

DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

Yuxtapositions: Compare/contrast ink

BY PAT MYERS

Week 1496 was the latest installment of our contest in which the Empress posts a list of wacky items and the Losers say what's similar or different about any two (or more). Numerous entries noted that 8 percent inflation and a banned book both result in high interest.

4th place:

The recurring exam dream is like 8 percent inflation: Both might culminate in a failed midterm. (Steve Smith, Potomac)

3rd place:

8 percent inflation and six Supreme Court justices: Things wouldn't be so bad if we could just get it down to three or four. (Hannah Seidel, Alexandria)

2nd place and the pack of Face Coasters:

A hyperonic missile and six Supreme Court justices: Look what I have in my pocket! — D.J.T., Mar-a-Lago, Fla. (Mark Raffman, Reston)

And the winner of the Clowning Achievement:

A hyperonic missile vs. a banned book: You can open-carry the missile in Texas. (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

SHAME DIFFERENCE: Honorable mentions

A flushable wipe and six Supreme Court justices: They're both up in my business. (Deb Stewart, Damascus)

Six Supreme Court justices vs. a worn-out toothbrush: Only the justices will control your cavities. (Kevin Dopart)

A flushable wipe and a romance novel: They both bring a flush to the cheeks! (Katherine Schaeppman, Locust Grove, Va., a First Offender)

A banned book vs. a romance novel: At a D.C. bookstore, you ask for one of these in a whisper while looking over your shoulder, and the other is part of a big "read a banned book" display. (Karen Lambert, Chevy Chase)

Cat hair and a romance novel: Lots of nasty stuff on the furniture. (Jesse Frankovich, Lansing, Mich.)

8 percent inflation and Old Bay: They've both been added lately to every item in the grocery store. (Ben Aronin, Washington)

A magnetometer can detect the presence of a gun in the lobby. Six Supreme Court justices are a present to the gun lobby. (Lee Graham, Reston)

A magnetometer and six Supreme Court justices: Both are out to monitor what's in your pants. (Ira Allen, Bethesda)

A romance novel vs. the LIV golf tour: In the novel, he gives his heart; in the other, he sells his soul. (Frank Mann, Washington)

A period-tracking app: Think "Mrs. Flo." A banned book: Think "Mr. Fla." (Kevin Dopart)

A terrible SNL sketch: "Did they really have to go there?" Being back at the office: "Did I really have to come here?" (Eric Nelkin, Silver Spring)

Six Supreme Court justices vs. 8 percent inflation: With the first, it's bye-bye Roe; with the second, bye-bye Joe. (Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.)

How are six Supreme Court justices like flushable wipes . . . Hey, has anybody seen my copy of the Constitution? (John Amberg, Alexandria)

Six Supreme Court justices vs. 8 percent inflation: The first did away with precedent; the second may do away with a president. (Jonathan Jensen, Baltimore)

The recurring exam dream and six Supreme Court justices: Both have taken many of us back over 50 years. (Chris Doyle)

A hyperonic missile and the LIV golf tour: One is a costly project for ICBMs and the other is a costly project for icy MBS. (Gregory Huyck, Frederick)

In a romance novel, nobody suffers from 8 percent inflation. (Aaron Olszewski, Silver Spring)

A romance novel vs. cat hair: One involves mattresses and the other involves cat tresses. (Leif Picoult, Rockville)

Being back at the office vs. Elon Musk: In one, you're a bitter sitter; the other's a Twitter quitter. (John Glenn, Tyler, Tex.)

A banned book and a period-tracking app: The app contains material that the State of Mississippi would find valuable. (Mark Raffman)

A banned book: Likely to be forbidden; Six Supreme Court Justices: Unlikely to be for Biden. (Beverly Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Style Invitational Week 1500: These go to 15

PIZA (3 + 1 + 10 + 1): What you get when the Domino's guy tipped over his bag on the way to your house. ZOOB: A co-worker who doesn't get videoconference etiquette. "And then he took over the screen just to show he'd solved today's Wordle in 3! What a zoob." CAFFOON: Someone who's constantly spilling the coffee or leaving the pot on too long. UNCAWTH: What it is when you don't invite your colleagues to your cocaine orgies.

Astonishingly, The Washington Post has seen fit to publish 1,500 weeks of The Style Invitational — which means the Empress is 98 weeks more astonished than when she ran this same sort of contest for Week 1402. This week: Make up a word or phrase whose Scrabble letter values add up to exactly 15 (no blanks!) and define it, as in the examples above; "Piza" is by Our Own Bob Staake, and the rest are from Invite Obsessive Duncan Stevens, who rightly figured that the E had totally forgotten Week 1402. Your single word may not be eligible for English-language Scrabble; to check, just type in the word at scrabble.merriam.com to make sure it's not valid. As with all our neologism contests, you're welcome to use your word in a funny sentence to make your entry funnier, and you are not welcome to use your word in one that doesn't. And remember, we're not playing Scrabble, so feel free to, say, use three B's even though there are only two in a Scrabble set, and it doesn't matter if your long word would end up on two double-point squares on the board. Just count the points, okay?

Scrabble letter values: A, E, I, O, U, L, N, S, T, R, 1 point; D, G, 2 points; B, C, M, P, 3 points; F, H, V, W, Y, 4 points; K, 5 points; J, X, 8 points; Q, Z, 10 points. Submit up to 25 entries at wapo.st/enter-invite-1500 (no capitals in the Web address). Deadline is Monday night, Aug. 15; results appear Sept. 4 in print, Sept. 1 online.



Perfect for hanging a leash — or a tailcoat. This week's 2nd prize.

Winner gets the Clowning Achievement, our Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a pair of sturdy bright blue coat hooks in a handsome dog butt motif; we believe they're from the wags at Ikea. Donated by Loser Daphne Steinberg.

