

DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

Stats entertainment: Figure fictoids

BY PAT MYERS

Week 1316 was another of our bogus-trivia contests, this one citing ridiculous statistics. More than 82 percent of this week's entrants sent an entry like this, which is actually true and therefore not applicable to this contest: **"100 percent of Style Invitational entrants who don't get ink believe their entries were way better than the ones she chose."**

4th place:

In the current administration, the average official's length of service before turnover is hovering around 17.3 Scaramuccis. (Jeff Contompassis, Ashburn, Va.)

3rd place:

Due to the law of diminishing marginal returns, Patriots fans now become only 4 percent more insufferable with each successive Super Bowl win. (Bill Dorner, Indianapolis)

2nd place and the sexy-frog maraca from Cuba:

It is now possible to tango with only 1.75. (Duncan Stevens, Vienna)

And the winner of the Lose Cannon:

Recent neurological research reveals that only 97.4 percent of fools fall in love. The remainder fall in a mix of lust and Axe Body Spray. (Todd DeLap, Fairfax)

Substandard deviations: Honorable mentions

Although of course the mainstream media failed to report them, during the first two years of his administration **President Trump made 142 true statements.** (John Glenn, Tyler, Tex.)

A cat's metabolism is so efficient that it can convert 5½ ounces of cat food into 7 ounces of feces, 3 ounces of urine and 2½ ounces of fetid odor. (Dudley Thompson, Cary, N.C.)

In a recent memoir, **Rick Astley admitted** that there is at least a 25 percent chance that he will give you up, and at least a 5 percent possibility that he will let you down. (Duncan Stevens)

Only 0.05 percent of registered Democrats are expected to enter the 2020 presidential race by June 2019. (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

Thirty-eight percent of accountants used to be statisticians, but they could not stand the excitement. (Keith Ord, Potomac)

4 out of 5 dentists recommend Your Mama. (Jeff Shirley, Richmond)

Ninety-one percent of the articles my dad forwards me are old, debunked or irrelevant, compared with 0 percent of the ones I forward to my kid in college. (Eric Nelkin, Silver Spring)

A Panda Express **"Panda Bowl"** actually contains only about 6 percent panda meat. (Bill Dorner)

A stitch in time will save 1,709 by the year 2030, when you factor in economic growth due to tax cuts. — S. Mnuchin, Washington (Kevin Dopart)

Almost 1 in 50 of Don Corleone's offers were refused. Well, briefly. (Todd DeLap)

An average of 535 members of Congress say they enjoy hearing the sound of their own voices. (Ivars Kuskevics, Takoma Park)

Contrary to popular belief, **the number 1** maintains an active social life, and is far less lonely than either 267 or 894. (Perry Beider, Silver Spring)

In a recent marketing survey, **4 out of 5 men believed** that discounted post-Super Bowl merchandise makes a great Valentine's Day present for their wives or girlfriends. (Ivars Kuskevics)

In a recent survey of **7,400 Korean War veterans**, more than 87 percent responded that they didn't hear the question. (Warren Tanabe, Annapolis)

It is now possible to accurately compare nearly 86 percent of apples with oranges. (Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)

Of the 3 million more votes cast for Clinton than for Trump, 55 percent were from illegal immigrants, 31 percent were from Democrats who voted twice and 18 percent were from dead people.



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

New contest for Week 1320: Questionable journalism

Line from the Post: With Beethoven, he adds, "there can be awkward jumps, or it's harder to find a fingering that really works."

Question it could answer: What did the toy company president concede about his low-selling line of Famous Composer Hand Puppets?

A. They will have instant replays, Jumbotrons and lots of television cameras. Question it could answer: What are Kim and Kanye's plans for conceiving another child? (Jeff Contompassis, Week 1053, 2014)

A. The investigators tried a different tack. Q. What happened after the "Wanted" poster fell off the bulletin board? (Jay Shuck, Week 667, 2006)

It's a classic Style Invitational contest since Week 254 in 1998: **Find any sentence (or a substantive part of a sentence) that appears in The Post or another publication, in print or online, dated Feb. 21-March 4, and pair it with a question it might answer**, as in the entries above by Bob Staake and from previous Questionable Journalism contests.

