

DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

Reporting for ditty: Song parodies

BY PAT MYERS

In Week 1440, as she does once or twice a year, the Empress sought songs about topics in the news — and was deluged with excellent parodies and a few originals, both as lyrics and on video.

This week, for the first time, the E is awarding a separate Clowning Achievement for Best Video along with the ones here for the best lyrics. See it and several other hilariously clever videos, along with lots more lyrics, in the online Invite at wapo.st/invite1444.

4th place:

Lobster diver briefly swallowed by whale off Cape Cod

To "Let It Snow"

Oh, the climate inside is frightful, (And your breath's so NOT delightful);

Just open your mouth real slow . . . Let me go, let me go, let me go!

Well, you started this day by scarfing, But the time has come for barfing; Pretend I'm Pinocchio! Let me go, let me go, let me go!

Is there something that's not quite right? Are you startin' to feel kinda ill? Could it be that you're not too bright?

Sheesh! Do I look like a krill?! I fear that there's no denying, In your mouth I might be dying; Please give me the old heave-ho; Let me go, let me go, let me go! (Beverly Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

3rd place: Jeffrey Toobin's Song To "I Could Have Danced All Night" I wear my pants all day, I wear my pants all day Right in my living room. I used to show my groin And I exposed my . . . loin To everyone on Zoom.

I'll never know what made it so exciting To be so raunchy and risqué. I'm back on CNN. I won't screw up again. I wear my pants, pants, pants all day! (Barbara Sarshik, McLean)

2nd place and the home-brewed mead containing a 2004 cicada: Hail to the (New Name) — what will it be? Count on contentious! Hey, this IS D.C.! Lions, Rams and Bears — good names, but taken. Lemurs? Lizards? Sloths? Fans would be shaken! What will they choose? We have no clues.

How about Big Gnus? They're! Front! Page! Maybe the owner, glowing with pride, Will just decide to name his team the Snyder.

(Barry Koch, Catlett, Va.)

And the winner of the Clowning Achievement: To "Royals" I'll never sit upon that fancy throne The crown will rest on brother's head, I can not see Why I can't venture on my own I'll avoid Mom's fate — damn paparazzi!

But everybody's like: Grow up, stand tall, pick a proper mate. An Actress? Good God! What an awful state! Man, They're afraid She'll pop out babies of a darker lot

Folks in the palace like Curtsies, pinkies up, shoulders with no chip, be Discreet, stoic, stiffen up that lip, see

They don't care If my stomach's in a Windsor knot

We don't want to be royals (royals) She's the queen of TV And baby, we'll spill, (we'll spill, we'll spill) A whole bunch of royal tea. (Hildy Zampella, Alexandria)

Très Misérables: Honorable mentions To "Oklahoma!":

Aaaaarizona, where we can't count votes too many times Where the way we see includes UV As we search for ballot-marking crimes! In Aaaaarizona, "kinematic artifacts" abound

Mitch McConnell and Joe Manchin Still may block our way, But when I remember the things I don't miss, I suddenly feel okay. (Mark Raffman)



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

New contest for Week 1444: It's a whole new all-game

The 00-meter dash: Just sit on your couch and watch the other events.

The beaststroke: Whoever can pet a polar bear and live wins a gold medal.

We're back to filling up stadiums (and the streets and highways near them), and the Olympics, which this year ought to be called the 2021 High Hurdles, are, at least at this writing, good(ish) to go. But True Sports Fans can never have enough, and so TSP (and 37-time Loser) Gregory Koch suggests this week's contest: Slightly change the name of a sport, sports event or similar pastime to create a new one, and briefly describe it. Gregory's examples above change the name by a single character, but more alterations are okay as long as the original sport is still obvious.

Submit up to 25 entries at wapo.st/enter-invite-1444 (no capitals in the Web address). Deadline is Monday, July 19; results appear Aug. 8 in print, Aug. 5 online.

Winner gets a gold medal . . . oops, we mean the Clowning Achievement, our Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives, as a salute to the Japanese medical establishment, which has finally vaccinated almost 20 percent of its population in time for the Olympics: the classic Japanese children's picture book "The Gas We Pass: The Story of Farts." Did you know that "a healthy person releases almost half a cup of gas in a single fart"? Now you do, and you didn't even have to win the book. Donated by 86-time Loser Pie Snelson.

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, "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 "Reporting for Ditty" is by Jesse Frankovich; Chris Doyle wrote the honorable-mentions subhead. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at [on.fb.me/invdev](https://www.facebook.com/on.fb.me/invdev); "like" the Style Invitational Ink of the Day on Facebook at [bit.ly/inkofday](https://www.facebook.com/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/conv1444.

