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?" A couple of questions were too good to be called stupid, and so they get nothing: Todd DeLap asked, "Did you realize that 'Fauci' backward is 'I Cuaf'?' and Eric Nelkin wondered, "Wait. when were the Certain Times?"

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 blackeyed 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



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

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.** ("Allergy Gallery" was his **inking entry in a similar contest, Week 955 in 2010.**) An anagram is a word or group of words that rearranges all the letters in another word or group of words, without omitting or duplicating any of them. Just think of having a bunch of Scrabble tiles and moving them around.) There's a really good chance that someone else will send the Empress the same anagram you did, so the ink would go to the funnier description.

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 kneelength 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" Grossery 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). See general contest rules and guidelines at *wapo.st/ InvRules*. The headline "What Duh..." is by Stephen Dudzik; Nan Reiner wrote the honorable-mentions subhead. Join the 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.

L.A. TIMES SUNDAY PUZZLE

EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

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Answers to last week's puzzle below.

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



Bet 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. 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. Learning moderation helps in your personal life. If single, you pursue a mate ardently and get a commitment in the latter part of the year. If attached, you are very protective of your partner, and your bond is super-strong with intense intimacy. Cancer can be moody.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

A childlike sense of wonder and curiosity gives you a spark of creativity that manifests in natural leadership tendencies. You will be especially strong and influential. Old barriers can be overcome, and you manifest a cherished wish through sheer effort.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) Today stimulates a deeper spiritual awareness. Heed a message brought in a dream. You find peace helping those less fortunate. Connect with nature to release frustration or anger. Spend time in quiet reflection.

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. You will be welcomed by new acquaintances. You also get back in touch with old companions.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) Changes within a profession as a whole make adjustments a must. The urge to try something new is brewing. Your choices will be good ones. Today is also marvelous for developing artistic gifts.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) You are rewarded today with new insight concerning the direction of your life. You use words creatively. This is a terrific time to design business or greeting cards, address labels or personal stationery.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) Allow fate to play her hand, and accept the inevitable graciously. Still, communicate with a partner in regard to shared finances. Inherited or invested funds, as well as tax and insurance payments require your attention.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct.22) A relationship may change.

Someone close to you wants to try a new project or wander an unfamiliar path. Allow this to happen. All will be well. Accept meetings and partings graciously.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) Today provides focus and direction. There is an accent on material security. You will be inclined to argue but can accomplish much. Plans are made to purchase a longdesired item. You feel a rapport with your pet.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) A soul mate connection or psychic bond develops with one you admire. Children are a source of joy. Past patterns hold the key to a love's mysteries. Listen carefully to what a dear one says, for conversations are meaningful.

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.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) You will be able to solve difficulties through discussion and multitask with ease. There is a flurry of emails and calls related to future travel plans. Conversations are profound and brighten your perspective.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) You will want to shop. There are some treasures you simply must have. Fulfill old obligations first; be aware of the force of habit regarding money management. Live within your means, and all will be well.

Answers to last week's puzzle.

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