DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

Quip on the draw: Winning captions

BY PAT MYERS

In Week 1197 we asked for captions for any of these Bob Staake cartoons. Remember, the entry deadline was well before Election Day. Whoever it was who described the woman in Picture 4 as Melania Trump . . . wha?

4th place

Picture 2: Everyone said Crocs weren't very stylish but comfortable to wear; Frank's experience, though, was exactly the opposite. (Larry Gray, Union Bridge, Md.)

3rd place

Picture 3: "Oh, crap. I hate backing out of parking spaces." (Hildy Zampella, Falls Church, Va.)

2nd place and the faux-'primitive' surfer figurine:

Picture 1: Although pleased with his ice cream cone head and drumstick ears, Buffet the Clown was less sure about the haggis nose. (Jerry Birchmore, Springfield, Va.)

And the winner of the Inkin' Memorial:

Picture 4: "Grab them by the uvula. You can do anything you want when you're famous." (Steven Steele Cawman, Poughquag, N.Y.)

Art depreciation: honorable mentions

PICTURE 1

"I'm not breaking up with you; I'd just like to see other faces." (Art Grinath, Takoma Park, Md.)

Donald Trump Jr. wonders about letting in just one Skittle. (Ralph Nitkin, Rockville, Md.)

"Mama always said that if I didn't quit playing with it, it was gonna fall off." (Jon Gearhart, Des Moines)

Bobo wonders if the five-second rule applies to body parts. (Chuck Salerno, Chelmsford, Mass., a First Offender; Roger Dalrymple, Gettysburg, Pa.)

A big blob of blood comes out of Donald's wherever after an alley meeting with Megyn. (Stephen Dudzik, Olney, Md.)

Medieval court jesters were often required to spite their faces. (Art Grinath)

When Blinky was expelled from Klown Kollege, he just went to pieces. (Doug Frank, Crosby, Tex.)

Bubbles wondered how the nine circus clowns would fit inside the Mini-Beetle. (Barry Koch, Catlett, Va.)

Fredo's balloon animal poops weren't the hit he'd imagined. (Cindi Rae Caron, Blowing Rock, N.C.)

Mike knows he shouldn't pick someone else's nose, but when in need . . . (Roger Dalrymple)

Even for a clown, it's no laughing matter when your prostate falls out. (Jesse Frankovich, Lansing, Mich.)

The end of Coco's career found him working at a tiny one-ring circus. (Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)

PICTURE 2

"I'm a litigator, not a crocodile!" (John Hutchins, Silver Spring, Md.)

"I suppose your mother told you she was a bit wild back in college?" "Um, yeah. Nice to finally meet you, Dad." (Hildy Zampella)

The two attorneys were naturally drawn to pro boscis cases. (Dave Prevar, Annapolis)

The IRS's newest investigator decides to poke his nose in the Caimans. (Doug Frank)

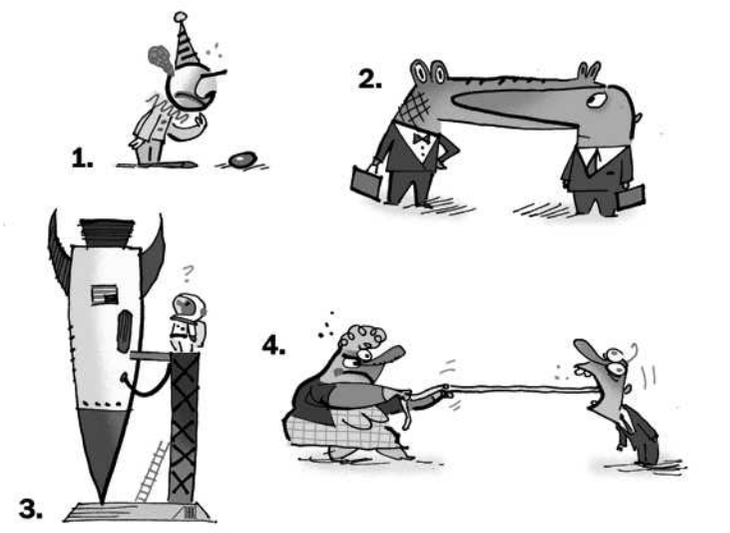
"If you think it's such a hostile takeover, why don't you walk?" (Dan Kinney, Charlottesville)

The new Grand Floridian Resort gateway arch was designed by Stephan Pastis. (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

Jim didn't quite understand when he heard that gaiters were coming back into vogue. (Larry Gray)

Ambulance Chaser's Success Tip No. 4: The pre-meeting breath check. (Warren Tanabe, Annapolis, Md.)

