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) You seem to be withdrawn and feeling the need to keep a secret. In truth, you are weighing the pros and cons of an important change in your life. You have experienced so much of the unexpected that you are not sure whether change is a solution.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) A friend or loved one could cause a change in plans. You could be surprised by how delighted you are to be around this person. You always seem to relax, laugh and enjoy life much more when they are around.

Answers to last week's puzzle.



12/30/18