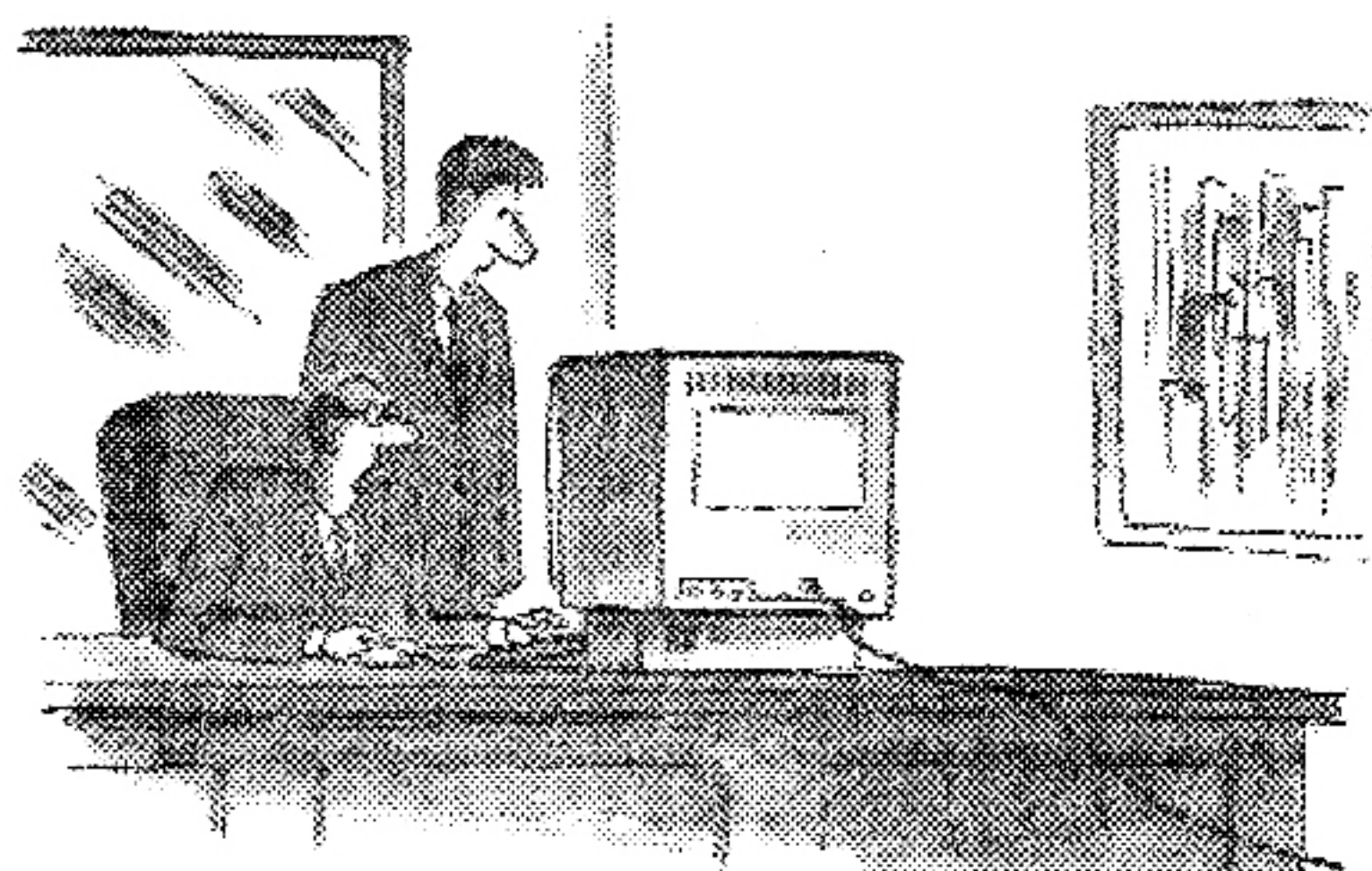


The Style Invitational

WEEK 274: THE DROLL OF A LIFETIME



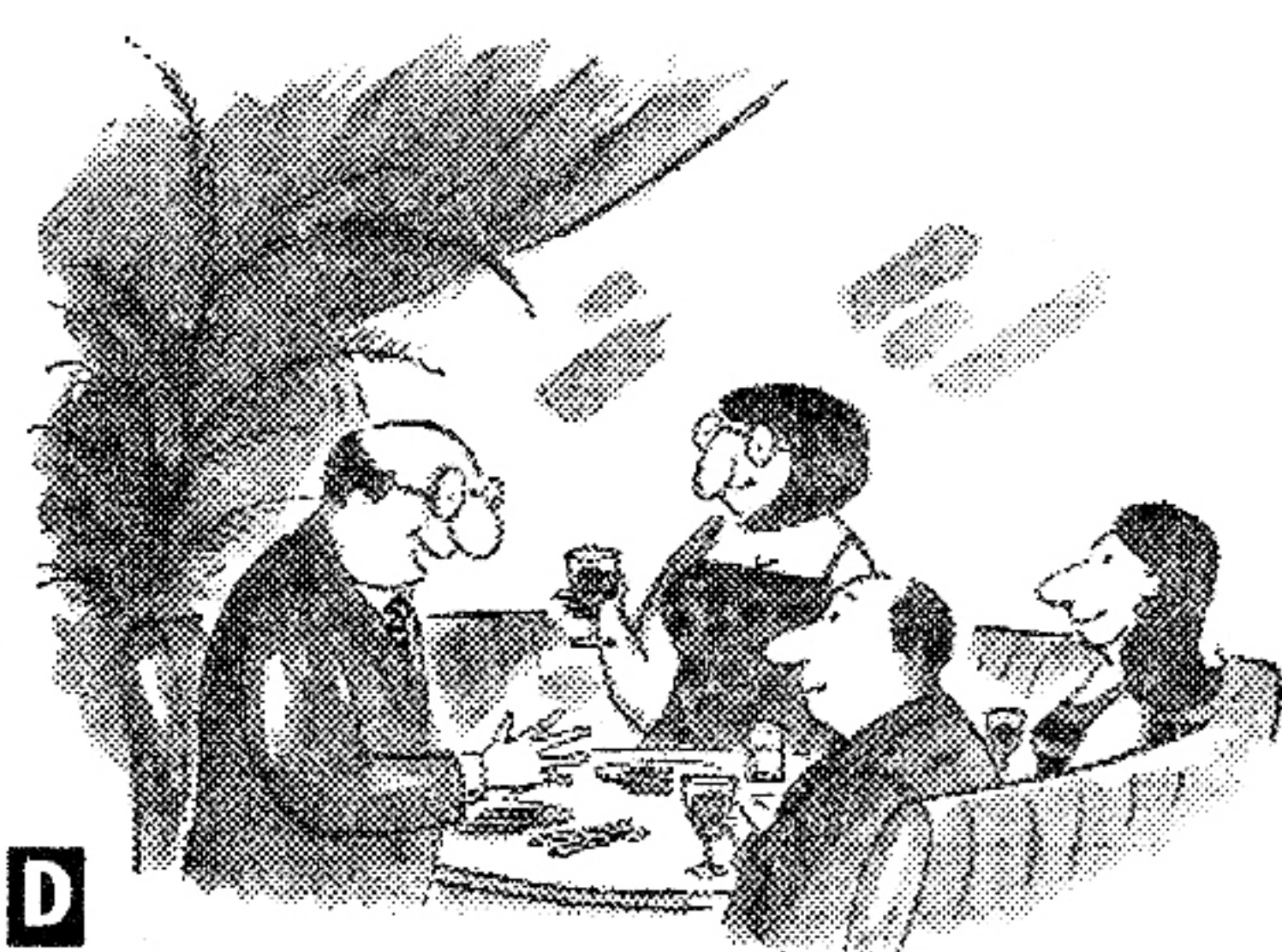
A "I'd just as soon it wasn't cut into those funny little pieces. If you don't mind."



B "Bear in mind we just bought string bikinis."



