Entertainment

Style Invitational Week 1274:
Heading for a foal — our famed horse name contest

‘Breed’ any 2 names on our list and name the foal;
plus 5 x 5 poems for our 25th birthday

Click here to skip down to the winning 5 x 5 poems

Walk in the Sun x Last Bad Habit = Walk in the Sin
Mr. President x Clever Mind = Never Mind
Choo Choo x Wisely = Train of Thought
Gold Town x Telekinesis = Mine Over Matter

Once again, it’s Post Time: It’s the 24th annual Style Invitational foal-naming contest, which if history is a guide will be our most popular of the year. The Empress usually ends up looking at about 4,000 entries, some from people who’ve been entering this contest (and only this contest) every year since 1995.

At the bottom of this page is a list of 100 of the 360 horses nominated for this year’s Triple Crown races, the Kentucky Derby, Preakness and Belmont; your job is “breed” any two names and name the “foal” to reflect both names, as in the examples above. (It matters not to us that all 100
horses are male, and at least one is a gelding.) As in actual thoroughbred racing, a name may not exceed 18 characters including spaces, but one or more of the characters may be punctuation marks or numerals. You may run words together to stay within the length limit, but the name should be easy to read. Make sure you (A) spell the original horse names correctly in your entry, and (B) use the “Name A x Name B = Foal Name” format as shown in the examples, so that the thousands of entries will be properly sorted and the Empress will have a chance of preserving some small fraction of her sanity. As always, you may send as many as 25 entries.

Submit entries at the website wapo.st/enter-invite-1274 (all lowercase).

Winner gets the Lose Cannon, our Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives the Farting Bubble Blaster, a large squirt gun you arm with a canister of cherry-scented bubble fluid: “Sounds like farts — smells much better.” Plus battery-powered “FRRRRRT!” sounds. Not included but evidently for sale: bubble fluid that actually smells like farts. Donated by Loser Nan Reiner.

Other runners-up win our “You Gotta Play to Lose” Loser Mug or our Grocery Bag, “I Got a B in Punnanship.” Honorable mentions get one of our lustred-after Loser magnets, “We’ve Seen Better” or “DIet Card.” First Offenders receive only a smelly tree-shaped air “freshener” (FirStink for their first ink). Deadline is Monday night, April 16; results published on Kentucky Derby weekend: May 6 in print, May 3 online. See general contest rules and guidelines at wapo.st/InvRules. The headline “The Muse at 5” is by Chris Doyle; Chris and Jesse Frankovich both suggested the honorable-mentions subhead. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at on.fb.me/invdev.

The Style Conversational The Empress’s weekly online column — published late Thursday afternoon, April 5 — discusses the new contest and results. Especially if you plan to enter, visit wapo.st/styleconv.

And from The Style Invitational four weeks ago . . .

THE MUSE AT 5: WINNING 5X5 POEMS FOR OUR 25th
In Week 1270 we celebrated the Invite’s 25th anniversary with a 5x5 poetry contest for any of three forms: 5 lines of 5 syllables each; 5 lines of 5 words; or 5 lines of iambic pentameter (bi-DUM five times over). We let hyphenated compounds count as either one or two words.

4th place:

5 lines x 5 words:
Dotard tweets his morning whine:
“Tillerson has crossed the line.
Calling me a moron? Fine.
But saying Putin poisoned Skripal?
That’s it for me, pal.”
(Nan Reiner, Boca Raton, Fla.)

3rd place:

5 lines of iambic pentameter:
Shall I compare thee to a lump of clay?
Thou are more agile (well, perhaps a bit);
Thou sleepest all the night and half the day;
When thieves break in, thou carest not a whit.
I love thee, dog, so I put up with it.
( Beverly Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

2nd place and the poop emoji pillow and slippers;

5 lines x 5 syllables
Some anagram fun:
“I’ve beaten the draft,”
Said Donald. “It’s done.”
The elder Trump laughed.
“BONE SPURS? SUPERB, SON!”
(Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.)

And the winner of the Lose Cannon:
Like socks need shoes, like gangsters seek out banks,
As forks want knives, or sick folk need a nostrum,
A weakening dreams of watching troops in ranks,
Parading while he preens atop a rostrum.
But should that happen here? We’ve said, “No tanks.”
(Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)

Nein to fives: Honorable mentions

5 SYLLABLES x 5 LINES
The Upside of Unsuccessful Negotiations With North Korea
If tête-à-têtes fail
And Doomsday draws nigh
With nuclear hail,
We’re free to eat pie
And throw out the kale.
(Melissa Balmain, Rochester, N.Y.)

By Pat Myers
April 3
Email the author

(Click here to skip down to the winning 5x5 poems)

Walk in the Sun x Last Bad Habit = Walk in the Sin

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The end of each day:
“At least Trump’s not gay?”
(Rob Huffman, Fredericksburg, Va.)

5 WORDS x 5
Initially happy to score me,
Endeavoring now to ignore me,
He paid me a sum
To stay quiet, the bum.
Beyond merely angry, I'm Stormy!
(Jesse Frankovich, Grand Ledge, Mich.)

