

The Style Invitational

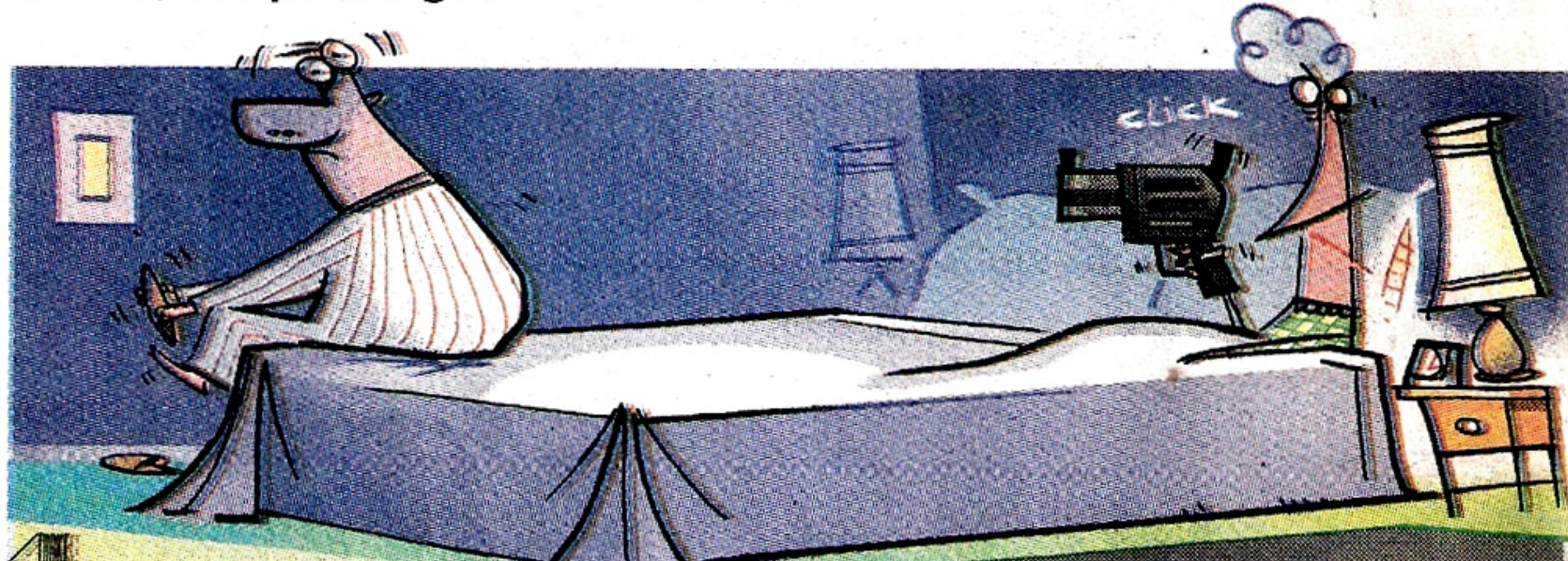
Week LXVIII: A Matter of Degree

Sign you're getting older: You wish you knew then what you know now.

Sign you're REALLY getting older: You wish you knew now what you knew then.

Sign your marriage is losing its magic: When you get into bed with her, she pulls away.

Sign your marriage is REALLY losing its magic: When you get into bed with her, she pulls a gun.



BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

This week's contest, suggested by Russell Beland, Springfield, is . . .

But before we get to that, a personal note. This contest will be the Uberczar's final curtain, as the Czar has crawled out of whatever weasel-infested pit he's been hiding in. This has truly been a rare opportunity for personal growth. Now I just hope I can have that growth removed as quickly and painlessly as possible.

As you were.

Now, then: Describe a sign of some modest change in a situation and pair it with a sign of an extreme change in that same situation, as in the above examples. First-prize winner gets a wine bottle cleverly cloaked in the lower extremity of a cloven-hoofed animal, complete with above-referenced hoof. Shoulder strap included. We've just now had an offer of \$11.99 for this item.

