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Entertainment

Style Invitational Week 1427: Rocky of ages, or Badenov for you?

'Bullwinkle'-style history puns. Plus winning anagrams of headlines.



(Bob Staake for The Washington Post)

By Pat Myers

March 11, 2021 at 10:19 a.m. EST

Add to list

(Click [here](#) to skip down to the winning anagrams of headlines)

1957: Introduction of the Edsel:

Building a Car Bomb, or The Lemon Doesn't Fall Far From the Tree (Russell Beland, *Week 540*)

1066, the Norman Conquest: **Saxon Violence, or Let Me Run This Bayeux** (Brendan Beary)

1854, the Charge of the Light Brigade:

Fools Speed Ahead, or Is That Your Final Lance, Sir? (Chris Doyle)

Hey, wish The Style Invitational a happy birthday — we just turned 28 last Sunday. And in a nod to Invite history, and history in general, the Empress is redoing one of the first contests she ran after deposing the Czar in 2003: And it itself is a homage to “Rocky and Bullwinkle” (and similar titles), the pun-filled Cold War-spoofing cartoon series that informed the comic sensibilities of many a Loser of a certain age.



Nothing says “I’m such a stud” as much as popping one of these guys out of your pocket.

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AD

Along with dialogue laden with what we'd now call dad jokes ("Round trip?" "Got any square ones?"), the wordplay went up a notch with the teaser for the next episode: The announcer gave two titles, at least one of them a pun. For one about a threatened execution, it was "Tune in next time for 'Axe Me Another,' or 'Tails, You Lose.'" And so **this week: State any historical event — right up to 2021 — in the "A, or B" pun format** as in the examples above, all of them inking entries from the 2004 contest.

Submit up to 25 entries at wapo.st/enter-invite-1427 (no capitals in the Web address).

Deadline is Monday, March 22; results appear April 11 in print, April 8 online.

Winner gets the Clowning Achievement, our new Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a practical-joke toy called **Sneekum Pet Pranksters**. It's a little box you put in your shirt pocket; then surprise your erstwhile friends as a little hairy monkey-monster head suddenly pops up. Think how that would impress your Zoom-date! Donated by Dave Prevar.

AD

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 "[Punderachiever](#)." 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 "Mixed Media" was sent by both Tom Witte and Jesse Frankovich; Dave Prevar wrote the honorable-mentions subhead. 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; and follow [@StyleInvite](https://twitter.com/StyleInvite) on Twitter.

The Style Conversational: The Empress's weekly online column discusses each new contest and set of results. See this week's, published late Thursday, March 11, at wapo.st/convi427.

The "You're Invited" podcast: Eleven half-hour episodes, including dish from the Empress and the Czar, and tips from top Losers. (Coming soon: Episode 12, with a new song.) See bit.ly/invite-podcast.

AD

[And from The Style Invitational four weeks ago . . .](#)

Mixed media: The headline anagrams of Week 1423

In [Week 1423](#), inspired by (a.k.a. ripping off) the Wordsmith.org website [Anagram Times](#), we asked readers to choose a headline from The Post or another publication, and to rearrange all its letters into an anagram. It's a tough task to make something that uses exactly every letter — none missing, none extra — into a readable line of English; in the process of finding the gems below, the Empress read through hundreds of anagrams like "Wintertime splotch subjugates oath. Notebook: Curb, force truth. Havoc hens fret. Onto presumptive theme: 'I.'" "

4th place:

Headline: WHO fact-finding mission departs China empty-handed

Anagrams to: **Whining of D.T.: "As if! China started Dems' phony pandemic!"** (*Jon Gearhart, Des Moines*)

5 Celebrate St. Patrick's Day with socially distant drinks, take-home cocktails and Irish culture



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3rd place:

Ted Cruz admits he has 'no defense' for Texas' current energy debacle =

Decent excuse for strange beard? Ted Cruz freely admits he has none. (*Jesse Frankovich, Lansing, Mich.*)

2nd place

and the *Butt Station* desk set:

Biden moves to hard part of reversing Trump legacy =

Removes 'perfect' bathroom stain, gravy puddle ring (*Kevin Dopart, Washington*)

And the winner of the Clowning Achievement:

Perseverance Probe Successfully Lands on Mars =

Endless Probes From Space Cleverly Scan Uranus (*Jesse Frankovich*)

Magnets = Angst 'em: Honorable mentions

Fauci predicts 'open season' for vaccinations by April =

"Can a professional stab us?" "Correct — dive in!" [Yip of panic.] (*Hannah Seidel, Alexandria, Va.*)

AD

Doodles and giggles: Some senators spend impeachment trial in distraction =

I scanned phone, Googled at "presidential transgressions committed," dismal! (*Kristin Braly, Baltimore*)

Make the magic happen =

Keep the MAGA champ in — Josh Hawley . . . OR . . .

