DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

Festival of slights: Celebrating 'Love a Lawyer Day' etc.

BY PAT MYERS

In Week 1149, we asked you for tips on how to celebrate National Love Your Lawyer Day — a real thing, dreamed up by the American Lawyers Public Image Association — or similar "holidays" real or imagined.

4th place

How to celebrate **National Mime Day:** Grab a hammer, smash the glass box and let him out. (Roy Ashley, Washington)

3rd place

For **Cosmetologist Appreciation Day?** Just make up something. (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

2nd place and the bottle of wine containing a snake and a scorpion:

For **Love Your Lawyer Day:** Hire him for a rush project right before daylight saving time ends so he can fulfill every lawyer's dream: billing 25 hours in a single day. (Mark Raffman, Esq., Reston, Va.)

And the winner of the Inkin' Memorial:

A greeting card for National Love a Supermodel Day:
To thank you for your flawless skin
And hips and tummy (oh so thin)
And thighs that do not meet, it
Will be my pleasure to bring cake
To your next shoot, where, on a
break,
You'll get to watch me eat it.
(Melissa Balmain, Rochester, N.Y.)

Better call it a day: honorable mentions

For Love Your Lawyer Day:

♥ Take him to lunch, factoring in the 0.25 hour he'll bill for advising you to order the prime rib. (George-Ann Rosenberg, Washington)

♥ Send a card, and of course charge for the cost of the card, gas to the card store, ink from the pen used to sign the card, postage, carriage, the intellectual property represented by the inscription, plus 50 percent overhead costs. (Mike Gips, Bethesda)

♥ Have sex with her spendthrift spouse. (Edward Gordon, Austin)

♥ Buy your lawyer a treadmill with a screen that shows the back end of an ambulance driving away. (Drew Bennett, West Plains, Mo.)

♥ Buy him a dog named Your Honor so he can enjoy uttering phrases like "Sit, Your Honor!" and "Beg, Your Honor!" (Mark Raffman)

♥ Send a card with your best wishes, stipulating that "wishes" provide no assurances and "best" implies no actual superlative benefit. (George-Ann Rosenberg)

♥ Buy him a judge. (Jeff Shirley, Richmond)

FOR THE REST OF HUMANITY (OR "HUMANITY"):

It's **Love Your Gym Teacher Day:** Remember yours with a three-pack of pale gray candles in a trio of evocative scents: Damp Tile, BO and Three-Day Sweat Sock. (Nancy Della Rovere, Silver Spring)

Tell **your cable installer** you'll pick him up for dinner between 4 and 10 p.m. on Thursday. Call at 9:30 to reschedule for a week from Tuesday. (Jon Gearhart, Des Moines)

Invite a few **airline executives** over for dinner. Serve each one three peanuts and a thimbleful of Scotch. (Jon Gearhart)

For **Love Your Psychiatrist Day:**
I talked to both the others and we think:
We ought to give a day off to our shrink.
We'll muddle through somehow if we just try;
Enjoy yourself! Signed: Me, Myself and I.
(Beverley Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

Buy **your lab tech** a lovely gown — backless, of course. (Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)

For **a freelance writer:** Mail her a postcard saying, "We've considered the idea of a day set aside to appreciate you. Unfortunately, it does not suit our current needs." (Lawrence McGuire, Waldorf, Md.)

The Orange Line will mark **Love Our Subway Day** by announcing at each stop, "We _ov_ yo_, Met_o." Celebratory gargling and snorting is encouraged. — Metro Mgmt. (Larry Neal, McLean, Va.)

Celebrate **Love Your Chiropractor Day** by getting extra kinky. (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn, Va.)

For **National Mail Carrier Day,** send your note of thanks to mylocalcarrier@usps.com. (Rob Cohen, Potomac, Md.)

Present **a paparazzo** with a framed photo of himself at work stalking some celebrity, but not the picture you tweeted of him taking a break peeing behind a car. (Dave Prevar, Annapolis)

For **Love Your Bloomingdale's Ad Exec Day:** Spike her morning coffee while she's not looking — wink, wink — then lock her office door and, you know, "love" her. (Nan Reiner, Boca Raton, Fla.)

