

# The Style Invitational

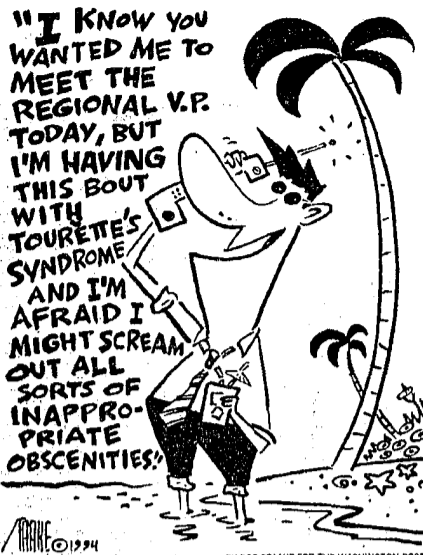
WEEK 56: DO THE HOOKY POKEY

"My doctor says I have the 24-hour Fire Hose Diarrhea virus, and it is extremely contagious. I could try to come in . . ."

"Hey, I'm a little stressed out today and —CHOPPER! WE NEED A CHOPPER OVER HERE!—I seem to be having some sort of strange flashbacks but I'm sure—INCOMING MORTARS! KISS THE DIRT!—I'll be okay as long as—MEDIC! MEDIC!—no one at the office is wearing black and . . ."

"'Nightline' wants to come over and interview me about what I think of the company."

"My uterus exploded. I could give you details if you want. . . ."



BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

**This week's contest** was proposed by Leslie Burket of Alexandria, who wins a realistic foam-rubber brick, perfect for hurling at people's heads. Leslie suggests that the suddenly beautiful Washington weather has made it essential to come up with inventive ways to call in sick or otherwise persuade your employer you must miss a day. First-prize winner receives the fabulous talking parrot, who repeats whatever is said to him; plus the Kodak Funsaver ("the film that's a camera!"), a total value of \$40. Runners-up, as always, get the coveted Style Invitational losers' T-shirts. Honorable mentions get the mildly sought-after Style Invitational bumper stickers. Winners will be selected on the basis of humor and originality. Mail your entries to the Style Invitational, Week 56, The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071, fax them to 202-334-4312 or submit them via Internet at this address: losers@access.digex.net. Entries must be received on or before Monday, April 4. 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 53,

in which we present the first annual Style Invitational Quiz, responding to commonly asked reader questions. Test your knowledge about America's most sophisticated newspaper column regularly featuring poop jokes. Answers below.

1. Who has won the Style Invitational the most times?
2. Who is the Czar of the Style Invitational? And who appointed him the world's greatest authority on what's funny?
3. Why are we reading this? Why aren't you awarding prizes for "How the Style Invitational Has Changed America," as you promised three weeks ago?
4. So who is this Chuck Smith of Woodbridge, anyway?
5. What are the average person's odds of winning the Style Invitational?
6. How many readers does the Style Invitational have?
7. Who has been the most successful female entrant?
8. Where is Lenoir, N.C.?
9. Who is the Faerie of the Fine Print & the Ear No One Reads? Is it a man or a woman? What is the Ear No One Reads?
10. Has the Style Invitational ever been censored for taste by prudish journalistic overlords? Specifically, in Week Three, "Celebrity Monuments," did someone submit a hilarious entry for "The Pee-wee Herman Public Clock" that never ran?
11. What would be a great name for a dog?
12. Who are these people?



1. Wrong. The most frequent first-prize winner is Tom Gearty, a mysterious Arlington who enters sporadically, but often wins. Tom has four wins. Chuck Smith of Woodbridge is second with three, tied with Steven King of Alexandria, who is not, so far as we know, obsessed with reanimating the dead.  
 2. The Czar's identity, known only to himself and Bob Woodward, is stored on microfiche at the Copenhagen headquarters of the Trilateral Commission. Washington Post editors communicate with the Czar via "drop," involving chalk marks made on the base of a public toilet somewhere in Greater Washington. The Czar was appointed for a three-year term by God himself.  
 3. Because your entries suck. The only good ones were: "Offers a forum for the odd and the offbeat to meet, chat and fall in love, and yet provides an excellent barrier to reproduction." (Paul Kondis, Alexandria). Paul wins the autographed, out-of-focus Bill Clinton photo. Winning T-shirts were: "By comparison, Ernest Borgnine seems like a more attractive man" (Dan Riley, Woodbridge); and, "Increased volunteerism for Bishperine III" (Mike Thring, Leesburg). And of course these: "Started a fad for wearing T-shirts inside out" (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge); and, "The Style Invitational T-shirt worn by Shane Stant helped finger him to authorities" (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge); and "It has allowed the triumphant return to the Post of Janet Cooke, writing under the pseudonym Linda K. Malcott" (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge). But that's about it.  
 4. Chuck was a minor functionary in the personnel department of the Environmental Protection Agency until approximately 10 minutes ago, when his boss read this paragraph and realized that it is that Chuck Smith.  
 5. Zero. The average person does not enter the Style Invitational.  
 6. According to the most recent Roper-Yankelovich survey, the Style Invitational has slightly in excess of 31 readers. But they are extremely enthusiastic readers, particularly when they are of their medication, and the Washington Post does not wish to upset them in any way, such as by canceling this patently offensive dirtdial feature.  
 7. That would be Linda K. Malcott of Silver Spring. The second most successful woman would be Robin D. Grove of Washington, except we have been reliably informed that Robin D. Grove is not, technically, a woman. So No. 2 is Cindi Rae Caron of Lenoir, N.C.  
 8. Who cares?  
 9. The Faerie of the Fine Print & the Ear No One Reads is a trained ferret named Franchise. The Ear No One Reads is in the Style section every Sunday, but no one reads it.  
 10. (picture at left)  
 11. Where-where. Also, Piny The Elder.  
 12. Chuck Smith of Woodbridge; Cindi Rae Caron of Lenoir, N.C.; The Baron de Longueil; Linda K. Malcott of Silver Spring; Joseph Wapner; Meg Sullivan of Potomac; Steven King of Alexandria; and Aung Sun San Kyi, though not necessarily in that order.



Next Week: Odd Couplings.