Submit entries at wapo.st/enter-invite-1320 (all lowercase).

Winner gets the **Lose Cannon**, our Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives an **electronic necktie on which is printed a piano-type keyboard** — and you can play the white keys; they make little beeping sounds like the ones you hear from obnoxious greeting cards. The Empress played part of "I'm a Loser" on it at the Losers' Post-Post-Holiday Party last month. Donated, as are so many of our most gloriously ridiculous prizes, by Loser Dave Prevar.

Other runners-up win our "You Gotta Play to Lose" Loser Mug or our "Whole Fools" Grossery 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, March 4**; results published March 24 (online March 21). See general contest rules and guidelines at wapo.st/InvRules. The headline "Stats Entertainment" was submitted by both Jeff Contompassis and Chris Doyle; David Peckarsky and Jesse Frankovich both thought of the honorable-mentions subhead. Join the Style Invitational Devotees on Facebook at [on.fb.me/invdev](https://www.facebook.com/on.fb.me/invdev). "Like" Style Invitational Ink of the Day on Facebook at [bil.ly/inkofday](https://www.facebook.com/bil.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.



DEAN EVANGELISTA

The Empress models our 2nd prize at January's Loser party.

The total exceeds 100 percent because some dead people voted twice. (Jonathan Jensen, Baltimore)

Less than 10 percent of Americans are able to identify the grammatical error in this entry. (Roy Ashley, Washington)

Tweeting for 15 minutes on the toilet actually burns about the same number of calories as 15 minutes of ranting at cable TV. (Kevin Dopart)

A recent study revealed that **62 percent of dogs who refused bargain brand dog food** would eat it when the dish was transferred to a neighbor's porch. (Marli Melton, Carmel Valley, Calif., a First Offender)

Researchers are unable to explain why when a sock disappears in the laundry, 75 percent of the time it's the left one. (Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase)

Soylent Green is mostly people: The remaining 19 percent consists of xanthan gum, calcium sorbate and corn syrup. (David Ballard, Reston)

A man's genitalia **can grow by as**

much as 75 percent when he's describing himself. (Warren Tanabe)

Surveys conducted during the Brett Kavanaugh hearings showed a 56 percent increased interest in boofing. (Duncan Stevens)

The average "Saturday Night Live" sketch continues for 2 minutes 36 seconds after the audience gets the joke. (Eric Nelkin)

The joke about the statistician who drowned wading across a river with an average depth of three feet is based on the fact that an average of 16.23 statisticians do perish that way every year. (Allan Grady, Fredericksburg, who last got Invite ink 21 years ago, in Week 212)

The number of bells rung every year far exceeds the annual pool of new angels. (Jeff Contompassis)

Of the 34 inchworms found in an average 18-square-foot flower bed, five actually stop and think marigolds are beautiful. (Lynne Larkin, Vero Beach, Fla.)

Twelve to 14 percent of teenagers have triskaidekaphobia. (Zachary Levine, Rockville)

While 3 out of 4 statisticians hate reporting in generalities, 16.34934 percent think that overspecifying precision is a bigger problem. (Ward Kay, Vienna, Va.)

With improvements in hygiene, it's now possible to achieve genius with a 40:60 perspiration-inspiration ratio. (Frank Osen)

Still running — deadline Monday night, Feb. 25: our contest for words built from ScrabbleGrams racks. See wapo.st/invite1319.

