

The Style Invitational

WEEK 50: GIVE US THIS DAY

New Holiday: Vice Presidents' Day.

Date: Some day in March; no one really remembers or cares.

How Celebrated: Going to a stranger's funeral.



BY MARC ROSENTHAL FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

This week's contest was proposed by Elden Carnahan of Laurel, who wins a working harmonica the size of a maggot. Elden points out, shockingly, that there are no federal holidays between Presidents' Day and Memorial Day, a cheerless run of more than three months. Let's stick one in there, somewhere. The holiday should celebrate something or someone uniquely American. Tell us the date, the name of the holiday and how it should be observed. First-prize winner gets a pair of "Poo Pets," which are garden fertilizer bricks in the shape of animals, made from deodorized, 100 percent cow manure. This prize has a dollar value of \$25, though obviously its sentimental value is far greater. Runners-up, as always, get the coveted Style Invitational losers' T-shirts. 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 50, The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071, or fax them to 202-334-4312. Entries must be received on or before Monday, Feb. 21. Please include your address and phone number. Winners will be announced in three weeks. No purchase necessary. Employees of The Washington Post and their immediate families are not eligible for prizes.

Report from Week 47

in which you were challenged to write very, very bad Valentine's Day poetry.

◆ Third Runner-Up:

Darling, I neglected you, it's true,
And then you were lost to me.
But now that you're back,
I'd do anything for you,
Except possibly get a colostomy.

(Nick Dierman, Potomac)

◆ Second Runner-Up:

You are so handsome and so kind,
And your shoes are always shined.
Your skin is flawless, your teeth so white,
Your hair and eyes shine so bright.
Your clothes are tailored, very hot.
Your butt is perfect, your stomach taut.
You're sensitive, you have a way. . . .
Omigod, you must be gay.

(Linda K. Malcolm, Silver Spring)

◆ First Runner-Up:

When it comes to verse
I'm no Stephen Sondheim,
But you could do worse,
I'll always use a condehim.

(Fred Dawson, Beltsville)

◆ And the Winner of the really ostentatious bouquet, delivered tomorrow:

My love for you, it sails with the wind.
It's like one of them sailing ships.
I want to kiss you again and again,
With not one, but *both* of my lips.

My love for you is much stronger
Than my love for travel and fine luggage,
My . . . pancreas . . . gets longer
When we embrace in human huggage.

(Michael Paulkovich, Burtonsville)

◆ Honorable Mentions:

I love you, my darling,
Really, really, really.
If life were like the Pentagon,
You'd be my Shalikashvili.

(Bruce W. Alter, Springfield)

The Secret Agent's Lament

When I ~~think~~ of you I scarce can ~~stand~~ my ~~tears~~,
And all of ~~your~~'s darkness ~~may~~ come a ~~big~~ down,
I cannot ~~stop~~ but for my ~~own~~'s ~~tears~~,
And for respite do I ~~take~~ ~~me~~ a clown.
"O damn'ed ~~days~~," I ~~say~~, as I in ~~the~~ ~~dark~~,
And ~~say~~! And ~~say~~! To put my ~~tear~~ in ~~your~~,
Just try and stop me!

(Elden Carnahan, Laurel)

There once was a girl from Nantucket.

I love you more anyway.
(Bruce W. Alter, Springfield)

I'd moon the Super Bowl for you
The QE II with all her crew,
I'd moon the monster of Loch Ness,
My love for you is bottomless.

(Mary Olson, Springfield)

I love you more than
The Style Invitational
But think haiku sucks.

(Robin D. Grove, Washington)

◆ And Last:

What would I do for your love? You name it.
I'd scale C.S. Lewis's pink handramit.
I'd lease my soul on weekends to the Fiend,
I'd re-wash dishes someone else has cleaned.
I'd take a bath in cut-rate Serbo-Croatian oil,
But I will not write poems for the Style Invitational.

(Elden Carnahan, Laurel)

Next Week: You Beg Us for Shirts.