

DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

Fallsities: Fake trivia about autumn

BY PAT MYERS

In our fourth contest in the past year for bogus trivia about the seasons, we got around to fall in Week 1410. Many Losers told about that one other Spice Girl, Pumpkin Spice.

4th place:

The number of rings around the **cranberry sauce** indicates how many years it was in the pantry. (Jesse Frankovich, Lansing, Mich.)

3rd place:

Fall cicadas emerge around Nov. 1 each year. You probably haven't noticed them because their humming sounds exactly like leaf blowers. (Erik Devereux, Silver Spring, a First Offender)

2nd place and the Dress-Up Squirrel:

President Eisenhower replaced **Armistice Day with Veterans Day** after wife Mamie complained that it sounded like "our mistress day," an unfortunate reminder of Ike's alleged wartime dalliance. (Steve Fahey, Olney)

And the winner of the Clowning Achievement:

In September 1864 — immediately after Gen. Sherman telegraphed Lincoln, "Atlanta is ours, and fairly won" — **Robert E. Lee declared** that the Confederacy had won the Civil War. (Steve Smith, Potomac)

Least o' fall:

Honorable mentions

At the current exchange rate, **Canadian fall colours** are only 76 percent as beautiful as U.S. fall colors. (Bill Dornier, Indianapolis)

The **Munich Oktoberfest** makes more money on pay toilets than it does on beer. (Jonathan Jensen, Baltimore)

Botanists concur that **trees can communicate** with each other and that they all agreed to drop their leaves in your yard. (Chris Yahnke, Stevens Point, Wis., a First Offender)

Historians now believe that President Lincoln gave a much longer **speech at Gettysburg** in November 1863, but people little noted nor long remembered what he said. (Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)

September is named in honor of the septum. Before it was invented, everyone just had one big floppy nostril. (Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase)

At the first Thanksgiving, Native Americans and Pilgrims feasted on **North American turkey**. The bird proved so popular that it was hunted out of existence, and now we have to make do with cheap foreign hybrids. (Roy Ashley, Washington)

Black Friday's origins date to ancient Rome, where after the Feast of the Turcia, plebes would line up outside Maximus Buy for a clay tablet and fight each other to the death. (Joe McManus, Silver Spring)

Nov. 26, 2020, will henceforth be known as Covidsgiving Day. (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

If a weasel sees its shadow on a golf course in November, that means six more weeks of denial. (Amanda Yanovitch, Midlothian, Va.)

In an attempt to sow divisiveness among Americans, **Russian operatives infiltrated the U.S. food industry** in the early 2000s, introducing a large range of pumpkin-spiced products. (Terri Berg Smith, Rockville)

In France, **trick-or-treaters** get cigarettes. (Sam Mertens, Silver Spring)

It takes up to eight months to train a cable to knit a sweater. (Daniel Galef, Tallahassee)

It's predicted that by 2025, 30 percent of those who celebrate **Cyber Monday and Giving Tuesday** will also observe Ransomware Wednesday. (Eric Nelkin, Silver Spring)

On its return voyage to England, the **Mayflower** was stocked with Thanksgiving leftovers. (Greg Dobbins, Boynton Beach, Fla.)

Botanists at a leading university once developed an **oak tree that would not shed its leaves**, but production efforts were stymied through intense lobbying of Congress by the National Garden Rake Association. (David Shombert, Harrisonburg, Va.)

Pumpkin Chunkin, a competition of hurling pumpkins across fields with a catapult, is based on the



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

New contest for Week 1414: Divining comedy: 2021 predictions

Jan. 20: At the inauguration, Trump's attempt to rush the stage and be sworn in instead is thwarted when Kanye West gets there first.

June 13: In an effort to appeal to younger citizens, President Biden announces his new infrastructure plan via TikTok dance.

July 23: The Olympic cauldron-lighting is interrupted by a crazed Rudy Giuliani, who claims the fire is being fueled by thousands of stolen Trump ballots.

Among other developments, last December the Loser Community predicted the following: (a) that the "Redskins" would draft three punters in the first round, for their primary offensive play; (b) that, in lieu of the U.S. Olympic team, the United States would be represented in Tokyo by Rudy Giuliani; and (c) that Mike Pence would acknowledge that he was gay.

