

## DIVERSIONS

### THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

## Losing with a pair of threes: Report from Week 1104

BY PAT MYERS

In Week 1104, we asked you to compare or contrast two or three things (or somehow link them, when we're feeling lenient) that have the same three-letter abbreviation or are three-letter words. We did this contest last year with abbreviations from AAA through DZZ; this time we have the EAAs-through-HZZs. Sometimes the abbreviation is for a foreign spelling that we're not going to spell out because it is Eesti Olmpiakomitee.

### 4th place

**EAA:** The **Experimental Aircraft Association** is not the official carrier of the **European Actuarial Academy**. (Kristen Rahman, Silver Spring)

### 3rd place

**GSA:** The **Geological Society of America** has experts on geysers. The **Gerontological Society of America** has experts on geezers. (Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.)

### 2nd place and the fossilized dinosaur poop

**EPA:** Majority leader: "Senator, among the **Equal Pay Act**, the **Environmental Protection Agency** and **English Pale Ale**, you may keep only one." Ted Cruz: "Cheers!" (Frank Mann, Washington)

### And the winner of the Inkin' Memorial

**HDP:** The law firm **Harness, Dickey & Pierce** and **high-density polyethylene**: "High-Density Polyethylene" would make a lousy title for a porn flick. (Larry Gray, Union Bridge, Md.)

### Barking up the wrong 3s: honorable mentions

**FAC:** Members of the **First Apostolic Church** are theists. Members of the **Freethought Association of Canada** are e-theists. (Chris Doyle)

**HDF:** **Hadfield Railway Station** and **high-density fiberboard**: Where can I get the best ham sandwich on the British Railway and what does it taste like? (Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)

**HPD:** **Histrionic personality disorder** and **highest posterior density**: Both make these letters a great title for Kim Kardashian. (Chris Doyle; Frank Osen)

**GMA:** **"Good Morning America"** and **"Good Morning Australia"**: The difference between them is day and night. (Kristen Rahman)

**ENS:** **Empty-nest syndrome** and **empty-nose syndrome**: In both cases, the little boogers are gone. (Chris Doyle)

**GGB:** **Greek government bond** and **Golden Gate Bridge**: If you would buy one, then perhaps I could also interest you in buying the other. (Mark Raffman, Reston)

**And also:** The Golden Gate keeps you above water. (Kristen Rahman)

**EOK:** The **Estonian Olympic Committee** and the **Hellenic Basketball Federation**: One is a bunch of guys in Tallinn, Estonia; the other is a bunch of guys who are tall in Greece. (Edmund Conti, Raleigh, N.C.)

**GFS:** The **Girls Friendly Society** and the **Global Financial System**: You don't want to crash the second one. (Mark Raffman)

**FCA:** **Financial collection agency** and **Funeral Consumers Alliance**: I see debt, people. (Chris Doyle)

**FSA:** A **Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries** studies ancient relics — like members of the **Florida Shuffleboard Association**. (Chris Doyle)

**EAU:** If you say "eau," you're in French; if you say "European Association of Urology," urine English. (Beverly Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

**ETS:** The **Evangelical Theological Society** and the **Educational Testing Service**: Both involve rooms of people beseeching God for the Answer. (Rob Huffman, Fredericksburg, Va.)

**HSI:** **High-speed Internet** and **horizontal shaft impactor**: One is how we find porn. The other is why. (Rob Huffman)

**EAT:** If you're in the shrinking middle class, your **earnings after taxes** might leave you barely able to do this. (Frank Mann)



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

## New contest for Week 1108: Hearts of dorkness

**To my Costco cashier:** If you would be my one true guy I'd stand in line for days and days. Since without you I can't buy My 15-gallon mayonnaise. (Andrew Hoenig, Week 645, 2006)

**From Poseidon to Medusa:** Oh, how I'd love to run my fingers through your snakes. (Lloyd Duvall, Week 544, 2004)

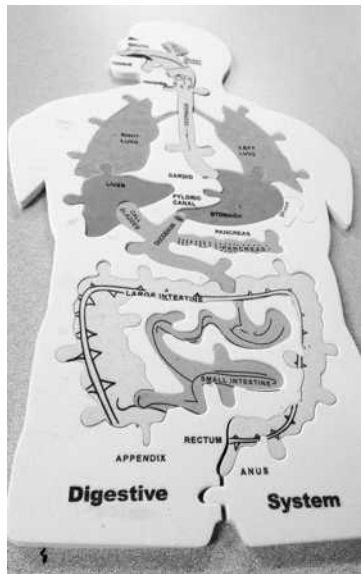
We're celebrating Valentine's Day in a Loserly way: by running a contest that asks for you to write valentines in January, with results that run a whole week after the holiday, like a forlorn box of chocolates on the clearance rack at Rite-Aid.