At the NBA's big game,
Fergie, without fear or shame,
Heaped derision on her name.
Her jazzy-up, breathy fare:
A bomb, bursting in air.
(Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)

The Washington Redskins name's offensive,
Rude, repugnant and rancor-intensive,
Reminding us of something disgraceful.
Get a moniker less distasteful:
Call them the Mid-Atlantic Redskins.
(Connie Dobbins Akers, Radford, Va., a First Offender)

Czech snowboarder bombs the gates,
Wins gold in skiing! Celebrates!
Next time, donning figure skates?
Here's hoping that Ester Ledecka
Pulls off an Olympic trifle. (Duncan Stevens)

Pruitt wants a soundproof chamber,
Carson wants a dining set,
Shulkin wants free family travel,
Mnuchin wants a private jet... .
Are we draining swampland yet? (Nan Reiner)

IAMBIC PENTAMETER x 5:

Trump's lawyer swore she'd leave there on a journey
When he took Stormy Daniels's deposition,
This wouldn't be some civil kid-glove tourney:
"Ma'am, you're a porn star by your own admission."
She said, "Yeah, so? You're Donald Trump's attorney." (Frank Osen)

The sad New York mortician, with a curse,
Complained his auto's knocks "do not sound good."
The car technician looked beneath the hood:
And said, "Alas, the news could not be worse:
To get to Broadway, sir, you must re-hearse."
(Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.)

"Good morning, Special Counsel's Office. How
May we be of assistance to you now?"
"Ms. Daniels? Two o'clock. We'll see you — ciao!"
"See Tillerson? Hi, welcome to the fold.

"Who’s this? Mr. McCabe, could you please hold..." (Nan Reiner)

I readily confess that I’m a glutton;  
For me, a morning snack’s a leg of mutton.  
Oh, bloody hell! There goes another button.  
Although they say that thin is sexier,  
I’ll never die from anorexia. (Brian Allgar, Paris)

If you were talented as Tennyson  
And drank ambrosia by the liter, son.  
You couldn’t match the farce and menace in  
The tale of fictive Peggy Peterson

And fake, fake President, David Dennison. (Frank Osen)

And Last:  
**One score and five** momentous years ago  
’Twas not forefathers but a Czar who so  
Invited us to write his jokes for free  
And rack our brains for humor with no fee.

To celebrate this? Better you than me. (Dudley Thompson, Cary, N.C.) [This poem had originally begun “Two score” until reader Francis O’Donnell wrote in to point it out. We’re glad someone’s keeping score.]

Still running — deadline Monday night, April 9: Our contest to tell us who (or what) would be better for various federal jobs. See wapo.st/invite1274

**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.

THE 2018 STUD FARM

These 100 horses listed below were drawn from a list of this year’s 360 Triple Crown nominees published by Churchill Downs; “breed” any two and name the foal for Week 1274, above. Submit entries at wapo.st/enter-invite-1274.

But first: Do the Empress — and yourself — a favor and...  

* Don’t “breed” two names and use a third name from the list for the “foal.” People do this more often and never get ink because it’s just too
• Don’t number your list of entries. Numbers at the beginning of a line will give fits to our name-sorting system. You’ll have to count to 25 on your 25 fingers.

• Type each entry on a single line. This is essential. If you have the parents’ name on one line and the foal on another, little Junior is going to get lost from Mom and Dad when we do The Big Sort. Remember, use this format: Horse A x Horse B = Foal Name

• Observe the 18-character limit, including spaces and punctuation marks. In other Invite contests, the Empress has occasionally given ink to an entry that didn’t technically fit the rules, if it was especially clever or funny. But there’s no give on the letter limit on horse names — it’s part of the challenge.

Ali
Alpha to Omega
Ark in the Dark
Arrival
Audible
Ax Man
B On Time
Bail Out
Beautiful Shot
Biblical
Big Brown Bear
Blame the Rider
Bolt d’Oro
Bravazo
Bugle Notes
Call a Cop
Candygram
Catholic Boy
Chaps
Choo Choo
Clever Mind
Combatant
Dawood
Demolition
Deputy Czar
Dream Friend
Dunk
Enjoy the Journey
Enticed
Evaluator
Exclamation Point
Explorer
Family Kitten
Firenze Fire
Flameaway
For Him
Gold Town
Good Magic
Gotta Go
Gronkowski
Heck Yeah
Hollywood Star
Ike
Justify
Last Bad Habit
Locomotion
Lone Sailor
Machismo
Magnum Moon
Maraud
Masked
Mendelssohn
Mississippi
Most Amusing
Mr. President
Mt. Rushmore
My Boy Jack
My Dream
Nero
Noble Indy
Numero Thirteen
Old Time Revival
One More Tom
Peppered
Personal Time
Pony Up
Private Eye
Promises Fulfilled
Quip
Replicator
Reride
Retirement Fund
Rucksack
Runaway Ghost
Scrapper
Seven Trumpets
Silver Hammer
Slot
Snapper Sinclair
Solomini
Somebody
Sporting Chance
Still Having Fun
Strike Power
Talent Scout
Talon
Tattooed
Telekinesis
Tenfold
The Money Dance
Times Square
Tiz Our Turn
Tough Times
Tres Equis
Vouch
Walk in the Sun
Wisely
World of Trouble

Eats & Drinks newsletter
The latest buzz on the D.C. area dining and bar scene, featuring restaurant critic Tom Sietsema, every Wednesday.
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 @patmyersTWP.

The Post Recommends

My neighbors’ bratty teen wants to babysit my kid and won’t take no for an answer
Plus, Dr. Andrea advises a reader who came to a boyfriend’s defense but has since learned he’s not so innocent.
1 day ago

Style Invitational Week 1282: Picture this — a cartoon caption contest
Plus: ‘A Little Night Mucus’ and other winning ‘grandpa’ names
6 days ago

Opinion
‘Feckless c—’; Samantha Bee apologizes for misogyny that delighted her audience
TBS also apologized for profane slam of Ivanka Trump.
5 days ago

PAID PROMOTED STORIES

Recommended by Outbrain