

## DIVERSIONS

### THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

# Grave ribbery: 2021 obit poems

BY PAT MYERS

In Week 1469 we asked you to commemorate those who died in 2021. Several Losers couldn't resist celebrating the famed mathematician Jacques Tits, but not in an inkworthy way.

#### 4th place:

**Spencer Silver (1941-2021), co-inventor of Post-it Notes**  
In times gone by, we'd have a thought—Some name or date or debt—But, lacking a convenient spot To jot it, we'd forget.  
Now, thanks to Silver, we can scrawl  
That date or debt or name—And, having stuck it on a wall, Forget it just the same.  
(Melissa Balmain, Rochester, N.Y.)

#### 3rd place:

**Prince Phillip (1921-2021)**  
The consort, loyal to the bone, Leans back on his celestial throne,  
And thinks, "Though death is far from dandy,  
Thank the Lord I'm done with Andy." (Stephen Gold, London)

#### 2nd place and the bleating rubber chicken:

**G. Gordon Liddy (1930-2021), Watergate "plumber"**  
Said the angel, "There's nothing been taken,  
But a noise just now caused me to waken!"  
Said Saint Peter, "Don't fear, Nothing happening here,  
It's just Liddy — another botched break-in."  
(Mark Raffman, Reston)

#### And the winner of the Clowning Achievement:

**Betty White (1922-2021), Ed Asner (1929-2021), Gavin MacLeod (1931-2021), Cloris Leachman (1926-2021)**  
One played Sue Ann, then Rose, with ease,  
The next, Lou Grant, then Lou's reprise,  
Murray turned Stubing — anchors aweigh!  
While Phyllis became Frau Blücher — "neigh!"  
We wish for these four friends of Mary  
A peaceful road to Tipperary,  
And along that road, with song and dance,  
We wish them seltzer down their pants. (Jeff Rackow, Bethesda)

#### LITE BIERS: HONORABLE MENTIONS

**Rush Limbaugh (1951-2021)**  
No friend to women or people of color,  
His listeners outraged and aggrieved,  
Ash Wednesday he left us to go meet his Maker;  
Boy howdy! Was She ever peeved!  
(Diane Lucitt, Ellicott City)

**Michael K. Williams (1966-2021), actor in "The Wire"**  
Soft whistling greets the dawning day.  
The duster swirls; he's on his way.  
Up in heaven, harps stop strummin'.  
Saint Pete's nervous: "Omar comin'!" (Diane Lucitt)

**Felix Silla (1937-2021), actor (To the "Addams Family" theme)**  
His costume was a killa,  
More hair than a gorilla,  
As played by Felix Silla,  
The Addams Cousin Itt.  
When visitors would meet 'im,  
Although they never seed 'im  
They'd scream as he would greet 'em,  
The Addams Cousin Itt.  
His costume was a rare piece, a TV made-to-scare piece;  
May he now rest in hairpiece:  
The Addams Cousin Itt.  
(Jon Gearhart, Des Moines)

**Bob Dole (1923-2021), senator, defeated presidential candidate, Viagra spokesman**  
After Dole lost his battle with Bill,  
Many thought he was over the hill.  
Then, a comeback surprising:  
His star began rising,  
All thanks to a little blue pill.  
(Jonathan Jensen, Baltimore)

**Ron Popeil (1935-2021), infomercial pitchman:**  
"Grim Reapers should try it! It slices! It dices!  
Mortalit-O-Matic! Buy four!"  
His scythe, it would seem, for its purpose suffices—  
"But wait!" Sorry, Ron, there's no more. (Duncan Stevens, Vienna)

**Maki Kaji (1951-2021), "father of sudoku"**  
For years, Kaji-san,  
We strove to fill your boxes.  
Now you fill your own.



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## Week 1473: Sign right here

REST STOP CLOSED  
CROSS LEGS  
NEXT 23 MILES (Sue Lin Chong)

ENTERING NYC  
INCREASE  
SPEAKING SPEED (Phil Frankenfeld)

This week we return to a contest we did 15 years ago, when we were tickled by this goshdarn newfangled website where you could type in a message for a highway sign and ding! you get a photo! Loser Every Year Since Year 1 (that would be 29 of them) Stephen Dudzik alerted the Empress that the very same



ATOM.SMASHER.ORG GENERATOR

site, [atom.smasher.org](http://atom.smasher.org), is still around, looking much as it did in 2006. **This week: Write a funny message for the overhead highway sign** (like the one above by Art Grinath from Week 672) **and/or the barbecue joint sign pictured here.** Maximum length for either sign: 4 lines, 19 characters per line including spaces and punctuation, but shorter might be better. You can make your own pictures with the sign generators, but don't send them to us; just send us the text, IN CAPITAL LETTERS.

