

DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

Wags to riches: Financial fictoids

BY PAT MYERS

In Week 1472, The Style Invitational continued its decades-long campaign to misinform innocent newspaper readers, this time with bogus trivia about money and finance. Numerous Losers explained that the ancient practice of **tasting money to test for purity led to the "bit coin."**

4th place:

A little-known section of the U.S. tax code **exempts citizens from paying taxes** if they have bone spurs in their feet. (*Bruce Carlson, Alexandria*)

3rd place:

In an unreleased sequel to "It's a Wonderful Life," George Bailey goes on to build himself a mansion using the money he collected in overdraft fees. (*Mark Raffman, Reston*)

2nd place and a weird Tokyo souvenir glitter globe:

India's GNP grew 1.2 percent last month purely from **increased call center volume** from Virginians afraid of critical race theory. (*John Hutchins, Silver Spring*)

And the winner of the Clowning Achievement:

Lincoln's picture on the \$5 bill gave him such widespread name recognition that he cruised to victory in the 1860 presidential election. (*Eric Nelkin, Silver Spring*)

Bottom dollar: Honorable mentions

After famously declaring that "greed is good" in the movie "Wall Street," **Gordon Gekko less famously adds under his breath:** "But even better is saving 15 percent on your car insurance." (*Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase*)

JFK had two fives and seven Lincoln pennies in his pocket on Nov. 22, 1963. And just as eerily, Abraham Lincoln entered Ford's Theatre on April 14, 1865, carrying a Kennedy half-dollar. (*Rob Huffman, Fredericksburg*)

A Susan B. Anthony dollar is 82 percent the size of the previous Eisenhower dollar. (*Kara Laughlin, Leesburg; Miriam Nadel, Vienna*)

Andrew Carnegie originally built Carnegie Hall as a vault for his riches, but he had it converted into a concert hall when he needed something larger. (*Lee Graham, Rockville*)

Anton Rothschild, considered the maverick of the family for choosing engineering over banking, developed the first prototype space laser. (*Mark Raffman*)

At MIT, **meteorology majors** who flunk Forecasting 101 are encouraged to switch to economics. (*Perry Beider, Silver Spring*)

Botanists have discovered that **money is not only the root of all evil**, but also its hypocotyl, petiole and axillary bud. (*Duncan Stevens, Vienna*)

Folks, you know that eye on the back of the dollar bill? It contains a **microchip that tracks your movements** and reports back to the deep state! The only way to protect yourself is to send all of your dollars to me for proper destruction! — DJT, Florida (*John Hutchins; Jonathan Jensen, Baltimore*)

In the early 1800s, **dollar bills were printed on ultra-durable buckskin**; hence "bucks." But later the government substituted the cheaper cowhide; that's why we say "cash cow" and "moolah." (*Jon Gearhart, Des Moines*)

In 2018, **Sen. Bernie Sanders** proposed legislation to break up big banks but promised they could still be friends. (*Robert Deigh, Burke, a First Offender*)

In an oft-neglected historical footnote, the **Financial Panic of 1837** was finally brought under control by the Financial Xanax of 1838. (*Marty Gold, Arlington*)

Lin-Manuel Miranda's musical about **America's favorite treasury secretary** wouldn't have reached Broadway without some tweaks. First, investors thought "Mnuchin" would just look silly up on the marquee. . . . (*Hildy Zampella, Alexandria*)



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Week 1476: Matchless humor — show us some Googlenopes

Googleyup: "Please pull my fingernails out"

Googleyup: "Please kick me in the shins"

Googleyup: "Please scream in my ear"

Googlenope: "Please bring me airline food" (*Duncan Stevens, 2018*)

Googlenope: "Sexy Coke bottle glasses." (But "Sexy Coke bottles" is a Googleyup, with two matches.)

Back in 2007 the Empress asked readers to find "Googlenopes," short phrases that yielded no matches on a Google search. (The term "Googlenope," coined by deposed Style Invitational Czar Gene Weingarten, currently produces 9,950 hits.) The winner, by Malcolm Fleschner: "That controversial 'Gilligan's Island' episode." We had good results again in 2010; winner: Mark Richardson finding Googlenopes in both "Nobody understands me like my husband" and "Nobody understands me like my wife."

