

DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

It's a tanka gas: The top TankaWanka news poems

BY PAT MYERS

In **Week 1148** we presented our second annual contest for TankaWanka poems on the news. The TankaWanka — a form the Empress named so nobody could accuse us of doing it wrong — is a variation on tanka, a classic Japanese poetry form. Like tanka, the TW has five lines of 5-7-5-7-7 syllables (like a haiku that forgot to stop), but it also contains at least one rhyme.

4th place

Ben Carson believes Egyptian pyramids were used by biblical Joseph

Carson: Pyramids
Were for the storage of grain.
Evidence for this:
They're sealed against the outside.
Much like Dr. Carson's brain?
(Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase, Md.)

3rd place

Coywolf, coyote-wolf hybrid, sees population boom

Wolf, in search of mate,
Struck out, then said, "You know what?
Coyotes look great!"
Fairy tale changes wryly
When Riding Hood meets Wile E.
(Beverly Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

2nd place and the "Jewjitsu" T-shirt plus Christian-themed jellybeans:

Nationals lose manager choice over too-low offer

"Bud Black is our guy!
He can run our pitching staff!"
But they made a gaffe
With their offer so mulish—
Penny-wise and mound-foolish.
(Perry Beider, Silver Spring)

And the winner of the Inkin' Memorial

Google self-driving car pulled over for driving too slowly, impeding traffic

California fuzz
Stopped a car, and found it was
Driving by itself.
Gave a warning, didn't cite.
Need I say the car was white?
(Nan Reiner, Boca Raton, Fla.)

Pro-pain tanka: honorable mentions

Christian groups protest lack of Christmas symbols on Starbucks cups

Time to get riled up!
Hang a plain red Starbucks cup
On the highest bough,
And have yourself a merry
Little War on Christmas now.
(Nan Reiner)

San Diego SeaWorld ends killer-whale shows but keeps whales

Folks cry: "Free Shamu!"
SeaWorld has a different view.
Stubborn, they say no:
"How could we, in good
conscience,
Let eleven killers go?"
(Beverly Sharp)

Trump calls Mexican immigrants "rapists"

"Sending their rapists"
Makes it clear, for goodness' sake,
That Donald Trump's yen
Is to be the prez who'll make
America hate again.
(Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.)

Carson's home features a large double portrait

We thought the Donald
Possessed the biggest ego
Of them all, but then
This painting came to seize us:
It pictures Ben with Jesus.
(Ward Kay, Vienna, Va.)

Inclusion in GOP debates depends on latest poll

Poll ranking dictates
Which of umpteen candidates
Make the next debates,
Based on this week's ups and
downs.
Open car; reshuffle clowns.
(Nan Reiner)

"Star Wars: Episode VII"

I. "The Force Awakens"
All of geekdom rejoices.
As we revisit
A galaxy that's far far,
Let us hope there's no Jar Jar.
(Jeff Contompassis, Ashburn, Va.)

II. "The Force Awakens":

A movie for which we'll queue.
For Disney, huge sums.
And in handy Yoda comes
When verse rhyming try we do.
(George-Ann Rosenberg, Washington)

Former Russian official found dead in Dupont Circle hotel

Could be very bad
If you get on outs with Vlad.
You haf "heart attack."
This case, upon scrutiny,



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

New contest for Week 1151: Oops? You do it again.

Didn't get your paper on July 23? Did you miss the deadline for Week 1105? Did the Empress rob you *again* for Weeks 1120, 1121 and 1122? Stop complaining already — here's your chance to do something about it: our annual retrospective contest. **This week: Enter any Style Invitational contest from Week 1098 through Week 1148, except for Week 1101, last year's do-over.** Use as few or many contests as you like, up to 25 entries total. You may refer to events that have occurred since the contest was published (exception: the Week 1105 obit poems should still be about people who died in 2014); for contests that ask you to use that week's paper, use Dec. 3-14 of this year. You may submit an entry you've already sent, but remember that it's the same old lady judging them. Where to find all these previous contests? There's a link to each one at washingtonpost.com/styleinvitational (click on "More News" at the bottom of the page to see the oldest few). You can also see all the contests on Loser Elden Carnahan's Master Contest List at nrars.org. After you read the instructions of a contest you want to enter, don't forget to check the results as well (usually four weeks later) to be sure you're not repeating an inking entry.

