

Entertainment

Style Invitational Week 1156: Dead letters — our annual obit poem contest

Plus everything from horse names to Your Mama jokes from our retrospective winners

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(Bob Staake for The Washington Post)

By Pat Myers December 30, 2015 Follow @PatMyersTWP

(Click [here to skip down](#) to the winners of our retrospective contest, in which you could enter any of the past year's contests)**Madame Claude****Was a bawd.****But she had class****When she peddled tushie.**

Once again, The Style Invitational celebrates the New Year with the level of class for which it is so justly renowned. **This week: Write a humorous poem of no longer than eight lines about someone who died in 2015**, as in the example above by Washington

Post Poet Laureate Gene Weingarten. You can find many lists of Heaven's newest residents by Googling "notable deaths 2015." As always with our obit poems, being clever doesn't mean you have to be brutal; don't give someone's new address as Hell just because he voted the other way or because she dressed badly. Your poem isn't required to rhyme (or play on rhyme, as in the example above), but over the years of obit poems, the rhymers have blotted up the great majority of Ink from the Empress.

Winner gets the [Inkin' Memorial](#), the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a special imported two-pack: "Fat of Python" skin ointment and "Cobra Toxan" cream, brought back from a Vietnamese vacation by Hall of Fame Loser Beverley Sharp. We advise, however, that you leave their contents in their tubes, lest you become the subject of a Style Invitational entry 56 weeks from now.

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" [Grossery 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, Jan. 11; results published Jan. 31 (online Jan. 28). You may submit up to 25 entries per contest. Include "Week 1156" 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 Chris Doyle; the honorable-mentions subhead is by Danielle Nowlin. 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](https://twitter.com/StyleInvite) on Twitter.

● **The Style Conversational** The Empress's weekly online column, published late Thursday afternoon, discusses each new contest and set of results. Especially if you plan to enter, check it out at wapo.st/styleconv.

[And the results of the Style Invitational contest posted four weeks ago . . .](#)

DO WIT AGAIN: OUR 2015 RETROSPECTIVE CONTEST

In [Week 1152](#) the Empress invited the Loser Community to enter (or reenter) any of 50 of the year's previous contests. She received entries for almost all of them, especially foal names, bank headlines and repurposed business names, but also a slew of excellent song parodies. The parodies work online better than in the print edition, since the columns of type are wider, but more importantly we link to the tunes they're based on, tunes a reader might not know. It's why this week we're adding a runner-up spot online.

5th place:

Week 1117, song parodies about current events:

Penis transplants soon to help wounded vets:

To "[Open a New Window](#)" from "Mame" (sung by Nan Reiner herself)

Talk to our new surgeons, walk through our new door,

Play on a new organ like you've never played before.

If you're a latter-day John Bobbitt, no need to feel sad.

We'll do a great job – it could even make you a Dad!

If injury's made your member less than muscular –
Slight in your hand . . . short of its prime . . .
Our medical skills – neuronal, bone, and vascular –
Promise to stand the test of time!
Our payment terms are flexible; we offer differences in charge
Based on if your donor is medium, small or large.
We've stacked up the tools to fix you right away:
You can nail with a new hammer, roll with a new drive shaft,
Bang with a new drumstick every day! (Nan Reiner, Boca Raton, Fla.)

4th place

Week 1141, bank headlines:

Post head: Mastectomy may not be best option, study finds

Bank head: Radical treatment for bronchitis questioned (Rob Cohen, Potomac, Md.)

3rd place

Week 1144, repurposed brand names:

Yoplait is an okay name for a yogurt, but it's a great name for a children's gym in New Jersey. (Michael Weiner, Gaithersburg, Md.)

2nd place and the giant inflatable dreidel:

Week 1117, song parodies on current events:

(Extremists demand Muslims' deportation; to "[Tomorrow](#)" from "Annie")

The people who cry, "Praise Allah!"

Let them weep in sorrow, scream or holler;

Kick them out!

My country despises Allah.

Put the face of Jesus on the dollar –

Show His clout!

In each city and town: you're brown? You're going!

And I'm feeling no qualms, imams go too!

If anyone worships Allah,

They'll be heading out by yacht or trawler;

Ban them fast!

Don't holler to Allah;

The boat's getting smaller,

America's great at last! (Matt Monitto, Bristol, Conn.)

And the winner of the Inkin' Memorial:

Week 1110, Your Mama jokes:

Yoda's Mama is so dumb, she talks like this. (Gregory Koch, Falls Church, Va.)

Wringing out the old: honorable mentions

Week 1103, song titles as TV themes: For "World Series of Poker": "I Want to Hold Your Hand" (Rob Huffman, Fredericksburg, Va.)

Week 1105, obit poems: *Millie Zantow, Recycling Activist:*

She was buried (tsk tsk) when found clearly not nimble,
As her number came up with no triangle symbol. (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

(Week 1106, resolutions 100 years from now: Schedule a visit to the Statue of Trump at Ellis Island, and climb into the extended middle finger. (Frank Mann, Washington)

Week 1108, valentines:

A valentine limerick...from a credit card reader to a new microchip card:

Please insert yourself into my slot
So that I can assess what you've got.
And don't pull out too fast,
For I need this to last
Or our dalliance will be for naught. (Nan Reiner)

Week 1109, bogus D.C. trivia:

President Truman collected 457 dollar bills during his term in office and kept them in a jar on his desk. (Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.)

