

DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

Deck the Ha(!!)s: Shortened song titles

BY PAT MYERS

In Week 1409 the Empress asked the Losers to drop one or more letters from the middle of a song title. Half a dozen people offered EVERY BReATH YOU TAKE — "I'll be washing you"; numerous others suggested YESterDAY — "every day in the Trump White House."

4th place:

DON'T LET ME DOWN: John Lennon's little-known first song to contain the lyric "Imagine no possessions . . ."

3rd place:

SLEIGH RIDE: A song about the long drive home after Thanksgiving dinner with the in-laws.

2nd place and the game What's That Smell?:

I'M SO EXCITED: "I'm about to lose control, and I don't like it." — You Know Who

And the winner of the Clowning Achievement:

MArGARITAVILLE: "Don't know the reasons We chose this Four Seasons — Since when have they had a horse manure aisle? But I can't be moody 'Cause my name is Rudy And I also came here to sell you a pile."



A not-so-big top: Our new first-prize trophy, the Clowning Achievement.

B(all)ADS: Honorable mentions

HELLO, GOODBYE: "So long, 2020, this song's for you!" (Lee Graham, Rockville; Richard Franklin, Alexandria) HEART LIKE A WHEEL: Trump gets his cardiology report. "So strong!" (Marilyn Melton, Carmel Valley, Calif.)

I WOULD WALK 500 MILES: Honestly, I'm just not that into you. (Seamus O'Connor, Springfield, a First Offender) DON'T FEAR THE REAPER: The first-draft title for "Baby Got Back."

I FEEL P:ETTY: Trump's Song of Spite, sung to Alexander Vindman, Mark Esper, etc. "It's delicious how vicious I feel!" (Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)

96 TEARS: After getting bored with the hot dog eating contest, Joey Chestnut tries corn on the cob. (Jesse Frankovich, Lansing, Mich.)

500 MILES: What the president gleefully sang after having mirrors installed throughout the White House. (Sarah Walsh, Rockville)

TWIST AND SHOUT: The Secret Service reveals its code names for Don Jr. and Kimberly Guilfoyle. (Duncan Stevens)

ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS I s YOU: Lament of the January credit card statement. (David Peckarsky, Tucson)

BRUSH, UP YOUR SHAKESPEARE: A millennial's rejection of high culture. (Jonathan Jensen, Baltimore)

DON'T BE CRUEL: The only rock song Fred Trump let his son listen to. (Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.)

COUNTRY TIL I DIE: Trump's post-election theme song. (George Thompson, Springfield)

I GOT YOU BABE: "I got way more popular votes than Lincoln ever did. Not even close! He only got a measly 2 million!" (Steve Leifer, Potomac, a First Offender)

WON'T GET FOOLED AGAIN: Roger Daltrey puts his foot down after his bandmates don't chip in for the burgers and fries he picked up at Wendy's. (Larry Gomburg, Lake Frederick, Va.)



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

New contest for Week 1413: We're finna give you some new words

I gave my vote at first to greige: A blend, it seems, of grey and beige, But also — in a span so brief! Communicating rage and grief. My fave's now favipiravir, Which won't let covid doom us! No link with fava, let's be clear: It's medicine, not hummus. — Julia Griffin

In a year that's transformed our lives so greatly that you can't watch a Christmas romcom without shuddering at the lack of social distancing in the tinkling sleigh, it's not surprising that our language has changed as well. Below is a list of some of the words and phrases (including new usages for existing ones) added this year to the dictionary at m-w.com. This week: Write a poem of eight lines or fewer featuring one or more of these terms, as in the two-part example above by Julia Griffin, queen of Light magazine's topical Poems of the Week at lightpoetrymagazine.com.

The terms must be used as they're defined in the new m-w.com listing; e.g., "novel" needs to mean "not previously identified," not only "new and fresh" or "what I will definitely write one of these days." You may use a closely related form of the word, like a plural or adverb. The online Style Invitational (wapo.st/invite1413) lists the pertinent definition for each word and also links to the full definition at m-w.com.

- anti-vax or anti-vaccination body-shame or fat-shame bombogenesis canna (containing cannabis) chef de cuisine corona (the virus) cryosphere CV or CV-19 dark web deepfake drifting (driving a car through a skid) fan art fast-casual favipiravir finna ("fixing to"), intending Friendsgiving greige herd immunity hydroxychloroquine iatrophobia (fear of doctors) nosocomophobia (of hospitals) tomophobia (of surgery) melissophobia (of bees) impostor syndrome juicery microtarget novel (not previously identified) paleo diet physical distance PPE shelter in place slow-walk (try to hinder progress) thirsty (for attention, approval, etc.) trendspotter truthiness trushtill useful idiot WFH (working from home) zedonk/ zonkey (hybrid zebra-donkey)

Submit up to 25 entries at wapo.st/enter-invite-1413 (no capitals in the Web address). Deadline is Monday, Dec. 14; results appear Jan. 3 in print, Dec. 31 online.