Winner gets the Inkin' Memorial, the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place, just in time to be several weeks late for Hanukkah, a giant inflatable dreidel, donated by Loser Diane Wah. It's actually sort of round, so if it lands on the wrong side, you can discreetly nudge it to a better letter.

Other runners-up win their choice of a yearned-for Loser Mug, the older-model "This Is Your Brain on Mugs" mug or the ardently desired "Whole Fools" Grocery Bag. Honorable mentions get one of our brand-new Loser magnets, "Magnet Dum Laude" or "Falling Jest Short." First Offenders receive a smelly tree-shaped air "freshener" (FirStink for their first ink). Email entries to losers@washpost.com or, if you were born in the 19th century, fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Monday night, Dec. 14; results published Jan. 3 (online Dec. 31 or maybe 30). You may submit up to 25 entries per contest. Include "Week 1152" in your email 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. The headline for this week's results is by Danielle Nowlin; the honorable-mentions subhead is by Jeff Shirley. 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; follow @StyleInvite on Twitter.

THE 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.

Looking very Putiny. (Nan Reiner)

Asian leaders meet

China's Xi Jinping
And Taiwan's Ma Ying-Jeou met;
There should be an ad:
"Spacious meeting room to let —
The historic Ma-Xi pad."
(Brendan Beary, Great Mills, Md.)

Pitcher insists on finishing World Series game, loses it

Matt Harvey, Mets ace,
Demands, "I'll pitch the ninth
frame
For a complete game!"
Soon the game, Mets fans would
see,
Was complete, over, *finis*.
(Brendan Beary)

Politicians exploit Paris attacks

Carnage in Paris
Leaves us sad and dejected
Except for a few
Asking the age-old question:
Can this get me elected?
(Frank Mann, Washington)

Water discovered on Mars

Evidence showing

There's liquid water flowing
On the planet Mars
Has made scientists zealous —
And Californians jealous.
(Jesse Frankovich, Lansing, Mich.)

"Gum Wall" gets a cleaning

Have you heard the news?
Seattle has a problem:
A sticky issue —
On a wall, not a tissue.
More gum control laws needed!
(Andrea Dewhurst, Lynn, Mass., a
First Offender)

George H.W. Bush criticizes Cheney, Rumsfeld in memoir

George Bush the first, you
Paterfamiliosly,
And biliously,
Trashed two top aides to Dubya —
Only now do they trulyba?
(Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.)

New baby panda

The National Zoo
Pulled the new panda handler
Aside to warn her
That nobody — NOBODY! —
Puts Bei Bei in the corner.
(Chris Doyle)

Feminist Germaine Greer rants that sex change surgery doesn't make a man a woman*

So says Germaine Greer:
"You can lop off your penis,
And good luck, my dear,
But, no matter your keenness,
You're not a woman, I fear."
(Michael Rolfe, Cape Town, South
Africa, a First Offender) [*Greer
actually used much cruder language in
her rant]

D.C. rated the "snobbiest city on the East Coast"

Look — some new website
Gave D.C. a top-10-ranked
Snooty ratio!
San Francisco ranks first, though
...
(Left-Coasters. What do THEY
know?) (Nan Reiner)

Still running — deadline Monday night, Dec. 7: our contest to rant at a rhymes-with-"glassbowl." See bit.ly/invite1151.



PAT MYERS/THE WASHINGTON POST

Be gelty, gelty, gelty with a beach ball-like blow-up dreidel, this week's second prize.

