

THIS WEEK'S CONTEST

Week 682: Punkin'd!



ILLUSTRATIONS BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Though (or because?) we ticked off some of the word-centric folks in the Loser Community this past spring with a contest seeking funny photos of fruit, we're back to play with the rest of the produce, in a contest whose results will run the weekend before Halloween: **Send us a funny, clever, entirely original photo featuring one or more pumpkins and/or other vegetables.** Fabulous hand-carved pumpkins would be very cool, but digitally altered versions of your own photos are fine, too. You can also use funny captions or titles. Our big fear is that we'll be burned by a jack-o'-lantern stolen from the Web. If that happens, and the creator of that image finds out and contacts us (and you can be sure he will), we will put that person in touch with you directly. We prefer that you e-mail the photos as attachments in standard digital formats (we'll contact you if we can't open them properly; try for jpegs no more than 1,500 pixels wide) or you may mail them to the address below. (Sorry, photos won't be returned.)

Winner receives the Inker, the official Style Invitational trophy. First runner-up gets, given the enormous effort and time required for this week's contest, a container of Fart Putty, which is supposed to make some sort of noise when you pull it out of the jar, PLUS two whistles in the shape of the Oscar Mayer Wienermobile, all donated by Peter Metrisko Esq., the same public servant who also posed for The Washington Post with his underpants encircling his face.

Other runners-up win a coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt. Honorable Mentions get one of the lusted-after Style Invitational Magnets. One prize per entrant per week. Send your entries by e-mail to losers@washpost.com or by postal mail to The Style Invitational, The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071. Deadline is Tuesday, Oct. 10. Put "Week 682" in the subject line of your e-mail, or it risks being ignored as spam. Include your name, postal address and phone number with your entry. Contests are judged on the basis of humor and originality. All entries become the property of The Washington Post. Entries may be edited for taste or content. Results will be published Oct. 29. No purchase required for entry. Employees of The Washington Post, and their immediate relatives, are not eligible for prizes. Pseudonymous entries will be disqualified. The Revised Title for next week's contest is by Seth Brown of North Adams, Mass.

REPORT FROM WEEK 678

The first time in its history that *The Style Invitational* lived up to its name, inviting two premier limerick-writers, Chris Doyle and Brendan Beary, to a smackdown in which they each submitted limericks meeting 10 individual challenges specified by the Empress: The peripatetic (and

retired) Chris worked on his entries from Fairbanks, Vancouver and finally Tokyo, while Brendan stayed put on the shores of St. Mary's County. Except for one category that didn't pan out for either of them (each was to write a limerick about the other), they done right good.

ROUND 1: A limerick about an obscure mammal.

**The coypu has breasts on her back,
So whenever her pups need a snack
While she floats in the water,
This kin of the otter
Is glad for her roof-mounted rack.**

(Brendan Beary, Great Mills)

**In Floridian waters, insanity
Rages as man, in his vanity,
Powers his boats
Through a mammal who floats.
Oh, the crimes that we do to you, manatee!**

(Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.)

Tough call between two great punch lines. Point to Beary for sheer funniness and a cooler mammal. Beary 1, Doyle 0.

ROUND 2: A limerick containing five consecutive words beginning with five consecutive letters of the alphabet.

**I wear long flowing dresses each night;
And with makeup and heels, I'm a sight.
Then I flounce, watching "Wheel,"
For my dream, I'll reveal,
Is someday to unseat Vanna White.**

(Beary)

**A brazenfaced Clinton denies
Ever fooling around, then replies,
To a question on sex,
That in certain respects
"It depends on what 'is' is."**

(Doyle)

Point to Doyle for the crafty Line 5, though it's a hoot to imagine the bearlike Beary doing the Vanna thing. Beary 1, Doyle 1.

ROUND 3: A note from George Bush to Condoleezza Rice.

**Hey, the thought just occurred to me, Condi:
You're the gentle persuader, like Gandhi;
Dick's the bossy old grouch;
I just snooze on the couch —
Cheney's Dithers; I'm Dagwood; you're
Blondie!**

(Beary)

**At the Cabinet meeting today,
Let's make fun of Dick Cheney. What say
We start gasping for air
And then slump in the chair
When he opens his yapper, okay?**

(Doyle)

No doubt about this one. Beary 2, Doyle 1.

ROUND 4: Include five or more body parts.

**"Oh, my pancreas, kidneys and spleen —
They've been better, you know what I mean?
And my lungs never clear . . ."**

Grandpa grates on the ear With his organ recital routine.

(Beary)

**Since I'm hip that this liver of mine
Is a bust, I've been toeing the line.
But your wine has a nose
Like a cheeky merlot's,
So my heart says a nip'll be fine.**

(Doyle)

Another clear winner. Eight, yes, eight body parts, and seven of them used figuratively. Beary 2, Doyle 2.

ROUND 5: Each line must begin with a vowel.