First runner-up wins the tacky but estimable Style Invitational Loser Pen. Other runners-up win the coveted Style Invitational Loser T-Shirt. The Uncle's Pick wins the shockingly ugly "The Uncle Loves Me" T-shirt. Send your entries via fax to 202-334-4312; by e-mail to losers@washpost.com; or by U.S. mail to The Style Invitational, Week LXVIII, c/o The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071. Deadline is Monday, May 21. All entries must include the week number of the contest and your name, postal address and a daytime or evening tele-

phone number. E-mail entries must include the week number in the subject field. Contests will be judged on the basis of humor and originality. All entries become the property of The Washington Post. Editors reserve the right to edit entries for taste or content. Results will be published in four weeks. No purchase required for entry. Employees of The Washington Post, and their immediate relatives, are not eligible for prizes. The revised title for next week's contest (Deep Thoughts from a refrigerator-magnet-type set of words) is by Tom Witte, Gaithersburg, who wins a T-shirt.

REPORT FROM WEEK LXIV

in which we asked you to drop letters from the sign of an actual business to create a new establishment: Just about everyone helpfully submitted a condensation of "House," "Home" or "Hour" to "Ho"—as in Ho Depot, One Ho Cleaners, Pancake Ho. Ho ho ho. Hum. Other frequently offered improvements included Ant Food from Giant Food; unTrust for SunTrust bank; Strom Rack for Nordstrom Rack (a large selection of plaid pants); and Bug King for Burger King. And a number of people sent in examples of actual comically burned-out signs, such as "Pubic Parking" on a large garage in Silver Spring, pointed out by Rachel Bernhardt of Takoma Park; and "Goo ear" on that Goodyear sign in Northern Virginia, noted by several of you.

◆ Fourth runner-up: **KMART to K MA**, the store where your child will try on the clothes you want him to. (Peyton Coyner, Afton, Va.)

◆ Third runner-up: **TALBERT'S ICE AND BEVERAGE to TARTS AND BEER**: Swing by and pick up a case! (Jim W. Pond, Holliston, Mass.)

◆ Second runner-up: **KAISER PERMANENTE to AIEEEE**, an anesthesia-free surgery center. (Bill Strider, Gaithersburg)

◆ First runner-up: **PETITS PLATS** restaurant to **PETIT SPLAT**, a bistro specializing in road-kill appetizers. (Sue Lin Chong, Washington)

◆ And the winner of the Baby Prince William paper dolls: **WAL-MART to WART**: Our name is synonymous with unwanted growth. (Selma Mathias, Harrisonburg, Va.)

◆ Honorable Mentions:

SHUMAN'S BAKERY, Alexandria, to **HUMAN BAKERY**, specializing in gingerbread men and ladyfingers—S. Todd, proprietor. (Ervin Stembol, Alexandria)

BRITCHES OF GEORGETOWNE to **BITES OF GEORGE W**: Colonial dentistry, wooden teeth our specialty. (Dave Zarrow, Herndon)

HOWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE to **HOW COM COLLEGE**: Accreditation pending. (Phyllis Kepner, Columbia)

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, College Park, to **FRY LAND**, the club where the party is always hot and the atmosphere blazing! (Scotty Balentine, Fairfax)

TIMBERMAN DRUGS, Alexandria, to **TIMBER N RUGS**, providing men with all their midlife-crisis needs from Viagra to toupees. (Ervin Stembol, Alexandria)

KINKO'S to **INKO'S**: Documents copied by scribes while you wait. (Craig DuBose, Charlottesville)

ADULT WORLD PLAYHOUSE CINEMA, Syracuse, N.Y., to **A DULL HOUSE**, featuring round-the-clock production of Ibsen plays. (Paul Kocak, Syracuse, N.Y.)

