

# The Style Invitational

## THIS WEEK'S CONTEST

### Week 717: Pitch Us a No-Hitter



BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

- What adorable garbage!
- Squid meringue pie
- The rabbi's favorite oyster stew
- Please play your bagpipes some more!

This week's contest is guaranteed to produce original results. A Googlenope — the term was coined by The Washington Post Magazine's Gene Weingarten in a recent column — is a phrase or very brief sentence that, entered into the Google search engine with quotation marks around it, produces no hits: In other words, that word combination has never appeared in the searchable online universe. It's very easy to come up with something unique (although it's amazing what's already out there). But you need to come up with something so clever and funny that it deserves a prize. Cleverer and funnier than the examples above, which were indeed Googlenopes at press time. **This week: Send us some genuine Googlenopes.** Twenty-five entries max per entrant, and please double-space your list if it's long — there's just one li'l ol' Empress reading these things. And if we were you, we wouldn't then post that phrase online in the next couple of weeks, you know?

Winner gets the Inker, the official Style Invitational trophy. First runner-up receives, courtesy of Loser Peter Metrisko, a Candy Hose Nose, a nose you place over your own nose, and then squeeze "Slime Candy gel from the nose hole" — we guess "nostril" was a little too technical — "onto your tongue." Don't sneeze!

**Other runners-up** win a coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt or yearned-for Loser Mug. Honorable Mentions (or whatever they're called that week) 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](mailto:losers@washpost.com) or by fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Monday, June 18. Put "Week 717" 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 July 8. No purchase required for entry. Employees of The Washington Post, and their immediate relatives, are not eligible for prizes. Pseudonymous entries will be disqualified. This week's contest was suggested by Brendan O'Byrne of Regina, Saskatchewan. Today's Honorable Mentions name is by Kevin Dopot of Washington. The revised title for next week's contest is by Russell Beland.

## REPORT FROM WEEK 713

In which we printed these three cryptic paintings by famed Loser Artist Fred Dawson, and asked you to title and explain them: We also, finally, asked Fred himself. We include his own titles and comments below, condensed from a diary he wrote at the time he painted the artworks in 1970.

**4 PAINTING B: "Opped Out":** Here's that classic optical illusion: Is it a face or a heavy guy in a suit folding napkins into boomerangs while wrapped in lunch meat? Well, then squint harder. (Jay Shuck, Minneapolis)

**3 PAINTING C: "Vampirism Sucks":** It's so hard to shop for your summer wardrobe after you've been bitten. (Chuck Koelbel, Houston)

**2 The winner of the genuine Fred Dawson Painting Style Invitational U.S. postage stamps: PAINTING A: "Temporal Paradox":** Expressing the eternal frustration of not being able to correct past mistakes, Dawson uses the newly invented chronophone to call himself on prom night. But alas, he cannot avert disaster with "Fertile Myrtle" Mandelblatt. (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn)



**AND THE WINNER OF THE INKER PAINTING B: "Father Mackenzie, Darning His Socks in the Night When There's Nobody There":** The artist stunningly answers the existential Liverpudlian conundrum "All the lonely people, where do they all come from?" by showing the Father both figuratively and, seemingly, literally "inside" Eleanor Rigby. (Glen Crawford, Germantown)

PAINTINGS BY FRED DAWSON

## FOR THE EASELLED AMUSED

**PAINTING A "Dad Gum It":** It took several calls, but they finally buried tycoon William Wrigley the way he wanted: in a gumball machine. (Jay Shuck)

**"Are You There, God. It's Me, George":** The president tries to reach God to find out what to do next, but due to an orange security level, only gets through to Tucker Carlson. (Phyllis Reinhard, East Fallowfield, Pa.)

**"Alfred's Warning":** Alfred appears on the Visi-Bat-Phone to warn Bruce Wayne of the Foggy Black Monster looming over Bruce's head and drooling on him. (Mike Dailey, Chantilly)

**"Dude Defending a Stare Case":** On the phone, a Washington attorney informs his client that he'll get the stalking charges dropped, if only he'll stop eyeballing him. (Lawrence McGuire, Waldorf)

**"Time to Reorder":** Noticing some wear and tear on the boss's picture on his stand-up punching bag, Fred orders up a replacement. (Roy Ashley, Washington)

**"Crime and Punishment":** My model for the man in the circle was Homer Van Meter, one of John Dillinger's gang. The other man was one of the FBI agents who pursued them. (Fred Dawson, Beltsville)

**PAINTING B "Now Push":** A baby catches his first sight of life on the outside. Much debated is the significance of the downward glance of the grandmother: Does it symbolize her desire to finish the knitted sock and "not give one more penny to those thieves at Baby Gap" or simply her reticence at staring at her daughter's hoo-ha? (Josh Tucker, Kensington)

