

DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Week 1499: Picture This, a cartoon caption contest

Recidivist Losers, you know the drill. Brand-new Invitees, I bet you can figure it out. In our umpteenth (give or take a tenth) Bob Staake cartoon caption contest: Write a caption, either descriptive or in dialogue, for any of the cartoons above, up to a total of 25 entries.

So you won't harsh the Empress's post-vacation mellow, please format your entries like this: Begin each entry with "Picture 1," "Picture 2," etc. (no, not with the quotation marks, silly), then follow it on the same line with your caption. This will let the E click on "Sort" to put all the Picture 1s (Pictures 1?) together, and your entry won't end up in two pieces on two different pages.

Submit up to 25 entries at wapo.st/enter-invite-1499 (no capitals in the Web address). Deadline is Monday, Aug. 8; results appear Aug. 28 in print, Aug. 25 online.

Winner gets the Clowning Achievement, our Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives two small bags of Lactation Cookie Bites, which contain — no, not breast milk (or even udder milk) — "ingredients traditionally used to support breast milk," which seem to be oatmeal, flaxseed and brewer's yeast. Donated by Jeff Contompasis, who has never had lactation difficulty.

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, "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 "Our Yuks Runneth Over" is by Eric Murphy; I solicited the headline in the Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook. Sign up for the Devotees 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, will return next week.

Our yuks runneth over: Bonus ink

So the Empress could take a few days' vacation — she and the Royal Consort went up to Niagara Falls to join a dozen or so Invite-types at this year's Loserfest — there was no Week 1495 contest four weeks ago. Instead, here's some more ink from five recent contests.

From Week 1489: Rearrange the words in a movie title

A Desire Named Streetcar: This tense political thriller follows the D.C. Council as planners seek approval to extend the H Street line once it stops crashing into things. (Hannah Seidel, Alexandria)

A Kill to a View: A family road trip is spoiled by their teenage son's repeated photobombing. (Eric Nelkin, Silver Spring)

French the Connection: The tragic tale of the brief apprenticeship of a young electrician. (Marty Gold, Arlington)

Kind Encounters of the Close Third: Edged out by a tenth of a second, the bronze medal relay team is invited by friendly rivals to share the second podium. (Susan Gearity, Menifee, Calif.)

Look Up Don't: A Merriam-Webster editor tells her boyfriend what she thinks of his planned bachelor weekend in Vegas. (Mark Raffman, Reston)

Penguins of the March: A raucous group of partiers dress up as nuns and crash New York's St. Patrick's Day Parade. (Jon Gearhart, Des Moines)

From Week 1490: Song parodies about the news

Two songs "sung" by Vladimir Putin, both set to "If I Only Had a Brain" from "The Wizard of Oz" From Lviv to Mariupol, I wouldn't have a scruple, The people I'd "retrain," And there'd be no discussion, 'Less, of course, they're speaking Russian, If I only had Ukraine.

This projection of my power Would make the Baltics cower, While NATO goes insane, And in Finland and Sweden, They'd see who'd be next for bleedin' If I only had Ukraine.

Oh I can't tell you why, We're not running up the score, It should have a pretty little war, But we've been stopped — and stopped some more.

With my mercenaries Chechen, I'd silence all the kvetchin' With none left to complain, My next moves I'd be plottin' While my friends go back to yachtin' If I only had Ukraine. (Mark Raffman)

II. I'll erase each Euro border To make a new world order, Where I alone will reign. Then the troops I'm stackin' inland Will begin attackin' Finland Once I subjugate Ukraine.

First I need to show Zelensky That there's no common-sense-ky

To savin' his domain, I'll be leavin' him a mess o' New cadavers in Odessa All resistance is in vain!

Oh, I have nukes galore, So many more in store, I could wage a war like never waged before — But here's a fear I can't ignore:

Russian poets might be pennin' More odes to me than Lenin While the obit scribes explain: "Putin should've been suspicious Drinking black tea that delicious, But he didn't have a brain!" (Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.)

From Week 1491: Add a letter to a word beginning A-E

Abysmale: Your doofus brother-in-law. (Roger Dalrymple, Gettysburg, Pa.) Chameleon: Someone who can enchant Tucker Carlson and, five minutes later, Rachel Maddow. (Karen Lambert, Chevy Chase)

Carvity: The mysteriously located repository for lost change, lipsticks and receipts; it comes as standard equipment in every vehicle. (Karen Lambert)

Ceremoney: What the wedding planner looks forward to. (Jerry Birchmore, Springfield)

Cutebacks: To conserve our nation's saccharin supply, romcoms henceforth will have only "meet normal" scenes. (Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase)

Calendare: "I bet you can't remember what day our anniversary is." (Diane Lucitt, Ellicott City)

From Week 1492: Conservative-leaning humor

What's the difference between a conservative and a liberal? A: A conservative believes in the school of life; a liberal believes in spending one's life in school. (Karen Lambert)

What do you call a liberal who has just received a large inheritance? A conservative. (Keith Ord, Potomac)

What happens when an Ivy League college brings together all its moderate and conservative employees? They say hi, finish their janitorial work and head home for the day. (Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)

From Week 1493: Feghoots — mini-stories ending in groaner puns

When the Israelites were led out of Egypt and into the desert, they became quite hungry. So God provided manna in the wilderness, and the wanderers ate their fill. In fact, one Israelite ate too much and became ill. The leader asked him what was wrong, and the man groaned, "Everything's coming up, Moses." (Beverly Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

At dinner parties, the scientist Alexander Fleming loved to tell his guests about how he discovered penicillin in 1928. His wife, of course, had heard the tale a million times. So whenever he launched into it yet again, she'd roll her eyes and say, "Here we go again... it's always the same mold story." (Jesse Frankovich, Lansing, Mich.)

