

# DIVERSIONS

## THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

# Short fuses: Winning comb. abbrevs.

BY PAT MYERS

In **Week 1342** we asked you to mash together two abbreviations. If you can't figure out some of the portmanteaus below — the Empress herself spent lots of hours puzzling over the 1,000-plus entries — check out this week's Style Conversational at [wapo.st/conv1346](http://wapo.st/conv1346) for an answer key.

### 4th place:

**J/KKK:** "Ha ha ha, of course I'm not racist! That was just a Halloween costume." (*Danielle Nowlin, Fairfax Station*)

### 3rd place:

**PhDD:** Person who might have occasion to say, "Excuse me, my brain is up here." (*Mark Raffman, Reston*)

### 2nd place and the sarcasm sign and button:

**WCCR:** The bathroom on the right. (*Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.*)

### And the winner of the Lose Cannon:

**UNICEFU:** "Every child's life is precious! . . . Oh, wait, those children aren't from here." (*Danielle Nowlin*)

### Short-term losses: Honorable mentions

**AARPG:** The ultimate "get off my lawn" weapon. (*Ira Allen, Bethesda*)

**AARPM:** 45s, 33s and still a few 78s. (*Rob Huffman, Fredericksburg*)

**AFL-CIOB/GYN:** For all your labor needs. (*Jeff Shirley, Richmond*)

**NSFWH:** Warning stamp on federal agency documents containing facts. (*Kevin Dopart, Washington*)

**AT&T&A:** Its cellphone agreement page features lots of naughty pictures, but still no one reads it. (*Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.*)

**BCCNN:** Default email setting of White House junior staffers that explains the continual "according to insiders" scoops. (*Stephen Litterst, Newark, Del.*)

**BYOBNB:** Camping. (*Melissa Balmain, Rochester, N.Y.*)

**CCCPAC:** Annual gathering of conservative activists and their Soviet supporters. (*Chris Doyle*)

**CRISPRBG:** The science that many Americans wish could keep the justice around forever. (*Dottie Gray, Alexandria*)

**CVSTFU:** "Customer Smathers to the pharmacy desk — your stool softeners are ready for pickup." (*Frank Oseri, Pasadena, Calif.*)

**DCAPTCHA:** "Select all images with a corrupt, power-hungry liar." (*Jesse Frankovich, Grand Ledge, Mich.*)

**ETASAP:** "Get your butt in here now!" (*Roger Dalrymple, Gettysburg, Pa.*)

**ETATMI:** "I'll be there between 19 minutes 24 seconds and 21 minutes 7 seconds from now." (*Roy Ashley, Washington*)

**FICOC:** Obsessively checking your credit score after every transaction. (*Stephen Dudzik, Olney*)

**FOMONG:** What teens suffer when they have to put their phones away. (*Bill Dorner, Indianapolis*)

**FUBARNR:** Spring break. (*Kerry Humphrey, Arlington*)

**GMOMG:** "Check out the size of those tomatoes!" (*Kyle Hendrickson, Frederick*)

**GOPDA:** Kissing the president's butt in full view of your constituents. (*Jesse Frankovich*)

**HOVIP:** A clown car driver in the high-occupancy lane. (*Bob Kruger, Rockville*)

**IBMAGA:** The company whose motto is "Don't think." (*Ward Kay, Vienna, Va.*)

**IMDBFF:** That one acquaintance you only invite to hang out on pub trivia nights. (*Matt Monitto, Bristol, Conn.*)

**IRSVF:** "Please respond by April 15." (*Jesse Rifkin, Arlington*)

**LMAOB/GYN:** "Ha ha, look at the speculum! Doesn't it look like a duck? Quack, quack! Okay, get back to work, there, Mr. Duck!" (*Danielle Nowlin*)