L.A. TIMES SUNDAY PUZZLE

EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

"PREP-POSITIONING" By GAIL GRABOWSKI

- 1 Cheese companion
- 4 Brewery fixtures
- 4 Minute dispute
- 12 Sandal features
- 19 "Barefoot Contessa" cook Garten
- 20 Journalist Larson
- 21 Pro shop purchase
- 22 Group bar orders
- 23 Revenue for a monarchy?
- 26 Crêpe cousin
- 27 "My mom is gonna kill me!"
- 28 San Simeon family
- 30 Sleep
- 31 Running total
- 32 "The Hurt Locker" backdrop
- 33 Upscale automaker
- 35 It might be generic
- 38 Novelist Waugh
- 39 Kids nagging parents about lack of air conditioning?
- 44 Which one?
- 45 Predator and Ionia computers
- 47 Jack Fleischer creator Child
- 48 Dept. formed under Carter
- 49 Bread grain
- 50 Agassi rival
- 53 Muses' domain
- 55 Massage offering
- 57 Important span
- 58 Bungalow inundated with vacationing relatives?
- 63 ___ column: concrete-filled steel support
- 64 Rope in
- 66 Quite a stretch
- 67 Freshly stained
- 68 Dr. Leary's turn-on
- 69 Sullen
- 70 Old Venetian coin
- 72 Capital that's home to the Potala Palace
- 74 "This is my ___"
- 77 Dodge logo critter
- 79 Poor, as excuses go
- 80 Ghee-brushed bread
- 81 Unwitting victim
- 83 Puts the worm on
- 85 Funny BBQ scene that got cut?

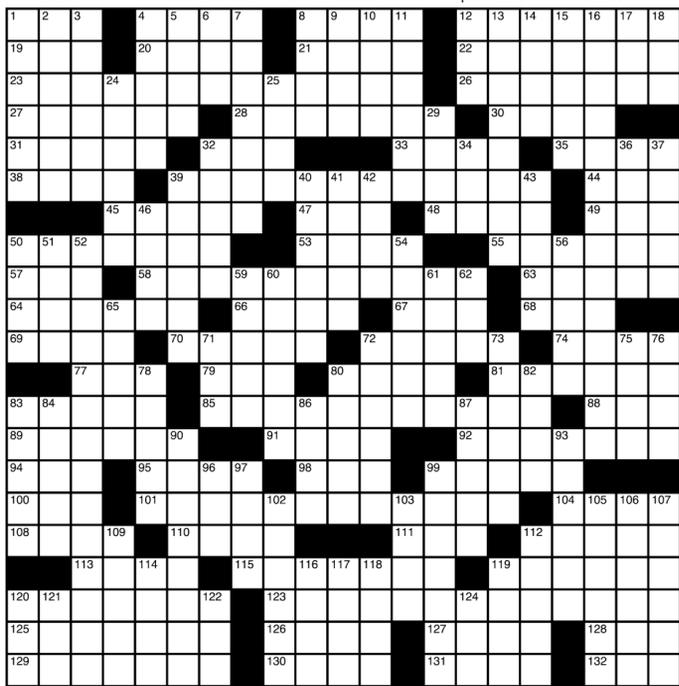
- 88 It's often bookmarked
- 89 Be there
- 91 Decorative jug
- 92 It may be lit during the holidays
- 94 Withdrawn
- 95 They may be wireless
- 98 Ristorante suffix
- 99 Links army leader
- 100 Loan letters
- 101 Unlikely winner of a trite joke contest?
- 104 Vicksburg soldiers
- 108 One of Tom Brady's three
- 110 "JAG" spin-off
- 111 Has too much
- 112 Piazza De Ferrari city
- 113 Humorist Barry
- 115 Takes care of a toy?
- 119 "To conclude ..."
- 120 Govt. water-testing sites
- 123 Group unhappy with election results?

- 125 SoCal daily
- 126 Pre-calc course
- 127 Rich deposit
- 128 Job ad abbr.
- 129 Pose a greater climbing challenge
- 130 "I'll get this one"
- 131 Chuck
- 132 Chekov's orig. "Star Trek" rank

- DOWN**
- 1 NHL Hall of Famer Stan
- 2 Dog or doggie
- 3 It may be scented
- 4 WWII surrender celebration
- 5 2016 MLB retiree
- 6 Virginia senator
- 7 Vail toppers
- 8 Gp. advocating adoption
- 9 Substandard
- 10 Charity
- 11 Line dance step
- 12 On the job, initially
- 13 "Rebel Without a Cause" actor

- 14 The Bee Gees, e.g.
- 15 New-product div.
- 16 Preview from St. Peter?
- 17 Candy invented in Austria
- 18 Dallas-to-Houston dir.
- 24 Easy pill to swallow
- 25 Pianist Peter
- 29 Confident
- 32 Less favorable
- 34 Unpleasant noise
- 36 DIY mover
- 37 Sidestepped
- 39 Flung with force
- 40 Put on conspicuous display
- 41 Seedless plants
- 42 Green of "Robot Chicken"
- 43 Question doggedly
- 46 Shoe with lots of holes
- 49 WWII "Hair" styles
- 51 River of Pisa
- 52 "You're a big girl now?"
- 54 "Who cares?"