**Submit up to 25 entries** at [wapo.st/enter-invite-1473](http://wapo.st/enter-invite-1473) (no capitals in the Web address). **Deadline is Monday, Feb. 7;** results appear Feb. 27 in print, Feb. 24 online.

**Winner gets** the Clowning Achievement, our Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives, so usefully in midwinter, **Derriere Repair Anti-Chafe Balm**, a soothing cream that, we suppose, is a step up from other skin pamperers we've given out, Anti Monkey Butt powder and Boudreaux's Butt Paste. Donated by baby-smooth Dave Prevar.

**Other runners-up** win their choice of our "For Best Results, Pour Into Top End" Loser Mug or our "Whole Pools" Grossery Bag. Honorable mentions get one of our lusted-after Loser magnets, "A Small Jester of Appreciation" or "Close, but Ceci N'est Pas un Cigare." First Offenders receive only a smelly tree-shaped air "freshener" (FirStink for their first ink). See general contest rules and guidelines at [wapo.st/inviteFAQ](http://wapo.st/inviteFAQ). The headline "Grave Ribbery" was sent in by both Kevin Dopart and Jeff Contompasis; Gary Crockett wrote the honorable-mentions subhead. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at [on.fb.me/invdev](http://on.fb.me/invdev); "like" the Style Invitational Ink of the Day on Facebook at [bit.ly/inkofday](http://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 the 2006 sign messages in this week's Convo at [wapo.st/conv1473](http://wapo.st/conv1473).

(Bill Dorner, Indianapolis)

**Desmond Tutu (1932-2021)**  
He opposed segregation, as everyone knows,  
A barrier-breaker at heart;  
Yet his heavenly home's nowhere near his old foes;  
Let's just say that they're quite far apart. (Duncan Stevens)

**Hal Holbrook (1925-2021)**  
The Samuel Clemens one-man show:  
His signature conceit.  
Now off to heaven watch him go;  
That's where the Twains shall meet. (Duncan Stevens)

**Eric Carle (1929-2021), children's book writer and artist**  
The very hungry caterpillar  
Binged on ice cream, cake and pie  
And yet emerged a butterfly —  
A second life after feeling yucky!  
(His creator wasn't quite so lucky.)  
(Frank Mann, Washington)

**Lou Ottens (1926-2021), inventor**  
Lou Ottens invented the compact cassette,  
A most innovative utensil  
That gave you your music in minimal space  
And new use for your Number 2 pencil.  
(Elliott Shevin, Efrat, West Bank)

**Samuel E. Wright (1946-2021)**  
The voice of Sebastian, that crab so renowned,  
Went from "Under the Sea" to under the ground. (Jesse Frankovich, Lansing, Mich.)

**Alan B. Scott (1932-2021), pioneer of botax**  
Admirers did their best to mourn him, though it  
Was hard for them to find a way to show it. (Melissa Balmain)

**Michael Collins (1930-2021)**  
He flew to the moon on Apollo 11.  
"Remain in the ship," ordered

Mission Command.  
In April, his soul reached the surface of heaven,  
Where God Himself granted "permission to land."  
(Bob Kruger, Rockville)

**Carla Wallenda (1936-2021), high-wire walker**  
The last living child of Karl Wallenda  
has closed out her act without further addenda.  
The Flying Wallendas have no more agenda  
for her, though she once left the firmness of terra  
and glided as high as the highest Sierra.  
The passing of Carla willenda great era.  
(Alex Steelsmith, Kailua, Hawaii)

**Donald Rumsfeld (1932-2021)**  
You should know your unknowns, Rumsfeld said;  
It's the unknown unknowns you should dread.  
But the biggest unknown  
Could be in the known zone  
If we knew if he knows he is dead.  
(Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase)

**Prince Philip**  
A lifetime of walking two footsteps behind,  
Having promised, for better or worse,  
That you'd follow wherever her footsteps would wind —  
You finally got somewhere first.  
(Beryl Benderly, Washington)

Haiku for **Henry Aaron**  
With unique verse form:  
Seven, five, and five  
(Ken Kaufman, Derwood)