**"Not Much of a View":** Rosie O'Donnell sits alone and showless. (Russell Beland, Springfield)

**"Bibbidi Bobbidi Bootie":** After searching the entire village for the owner of that abandoned stocking, the prince's squire wandered — at last! — into the office of Cinderella's gynecologist. (Jay Shuck)

**"Sperm's Eye View":** The spermatozoa had no idea that the uterus employed a goalie. (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

**"Newspaper Budget Crunch":** No longer able to order Style Invitational Inkers, T-shirts, Mugs and Magnets, the Empress tears out paper L's for prizes. (Drew Bennett, Alexandria)

**"The Grandmother":** The woman's grotesque size makes her formidable. She's given life but dominates those she gave it to. As a whole this picture shows the glorification of life at its most extreme. (Fred Dawson)

**PAINTING C "Choices":** A bittersweet commentary on the decisions we make in life. The young woman emerges from one doorway only to find that the alternative doorway has been

Painted over; it's gone. The paths we follow are all too often one-way; there's no going back. Also, it's about sex. (Jon Milstein, Falls Church)

**"The Glass Hallway":** This painting depicts the frustration of women who cannot even move laterally in the workplace. (Chuck Smith)

**"Reality Checked":** Edward Hopper's model was horrified to discover she'd accidentally wandered into that abstract expressionist house down the block. (Jay Shuck)

**"Hello. Have You Seen a Woman With White Face, Red Hair, Scary Mouth and Little Claw Hand? I'm Her Daughter, Girl With Brown Hair, Baby-Poop-Colored Dress and Matching Pumps, and Arm in a Sling. Please Don't Slam Your Door in My Face Again. Hello?!"** (Don Kirkpatrick, Waynesboro, Pa.)

**"The Jaded One":** The larger area could be the woman's thoughts about a dull, colorless world. Or the rectangle could represent a prison in reality. It might also be a pretty picture, like my mother said. (She also said, "It reminds me of when I had the arthritis.") (Fred Dawson)

Next Week: Amalgamated Steal, or A Case of Corporate Breed

## BRIDGE | Frank Stewart

East dealer  
Both sides vulnerable

**NORTH**  
♠ K 8 6 5 3  
♥ J  
♦ J 8  
♣ K 10 8 6 3

**WEST**  
♠ 7 4 2  
♥ 9 7 5 2  
♦ None  
♣ Q 9 7 5 4 2

**EAST**  
♠ Q J 10 9  
♥ A K Q 10  
♦ Q 10 2  
♣ A J

**SOUTH**  
♠ A  
♥ 8 6 4 3  
♦ A K 9 7 6 5 4 3  
♣ None

The bidding:  
East South West North  
1♦ 5♦(1) Pass Pass  
Dbl All Pass

Opening lead: ♥ 2

"Of all the unsatisfactory bidding I ever heard . . ." Alice mumbled.

As the bridge game at the Mad Hatter's continued, the players began to take outrageous chances, hoping to impress the two Red Queens, who were kibitzing intently. When the March Hare, East,

opened one diamond, the Hatter, South, startled the table with a leap to five diamonds.

"How can you leap to game in a suit the Hare bid?" Alice, who was North, demanded with asperity.

"The Hare said he could take seven tricks at diamonds," the Hatter replied meekly, "and I'm contracting for 11. That's only 18 in all. Sometimes in Wonderland we try for more."

"You've lost your mind," Alice growled. "He'll lose something else if he goes down," muttered the Queen of Hearts.

West, the Dormouse, led a heart, and the Hare won with the queen as the Queen of Hearts nodded in approval.

"Nothing East can do," she whispered to Alice. "If he leads, say, the queen of spades next, the Hatter takes the ace, ruffs two hearts in dummy and discards one heart on the king of spades. He loses a trump and a heart."

"Don't be too sure," murmured the Queen of Diamonds, giving the Hare a meaningful glance. Getting the message, he tabled the queen of diamonds at Trick 2, and the Hatter had no answer. East's play had gained two tricks: Declarer could ruff only one heart in dummy, leaving him with a second heart to lose, and since that ruff would come with the jack of trumps, East's 10 would be revived for the setting trick.

© 2007, Tribune Media Services

Dear Amy:

I am a remarried father with two teenage sons and a wonderful 6-year-old stepdaughter whom I consider to be my own child.

When my wife and I got married, we had a very simple wedding. Now my younger sister is getting married in Chicago. We live in Denver.

My wife is pregnant with our fourth child. This baby is due in June, and my sister's wedding is in August.

This is an adults-only wedding, with the exception of the children that she has chosen to be a part of the ceremony. The problem is that my sister is only inviting my two sons (she wants one to participate in the ceremony).

