

DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

Let's do the twist: Song anagrams

BY PAT MYERS

In Week 1412 the Empress offered up a choice of anagram challenges involving songs: (a) Choose a line, or even multiple lines, from a song and rearrange all the letters; or (b) anagram the song's title and, optionally, give the revised title some parody lyrics.

Today's winner goes a giant step further: It rearranges all three verses of the carol "Away in a Manger" — that's 432 individual letters in its 116 words — into the rhyming poem below.

4th place: It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas anagrams to I AM GOING, LIKE, "NO THANKS! IT'S STILL OCTOBER!"

3rd place: Carol of the Bells = CHOLESTEROL FLAB See how the fat, soft belly fat, Seems to appear when winter's here.

Watching the game, always the same, Nachos and beer sure to appear. Large pizza, please, with extra cheese, No, that won't do — we'll order two.

Can't ride a bike, can't take a hike, Burgers and fries, no exercise. Parties are fun, food by the ton, Eggnog and booze, can't see my shoes.

Very very very very listless! Very very very very listless! Step on the scale, face turning pale, So out of shape, big hulking ape. King... Kong... King... Kong!

2nd place and the inflatable antlers: Have yourself a merry little Christmas, let your heart be light... Be rather cheery, for Mr. Yuge-Mitts lost it all. (Helluva year, this.)

And the winner of the Clowning Achievement: All three verses, 432 letters, of "Away in a Manger" anagrammed into this poem (which can almost be sung to the hymn tune):

MY REAL WORTH My keen Christmas wish here is to help all I meet, Share joy and goodwill as I walk down the street.

To reward the jobless, even though I am broke, And hide noble deeds with a shrug or a joke. To seek to be jolly, decent, godly, serene,

To buy all the beers when I go to a bar, The landlord at the inn will think I am a star. I'll carry a banner, reading "Jesus Is Love."*

SOILED... OLDIES: Honorable mentions The Jackson 5's ABC = ACB Well, you're on the SCOTUS now, gal,

Doing things you never did before. Five may be key, a clear guarantee, But we'd like to have one vote more. Now, now, now, we're gonna show you (show you, show you)

ACB, chosen by DJT! No leftie like RBG! ACB, 6 to 3, Amy, make it be!

O Christmas Tree = O SIR TECH MASTER O techno-geek, O techno-geek, My smart TV's not booting!



New contest for Week 1416: The Year in Redo, Part 2

F-fluent: What a lot of tots have become after learning new vocabulary at home from their stressed-out parents.

If 2020 were a Christmas tree, Charlie Brown would look at it and say, "Let's get the big shiny pink one instead."

"Downton Abbey" updated for 2020: Lord and Lady Grantham struggle with the challenges created by social distancing — especially dressing themselves.

This week we continue our 2020 do-over (oh, yes, Lord, please) with a second chance on any — or all — of 25 recent contests, including limericks, cartoon captions, foal names, fake trivia, up to this week's song anagrams.

This week: Enter (or reenter) any Style Invitational contest from Week 1388 through 1412.

See descriptions and links for all the old contests, plus more important details, in this week's Style Conversational column at wapo.st/conv1416.

Submit up to 25 entries at wapo.st/enter-invite-1416 (no capitals in the Web address). Deadline is Monday, Jan. 4; results appear Jan. 24 in print, Jan. 21 online.

Winner gets the Clowning Achievement, our new Style Invitational trophy. Second place wins a face mask in Dumpster Fire print cotton, handmade by Loser Rebekah Bundang.

Other runners-up win their choice of our "For Best Results, Pour Into Top End" Loser Mug or our "Whole Fools" Grocery Bag. Honorable mentions get one of our lusted-after Loser magnets, "No 'Bility" or "Punderachiever."

A new "You're Invited" podcast episode: Mike Gips interviews 750-time Loser Beverley Sharp, who gained a new, somewhat secret identity with the Invite.

What says "2020" better than a face mask in Dumpster Fire print? Six innuendos, FIVE ALL-CAPS RANTS! Four idle threats, Three big lies, Two enormous boasts, And a hot cup of covfe!



It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year = IT'S THE MOST WONDERFUL MOHAIR FETE YET

... I've a vest in the attic That attracts so much static, I'm bound to appear In the ugliest sweater this year!

Grandma Got Run Over By a Reindeer = EVER MOURNING A TENDER GRAY BROAD

Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer = GRANDMA GOT A VERY NO-BUN DERRIERE But her new implants — gifts — made her much cheerier,

The Twelve Days of Christmas = A RASH ELF TWEETS COVID MYTHS ... On the sixth day of Christmas the Donald tweeted me

L.A. TIMES SUNDAY PUZZLE

EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for 'EYE EXAM' and 'DOWN' sections. Clues include 'Order to a construction worker?', 'EPA-banned toxins', 'Chicago district, with "the"', etc.

Answers to last week's puzzle below.

HOROSCOPE

BY MADALYN ASLAN

HAPPY BIRTHDAY | Dec. 27: Giving, ethical and idealistic, you are the clever contributor in what you offer the world this year. It's the best time to express yourself creatively.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) Your use of constructive thoughts and words magically uplifts the world you dwell in. A sister or brother becomes a closer friend.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) It's easy to be overcharitable today. Say no to a demanding acquaintance. Be especially conservative when it comes to financial risks or pricey purchases.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) You feel the need to accomplish more. This ambition leads you to pursue your work with an intensity. Don't let job-related stress build.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) Today brings hidden information to the fore when most needed. Be cautious about expressing love and devotion too overtly.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) Today can tempt you to envy others. Concentrate on your quality of life. A friend makes a helpful recommendation.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) Focus on creating the right impression. Combine professional expertise with the human touch, and your day is off to a wonderful beginning.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) Today allows you to understand a complex neighbor or sibling. Ideas

Answers to last week's puzzle.

Grid of answers to the previous week's crossword puzzle, including words like 'EMOPESTHABEASIBET', 'WAZEINCHBRENDAMULE', 'WHOLETTHE DOGSOUTOILS', etc.