

The Style Invitational

THIS WEEK'S CONTEST

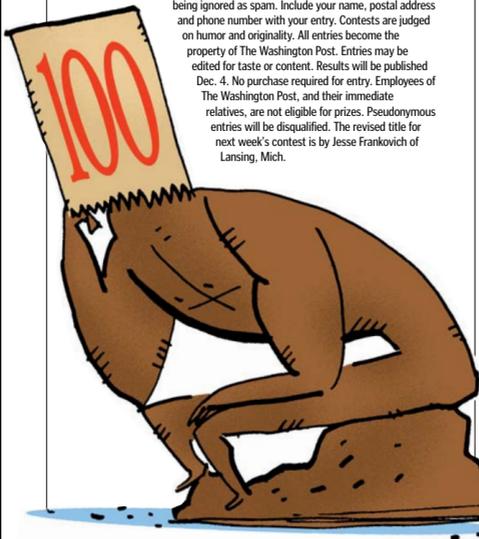
Week 635: I've Told You a Hundred Times

As of today, the Empress is 100 weeks older than when she effected a little regime change and tossed that little ol' Czar aside. Since then, Loser magnets have replaced Loser bumper stickers, and maybe there have been fewer toilet jokes. But one thing is constant: Every week, someone or other gripes that his obviously superior entry was overlooked. **This week's contest: Enter any Style Invitational from Week 536 to Week 631** (the Style Invitational Web page on washingtonpost.com includes links back to Week 599, which is enough for any sane person). Your entry, either one previously submitted or a new one, must be substantially different from the original winners. It may refer to events that occurred after the original contest appeared. Because of space limitations, shorter-form entries are more likely to get ink than long ones such as song parodies.

Winner receives the Inker, the official Style Invitational trophy. First runner-up gets, discourtesy of Beth Martin of Fairfax, a board game called Washington in a Box, presumably because its creators forgot to name it Total Ripoff of Monopoly. It is very colorful, however, and features various Washington landmarks and the Lincoln Memorial, Capitol dome, etc., as tokens.

Other runners-up win a coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt. Honorable mentions get one of the tatted-after Style Invitational Magnets. One prize per entrant per week. Send your entries by e-mail to losers@washpost.com or, if you really have to, by fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Monday, Nov. 14.

Put "Week 635" 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 humor and originality. All entries become the property of The Washington Post. Entries may be edited for taste or content. Results will be published Dec. 4. 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 Jesse Frankovich of Lansing, Mich.



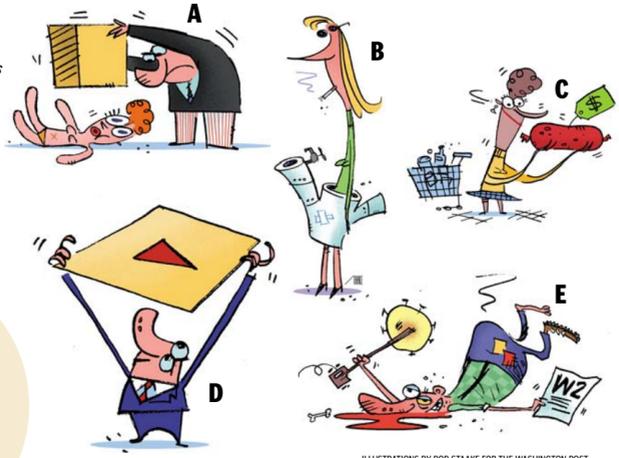
REPORT FROM WEEK 631

In which we asked you to explain these cartoons: We don't think Bob Staake had "Farrah Faucet" in mind when he drew Cartoon B, but that's what occurred to everyone else. **First, a correction:** The winning entry for Week 630, printed last Sunday, had also been submitted by Chris Doyle of Forsyth, Mo., as No. 45 in a list of 55 entries. Poor Chris was credited only with First Runner-Up (for No. 17).

4 Cartoon B: Though shareholders applauded the Victoria's Secret-Restoration Hardware merger, some Tysons Corner shoppers were put off by the new window display. (Alison Kamat, Reston)

2 Cartoon C: Winner of the "Field Guide to the First Ladies": Reflecting the shift in American demographics, Tootsie Roll adjusted its serving size. (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

1 AND THE WINNER OF THE INKER
Cartoon D: When W asked if the Delta could be raised to prevent flooding, Brownie said, "No problem!" (Elwood Fitzner, Valley City, N.D.)