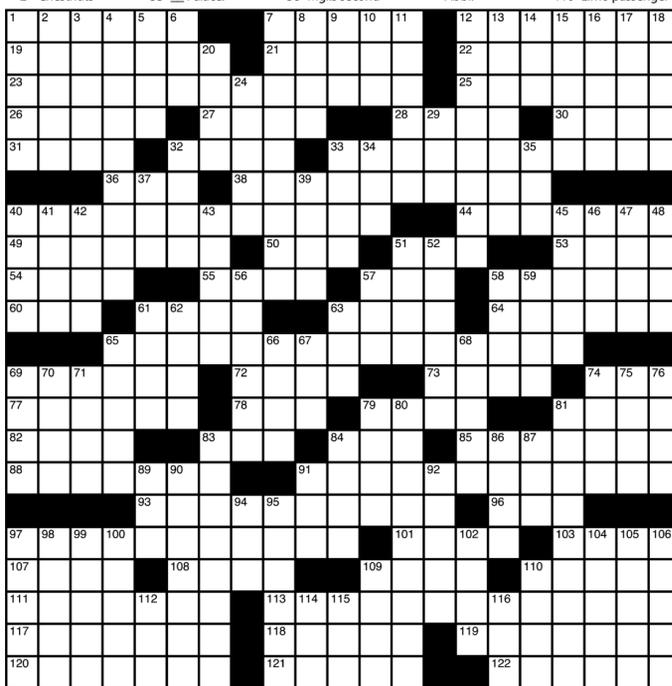
More honorable mentions in the online Invite at [wapo.st/invite1473](http://wapo.st/invite1473).

**Still running — deadline Monday night, Jan. 31:** our fictoid contest for fake trivia about money and the financial system. See [wapo.st/invite1472](http://wapo.st/invite1472).

### L.A. TIMES SUNDAY PUZZLE

EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

- |  |   |  |  |   |   |
|--|---|--|--|---|---|
| "MAKING A DENT"<br>By MATT SKOCZEN                   | 96 Whole lot<br>97 Major curves on a mountain road? | roasting... co-writer<br>3 Exam no-nos<br>4 Tony winner who portrayed TV's Barney Miller | castle on the Portuguese Riviera<br>34 Word with white or cream<br>35 "America's ___ Talent" | in-command<br>59 Wintry strains<br>61 California's San ___ Obispo | 86 Some NCOs<br>87 Arafat's gp, once<br>89 Group for ex-GIs<br>90 Brings forth<br>91 Recycling receptacle |
| ACROSS   | 101 Record speeds, for short                        | 5 Vogue alternative  | 37 Legal gp.   | 62 Part of MIT: Abbr.   | 92 How deals are usually sealed   |
| 7 Honi's comics dad                                  | 103 "___ Smile": Hall & Oates hit                   | 6 ___ gratias  | 39 Ready   | 63 Fix  | 93 Hit the jackpot  |
| 12 Jungian concerns                                  | 107 Park way  | 7 Use to conceal, as a bed   | 40 One way to crack  | 65 "The most striking figure in Starkfield" in a Wharton classic  | 94 Kissing at the bar, briefly  |
| 19 Ricky Martin's surname, by birth                  | 108 Scott of "Hawaii Five-0"                        | 8 Added conditions   | 41 "You found the right person"  | 66 Twelve, half the time  | 95 Hit the jackpot  |
| 21 Mindless  | 110 Statehouse official: Abbr.                      | 9 Chicken, in a Cantonese dish   | 42 Patti Tavatanakit was its Rookie of the Year for 2021: Abbr.                              | 67 African antelope   | 97 Protestant denom.  |
| 22 Stuffed meat dish                                 | 111 At Notre Dame, say                              | 10 Wilson of Heart   | 43 Jazz pianist ___ Jamal  | 68 Polished off   | 98 Group of experts   |
| 23 Fraudulent budget increase for cleaning supplies? | 113 Ocean trip for relationship strengthening?      | 11 Saskatchewan capital  | 45 Quarterback Rodgers   | 70 Weena's race, in a Wells classic                               | 99 Geek Squad member, for short   |
| 25 Together  | 117 Saw-toothed                                     | 12 What a chair does   | 46 Soften  | 71 IRS agent  | 100 Burns a little  |
| 26 Walk in the park, say                             | 118 Strand at a chalet, say                         | 24 Moving figure   | 47 One-named body-image advocate   | 74 Bit of talk show self-promotion                                | 102 Parts of gigs   |
| 27 Ending with neur-                                 | 119 More frivolous                                  | 15 Simple fastener   | 48 Sesame ___  | 75 One may fall over a crowd                                      | 104 Word from a coach   |
| 28 Role for Ingrid                                   | 120 Like a best friend                              | 16 "___ mañana"  | 51 Bulb measure  | 76 Something specific, informally                                 | 105 Where to find words for words   |
| 30 False ___   | 121 One of the                                      | 17 Car that didn't go far  | 52 Nightly news  | 79 Heels  | 106 Label giant   |
| 31 Lucie's dad                                       | Allman Brothers                                     | 18 Percolates  | 24 Moving figure   | 80 Showing support for  | 109 "Gotcha, man"   |
| 32 Start of a classic dramatic question              | 122 Lots  | 20 Precise location  | 29 Pres. or CEO  | 81 Take a limo, say   | 110 Loaf  |
| 33 Those waiting for Facebook friend acceptance?     | DOWN  | 21 Boast in a 1987 Michael Jackson hit   | 32 Fed. anti-discrimination org.   | 83 Special occasion service                                       | 112 Jepsen  |
| 36 Iain's negative                                   | 1 Boast in a 1987 Michael Jackson hit               | 2 "Chestnuts   | 33 ___ Palace:   | 84 Sofia's home: Abbr.  | 114 Text-scanning tech.   |
| 38 Concerning  | 2 "Chestnuts  | 33 ___ Palace:   | 57 One side of an issue  | 84 Sofia's home: Abbr.  | 115 Called before   |
| 40 Pre-flight pandemonium?                           | 33 ___ Palace:                                      | 57 One side of an issue  | 58 Mgr.'s second-  | 84 Sofia's home: Abbr.  | 116 Limo passenger  |



