

Entertainment

In the News 'The Normal Heart' 'X-Men' Kim Kardashian Concert special effects 'Blended'



The Style Invitational

By the Empress

Style Invitational Week 1073: Mess With (Y)our Heads; plus poems made of little words



Bob Staake for The Washington Post - "Northwestern softball shows progress." The headline was really about the team from Northwestern High School.

By Pat Myers, Published: May 22

Northwestern softball shows progress (Gazette-Star, May 15)
Slow but determined spheroid heads southeast toward plate in Ultra Slo Pitch

A watershed moment for the GOP? (Washington Post, May 19)
Called bad names by Tea Party, Boehner bites lip, starts making little sobs

The Style Invitational

The Style Invitational is The Post's weekly humor/wordplay contest, serving up since 1993 an irreverent mix of highbrow and lowbrow -- haughty and potty -- in genres ranging from neologisms to cartoon captions to elaborate song parodies. A new contest appears at [washingtonpost.com/styleinvitational](http://www.washingtonpost.com/styleinvitational) every Friday.

Archive

Style Conversational | E-mail

New York gets leg up in Game 1 (Washington Post, May 18)
N.Y. Pets score game-winning piddle in Puppy Bowl playoff

Because the Empress can never get enough of these: It's another installment of our bank headline contest, and once again we'll let you use anyone's heads, not just our own. **This week: Quote a headline appearing in The Washington Post, washingtonpost.com or another publication, print or online, dated May 22 to June 1, and supply a "bank" headline that either**

The Post Most: Entertainment

The top-read stories of the past four hours

- 1 CANNES WATCH: QUICKQUOTE: Tarantino on digital
- 2 CANNES WATCH: Uma Thurman wows in canary 
- 3 Rupert Loewenstein, Rolling Stones' money man, dies at 80
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Going Out Guide: Dinner & Drinks **Movies**

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Going Out Guide

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Live Discussions

There are no discussions scheduled today.

Weekly schedule, past shows

Going Out Guide

Movies

- X-Men: Days of Future Past
- X-Men: Days of Future Past in 3D



(Paladone.com) - Ice cream served up by the queen herself: Direct from England, it's this week's second prize.



Best news photos of the week

A look at some of our favorite images of the week.

Going Out Guide

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Get ideas

misinterprets it, as in the examples above, or comments wryly on it. For online headlines, include a link to the Web address where you saw it (if it's a home page that changes all the time, I'll have to take your word for it). For a head in the print Post, include the date and page number. For print heads in other publications, you're on the honor system, but a photo or scan of the headline would help; if it seems hard to believe, I'd be reluctant to use it. You may omit the beginning or end of the head if that doesn't change its point substantially. What counts as a headline: (a) the main heading above the text of an article or ad; (b) the bank head under a headline; (c) a "jump" head on the second page of an article; (d) a subhead within an article; (e) a headline-style link from a home page to an article. If it's a full sentence ending with a period, it's not a headline. Don't capitalize a word that's lowercase in the headline to turn it into a name. See the Style Conversational for more guidance.

Winner gets the [Inkin' Memorial](#), the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a fabulous item brought back from England last month by the Empress herself: It's an ice cream scoop whose handle is the regally dressed, white-gloved corpus of the Queen of England, with the convex scoop part taking the place of her head. It is of course called the [Ice Queen Scoop](#).

Other runners-up win their choice of a yearned-for [Loser Mug](#) or the ardently desired "Whole Fools" [Grossery Bag](#). Honorable mentions get a lusted-after Loser magnet, either the [Po' Wit Laureate](#) or [Puns of Steel](#). First Offenders receive a smelly tree-shaped air "freshener" ([FirStink](#) for their first ink). E-mail entries to losers@washpost.com or, if you were born in the 19th century, fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Monday, June 2; results published June 22 (online June 19). No more than 25 entries per entrant per contest. Include "Week 1073" in your e-mail subject line or it might be ignored as spam. Include your real name, postal address and phone number with your entry. See contest rules and guidelines at

wapo.st/InvRules. This week's honorable-mentions subhead is by Danielle Nowlin; the

- Blended
- Cold in July
- 50 to 1

[More Movies](#)

Best Bets

- Best Bets for this weekend
- Best restaurants for vegetarians and vegans
- Best spots to lock lips
- Best bars and restaurants with fireplaces
- Best wings

[More Best Bets](#)

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alternative headline in the “next week’s results” line is by Kevin Dopart. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at on.fb.me/invdev, and click “like” on Style Invitational Ink of the Day at bit.ly/inkofday.

□ **The Style Conversational:** The Empress’s weekly online column discusses each new contest and set of results. Especially if you plan to enter, check it out at wapo.st/styleconv.

It’s a small, small word:

Results of Week 1069’s poetry of the prosaic

Week 1069 was inspired by a cartoon from the comic XKCD that described the Saturn V rocket using only a list of very common words (it was titled “[Up Goer Five](#)”). Similarly, we asked you to write a poem whose words were entirely taken from a list, compiled in 2006, of [the 1,000 words](#) found most frequently in a large collection of TV and movie scripts. (The Empress benevolently let you add -s, -es, -ed and -ing.)

