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Lifestyle

Style Invitational Week 1402: The fourteeners – a neologism contest

Plus metaphors for the all-too-memorable year 2020



By Pat Myers

September 17, 2020 at 9:05 a.m. EDT

+ Add to list

(Click [here](#) to skip down to the winning descriptions of the year 2020)

Karenting: When a mom with a cranky baby demands to see the stork's manager.

WMATAdor: You, as you twist and wave your hands, trying to keep six feet away from everyone else on the train.

Mailodorous: How it smells when the Postal Service starts slowing down delivery before an election.

Having donned her imperial tiara in Week 536, lo these almost 17 years ago, the Empress is as surprised as anyone that she's never had to have it surgically removed. Indeed, she did a little scepter-shudder to see "Week 1400" appear in The Style Invitational's headline two weeks ago. We were busy with horse names that week, so let's catch up now to add 1 to a contest from 2016, first suggested by Mark Raffman, later by Jeff Contompassis, and this time by Duncan Stevens, complete with the examples above: **Make up a word whose Scrabble letter values add up to exactly 14 (no blanks!)** and define it. Your word *cannot* be eligible for English-language Scrabble; to check, just type in your word at scrabble.merriam.com to make sure it's not valid. As with all our neologism contests, you're welcome to use your word in a funny sentence to make your entry funnier, and not welcome to use your word in an unfunny sentence.

Scrabble letter values:

A, E, I, O, U, L, N, S, T, R: 1 point;

D, G: 2 points

B, C, M, P: 3 points;

F, H, V, W, Y: 4 points;

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5 Perspective

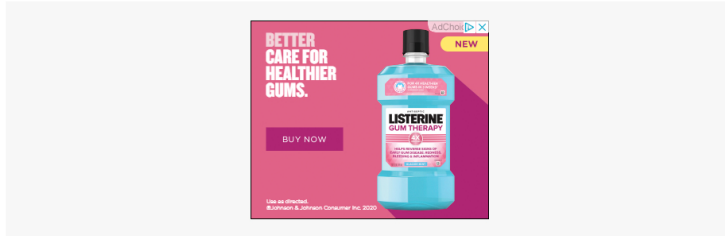


K: 5 points;
J, X: 8 points;
Q, Z: 10 points

You don't have to worry about how many of each tile are really available in a Scrabble set; it also doesn't matter if your word is so long that it would fall on a multiple-letter tile on a Scrabble board. Just count the points.

Submit up to 25 entries at wapo.st/enter-invite-1402 (no capitals in the Web address). **Deadline is Tuesday, Sept. 29** (an extra day so that those observing Yom Kippur may think about entries during the sermon); results will appear Oct. 18 in print, Oct. 15 online.

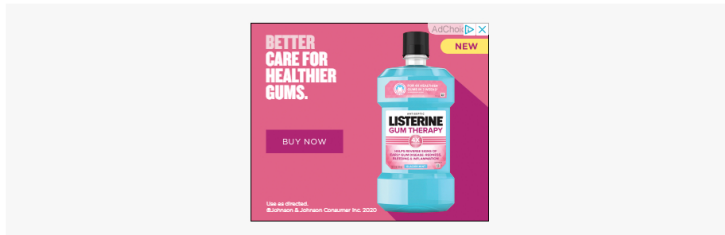
Winner gets the Lose Cannon, our Style Invitational trophy. Second place gets a tiny tin containing actual foldout "Emergency Underpants" and a coconut-scented car-interior freshener that's called, we swear, Pimp Oil.



Other runners-up win their choice of our "For Best Results, Pour Into Top End" Loser Mug or our "Whole Fools" Grossery Bag. Honorable mentions get one of our lusted-after Loser magnets, "No 'Bility" or "Punder-achiever." First Offenders receive only a smelly tree-shaped air "freshener" (FirStink for their first ink). See general contest rules and guidelines at wapo.st/InvRules. The headline "Bleep Year" was submitted by both Bill Dorner and Chris Doyle; Chris and Jesse Frankovich each sent in the honorable-mentions subhead. Join the 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.

BRAND-NEW PODCAST! In Episode 3 of **You're Invited**, host Mike Gips interviews Elden Carnahan, founder 27 years ago of the thriving social community we now call the Losers. Hear it at bit.ly/invite-podcast.

The Style Conversational The Empress's weekly online column discusses each new contest and set of results. See this week's — published late Thursday afternoon, Sept. 17 — at wapo.st/conv1402.



And from The Style Invitational four weeks ago . . .