**MSRPOTUS:** The going rate for emoluments. (*Sam Mertens, Silver Spring*)

**NARAIA:** Uh, we've got some work to do. (*Sam Mertens*)

**NASAFTRA:** The dedicated men,



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

## New contest for Week 1346: AZ if — balancing acts

**B-Y: Bolshy:** A Russian ballet company whose dancers suffer from stage fright. (*Bob Staake*)

**H-S: Hipatitis:** Terminal coolness. (*Tom Witte, Week 278*)

**S-H: Suckotash:** A dish of corn, lima beans and tofu. (*Russell Beland, Week 278*)

**M-N: Mucussion:** The drastic result of overly strenuous nose-blowing. (*Chris Doyle, Week 368*)

**M-N: Mushderloin:** Result of a kick in the crotch. (*Stephen Dudzik, Week 156*)

This week's contest was suggested to the Empress by the Royal Consort, who sleeps in on Sundays later than the E does these days. He was lying in bed, listening to the weekly Sunday Puzzle a few weeks ago on NPR's "Weekend Edition," and heard the answer to a challenge posed by listener Andy Blau: Think of a word that is "alphabetically balanced," or symmetrical: Its first and last letters are the same distance from the beginning and end of the alphabet; its second and second-to-last letters are, too; and so on. He suggested BEVY — B and Y; E and V. The winning word: WIZARD. How cool is that!

It'd be insane to ask you to produce totally balanced words, but I think we could work it with the ends. **This week: Think of a new word or two-word phrase that begins and ends — either way — with one of these "alphabetically balanced" pairs, as in the examples above, most from earlier contests that happen to fit this week's parameters:**  
**AZ, BY, CX, DW, EV, FU, GT, HS, IR, JQ (good luck!), KP, LO, MN**

Submit entries at [wapo.st/enter-invite-1346](http://wapo.st/enter-invite-1346) (all lowercase).

Winner gets the **Lose Cannon**, our Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a *toiletklaver*, or, as its Danish manufacturer translates it, "**bathroom piano**": It's an electronic floor mat that you place in front of your commode so that you may tap out a tune — perhaps "Let It Go" — on the keyboard diagram. But can you do that *and* write Style Invitational entries in the same session? Try to find out. Donated by Loser Since Week 120 Roy Ashley.

**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, "Too-Weak Notice" or "Certificate of (de) Merit." First Offenders receive only a smelly tree-shaped air "freshener" (FirStink for their first ink). **Deadline is Tuesday, Sept. 3** (aw, don't labor on Labor Day); results published Sept. 22 in print, Sept. 19 online. See general contest rules and guidelines at [wapo.st/InvRules](http://wapo.st/InvRules). The headline "Short Fuses" is by Tom Witte; Jesse Frankovich wrote the honorable-mentions subhead. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at [on.fb.me/invdev](http://on.fb.me/invdev). "Like" the Style Invitational Ink of the Day on Facebook at [bit.ly/inkofday](http://bit.ly/inkofday); follow @StyleInvite on Twitter.

**The Style Conversational:** The Empress's weekly online column discusses the week's new contest and results. This week, an answer key to the Week 1342 results. See it at [wapo.st/conv1346](http://wapo.st/conv1346).



**Why just sit there when you can tap out a jaunty tune? This week's second prize.**

women and FX artists who helped fake the moon landing. (*Stephen Dudzik*)

**NFLOL:** "We're doing all we can to make the sport safer for the players." (*Mark Raffman*)

**NSFWD-40:** Lubricant for even more uses! (*April Musser Brand, Alpharetta, Ga.*)

**OB/GYNRA:** A group that supports shotgun weddings. (*Jesse Frankovich*)

**OMBDSM:** "We really, really love budget cuts — deep, sharp, stinging ones." (*Kevin Dopart*)

**401KO:** Effect of Trump's trade war

on my retirement account. (*John Hutchins, Silver Spring*)

**OMGCA:** "Nobody wants to see you in that Speedo!" (*Jeff Strong, Fairfax, Va.*)

**RSVPS:** Announcing to your hosts that you'll also be bringing guests they did not invite. "RSVPS: Fido will be coming, too — don't worry, we'll bring carpet cleaner!" (*Kevin Dopart*)

