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Style Invitational Week 1047: Bank Shots, and the most novel of celebrity reality shows

By [Pat Myers](#), Published: November 14

Big jump for D.C. kids on national test (*The Washington Post*, Nov. 8)
School board hires Evel Knievel to coach 8th-graders

NYC age to buy tobacco highered (*The University Daily Kansan*, Nov. 5)
Will student editor be fighered?

It's our perennial contest that we used to call "Mess With Our Heads." But this year we'd add: "Or Anyone Else's." Now that most out-of-town Invite buffs aren't able to surf all over washingtonpost.com without a paid subscription just to be able to give us free jokes, the Empress has decided to broaden the pool: **This week: Quote a headline appearing in The Washington Post, washingtonpost.com or another publication, print or online, dated Nov. 14 to Nov. 25, and supply a humorous "bank" headline that either misinterprets it, as in the first example above, or comments wryly on it, as in the second one.** For a non-Post headline, you'll have to include a link to a Web address where I can verify it, or, if it's in print, a scanned copy. For a head in the print Post, include the date and page number. You may omit the beginning or end of the head if that doesn't change its point substantially. What we're counting 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 (you're on the honor system for those, because there's no link to give). Don't capitalize a word that's lowercase in the headline to turn it into a name.

Winner gets the [Inkin' Memorial](#), the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives something very cool: an old edition of the 1830 English novel "Paul Clifford," which nobody knows but whose opening line everyone knows: "It was a dark and stormy night." Its author, Edward Bulwer-Lytton, has achieved immortality with the annual namesake contest for bad openings to a novel. Donated by intermittent Loser Larry Pryluck.

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 Monday, Nov. 25; results published Dec. 15 (online Dec. 12). No more than 25 entries per entrant per week. Include "Week 1047" 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 Beverley Sharp; 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, and click "like" on Style Invitational Ink of the Day at bit.ly/inkofday. The "fighered" joke was made in a comment by Ed Byers on [Jim Romenesko's Facebook page](#).

Report from Week 1043

in which we asked for ideas for celebrity-focused reality shows that would be even nuttier than the actual "Vanilla Ice Goes Amish":

The winner of the Inkin' Memorial:

"This Old House," with new host John Boehner: John shows a wealthy family in a decaying mansion how to save money and increase efficiency by doing no renovations and refusing to pay old debts. Co-host Norm Abrams disagrees. Next week: repeat episode. (*Tim Livengood, Columbia, Md.*)

2. *Winner of the [More Cowbell cowbell](#):* **"Turnabout for Ted":** Sen. Ted Cruz visits a preschool and surprise — he's the teacher today! Ted's challenge is to persuade all the tykes to cooperate — even the little boy who screams all day and isn't interested in anything the other kids want to do — so they can complete their class project before recess. (*Laurie Tompkins, Rockville, Md.*)

3. **Miley Cyrus on "Toddlers and Tiaras":** Ms. Cyrus counsels the young pageant contestants on the dangers of being typecast as cute children and demonstrates her technique for earning respect as a serious artist. (*Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase, Md.*)

4. **"Angela Merkel, Up Close and Personal":** The NSA begins recycling its old cellphone recordings with some classics from the archives. This week the German chancellor shares a few choice comments after her unauthorized back rub from George W. Bush in 2006. (*Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.*)

Channel suffer'ing: honorable mentions

"The Ex Factor": In this mashup of "The Bachelor" and "Beat the Clock," Larry King is surrounded by a bevy of lovely women, and must persuade one of them to marry him. He and his bride must then attempt to stay married for the remainder of the 30-minute show. (*Brendan Beary, Great Mills, Md.*)

"George Zimmerman, Kindergarten Cop" follows the dauntless Floridian in his new job as kindergarten teacher and incognito school security guard. Will anyone wear a hoodie to class? Will the kids talk back to the teacher? Watch a community at ease under the protection of a "good guy with a gun." (*Dan Ramish, Washington*)

"The Amazing Racist": Paula Deen, Marge Schott, Jimmy the Greek and Al Campanis travel around the world vying to insult as many different nationalities, ethnic groups and religions as they can. (*Michael Levy, Silver Spring, Md.*)

"What Not to Wear, Sochi Edition": Host Vladimir Putin (formerly of "Black Eyes for Queer Guys") tours the Olympics venues, rounding up suspects and sending them to fashion re-education camp. This week: how to accent a rainbow T-shirt with tar and feathers. (*Frank Osen*)

"What Knot to Wear": A behind-the-scenes look at Lady Gaga's bondage fashion videos. (*Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.*)

Chuck Norris was on **"Flip That House,"** but he got bored after a while. (*Barbara Turner, Takoma Park, Md.*)

"Burnt Citrus Is the New Black": Martha Stewart pays a nostalgic visit back to the pen. (*Dan Ramish*)

Michael Richards at the Apollo: To show solidarity with his audience, the comic plans to perform in blackface. (*Joel R. Malkin, Arlington, Va., a First Offender*)

"Celebrity Retox": Lindsay Lohan and Charlie Sheen counsel recovering recoverers through the process of dehab. (*Frank Osen*)

William "Refrigerator" Perry returns to Chicago to guide his old NFL team in a high-carb nutrition regimen in ESPN's **"Build-a-Bear Workshop."** (*Craig Dykstra, Centreville, Va.*)

"Casting Calls": Nicolas Cage calls every producer in the Los Angeles phone directory in the hopes of being cast in a movie that doesn't suck. Tonight: A through C. (*Neal Starkman, Seattle*)

Juice the Bogey Hunter: After his release from prison, O.J. continues his relentless pursuit of the Real Killer and par. (*John Folse, Bryans Road, Md.*)

The Clog Whisperer: Joe "The Plumber" Wurzelbacher finally gets his contractor's license. (*Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn, Va.*)

Bear Grylls in "Surviving the Kardashians": Armed with a hunting knife and a roll of duct tape, the survivalist wades into a den of superficiality to face a week of shopping, partying, scandal-mongering and applying eyeliner. (*Jeff Brechlin, Eagan, Minn.*)

"America's Got Talons:" Who will be able to outsnark Joan Rivers? (*Craig Dykstra*)

"Where'd It Go?": Each week John Boehner leads a crew around the world — through the Amazon rain forest, across the Gobi desert, beneath the Indian Ocean — in search of his spine. Tonight: Could it be in an abandoned Kentucky mine? (*Neal Starkman, whose entry actually had the House speaker searching for a pair of more intimate body parts*)

Still running — deadline Monday night: Our contest for bogus explanations of the origins of common expressions: See bit.ly/invite1046.

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: [Playing It Safe](#), or **Joking Hazards**, our Week 1044 contest to come up with comical safety warnings.

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