

DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

Hijinks: Winning 'air quotes'

BY PAT MYERS

In Week 1280, we asked you to insert "air quotes" into a word, then define it. "Trump" had already been done, not just in one of our own air quotes contests, but by the entire world.

4th place

Pr"ogress"ive: Hillary. — D.T., Washington (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn)

3rd place

Per"ha"ps: Yeah, we should definitely do lunch sometime! (Danielle Nowlin, Fairfax Station)

2nd place and the fart-noise-maker and euro-motif toilet paper

"Colon"alism: Exploiting another country till you've rectum. (Kathy El-Assal, Middleton, Wis.)

And the winner of the Lose Cannon:

Be"lie"ve me: When a speech begins with this phrase, you know what to expect. (Brian Allgar, Paris)

'Not'able:

Honorable mentions

F"rat p"arty: "Man, this cheap beer tastes weird!" (Rob Huffman, Fredericksburg)

"Mad"onna: "I thought I told you to take a bath. No, it doesn't count if you just sit there on top of the water like that. JESUS, JUST GET IN THE TUB!" (Danielle Nowlin)

B"onan"za: Discovering your father's stash of Playboys. (Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.)

Cele"brat"e: "It's my party and I'll cry if I want to." (Drew Bennett, West Plains, Mo.)

Hy"pot"hesis: "Hey, dude, I was thinking, like, what if, you know, like, wouldn't that be awesome?" (Roy Ashley, Washington)

Jer"USA"lem: Foreign city with an irritating bit of America stuck in its middle. (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

M"anus"cript: Pages of rejected novel used as toilet paper. (Robert Schechter, Dix Hills, N.Y.)

Peg"gy P"eterson: "\$130,000 and she's still talking? What a rip-off!" — D. Dennison, Washington (Jesse Frankovich, Grand Ledge, Mich.)

R"oy" Moore and Har"vey" Weinstein: Aunt Yetta warned me about guys like that. (Elaine Lederman, Strasburg, Va.)

Tech"nolog"ic"al advancement: A software update that now requires three steps to do what used to take one. (Jon Gearhart, Des Moines)

Ther"mom"eter: What you check to see if you are going to need a sweater. (Peter Ashkenaz, Falls Church, a First Offender)

Z"ucch"ini: Zucchini. (Brendan Beary, Great Mills, Md.)

Adole"scen't": "Honey, it's definitely time to wash those gym clothes." (Rick Haynes, Boynton Beach, Fla.; Rob Huffman)

"RIP"ple effect: Why do celebrity deaths always seem to come in threes? (Dima Llanos, Middleton, Wis., a First Offender)

"Lite"rature: "Man, this new James Patterson is great!" (Rob Huffman)

"Hide"ous: "That vase you got me? Oh, I put it away so the kids won't break it." (Danielle Nowlin)

An"them": A patriotic song that "those people" won't stand for. (Kevin Dopart)

Ba"star"d: When you're one, you think you get to do anything. (Jeff Contompasis)

Ca"tech"ism: Online Bible study. (John Hutchins, Silver Spring)

B"ED": A problem in the sack. (Tom Witte, Montgomery, Village)

Dec"AF": "This coffee is so @%#\*ing lame." (Melissa Balmay, Rochester, N.Y.)

Com"putin"g: How the Russians managed to hack the U.S. elections. (Brian Allgar)

H"ILIGH'T": My best alternative fact. — K. Conway (Jeff Strong, Fairfax, a First Offender)

Discr"EPA"ncies: What auditors found in Scott Pruitt's travel vouchers. (Chris Doyle; Jesse Frankovich)

E"NRA"ged: Mad as hell that that



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

New contest for Week 1284: Same difference

The difference between the World Cup and armpit hair: This year, more Americans will be watching their armpit hair.

- Alex Ovechkin's smile
• a Roach Motel
• The print version of The Washington Post
• dust bunnies
• the World Cup
• Florida Man
• Kim Jong Un's Porta-John
• a pound of scrapple
• Oscar Wilde
• Cold, hard facts
• armpit hair
• a North Korean beach vacation
• a deck of 51 cards
• an emotional-support peacock
• the new Duchess of Sussex
• edible glitter
• Justify's tail
• a coffee mug with a ceramic snake head inside

"Our similarities outweigh our differences," it's often said by the hopeful. For this perennial contest, the Empress will take similarities or differences, whatever's funnier. This week: Explain how any two of the items in the list above are similar, different or otherwise linked...