**SAT&T:** The new "open phone" exam. (*Eric Nelkin, Silver Spring*)

**TMIHOP:** Telling the server that the Fresh 'N Fruity makes you Rooty Tooty. (*Jean Sorensen, Herndon*)

**USUK:** America and Britain issue a joint declaration to the rest of the world. (*Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase*)

**WTFIFA:** The 2022 World Cup in Qatar? (*Jim Derby, Rockville*)

**WTFLOTUS?:** Wearing a pith helmet in Kenya? (*Bill Dorner*)

**YMCAARP:** Favorite place of the Retirement Village People. (*Barbara Turner, Takoma Park*)

**YMCAT:** Young men, a bunch of premeds/ I said young men, there's plenty of beds . . . (*Mike Gips, Bethesda*)

**YOLOTOH:** Better safe than sorry. (*Jesse Frankovich*)

**Still running — deadline Monday night, Aug. 26: Our contest for fake trivia about food. See [wapo.st/invite1345](http://wapo.st/invite1345).**

## L.A. TIMES SUNDAY PUZZLE

EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

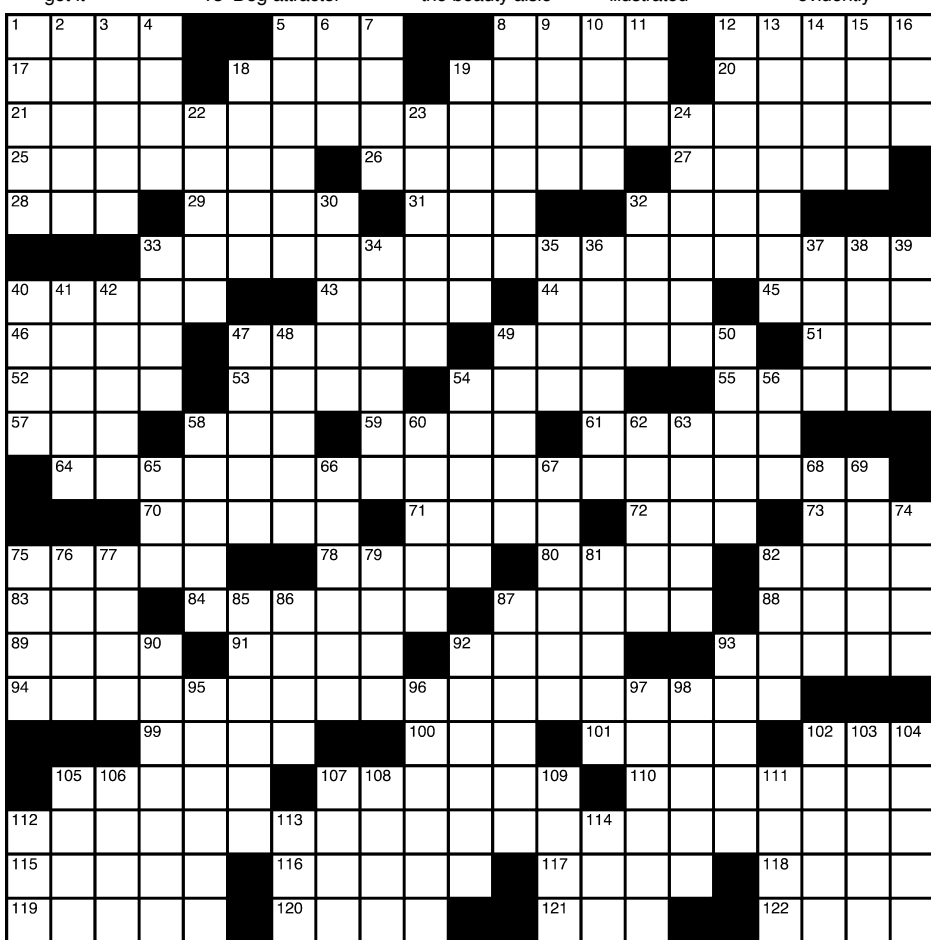
**"LITERAL LITERATURE"**  
By PAM AMICK  
KLAWITTER

