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Style Invitational Week 1035: In toon with the news in the Empress's 500th column

By [Pat Myers](#), Published: August 22

Five hundred Style Invitational contests ago today, the anonymous Czar had some news to tell. But for a journalist, he sure didn't get his point across very clearly. His news was that starting with the next week's contest, Week 536 (Dec. 14, 2003), the Czar would be outta here, replaced by an equally anonymous Empress (I didn't get named on this page until 2011).

But instead of just telling readers, the Czar offered a contest: He had Bob Staake draw [five cartoons](#), each featuring Bob looking insane, along with something cryptic going on. The contest: Explain what news Bob was trying to communicate. [Here are the results](#). Nobody guessed that the cartoon with Sistine Chapel Adam all alone meant "the Creator has disappeared!" (the Czar was not excessively modest), but as always, there were plenty of funny, better answers, which you can see by enlarging your screen (click the Ctrl and + keys simultaneously).

Anyway, this is the Empress's 500th column, and Bob is still here to draw us cryptic cartoons, even if we have no earth-shaking news to report today; as far as we know, Jeff Bezos doesn't have it in for us yet. **This week: Explain what news Bob is trying to tell in any of the drawings above.**

Winner gets the [Inkin' Memorial](#), the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a super double prize: the fabulous ["Eat-a-Bug Cookbook,"](#) featuring lavishly illustrated recipes for such dishes as Sweet and Sour Silkworm and Cream of Katydid Soup; as well as, for those who like their bugs ready to eat, a little box of cheddar-flavored [Larvets Worm Snax](#), identified as "genuine insect larva" and looking a lot like mealworms. The Larvets were donated by Bruce Alter.

Other runners-up win their choice of a yearned-for [Loser Mug](#) or the ardently desired [Grossery Bag](#). Honorable mentions get a lusted-after [Loser magnet](#). First Offenders receive a smelly, tree-shaped air "freshener" (FirStink for their first ink). E-mail entries to losers@washpost.com or fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Tuesday, Sept. 3 (you may skip laboring on Labor Day); results published Sept. 22 (online Sept. 19). No more than 25 entries per entrant per week. Include "Week 1035" 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/inviterules. The subhead for this week's honorable mentions is by Kevin Dopart; the alternative headline in the "next week's results" line is by Chris Doyle. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at on.fb.me/invdev.

Report from Week 1031

in which we asked you to find pertinent words inside other words or names:

The winner of the Inkin' Memorial:

Ameri"can": A butt larger than a size 18. (*Barbara Turner, Takoma Park, Md.*)

2. Winner of the [Holy Crap brand Canadian cereal](#): **Linke"din":** A thousand .connection requests from people you've never heard of. (*Mike Gips, Bethesda, Md.*)

3 **M"ale":** What's inside a guy after a night of too much drinking; **fe"male":** What's inside a girl after a night of too much drinking. (*Lela Martin, Midlothian, Va., a First Offender*)

4 . **Compe"nsa"tion:** Fringe benefit entitling one to a multiweek stay at the Moscow airport. . (*Yuki Henninger, Vienna, Va.*)

Ho'no'able mentions

R"egret": It often arrives when the bluebird of happiness has flown. (*Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.*)

Se"cret in"redient: A common marketing ploy targeting the pathologically gullible. (*David Garratt, Silver City, N.M.*)

Cr"usa"der: Someone who expects the rest of the world to share his values. (*Tom Witte, Montgomery Village, Md.*)

Ce"rebel"lum: The part of the brain that kicks in when kids hit their teens. (*Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.*)

Ini"quit"y: The Capitals' playoff performances. (*Jim Stiles, Rockville, Md.*)

H"andboo"k: "How to Be a New York Sports Fan." (*Susan Thompson, Cary, N.C.*)

Ichth"yolo"gy: Hey, there are lots of fish in the sea. (*Doug Frank, Crosby, Tex.*)

Melli"flu"ous: Description of the low, sexy quality of your voice just before it gives out entirely. (*Larry Powers, Falls Church, Va.*)

P"resent": A gift you feel pressured into giving. (*Robert Schechter, Dix Hills, N.Y.*)

Wa"shroom": A poorly ventilated lavatory. (*Susan Thompson, Cary, N.C.*)

"Aw"ard: The trophy the team gives to the schlumpy kids just for participating. (*Roger Dalrymple, Gettysburg, Pa.*)

Feat"herbra"in: A woman whose attractions are not those of the mind. (*Dudley Thompson, Cary, N.C.*)

C"hate"au: Your neighbors' newly expanded McMansion. (*Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn, Va.*)

E"ducat"ion: Where local tax money goes. (*Greg Arnold, Herndon*)

So"cialis"m: Political theory focused on the rise of the masses. (*Matt Monitto, Elon, N.C.*)

B"eh"ind: An unimpressive posterior. (*Denise Sudell, Cheverly, Md.*)

Au"tomato"n: She looked so hot yet turned out so cold. (*Mae Scanlan, Washington*)

Ex"huma"tion: Are there any more skeletons left to uncover, Anthony? (*Kevin Dopart, Washington*)

St"retch": The first course of action on the morning after. (*Kristen Rowe, Silver Spring, Md.*)

Bud"get off"ice: Bureaucrats who delight in denying your expense request. (*Samara Firebaugh,*

Annapolis, Md., a First Offender)

Bak"sheesh": A miserly tip. (*Beverley Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.*)

P"arse"c: The distance across Your Mama's backside. (*Jeff Contompasis*)

"Har"dship: A first-world problem. (*Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase, Md.*)

Walm"art": "Dogs Playing Poker." (*Christopher Lamora, Arlington, Va.*)

Synchronized s"wimmin"g: You don't think *guys* would watch it, do you? (*Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.*)

Frank"fur"ters: Hot dogs left in the back of the fridge too long. (*Mark Raffman*)

Z"omb"ie: Someone who's read the federal budget cover to cover. (*Elden Carnahan, Laurel, Md.*)

R"and Pa"ul: If he became president, he might bring some extra baggage to the White House. (*John Glenn, Tyler, Tex.*)

Limba"ugh": An American embar-rassment. (*Jeff Shirley, Richmond, Va.*)

T"rouse"rs: How you know he's happy to see you. (*Chris Doyle*)

Bos"om": Something that holds mystical power over men and is often the object of intense concentration. (*Tom Witte*)

Disc"loser": Edward Snowden. (*Jeff Contompasis*)

Jo"urn"ey: The final trip. (*Mae Scanlan*)

W"ash"ington Post: Another one bites the dust. (*Dayna Fellows, Bethesda, Md.*)

Still running — deadline Monday night: Our Week 1034 contest, "I like my X the way I like my Y." See bit.ly/invite1035.

See the Empress's online column [The Style Conversational](#) (published late Thursday), in which she discusses today's new contest and results along with news about the Loser Community — and you can vote for your favorite among the inking entries, since you no doubt figured the Empress chose the wrong winner. If you'd like an e-mail notification each week when the Invitational and Conversational are posted online, [sign up here](#) or write to the Empress at losers@washpost.com (note that in the subject line) and she'll add you to the mailing list. And on Facebook, join the far more lively group [Style Invitational Devotees](#) and chime in there.

Next week's results: Keep It Symbol-Stupid, or Signs Fiction, our Week 1032 contest, which asked you to tell us about "obvious" symbolism or hidden messages in public places — obvious if you're a nut case, that is.

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