The "You're Invited" podcast is back! Season 2 begins with a two-part episode live from last weekend's Loser Picnic. See bit.ly/invite-podcast.

If our paper crew can find bamboo

We'll know Chinese cheating has been found! We know we believe QAnon So don't bother to say it's a con! And when we say, "Fraud!" Our logic may be flawed . . .

But still we're saying, "Don't laugh at us Arizonans, Arizonans, by God!" (Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase)

Oh, Bailey, Stop Eating the Cicadas!

To "Be Our Guest": Don't ingest, don't ingest, Though cicadas crunch the best! You're a dog and not a frog, So please let's give this game a rest! We'll go home, find your bowl, (Wash the muck from your last roll) And I'll serve an awesome dinner, Don't believe me? It's a winner!

Spiny legs, see-through wings? You'll eat far more yummy things! Chicken gizzards soaked in gravy, I'd suggest! Just leave that poor cicada, Let him find and mate a Lady pest — don't ingest, don't ingest! (Sarah Walsh, Rockville)

Good Riddance To "My Favorite Things"

Paying off porn stars and placating Putin, Giving polluters a pass for pollutin' Firing off tweets with a taunt or a diss, These are a few of the things I don't miss.

Talking up bleach while discouraging masking, Calling Ukraine for corrupt-favor-asking, Giving the Proud Boys a wet sloppy kiss, These are some more of the things I don't miss.

Mitch McConnell and Joe Manchin Still may block our way, But when I remember the things I don't miss, I suddenly feel okay. (Mark Raffman)

Md. Gov. Signs Bill Repealing Civil War Era State Song

To "Maryland, My Maryland" (same as "O Christmas Tree")

I'm glad the song will go away, Maryland, my Maryland Your racist roots were on display, Maryland, my Maryland Let's get a new song right away So we'll remember every day That our brave troops weren't dressed in gray Maryland, my Maryland.

I hope the tune won't be reused Maryland, my Maryland No Christmas song should be abused Maryland, my Maryland The Preakness crowd, once it's been boozed, Gets both songs' verses all confused And I, for one, am not amused Maryland, my Christmas tree. (Terri Berg Smith, Rockville, Md.)

The McConnell Song To "I Caint Say No!" from "Oklahoma!"

I'm just a guy who won't say yes, Won't ever say it at all! Don't care the country's in a mess Long as we carry the ball. When Joe Manchin acts Republican, I know I shouldn't snicker, but that's me! Then I overhear the Democrats, I pull the football, then I laugh with glee!

I can't resist their earnestness, Thinking I'll see it their way, Giving me just one more day. But it's no good, I'll still say, "I won't say yes!" (Irene Plotzker, Wilmington, Del.)

See more songs plus winning videos at wapo.st/invite1444.

Still running — deadline Monday night, July 12: Our contest to suggest a new law with a funny acronym. See wapo.st/invite1443.

L.A. TIMES SUNDAY PUZZLE

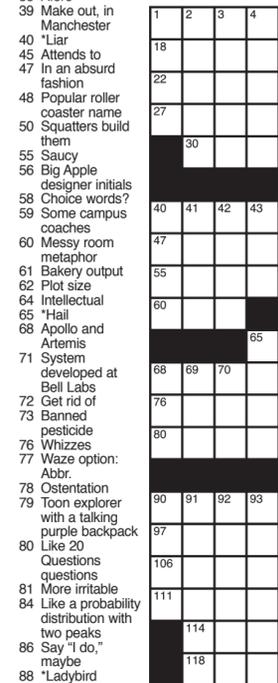
EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

"IT TAKES TWO" By MARGARET WOODRUFF

ACROSS

1 Dafny Duck feature
5 Throws, as the shot
9 Real grind
13 Second most populous city in the Dakotas
18 Chip in a chip
19 Brand with a wasabi-flavored variety in China
20 Necklace-fastening site
21 Most of the Easter's surface
22 "Extra"
25 Brought up
27 Paint fight sounds
28 Corned beef concoction
29 Latte maker
30 31-Across prefix
31 Cruise stopover
32 "Bad"
34 Since
36 Small island
38 Afore
39 Make out, in Manchester
40 "Liar"
45 Attends to
47 In an absurd fashion
48 Popular roller coaster name
50 Squatters build them
55 Saucy
56 Big Apple designer initials
58 Choice words?
59 Some campus coaches
60 Messy room metaphor
61 Bakery output
62 Plot size
64 Intellectual
65 "Hail"
68 Apollo and Artemis
71 System developed at Bell Labs
72 Get rid of
73 Banned pesticide
76 Whizzes
77 Waze option: Abbr.
78 Ostentation
79 Toon explorer with a talking purple backpack
80 Like 20 questions
81 More irritable
84 Like a probability distribution with two peaks
86 Say "I do," maybe
88 "Ladybird"

