

In‘SI’de jokes: Winning ‘air quotes’

BY PAT MYERS

Week 1511 was another round of our “air quotes” contest to find revealing words inside other words. Among the almost 1,500 entries were a lot of **Pat“riots,”** too many to credit individually, but blessedly almost no more **T“rump”** and **“fun”eral**.

4th place:

Fist“ICU”ffs: Why it’s not the best idea to confront the guy who took your parking space. (*Karen Lambert, Chevy Chase*)

3rd place:

S“ex”ting: How you lost your wife. (*Al Lubran, Rockville*)

2nd place and the “101 Pooping Puppies” jigsaw puzzle:

Marve“lous e”vening!: [Thinks] “What a jerk!” (*Ann Martin, Brentwood*)

And the winner of the Clowning Achievement:

“RSV”P: Yes, we’d be delighted! And we’ll be bringing little Makayla — don’t worry, her virus is almost all better.” (*Rivka Liss-Levinson, Washington*)

C“ha’ff: Honorable mentions

Dou“bleh”eader: When sitting through one game isn’t boring enough. (*Ellen Raphaeli, Falls Church*)

“Bro”ccoli: A nutritious cruciferous vegetable that’s been beer-battered, deep-fried and served with queso dip. (*Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn, Va.*)

D“erring”-do: What follows “hold my beer.” (*Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.*)

“Demo”cracy: We have the beta version. Thanks for finding the problems. (*Howard Ausden, Damascus*)

Col“ono”scopy: It *can’t* have been 10 years already — wait, holidays don’t count toward that, right? (*Dottie Gray, Alexandria*)

Fir“ST D”ate: I’ll remember this night forever. (*Jonathan Jensen, Baltimore*)

“End”orsement: A big announcement about breaking ties. “Whoa, that’s another huge ‘end’orsement Ye just picked up.” (*Susan Gearity, Menifee, Calif.*)

B“ye”-b“ye”: Not waiting for another shoe to drop. — Adidas Group (*Kevin Dopart, Washington*)

Dis“app”ointment: When you swipe right and they swipe left. (*Chris Damm, Charles Town, W.Va.*)

Missis“sip”pi River: After month after month of drought, what’s left after the Mighty has fallen. (*Steve Smith, Potomac*)

Pre“ten”ding: Photoshopping your dating profile photo. (*Pete Morelewicz, Fredericksburg*)

S“edit”ion: [Capitol tourists] having [legitimate political discourse]. (*Kevin Dopart; Mark Raffman, Reston*)

Ae“rofi”ot: The world’s best airline, as voted every year by the Russian Ministry of Transport. (*Chris Doyle*)

“Hood”wink: “Well, sir, looks like your entire engine needs replacing.” (*Karen Lambert*)

“LAPD”ogs: Los Angeles’ experimental Shih Tzu K-9 corps was quickly disbanded. (*Chris Doyle*)

“Lead”ership: Corporate management that doesn’t like to change course, even if it means sinking to the bottom of the sea. (*David Kleinbard, Mamaroneck, N.Y.*)

“Q”uestions: A way to spread ludicrous disinformation in the guise of inquiry. “How do we know AOC isn’t Vladimir Putin in disguise? Hey, I’m just asking ‘q’uestions here.” (*Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.*)

“Fart”her: The correct distance from me after a Tex-Mex meal. (*Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase*)

G“over”nor: What you get with Virginia’s one-term limit. (*Terri Berg Smith, Rockville*)

H“OT C”ocolate: This mood stabilizer doesn’t require a prescription. (*Judy Freed, Deerfield Beach, Fla.*)

In“flu”encer: An anti-vaxxer who makes you go viral. (*Ben Aronin, Washington*)

I“dent”ifier: That bumper ding that helps you tell your silver Camry from the other three in your parking lot row. (*Scott Richards, Hollywood, Md.*)

In“tell”ectual: No, you hadn’t mentioned that you’re a Mensa member — today. (*Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.*)

Met“averse”: Hand over even more data to Mark Zuckerberg? Count me out. (*Tom Witte, Montgomery Village*)

Mort“gag”e: “The interest rate went up to WHAT?” (*Karen*



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Week 1516: Munich-ipals — European ‘sister cities’

The Morón (Spain)-Lost (Germany) Election Denial Center

The Chester-Brest Any-Gender Bra (England, France)

The Essen-Emmen “Adult Activity” Center (Germany, Netherlands)

The Brighton-Erle Alarm Clock Works Ltd. (England, Germany)

Ten weeks ago the Empress sent the Loser Community on a search through U.S. maps in a contest to supply two or more town names and a wordplay “joint venture” (e.g., Jon Gearhart’s “Iowa-Latta-Green Student Loan Forgiveness Program, from towns in Louisiana, Oklahoma and Ohio).