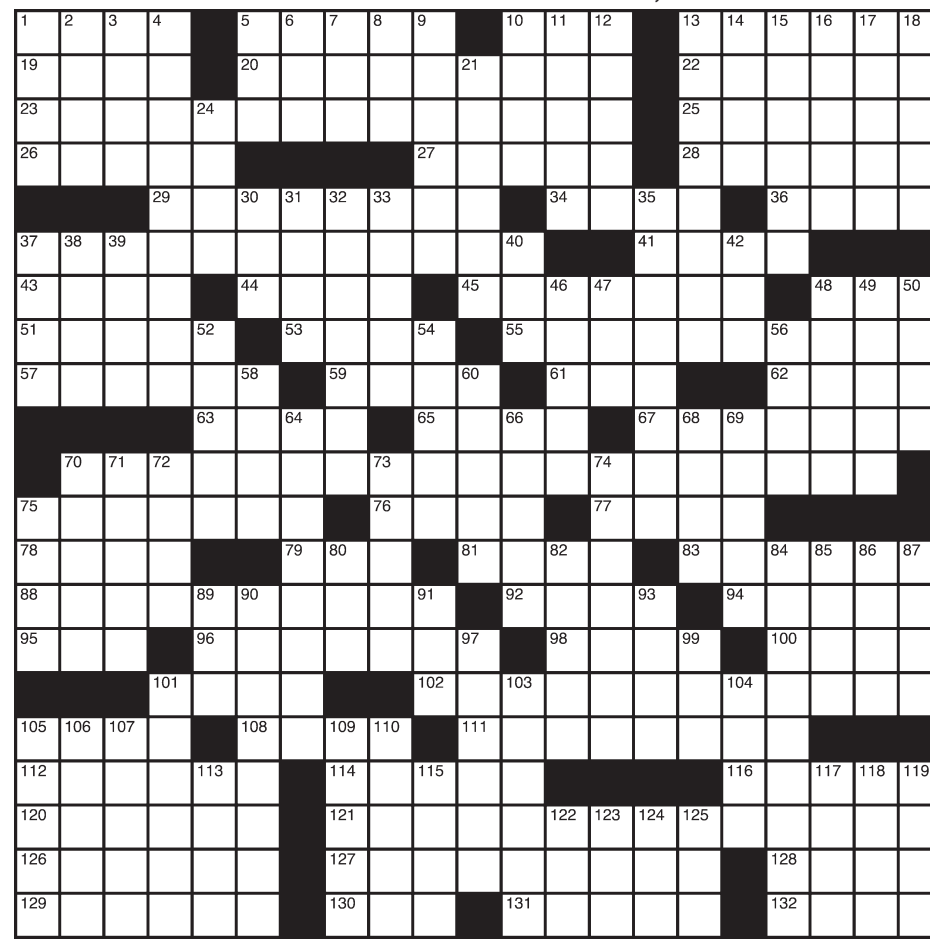
The thieves were getting brazen at our little Dodge truck repair shop, stealing wheels, catalytic converters and sound systems. And we just didn't have the money for a security system or a bigger fence. So we rotated guard duty: All through the night o'er the Ram parts we watched. (Al Lubran, Rockville, a First Offender)

Still running — deadline Monday night, Aug. 1: Our contest to write a funny poem that misuses a word, like using "debunk" to mean take down a bunk bed. See wapo.st/invite1498.