My daughter has a close relationship with her cousins, and I believe that being singled out and left out may upset her. Why would someone pick and choose which immediate family members can attend a wedding?

I realize that this is my sister's day, but I feel that telling me to leave an infant and my daughter (who is the same age as my niece) behind is wrong. Because of this, I don't plan on attending the wedding.

Should I cave in to the pressures of my family and attend the wedding alone, or should I stand behind my beliefs and regretfully decline the invitation?

Confused in Colorado

I agree that your sister is being rude and insensitive in inviting and including some of your children but not others. (For instance, nursing infants are generally exempted from the adults-only rule.)

However, you might feel that your sister

is deliberately excluding your daughter because she is a stepdaughter, when the bride's decision might be entirely age-based.

Couples who choose to have adults-only weddings face genuine challenges when they also include children in the ceremony; they need to be sensitive to the needs of out-of-town guests who have children, as well as to the siblings of wedding participants.

You feel very strongly about this, so of course you need to stand by your immediate family and send your regrets. Don't be punitive, however; just tell her that you tried mightily but couldn't work out a way to divvy up the kids on that day, so unfortunately you're all going to have to stay home.

Dear Amy:

An individual close to my parents is a police officer. Unfortunately, he was present when I made a mistake about 10 years ago.

This incident did not involve me going to jail, nor was it an incident that might have landed me in jail. However, as a result, I do feel a sense of shame whenever I see this person. I feel that he dislikes me because of this.

My parents insist that he does not hate me.

How should I handle this?

Ashamed in Pennsylvania

Shame is human nature's perpetually wagging finger. A sense of shame is useful in that it prevents you from repeating mistakes. However, part of growing up and assuming the mantle of adulthood is admitting your mistakes, along with enduring the shame that accompanies those mistakes.

Here's the hard part: To fully recover from this and "close the circle" on your previous actions, you should speak with this person and say, "Every time I see you, I'm reminded of my actions, and I want you to know that I'm still embarrassed and

ashamed." The gentlemanly response would be for him to say, "Your infraction is ancient history; please don't give it another thought. You've turned out well and that's the most important thing."

Dear Amy:

My boyfriend of one year believes there is nothing wrong with watching pornography. I am fully against the idea.

I understand it is considered "acceptable" because it is so popular among guys, but I cannot get through to him how against it I am — or influence him to stop. Perhaps it is because of my growing up in a conservative Catholic household. Nonetheless, I am repelled by pornography. Lately he has been pushing me to join him. He thinks it will help our sex lives. Instead, it only leads to us fighting.

Am I being too uptight to not want to watch pornography? Am I taking it too far to want him to give it up as well?

Torn Against Porn

According to you, your boyfriend gets to dictate the values in your household.

His response to you being repelled by porn is to push you to watch it with him.

This sort of "aversion therapy" doesn't sound effective, and it certainly isn't respectful. Pornography is only deemed "acceptable" by the people who create and consume it.

Your boyfriend has the right to have the sex life he desires and to ask you to have it along with him. But it is your right — and your duty — to be true to your own values.

If asked to choose between your boyfriend and your values, you should choose your values.

© 2007 by the Chicago Tribune  
Distributed by  
Tribune Media Services Inc.

## LIFE IS SHORT | Autobiography as Haiku

"My son asked his first 'who' question yesterday!" I proudly beamed.

"My son's been able to ask 'who' for a couple of months. We're working on 'why,'" a father replied.

"Well, we've had 'who' and 'why' for about a year," another mother chimed in. "We're working on 'how.'"

The exchange leaves me deflated, but hopeful. I recall having similar conversations when my oldest child was a toddler. But nobody here is bragging. In this play group, the children are nearly 5 and on the autistic spectrum. We are all thankful that our kids have learned to ask anything.

Marla Levenstein  
Olney



"Aren't you going to ask me about school?" my 4-year-old daughter asks as I go to turn off her light. I stay. Details surge — hands trace the shape of her teacher's earrings. Today on the playground, she was one of the three pigs with Faith and Sanai — Porter was the big bad wolf. "He didn't eat us." Her eyes play on the ceiling as if the record of her day is written there. More detail. "Chicken nuggets. And I didn't finish my milk." Our lives are like this: so much of beauty still left in the fields at night, the gleaners weary.

Soren Johnson  
Washington



PHOTOS BY REBECCA D'ANGELO FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Find a way to give insight into your life in under 100 words. Authors of selected entries will be notified and paid \$100. Send text (accompanied by a home phone number) via e-mail ([lifeisshort@washpost.com](mailto:lifeisshort@washpost.com)), fax (202-334-5587) or mail (Style, Life Is Short, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071). Only entries from The Post's immediate circulation area can be considered at this time.