

DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

What duh . . . : Stupid questions

BY PAT MYERS

In Week 1384 the Empress asked for stupid questions, especially relating to The Current Situation, but more timeless ones as well. Several Losers just quoted verbatim: "I see the disinfectant, where it knocks it out in one minute, and is there a way you can do something like that by injection inside, or almost a cleaning?"

4th place:

"Don't you think I look a lot more manly without that stupid mask?" (Marli Melton, Carmel Valley, Calif.)

rd place:

"Why are my neighbor's black-eyed Susans staring at me?" (Paul Duffy, Geneseo, N.Y., a First Offender)

2nd place and the shower cap-style Ear Guards:

"Anyone want to carpool over with me to the testing site?" (Bill Bouyer, Ocoee, Fla.)

And the winner of the Lose Cannon:

If ignorance is bliss, why is Trump so cranky all the time? (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

. . . and dumber: Honorable mentions

"Do you agree with the president on that point, Mr. Vice President?" (John Glenn, Tyler, Tex.)

"Since you have to be on a ventilator for a month now, can I borrow your masks?" (Joe Neff, Warrington, Pa.)

"Is it too much to ask for a plane door that's bigger than my umbrella?" — D.J.T. (Jesse Frankovich, Lansing, Mich.)

They say that it is loss that teaches us about the worth of things, but what has it taught us about socks? (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

"Can you and your sister stop fighting and be quiet for the next hour while I lead a Zoom meeting?" (Marli Melton)

"Hi, do you offer Zoom acupuncture?" (Sarah Walsh, Rockville)

"A notorious multiple-bankruptcy con artist sent me a \$1,200 'check.' Should I call the FTC to report this obvious scam?" (Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)

"Officer, do you even know how to use that Taser?" (Stephen Dudzik, Olney)

Can you believe those greedy teachers, asking for raises after we've been doing their job for them all this time? (Josh Feldblyum, Springfield, Pa.)

"Alexa, how far is six feet in a size 8 shoe?" (Bill Bouyer)

"Did you hear that the virus comes from Chinese penguins?" (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village)

"Are you wondering if those pants make you look fat?" (Kyle Hendrickson, Frederick)

Can you shake left-handed since I only wipe my nose with my right hand? (Rob Cohen, Potomac)

"Come on, wasn't that the best two minutes you've ever had?" (Tom Witte)

"Do you take this excrement to be your husband?" (Dan Steinbrocker, Los Angeles)

"Does hydroxychloroquine make your hands grow?" (Jesse Frankovich)

"Does this face mask come in mesh?" (Jean Sorensen, Herndon)

"Doesn't anyone here still care about Brexit?" (Ken Gallant, Sequim, Wash.)

"For a Wonder Bread fan like me, is there somewhere that I can get a sourdough ender?" (Mark Raffman, Reston)

Has anyone ever watched paint dry all the way to make sure the whole process is boring? (Jon Gearhart, Des Moines)

"Honey, with your promotion to inspector general, why don't we buy a new house?" (Steve Smith, Potomac)



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

New contest for Week 1388: Turning around a business

OAF ODES SEAFOOD: A restaurant with clumsy waiters who insist on singing sea chanteys.

ALLERGY GALLERY: The Museum of Natural Histamine.

LEGATO GELATO: The smoothest ice cream around.

This week's contest was suggested by Absolutely Obsessive Loser Jeff Contompasis. Are you seeing what he did here? This week: Create a business, product, organization or similar entity that contains a word, name or phrase and its anagram, and describe it, as in Jeff's own examples above.

Submit up to 25 entries at wapo.st/enter-invite-1388 (no capitals in the Web address). Deadline is Monday, June 22; results will appear July 12 in print, July 9 online.

Winner gets the Lose Cannon, our Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a pair of knee-length socks that, together, depict a bag of Lay's sour cream and onion potato chips. These are simply de rigueur for the Loser wardrobe, but only after Memorial Day. Sandals optional.

Other runners-up win their choice of our "For Best Results, Pour Into Top End" 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."