For **Love Your Improv Comedian Day:** Spend the day doing whatever random strangers tell you to do. (Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)

Give **your banker** a hotel stay with free check-in (other services included for additional fees). (Lela Martin, Midlothian, Va.)

For **Love Your Garbage Collector Day,** hide a few festively decorated gifts among your refuse. Your collector will enjoy the curbside "scavenger hunt." (Rob Cohen)

Buy a Super Bowl ticket for your favorite **Washington Redskin** so he can go to a Super Bowl at least once. (Jeff Hazle, Woodbridge)

A card for **National Love Your Mortician Day:**
It was only this summer you buried our dad
In a casket you claimed was the cheapest you had.
When we looked at the bill, we decided right then:
We'll be none of us dying to meet you again. (Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.)

Hold a buffet lunch on **DMV Clerk Recognition Day:** Place the food on the main table but put the utensils in a different room. Then let the guests know they need to have brought their own plates, notarized. (Kevin Dopart)

On **Lenders Appreciation Day,** call up a savings and loan, offer to throw them a party, then call back and tell them they don't qualify. (Frank Osen)

Still running — deadline Monday night, Dec. 14: our contest to enter any of 50 previous contests. See bit.ly/invite1152.

BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

New contest for Week 1153: Be three-paired

FSM: To follow Fecal Sludge Management, it is best to wear rubber gloves and a mask.
To follow the Flying Spaghetti Monster, you need only wear a spaghetti strainer on your head.

FMM stands for the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary . . . and also for Female-Male-Male, a position not endorsed by the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary.

We came up with that nice comparison above to use in Part 2 of our series of initialisms contests, covering EAA through HZZ ... and then, at the *very* last minute, we realized: *We did Part 2!* We're on Part 3! But you get the idea: There's a set of Wikipedia pages containing nothing but thousands of three-letter combinations — TLAs, they're called, three-letter acronyms and initialisms. And each one of these TLAs is a link to a page listing various things that the TLA is used to represent. **This week: Choose two or more entities represented by a single three-letter combination from IAA through LZZ — find the Wikipedia links at bit.ly/invite3-2015 — and say how they are alike or different or have *some* connection,** as in the examples above. The entity could be something abbreviated by the three letters, as above, or it might be a three-letter word or name: "let" or "Ito," say. It doesn't even have to be mentioned in the Wikipedia list, but it must be real. And remember, the TLA has to start with I, J, K or L.
Winner gets the Inkin' Memorial, the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place also salutes a titan of the Republican Party: It's a genuine original LP record of "Spiro T. Agnew: The Speeches That Stirred America," which the Empress procured from Som Records, that great D.C. emporium of vinyl. Made to promote the Nixon-Agnew 1972 reelection ticket, the disc features 60 solid minutes of the then-veep having his say on "Youth, Hippies and Yippies, Draft Dodgers," etc. (Not clear if "nattering nabobs of negativism" made the cut; also, there's no tape of Agnew accepting construction kickbacks in his White House office.)

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, Dec. 21; results published Jan. 10 (online Jan. 7). You may submit up to 25 entries per contest. Include "Week 1153" 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 Jesse Frankovich. 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.

Kick back and listen to this 1970 collection of natterings by the only vice president from Maryland.