"Bob mistakenly thought the "alligator, briefcase" listing was for an alligator briefcase. (John Hutchins)



BOB STAAKE/FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

The cartoons are in color online, but the captions work either way.

PICTURE 3

NASA soon gave up on planning April 1 launches. (Pam Sweeney, Burlington, Mass.)

The order to "aim rockets at China" appeared to have been misinterpreted. (Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.)

"My ex-wife was right — I *am* going straight to Hell!" (Michele Uhler, Fort Washington, Md.)

Ever vigilant, Capt. Wilbur detected that someone had mounted the rocket's flag upside down. (Steve Fahey, Kensington, Md.; Warren Tanabe; Dave Prevar)

Cash-strapped NASA begins drilling for oil. (John Hutchins)

"Your software update is complete." (Roger Strauss, Silver Spring, Md., a First Offender)

Biff still wasn't convinced that an expedition to the sun was a good idea, even if done at night and backward. (Frank Osen)

Those literal-minded engineers misinterpreted NASA's "Back to the Moon" program. (Ward Kay, Vienna, Va.)

"When I said, 'We've got to turn this program around,' I didn't mean this." (Jack Turner, Milford, Del.)

"Liftoff in T minus 3, 4, 5 . . ." (Nick Semanko, Washington, a First Offender; Warren Tanabe)

NASA's reverse-engineering effort seemed fraught with confusion. (Howard Walderman, Columbia)

There's a difference between "moon rocket" and "moon, rocket." (Kevin Dopart)

PICTURE 4

Even at age 67, Gene Simmons still has groupies. (Tom Witte, Montgomery Hills, Md.)

"What do you mean your tapeworm doesn't like my lasagna?" (Jennifer Dickey, Silver Spring, Md.)

Margie caught the linguine thief right in the act. (Roger Dalrymple)

If your wife tells you to watch your tongue, NEVER sass back, "Just how can you do that?" (Dave Prevar)

Problem: Foulmouthed politician. Solution: Soap on a rope. (Ben Aronin, Washington)

"I told you that was no way to get rid of a sex tape!" (Jennifer Dickey)

"I love you, Harold, but it's high time you got one of those self-starting brains." (Nathanael Dewhurst, Lynn, Mass.)

ALL FOUR PICTURES

It's always awkward asking someone to dance. (Art Grinath)

No, the milk doesn't come out the udder tucked under this ceramic mug, this week's second prize.

Still running — deadline Monday, Nov. 14: Our contest for wry "Devil's Dictionary" definitions. See bit.ly/invite1200.

Week 1201 — Tour de Fours XIII: What's there to NOVE?

NEV-OLUTION: The science-denier's theory of human development.

LOVE-NUMB: Suffering the results of extended lip-lock.

It's a neologism contest that the Empress has run in each year of her ~~sorry regime~~ celebrated reign, each time with a different set of four letters: **Coin a word or multi-word term that contains the letter block N-O-V-E** (hey, it's November) and describe it, as in the examples above; **the letters may be in any order, but there may be no other letters between them (you may insert a space or hyphen).** Feel free to use it in a funny sentence, especially since several other people might coin the same word you did, and the funniest description is going to get the ink.

Submit entries at the website bit.ly/enter-invite-1201 (all lowercase).
Winner gets the Inkin' Memorial, the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives this purebred Holstein black-and-white ceramic mug with a little pink ceramic udder between its little mug-legs. Donated by Loser Every Year Since Year 1 Elden Carnahan, who thought he might have won it in the Invite way back when, but we don't think he can pin this one on us.

Other runners-up win their choice of the yearned-for "This Is Your Brain on Mugs" Loser mug or our Grossery Bag, "I Got a B in Punmanship." Honorable mentions get one of our lusted-after Loser magnets, "Magnet Dum Laude" or "Falling Jest Short." First Offenders receive a smelly tree-shaped air "freshener" (FirStink for their first ink). Deadline is Monday night, Nov. 21; results published Dec. 11 (online Dec. 8). You may submit up to 25 entries per contest. See general contest rules and guidelines at wapo.st/InvRules. The headline for this week's results is by Kevin Dopart; the honorable-mentions subhead is by Chris Doyle. 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.