In 2018 we added a nifty option, one that we'll offer again: **This week: Find us a Googlenope — a phrase in quotation marks that generates the message "It looks like there aren't many great matches for your search"** (or you get just a few entries that don't actually contain the phrase) — or a **Googleyup, a phrase that surprisingly does have hits** (mention how many). And you could contrast a Googlenope with one or more Googleyups, as in some of the entries above ("Sexy Coke bottle glasses" was by Elizabeth Molyé, who suggested a slightly different contest). If you get exactly one hit, call that a **Googlewack**.

Submit up to 25 entries at wapo.st/enter-invite-1476 (no capitals in the Web address). Deadline is Monday, Feb. 28; results appear March 20 in print, March 17 online.

Winner gets the Clowning Achievement, our Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives two translucent green **sports-type water bottles** — each labeled, in large type, "bong water." Donated (unsullied) by Loser Kathleen Delano. **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 new 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. The headline "Wags to Riches" is by Kevin Dopart; both Jesse Frankovich and G. Smith submitted the honorable-mentions subhead. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at on.fb.me/invdev; "like" the Style Invitational link of the Day on Facebook at bit.ly/inkofiday; 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/conv1476.



SHUTTERSTOCK

The stone money of Yap can exceed 12 feet in diameter.

Known for its unique currency, **Yap Island in Micronesia** also boasts the world's largest parking meters. (*Jeff Shirley, Richmond*)

The original "**money-grubbers**" earned their living selling insect larvae impaled on sticks for snacks. (*Lawrence McGuire, Waldorf*)

In most states, the **highest-paid government employee** is a college football coach, while the lowest-paid government employee is a college football player. Oh wait, these are supposed to be untrue. (*Ward Kay, Vienna*)

Irony alert! In the aftermath of World War I, it took a bread box full of German marks to buy a wheelbarrow. (*G. Smith, Fairfax*)

In January, New Yorker George C. Parker **received a record \$93 million for an NFT** of the Brooklyn Bridge. (*Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.*)

On \$1 bills issued from 2017 to 2020, **if you hold one up to a bright light**, the "ST" in "TRUST" changes to "MP." (*Rob Cohen, Potomac*)

President Biden plans to add Tom Brady to the Federal Reserve Board, given his experience in reducing inflation. (*Gary Crockett; Sam Mertens, Silver Spring; Jesse Frankovich, Lansing, Mich.*)

The Braille signage on drive-up ATMs says, "Sighted people are so gullible." (*Craig Dykstra, Centreville*)

The Dutch "tulip bubble" collapse of 1637 was the worst economic crash until the Spanish "spatula bubble" burst in 1811. (*Jon Ketzner, Cumberland, Md.*)

Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen is paid daily in freshly minted \$100 bills. (*Drew Bennett, Rogers, Ark.*)

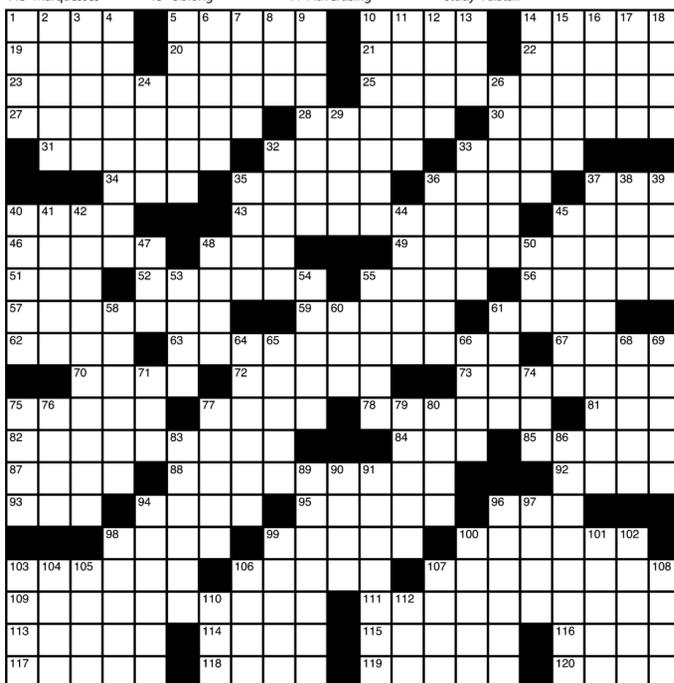
When the U.S. Mint announced that it would issue a **Sacagawea dollar**, Sen. Elizabeth Warren immediately offered to pose for it. (*Tom Witte, Montgomery Village*)

Still running — deadline also Feb. 28: Come up with a song or cheer for the newly named Washington Commanders (or another D.C. institution). See wapo.st/invite1475.