**"Eh? You need a spell cast onto Chris?
'E won't know what we've done!" witches
hiss.**

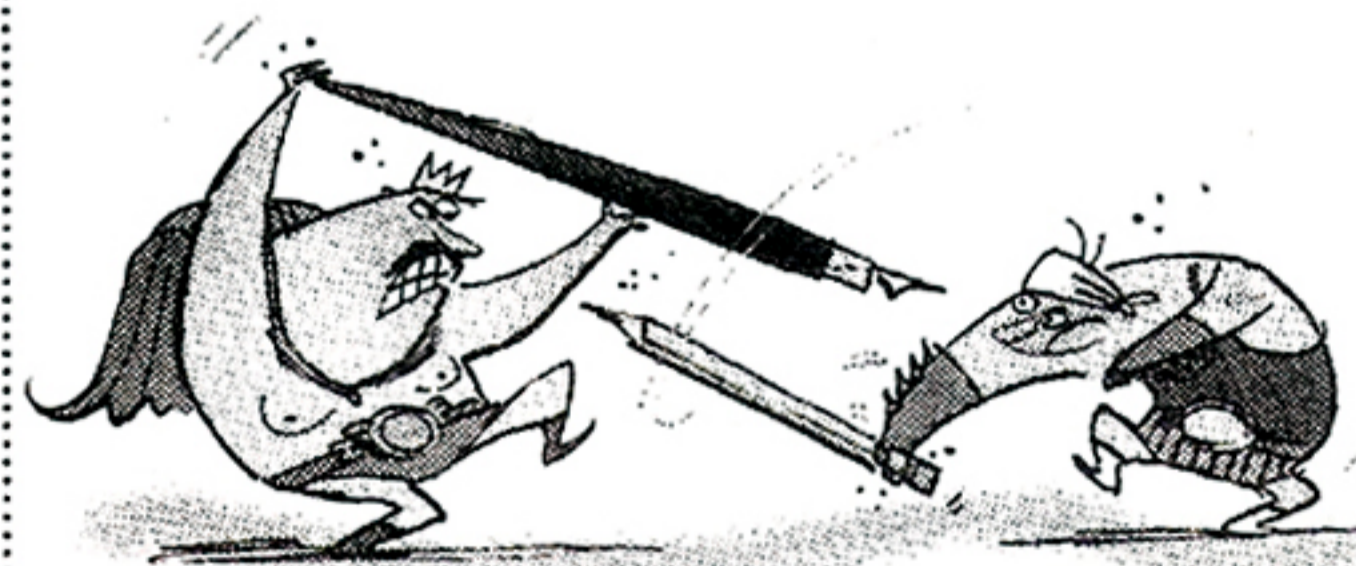
**"Eye of bat, ear of horse,
Eau de swamp, and of course,
Ewe saliva — now watch his gags miss!"**

(Beary)

**All the Russians who live in Rostov
Eye an anthracite statue and scoff.
It's a new piece of art,
And the mayor is smart,
As he's hauling the coal thing right off.**

(Doyle)

Ooh, tough one. That's a classic Doyle chiasmus pun in the last line, his stock in trade. But! Beary has not only started every line with an E, but used them, in order, to make the long sounds A, E, I, O and U. Beary 3, Doyle 2.



ROUND 6: Directions on doing some task.

**The Sudoku is easy to play
If you hold your impatience at bay,
So just keep a cool head
And don't start till you've read
The solution the following day.**

(Beary)

**Here's a task that for husbands must be
Quite demanding, since many, you see,
Find it irksome to do
When they're using the loo:
Lift the seat before taking a pee.**

(Doyle)

Don't know if you'd call either of these directions, but so what, they're funny. Beary's is funnier. Beary 4, Doyle 2.

ROUND 7: Include the word "nasopharyngeal"

**Indecisive, that's you — and it shows
In your nasopharyngeal woes.
A new schnozz every week
Is what's made you a freak —
Jacko, once and for all, pick your nose!**

(Beary)

**In the nasopharyngeal span
'Tween my nose and my pharynx, I can
Mix a dollop of phlegm
With saliva — a gem!
Soon the spit will be hitting the fan.**

(Doyle)

Great round. Nice disgusting stuff from Chris, but you can't top Brendan's. Beary 5, Doyle 2.

ROUND 8: Explain a scientific or philosophical concept.

**Cogito ergo sum:
"If I think, then I am," says Descartes.
"That don't mean what I'm thinking is smart;
I'm a skeptical guy
So it may not imply
A whole lot, but y'know, it's a start."**

(Beary)

**Free will:
Since God is all-knowing, He can
See beforehand what destiny man
In the end must fulfill,
So I had no free will
When I slept with your sister Joanne.**

(Doyle)

Doyle, hands down. Beary 5, Doyle 3.

ROUND 9: Their favorite limerick submitted for the "ca- word" contest that did not get ink.

**Little Junior's a finicky kid,
So we keep foods' identities hid
With deception and games
And exotic-type names —
"Calamari" sounds better than "squid."**

(Beary)

**A dwarf bent on saving his neck
Leaves from Prague on a perilous trek.
To a man loading casks
At a truck stop, he asks,
"Tell me, sir, can you cache a small Czech?"**

(Doyle)

Beary's is fine but not that novel; we think he sent better ones. Doyle's, however, was one of the last limericks cut from the pool. In other words, his eighth-best limerick that week was this good.

FINAL SCORE: Beary 5, Doyle 4.

Next Week: Ask Backwards, or This Punnish Inquisition