MARRIOTT SUITES to **RIOT SUITS**, outfitting the discriminating Cincinnati police officer since 1967. (Dave Zarrow, Herndon)

BURLINGTON COAT FACTORY to **BUTT FAT**, the plus-size center. (Dave Zarrow, Herndon)

BALLY TOTAL FITNESS to **LOAFIN**, not-so-total fitness. (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

CLOSET STRETCHERS, Rockville, to **CLOSET RETCHERS**, a support group for bulimics. (Chris Doyle, Burke)

HEART IN HAND restaurant, Clifton, to **EAR IN HAND**, Mike Tyson's favorite eatery. (Chris Doyle, Burke)

RADIO SHACK to **ADIOS**, Jack Kevorkian's one-hour finishing shop! (Stephen Dudzik, Olney)

THE MOBILE SOLUTION, Landmark Center, to **THE MOB SLUT**, tasteful fashions for the gangster babe. (John Drummond, Alexandria)

AUNTIE ANNE'S PRETZELS, Landmark Center, to **UNTIE ANNE'S PRETZELS**: So soft they come undone. (John Drummond, Alexandria)

LIFE UNIFORMS, Landmark Center, to **LUNIFORMS**: Straitjackets Unlimited. (John Drummond, Alexandria)

OLD NAVY to **OLD NAY**: Do we have it? NO! Can we get it? NO! You'll save like never before! (Judith Cottrill, New York)

GREAT CLIPS, Columbia, to **EAT LIPS**: We serve tongue, too. (Phyllis Kepner, Columbia)

MCDONALD'S to **NADS**: Mountain oysters are our specialty. (Saul Rosen, Rockville)

PLACE ONE CONDOMINIUMS, Alexandria, to **LACE ON CONDOMS**, Almost Perfect Prophylactics (Chris Doyle, Burke)

PARFUMS DE FRANCE, Tysons Corner, to **PRUDE FACE**, cosmetics for the sexually repressed. (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

MONTGOMERY MALL, Bethesda, to **ON TOE YALL**, a ballet and square dance school. (Bill Strider, Gaithersburg)

BASKIN-ROBBINS to **KIN-BINS**: Wondering where to put up those out-of-town relatives? (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

BUSTER BROWN to **BUST ROW**, outlet shopping for Victoria's Secret, Frederick's of Hollywood and Maidenform. (M. Lilly Welsh, Oakton)

BED BATH & BEYOND to **BEAT & BOND**, for all your S&M needs. (Marleen May, Rockville)

ORLEANS HOUSE restaurant, Rosslyn, to **OR HOUSE**, a Cockney recreation facility. (Mel Loftus, Holmen, Wis.)

FRESH FIELDS WHOLE FOODS MARKET to **FRIED FOOD**: Ah, forget the damn sprouts. (Dave Zarrow, Herndon)

GALAXY COMMUNICATIONS, Bethesda, to **LAX MUNITIONS**: Guns & Ammo—no ID, no limits. (Russell Beland, Springfield)

BARNES & NOBLE to **BAR & NO**: She'll still turn you down, but cappuccinos are cheaper than dinner. (Mariann Simms, Wetumpka, Ala.)

CRACKER BARREL restaurant, country cooking, to **CRACK BAR**, city cooking. (Steven J. Allen, Manassas)

THE WASHINGTON POST to **HASH N POT**: [Products sold for novelty purposes only—eds.] (Niels Hoven, Camperdown, Australia)

◆ The Uncle's Pick: **TOYS R US** to **OYS R US**, a travel agency specializing in guilt trips: "Come to Oy, and we'll show you the Vay." (Lloyd Duvall, Roslyn, Pa.)

The Uncle Explains: Let's examine the puns in turn: The first is on the word "trip," which has both a travel meaning and a Jewish-mother connotation. The second pun is on "vay." You see, some of our Hebrew friends pronounce W as V, so this "trip" agency offers to show you both the "way" and the second half of the Yiddish term "oy, vay!"