### ACROSS

- 1 It can have pins at the end of it
- 5 El
- 8 Pop's Mama
- 12 Printer handle
- 17 Declare to be true
- 18 Math class ratio
- 19 Metz man
- 20 Khan: "The Jungle Book" tiger
- 21 Pop-up book?
- 25 Tool usually pluralized
- 26 "According to whom?" retort
- 27 "Don't be \_\_\_!"
- 28 Haifa's home: Abbr.
- 29 Pleasingly dated retail adjective
- 31 Post-WWII pres. monogram
- 32 Black cat, to some
- 33 Match book?
- 40 Woodard of "Passion Fish"
- 43 "The Voice" host Carson
- 44 One eliciting yawns
- 45 Diagnostic aid
- 46 Silver finish?
- 47 King Minos' land
- 49 Does the 96-Down for Sussex suffix
- 51 Has regrets about
- 53 Hill helper
- 54 Over-the-shoulder garment
- 55 Battery parts
- 57 They're defined by revolutions: Abbr.
- 58 Bit of work
- 59 Some HDTVs
- 61 Swiss Miss product
- 64 Blue book?
- 70 Sign of vacancy?
- 71 Tempe neighbor
- 72 St. Louis summer hrs.
- 73 Leave in the dust by overtaking?
- 75 Pool table slab
- 78 Fivers
- 80 "The Lion King" villain
- 82 Almanac fodder
- 83 Facebook chuckle
- 84 Removes for good

### DOWN

- 1 Christine of "The Blacklist"
- 2 Declares
- 3 More up-to-date
- 4 Art Deco icon
- 5 Dante translator John
- 6 Tats
- 7 Shoddy pair?
- 8 Tummy-tightening garment
- 9 Clock radio toggle
- 10 Barrie's bosun
- 11 UGA's conf.
- 12 Book before Blood and Sand" co-star
- 13 Fifth-most populous U.S. city
- 14 Scorch
- 15 Relative of -ish
- 16 Cousin of corn
- 18 Dog attractor
- 19 Period of great popularity
- 22 Thinning layer
- 23 Striker of a polymer ball
- 24 Mess (with)
- 30 Was discontinued
- 32 Fiona or Shrek
- 33 Finds in mines
- 34 Grill, maybe
- 35 Flanged girder
- 36 Pay attention to
- 37 Diagnostic aids
- 38 Steinbeck's "\_\_\_ of Eden"
- 39 Deli selections
- 40 Out of whack
- 41 Linney of "Ozark"
- 42 Caught this morning
- 47 Magna \_\_\_
- 48 Hardship
- 49 Treatments for breaks
- 50 Pub pick
- 54 Burglars' targets
- 56 Unit of wheat
- 58 First name in the beauty aisle
- 60 Word with clean or unglued
- 62 Richard's songwriting partner
- 63 Starfleet VIPs
- 65 End of a believer?
- 66 "Because," to a kid
- 67 Pain in the neck
- 68 Highway alert
- 69 Attended as an observer
- 74 It's behind you \_\_\_ dunk
- 76 Misplace
- 77 Worry word
- 79 North Atlantic hazard
- 81 Tight-knit squad
- 82 Conveyer of tears
- 85 Slangy convertible
- 86 Grenoble gal pal
- 87 Reacts to trouble
- 90 Hymnal that's often richly illustrated
- 92 Oater regulars
- 93 Con man's cohort
- 95 Surfaces
- 96 Things to do after dinner
- 97 Kitchen work spot
- 98 In a carefree manner
- 102 How great minds think
- 103 Cut again, as grass
- 104 Cheats at blind man's buff
- 105 Wrangler, e.g.
- 106 Middies' sch.
- 107 Toucan's pride
- 108 Teen breakout
- 109 Detective show that spawned "Baretta"
- 111 Chem class model
- 112 Real estate ad abbr.
- 113 Bird in some Australian place names
- 114 Fidget spinners, evidently



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Answers to last week's puzzle below.