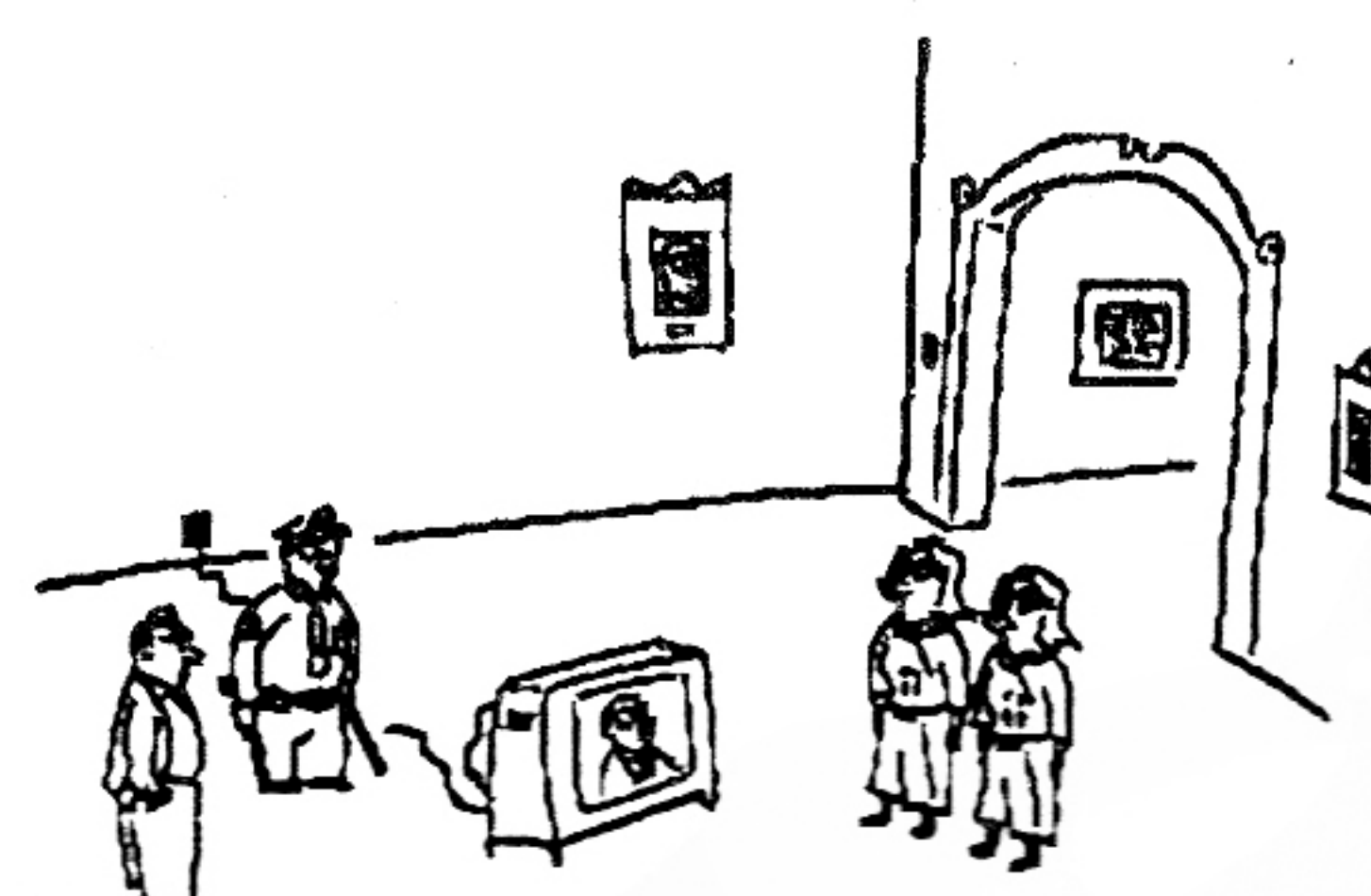
C "Cell phones! Get your cell phones here! Cell phones!"



D "Apparently, it has something to do with el Niño."



E "You're just in time. We're having vegetarian chili tonight."



F "We'll take it."

This Week's Contest was proposed by Robert Staake, of the St. Louis, Mo., Staakes. Being a cartoonist himself, Robert is a big fan of the cartoons in the New Yorker, although, like anyone who is not a member of the snot-nosed latte-sipping Manhattan intelligentsia, he sometimes has no idea what they mean. Inspired by some recent New Yorker cartoons, Bob redrew them a little (to avoid pesky problems with copyright infringement, lawsuits, lengthy prison terms, etc.) and reproduced them here. Unfortunately, he accidentally scissored off the original captions, and when he tried to match caption back to cartoon, he might have made some mistakes. He may even have included captions from *other* cartoons in the

magazine. But we can't be sure. With the New Yorker, it is sometimes hard to tell. Your challenge this week is to be the New Yorker comics editor, and explain to readers of The Washington Post why the above jokes are charmingly witty. Choose one or more. First-prize winner gets a two-foot-high stack of bound volumes, in beautiful pastels, of the single most stultifying document we at The Washington Post (Motto: "Official Repository of Documents So Boring They Could Sedate a Hyena") have ever seen, to wit: "The Economic Report of the President, 1979-1990." This rare collection, stolen from the wastebasket of an extremely important National Desk reporter, is worth \$123 in 1981 dollars, adjusted for inflation.