SUNDAY CHALLENGE

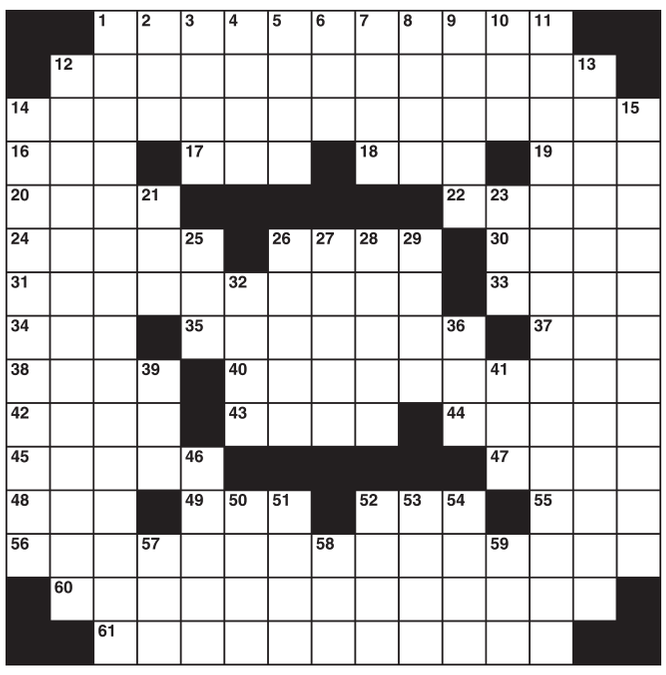
BY MARTIN ASHWOOD-SMITH © 2015 CROSSYNERGY SYNDICATE LLC

ACROSS
1 Voters' rights group of the early 20th century
12 They may try to figure out the future
14 Capitol Hill prizes
16 Alternatives to fans, briefly
17 "Little Women" woman
18 It's a bit of a reproach
19 Down time?
20 Mangel-wurzel, e.g.
22 Augment
24 Rigel or Spica
26 Antiques
30 ____ dire (jury selection process)
31 Jersey Shore city popularized by Springsteen
33 Research ctr.
34 Barcelona relative
35 Find fault with
37 Tie settlers, for short
38 "Shake ____" (1981 song by the Cars)
40 Chipped, say
42 NASCAR legend Yarborough
43 Citrus peel
44 Betel nut palm
45 Bothered big-time
47 Caution tag
48 Woman who's 54?
49 "Call Me Maybe" middle name
52 Criminal patterns, briefly
55 Ink spot?
56 Surprise visits, of a kind
60 Where "He maketh me to lie down," biblically
61 Lets down

DOWN
1 Swanson film of 1950
2 Thespian Thurman
3 Big cheese in Greece?
4 Email header
5 Actor Calhoun
6 Clay transformation?
7 Big kid?
8 Inuit word for "house"
9 Blues vocalist ____ Monica
10 "Ash Wednesday" monogram
11 Try to get a better view, perhaps
12 Calling for
13 Figureheads?
14 Leaves, in a way
15 Game shows?
21 19th of 24 Greek letters
23 Early sixth-century date
25 Short lines?
26 Heaps
27 Is slack-jawed
28 Be constructive?
29 It's played with 32 cards
32 Santa ____ Valley, California
36 Lilting syllable
39 Shell game object
41 ____ pro nobis
46 Has a go at
50 Final Stuart monarch
51 Armchair quarterback's channel, perhaps
52 Get engaged?
53 Eight, for starters
54 Knock for a loop
57 Canadian prov. named for royalty
58 D.C. donor
59 First NYC subway

