DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

Troubles in parodies: Songs of 'woe'

BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

BY PAT MYERS

In **Week 1339** we sought songs about **"modern woes,"** a gapingly broad topic encompassing both frivolous "First World problems" and serious issues — and how could that category exclude current politics? The Empress received a litany of laments set to some 300 different songs — from "I'm a Little Teapot" to "Louie, Louie" to "Shallow," along with seven versions of "Yesterday," four "Major-General's Songs" and of course a slew of show tunes. *Many* more inking parodies, with links to the melodies (some in video) at **wapo.st/invite1343,**

4th place:

To "Some Enchanted Evening":
Some distracted morning, you
won't see that stranger,
You won't see that stranger beside
you at the beach
Who looks like a cross between Pitt
and Cruise
Except for his twinkling
McConaughey blues.

Some distracted morning, you'll be
reading email
Even as that he-male reclines in
easy reach—
Then maybe you'll check your
Instagram likes,
Or watch a new film clip of goats
riding bikes.

Who needs a boyfriend when
you're not alone,
When you are going steady with
your phone?
(Melissa Balmain, Rochester, N.Y.)

3rd place:

To "The Streets of Laredo"
As I was out walking the streets of
Seattle,
I craved me a coffee and entered a
shop;
I asked the barista for a tall
cappuccino
With two packets Splenda and
whipped cream on top.

He said, "That's four fifty"; I
reached for my wallet,
Extracted a fiver and started to
pay;
He looked at me squarely, said,
"Stranger, you're new here.
Just fold up that greenback and put
it away.

"We don't except cash here, just
Mastercard, Visa,
Or bitcoin they spin out of
moonbeams and dust,
And Google Pay, Apple Pay, Venmo
and PayPal,
But never that stuff that reads 'In
God We Trust.' "

I said, "I've no smartphone and
don't carry plastic:
My currency's always been
honored before."
He called me a deadbeat and sent
for the sheriff,
And that's why I sing from behind a
cell door.

I sit now and ponder how fast the
world changes;
This Digital Age is rewriting the
book:
Our money's now backed by the full
faith and credit
Of Mark Zuckerberg, Sergey Brin
and Tim Cook.
(Elliott Shevin, Oak Park, Mich.)

2nd place and the 'Mr. President' wig:

To "Maria," as sung by Donald Trump:
Korea! I've just stepped inside
North Korea!
My new best friend is Kim,
I'm sure he'll write a hymn — to me!

Korea! I've just shaken hands in
Korea;
I showed the world who's boss;
I strolled across the DMZ!

Korea, all it took was a tweet on
Twitter!
Now the Dems are all jealous and
bitter!
Korea (I bask in the glitter!), Korea!

What a beautiful photo op it was
. . . Ko-ree-ah!
(Beverley Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

And the winner of the Lose Cannon:

To "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas":
Have yourself a gerrymandered
district,
Draw some artful lines;
Make it look like 12 exploding
porcupines.
Have yourself a gerrymandered
district,
Slice and dice the votes:
Safe seat, even if they catch you
screwing goats

Once we'd choose folks who stood
for us;
"Go do good for us," we said —
Threw out those who were abusing
us.
Now they're choosing us instead.

Draw it up so you can't be
defeated,
Be you saint or heel,
'Cause John Roberts says that this
is no big deal,
So have yourself a seat no one can
ever steal.
(Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)

Unsound of music: Honorable mentions

To "You're So Vain":
I walked into the potty like I was
living without a care;
The Post strategically tucked below
one arm,
I lowered my derriere.
It was then I saw the toilet roll, and
I just stopped to stare
'Cause it was hung with the paper
draped under, paper draped under,

You're a pain — you probably think
your way is the right way!
You're a pain — I bet you think your
way is the right way, don't you?
(Bob Kruger, Rockville; see a longer version online)

To "Maria":
Twelve items!
The fast lane's for only 12 items!
But my cart has 13, don't want to
make a scene, you see?
Twelve items! Do they really count
all my items?
The cashier has to know — if I get
busted woe is me!

Twelve items,
Any more and the lines are
endless,
So I'll put back this small box of
Splendas . . .
It's worth it, it's worth it to have
just twelve items!
(Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase)

To "Another Brick in the Wall"
My kids need to clean their toys up;
My kids need some mess control.
It's dark; I'm walking down the
hallway . . .
Dammit, what's that on the floor?
Ouch! Dammit! What's that on the
floor?
All in all, it's just another brick in
the sole. *(Jesse Frankovich, Grand Ledge, Mich.)*

To "Comedy Tonight"
If we get lucky,
We'll flood Kentucky.
Everyone there will take their
opioids tonight!
Wall Street is singing,
Money's ka-chinging,
All Appalachia's taking opioids
tonight!

