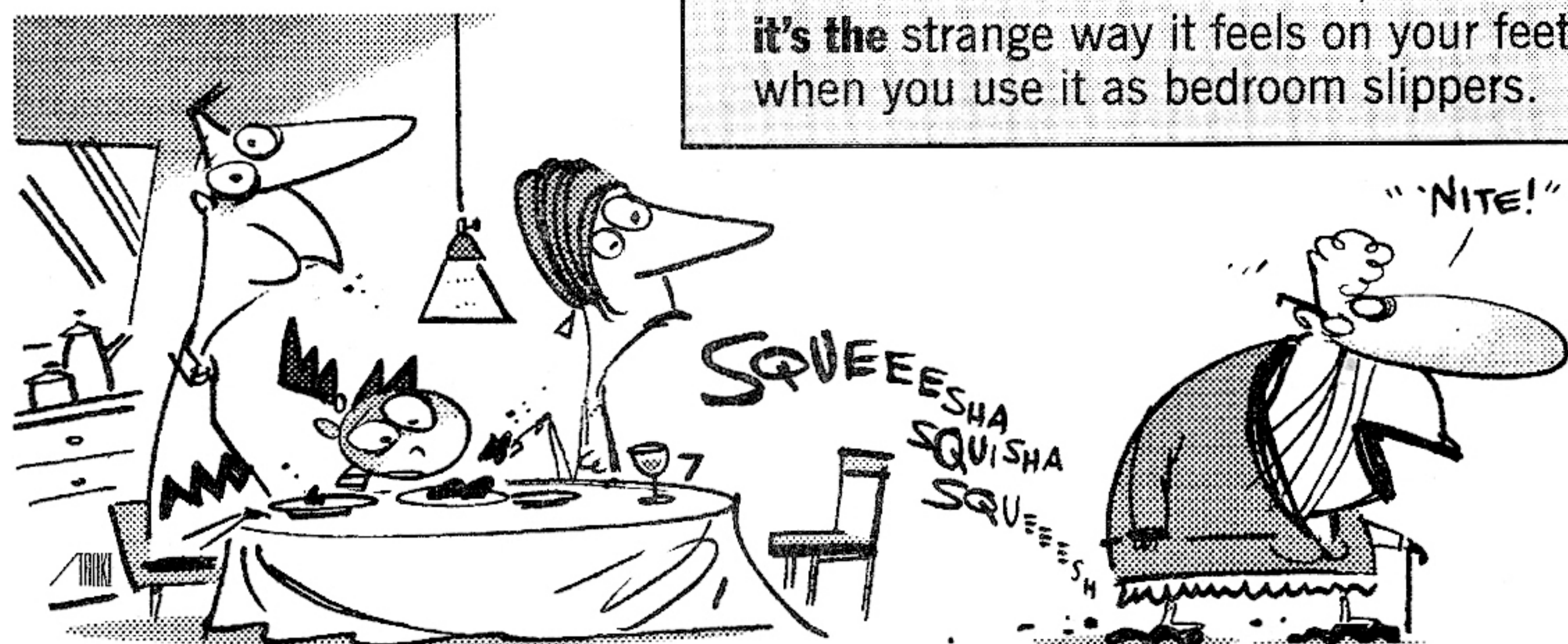


The Style Invitational

WEEK 188: BLANKETY BLANKS

1. It's not the _____, it's the _____.
2. If you _____, they will _____.
3. You can _____, but you can't _____.
4. If they can _____, why can't they _____?



Today's contest was suggested by Jerry Pannullo of Kensington, who wins a "colonoscopy swab," which is basically a 15-inch Q-Tip with a head the size of a grape. This fine prize was donated to the Style Invitational by Louis Y. Korman of Chevy Chase, the Czar's personal physician. Observation: The last personal physician to a czar was stood up against a wall and shot. Anyway, Jerry suggests

that you complete any of the above sentences, substituting your own phrases for the well-known omitted words. (Samples: If you **commit a murder with ill-fitting clothes**, they will **acquit you**; You can **put a burger on the grill**, but you can't **do the same thing with angel-hair pasta**.) First-prize winner gets a limited-edition handsomely packaged bottle of Elvis cologne, from 1991, a value of \$30.