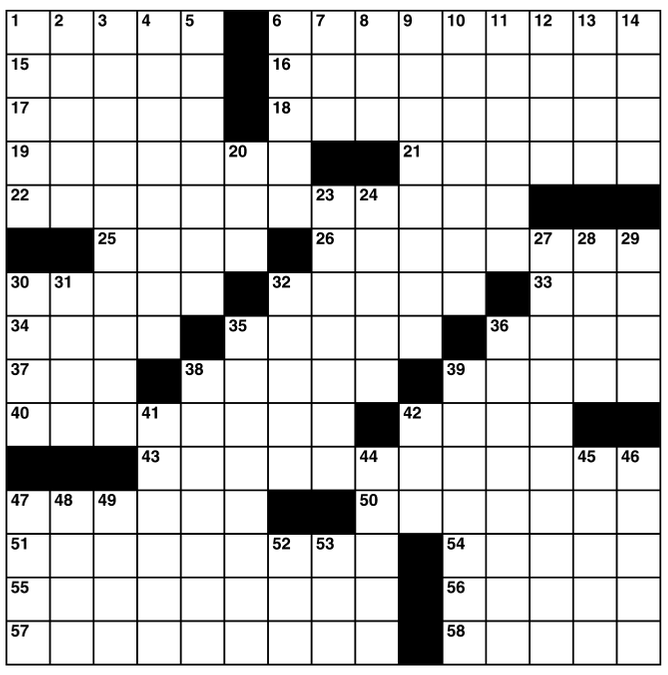
THE STYLE CONVERSATIONAL The Empress's weekly online column discusses each new contest and set of results. Especially if you plan to enter, check it out at wapo.st/styleconv.

SUNDAY CHALLENGE

BY TONY ORBACH © 2016 CROSSYNERGY SYNDICATE LLC

ACROSS
1 Come out of one's shell
6 The skin you're in
15 ____ hold 'em (poker game)
16 Mission statement
17 Brought aboard
18 Critical battle for a gamer
19 Out of the loop
21 Noir and black comedy
22 Bigfoot, for one
25 Slog
26 Place where free coffee might be offered
30 Alaskan native
32 Alluvial deposits
33 2016 Olympics city
34 Standstill
35 Old lab heaters
36 Zip
37 Thickness measure
38 Throaty and alluring, as a voice
39 Simoleons
40 Not fixed, in a way
42 Clock sound
43 Not peeping at all
47 Madeleine-inspired writer
50 "Take that!"
51 Thing counted by Geiger
54 Japanese cooking pastes
55 Colorful refresher
56 Jungian principle
57 North American, say
58 Caricaturist Hirschfeld's hidden tributes to his daughter

DOWN
1 Meh
2 Acid in proteins
3 It might be heard at an Italian wedding
4 Lays into
5 Got into the fray
6 Smoldering bit
7 Kung ____ chicken
8 Connections
9 Puts off
10 Personal property
11 Signs again
12 Roman Catholic off.
13 "Am ____ only one?"
14 Tipplers
20 Seminary subj.
23 Bauble
24 Pass on
27 Arrives a few at a time
28 Shoat shout
29 Collectible caps of the 1990s
30 Weary comment
31 Hiding spot
32 It's a wrap
35 Rankle
36 Bread squash
38 Bratwurst or weisswurst
39 Charon, for one
41 Scrunch one's eyes
42 General on a Chinese menu
44 Ed who voiced Carl Fredricksen in Pixar's "Up"
45 Bakery draw
46 Flat lands?
47 Christening spot
48 Seldom seen
49 Harem chambers
52 Suffix with Faust or Freud
53 Paean