Prompted by Loser Daphne Steinberg's suggestion on the Style Invitational Devotees page on Facebook, the Empress discovered that the Invite had done three valentine contests — but none since 2006. So this week we'll combine elements from the earlier ones for another go: **Write a humorous Valentine's Day sentiment to someone (or to some organization), either real or fictional — either from you or from someone else you name, as in the missives above. Plus an all-new option: We'll also be willing to run at least one really funny, clever, well-executed graphic (make sure you don't use copyrighted art, and send it as an attachment to your e-mail).**

Winner gets the Inkin' Memorial, the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a colorful foam puzzle of the digestive system, donated by registered nurse and registered Loser Marleen May. Without even bothering to reach for a scalpel, you or your child can yank out a human liver, rectum or even "call bladder."

Other runners-up win their choice of a yearned-for Loser Mug or the ardently desired "Whole Fools" Grossery Bag. Honorable mentions get a lusted-after Loser magnet designed by Bob Staake: either "The Wit Hit the Fan" or "Hardly Har-Har." First Offenders receive a smelly tree-shaped air "freshener" (FirStink for their first ink). E-mail entries to losers@washpost.com or, if you were born in the 19th century, fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Monday, Feb. 2; results published Feb. 22 (online Feb. 19). You may submit up to 25 entries per contest. Include "Week 1108" in your e-mail subject line or it might be ignored as spam. Include your real name, postal address and phone number with your entry. See contest rules and guidelines at [wapo.st/InvRules](http://wapo.st/InvRules). The headline for this week's results is by Tom Witte; the honorable-mentions subhead is by Chris Doyle. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at [on.fb.me/invdex](http://on.fb.me/invdex). "Like" the Style Invitational Ink of the Day on Facebook at [bit.ly/inkofday](http://bit.ly/inkofday).

**STYLE CONVERSATIONAL** The Empress's weekly online column discusses each new contest and set of results. Especially if you plan to enter, check it out at [wapo.st/styleconv](http://wapo.st/styleconv).



**SURGICAL IMPRECISION:** No Valentine's heart, but can we interest you in a "call bladder"? This week's 2nd prize.

**GNU:** The difference between a wildebeest and the free software collaboration group is that the wildebeests make better dinner party guests. (Todd DeLap, Fairfax)

**GLB:** The differences between the gay, lesbian and bisexual community and the Girls' Life Brigade Christian youth organization are fewer than you would think. (Todd DeLap)

**GMT:** With **geometric measure theory**: Here's looking at Euclid. With the **Giant Magellan Telescope**: Here's looking at Uranus. (Chris Doyle)

**GAG:** A device to prevent speech and, ironically, a laugh-provoking act: Both refer to how people see

China's attempt to ban puns. (Frank Osen)

**HRA: Health risk assessment and home runs allowed:** With both, the more people you let score, the worse off you'll be. (Jeff Shirley, Richmond)

**PEG: Percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy (feeding tube) and my mother:** With both, you can be sure that people will get the nutrition they need, whether or not they asked for it. (J.F. Martin, Naples, Fla.)

**GAL: "Get a life" and a galileo,** a unit used measuring local variations in the acceleration of gravity: For some reason, whenever I start talking about the latter, I hear the former. (Kevin Dopart, Washington; John McCooy, Rehoboth Beach, Del.)

**FCI: Federal correctional institution and French Culinary Institute.** The first does not use Gruyère in the sauce mornay. (George-Ann Rosenberg, Washington)

**HSA: The Haiku Society of America and the Homeland Security Act:** Suspicious package? Call us! We already know Your number, neighbor. (Barbara Turner, Takoma Park)

**FWM: Four-wave mixing,** an intermodulation phenomenon in nonlinear optics that will never be understood by . . . (Frank William Mann, Washington)

**Still running — deadline Monday night: Our biennial "joint legislation" contest in which you combine the names of members of Congress.** See [bit.ly/invite1107](http://bit.ly/invite1107).