1/30/22

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Answers to last week's puzzle below.

### HOROSCOPE

BY GEORGIA NICOLS

**Happy Birthday | Jan. 30:** You are multitalented. You like big projects because you welcome a challenge. You are intelligent and informed, and you value your sense of freedom. This year is the beginning of a new nine-year cycle, which means you can open any door. Be courageous! Be inventive! Trust your instincts.

**Moon Alert:** Avoid shopping or making important decisions after 11:30 p.m. The Moon is in Capricorn.

**ARIES** (March 21-April 19)  
Almost certainly a friend will surprise you or you might meet a real character — someone unusual or avant-garde. You also might be caught off guard by a group or a club to which you belong. Expect surprising and different situations when you encounter others. Protect your safety.

**TAURUS** (April 20-May 20)  
Keep your cool when dealing with parents, bosses and the police, because they might throw you a curveball. Something unexpected will occur, which will perhaps limit your freedom or create restrictions for you. This won't be easy. Stay chill.

**GEMINI** (May 21-June 20)  
Travel plans will suddenly change. Or possibly you suddenly might have to travel when you did not expect to do so. Likewise, news in the media might surprise. Or you might be surprised by news from afar. Many people are caught off guard by unexpected events.

**CANCER** (June 21-July 22)  
Check banking details or anything to do with shared property, taxes, debt and inheritances, because these are the areas where you might suddenly be caught off guard. Something unexpected also might impact your wealth.

**LEO** (July 23-Aug. 22)  
You might encounter an unexpected separation from someone. Likewise, you might have a sudden argument with someone. Perhaps you will be surprised by encountering someone unusual, especially someone you did not expect to meet.

**VIRGO** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)  
Your work routine will be interrupted. You might feel

rebellious about new rules or when dealing with a supervisor or boss. Pet owners should be vigilant to catch unexpected surprises related to their pet, especially the chance of them being lost or in an accident.

**LIBRA** (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)  
Parents must keep their eyes open, because this is an accident-prone day for their kids. Meanwhile, social plans will suddenly change. Sports events could be the source of sudden accidents. Even romance will be a rocky road. Stay chill.

**SCORPIO** (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)  
Small appliances might break down or minor breakages could occur. Someone unexpected might knock at your door. Arguments, especially with parents, might occur. Patience is your best friend.

**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)  
Your everyday routine will change. You might be the instigator, or it

might just happen! Give yourself extra time so you have wiggle room to deal with the unexpected.

**CAPRICORN** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)  
Keep an eye on your possessions and personal wealth. For example, you might find money or you might lose money. Protect what you own against loss, theft or damage.

**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)  
Sudden changes in your own behavior or the behavior of others might be upsetting. Whatever happens, you will not follow your usual routine. Stay cool so you can avoid sudden arguments. Don't do anything rash.

**PISCES** (Feb. 19-March 20)  
This is an accident-prone day and full of surprises. You might feel restless and impulsive. Very likely, you're not sure what to do next. Stay cool and don't do anything that you will regret. Keep your eyes open.

#### Answers to last week's puzzle.



1/23/22