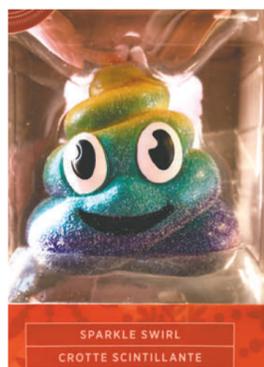
We just didn't have enough imagination, I guess, for 2020.

So as we rush to bring out our new wall calendar as if it will magically shut the door on the woes filling every square of this one, let's give it our annual try: **Name some humorous news event to happen in 2021**, as in the examples above by Longtime Loser Malcolm Fleschner, who used to write his own Years in Preview in a newspaper column back when more newspapers had columns. Include a date on the event only if it's relevant to the joke (feel free to explain why); otherwise the Empress will add an arbitrary one to fill out the calendar. Submit up to 25 entries at wapo.st/enter-invite-1414 (no capitals in the Web address). **Deadline is Monday, Dec. 21**; results appear Jan. 10 in print, Jan. 7 online.

Winner gets the Clowning Achievement, our new Style Invitational trophy. Second place wins — just in time to be too late for Christmas — a genuine Hallmark brand Poop Emoji ornament — but it's not your American standard variety: This one is Sparkle Swirl: it's iridescent rainbow colors, and caked with glitter (you mean yours doesn't glitter?). Donated by Poop Emoji Prize Donor Jeff Contompasis. We'll even throw in some Rainbow Poop Emoji lip balm ("Doo-lightful!").

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, "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 "Fallsities" was submitted by both Jesse Frankovich and Kevin Dopart; Jeff Contompasis wrote the honorable-mentions subhead. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotes 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/conv1414.



When Hallmark does poop, it is glitter poop. Our second prize.

ancient Saxon practice of shooting back the heads of their enemies, originally known as Noggin Floggin. (Mike Caslin, Round Hill)

Purists still insist on using the term **"maizeucopia."** (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn)

Starting next Thanksgiving, police in Montgomery County will set up **tryptophan checkpoints** to catch drivers who are overly drowsy from turkey consumption. (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village)

The first Thanksgiving meal was nearly ruined by a wild cat. Which is why we have the tradition of **Someone Beating the Lions** before Thanksgiving dinner. (former Detroit Ward Kay, Vienna, Va.)

The Jamestown settlers faced starvation in the fall of 1609 until **Pocahontas** told them she had a plan for that. (Steve Smith)

The **Marine Corps Marathon**, run every October, has a drill sergeant stationed at each of the last 10 miles to encourage lagging runners by barking "You better not die, maggot!" (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

When **daylight saving time** ends in November, all of the saved daylight is gathered up and stored in a small zip-lock bag at the National Weather Service. (Mark Calandra, Wenham, Mass.)

There were no turkeys in Massachusetts in 1621. Actually, the first Thanksgiving's main dish was **ganducken**, a male goose stuffed with a mallard. (Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.)

While schoolchildren are taught that **the Pilgrims left England** in search of religious freedom, they also left because, according to one account, "King Jamef waf awayf up in our bufyneff and unmatched in his defyre for mycromanagng." (Wendy Shang, Falls Church)

In rural Tuscany, the **land of Rudy Giuliani's ancestors**, harvest time used to be so grueling that farmers toiled until the hair dye ran down their faces. (Duncan Stevens)

While the venue was widely viewed as a comical mistake, **Rudy Giuliani's scheduling assistant** knew that 54.3 percent of Trump supporters shopped for shrubs and sex toys in early November. (Doug Montgomery, North Potomac)

More honorable mentions in the online Invite at wapo.st/invite1414.

Still running — deadline Monday night, Dec. 14: our contest for short poems featuring this year's new dictionary words. See wapo.st/invite1413.