Winner gets the Lose Cannon, our Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives an ultra-cool, if ultra-creepy, large ceramic mug with a ceramic rattlesnake tail for a handle...

Other runners-up win our "You Gotta Play to Lose" Loser Mug or our Grossery Bag, "I Got a B in Punmanship." Honorable mentions get one of our lusted-after Loser magnets, "We've Seen Better" or "Idiot Card."

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.



What better for a sleepy morning than a rattlesnake head in your coffee cup?

the government wants to take your guns away. (Chris Doyle)

Ho"t rum p"unch: Many folks thought it sounded good until they woke up and realized what a big headache it caused. (Hildy Zampella, Alexandria)

Im"pot"ent: Too high to even try. (Deanna Busick, Knoxville, Tenn.)

L"ex"us: She got the car. (John McCooney, Rehoboth Beach, Del.)

Immig"ration": This year we'll take a few non-swarthy Europeans ... (Jeff Hazle, San Antonio)

P"ass"ing lane: The shoulder. (John Ramos, Duluth, Minn.)

Re"tire"ment: So much free time now! I can do any ... (Rob Huffman)

S"love"nia: What Melania left behind years ago. (Kevin Dopart)

Yo"ga": "How was class? Oh, did

you know there's a hole in the back of your pants?" (Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)

Cy"bern"etics: How Sen. Sanders plans to stay viable for another presidential run. (Jesse Frankovich)

V"ale"dictorian: Beer pong champion. (John Hutchins)

Sports II"lust"rated: The Swimsuit Issue. (Dan Helming, Maplewood, N.J.)

T"rue": Describing something that, while accurate, would have been better left unsaid (e.g., "Your sister sure looks hot in that bikini"). (Mark Raffman, Reston)

"Ass"ociation: "I'm with stupid." (Luke Baker, Columbia)

Bom"bs"hells: Your daily White House tweetstorm. (Kathy El-Assal)

E"norm"ous: The average size of Middle America's middle. (Kevin Dopart)

Cli"mate": Conditions that determine whether your partner runs hot or cold. "The cli'mate" in my bedroom has been chilly ever since my wife caught me watching our neighbor sunbathing topless." (Jon Gearhart)

And Last: Sym"pat"hy: However much the Empress might feel, it won't get you any ink. (Jesse Frankovich)

Still running — deadline Monday night, June 18: our contest to use a word from the National Spelling Bee in a short poem. See wapo.st/invite1283.

L.A. TIMES SUNDAY PUZZLE

EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words.

Grid numbers and corresponding crossword clues for both Across and Down directions.

6/17/18 xwordeditor@aol.com ©2018 Tribune Content Agency, LLC.

Answers to last week's puzzle below.

HOROSCOPE

BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY | June 17: This year you have many opportunities to choose from. The real issue will be deciding which one appeals the most to you. Others will become more in touch with your multifaceted personality.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) Opportunities to express your strength and determination emerge. Others might chill out or slow down when you express your energetic personality.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) Be sensitive to a friend who wants your support as well as your company. Don't allow minor details or any mild discomfort to get in your way.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) Deal directly with a key person about a money commitment or agreement. You might feel as if you will achieve the goals you want as long as you remain focused.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) Don't push a loved one past their limits. You might feel as if you can't change your interactions. Decide to be more direct about whatever it is you desire.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) Realize how many people look to you for advice. You tend to enrich the quality of others' lives. Your smile helps warm up a difficult matter.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) Your caring ways finally see some results. A key person in your life becomes more attentive and caring. You could be delighted by this person's support and attention.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) Communication flourishes, and you seem to feel more connected to others than you have in the recent past. Honor a fast change of pace.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) You might opt to go on a day trip or partake in some other type of adventure. Getting away will be beneficial. You will see difficult situations with new eyes, given time and space.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) Your caring ways attract others. A discussion could be difficult to hear. Others see you as a sensitive, loving person. You might get involved in a disagreement.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) Use care with your finances, and don't go overboard when expressing your feelings. Do a better job of listening. You could be involved in a difficult conversation.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) Your upbeat personality will help take the edge off someone else's so-so mood. Remain sensitive to this person's needs. Understand your limits, and let others know when you have had enough.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) Take your time answering someone else's questions. This person might be concerned about a mutual friend. Listen and make suggestions. Do your best to avoid a problem or hassle. Open up to a new opportunity, but do not commit to anything just yet.

Answers to last week's puzzle.

A crossword puzzle grid filled with the answers to the previous week's puzzle.

6/10/18