Pushers and pills, profits and pain
From Mississippi straight up to
Maine.
We'll keep it going!
We'll keep it flowing!
Who cares what Post reporters
write?
Litigate tomorrow, opioids tonight!
(Barbara Sarshik and Andy Pike, McLean)

To "Knock Three Times"
Yes, your call's important to us.
Sorry, we're helping the people
who phoned in before you.
Maybe you can phone back later
When the waiting times are
greater;
That way we'll spare you the fact
that we care to ignore you.
Oh you dummy!

Press 1 twice (beep beep!) if you'd
like to hear more choices
Stay on the line (cricket chirps) to
connect to a droid,
What a sucker!
"Click click click" means you won't
hear human voices.
"Transferring now!" sends you off
to the void.
(Frank Mann, Washington)

Many more honorable mentions, including several videos, are in the online Invite at wapo.st/invite1343.

Week 1343: The Empress pleads no contest

It's been a couple of years, but the Empress gives you a break this week from your sacred obligation to submit Style Invitational entries every seven days ad infinitum: Later this month the E will be progressing through the Midwestern portion of her realm with the Royal Consort (and meeting up with some Losers along the way). And so in four weeks we'll have a column, prepared in advance, featuring robbed-of-ink entries from earlier contests — including, surely, many extra parodies from Week 1339. So if the song you entered didn't get ink this week, don't despair — just wait four weeks. *Then* despair.

Meanwhile, the **Week 1342 contest for combined abbreviations** is still running: Deadline is midnight on Monday, Aug. 5. See **wapo.st/invite1342.**

The headline "Trouble in Parodies" was submitted by both Jon Gearhart and William Kennard; Gary Crockett wrote the honorable-mentions subhead. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at on.fb.me/invdev. "Like" the 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.