L.A. TIMES SUNDAY PUZZLE

EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

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| <p>"ON THE JOB" By FRED PISCOP</p> <p>ACROSS</p> <p>1 With 21-Across, marching band instrument</p> <p>5 Feline weapons</p> <p>10 Vineyard measure</p> <p>14 Valuable find</p> <p>19 James who co-wrote and sang "I'd Rather Go Blind"</p> <p>20 Monsieur ___: classic Jacques Tati role</p> <p>21 See 1-Across</p> <p>22 Had one's fingers crossed</p> <p>23 M.D. on "Wheel of Fortune?"</p> <p>25 Fast-working "Downton Abbey" woman?</p> <p>27 Indian menu word</p> <p>28 "... a grin without a cat!" thinker</p> <p>30 How aspirin is taken</p> <p>31 Restful state</p> <p>32 Promising moment, as of wit</p> <p>33 Till stack</p> <p>34 Madness</p> <p>35 Coward's lack, figuratively</p> <p>36 Aparicio in Cooperstown</p> <p>37 Dress (up)</p> <p>40 Float like smoke rings</p> <p>43 Painter in prison?</p> <p>45 Crime novelist Paretsky</p> <p>46 Crop up</p> <p>48 "Nixon in China" role</p> <p>49 Mutual influence</p> <p>51 Speak like a rug?</p> <p>52 Ideal for farming</p> <p>55 Quilting events</p> <p>56 Hurricane of 2011</p> <p>57 The Who co-founder</p> <p>59 Prepare for a race</p> <p>61 Hot rod?</p> <p>62 Shoppe preceder</p> <p>63 CIA operative in the Arctic?</p> <p>67 Dry run</p> <p>70 Happy cap tosser</p> <p>72 Delete</p> <p>73 "And Still I Rise" poet</p> <p>75 Unacceptable, as punishment</p> <p>77 Caramel-topped dessert</p> <p>78 Exodus obstacle</p> <p>81 Chem class part</p> | <p>82 Partied hearty</p> <p>84 Site for used cars</p> <p>85 Short-vowel mark</p> <p>87 "The West Wing" Emmy winner, 2006</p> <p>88 One rating singles bar come-ons?</p> <p>92 Smelter metals</p> <p>93 ___ hours</p> <p>94 "Don't play" music notation</p> <p>95 Gazetteer stats</p> <p>96 Drink from a snifter</p> <p>98 Wall map marker</p> <p>99 Princeton mascot</p> <p>100 Cell feature</p> <p>103 Trip up</p> <p>106 Derby drink</p> <p>107 Hill hundred</p> <p>109 Gofer at a ballpark?</p> <p>111 Displayer of truck-stop equipment?</p> <p>113 Flirt with, say</p> <p>114 Sign of spoilage</p> <p>115 Marquesses'</p> <p>inferiors</p> <p>116 100-year-old chip brand</p> <p>117 Ran standing still</p> <p>118 Digs for pigs</p> <p>119 Surprise ending</p> <p>120 Put one over on</p> <p>DOWN</p> <p>1 Awards adjective</p> <p>2 For face value</p> <p>3 "Fear Street" series author</p> <p>4 Kids' play places, across the pond</p> <p>5 Settle on</p> <p>6 Ill-gotten loot</p> <p>7 Some choir members</p> <p>8 Try to win over</p> <p>9 Secure for the trip</p> <p>10 Fan</p> <p>11 Pain in the neck</p> <p>12 Mystical character</p> <p>13 Liberty's LiMu, for one</p> <p>14 Beatles' ___ a Place"</p> <p>15 Oblong</p> <p>tomatoes</p> <p>16 Birthstone after sapphire</p> <p>17 Bridal shop buy</p> <p>18 Hot tub feature</p> <p>24 One of a couple's pair</p> <p>26 Time on a marquee</p> <p>29 Clark's teenage crush</p> <p>32 Fishing line holder</p> <p>33 Gives the heave-ho</p> <p>35 Nature's bandage</p> <p>36 White sale purchases</p> <p>37 Bank worker with lots of stories?</p> <p>38 City across the Mediterranean from Cartagena</p> <p>39 Marvin of Motown</p> <p>40 Guy hiding in a red-and-white striped shirt</p> <p>41 Sans-serif font</p> <p>42 Farmland tour giver?</p> <p>44 Advertising</p> <p>gimmick</p> <p>45 Elf</p> <p>47 Melodic sense</p> <p>48 Eponymous surgical family name</p> <p>50 Tear</p> <p>53 Tear</p> <p>54 Hawke of "Sinister"</p> <p>55 Less carpeted</p> <p>58 One of Barbie's best friends</p> <p>60 Hi-___ graphics</p> <p>61 Seasonal song word</p> <p>64 Back off</p> <p>65 Give this for that</p> <p>66 Historian's subject</p> <p>68 Dry Italian wine</p> <p>69 Straws, e.g.</p> <p>71 Cockpit gauge fig.</p> <p>74 Be a chatterbox</p> <p>75 Metaphorical sticking place</p> <p>76 Auditor's goal</p> <p>77 Pat down</p> <p>79 English composer of the symphonic study "Falstaff"</p> <p>80 "That ___ it!"</p> <p>83 Awards a seat to</p> <p>86 Skiers' aids</p> <p>89 Corrections staffers</p> <p>90 Push for</p> <p>91 Like Jennifer Aniston's eyes</p> <p>94 Typed in ALL CAPS, maybe</p> <p>96 Least wacky</p> <p>97 Mosque leader</p> <p>98 Not given to speeches</p> <p>99 Yank at</p> <p>100 Amoebae, e.g.</p> <p>101 "The Kiss" sculptor</p> <p>102 Recess rebuttal</p> <p>103 Piedmont wine region</p> <p>104 Hustled resource</p> <p>106 Green hue</p> <p>107 Bollywood attire</p> <p>108 Whole lot</p> <p>110 Uncorking sound</p> <p>112 Rook's call</p> |
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Answers to last week's puzzle below.

