

Style Invitational

BY PAT MYERS



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

THE
WINNER
OF THE
INKIN'
MEMORIAL

Ferdinand A. Porsche (1935-2012), designer of the Porsche 911

When Porsche first designed his car, he cleverly employed The insights he had garnered from the works of Sigmund Freud. A car, as Porsche understood, was outwardly metallic, But in the heart of man it was organic flesh, and phallic.

And so he built it long and strong, he built it fast and loud, To make the rich unmanly man feel powerfully endowed. Though Freud had said that now and then cigars are just cigars, Ferdinand, the businessman, knew cars are not just cars.

(Robert Schechter, Dix Hills, N.Y.)

Report from Week 1004

Our annual contest for poems about those who died in the previous year: Frequently noted was that Dave Brubeck is taking five and much longer; that Sherman Hemsley moved on up; that Robin Gibb's no longer stayin' alive; that Vidal Sassoon and Phyllis Diller were hair today, gone tomorrow; and that go-go pioneer Chuck Brown was, of course, gone-gone.

2 Winner of the toilet-shaped coffee cup:

Edward Archbold, who died after winning a roach-eating contest

Hey, the next time that someone approaches With a contest to eat the most roaches, Though the prize may be nice, suggest you think twice, 'Cause it might be your big *buenas noches*.

(Nan Reiner, Alexandria)

3 A eulogy for Sally Ride is not off-base; I wouldn't halt one, though perhaps I'd pause it

To ponder how she managed a career in space Yet all the while remaining in a closet.

(Brendan Beary, Great Mills, Md.)

4 Thomas Kinkade

Go very gentle into that good night With houses quaint where Pollyanna lived. "Rage? Nah," said the Painter of the Light.

(Jeff Brechlin, Eagan, Minn.)

Primping for our big day

There's no new contest this week, because four weeks from now — on March 3, when the results would have run — the Empress will devote this entire space (and more!) to a celebration of the Style Invitational's 20th anniversary. We'll look back at the Invite's greatest hits, especially from the past 10 years: the best of the song parodies, neologisms, horse names, limericks, "joint legislation," cartoon captions and dozens of other classic contests. We'll also tell you about the Losers, the unlikely community of contestants that's been active since Year 1 with a calendar of social events, a vigorous competition for most ink, a set of meticulous online standings, and a Facebook page that numbers almost 500 members. And there just might be a few peeps from the Czar, the E's predecessor and the originator of this contest, whom she mercifully sent into retirement nine years ago.

Digging deeper: Honorable mentions

Marvin Miller, head of the Major League Baseball Players Union

When crafty Marvin Miller led the MLBPA, 'Twas then that players' salaries went rocketing away.

He made some people very rich, but there's one problem: That's

The reason that it costs a hundred bucks to see the Nats. (Nan Reiner)

Earl Scruggs saunters up to the Heavenly Gate.

There's a banjo audition. How easy is that? Saint Peter's on harp and his playing sounds great, But an angel joins in on guitar — and he's Flatt. (Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.)

Murray Lender, of the People Chosen, Made a fortune large in bagels frozen. We'll always miss him dearly, even though he Made us like his product: round and doughy. (Kathye Hamilton, Annandale)

Donna Summer and Robin Gibb

People stuck in the '70s fervently shouted, "By music we won't be misled!" But two passings have shown what the sane never doubted: That disco is certainly dead. (Matt Monitto, Elon, N.C.)

Joe Paterno, once revered, Whose earthly days are through, Will sadly be remembered most For what he *didn't* do. (Mae Scanlan, Washington)

Jack Klugman

For years you entertained us by annoying Felix Unger; But all things pass (and you, alas, weren't getting any younger). With neatnik vs. total slob, will either one convert?

I guess you get the last laugh, 'cause you're both immersed in dirt.

(Beverly Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

Ray Bradbury

Ray's friends flew like madmen the length of the drive

And arrived at the funeral parlor at 5. "Alas," said the owner, "it's over and done: I did the cremation at 4:51."

(Christopher Lamora, Guatemala City)

I heard you at the Fillmore, heard you at Winterland, I heard you with Bob Dylan, I heard you with the Band, You took a load off Annie, you took a load for free.

Financially, O **Levon Helm**, you took a load off me. (Nancy Lasner, Washington, a First Offender)

Antisa Khvichava

She claimed to be one hundred thirty-two (It's hard to tell if that was really true), But thanks to luck, good health and proper genes, She'd pass for someone in her hundred-teens! (Brendan Beary)

Helen Gurley Brown

To her magazine readers she wanted to show That it's fun and fulfilling to act like a ho. (Mark Raffman, Reston)

Arlen Specter

Now that really he's a specter, No one chivvies, snipes or chides That former GOP defector Arlen's once again switched sides. (Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)

Don Cornelius

He introduced soul music to the nation, But now, alas, Don's soul train's left the station. (Howard Walderman, Columbia)

Said Jean Harris, "This new Scarsdale Diet

Is amazing! You really must try it! With just four rapid rounds I shed 200 pounds! (Now I just hope the jury will buy it.) (Christopher Lamora)

Robert B. Sherman, Disney songwriter

Earthworms over earworms crawl, Since it's a pall world after all. (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

John Demjanjuk, Nazi guard

Living in our own back yard, Was innocent, he often said, But all his witnesses are dead. (Robert Schechter)

Art Modell, owner of the Cleveland Browns (until he moved them in 1996)

On a winter midnight dreary, while snow blew in from Lake Erie, Art came up with a new theory he had failed to find before. "My team needs some warmer weather! Sever this cold Cleveland tether,

Question 'where,' no longer 'whether': We are heading for the door!" Like a flame there came the answer, as he led

them out the door: "We are going to Baltimore!"

Frantic fans fumed: "This is treason! Keep them here for one more season!" But Art gave not cause nor reason, heading for that warmer shore.

All the so-called football mavens dubbed Art's newly minted Ravens Flightless, flightless Cleveland cravens — faded Browns, who could not score. Yet in the 2000 season, Art's team was the Super Corps! They were part of Baltimore.

Now Art's taken one last flier, joining legends all admire, Halas, Rooney and the Squire — men who made pro football soar. Though "the Move" is still debated, on Lake Erie's shores berated, In Charm City celebrated, there's one voice fans can't ignore.

Loudly, proudly, hear the players voice their deep, unfeigned rapport: Quoth Art's Ravens — "Baltimore!" (Barry Koch, Catlett, Va.)

More terrific obit poems — including a song parody that wins a second Inkin' Memorial — in the online Invite at bit.ly/inv-obit13

Still running — deadline Monday night — is our backward-crossword contest. See bit.ly/invite1007.

 **STYLE CONVERSATIONAL** Have a question for the Empress or want to talk to some real Losers? Join us at washingtonpost.com/stylconversational.