L.A. TIMES SUNDAY PUZZLE

EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

"PAPER TRAIL" By GARRY MORSE

ACROSS

- 1 Springlike
7 Word in France's national motto
14 Scratched, say
20 Skin care brand
21 Michelle's successor
22 Alpine climbing tool
23 Newspaper for jeans wearers?
25 Shake and bake, e.g.
26 Rodeo ropes
27 Essen article
28 For example
29 "Leaves and Navels" artist
30 Philippine money
33 General on a menu
34 "A Beautiful Mind" mathematician
36 At the discretion of
37 Preceding periods
38 Apple platform
39 Newspaper for newlyweds?
43 Venetian Renaissance artist
45 Chinese currency
47 Six-time NBA MVP, familiarly
48 Hitech medical image
50 Investor's concern
52 Like a solid theory
56 U.S. maritime agcy.
57 Newspaper for attorneys?
61 Not std.
62 Div. that, in its first year of existence, produced a World Series champ
64 Best poker pair
65 Phnom Penh river
66 Saltimbocca spice
68 Company whose spoofed horror film ad has the line, "Why can't we just get in the running car?"
71 Swimmer Ledecky
73 Racer Ferrari
74 Paperwork, often
76 Get exactly right
78 Fake
80 Island with Dutch as an official language
81 Newspaper for chefs?

- 84 Diminish
87 12th-century English king
89 Place to park it
92 Fulfill
92 It starts in the 60s, by most reckonings
95 Mine car
97 Wee bit
98 Newspaper for traffic cops?
102 2010 health law. Abbr.
104 Coal-rich valley
105 Cut
106 Sad
107 Four-term prez
108 Auto repair bill component
109 Seine summer
110 Prefix with cycle
112 Deg. for drillers
114 Like an accomplice
116 Make changes to
118 Newspaper for Schwinn owners?

- 123 Insect-sized superhero
124 Puts away
125 Poetic Bible book
126 ___ skills
127 Large chamber groups
128 Americans in Paris, maybe

DOWN

- 1 Short cleaner
2 "Casino Royale" (2006) actress
3 High___ monitor
4 Phobia, e.g.
5 Diarist first name with a diaeresis
6 Glaudini of early "Criminal Minds" episodes
7 Consulate cousin
8 Artwork base coat
9 Bar order
10 Frying medium
11 Create
12 Clothing store display aid
13 Kernel holder
14 "Look!" to Luis
15 Sore
16 King of Spain
17 NY/NJ's ___ Mountains
18 Applies

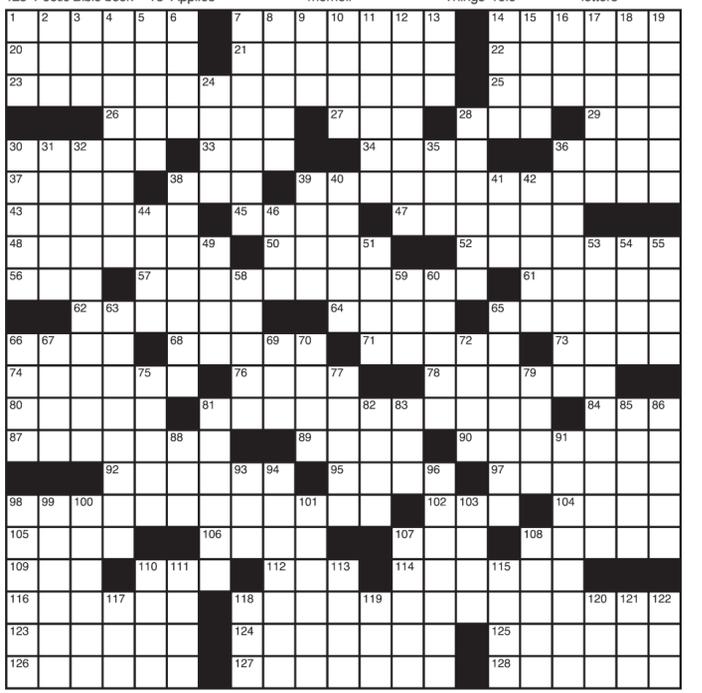
- 19 Absolute ruler
24 Due times four
28 Team in some pickup games
30 San Diego's ___ Park
31 Aquafina rival
32 Newspaper for hairstylists?
35 Doo-wop syllable
36 Short seller's concern

- 37 Steamed
38 Reagan's first secretary of state
39 Photo-sharing app, briefly
41 Once called
42 1992 Robin Williams role
44 Part of an opéra
46 Keats' "Sylvan historian"
49 Where Coca-Cola is KO
51 Complian
53 Newspaper for metalworkers?
54 Emmy winner
55 Wafflers brand
58 Singer Turner's memoir

- 59 "Give ___ minute ___"
60 Glycoide, for one
63 Longtime "Band of Renown"
65 "Ben-Hur" villain
66 Ousted Iranian
67 Bern's river
69 Caboose, for one
70 Artist's medium
72 Angers
75 Clapton woman who's "got me on my knees"