2020 — it's a bleep year: Metaphors from Week 1398

In [Week 1398](#) the Empress asked for novel ways to describe the year 2020 and got a deluge — some 2,000 entries — of "how bad is it?" jokes. If you're entering our still-running contest for "X is so Y" jokes in haiku form (wapo.st/invite1401; deadline [Sept. 21](#)), sorry if one of these scooped your own idea.

4th place:

2020 has been so offensively bad, it's had to change its name to Washington Calendar Year. (*Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.*)

3rd place:

If 2020 were a camping trip, the poison ivy would have chiggers on it. (*Beverly Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.*)

2nd place

and the mask with the cartoonish grin:

Miss Manners: Correcting behavior without wasting your time

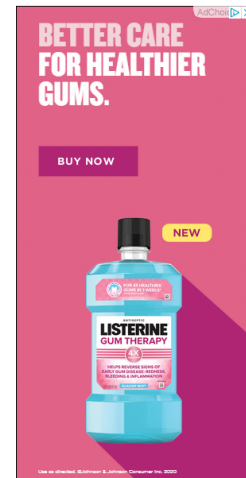


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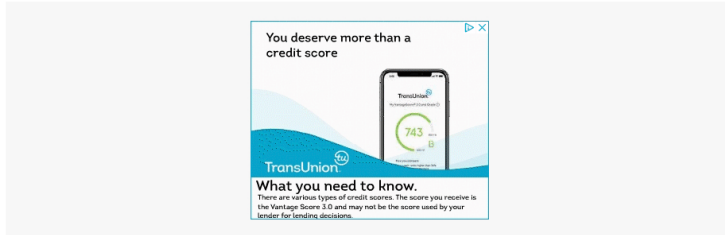
If 2020 were a Christmas tree, Charlie Brown would look at it and say, "Let's get the big shiny pink one instead." (*Matt Monitto, Bristol, Conn.*)

And the winner of the Lose Cannon:

2020 is like a Zoom work conference where everyone says goodbye but then nobody is able to Leave Meeting. (*Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.*)

Year misses: Honorable mentions

2020 is like a crash between two semis on the Beltway in rush hour where they both lose their loads and one is full of baking soda and the other is full of vinegar. (*Jeff Hazle, San Antonio*)



If 2020 were a novel, it would be "1984" with all the funny parts taken out. (*Art Grinath, Takoma Park, Md.*)

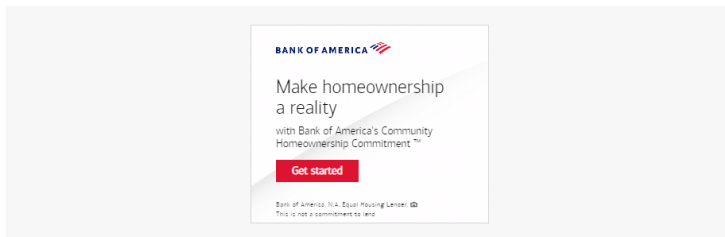
If 2020 were indicted on fraud charges, Donald Trump would say, "I never actually lived in 2020." (*Robert Schechter, Dix Hills, N.Y.*)

2020 as a Cole Porter song: "It's depressing, it's disgusting, it's detestable, it's deplorable, it's demonic, it's de-reary, it's de-worst, it's de-lousy." (*Jonathan Jensen, Baltimore*)

2020 is like binge-watching the "Buffering" message. (*Ben Aronin, Washington*)

2020 is like an itch on your nose you can't reach because you're not supposed to touch your face and also you've been handcuffed. (*Sam Mertens, Silver Spring, Md.*)

If 2020 were a song, it would be Florence Foster Jenkins covering "WAP" backed by Alvin and the Chipmunks. (*John Johnston, St. Inigoes, Md.*)



If 2020 were a nickel bag, it would be a bag with a nickel in it. (*J.D. Berry, Springfield, Va.*)

2020 is like having your wife run off with your best friend who you just found out is running a drug cartel that is funneling money into an offshore account under your name that is about to be busted in a sting operation on your birthday. (*Rob Cohen, Potomac, Md.*)

2020 is like bribing a college-admissions officer and ending up at Trump U. (*Duncan Stevens*)

2020 is so bad, Jerry Falwell Jr. had to stop watching. (*Frank Osen*)

If 2020 apologized to us for all this, it would say "Well, I'm sorry you feel that way." (*Danielle Nowlin, Fairfax Station, Va.*)



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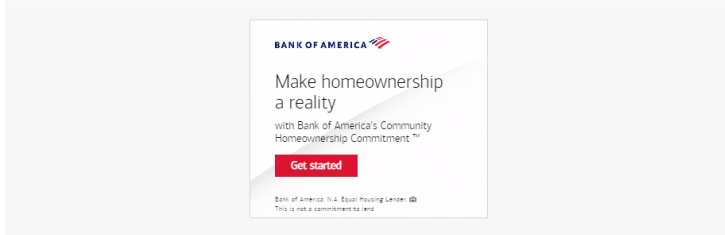




Honorable mention for Frank Mann's photo of his own rotting jack-o-lantern.