- 56 Roundup catcher
- 59 Postgame staple
- 60 Band aide
- 61 Should have said
- 62 Area 51 creatures, it's said
- 65 Doggone mad
- 71 Battleship letters
- 72 Hugh of "House"
- 73 "Just ___"
- 75 Fiend of fantasy
- 76 Legendary soccer star
- 78 "Morning Joe" network
- 80 Ad infinitum
- 82 Hatcher of "Desperate Housewives"
- 83 Jazz count
- 84 Pal of Aramis
- 86 Relative who shares your birthday, perhaps
- 87 "Hair" styles
- 90 Queen's mate
- 93 Mother canonized by Pope Francis
- 96 Hammer throw trajectory
- 97 Impudent sort
- 99 Pasta water prep instruction
- 102 Did, but doesn't now
- 103 Campus recruiting gp.
- 105 Dining selection
- 106 Balladeer Michael
- 107 Give the okay
- 109 Bush or Clinton, once
- 112 Rubbernecks, with "at"
- 114 Seductive sort
- 116 Struggling to decide
- 117 Triathlon component
- 118 "Picnic" playwright
- 119 Bygone Fords
- 120 2015 Payne Stewart Award honoree Ernie
- 121 Touch gently
- 122 Return ID
- 124 Great Lakes' ___ Canals



2/24/19 xwordeditor@aol.com ©2019 Tribune Content Agency, LLC.

Answers to last week's puzzle below.

HOROSCOPE

BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY | Feb. 24: This year, you break a pattern, which will allow you to become more innovative and positive. You are anchored and know what you want. You will be difficult to stop. If single, you have a distant, dreamy look that often attracts others. If you're attached, the two of you will establish a long-term dream or desire. You might not like it when it manifests. Update your goals before you go after them. You will be happier in the long run. Scorpio helps you look at the long-term issues in your life.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) Your instincts help you hit a home run with a loved one or a key partner. How you see this person might change as you come to understand how intuitive this person is, as well. Learn to weave your ideas together rather than have an argument.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) Others distract you from what you want to accomplish. You find several people in your immediate circle somewhat wifty, into concepts and not grounded. Be aware of what is happening.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) You could try to do something differently and not get the response you had in your mind. Your expectations might be off; review them with a loved one and get feedback.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) Your emotional frequency and ability to get past a problem peak. Honor a sudden realization that could have implications. Look past the obvious and consider your options. Defer to another person who might have a better grasp of recent events.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) How you deal with a loved one or roommate reflects who you are. Do not question what needs to happen; just follow through. You might feel ill at ease taking up a practical activity. You need to process.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) A loved one has a way of opening you up to many variations and thoughts. You will have a good time working through them. You are serious-minded in general. Lighten up; do not look for nor make commitments.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) Your more-aware side emerges, allowing you to gain a greater sense of well-being. Reach out and handle a personal matter in a different style. You finally come to a conclusion that supports your lifestyle.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) You beam, and others notice. Staying away from you could be very difficult and challenging on another level. Understand what drives a loved one toward you and causes such emotional highs and lows. Process but do not judge.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) Be more direct. Listen to what happened, and imagine what was happening that you were not aware of. Say little. Stay aware and know your limits. Investigate what is happening through observation. Use care with finances.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) Zero in on friends. You might need a few carefree days to play and enjoy the good life. Your sense of discipline works against you. Understand that sometimes you do need to be more easygoing.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) Your ability to lead others might be subtle, but it is effective. Don't push so hard to achieve certain results; you don't need to. Invite a few friends and family members over for a fun afternoon.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) One-on-one relating takes you to a new level of understanding. You feel connected to someone who often seems distant. Your ability to empathize emerges. When you walk in this person's shoes, you understand a lot.

Answers to last week's puzzle.