First runner-up gets the tacky but estimable Style Invitational Loser Pen. Other runners-up receive the coveted Style Invitational Loser 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 274, 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@washpost.com. Internet users: Please indicate the week number in the "subject" field. Also, please do not append "attachments," which tend not to be read. Entries must be received on or before Monday, June 22. Important: Please include your postal address and phone number. Winners will be announced three weeks from today. Editors reserve the right to alter entries for taste, humor or appropriateness. No purchase necessary. Today's *Abv No One Ntcs* was written by David Genser of Arlington. Employees of The Washington Post and members of their immediate families are not eligible for prizes.

REPORT FROM WEEK 271,

in which you were asked to invent modern Yogi Berra-isms. This proved very hard. A Yogi-ism is a subtle thing. It entails a rare balancing act: a statement that teeters briefly on a tightrope between the profound and the ridiculous, and then falls on its keister with a thud and a splat.

Mostly, you failed. You resorted to simple malapropisms ("My son is a child progeny") or self-referential ironies ("Nostalgia ain't what it used to be") or mangled metaphors ("You can't make an omelet without walking on eggshells"). Observed Dave Zarrow of Herndon: "When Yogi is on his deathbed, he will say of his life's work as a mangler of words: 'It ain't oeuvre till it's oeuvre.'" Clever, but waaaay too la-di-da for Yogi, a man born with three days' stubble and a body like the Tasmanian Devil. The fact is, the contest's limp results persuaded us that Mr. Berra is a rare genius, a man who could catch a curve, hit a curve, and then wind up his tongue and throw a curve that comes in straight but breaks sharply down and in the dirt.

- ◆ Third Runner-Up: "Whether you win or lose depends entirely on the score." (Ray Clarke, Quince, Va.)
- ◆ Second Runner-Up: "I couldn't commit suicide if my life depended on it." (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)
- ◆ First Runner-Up: "I never go to all-you-can-eat places. I just can't eat that much." (Jerrod M. Witcher, Takoma Park; Russ Beland, Springfield)
- ◆ *And the winner of the Elvis cookbook: "The great thing about VCRs is you can see shows without having to watch them."* (Phil Frankenfeld, Washington)

◆ Honorable Mentions:

"They should make Viagra for women, so men aren't the ones having to wait an hour." (Bill Strider, Gaithersburg)

"They say the lottery is an 80 million-to-one shot, but that ain't so if you got all six numbers." (Barry Blyveis, Columbia)

"After I am buried they should put nice things on my tombstone; otherwise I will feel bad." (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

"I didn't know he was still alive until I read that he had died." (Meg Sullivan, Potomac)

"If we can outscore 'em, we'll probably beat 'em." (Jose Cortina, Centreville)

"If you have to ask, you need to find out." (Jonathan Paul, Garrett Park)

"Money is the key to financial success." (David Kleinbard, Silver Spring)

"I'd pay anything to be rich." (Michael A. Genz, La Plata)

"Anyone who isn't confused about Central America doesn't understand it." (Elden Carnahan, Laurel; Joseph Romm, Washington)

"In a dangerous neighborhood, always walk backward so no one can sneak up on you." (Barry Blyveis, Columbia)

"You gotta start your kids out young." (Brian Broadus, Charlottesville)

"To win a race, you've either got to take bigger steps than the next guy, or more of them." (Barry Blyveis, Columbia)

"Sometimes you have to look really close at the big picture." (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

"I intend to live 24 hours per day until the day I die." (Jerry Pannullo, Kensington)

"The thing about religion is you just have to believe in it." (Jean Sorensen, Herndon)

"It ain't over till the fat lady says it's over." (Jessica Steinhice Mathews, Arlington)

Next Week: **Picture This**