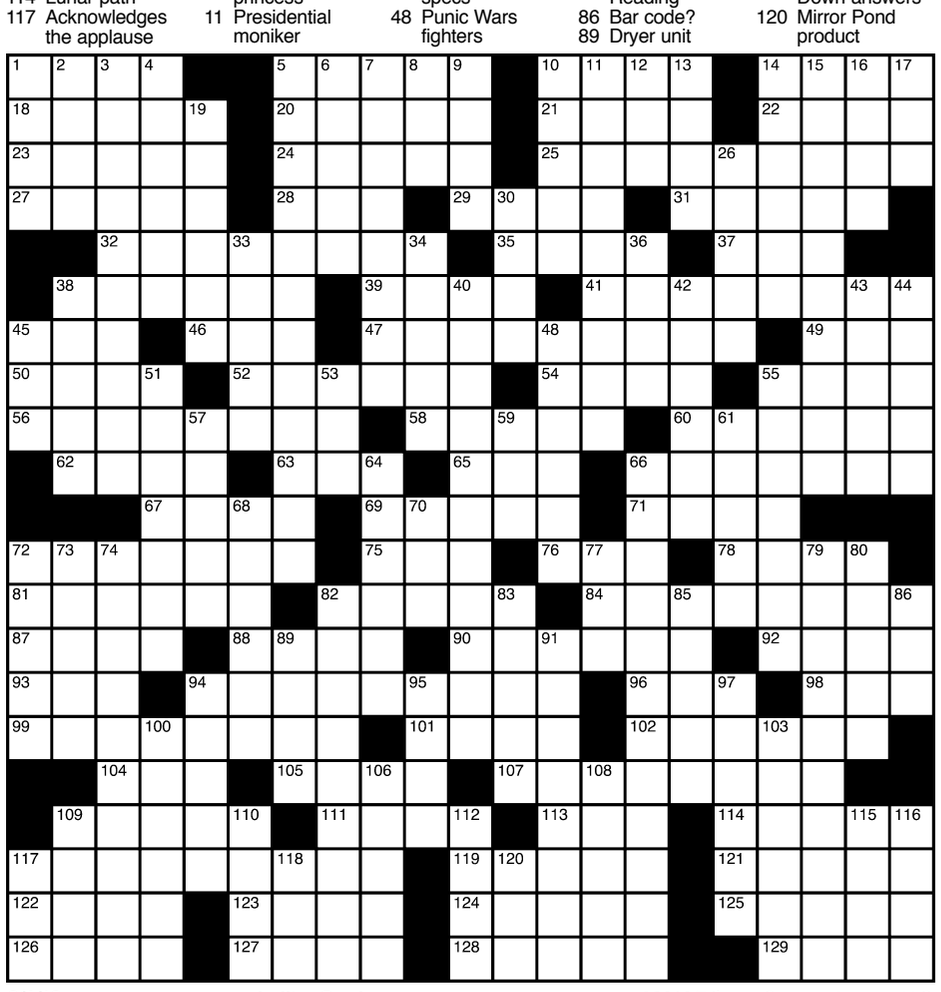
L.A. TIMES SUNDAY PUZZLE

EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

"WALK-OFF" By C.C. BURNIKEL

ACROSS
1 Org. with the slogan "No More Victims"
5 Addis __ University
10 Thunder god
14 Tributes in verse
18 Inbox pileup
20 Made level, with "up"
21 State since 1846
22 Present
23 Mucho
24 Ski resort hangout
25 Big name in women's apparel
27 "Ozark" or "Fargo"
28 Young Darth
29 Goose that sometimes nests in lava fields
31 Lies for, maybe
32 On an even keel
35 Job for Sam Spade
37 Remote battery
38 Two-time NBA Finals MVP
39 Asian fusion restaurant chain
41 Glad offering
45 Become defunct
46 Multi-platinum Steely Dan album
47 Type of sale
49 Language in the Tai family
50 City near 66-Down
52 Challenge in court
54 Orchestra pitch setter
55 Fourth-down play
56 Unbearably confident
58 Instruction Alice followed
60 Rapid-fire
62 "Hmm ... doubt it"
63 Withdrawal site
65 Cry at a shearing
66 "I'm good with it"
67 Streamed, perhaps
69 Run-D.M.C.'s "You Be __"
71 Pretended to be
72 "You don't have to remind me"
75 "The Matrix" role
76 Big ball of energy
78 Food since the Han Dynasty
81 "Casino" co-star
82 Like ripe mangoes
84 "Well done, sista!"
87 Chocolat chaud need
88 It has colorful suspects
90 __ Khan
92 Crazy Taxi publisher
93 Summer hrs. in Buffalo
94 Knock response
96 Deli order
98 Put a Singer to work
99 Track tie
101 105-Across output
102 Modifies to fit
104 Drone, e.g.
105 "Mae West Lips Sofa" sculptor
107 Thai chili sauce
109 Saves, with "away"
111 Cause of some nodding
113 "Hold on a sec," in texts
114 Lunar path
117 Acknowledges the applause
119 Early life stage
121 Haka dancers
122 "American Psycho" author __ Easton Ellis
123 Ancient France
124 Prime minister after Major
125 Nubian Museum city
126 Have the nerve
127 Bar worker: Abbr.
128 Cigna rival
129 "Frozen Fever" queen

DOWN
1 Canasta play
2 Love in Spain
3 Hacker's coup
4 Consternation
5 SunTrust Park player
6 Rodeo mount
7 Theater group
8 Plead with
9 Yemen's principal port
10 "The Princess and the Frog" princess
11 Presidential moniker
12 Beat consistently
13 Pro __
14 "Now I remember"
15 Genre from Mississippi
16 Bow-toting god
17 Sun. delivery
19 Yellow Teletubby with a curly antenna
26 Humiliate
30 Quito's land: Abbr.
33 European pear
34 Sweetly, to Salieri
36 Game designer Rubik
38 Delicate trinket
40 Heart rhythm manager
42 Hickok's last hand, reportedly
43 Texas school, informally
44 "Somebody That I Used to Know" singer
45 Dwarf wearing specs
48 Punic Wars fighters
51 "You don't have to remind me"
53 Jacuzzi feature
55 Nana and Toto
57 Ping producer
59 __ chi
61 St. Peter's Basilica sculpture
64 Movement in Brahms' Serenade No. 1
66 University of California city
68 Throat lozenge
70 Molokai memento
72 Sat at a light
73 Winner at Gettysburg
74 "Sweet Love" R&B singer
77 AA flying rival
79 Annual Arizona football game
80 Prompts
82 Almost
83 Domed Asian shelters
85 Swinton of "Burn After Reading"
86 Bar code?
89 Dryer unit
91 Sausage at tailgate parties
94 Piques, as an appetite
95 Locks up?
97 Washington port
100 Remove
103 Sentence fragment
106 Humble
108 NFL Network analyst Michael __
109 Lee whom nobody doesn't like
110 Long tale
112 Island off Tuscany
115 Some S&L plans
116 Grammy winner Turner
117 Sched. uncertainty
118 Something flipped after a walk-off home run ... and in the nine longest Down answers
120 Mirror Pond product



8/4/19 xwordeditor@aol.com

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Answers to last week's puzzle below.