The Style Conversational: The Empress's weekly online column reviews each new contest and set of results. See wapo.st/conv1388.



But you can't . . . well, who'd want to wear just one, anyway? This week's prize socks.

"How can Governor Cuomo's sign language interpreter even hear him from inside that box?" (Lil Tompkins, Laurel, a First Offender)

"I'm teaching my children at home. Where do I call to get a substitute?" (Robyn Carlson, Keyser, W.Va.)

"I crammed a Q-Tip up my nose, and when I pulled it out it was covered in red and greenish goo, but I didn't see any of those little spiky balls. So I'm good, right?" (Bird Waring, Larchmont, N.Y.)

"If I maintain a 12-foot distance from my wife, can I be within zero feet of my girlfriend?" (Bob Kruger, Rockville)

"Why does this mask make everything look so dark?" (Wendy Sheng, Falls Church, a First Offender)

"If I mix hydroxychloroquine with meth, will it work faster?" (Lee Graham, Rockville)

If you're not allowed to eat a sandwich on the Metro, why is it called a subway? (Jesse Frankovich)

"Mr. President, could you explain your long-term strategy on this issue?" (Eric Nelkin, Silver Spring)

"Since I'm an essential employee, I'm going to be paid more, right?" (Terri Berg Smith, Rockville)

"Since school is canceled, shouldn't we gather all the neighborhood kids and put them together in a room to teach them something?" (Sam Mertens, Silver Spring)

"Since we can't shake hands anymore, why don't we start rubbing noses?" (Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase)

"I'd feel safe if I kept my mask on, like you do, during the dental exam, okay?" (Drew Bennett, West Plains, Mo.)

Why do female politicians do so many things that get Donald Trump in a lather? Are they out to provoke him or something? (Duncan Stevens)

Why is it that every time Anthony Fauci is asked to testify before Congress, a new disease appears in the United States? (David Kleinbard, Mamaroneck, N.Y.)

"Will my blood still be red after I drink the bleach? How will I know when I'm bleeding?" (Nancy Della Rovere, Silver Spring)

"Would you like to see my PowerPoint on people I have observed in our neighborhood who are not practicing social distancing?" (Roy Ashley, Washington)

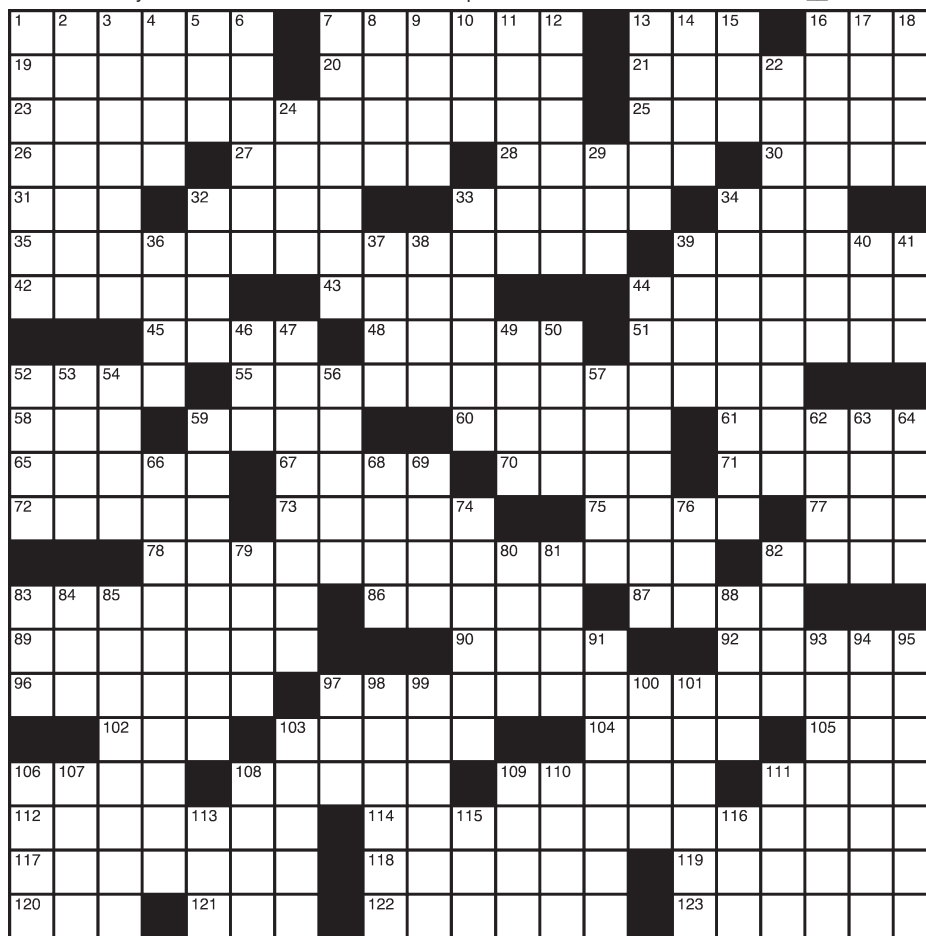
Why don't we eliminate the security risk of cloth-covered faces (bank robbers, much?) by covering our noses and mouths with nice clear Saran Wrap? (Danielle Nowlin, Fairfax Station)