ILLUSTRATIONS BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

HONORABLE MENTIONS

Cartoon A
Frank wondered how long his blow-up doll's mother was going to visit. (Fil Feit, Annandale)

Let out her air, Blair: The 51st way to leave your lover. (Brendan Beary, Great Mills)

Doesn't anything come with an instruction manual anymore? (Martin Bancroft, Ann Arbor, Mich.)

It's the same old story: You get married and your wife makes you throw out your stuff. (Douglas Frank, Crosby, Tex.)

Crew members continue to clean out debris from the Minnesota Vikings' lake cruise. (Stephen Dudzik, Olney)

The estate of the late, great Lucille Made an unseemly marketing deal When they licensed a doll That's not likely at all To turn up in your next Happy Meal. (Russ Cooper, Phoenix)

Cartoon B
Fashion takes a turn for the worse in Montgomery County after smokers are required to keep fire extinguishers on their persons at all times. (Kyle Hendrickson, Frederick)

The Franklin Mint proudly announces its newest collectible, "Martha Stewart in the Jug." (Mark Eckenwiler, Washington)

Another fiendish right-wing plot to control a woman's right to ooze. (Beth Baniszewski, Somerville, Mass.)

Dodging the paparazzi, Kate Moss hides inside her bong. (Bird Waring, New York)

When Chloe opted for breast reduction surgery, she didn't count on all of her tank tops falling

down. (Michelle Stupak, Ellicott City; Russell Beland, Springfield)

Cartoon C
Yolanda's hopes of anthropological fame and fortune would be dashed when experts disputed her claim to have found the Missing Link. (Mark Eckenwiler; Kate Stenberg, Reston)

Some consumers failed to notice the drawback to the once-a-year birth control pill. (James Noble, Lexington Park)

"Hey, good deal on baby panda sausage!" (Jonathan Guberman, Princeton, N.J.)

She had never heard of Soylent Green, but since it was 75 percent off with a savings card . . . (Art Grinath, Takoma Park)

The new, improved Ball Park Franks, marinated "in the clear." (Mel Loftus, Holmen, Wis.)

A Hollywood memorabilia collector quickly spots Minnie Pearl's headrest. (Russell Beland)

Cartoon D
The centerfold editor of Abstract Monthly checks the proofs of Miss May. (Sue Richardson, Somerville, Va.)

Examining an X-ray of the package that arrived at the White House in plain brown paper, the Secret Service discovers it's only the president's new Speedo. (Jeff Covell, Arlington)

An event organizer displays the traditional welcoming sign for the Association of Gay Airline Pilots. (Andrew Hoenig, Rockville)

All Wolfowitz needed was a square peg, and the Iraq war plan would be complete. (Brian Barrett, New York)

George tries to get a pink triangle sunburn on his forehead. (Ted Weitzman, Olney)

After doing time for kiting checks, Ed enters a work-release program with a job checking kites. (Brendan Beary)

Cartoon E
"I done run into John Barleycorn 'fore payin' my Uncle Sam . . ." (Phil Frankenfeld, Washington)

The Teamsters convention wasn't too happy with Barjo Bob's right-to-work folk songs, but at least they paid him. (Bruce W. Alter, Fairfax Station)

Bono's band mates didn't take it well when the IRS persuaded him to change the group's name. (Brian Barrett; Bruce Evans, Arlington)

Maybe he shouldn't have told the tax man that he sure had a purty mouth. (Art Grinath)

Flattened Scruggs. (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village)

And all five: A is for Anger, which Al has to spare, For love is Apparently not in the Air. B is for Beatniks, not very Becoming, Like Bess, who's not Bashful to show you her plumbing.

C's a Colossal Corned beef from the deli; A Cinch to Consume for bulimics like Ellie. D is for Drawings of Deltas in red, Which Don, the big Dolt, likes to Drop on his head. E's Education: now Erv has just learned What the feds do to those who misstate what they've Earned.

(If primers like this make you sputter and spout, Be glad the F picture was edited out.) (Brendan Beary)

Next Week: Live On, Sweet, Earnest Reader, or Print Our Style Tripe

With Kickball, Scoring Is the Name of the Game

KICKBALL, From D1

ter work. Her blue eyes are rimmed with black liner. Her blond hair is hoisted high in a perky ponytail. And her short-shorts show off two perfectly tanned legs. What Grubbs and 415 other enthusiasts understand is that everything you ever needed to know about dating you learned in kickball — the middle school game (think baseball, but with a large, pink rubber gym ball) that is the embodiment of social splendor.