We see now that the listmaker must have had been mining “Friends,” “Dawson’s Creek,” “Frasier” and “All My Children,” since the list included, among other names, “Phoebe,” “Dawson,” “Frasier” and “Greenlee.”

In our bonus contest, the inking entry whose least common word is highest up on the list — i.e., the whole poem came from the most common words — is, unsurprisingly, the shortest: Ward Kay’s shorter-than-a-haiku (but so wise) epigram. Its least common word, “fight,” was No. 535. Ward wins a mug or bag.

THE WINNER OF THE INKIN’ MEMORIAL

Same sex marriage? Why the fight?

It’s good for both the left and right.

The left: “This cause the law protects.”

The right: “More weddings mean less sex.” (Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.)

Second place and the [souvenir snow dome](#) from San Francisco featuring a cable car and a topless mermaid:

A nice young woman we all know shared happy news not long ago:

She’s not alone; there is another: In the fall she’ll be a mother!

Soon the talk was moving from the almost-mother to *her* mom.

“Has this news a message sent that she should not be president?”

“Will she now stay home and sit and play with baby?” Is that it?

No one realized all along that something here is very wrong?

Would this stupid talk be had about an almost-mother’s *dad*?

(Nan Reiner, Alexandria, Va.)

Third place:

I think that I shall never see

A word picture as good-looking as a very big stick that is alive would be.

(Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase, Md.)

Fourth place:

Just Saying . . .

Your daughter’s going on a date

You tell her not to come home late,

To watch her step and *never* drink —

(That stupid stuff won’t let you think!)

And one more thing she better know:

That boys are *always* hot to go!

Your job is done! (Be glad your kid
Has no idea of what *you* did . . .) (Beverley Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

Simple whiffs: honorable mentions

Young people love the president,
But he won't love them back:
He makes them buy "care" they don't need
They spend and don't get jack.
Oh wait, I think I understand
Why young people aren't mad:
They moved back home and gave the bill
To dear old Mom and Dad.
(Mark Raffman)

Eve, I love you! You're so sweet!
You've brought me something new to eat!
(Robert Schechter, Dix Hills, N.Y.)

What's black and white and red all over?
Children used to ask.
But soon the answer will become:
Not a damn thing.
(Todd DeLap, Fairfax, Va.)

When in a fight
And you know you are right
Say good night. (Ward Kay, Vienna, Va.)

Call Waiting?
The movie has started; I came here alone.
The guy sitting next to me takes out his phone!
His very next words he'll be sorry he said,
'Cause that's when I'm dropping my drink on his head. (Beverley Sharp)

This guy met a girl in a bar
And he tried out an old pick up line.
I loved it when she answered, "STOP"
'Cause his question was "Hey, what's your sign?" (Craig Dykstra, Centreville, Va.)

"Hamlet" as a limerick:
I'm down now that Father is dead
And his brother takes Mother to bed.
My girl just got mad
When I did in her dad.
No wonder I'm out of my head! (Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.)

I have a big girlfriend, about six-feet-five,
And so hot that she makes me feel glad I'm alive.
I got up on a box to make love face-to-face –
And that was the night that I first fell from Grace. (Craig Dykstra)

My love is like a red, red rose,
I think that's how the saying goes.
It's true, except I would have said
Most roses move more in a bed. (Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)

Four times twenty and seven years ago,
The country dads that came before, in case you did not know,
Brought to this part of the earth, a cool new bitching place,

From an idea that dudes are all the same under God Herself's good grace.
There is now a crazy war with blood, to test if it can last.
We make this dead body place for those who fell and passed.
But, now, it's kinda up to us to follow through on our end,
So this cool new bitching country doesn't go away, my friend. (Kelly Ronayne, Alexandria, Va.)

I love the way you make me feel
As if my whole world is only about you.
Your face, your hair, your body;
They all turn me on so much.
I cannot get enough of your love.
Oh dear, I see our time is up.
Just leave the money on the table, sweetie. (Craig Dykstra)

About This List

Most people who checked out that word list today
Have probably not even wondered
Why "hate," "kill" and "murder" are showing the way,
While "Jesus" is in the last hundred.
There's far too much angry talk going around,
What happened to "yes, sir" and "thank you"?
We all need to hear how some kind words would sound,
So that . . . DAMN IT, SHUT UP OVER THERE! I'M STILL TALKING! (Barry Koch, Catlett, Va.)

And Last:

Maybe she who sits on high
Will like these lines; I can but try.
Will what I write be good enough
To get some nice black writing stuff?
The president with moving head?
Maybe not, but still, instead,
I'll be (for better or for worse) an
Admitted normal no win person. (Hugh Thirlway, The Hague)

And Really Last:

The idea for this week was to write something fun
From a list of a thousand small words, which you've done.
Now I've read what you sent me and, take it from me,
You'd do well not to give up your day job. – The E. (Chris Doyle)

Still running — deadline Monday: Our contest to make new words from ScrabbleGrams letters sets. See bit.ly/invite1072.

Next week's results: Colt Following, or Refoal Madness, our annual spinoff contest in which you "breed" the winning horse names of a few weeks ago to produce "grandfoals." See bit.ly/invite1070.

 Reprints

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