Winner gets the Clowning Achievement, the new Style Invitational trophy that we introduce today. The sorry-faced bozo replaces the Lose Cannon, which got its name from a Trumply spelled Trump tweet about Hillary Clinton; like its inspiration, it's been with us since 2017 and we'd think it's high time to put it behind us. There will be only 100 Clowning Achievements, since that's how many "retired" little clown heads the Empress was able to score from some craft shop's online clearance sale. Based on an idea by Loser Kevin Dopart.

Second place wins a box of Clamdy Canes — yup, clam-flavored candy canes. They're a holly jolly yucky ucky greige and white. Donated by Loser Edward Gordon.

Other runners-up will 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, "No Bility" or "Punderachiever." 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 "Deck the Ha(!!)s" is by Jeff Contompassis; Tom Witte 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; and follow @StyleInvite on Twitter.

The Style Conversational: The Empress's weekly online column discusses each new contest and set of results. See this week's at wapo.st/conv1413. New "You're Invited" podcast episode: An interview with Hall of Fame Loser Jeff Contompassis, who tells how he changed his Invite approach after getting no ink for eight years. See bit.ly/invite-podcast.

- DON'T GO BReAKING MY HEART: Clarice's song in "The Silence of the Lambs: The Musical." (Jerry Birchmore, Springfield) DISCO INFERNO: Burn, baby, burn! An ode to back pain. (Madelyn Rosenberg, Arlington) FOR-BIDdEN FRUIT: The Peach State turns blue. (Frank Osen) BOOGIE WOOGIE BUGle BOY: Swingin' theme for "Metamor-

L.A. TIMES SUNDAY PUZZLE

EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Clues include 'Nicaraguan president', 'Elaborate dos', 'Brit's editorial', 'Formally disciplined', 'Clothing', 'Disney dog serving in Congress?', 'Nova', 'Ah, me!', 'Spring zodiac sign', 'Mil. decorations', 'Put up', 'Dorm, briefly', 'Part of FNMA?', 'Assumed the role of', 'Dale's brother, away from their home turf?', 'Name near the top of a "Citizen Kane" movie poster', 'Bed-and-breakfast, maybe', 'Lord's Prayer start', 'If all ___ fails ...', 'One of Snow White's pals acting shellfish-y?', 'Surveillance tactic', 'Photo', 'City near Provo', 'Arch type', 'O, The ___ Magazine', 'Fernando's fire', 'JURL intro', 'Trendy berry', 'Franchises owned by Donald's girlfriend?', 'Line holder', 'Gets thinner', 'Big name in pet food', 'Sweatshirt options', 'Bear', 'Egyptian Christian', 'Sign of cooking', 'Well put', 'Games category', 'Kitchen cooker belonging to 22-Across' beau?'

Answers to last week's puzzle below.

HOROSCOPE

HAPPY BIRTHDAY | Dec. 6: Perceptive, pragmatic and optimistic, you're so capable that you succeed in a year where others find only challenges. ARIES (March 21-April 19) Today sets the stage for serious commitments and a cycle of meaningful creativity. TAURUS (April 20-May 20) Thoughts will center on your home life and understanding family members. GEMINI (May 21-June 20) Rapid responses are the path to success today. CANCER (June 21-July 22) The rewards of past labor are realized. LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) Today brings a vision of your year to come. VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) There are opportunities now to be helpful. LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) Friends are opinionated today.

Answers to last week's puzzle.

Grid of answers to the previous week's crossword puzzle, including words like ONTAP, WORLD, STUFFED, EASTER, ALG, TURKEY, ORION, PETSIT, ODDORS, MTV, HIHO, ALA, DATA, UNWELL, POOR, NICETRY, INTER, NOW, POOPSIE, UKRAINE, TSKT, OMANIS, NAGANO, ANIMAL, NENA, IMO, TERN, SERFS, OPEDES, ALMANAC, ELLIOT, OSU, BATS, GOSPEL, DAVI, JUSTICE, ROM, ORS, TAD, SELL, HATS, REIN, OLE, DEBTS, SOLOED, CATS, SPA, SWAINS, LEWIS, SKIPS, CLA, EBAN, NAT, SNAP, BRIBED, SOCIALS, STUDIES, IMHERE, SLIVER, REARED, KEELS.