Answer to last week

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

HOROSCOPE

BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY|Nov. 13: This year you often challenge others, not because you believe they are wrong, but because you want to understand their logic. Express more respect for different ideas. If you are single, relating becomes simpler, and you see less conflict. If you are attached, you and your sweetie will want to take off and explore more. Whether you take hikes together or travel to foreign countries, you will expose yourself to different types of thinking. Taurus encourages you to live the good life.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
You could wake up on the wrong side of the bed without realizing it. Others' reactions will clue you in to the fact that your words have an edge. Use your sixth sense with spending; otherwise, you are likely to go overboard.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
You finally are feeling happy, energized and above all of your problems. Use caution around an Aries, as they could be more challenging than you realize. A friend might make a suggestion that you don't want to say "no" to.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
Curb a tendency to be somewhat harsh while pursuing answers. Work on being more patient, and you are likely to be pleased with the outcome.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
The only way you will be able to get past someone else's power play is to walk away. You might witness an outburst at first, but eventually this person will come to terms with your decision.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
You have an innate bossy streak, and as a result, you might decide to take on a project that is falling apart and put it back together again. The outcome will be better than you had expected.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
You tend to push past the point where many people would choose to stop. A partner or loved one might attempt to explain their position. Understanding will build trust between you.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
A vibrant conversation continues for a good part of the day. You and the other party seem to have much more to share than either of you thought possible. An idea that emerges from out of left field will be the solution to an ongoing problem.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
Others can't seem to imagine how you can juggle as much as you do. Know when to say no to taking on extra responsibility. Schedule a special event with a child.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
Learn to incorporate different points of view into your decision-making process. As a result, the possibility of success becomes more real.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
Your creativity will help you bypass any roadblock or hassle that gets in your way. Know that there is always a solution. Drop the word "no" from your vocabulary.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
Know that you don't need to be doing something all the time. You can be a couch potato as long as you want. On the other hand, if you want to complete a project, why not? Do what you want for a change.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
You are invigorated and determined to follow through on making some calls to loved ones at a distance. You will smile after hanging up the phone. An invitation could be exchanged between you and a close friend.

Couple: Deficient partners and parents

Ask Amy
AMY DICKINSON

Dear Amy: My current husband and I have been married 14 years. (He is 74; I'm 60.)

I had a very traumatic divorce. My current husband was one of the lawyers involved in the divorce. We had a whirlwind relationship and married after nine months.

My new stepdaughter, 31 years old at the time, chose to destroy our special day and to this day, hates me. My husband and I tried to work this through; he was devastated, and I let her walk all over me. Now I don't have anything to do with her.

My husband has refused to attend family events if my only son is attending because my son has had several DUIs. My son is a hard worker but has a limited income. I have helped him with legal fees, etc. I used our joint accounts for this. My husband seems to think my son is a loser.

After holding in my anger about having to shuffle holiday events, I totally blew up and revealed very ugly sexual activities that his daughter did. I feel terrible about this.

Because he is a lawyer and can file for divorce (and has done it before without my knowledge after fights), is my love for him healthy? Should we try harder to make this work? Ninety percent of the time we are good.

Wondering Wife

Wondering: Should you work harder on your marriage? Yes. But you two also seem to be equally poor parents: enablers, punishers and with distorted views of your adult children.

I'm shocked that your marriage is good 90 percent of the time, because given what you report, you two deal with your problems by refusing to deal with your problems and blaming your partner.

You should decide to be partners first, and then parent together. This means that you don't sneak money from your joint account to enable your son's drinking, and he doesn't tolerate his adult daughter's mistreatment of you.

Your mutual refusal to acknowledge and take responsibility for your own actions doesn't bode well. A counselor with a specialty in family systems could help. You might also want to consult with your own attorney.

Dear Amy: I have been extremely unhappy since I was 8 years old, and I'm 27 now. It just seems like my life keeps getting worse. I have never had more than a few friends and have not really been in a relationship. I have been struggling since I was last in college and cannot get the jobs I go for.

I feel like I'm rotting and stuck at home while people who have treated me badly get ahead. I would like to get into politics or acting, but I have no clue how to get started. I am constantly rejected by people, and it is extremely frustrating.

I don't know what to do. I want a career I will enjoy, but I don't know how to make people want to help me career-wise and in my personal life.

Frustrated

Frustrated: You should get a thorough mental-health screening and solid career coaching.

For someone who is sensitive to rejection, your two career choices: politics and acting, are not good fits. Both careers involve repeated rejection experiences, but if you are truly passionate about these things, then you will learn the most by diving in.

You should volunteer with a local political campaign, supporting a cause or a candidate you believe in. You should also take an improv class. Improv acting is a great way to learn to navigate around different personalities, think on your feet, master rejection and learn to always say "yes."

Amy's column appears daily at *washingtonpost.com/advice*. Write to *askamy@amydickinson.com* or Amy Dickinson, Tribune Content Agency, 16650 Westgrove Dr., Suite 175, Addison, Tex. 75001. You can also follow her @askingamy.

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