HOROSCOPE

BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY | Aug. 4: This year, you find that you are questioning both what is going on and your role in creating these events. You look for more understanding. If single, you are often drawn to others, but your biggest problem might be pushing away your admirers. Your love life could easily become overwhelming. If you are attached, the two of you take off for a cup of coffee. You will plan several getaways for only the two of you. Libra enjoys being around you, and makes no bones about it.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
You finally get answers, but not because you pushed for them. Rather, you hang back and encourage a partner to chat away. Do not make a big deal out of what you hear. Just smile.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
You could question your plans. On one level, you might want to clear out a project or get a better sense of what you want to do. Make it okay to change your plans. You cannot avoid an important talk either way.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
Your very nature encourages you to lighten up and make the most of a fun invitation or suggestion. In some way, you are unstoppable in your pursuit of enjoying others and the moment.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
You have a very caring attitude that comes through to others. You might not have the right words, but you communicate your feelings well. Touch base with a family member whom you do not see often.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
Make calls in the morning and catch up on others' news. You might adjust plans because of what you hear. Do not hesitate to share some very good news that might surround someone who is younger than you.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
You might be overly concerned about your finances and how to maintain your budget. You might be eyeing an investment or a purchase. Double-check your information and do the research.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
You are personality-plus and cannot get enough of others. You have been somewhat reclusive of late. Suddenly, you want to go out and meet a friend or two for brunch or a movie. Keep it light.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
Take your time making plans. Be honest with yourself. If you do not want to visit with others and would rather spend the day alone, do so. Remember, this is your Sunday, too.

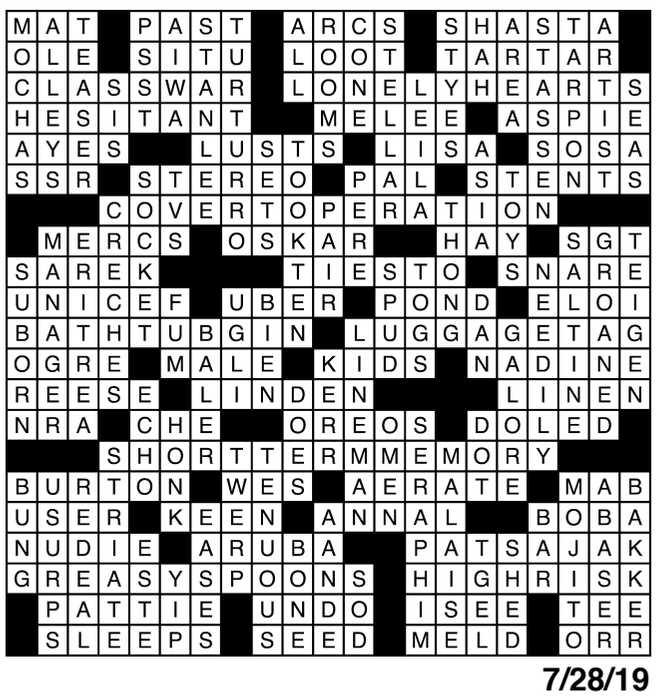
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
You might be touched by a friend and that person's choices. You have a way of letting others know how much you care about them or appreciate their efforts. A conversation over a meal may be more important than you think.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
You might hear a lecture or have a discussion that forces you to rethink a decision. You might do best opening up this topic for conversation in your immediate circle. You will hear a variety of perspectives.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
You have the ability to look at the big picture. Refuse to get caught up in details someone might present. What you get is the implications and the possibilities. Touch base with someone who lives at a distance.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
Pace yourself and get as much of a project completed as you can. A partner, loved one or dear friend could pitch in — if asked to make this "chore" more interesting. You might surprise yourself by what a good time you have.

Answers to last week's puzzle.



7/28/19