### POST PUZZLER

## No. 251

BY BYRON WALDEN EDITED BY PETER GORDON • FIREBALLCROSSWORDS.COM

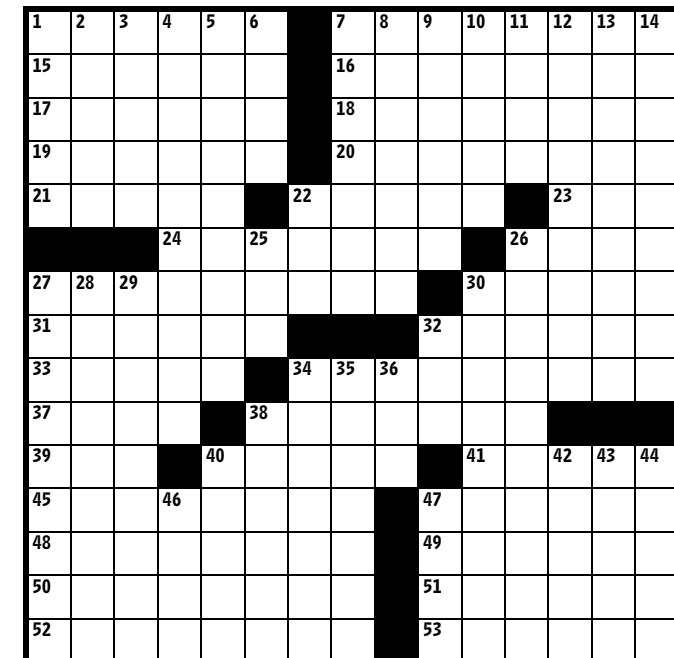
**ACROSS**

- 1 Shorthand developer Isaac
- 7 LG offering discontinued in November 2014
- 15 Like bials
- 16 Greeks
- 17 Last button setting
- 18 Gleaming
- 19 Word with line or score
- 20 Supportive of an independent Taiwan, like a policy
- 21 Take off
- 22 Simon Legree's creator
- 23 Result of a sac fly
- 24 Certain guns
- 26 Irving protagonist
- 27 Everglades denizen that can trap a fish in 25 milliseconds
- 30 Social \_\_\_\_\_
- 31 Sends in
- 32 Locale in "Kubla Khan" or "Citizen Kane"

**DOWN**

- 1 Swine along the Seine
- 2 Like argon
- 3 Race official
- 4 Jazz standard originally titled "Dreamy Blues"
- 5 Introductory Italian course?
- 6 Duma demurrall
- 7 "Tomorrow's a dooper, \_\_\_\_\_ latter day" (lyric from "The Book of Mormon")
- 8 Pounding the pavement, say
- 9 Admits
- 10 Hook's counterpart
- 11 Dove-tail
- 12 Stealthy?

- 13 Liz Taylor was one twice
- 14 Nobel laureate who wrote "The Enigma of Arrival"
- 22 New European country code at the 1992 Winter Olympics
- 25 First word of "Thriller"
- 26 Shows deference
- 27 Very mild reproof
- 28 One who might hail a cab?
- 29 Not mandatory, to a list maker
- 30 Co-creator of "The Book of Mormon"
- 32 Cake guitarist
- 34 Shooting stars?
- 35 Victorian overcoats
- 36 Michelle Obama, \_\_\_\_\_ Robinson
- 38 Put under
- 40 Jeopardy
- 42 Character with the catchphrase "Did I do that?"
- 43 The Saints of the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference
- 44 They're driven
- 46 "What, will these hands \_\_\_\_\_ be clean?": Lady Macbeth
- 47 Move like a moth



Answer to last week, No. 250

A N A T E E A R I A D N E  
A M E N I T Y L A C R O I X  
I R O N C H E F A M E R I C A  
L A C E C U S P S T E L  
I D O S R A N K S S N O T  
N I N D O N N A S C O N E  
G O S T E A D Y M E O W E D  
R E L Y P E E L  
A C C O R D S O A P D I S H  
I H A V E Y A W N S N W A  
M A R E R A G E S S C I S  
E R R I C E R P E N A  
D A Y L I G H T S A V I N G S  
A D M I T T I T A R A L S E A  
T E E P A D S W I N T E R Y

### HOROSCOPE

BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY | JAN. 25:** This year you might be seen more frequently on the social scene. You are not judgmental, and as a result you draw a variety of personalities toward you. If you are single, you open up to dating many types of people. However, this year someone special may mosey into your life. You will know when this person appears. If you are attached, the two of you might expand your immediate circle of friends. A new mutual hobby is also likely.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19)**  
A power play involving a respected elder or boss might backfire. Strong feelings may emerge from the experience. Make a point of getting together with a loved one.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20)**  
You might prefer to take a back seat to the events around you. By being an observer, you may discover a new side of a loved one. Get some extra R and R.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20)**  
Don't hesitate to reach out to your friends. Join them in whatever activity with which they seem to be involved. You'll recharge your batteries in the process.