HOROSCOPE

BY GEORGIA NICOLS

Happy Birthday | Feb. 20: You have poise and grace. You are empathetic and intuitive, and you reserve judging others until you know their side, because justice is important to you. Relationships are also important to you. This year is the beginning of a new nine-year cycle. Be courageous, be curious and be ready to open any door.

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

ARIES (March 21-April 19) Zip thy lip, because it's easy to lose your temper when dealing with parents, bosses or the police. You will react. You might even be in the right. But too often, things get worse when you fight with authority. Wait until things cool down.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) Avoid discussing politics, religion and racial issues, because people are looking for a fight. Everyone is touchy and defensive. That means this is a poor day for an intelligent discussion about anything important or emotionally loaded.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) Don't get embroiled in disputes about shared property, insurance issues or inheritances. Wait until Tuesday to discuss these matters, because you will more easily arrive at an agreement, which is what you want.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) Patience is the antidote to anger. It's easy to be angry with partners and close friends or a family member. But this only makes everyone miserable. Your solution? Practice patience. Let this pass.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) It's easy to feel discouraged. You might see everything that comes your way as a threat, which makes you react defensively. Perhaps you are being overly sensitive. Chill out. This is an illusion. Everyone loves you. Guard against accidents.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) Disputes about money and possessions might arise. You might feel someone is doing something on purpose to annoy you. This is probably not the case. Guard against rash actions and being too hasty.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) Avoid needless disputes and feelings of irritability. Guard against knee-jerk reactions when dealing with others, because you will be tempted to bark at someone. The truth is, nothing is worth getting upset over. Practice patience.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) This is an accident-prone day because you might be rash or hasty. Therefore, be mindful and aware. Don't try to win an argument. Don't try to persuade others to agree with you. Relax.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) Relations with friends and groups are tricky. You might feel the need to confront someone. Or you might think someone is trying to challenge you. You feel a strong need to express your grievances, but what will this gain? It might help; it might not.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) You might feel attacked by authority figures, which makes you feel distrustful or defensive. This could make you emotionally aggressive. This is possible because the Moon is in your sign being agitated by Mars. Stay cool.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) You might have a difference of opinion with a friend or a member of a group. Because you feel emotionally invested, you will take things personally. You might offend someone on Facebook. This is temporary.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) Quarrels with a group or a friend about sharing something, using equipment or how to spend a specific amount of money might arise. Perhaps you don't like the approach others are taking. You might feel cheated out of your fair share. This problem will fade quickly.

Answers to last week's puzzle.