L.A. TIMES SUNDAY PUZZLE

EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

- "REBOOTS" BY MICHAEL SCHLOSSBERG
ACROSS
1 Wild hog
5 Latish lunch hr.
10 Place for "me time"
13 Inflamm with love
19 Atlanta Hawks arena until 1997
20 Cause of in-flight turbulence
22 "... Bovary"
23 Show about monks who form a rock group?
25 Show about Alfred E. Neuman and company?
26 Start
27 Comedian Mandel
28 Consecrate
29 Charming person?
34 "Who here hath these two days buried": "Romeo and Juliet"
36 "Queer Eye" grooming expert Jonathan Van
37 Show about some St. Louis sluggers and their fixer-upper?
41 "Fiddlesticks!"
43 Lhasa
44 Tea party attendee
45 Highway scowflaw
48 Old dietary std.
51 Physicist Nikola
53 Delta deposit
55 Show about a mom-and-pop neckwear business?
57 Sign up
59 Ceremonial pile
61 Cloog front
62 Letters of urgency
63 Gal
65 NBA Commissioner Silver
67 Muted colors
70 Show about mug shot photography?
75 Fitness coach
76 City near Tahoe
77 Foil kin
78 Cal's twin, in a Steinbeck novel
79 Ortiz of "Ugly Betty"
81 Storage tower
83 Pats gently
88 Show about a village and its mountain lion problem?
92 Actress Merrill
94 Old-school
95 Hooting bird
96 Tiny garden planting
98 Attic pests
100 Exploit
101 Uneven do time"
102 Show about a red sock, a blue sock, and the love they found in the dryer?
105 One-word warning
108 Black shade
111 Losses enthusiasm
112 "Ooh! There!"
114 Zenith's opposite
116 Go off-script
120 Show about a school pep squad?
121 Show about Quaker Oats, Mikey, and the partnership that changed cereal forever?
126 Sniggler's trap
127 Network announcement
128 Facility
129 Declines
130 Yang counterpart
131 Give some space
132 Deliver by parachute
DOWN
1 Former wrestling star
2 Muscat's sultanate
3 Writers Patchett and Brashares
4 Goes it alone
5 Dolt
6 Tip for a writer
7 Make a typo, say
8 HMO alternative
9 May honoree
10 Distort, as data
11 Danger
12 Utterly lost
13 Name that means "God is with us"
14 Flatbread served with tandoori chicken
15 Bells and whistles
16 First lady after Bess
17 Signs
18 Uses for a fee
21 Guitar Hero combinations
24 Native Nebraska
31 Heads of cabbage, for short?
32 Celestial event
33 Come from behind
35 The Shins' genre
37 Not fancy
38 Double-click, say
39 Cold War letters
40 Beach bottle letters
42 Attempt
46 Wonderland cake message
47 Punk offshoot
48 Ascended
49 Passed out
50 Nile vipers
52 Wrench
54 Sports page news
56 Name on four
British art galleries
Use a surgical beam
Idyllic spots
Battlefield board game
Elude
Copied
Makeup mishap
Shape hidden in the FedEx logo
Fauvist painter
Key holder
Southern inflection
November meteor shower
Tuesday
Silent assent
Spanish citrus fruit
Discombobulated
Fitbit unit
Asian lake memorialized by UNESCO
Pledge drive freebie
Volcanic debris
Is affected by
Volleyball court
divider
Electrically flexible
Economy
Earth-friendly prefix
Brews
Continental travel pass
Snowman in "Frozen"
Chops up
"Straight Outta Compton" actor
Jackson Jr.
Bruins legend
Cam
On edge
"Chicago Hope" Emmy winner
Wrinkle remover
Faculty head
Perjurer
In that case ...
[Cedar Rapids college]
Blast letters
Bro or sis
Tribute in verse



7/31/22

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Answers to last week's puzzle below.

HOROSCOPE

BY GEORGIA NICOLS

Happy Birthday | July 31: You are a charismatic straight shooter. You're a natural leader who is direct and hard-working, which is why people easily follow you; plus, you do your homework before you jump into anything. This is the year that will bring you rewards and recognition. Expect a promotion, accolades and the acknowledgment you deserve.

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

ARIES (March 21-April 19) Glory hallelujah! This is a fun-filled day! Enjoy sports events, playful activities with kids, the theater, picnics, barbecues and entertaining diversions. It's a strong day to work and get things done as well.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) Invite friends and family over for good food and drink, because this is a marvelous day to entertain at home. This is also an excellent day to pursue real estate opportunities and ways to improve where you live.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) You're in a positive frame of mind, which is why you'll enjoy talking to siblings, relatives and neighbors. It's a great day for a short trip and a new venture. It's also a solid day to sign contracts. You will also enjoy doing something to improve your home.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) Business and commerce are favored. Look for ways to boost your income, either now or in the future. You have the gift of the gab today, which is why it's a strong day for those who sell, market, teach, act or write.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) Lucky you. The Sun is in your sign dancing with Jupiter, which gives you good feelings of peace and harmony with everyone around you. You feel buoyant and enthusiastic. You're quick to see the big picture, and many of you will enjoy good fortune.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) You have the advantage, which makes you courageous and confident. Whatever you do, you

will quickly see what is needed, and you will know how to unify your objectives with others.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) This is a popular day. You will enjoy schmoozing with others because you are one of the most social signs in the zodiac. Group activities such as classes, conventions and conferences will be a positive and learning experience.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) You make a fabulous impression on everyone. You will instantly know what to do in a given situation. People respect you because you look successful and competent (even if you don't feel this way).

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) Change your daily routine because you want adventure. Enjoy meeting people from different backgrounds or cultures. Travel if possible. Do

something so you can learn new ideas, concepts and philosophies.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) Although this is a marvelous day to discuss shared property, inheritances, and the wealth and responsibilities you share with others, you want to get outta Dodge. You need a change of scenery.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) Relations with close friends, partners and spouses are super positive today. You also will work well with a partner, especially if what you do involves travel or dealing with foreign interests.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) Work-related travel is probable. If you're working, this is an upbeat day. People will help you. Partnerships will be invigorated by shared ideas.

Answers to last week's puzzle.



7/24/22