

# Style Invitational

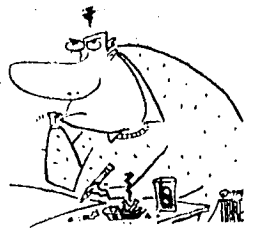
## WEEK 79: TERROR-DACTYL

**Piggery Pokery,  
Doc Jack Kevorkian  
Gave us a gizmo  
To make people croak.**

**Abacadaver!  
Nothing remarkable!  
Marlboro did it  
With mere puffs of smoke.**

**Higgledy Piggledy,  
Benjamin Harrison,  
Twenty-third president  
Was, and, as such,**

**Served between Clevelands  
And save for this trivial  
Idiosyncrasy  
Didn't do much.**



**This week's contest** is very very difficult. It was proposed by Paul Richard, the Washington Post's art critic. Paul gets a Keane portrait of big-eyed, weeping children. Paul suggests that you come up with a double dactyl, which is an obscure type of poetry that is to the limerick what Leonardo da Vinci is to a dung beetle, in terms of life-form comparisons. We must admit this contest idea seems more appropriate to the weekly Competition in New York magazine, which fancies itself a literary adventure and regularly solicits frightfully amusing pastiches of 16th-century iambic verse, than to the Style Invitational, which traffics fairly exclusively in colo-rectal humor. However, we wish to prove our readers every bit as pretentious as New York readers. So. Send us a double dactyl. Here are the rules: The first line must be a nonsense phrase of five to seven syllables containing exactly two downbeats. **HIG-gle-dy PIG-gle-dy** is often used. The second line must be a name, in five to seven syllables but only two downbeats (**GEORGE Steph-an-OP-ou-los; PEE-Wee the OR-gan-ist**). The remaining six lines must contain four to seven syllables and two downbeats each, with Lines 4 and 8

rhyming. Are you getting this? Somewhere in the poem, one line must consist of only one word (**EX-tem-por-AN-e-a**). And the whole thing has to be on the subject of national health care reform. Hahaha. Just kidding. We wouldn't want to make it too *hard*. You can write about any subject. Listen, it's easier than it looks. Just read the above poems aloud (the first is ours, the second the work of double-dactyl pioneer John Hollander) and you will get it. First Prize Winner, should there be one through some miracle, gets a fairly spectacular working chrome 1950s art deco one-slice toaster, a value of \$80. 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 79, The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071, fax them to 202-334-4312, or submit them via the Internet to losers@access.digex.net. Entries must be received by Monday, Sept. 26. Please include your address and phone number. Winners will be announced in three weeks. Editors reserve the right to alter entries for taste, appropriateness or humor. No purchase necessary. Employees of The Washington Post and their immediate families are not eligible for prizes.

### REPORT FROM WEEK 76,

in which we asked you to discuss the great advantages of Washington in August:

◆ Third Runner-Up: **The mulberry slime is gone from the sidewalk, and the black walnut slime has not yet appeared.** (Elden Carnahan, Laurel)

◆ Second Runner-Up: **In August, lawmakers leave town, creating a "power vacuum" that D.C. residents may then use to do end-of-summer cleaning around the house.** (Mark P. Hurst, Germantown.)

◆ First Runner-Up: **It offers the chance to be memorialized in thousands of family scrapbooks around the world by popping up behind those unsuspecting two- and threesomes just as their pictures are taken.** (Stu Segal, Vienna)

◆ **And the winner of the Gerald Ford Calendar:**

**August in Washington? It's GREAT! The skies are sunny, there is low humidity, temperatures rarely get above 80 degrees, the mountains are majestic and snow-capped, the evenings are bracingly chilly with fabulous grunge nightlife. ...**  
(Sue Witner, Bellingham, Wash.)

◆ Honorable Mentions:

**Anyone likely to say "hot enough for ya?" has already been killed.** (Elden Carnahan, Laurel)

**One has a better chance of seeing Janet Reno in a bikini.** (Chris Rooney, Reston)

**Washington in August is as good a place as any to stay away from Woodstock again in.** (Elden Carnahan, Laurel)

**We don't use as much ammunition driving on Interstate 395.** (Paul Kondis, Alexandria)

**At least this August we weren't the only major U.S. city without big-league baseball.** (Mike Thring, Leesburg; Elsa Newman, Bethesda)

**Perp walks are conducted under "dress down day" rules.** (Sue Lin Chong, Washington)

**No matter how hot it gets, you can always cheer yourself up with the knowledge that there are actually people who pay money to take their vacations here.** (Joseph Romm, Washington)

**The following persons will have a birthday and therefore be one year closer to death and/or mandatory retirement: Elvis Costello, Steve Guttenberg, Ron Brown, Connie Chung, Alfonso D'Amato, Geraldine Ferraro, Pee-wee Herman, Michael Jackson, Robin Leach, Madonna, Sean Penn, Jerry Falwell and Bill Clinton.** (Elden Carnahan, Laurel)

**You can take your Aunt Bessie and Uncle Ned to see the cherry trees without running into everyone else's Cousin Merle.** (Mike Thring, Leesburg)

**In August, the world Gee Haw Whimmy Diddle competition takes place here.** (Barbara Bryce, Adelphi)

**You can sit naked on your front porch with the Sunday Post on your lap and no one can tell the difference.** (Elden Carnahan, Laurel)

◆ And Last:

**I am a teacher.** (Laura Ditrapani Clairmont, Centreville)

Next Week: **The Rorschach of the Crowd.**