

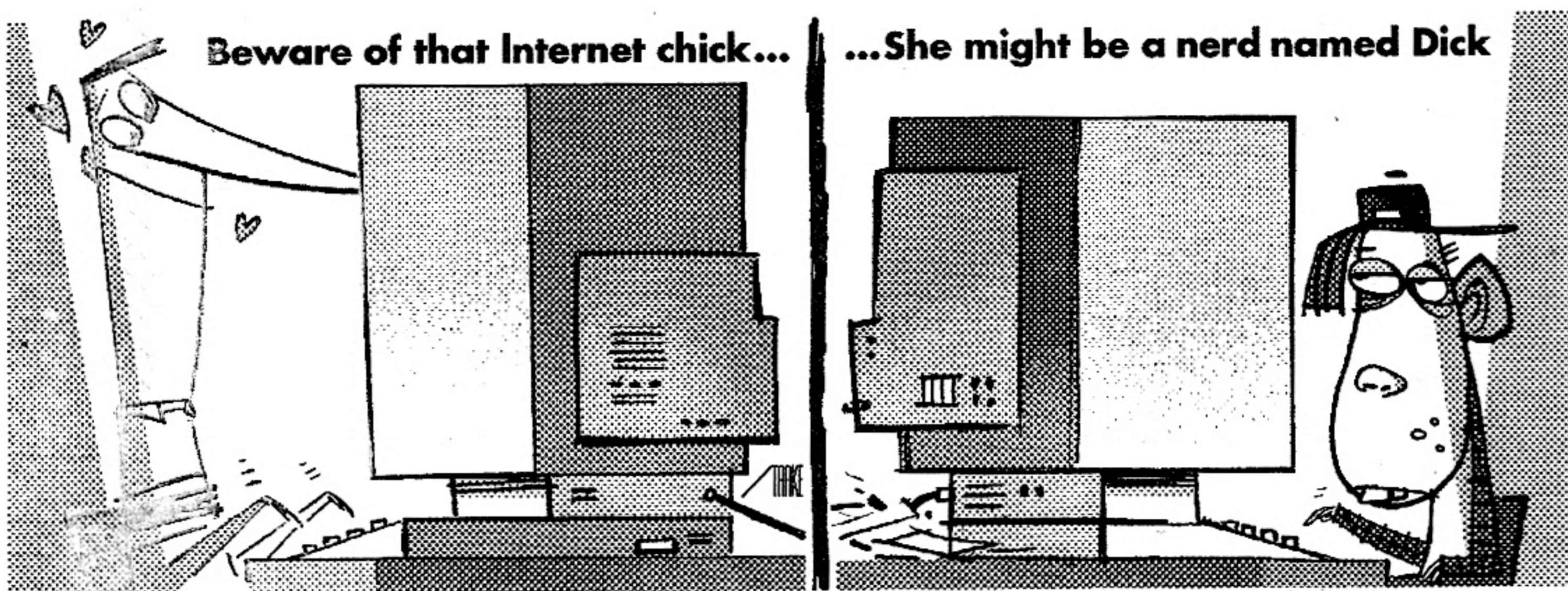
The Style Invitational

WEEK 307: IF YOU BOYCOTT THIS TASK / YOU WON'T WIN THE FLASK

If your husband buys a Jag / He'll soon dump his old bag.

Intern in thong / Is wrong, wrong, wrong.

If thrift is your sport / Don't shop at the airport.



This Week's contest was suggested by Jean Sorensen of Herndon, who wins a roll of toilet tissue containing excerpts from the Starr Report. Jean was inspired by the old saw: "Leaves in three, don't touch me," a warning

against poison ivy. She proposes that you come up with similar rhyming couplets (two lines only, please) to warn us about the perils of modern life. Extra credit awarded for painfully bad rhymes. First-prize winner gets a genuine cow-hoof flask, valued at \$25.