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 "Yuxtapositions" is by Jesse Frankovich; Jeff Contompasis wrote the honorable-mentions subhead. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at on.fb.me/invudev; "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/conv1500.

Cat hair and borscht are tied for the two worst aspects of finding cat hair in your borscht. (Daniel Galef, Jacksonville, Fla.)

Cat hair is like a worn-out toothbrush in that it's been in my mouth way too much. (Sam Mertens, Silver Spring)

8 percent inflation and being back at the office: Yay, we're all getting 8 percent raises! . . . Aren't we? Hello! (Pam Shermeyer, Lathrup Village, Mich.)

8 percent inflation can make your money worthless; a period-tracking app can keep your honey birthless. (Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase)

A hyperonic missile vs. a terrible SNL sketch: Both end with a bomb, but the sketch takes forever to get there. (John Hutchins, Silver Spring)

Being back at the office vs. a period-tracking app: Some folks eagerly count the days until the office holiday party; some folks nervously count the days after it. (Barbara Turner, Takoma Park)

Being back at the office is like a worn-out toothbrush: It's not so bad when you're used to it, but coming back to it after two years? Gross. (Michie March, Ellicott City, a First Offender)

Being back at the office vs. the recurring exam dream: In both cases you're baffled and have no idea what you're doing there, but in the dream you're more prepared. (Karen Lambert)

A period-tracking app and a flushable wipe: If you don't use the former, you may soon be

using more of the latter. (Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)

A worn-out toothbrush: The bristles overused. Cat hair: The Bissell's overused. (Chris Doyle)

A flushable wipe vs. borscht: One can clog your pipes, the other can clog your pipes. (Pam Shermeyer)

Cat hair and Old Bay: I'd rather season my food with the former. — G. Weingarten, Washington (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn)

8 percent inflation: What you've earned is worth less. A Style Invitational second prize: What you've earned is worthless. (Jesse Frankovich)

A worn-out toothbrush and a Style Invitational second prize: There's a market on eBay for the toothbrush. (Mike Gips, Bethesda; Leif Picoult)

A flushable wipe vs. a Style Invitational second prize: The wipe was designed to be to be flushed down a toilet. (Frank Osen)

The recurring exam dream, a hyperonic missile, 8 percent inflation, Elon Musk, and six Supreme Court Justices: The first is the only nightmare on the list that you can wake up from. (Michael Stein, Arlington)

More honorable mentions at wapo.st/invite1500.

Still running — deadline Monday night, Aug. 8: Our caption contest for any of four Bob Staake cartoons. See wapo.st/invite1499.

L.A. TIMES SUNDAY PUZZLE

EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

Grid of crossword puzzle clues and answers. Includes categories like ACROSS, DOWN, and a list of clues such as 'Blast that may invert an umbrella', 'Float on the breeze', 'Soft "Hey, you!"', etc.

Answers to last week's puzzle below.

HOROSCOPE

BY GEORGIA NICOLS

Happy Birthday | Aug. 7: Justice and fair play are important to you because you have ethical values. You are generous and benevolent to others. You are also entertaining and friendly. This year, it's time to enjoy life. Seek opportunities to entertain and socialize with others. Find ways to express your creativity. Get in touch with old

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

ARIES (March 21-April 19) Although this is a pleasant day at home, especially entertaining others, you might feel restricted financially. Or perhaps something that you own will create some challenges. Fortunately, this is nothing you can't handle.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) Tread carefully. The good news is, relations with others are warm and friendly. People are mutually sympathetic. However, the bad news is that someone in authority might rain on your parade or make things difficult for you. Be patient and polite.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) This is a favorable day for financial matters. If shopping, you will be inclined to buy beautiful, luxurious items. Meanwhile, something going on behind the scenes could be problematic. Do be aware of this. If something looks like it could be a problem, don't dismiss it. Look at it.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) Today is a mixed bag, but it's a pleasant, positive day. Nevertheless, a friend or a group might not go along with your ideas. Someone might even say something that confirms your worst suspicions about yourself. Don't listen to this.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) You feel happy and content with your world today, which is why this can be a lovely day for you. However, someone in a position of authority might block something that you want to do. Go with the flow and accommodate this as well as you can.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) This is a mellow day dealing with friends and members of groups.

However, travel plans could be difficult. Possibly, rules and regulations or something in the news or the media will hold you back or prevent you from doing something you want.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) You look good to others. This might help you when dealing with others if you have disputes about shared property or shared responsibilities. Someone you encounter might be stubborn.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) Tread carefully, because someone close to you might try to block your plans. Meanwhile, opportunities to travel for pleasure exist. Could this be the escape you need?

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) The Moon is in your sign; furthermore, the position of Venus can attract benefits, favors and even money to you. However, those of you at work might encounter resistance to your ideas. Therefore, proceed slowly and cautiously. Believe in yourself.

Answers to last week's puzzle.

Grid of crossword puzzle answers. Includes words like BOAR, OMNI, BAND OF BROTHERS, MADMEN, ONSET, HOWIE, ANOINT, SORCERER, LAIN, NESS, HOUSE OF CARDS, NUTS, AP SO DOLL, SPEEDER, RDA, TESLA, SILT, FAMILY TIES, ENROLL, PYRE, TOE, ASAP, LASS, ADAM, PASTELS, ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT, TRAINER, RENO, EPEE, ARON, ANA, SILO, DABSAT, COUGARTOWN, DINA, RETRO, OWL, SEEDLET, MICE, FEAT, SHAG, THEODD COUPLE, DONT COAL, RUNSCOLD, ISEEIT, NADIR, ADLIB, CHEERS, THEFACTS OF LIFE, EELPOT, STATION ID, EASE, SAYS NO, YIN, LETBE, DROP.