If 2020 were a stray dog, they'd turn it away at the no-kill shelter. (*Susanne Pierce Dyer, Suisun City, Calif.*)

As a song, 2020 would be "Seasons in the Sun" played on a spit-filled kazoo. (*Joanne Free, Clifton, Va.*)



If 2020 were an infomercial, you'd lose track of how many times they said, "But wait! There's more!" (*Jesse Frankovich, Lansing, Mich.*)

Even Stanley Kubrick would have thrown out the script for 2020. (*Bill Bouyer, Ocoee, Fla.*)

If 2020 signed up for The Post's Date Lab, there would be "No further contact." (*Madelyn Rosenberg, Arlington, Va., a First Offender*)

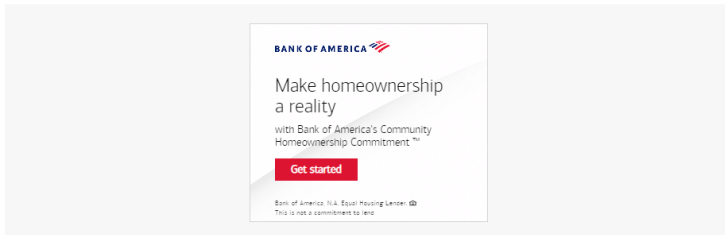
If 2020 were a sandwich spread, it would be toe jam. (*Teri Chism, Winchester, Va.*)

If 2020 were a day at the beach, it would be June 6, 1944. (*Frank Mann*)

If 2020 were a cartoon character, it would be Wile E. Coyote — and the laws of physics would apply. (*Kevin Dopart, Washington*)

If 2020 were a Facebook friend request, it'd be from Stephen Miller. (*David Shombert, Harrisonburg, Va.*)

If 2020 were a Kama Sutra position, it would be called Abstinence. (*Lee Graham, Rockville, Md.*)



If 2020 were your homework, you'd be scrubbing it out of the carpet because your dog spit it back up. (*Marli Melton, Carmel Valley, Calif.*)

If 2020 were a piece of pie, it would be from "The Help." (*Art Grinath*)

If my eyesight were 2020, I'd sue my Lasik surgeon. (*David Zvijac, Annandale*)

2020 is the blackberry seed in the molar of life. (*Bill Dorner, Indianapolis*)

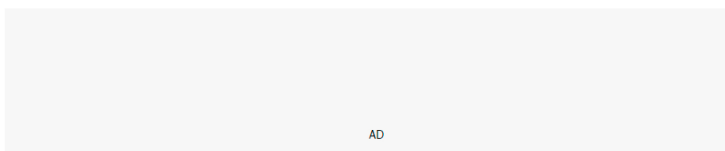
2020 is like being a hypochondriac who's suddenly right all the time. (*Diana Oertel, San Francisco*)

If 2020 were on Tinder, even Your Mama would swipe left. (*Duncan Stevens*)

The audiobook of 2020 will be narrated by Gilbert Gottfried and Kimberly Guilfoyle. (*Duncan Stevens*)

If 2020 is an opera, the fat lady obviously has laryngitis. (*Jon Gearhart, Des Moines*)

If 2020 were the Style Invitational, it'd be a poetry contest requiring the words "orange," "silver," "opus" and "discombobulate." (*Todd DeLap, Fairfax*)



AD

2020 is like reading the Style Invitational: You keep thinking that next week it will finally get better. (Rob Cohen)

If 2020 were an Invitational prize, it would actually be one of the better ones. (Jesse Frankovich)

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1 Comments



Pat Myers

Pat Myers is editor and judge of The Style Invitational, The Washington Post's page for clever, edgy humor and wordplay. In the role since December 2003, she has posted and judged more than 700 contests. She also writes the weekly Style Conversational column and runs the Style Invitational Devotees page on Facebook. [Follow](#)

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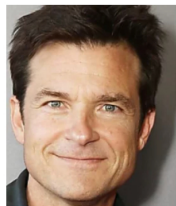
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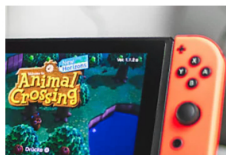
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