SUNDAY CHALLENGE

BY TONY ORBACH © 2015 CROSSYENERGY SYNDICATE LLC

ACROSS

1 Connect with unexpectedly
11 Borderline word, perhaps
15 Delusional
16 South Pacific sequel
17 One of a pair of brothers who held world heavy-weight championships
18 Post-nouveau style
19 Award for Viola Davis for "How to Get Away with Murder"
20 She, in Sardinia
21 Netanyahu's successor
22 Suss, in slang
24 Chocolatier whose logo is a woman on horseback
25 Reddi-____
26 Take a chorus or two
28 Cygnet's father
29 "Midnight at the Oasis" beast
32 Comedian who played the cook on "Archie Bunker's Place"

34 Hydrocarbon suffixes
35 Share
36 Without ____
37 Across all counties
39 Secret
40 "If we say we have no ____ we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (L John 1:8)

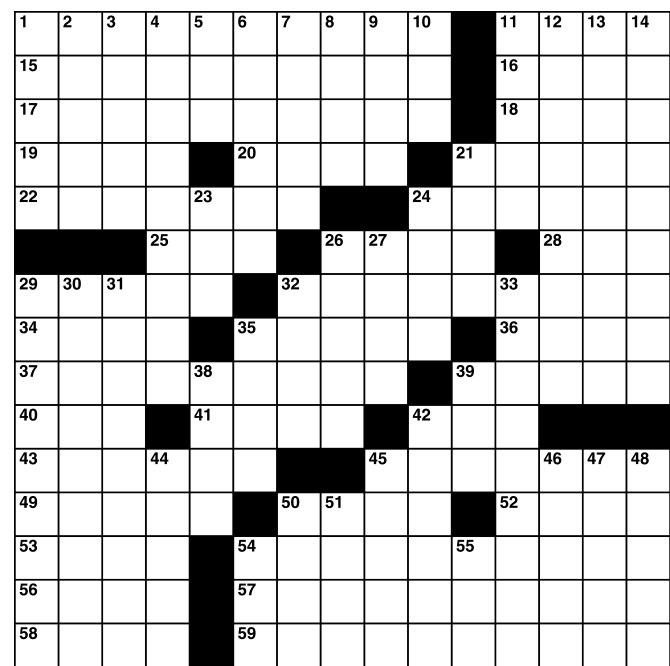
41 Pen
42 ____ matter
43 Teeming
45 Mortal
49 '60s collar style
50 Sixers' competition
52 Elation, in Ile-de-France
53 Smidgen
54 Where errors can be found
56 Kempt
57 Comically undersized prop in "This Is Spinal Tap"
58 Home to Jack Trice Stadium
59 Faded by design

DOWN

1 In a mound
2 "____ Time" (70s musical)
3 Walk to be heard
4 Bane of Beck and Taylor Swift, at awards shows
5 2002 British Open champion
6 Prepare for a bout
7 Kathy Griffin's domain
8 McKellen and McShane
9 "(You're) Having My Baby" singer
10 SLC-based group
11 Person given a thumbs-down when surf's up

12 Grammy genre for which Levon Helm and Mavis Staples have won awards
13 Farm-to-table advocates
14 Didn't recoup, say
21 "Bam!"
23 Emulsion component, often
24 What saying "Yay!" might indicate
26 Sardonic
27 2007 movie with the Oscar-winning song "Falling Slowly"
29 Ignored prophet of Troy
30 It provides immunity
31 Word that might precede a change of scenery

32 Sacha Baron Cohen alter ego
33 Iconic road sign
35 Crawled, maybe
38 Neutral tone
39 Titular Poirot role
42 Options specialist?
44 "We have the meats" advertiser
45 Main thing?
46 Dilemma feature, idiomatically speaking
47 Vassal
48 Gave a sycophantic answer
50 ____ Field
51 Years, in Iberia
54 Dropped stuff?
55 Leader in a beret



Answer to last week

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

HOROSCOPE

BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY | DEC. 6: This year, you have an unusually strong drive to manifest more of what you want. As a result, you will expand your inner circle and meet many new people, which will create even more opportunities. If you are single, you will meet someone who might encourage you to change your status. If you are attached, the two of you enjoy each other's company enormously. Libra can be extremely charming.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

You have a big effect on a loved one. You know how to turn this person's world upside down. You might wonder whether to share a special confidence. You are likely to spill the beans today, or perhaps you'll give someone an early Christmas gift.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