**CANCER (June 21-July 22)**  
Deal with someone who rains on your parade. Ask for some insight

as to why he or she behaves a certain way. An open discussion might provide you with a fresh perspective.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)**  
Reach out to someone at a distance this morning. In fact, you might want to make a round of calls to those you typically don't have time to check in with. Enjoy a lively exchange of news.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)**  
You might gain an unusual understanding of a special person in your life, which will allow you to avoid a hassle in the near future. Demonstrate your caring through a kind gesture.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)**  
A partner or loved one may be unusually challenging right now. Several friends might want to draw you into a happening later

in the evening. Go for it!

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)**  
Put a halt to weekend indulgences and head to the gym or start some other form of exercise. You will reduce your stress, feel better and make a better impression. A friend or loved one will cheer you along.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)**  
Don't let a financial matter trip you up. Your caring will make all the difference to a child or new friend. Remember not to sweat the small stuff. Be happy, and others will follow your lead.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)**  
Devote more quality time to a roommate or family member. Your attention and caring will be returned tenfold, but don't let that be the reason you indulge this person.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)**  
A child or loved one may not feel as upbeat as you. You tend to help this person gain perspective on his or her life.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)**  
Make it a day of indulgence. Stay in bed, dine at a favorite restaurant or pick up a few items at a favorite store. Just do whatever will make you smile.

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## Puzzling over communal newspaper

### Ask Amy

AMY DICKINSON

**Dear Amy: I work at a city department with about 20 employees. Our office receives**

*two different newspapers every day and they are put in our lunch/break room for the staff to share. Recently someone has been taking the page with the crossword puzzle and not allowing others to enjoy it. The problem is that your column and other daily printings are located on the same page and I love reading them daily. What is the proper protocol for communal newspapers?*  
**Puzzled Reader**

**I delight** in learning that this column is shared, discussed (and argued over) in break rooms at offices, police stations and hospitals. I often craft responses imagining how my office pals would respond.

The most considerate way to handle a communal newspaper is for a thoughtful employee to photocopy the crosswords, etc., and leave several (uncompleted) copies on the break room table for others to puzzle over. The newspaper should remain in the break room — otherwise it is no longer the communal newspaper but "Bob's

newspaper."

In terms of sharing this column, I favor dramatic out-loud readings of the letters, followed by group guesses about how I will answer, discussion about the content and speculation about the outcome.

Thank you so much for being a part of this lively conversation.

**Dear Amy: Many years ago my family resolved the "grab bag" gift exchange by each person buying a gift for himself. It is amazing how it ended all the anxiety of gift-giving.**

*We set a price range. The gift to yourself cannot be a gift card. It must be wrapped and then opened in the presence of the others.*

*It is so much fun getting something you wish for but would not normally splurge on. We call this "Elf to Myself." It might sound quirky but I don't think there has been a return yet! It is fun and has worked well for us.*  
**Plan B Grab Bag**

**Inventive.** I look forward to readers' reactions.

**Dear Amy: While clearing up some old, forgotten paperwork, I**

*came across a 13-year-old check that was made out to me and never cashed. It was payment for music lessons I gave to my friend's daughter. The amount was \$100.*

*I recently had dinner with my friend and laughingly showed her the outdated check. She didn't realize it hadn't been cashed because she was divorcing and her ex had closed the account. She insisted on writing me a fresh check. When I disclosed this situation to a family member, she said I should have just let it drop.*

*Am I right here? Am I due my money or should I just let it drop? I certainly don't want to lose a friendship over this.*  
**Unsure Friend**

**Your friend paid** her bill. It is not her responsibility to make sure you cashed the check, or to hunt you down if you didn't cash it. This was your mistake. It was kind (and unnecessary) of her to insist on paying you again after all these years; if you decide to cash it perhaps you could use the money to treat the two of you to dinner.

Write to Amy Dickinson at [askamy@tribune.com](mailto:askamy@tribune.com) or Ask Amy, Chicago Tribune, TT500, 435 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60611.