## HOROSCOPE

BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY | Aug. 25:** This year others often find you intriguing. You can be coldly intellectual, extraordinarily witty or emotional within hours. You certainly will not be boring to relate to. If single, many potential prospects weave around you. You want to be valued for your totality. If attached, your sweetie might be stunned at how fast you can switch from one persona to another. Leo often plays off your feelings, adding drama.

**ARIES** (March 21-April 19)  
What you share in the daytime, be it pearls of wisdom, general news or a feeling, will need to be repeated. Do not take offense. The other party is listening, but so much is running through this person's mind.

**TAURUS** (April 20-May 20)  
You are likely to tell it as it is, or so you think. When you tell it like it is, you are telling it as you see it. Others simply have different perceptions. Try to understand where people come from.

**GEMINI** (May 21-June 20)  
You wake up, ready for coffee and your Sunday paper. Touch base with several people you do not often speak with. You will enjoy catching up on news. Make plans for dinner if you wish.

**CANCER** (June 21-July 22)  
You might feel off in the daytime. You are likely to roll over and sleep in late, or head back to bed for a nap. Use the daylight hours for you. Make any plans for evening, not sooner.

**LEO** (July 23-Aug. 22)  
You are a sign ruled by the sun. Today you could use some time out and about enjoying the summer rays. What you do and who you are with might not be as important as the fact that you are out.

**VIRGO** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)  
Catch up on an older relative's news. In fact, meeting for a late brunch might be in order, and fun. You will notice that others generally relax while they are eating, and you'll find this person more open as a result.

**LIBRA** (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)  
You could get into the tradition of Sunday calls. If you have not yet indulged in using that time for

catching up with loved ones you do not see often, try it. You will feel great about the communication.

**SCORPIO** (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)  
A loved one demands a great deal of your time during the day. Make it your pleasure. This person could be rather intense and perceptive. Speaking to them nearly always provides insight.

**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)  
You know you are strong-willed. Make it okay to defer to a loved one who insists on being dominant right now. Do not create an issue when there is none. Enjoy this role reversal.

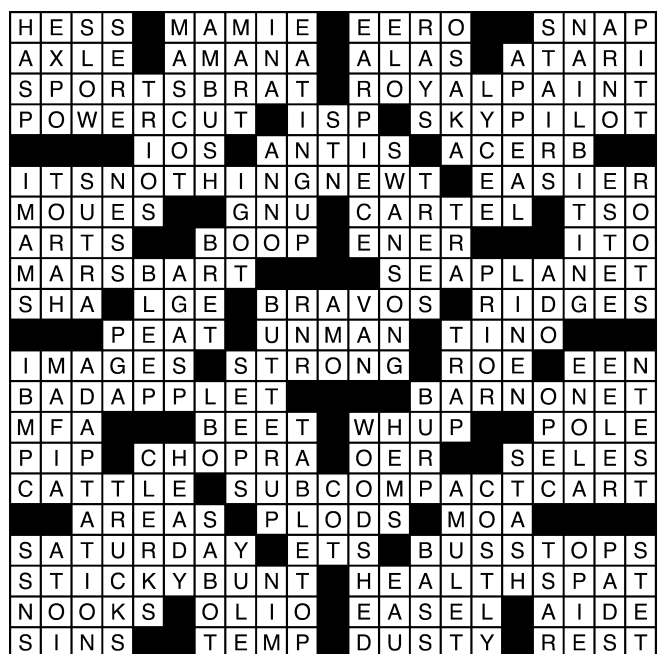
**CAPRICORN** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)  
You might decide to complete

some errands and handle a difficult situation at the same time. You find that the person in question who seems difficult will not be responsive immediately.

**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)  
Your naughty side keeps emerging whether you are having a pillow fight with a child or off playing a prank on a dear friend. Do not worry; you will grow up by the end of the day.

**PISCES** (Feb. 19-March 20)  
You might need to spend some quiet time at home for now. However, your home suddenly takes on a life of its own, with phones ringing and people coming to the door. Decide to go with the flow.

## Answers to last week's puzzle.



8/18/19