- Metrorail escalators were designed extra wide to allow tourists to conveniently place their luggage next to them, or to stand together as a family. (David Ballard, Reston, Va.)

Week 1110, Your Mama jokes: Sir Isaac Newton's Mama is so fat, he wrote that "F = Ma." (Drew Bennett, West Plains, Mo.)

Week 1112, neologisms containing S, H, A, R and P:

Ballparkish: Only approximately approximate. (Jesse Frankovich, Lansing, Mich.)

- Derpsichorean: Having two left feet. (Chris Doyle)

Week 1114, headlines with a positive spin: Liberty University makes [packing for college](#) easy (Kevin Dopart)

Week 1117, parodies on the news:

To the 1940s song "[Cruising Down the River](#)"

Cruz can make you shiver when you'd otherwise be warm;
He rants, berates, pontificates, creates a verbal storm.
The rigid right adore him; they admire his cheek and spin,
But Cruz can make you shiver
'Cause he just might win. (Mae Scanlan, Washington)

(To *"Uptown Funk"*; start video at 0:36)

I'm so hot (hot damn!)
Live-tweeting my master plan!
I'm so hot (hot damn!)
Got some flames I'd like to fan.
I'm so white (that's right!)
If you're Muslim I'll pick a fight.
I'm so white (that's right!)
Mexicans had best take flight.

Trade deal? I'll undo ya (whoo!)
Refugees? Gonna screw ya (whoo!)
Racists? I'm gonna woo ya (whoo!)
'Cause Dumb Down Trump gonna give it to ya!
Don't believe him? Just watch! (Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.)

Week 1118, "breed" two Triple Crown-eligible horse names: Carpe Diem x Royal Squeeze = Crappe Biem (Jon Gearhart, Des Moines)

- Firing Line x Condo Commando = Scared Shortless (Jon Gearhart)
- Leave the Light On x Moon River = Motel Styx (Perry Beider, Silver Spring, Md.)

Week 1119, color names: Pepcobalt — It's supposed to be a bright blue, but it can go dark unexpectedly, sometimes for a week at a time. (Danielle Nowlin, Fairfax Station, Va.)

Week 1122, "grandfoals":

Chat With Dentist x 2B Continued = Coming Extractions (Chris Doyle)

- GermanOfTheBored x Let My Pimple Go = Adolf Zzzzzitler (Nan Reiner)
- Helene a Handbag x Kiljoy Was Her = Drachma Queen (Kathy El-Assal, Middleton, Wis.)

Week 1125, truncated song titles: [Ti]ME IN A BOTTLE: Jingle for the new neighborhood fertility center. (Rob Wolf, Gaithersburg, Md.)

SIMPLE TWIST OF FAT[e]: The Cruller Shop (Al Larsen, Arlington, Va., a First Offender)

Week 1132, fake military trivia:

The names of some Civil War generals have made their way into our vocabulary. They include Ambrose Burnside, who had impressive sideburns, and Rufus Hitshed, who was not a very nice guy. (Roger Dalrymple, Gettysburg, Pa.)

- Before a recruit receives his dog tags, he must “mark” his bunk. (Lawrence McGuire, Waldorf, Md.)

Week 1133, clerihews:

Bob Dylan

Put on tefillin

To demand answers from God, then grinned

When God said, “Zimmerman, have you checked with the wind?” (Robert Schechter, Dix Hills, N.Y.)

- Alex Rodriguez

Is big in the Major Leaguez.

For 22 years he produced

And juiced. (Kevin Dopart)

Week 1134, “air quotes”:

Incen”diary”: When your spouse reads what you wrote about old flames. (William Collinge, Gettysburg, Pa.)

- P“ass”ing interest: Just looking, dear. (Warren Tanabe, Annapolis, Md.)

Week 1140, good/bad name: Legoland is a good name for an amusement park but a bad name for a bereavement counseling center. (Jon Hensley, Arlington, Va.)

Week 1141, bank heads:

Post head: Man suffers heart attack, tumbles from escalator at L’Enfant Plaza Metro station

Bank head: Train had arrived on time (Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)

- Bowser, McAuliffe and Hogan endorse joint trade missions

Mayor, governors first shared reefers, then chipped in for munchies (Pie Snelson, Silver Spring, Md.)

- Why you can’t call nuts, avocados, olives or salmon ‘healthy’

It’s ‘healthFUL,’ carp grammar pedants (Mike Gips, Bethesda, Md.)

Week 1144, repurposed brand names:

Prelude is a good name for a car, and also a good way to describe the first part of a date with Bill Cosby. (Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)

- Chico’s is a good name for a women’s fashion boutique, but a better name for a brand of underpants. (Beverley Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

Still running — deadline Monday night, Jan. 4: our “Vowel Movement” contest. See bit.ly/invite1155.

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