Answer to last week

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



HOROSCOPE

BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY | DEC. 13: This year you will be able to merge different interests, friends and offbeat ideas. If you are single, your dating life keeps each day exciting. A relationship formed at this time in your life will be dependent on having a perpetual element of excitement. If you are attached, a situation involving how the two of you approach each day will come to the surface. You will be pleased with the outcome and enjoy each other more as a result. Capricorn is not always compliant.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
The unexpected occurs, but you seem to be the muse who triggers it. Try to avoid a confrontation with a partner who has been quibbling over this or that. Give this person some space to work through their frustration. Be kind and responsive.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
Read between the lines with a loved one at a distance. This person really wants your time and attention. You'll gain insight if you remain nonjudgmental. Be aware of another person's limits. See what you can do to make a difference.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
Opt for quality one-on-one time with a loved one. The more you invest with this person, the deeper the bond will be. You are likely to greet the unexpected with a smile. A child or new friend could be contentious without explaining why. Try to find out what is going on.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
Reach out to others rather than get upset that you have not seen or heard from them lately. The unexpected marks your plans and your day. Don't stand on ceremony. The presence of a loved one could make all the difference.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
Pace yourself with the knowledge that you can get what you need done. Understand your limits and your expectations. You could be surprised by the options that appear. Be willing to accept more of what a friend offers. You both will be happier as a result.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
Your imagination might take you where you should not be. Maintain a sense of humor, and be willing to share some of your thoughts with a friend. A loved one might seem elusive compared with what he or she used to be. Be more direct if you're confused.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
You might need to loosen up and enjoy your relationships more. If you are frustrated with a key person in your life, you need to open up and be more vulnerable. Share these feelings, and you will discover that being vulnerable can be very important.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
Your temper will flare up from out of the blue, which could shock you. Slow down and note what triggered this outburst. A discussion with a sibling or dear friends will point you in the right direction.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
Your finances might stabilize if you can shop around and find the right bargain. You could lose patience with the crowds, so try to shop at offbeat times. Make time for a special friend. How about an early dinner?

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
You are all smiles, and you understand the limitations that a situation could impose on you. A boss or an older person might make demands that you will not want to meet. Don't be surprised if an angry squabble happens from out of the blue.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
You might want to get to the bottom of a problem. Where you go with the information you get will be significant in figuring out its connection to you. Schedule some downtime and relax. You probably want to finish your holiday cards as soon as you can.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
You will want to defer to others today. Nevertheless, an argument over funds is likely to pop up from out of the blue and make you reconsider your priorities. This topic frequently triggers arguments.

Ex's vicious spin on a holiday letter

Ask Amy

AMY DICKINSON

Dear Amy: This will be my fifth holiday season since I left a suffocating, controlling, verbally abusive ex.

In the time since then, we have gone to court multiple times due to his desire to renegotiate our financial settlement in order to get more money from me. He has lost every case.

Every year, at this time, he writes an epic diatribe against me — the liar and the coward who left — blaming me for the debt he has taken on for vacations, cars, laptops, etc.

He cc's all of our kids, his in-laws and others in his vicious onslaught.

It is hurtful and relentless. He tells lies or distorted half-truths.

This year he used work email. (We both work for the county.)

I want to complain to human resources, but I don't want to be responsible for him losing his job. His nasty-grams are mostly ignored by our children but have become an invisible wall between me and my oldest child, who never wants to hear my side. This leaves a hole in my heart. Can you please advise me on how best to deal with this?

Wishing He'd Let Me Go

Wishing He'd Let Me Go: Well, this puts a whole new twist on the obnoxious holiday letter. Do not respond to this email or any others, but print them out and keep them.

You say that you don't want your ex to be fired, but where I work, using company email to harass anyone — not to mention a fellow employee — is grounds for firing, although the road to termination might lead through mandatory counseling sessions (which he obviously needs).

I don't think you should protect your ex from the consequences of his actions. If he lost his job over this, he — not you — would be responsible for his firing.

Your ex seems to enjoy going to court. The next time he sees a courtroom it might be to answer to a harassment charge. You should contact a lawyer or agency where you live to see if his actions sink to the level of qualifying for a "no contact" order.

You should not feel compelled to defend yourself to those who receive these "nasty-grams," but you should express sorrow that they are on the receiving end. Reach out to your oldest, offering to talk about it whenever they are ready.

Dear Amy: I'm sorry but the letter from "Disappointed Dad" seemed like a lot of whining to me. If he wants to see his grandchildren, he and his wife should go to visit them!

Active Grandparents

Active Grandparents: "Disappointed Dad" had his own elderly parents to take care of. Inviting the grandkids to visit them for a couple of weeks during the summer would be a good idea.

Write to Amy Dickinson at askamy@tribune.com or Ask Amy, Chicago Tribune, TT500, 435 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60611.

©2015 by the Chicago Tribune