Runners-up, as always, receive the coveted Style Invitational Loser's T-shirt. Honorable Mentions get the mildly sought-after Style Invitational bumper sticker. Winners will be selected on the basis of humor and originality. Mail your entries to The Style Invitational, Week 188, c/o The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071, fax them to 202-334-4312 or submit them via Internet to this address: losers@access.digex.net. Internet users: Please indicate the week number in the "subject" field. Entries must be received on or before Monday, Oct. 28. Please include your address and phone number. Winners will be announced in three weeks. Editors reserve the right to alter entries for taste, humor or appropriateness. No purchase necessary. The Faerie of the Fine Print & the Ear No One Reads wishes to thank Jennifer Hart of Arlington for today's Ear No One Reads. We are also soliciting fight songs for the high school football team named below. Best one gets a bar of soap from the Bates Motel. Employees of The Washington Post and their immediate families are not eligible for prizes.

REPORT FROM WEEK 185,

in which you were asked to come up with replacements for the current Seven Wonders of the World.

We wanted grand fanciful inventions, but most of the entries were compendiums of real roadside weirdnesses, which are on post cards and published in various books of kitschy Americana. Most of these bored us, but we were intrigued by two. The first was the famous **Urinal Used by John F. Kennedy, Verified With a Plaque, at Reilly Stadium in Salem, Ohio**. We regret to report that under close journalistic scrutiny, this item turned out to be a blatant fabrication. We personally interviewed Randy Engle, superintendent of schools of Salem, Ohio, who informed us icily that there is not, nor has there ever been, such a urinal at Reilly Stadium, home of the Salem High School Fighting Quakers. "A lot of tourists stop by wanting to see where JFK peed," he says. He is getting pretty darned tired of it.

The second real Wonder of the World, submitted by Fred Dawson of Beltsville, checked out, however. It is **Lee Harvey Oswald's Can Opener**, on permanent exhibit in the Gafford

Family Museum, near Crowell, Tex. The curator of the museum, Bettie B. Gafford, confirmed the existence of the can opener, and explained its provenance. A long time ago, Mrs. Gafford was friends with Lee's mom, Marguerite Oswald. One day Marguerite received a letter from Lee, who had by that time defected to Russia. On the outside of the envelope, "written on the back, where you lick the flap to seal it," Mrs. Gafford recalls, was a note asking his mother to mail him some items, including his can opener. Mrs. Oswald had the can opener packed away, so Mrs. Gafford offered to mail to Lee her own can opener, which she did, and in exchange Mrs. Oswald gave her Lee's can opener, which is now under glass, on permanent display. Incredibly, it is not the most popular exhibit at the Gafford Family Museum, because Mrs. Gafford does not advertise it. Sometimes she won't even tell visitors about it. She fears knowledge of its existence would attract riffraff, or, as she puts it, "people off the highway. I don't want that class of clientele." The most popular exhibit at the Gafford Family Museum near Crowell, Tex.? "That would be the rattlesnake in formaldehyde."

Okay, back to the Wonders of the World. We were looking for modern replacements for the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, the Lighthouse at Alexandria, the Colossus of Rhodes, the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, the Great Pyramids at Giza, the Temple of Artemis at Ephesus, and the Statue of Zeus at Olympia. We promised you seven, but the world-renowned Style Invitational Guarantee of Genuine, Actual Humor required us to limit the results to five.

- ◆ Fifth Wonder of the World: **The Colossus of Roads on 17th Street five minutes after it changes to two-way traffic.** (Steven King, Alexandria)
- ◆ Fourth Wonder of the World: **The Statue of Al Gore at Washington, D.C.** (Dave Wilton, Oxon Hill)
- ◆ Third Wonder of the World: **The Hanging Curveballs at Camden Yards** (Joseph Romm, Washington; Mike Schikman, Harrisonburg)
- ◆ Second Wonder of the World: **The Colossal Gall of Marion** (Frank Thompson, Vienna)
- ◆ *And the First Wonder of The World, winner of the Apollo 11 tape:*
The Hanging Pardons of Washington (a work in progress). (Don Maclean, Burke)

We suddenly seem to find ourselves with extra space, and fortunately we had a special fine-print contest to come up with new names for the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. The old Horsemen, if you recall, are Famine, Pestilence, Destruction and Death. Here are the new ones:

(1) Bad Sushi; (2) The Insidious Influence of the Liberal Media; (3) Just Plain Lousy Timing; (4) Bob Dole. (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

(1) Really, Really Nasty Pestilence; (2) The Drew Carey Show; (3) Everybody Talks Like Carol Channing; (4) Every Team Sucks as Bad as the Jets. (Rick Rosenthal, Washington)

(1) Format C; (2) Error 404; (3) System Error 11; (4) Insufficient Memory. (Stephen Dudzik, Silver Spring)

(1) Groucho; (2) Harpo; (3) Chico; (4) Armageddo. (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

(1) Indifference; (2) Shoddy Craftsmanship; (3) Incompleteness. (Russell Beland, Springfield)

Next Week: **Calling the Toon**