You have a lot of plans to make this holiday work for others. Your pace could become quite hectic and demanding. If you need to stop, do. Christmas is not as close as it seems to be. A partner will be highly responsive.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

You might feel invigorated by an interaction with a loved one. Somehow, when you're around this person, you lose your sense of responsibility for a short while. You become more childlike, and anything could happen.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

Stay on top of what needs to happen. A meeting in the morning will make you consider the holidays and your responsibility to make them as

close to perfect as possible. Be careful with a difficult person who might try to start a revolution.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

The romantic nature of the holidays flows into your life. If you are attached, you can't seem to find enough mistletoe for you and your sweetie to stand under. If you are single, you'll share eggnog with quite a few interesting people.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

Your more possessive side emerges, especially if you feel that you are not getting the attention you want or that someone is slighting you in some way. Your playfulness causes you to be more concerned with a child or loved one than you typically are.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

You might be on a collision course with a family member, but you'll find a way around it. You have a style about you that appeals to most people and prevents difficult scenes from happening.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

Continue playing it low-key for a

few days by doing what you want and not necessarily what you should. Your lightness and caring ways trigger others to be somewhat critical and perhaps even demanding. Know when to say "enough."

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

Where you find a friend demanding a lot from you is probably where you want to be, once this person calms down. Your vision of what is possible is very different than the vision of many others. Be aware of the costs of your thinking.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

Take charge and share your feelings with an important person in your life. You are unlikely to be on the same page, no matter how much you discuss an issue. Pressure builds from the strangest issues; perhaps you should handle them in a different way.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

Reach out to someone at a distance whom you care a lot about. Your conversation will have a touching tone that draws the two of you even closer together. A friend could play a substantial role in a decision and in your plans.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

You could be at a point where you simply want to relax and enjoy a very special person in your life. Though a call could distract you, this individual knows how to pull you back into his or her thoughts and away from the world.

Husband making it tough for diabetic

Ask Amy

AMY DICKINSON

Dear Amy: I am in my 60s. I have Type 2 diabetes and am on oral medication.

I have always been very active and try to eat healthfully. I am always battling urges for chocolate and sweets.

The problem is that my husband is constantly buying ice cream, cupcakes, chocolate cakes, candy, etc. He feels that he should not have to be deprived because I have diabetes. I do not eat most of the sweets that he brings into the house, but too frequently I break down.

At that moment, I truly believe that I can take "just a little piece" and then eat the whole thing . . . and more.

I know that I should be the one in control of what I put in my mouth, but sometimes I cannot control the urge. I have spoken to him about this, but it falls on deaf ears. I compare it to an alcoholic who is constantly being teased by a bottle of alcohol on the counter and being told that "you just need more willpower." I know that my future health is

being greatly compromised. Do you have any suggestions?

Diabetic

Diabetic: The difference between someone who is addicted to food and someone addicted to alcohol is that human beings have to eat, and because of this we are surrounded by the triggers you are so eager to avoid.

Your husband is not helping, of course. He either has no idea of how challenging this is for you or he is actively sabotaging your efforts. This might be either deliberate or unconscious on his part, but it is surprising how often family members will actively disable a loved one's efforts to be healthy.

One obvious solution would be for you to install a lock on a cabinet, where he can store his stash of sweets. You also need to continue to work on your own eating habits, however, because these temptations abound — especially during the holidays.

Visit your local library or do some online research on how to handle your food cravings.

Meditation and mindfulness might be very useful for you.

Dear Amy: So many horrible events have taken place around the world lately. As a mother, I feel sad and overwhelmed and worried about my children. Can you suggest a way to explain these violent and tragic happenings to young children?

Upset Mother

Upset Mother: Protect young children from graphic and violent imagery — both fictional and actual. Explain that sometimes people get hurt, that it's not their fault and that it makes all of us sad. Also make sure to pass along this timeless wisdom from Fred Rogers: "When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, 'Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.'"

Write to Amy Dickinson at askamy@tribune.com or Ask Amy, Chicago Tribune, T5000, 435 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60611.

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