DOWN
1 "Dancer in the Dark" Palme
6 Or winner von Trier
2 Clumsy
3 Hardly new
4 Item common to bikes and pianos
5 D.C. bigwigs
6 Address without lat. or long.
7 Detachable strip
8 Serious
9 Ignore pointedly
10 In recent history
11 Offer a view
12 "___ Out": 2017 Jordan Peele film
13 Made inroads
14 Bling, as wit
15 Shows over
16 Actress Greer with the longest-ever Oscar acceptance speech
17 Kind of punch
23 Order to relax
24 Verbal protest
26 Freaking
29 Carried
31 Quarter barrels for a beer bash
33 Controlling



7/11/21

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Answers to last week's puzzle below.

HOROSCOPE

BY GEORGIA NICOLS

HAPPY BIRTHDAY | July 11: You have high personal standards, which is why you are a perfectionist and a strong achiever. You are easygoing and charming; nevertheless, when it comes to what you want to do, you like to call the shots. This year is a pivotal year for you, perhaps a time of major change in your life. It is a fun-loving and exhilarating time.

Moon Alert: There are no restrictions to shopping or important decisions today. The Moon is in Leo.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) Children might be an increased responsibility today. Dealings with romantic partners might disappoint. Social plans will change. Entertain at home. Enjoy family discussions. This is also an excellent week for real estate negotiations or plans related to your home.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) It's hard to have a cozy conversation with a family member today because things are a bit strained. Your positive frame of mind encourages a happy, busy week. Enjoy short trips. Many of you will entertain at home as well.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) Life looks worse than it really is today because this is one of those days where you feel as if your glass is half empty. Guard against accidents. You have big moneymaking ideas. You are also persuasive with others because your words will be like gold.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) You might be worried about finances today. Why is there always so much month left at the end of the money? Guard against financial loss. Business and commerce are favored. You want to shop for pretty things for yourself and for loved ones.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) Be patient with others, even if you feel things are less friendly. This feeling will be gone quickly. In one way, you want to maintain your privacy, but in another way, you're eager to socialize and take the lead.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) Cooperate with co-workers despite your feelings. Health issues are not as bad as you think. Expect to be active with friends as well as groups

and organizations. In particular, you will be involved with younger people.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) If friendships look gloomy today, this is just a fleeting dark cloud on your horizon. Things will improve. You will impress bosses, parents and VIPs this week. They see you as successful and affluent. This is also a popular week for you with friends and groups.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) Don't expect approval from bosses or parents today. This is a gloomy day, but it's just temporary. Travel plans look exciting. You want to study and learn more about the world. Meanwhile, you will impress important people.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) You might be in worry mode today. "Worry is like a rocking chair. It gives you something to do but gets you nowhere." Discussions about inheritances and shared property

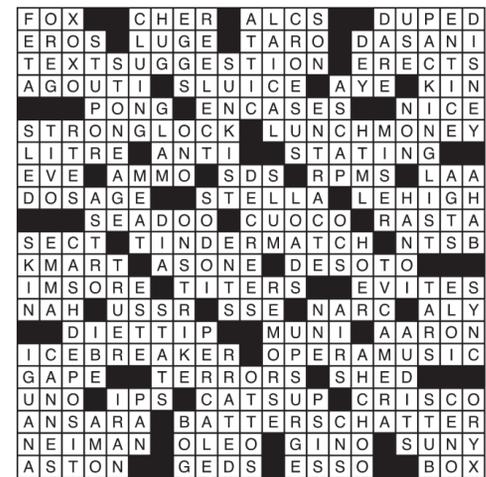
will favor you, your family and a real estate situation. Meanwhile, travel plans and romance with someone different will excite.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) Don't get hung up on financial worries, because this is a temporary setback. Get more sleep this week. Discussions with partners and close friends will be upbeat and enthusiastic. Gifts and favors from others will come your way.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) Be patient with partners. Things are not as bad as they look. Work-related travel is likely. You will easily impress co-workers. Partnerships are affectionate yet a tad aggressive.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) The best way to handle today is to work. Health news might surprise you. Accept invitations to party. Enjoy sports and fun activities with children. Relations with co-workers are positive.

Answers to last week's puzzle.



7/4/21