This time, at the suggestion of Loser Randy Lee, we’re going to do it again, but further afield: **Choose any two or more towns from the 51 countries in Europe/Eurasia and come up with a joint endeavor the “sister cities” would undertake**, as in the examples above. And Randy also offers a very nifty tool: At geotargit.com, you can type in any name, and it’ll tell you where in the world there’s a city with that name. (But any source is fine as long as the town shows up on Google.)

Which 51 countries exactly? Let’s use the list for Europe at countries-of-the-world.com. (You may use a town anywhere in Russia or Turkey, even if it’s in the Asian part of that country.) And while I demanded that the U.S. towns be pronounced correctly, this time I’ll be more lenient toward visual puns, especially for less famous towns.

One more thing: In Week 1505, many people went to town (so to speak) with long, unwieldy strings of cities that were supposed to sound like a lengthy phrase or sentence. I’m not *forbidding* you to do that for Week 1515, but unless they’re very easy for *me* to read (and of course lederhosen-splittingly funny) I’m going to favor the shorter combinations.

Submit up to 25 entries at wapo.st/enter-invite-1515 (no capitals in the Web address). **Deadline is Monday night, Nov. 28**; results appear Dec. 18 in print, Dec. 15 online. (New entry form this week! The Empress’s life is impossibly exciting.)



Be your personal Chief of Navel Operations: This week’s itty-bitty 2nd prize.

Donated by Loser Steve Smith.

Winner gets the Clowning Achievement, our Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a **“bellybutton duster,”** which looks like a looped toilet brush if the toilet were the size of a walnut shell. It’s not much more than an inch long, so you’ll have plenty of room for more Invite detritus prizes in the future.

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 “In‘SI’de Jokes” is by Kevin Dopart; Kevin also wrote the honorable-mentions subhead. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at on.fb.me/invdev; follow Style Invitational Ink of the Day on Facebook at bit.ly/inkofday; 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/conv1515.

Lambert)

Mys“elf”: The one person I can count on to get me the perfect Christmas gift. (*Steve Smith*)

Va“cat”ion: Eat, play, sleep, repeat. (*John Klayman, Fairfax*)

“E-ducat”ed: Well versed in cryptocurrency matters. (*Byron Miller, Cobble Hill, B.C.*)

“Ma”rtyrdom: “You never call.” “Where have I failed?” “What did I do to deserve this?” (*Tom Witte*)

Academy A“war”ds: Co-hosted by Will Smith and Chris Rock. (*Mark Raffman*)

An“glop”hile: Someone who loves British dishes like toad in the hole and spotted dick. (*Roy Ashley, Washington*)

Ron DeS“anti”s: Governor with firm stands on racial progress, science-based policy, and Mickey Mouse. (*Mark Raffman*)

B“ID”et: The next technology after facial recognition. (*Steve Baldwin, Bethesda*)

B“oz”o: A New Jersey clown who thinks Pennsylvania is the place to shop for crudites. (*Kevin Dopart; Chris Doyle*)

Bo“redo”m: “I’m sick of beige, honey — let’s paint the living room chartreuse!” (*Sarah Walsh, Rockville*)

E“arf”ul: What the dog gives you when FedEx comes to the door. (*Byron Miller*)

F“IRS”tborn: Congratulations, you’ve got a bouncing baby deduction! (*Pam Shermeyer, Lathrup Village, Mich.*)

Hal“low”een: The Bit O’ Honey and candy corn left in the bottom of the sack. (*Joanne Free, Clifton*)

To“xi”c: Unhealthy for China, and the world. (*Frank Mann, Washington*)

F“utility”: The exercise of trying to get a helpful Verizon person on the line. (*Judy Freed*)

S“poo”f: Slipping a Baby Ruth bar into the neighborhood pool. (*Chris Doyle*)

Save A“me”rica: The main beneficiary of the Trump PAC. (*Neil Kurland, Elkridge, Md.*)

In“stall”er: Now up to excuse No. 7 for why my kitchen renovation’s not done. (*Michael Stein, Arlington*)

And Last: C“low”ning Achievement: The top prize from the bottom of all literary awards. (*Drew Bennett, Rogers, Ark.*)

Still running — deadline Monday night, Nov. 21: Our perennial “Ask Backwards” contest. See wapo.st/invite1514.