DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

Sung in cheek: Parodies on the news

BY PAT MYERS

In Week 1490, the Empress once again went to Loserdom's wheelhouse for songs about the news. Here are just a few; for many more — including several terrific videos – see the online Invite at *wapo.st/invite1494*.

4th place:

To "I Feel Pretty": I bought Twitter, don't be bitter, I will git 'er much fitter, you'll see I'm no quitter — there's no leader more steadfast than me! But the price is a small crisis To think twice is the wisest, I feel My advice is: Twitter must give me a better deal!

Who's that billionaire in the mirror there? Who'll set social media free? It's not Zuckerberg, not that Bezos dude, not the Google guys, Not Bill Gates, it's me! I have Teslas, I have rockets, And with Twitter I have a new toy. All in all, I'm a pretty wonderful bov! (Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase, Md.) 3rd place: Alito's Favorite Plans

To "My Favorite Things" Stare decisis? We say no comprendo! We're dissing women? That's just innuendo. Our rulings govern until we are dead, Just so the Senate's at least onethird red.

We chose a president, spiting the nation. We did the bidding of each corporation. To gerrymanders we give the green light When they preserve seats for pols on the right. Confirmations! Public speeches! We prevaricate. We'll execute all of the plans we have hatched So you're fighting back too late! (David Young, Falmouth, Mass.)

2nd place and the 1968 Humphrey-Muskie campaign flask:

The Jan. 6 Committee



BOB STAAKE/ILLUSTRATION FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

ΕZ

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New contest for Week 1494: Put it in bee-verse

"Charadriiform" - oh, what a mouthful! Such abstruse ornithology talk. I'd better forgo the five syllables And stick with "a gull!" or "an auk!"

Did you see this year's finals of the National Spelling Bee, with the new lightning-round tiebreaker? You rock, 14-yearold Harini Logan, who fired off 22 ridiculously obscure words correctly (plus a few incorrectly) in the space of 90 seconds! You'll be happy to know, though, that YOU, dear Loser, have not 90 seconds but 12 days for this annual contest: Write a humorous poem of eight lines or fewer that includes at least one of the words used in Round 4 or later of this year's bee, as in the example above from Round 13. OR: Write a joke in Q&A form that uses at least one of the words. At least for the poems, you must use the word with its real meaning and pronunciation; you can't pretend it's something else (stay tuned for a future contest like this). You may use a slightly different form of the word, such as a plural, adding "-ing," etc. You may add a title, and even use the word in the title and not the poem itself. To see the words: Go to spellingbee.com/ round-results, then click on any of the rounds from 4 through the final spell-off. If you don't want to look up all those words, check out my list of 20 of the words in the online Invite at wapo.st/invite1494. Submit up to 25 entries at wapo.st/enterinvite-1494 (no capitals in the web address). Deadline is Tuesday, July 5 (we'll give you July 4 off); results appear July 24 in print, July 21 online.

Winner gets the Clowning Achievement, our Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives the cutest little



bedbug you've ever seen, $2^{1\!/_{\!\!2}}$ inches long, plush and squeezable with big winsome eyes and a velvety exoskeleton. Yet another in our series of noisome parasites that we offer as second prizes. We do recommend that you not decorate your Airbnb rental with it. Donated by Dave Prevar

Other runners-up win

their choice of our "For

Best Results, Pour Into

L.A. TIMES SUNDAY PUZZLE

EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

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Answers to last week's puzzle below.

To "I Feel Pretty" Here's the nitty and the gritty: Our fair city was ransacked by thugs! This committee does not think they came to give out hugs. Lost-election insurrection! Their complexion? We bet you've a sense. It's not pretty when a mob is out to kill Mike Pence.

How did that sedition get organized? Who arranged that violent mob? Who unleashed the gang that was out to hang, turn the Dems and Reps into shish kebab?

Though you're sneering and you're jeering, At this hearing we're clearing the air, And we'll learn who's the culprit for steering them there! (Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)

And the winner of the **Clowning Achievement:**

If I Only Had a Brain -A Heart - The Nerve: **Musing With the GOP Three**

First: Marjorie Taylor Greene: I could while away the hours on legislative powers, or helping folks in pain, And I might not be rootin' for the folks who are shootin', if I only had a brain. I would get to know some new folk, not just a lot of Q folk — I'd know they were insane; And I wouldn't get crazier with a Jewish space . . . lazier if I only had a brain.

Oh I . . . could tell you why . . . Joe Biden won the vote. I could even introduce a bill of note And never give a stupid quote!

But my voters love the crazy, so why not just be lazy, not cause my head a strain; I could lose their affection, and might not win election, if I only had a brain.

Then: Mitch McConnell:

When a man's an empty vessel, he never needs to wrestle with conscience for his part. I might start actin' human, though my downfall would be loomin', if I only had a heart. I must cater to the donors, the billionaires and owners, like anvone who's smart. I'd become just like Cupid, which would be kind of stupid, if I only

A bedbug vou can cuddle in bed! This week's second prize.