Still running — deadline Monday night, June 15: Our contest to delete letters from the middle of a movie title. See wapo.st/invite1387.

L.A. TIMES SUNDAY PUZZLE

EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

ACROSS
1 Brings from novel to screen
7 Like some captioning
13 Energy bill letters
16 See 117-Across
19 Victim of Perseus
20 MLB call-up, often
21 "With any luck"
23 Fault a rearrangement of infielders?
25 "Mean Gins" writer and co-star
26 McCann of country
27 Sahara respites
28 Mixer knob
30 Michael who played Juno's love interest in 'Juno'
31 Priest who reared Samuel Swear
33 Like the Sisters in 'Macbeth'
34 "... cryin' out loud!"
35 Gives surf ratings?
39 Way to one's heart?
42 "Lucas" co-star
43 Former Arthur Ashe Stadium neighbor
44 Ready, as a range
45 Uber alternative
48 Collection of maps
51 Withdrew
52 Have trouble with Sisyphus?
55 Arranges for party chefs?
58 Friend of Genie in 'Aladdin'
59 Dobrev of 'The Vampire Diaries'
60 Chaos
61 "... in!"
65 Celtics star Walker
67 Crafty site?
70 Vision starter
71 Lucy's sitcom pal
72 Henry James, for much of his life
73 Inside job
75 Big ref. volumes
77 Link letters
78 Masters yoga?
82 Cruising
83 Freud's homeland
86 ... cords
87 Brutal act of Brutus
89 Equal share, maybe
90 Cupid counterpart
92 "The ___ Kid": 1950s TV Western
96 In need of companionship
97 Ask, "You sure this is diet?"
102 Some H.S. classes
103 Sushi fillings
104 "___ as good a time ...
105 Big name in Marvel Comics history
106 "Toodles"
108 Butler in literature
109 Pursue
111 "Sick" insult
112 Inability to smell
114 Emulate a Jedi?
117 With 16-Across, elaborately designed decoration
118 SoCal locale in a 1987 Cheech Marin title
119 Harm's way
120 Sounds of disgust
121 NBA's Cavs, on scoreboards
122 Prepares (oneself), as for a crisis
123 Stable animals
DOWN
1 Unhurried bunch
2 Biblical betrayer
3 2015 romantic fantasy role for Blake Lively
4 Yellowstone predator
5 "Old Possum" monogram
6 Took a pass
7 Pungent greens
8 Give the slip to CPAs
9 Impressed crowd sounds
10 Emulate Olympians
11 Miller and Vonn Statute of Liberty architect
12 Fine point
13 Passed, as bad checks
14 Machinery noise
15 Boo
16 Called the game
17 App buyer
18 "Creations from la cocina" brand
22 What a nervous director may do?
24 ... browns
29 Many profs.
32 "Woodstock" quartet, initially jazz
33 Plentiful supply
34 Rashida Jones facial feature
36 Iodine source
37 Source of many dramatic quotes: Abbr.
38 Licks
39 Mars: Pref.
40 Issa of
41 Since Jan. 1, to
42 Bane of Sideshow Bob eaters
49 At the drop of ___
50 Goller
52 Carousing venue
53 Curoly-horned goat
54 Cesspool
56 Author with three 5-letter names
57 Dash alternative, perhaps
59 Seven and eleven, in craps
62 Like so
63 Simply
64 First name in jazz
66 Block an access road between hills?
68 "SNL"-like show that spawned many comedic careers
69 Start of a pirate chant
74 Intermission
76 Once-a-yr. reason for oversleeping?
79 ___ pad
80 Bane of Sideshow Bob eaters
82 Broadway beau
83 Verizon subsidiary
84 Game with Skip cards
85 Lawmaking century
88 Frankfurter's exclamations
91 Beethoven's 32 for piano
93 Spare no expense
94 Strong-armed
95 Some operate remotely
97 Montreal's prov.
98 Lets loose
99 Patronizes, as a diner
100 Snack
101 Suit fabrics
103 Honorific for Macbeth
106 Bygone recording medium
107 One way to start
108 Dough in Tehran
109 A step down from "Funny!"
110 Setting of many a "Far Side" comic
111 ... tired
113 Karaoke aid
115 Leeds-to-London dir.
116 "... chance!"



