

The Style Invitational

WEEK 328: NICE CAPADES



BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

This Week's Contest was suggested by "John from Gaithersburg," who wrote to ask why the Style Invitational traffics so relentlessly in negativity, making fun of people for the sake of a cheap giggle; reveling in others' failures; reinforcing negative cultural stereotypes; issuing gratuitous personal slurs. In short, he asks why we are so nasty. Well, John, you raise a good question, and it deserves a good answer: It is because you are a lard-butted idiot. But you did give us an idea for a contest. Here it is: Be nice. Send in some pleasant observation, in which you

take a really cheerful or heartwarming view of something that less charitable people might conceivably see differently. It can be about anything: individuals, groups of people, institutions, places of origin, circumstances in which one can find oneself, whatever. The only criterion is that it be "nice." We are giving no examples because we want to widen the playing field. First-prize winner gets a limited-edition, numbered (#3,022) coffee mug from the launching of the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower on Oct. 15, 1975. It is worth \$20.

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 328, c/o The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071; fax them to 202-334-4312; or submit them via e-mail to this address: losers@washpost.com. E-mail 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 Tuesday, July 6. 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 Ear No One Reads was written by Andy Spitzler of Washington. Employees of The Washington Post and members of their immediate families are not eligible for prizes.

REPORT FROM WEEK 325,

in which you were asked to come up with rhyming Burma-Shave highway signs to welcome travelers to various cities or states.

◆ Third Runner-Up—

GEORGIA:

**Welcome to
The deep, deep South.
You sure got
A purty mouth.**

(Art Grinath,
Takoma Park)

◆ Second Runner-Up—

EAST ORANGE, N.J.:

**We celebrate in poem
Our town of East Orange.
Enjoy our lovely home
And ... oh crap.**

(Meg Sullivan, Potomac)

◆ First Runner-Up—

NANTUCKET ISLAND:

**We know why you're here.
We know your plan.
You just want a gander
At "The Man."**

(Greg Arnold, Herndon)

◆ And the winner of the big yellow truck photos:

LOS ALAMOS, N.M.—

**We've got a bomb lab
And takeout Chinese
Though the Chinese take out
Whatever they please.**

(Stephen Dudzik, Silver Spring)

◆ Honorable Mentions:

ZURICH:

**Our scenery's gorgeous,
It never gets old.
Just like the interest
On Nazi gold.**

(Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)

PARIS, TEX.:

**There's no Eiffel Tower
No Louvre or Versailles,
But if you get hungry
You can have a french fry.**

(Roz Levine, McLean)

WASHINGTON D.C.:

**This capital city
Lives up to its billing.
Our crime rate is low
(Except for the killing).**

(Vance Garnett, Washington)

CANADA:

**Enjoy your visit eh
It's a nice place eh
Just don't go to Quebec eh
Unless you speak French eh.**

(Warren Blair, Ashburn)

ORLANDO:

**Grab your wallets
And dig down deep.
We may be cheesy
But we ain't cheap.**

(Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)

INDIANA:

**We welcome all visitors
To the home of Dan Quayle.
Keep your hands on the wheel
And your eyes on the road, because studies
have shown that people who glance away,
even for short periods (such as for changing
radio stations or dialing a cell phone) tend to
have more accidents than those who pay
closer attention. Humans are, after all, frail.**

(Russell Beland, Springfield)

ARKANSAS:

**We glad you're here
A nice time it'll earn ya.
If you don't speak good English,
We're happy to learn ya.**

(Jeron Hayes, Dahlgren)

DRANESVILLE:

**Welcome to Dranesville.
Escape big-city noise.
We have us a tavern
(Last sign was stolen by high school boys).**

(John Kammer, Herndon)

INTERCOURSE, PA.:

**We know our name
Seems funny to some
Heck, we're just glad
That you could get.**

(Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)

ARKANSAS:

**Betty Sue
Done wrote this sign.
And she's sellin'
If your bine.**

(Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

BRANSON, MO.:

**Dinner theater
At its best.
We've even got Shakespeare
Starring Adam West.**

(Bob Sorensen, Herndon)

NORTH POTOMAC:

**We changed our name
'Cause we abhorred it.
We'd move except
We can't afford it.**

(Bill Strider, North Georgetown)

BOGOTA:

**Americans welcome!
To each we devote
Only the finest
Ransom note.**

(Phil Ehrenkranz, Leesburg)

ATLANTIS:

**Our city was sunk,
Our towers were tossed.
If you're almost here,
You're *really* lost.**

(Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)

BELGRADE:

**The lights give no glow
When you turn on the switch
All's dark, like the soul
Of Milosevic.**

(Steve Fahey, Kensington)

MONTANA:

**Welcome, travelers,
Please check your gun.
If you did not bring it
We'll issue you one.**

(Mary Jane Mitchell, Ellicott City)

HAVANA:

**Bienvenidos a Cuba
We beat the O's!
Now all we need
Are food and clothes.**

(Phil Ehrenkranz, Leesburg)

◆ Rookie of the Week:

FLORIDA:

**Hello, strangers
Just try to have fun.
In a Southern state
Even *shaped* like a gun.**

(Wid Douglas, College Park)

◆ And Last:

LAUREL, MD.:

**Our favorite son
Is peeved and miffed; he
Suggested this contest
Around Week 50.**

(Elden Carnahan, Laurel)

Next Week: **Comic Relief**