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 307, 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, Feb. 8. 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 Box No One Opens was written by Russ Beland of Springfield. Employees of The Washington Post and members of their immediate families are not eligible for prizes.

REPORT FROM WEEK 304,

in which we asked you to come up with inspirational signage to be placed outside local offices or business establishments.

But first, a brief digression, occasioned by the need to fill space resulting from an unusually tepid set of entries. This made us think of the world-famous "Cockney Rhyming Slang" contest, the entries to which were so unfunny we dared not print them, resulting in letters of derision and contempt from our readers, many of whom contended that cockney rhyming slang is a useless form of communication without practical application. Well, the other day the auxiliary Czar stumbled upon the word "raspberry" in the dictionary, which has a secondary meaning of a Bronx cheer, or "a sound of derision, contempt, etc., made by expelling air forcibly so as to vibrate the tongue between the lips." We all knew this, of course. But here is where it gets interesting: The dictionary noted that the derivation of "raspberry" as used in this context is the term "raspberry tart," which is taken from the word "fart" through the application of ... cockney rhyming slang!

Back to our contest, which was, in cockney rhyming slang, a total piece of bloomin' Brit.

- ◆ Third Runner-Up: **The National Security Agency: You Didn't See This Sign.** (Joel Knanishu, Rock Island, Ill.)
- ◆ Second Runner-Up: **St. Elizabeths Hospital: Just Because It's Purple Doesn't Mean It's a Squirrel.** (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)
- ◆ First Runner-Up: **Gallaudet University: " "** (Brian Broadus, Charlottesville)
- ◆ *And the winner of a copy of the Sept. 20, 1995, issue of Playboy magazine, in Braille: PETA Headquarters: Don't Let People Put You Down.* (David Genser, Arlington)

◆ Honorable Mentions:

American Psychological Association: Inquire Within. (Phil Frankenfeld, Washington)

D.C. Department of Motor Vehicles: Living Hell is the Best Revenge. (Jonathan Paul, Garrett Park)

The Pentagon: Let Us Prey. (Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)

Beltone Hearing Aids: Here Today, Hear Tomorrow. (Mike Genz, La Plata)

U.S. Supreme Court Dining Hall: Even the Thinnest Pancake Has Two Sides. (Marvin Maizel, Silver Spring)

The law office of either Bob or Bill Bennett: I Am Not My Brother's Keeper. (Greg Arnold, Herndon)

Planned Parenthood: Abstinence Makes the Heart Grow Fonder. (Sandra Hull, Arlington)

NRA Headquarters: Defending Your Right to Shoot This Sign. (Brian Broadus, Charlottesville)

Dachshund Farms of Maryland: Get a Long Little Doggie. (Elden Carnahan, Laurel)

Arlington National Cemetery: We're Looking to Get Dirt on You. (Mike Genz, La Plata)

Laurel Race Course: Bet All That You Can Bet. (Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)

Midas Muffler: No Noise Is Good Noise. (Mike Genz, La Plata)

ASPCA: Please Do Not Litter. (Sandra Hull, Arlington)

Syms: We Sell Clothes Like They Were Going Out of Style. (Sandra Hull, Arlington)

D.C. Public Works Department: Welcome to the Crater D.C. Area. (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

Washington National Cathedral: We Practice Safe Sects. (Niels Hoven, Silver Spring)

Jack Kent Cooke Stadium: If the Will Is Not Strong, a Man Could End Up Without Jack. (Susan Reese, Arlington)

Office of the Independent Counsel: If at First You Don't Succeed, Pry, Pry Again. (Robin D. Grove, Arlington)

Washington Wizards: When You Think Wizards, Think Community Service. (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

The Washington Post: No Bad Deed Goes Unpublished. (Sandra Hull, Arlington)

The Washington Times: Don't Go Through Life Chained to a Post. (Bill Strider, Gaithersburg)

Next Week: Ask Backward CMXVI²