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Answers to last week's puzzle below.

HOROSCOPE

BY MADALYN ASLAN

HAPPY BIRTHDAY | June 14: Gutsy and determined, you make this year a success no matter what comes. And you do it your way, by your own honorable code.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) A childlike sense of wonder and curiosity gives you a spark of creativity that manifests in natural leadership tendencies.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) A relationship may change. Someone close to you wants to try a new project or wander an unfamiliar path.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan 19) Real estate transactions can be profitable today. For those with bittersweet memories of early home and family life, it is time to process them for release.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) Today stimulates a deeper spiritual awareness. Heed a message brought in a dream.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) Today provides focus and direction. There is an accent on material security.

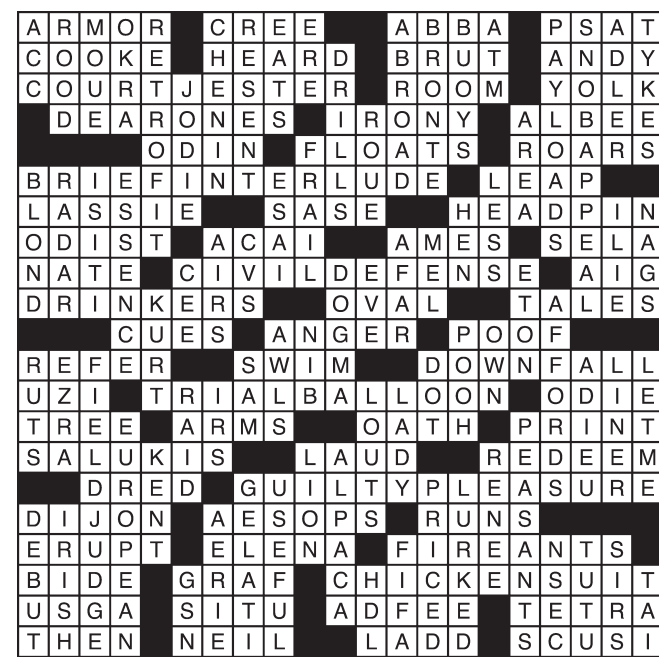
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) You will be able to solve difficulties through discussion and multitask with ease.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) Friends are a special blessing today. Membership in an organization or new group can be a catalyst for happiness and accomplishment.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) A soul mate connection or psychic bond develops with one you admire.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) You will want to shop. There are some treasures you simply must have.

Answers to last week's puzzle.



6/7/20