The beauty of adult kickball, thriving in Washington since 1998, is this: One need only stage a clumsy slide into first base, thus hitting the attractive member of the opposite sex playing said base, and one will hopefully get to first base with the aforementioned person that night or later that season. It's all part of the game.

"Now I go out mostly with people from the team," Grubbs says. "My teammate Laura and I actually just went out with two guys on the team Saturday night." One of them, Mark, is sitting just a feet away and happened to be the first high-fiver after her clutch catch.

It boggles the mind that a game as unsexy as kickball could be the hottest aphrodisiac in town. Salsa dancing? Sure. Hot yoga? Maybe. But kickball? Unlike most intramural softball or soccer teams around town that require just two female players on the field at any given time, the World Adult Kickball Association requires four or five, which accounts for roughly half the team. With odds like that, there's a lot of opportunity for guy-gal contact.

One home run and a dozen field flirtations later, Grubbs's team, Rambo First Balls, claims victory. Then an army of red, orange, blue, yellow, green, pink and purple T-shirts marches up 18th Street NW like a parade of M&Ms. It's a mass of girlish giggles, playful screams, poking, nudging and other forms of post-play foreplay. The civilians sitting at cafe tables along the route begrudgingly acknowledge the weekly mating ritual as it makes its way to the Adams Mill Bar & Grill.

The Adams Morgan bar is the official sponsor of the "21 and over-only" Memorial Division that faithfully patronizes the watering hole. Any sparks that flew on the field blaze at the bar. "The drinking part



Amy Grubbs high-fives a teammate after her inning-ending catch for the Rambo First Balls. Team members celebrate their win with a post-game cheer, below.

has a lot to do with people joining," Grubbs says as she positions herself next to Saturday night-Mark at a long table filled with shiny red plastic cups. "Everybody is pretty much a lush."

Humans have been randomly hooking up ever since a caveman named Bud brewed the first beer. Thus, the mating dance that began

on the kickball field continues at the "flip cup" table if everything goes according to plan.

"The kickball is just an excuse to get to the bar. I mean, the game is only 45 minutes," Steve Minard says as he shuttles pitchers of Miller Lite (WAKA's official 2005 sponsor) to the table set up at the back of the bar. He's a member of team Conjugal Visit, which sadly lost its game and is now facing off against Grubbs and the other members of Rambo First Balls.

The weekly postgame flip cup races give the losing teams a chance to reclaim their pride after a loss on the field, while facilitating gender relations. In this game, each team lines up boy-girl-boy-girl on either side of a long table with a plastic cup holding about an inch of beer in front of each member. Then they race from one side of the table to the other to see which team can drink their beers and flip their cups over the fastest.

"Now this is my game," Minard says as he rations out the beer for the first round.

Minard, 31, has been a kickball and flip-cup devotee for four years. He and a roommate share a townhouse in Fairfax, where he works as a database programmer. Every Thursday he takes a bus and two Metro trains to partake in the August-to-November games. Although he claims to have joined for love of the game and the drink, there's a



suspicious whiff of the looking-for-a-lady-love variety. "I'm the guy who's watching and not getting any," Minard says as he looks longingly over at a teammate working it with two girls near the bar. "You have to be sociable in that kind of way."

Grubbs is standing just across the beer-drenched wood table. She's still next to Mark, who bestows high-fives and hugs whenever the Rambo First Balls win a round of flip cup. As the rounds go on, interspersed with shots with the bartender, everyone gets a little louder and a lot more sociable. "See that guy? He's hooked up with three different girls just on this floor," Grubbs says, pointing to a passing male. "They

say fifty percent of the people who play hook up with each other."

Around midnight things start to wind down. There's a collection of red plastic cups on the beer-slicked floor. A guy in a green T-shirt holds a girl in a pink one in a dark corner. A guy in maroon with a backward baseball cap stumbles to the bar to settle his tab. Minard has missed his bus back home by now. He decides to accept an offer from a female acquaintance on another team to crash at her place just down the street.

"It's pretty much a moment thing," he says as they exit the bar together. Still, Minard is off the bench.



After the game, Danielle Heinzman flips her beer cup in a contest at the Adams Mill Bar & Grill.