- 77 Deceive
79 Italian wine hub
81 2000 A.L. MVP
82 Gideon Fell creator John Dickson ___
83 Bk. fair organizer
85 Key of Schumann's "Spring Symphony"
86 Joyce ___
87 Winona Ryder's "Stranger Things" role

- 88 Mount ___: Charley
89 Weaver's home
91 "Don't go in there!"
93 Grissom on leader
94 Scholarly
96 "O, that way ___ lies": Lear
98 On ___: famous
99 Sloppy kiss
100 Had because of
101 Baggage porter
103 Foam footwear
107 Sole order
108 Tenth of 12 popes
110 Nonstick kitchen brand
111 Ex-Cub Sandberg
113 Part of DOS: Abbr.
115 "Nuh-uh"
117 Little dickens
118 Undergrad degs
119 Friend of Fidel
120 Dockworker's gp.
121 CPR expert
122 Blog feed format letters



12/13/20

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Answers to last week's puzzle below.

HOROSCOPE

BY MADALYN ASLAN

HAPPY BIRTHDAY | Dec. 13: Perceptive, attentive and deeply ironic, you are painstaking and exacting when it comes to your work. Go with the flow and you succeed even better this year. In 2021, you create a masterpiece. If single, when you allow for the foibles of your dates, you commit by the end of the year. If attached, after sparkles and surprises, love becomes more stable. Virgo says not everything has to be perfect.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
A phase of your life is ending, and another phase beginning. Someone from another cultural or spiritual background can become a romantic prospect or at least a new friend.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
Add a note of humor if you sense that you're coming across as overly opinionated. Be true to yourself, and be sensitive to the needs of companions. Observe others' facial expressions to maintain perspective.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
Today brings a chance to step back and prioritize. Your heart tells you to focus on home and family life, but another part of you wants something else. Use care regarding travel. There could be some frustration.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
An employment opportunity suggested by an old friend can be worth considering. It's a wonderful day to cast out clutter and do a thorough cleaning. Be prepared for some excitement and surprises.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
Let the magic take hold. Encourage a potential love interest to talk. Listen. Children will be a source of comfort and joy. Recreational activities that inspire thinking and creativity will bring you happiness.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
Examine ways to make housing as comfortable and hospitable as possible. Dreams and hunches about domestic matters should be heeded. Your vitality may be up and down. Be good to yourself.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
Today generates a feeling of freedom and well-being. Relationships will be a delight. A true pal comes to your rescue and

helps resolve a potentially sticky situation. Transportation arrangements will have to be revamped.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
It's a wonderful day for research and completing old business and correspondence. Someone who seems selfish might just fear scarcity. Suggest employing prosperity consciousness. You will earn their love and respect.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
Today marks a turning point. A lot of people contact you. Either an attraction ends abruptly or becomes a more significant part of your life. You have a touch of cabin fever and can't sit still for long.

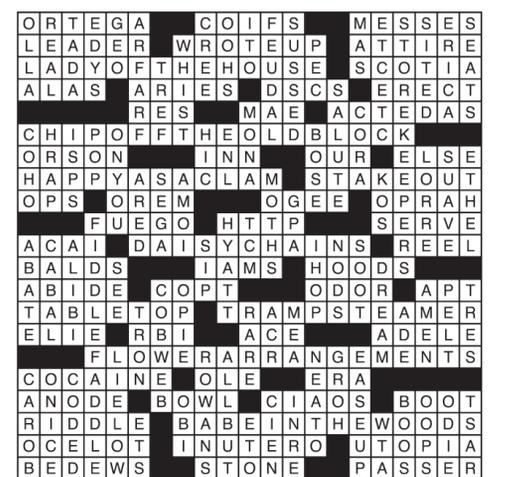
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
Your dreams will be especially vivid. Take the time to interpret them,

and valuable messages will emerge. Untamed places and wild animals will recognize the innermost you. Don't worry if you're unable to share some of these feelings at present.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
People from the past will call. You'll feel haunted by an old wish or goal that proved elusive. Be very realistic if you're tempted to give it another try. Practicality provides the best way forward.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
Your creative potential is very promising. Express it. Your energy, like fire, must be handled with care if it is to do good. If you have truly wanted a new career path, this might be it.

Answers to last week's puzzle.



12/6/20