Impeach the peak G-man — Nancy Pelosi (*Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.*)

Can I Still Wear My Grandmother's Fur? =

Run wild, nasty girl! From the cameras. (*Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.*)

House managers wrap up their case in Trump impeachment trial =

"Trump is a cheap, repugnant, immature man who repeats rich lies." (*Jesse Frankovich*)

Health code violations =

Ooh, locals invite death! (*Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.*)

Millions lose power in Texas, northern Mexico as blackouts and bitter cold continue =

Notable climate-hoax notion tricks town's credulous, inexplicable moron residents (*Kevin Dopart*)

AD

Millions without power as winter weather blasts the U.S. =

This white-out's terrible! Lotsa snow! We ain't warm! Help us! (*Jesse Frankovich*)

The glories of cabbage =

I forage, eat gobs, belch (*Jonathan Jensen, Baltimore*)

Pence remains loyal to Trump =

It's truly man-romance, people (*Chris Doyle*)

The white-out's terrible! Lotsa snow! Help us!

Podcast

Post Reports

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Tracking Biden's political appointees =

Picking tepid, banal Eastern politicians (*Hannah Seidel*)

As mating rituals go, Valentine's Day isn't so bad =

Bods uniting at a sassy animal love isn't G-rated! (*Steve Allison, Milford, Conn., a First Offender*)

Impeachment impressions =

Mitch simpers: "A spine? Me? No." (*Duncan Stevens*)

Biden team pledges aggressive steps to address chip shortage =

President delivered bagged crisp potatoes, gets (shh!) massages (*Joe Neff, Warrington, Pa.*)

How to stand out while working remotely =

Lo! the muted-toilet work is wrong, anyhow! (*Danielle Nowlin, Fairfax Station, Va.*)

AD

Hustler publisher always tested limits =

Larry established I must sleep with lust (*Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn, Va.*)

Taking your 9 to 5 on the road =

95: Ratty, honking auto rodeo (*Jonathan Jensen*)

Love, in all its permutations =

Mull alternative positions (*Kevin Dopart*)

Love, in all its permutations =

A million venal prostitutes (*Duncan Stevens*)

Love, in all its permutations =

Simple vanilla is not utter 'O' (*Danielle Nowlin*)

'I'm not a cat,' says lawyer having Zoom difficulties =

Miaow! Activating a shy, crazy feline lifts U.S. mood (*Bruce Niedt, Cherry Hill, N.J.*)

In the Galleries: Personal and political perspectives on the past =

In the Galleries: It's liver, onions, Scotch tape, and paper pet lapels (*Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.*)

What's sexy in a pandemic? Caution. =

Pony twins exhaust academician (*Chris Damm, Charles Town, W.Va.*)

AD

It's time for baseball =

Baltimore fails best (*Duncan Stevens*)

Mardi Gras celebrations restricted following last year's super-spreader event =

A seeming result's wild party girls can't reveal parts in order to score free beads (*Jesse Frankovich*)

About the impeachment trial =

A beaten Trump: 'I loathe Mitch' (*Jonathan Jensen*)

The GOP's loud caucus =

Thug coup: Lost cause (*Jeff Contompasis*)

What are sperm telling us? =

Get in! Her wall's upstream! (*Chris Doyle*)

Trading her classroom for a police beat =

For a teacher, it's grim. No dollars. Be a cop. (*Mark Raffman*)

Do you need insurance for your water and sewer lines? =

You do need insurance for your Western Wiener Salad! *(Frank Osen)*

Ted Cruz Provides 9 Crisis Management Lessons For Business Leaders =

Bastard Ted Cruz Provides Series of Lessons in General Scumminess *(Jesse Frankovich)*

AD

*And Last: **Loser: Try, toil, ace!** = (headline:) Closer to reality = **Loser: Toil, cry, eat** (Beverley Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)*

Still running — deadline Monday night, March 15: The latest installment of our bank headline contest. See wapo.st/invite1426.

DON'T MISS AN INVITE! [Sign up here](#) to receive a once-a-week email from the Empress as soon as The Style Invitational and Style Conversational go online every Thursday, complete with links to the columns.

0 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 [Twitter](#)

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