Top End" Loser Mug or our "Whole Fools" 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*. The headline "Sung in Cheek" is by Jon Gearhart; both Chris Doyle and Kevin Dopart submitted 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/conv1494*.

had a heart.

Picture me on your TV, my voice all sweet and slow. Contradicting what I said a year ago

Hypocrisy? That's me! When majorities they muster, I use the filibuster. It's really quite an art. I'd turn into a lefty; my remorse would be hefty, if I only had a heart.

And finally, Lindsey Graham:

Yes, it's sad, believe me, missy, when you're born to be a sissy, without the vim and verve, But I could be a hero, not a bootlicking zero, if I only had the nerve I'm afraid there's no denying I've given up on trying to protect and to preserve Our great land's Constitution – but I'd find a solution, if I only had the nerve.

rousing speech! Full fidelity to law is what I'd preach -And bravely vote then to impeach. I would show that con man Donny a bravery so bonny, no longer would I serve! I'm well read; I am brainy; I could be a Liz Cheney -If I only had the nerve! (Michael Stein, Arlington, Va.)

Bad news airs: Honorable mentions

Baby formula shortage after lab was shut down over cronobacter bacteria: To "Be Our Guest" Pump your chest! Pump your

chest

Or a nauseating slime?

When they found the

cronobacter?

Was our cleanliness a factor

With no stock on the shelves,

You'll produce it all yourselves,

'Cause our formula is "Mothers,

Till our problem is addressed, In our lab up here at Abbott The inspectors weren't impressed. Was there dirt? Was there grime?

do your best!" We've gone to no production, so get out that suction, Do not rest! Get expressed! Pump your chest! (Mark Raffman, Reston) "Indiana Jones 5" to premiere in June 2023, with 80-year-old **Harrison Ford:** To 'When I'm Sixty-Four' When his fedora covers no hair, a

few years from now Indiana Jones will hunt the Oh, I'd be in my stride, I'd give a Fountain of Youth. Crepe-skinned, half-deaf, long in the tooth If he is streamed or on the big screen, Will they beg for more? Will Indy awe them next time they thaw him When he's 84? (Kenneth McLeod, Bowie, a First

Offender) More honorable mentions in

the online Invite at *wapo.st/* invite1494.

Still running — deadline Monday night, June 27: Our contest for "feghoots" - ministories that end in groaner puns. See wapo.st/invite1493.

HOROSCOPE

BY GEORGIA NICOLS

Happy Birthday | June 26: You are a creative, intelligent, interesting conversationalist. You enjoy the company of others and like to be informed. You are hard-working and romantic. This year is slower paced. Your focus is mostly on relationships and partnerships. Look for relationships that benefit you. Take time for yourself.

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

ARIES (March 21-April 19) Enjoy talking to neighbors, relatives, siblings and daily contacts, because this is an upbeat, friendly day. It's a perfect day for a short trip, and a great day to network. Writers, actors and salespeople also will flourish. (It's a wonderful day to write romantic fiction.)

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

Business and commerce are favored today. Look for ways to boost your income or get a better paying job. Work-related travel is also likely. However, you also might spend money on lovely exciting things.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

This is a feel-good day because the Moon is in your sign lined up with fair Venus and dancing with lucky Jupiter. (It doesn't get much better than this.) In particular, it's a lovely day for romance. Enjoy!

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

This is truly a marvelous day. (You have a warm feeling in your tummy.) Ironically, you will enjoy time alone, especially swinging in a hammock, or you will enjoy the company of others. It's your choice. Work done alone or behind the scenes will boost your reputation and good name.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

Enjoy warm friendships and schmoozing with others today, because people will be glad to see you. This is a great date day. It's also a wonderful day to enjoy the company of creative, artistic types. Make plans with someone to explore future travel or exciting ideas.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) It's a great day for a romantic gettogether. You will impress someone. Someone might want your advice about how to make something look better. (Something also might boost shared wealth today.)

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) This is a glorious day to travel or do anything out of the ordinary. If you can't travel, talk to people from other cultures. In fact, you might fall in love with someone or develop a crush on someone "different."

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) This is a good money day. It's an excellent time to discuss how to divide something, perhaps an inheritance or something to do with jointly held property. Whatever happens, you'll come out smelling like a rose.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) Enjoy schmoozing with others today, because this is a romantic, friendly day. You will also like to meet members of the general public. Enjoy social outings, sports

events and fun times.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) This is a positive day at work. Coworkers will be supportive. Workrelated travel will please you. Even if you have to work on behalf of someone else or perform a service, you will find it rewarding and satisfying.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) This is a fun-loving day. Enjoy playful

activities with children, social outings, the entertainment world. the arts and fun diversions. Have a long lunch. Go for a picnic. Enjoy the company of your kids. There are so many options to please you today. Do something.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) Home and family will be a source of happiness. This is a lovely day to entertain at home. Invite the gang over for good food and drink. Likewise, today is favorable for real estate negotiations.

Answers to last week's puzzle.

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