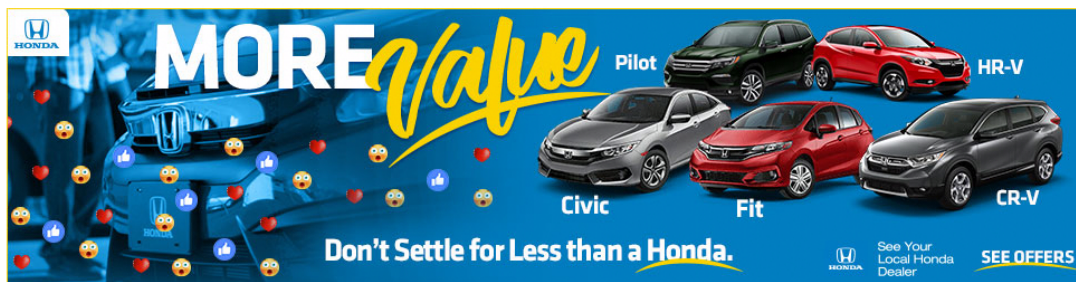




Sections

The Washington Post  
Democracy Dies in Darkness

Elden Carnahan



Entertainment

# Style Invitational Week 1249: Ask Backwards 36 — we answer, you question

Plus winning stupid complaints to The Post



The IQ test showdown — or shoedown. (Bob Staake for The Washington Post)

By Pat Myers October 12, 2017 [Email the author](#)

(Click [here to skip down](#) to the winning rants at The Post and other papers)

A. Melania's left shoe.

Q. Whom in the White House — or what — has Trump *not* challenged to an IQ test?

A. Oops, that was a typo.

Q. Secretary Tillerson, did you really write "[redacted]" in the stall of the White House men's room?

A Slim Jim smoothie

Melania's left shoe

Bleechsit

A fidget spinner, an infinity scarf and Cher

280 characters

I don't think they have that at Whole Foods

Oops, that was a typo

Wynken Blynken and Stynken

NEW EXHIBITION

## AAM @ 60: The Diamond Exhibition

Reception: July 27, 2018, 5:30 - 7:00 pm  
July 28 - October 14, 2018

Miriam Schapiro. *Children of Paradise*, 1983-1984.  
Color lithograph and collage on arches cover paper.  
AAM 2008.014. Gift of George Holzer, 2008

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Miriam Schapiro. *Children of Paradise*, 1983-1984.  
Color lithograph and collage on arches cover paper.  
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## Despacheeto

## Mike Pence's favorite pastime

## Fluffy or something

## The comma before the storm

## Fargo, North Dakota

## Nose hair extensions

## There's still no app for THAT

Yes, it's the 36th time — at least — that The Style Invitational has run this contest in its almost 25-year history, though the last time was 13 months ago.

**This week: Choose any of the 15 items above and follow it with a question that it could humorously answer**, as in the examples above. Submit entries at this website: [wapo.st/enter-invite-1249](http://wapo.st/enter-invite-1249) (all lowercase).

Winner gets the **Lose Cannon**, our new Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a unique prize (except for one other, still in the possession of its creator): **an enormous custom-made T-shirt** that says, in Maori, "*Kaua e uapare mai. I tuku Poti ahau ki a Hillary!*" As well as its English translation, "Don't blame me! I voted for . . ." Donated by Loser Ed Sobansky, who had it made before he and his wife visited New Zealand earlier this year; "it helped me not to have to answer the constant question from the Kiwis: 'What's up with this Trump fella, anyway?'" (If you end up in second place but did not vote for Hillary, or just don't want the shirt, you may have a mug or bag instead.)

**Other runners-up** win our "You Gotta Play to Lose" Loser Mug or our Grossery Bag, "[I Got a B in Punmanship](#)." Honorable mentions get one of our lusted-after Loser magnets, "[No Childishness Left Behind](#)" or "[Magnum Dopus](#)." First Offenders receive only a smelly tree-shaped air "freshener" ([FirStink](#) for their first ink). Deadline is Monday night, Oct. 23; results published Nov. 12 (online Nov. 9). See general contest rules and guidelines at [wapo.st/InvRules](http://wapo.st/InvRules). The headline for this week's results is by Jesse Frankovich; the honorable-mentions subhead is by Chris Doyle. Join the Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at [on.fb.me/inudev](https://on.fb.me/inudev). "Like" Style Invitational Ink of the Day on Facebook at [bit.ly/inkofday](http://bit.ly/inkofday); follow [@StyleInvite](https://twitter.com/StyleInvite) on Twitter.

**The Style Conversational** The Empress's weekly online column, published late Thursday afternoon, discusses each new contest and set of results. Check it out at [wapo.st/conv1249](http://wapo.st/conv1249).





[And from The Style Invitational four weeks ago . . .](#)

## A LOAD OF CARP: THE RANTS OF WEEK 1245

In [Week 1245](#) we invited you to complain "in a humorously missing-the-point way" about something in The Post or another publication. Some of you made the mistake of pointing out actual inaccuracies, like the "\$81" that was supposed to be "\$81,000," or the fact that The Car Pages is actually A Car Page, or that the Weekend section has listings for the whole week. Or you noted valid irritants, like ad stickers covering parts of the front page. We can't stand those either, so no ink for you.

## 4th place:

Once again, The Post's TV critic thoughtlessly ruins the viewing experience. I was eagerly awaiting the PBS documentary on the Vietnam War until Hank Stuever blabbed, "It ended 30 years later in failure." (Frank Osen, Pasadena,

- 2 Perspective**  
President Trump's power to pardon himself, as skewered by cartoons 
- 3** Celebrities, fashion insiders react to death of Kate Spade 
- 4 Review**  
Sex, politics and art painted in broad strokes in 'Botticelli in the Fire' 
- 5 Perspective**  
Trump's Super Bowl party without the Eagles, as mocked through cartoons 

## Our Online Games

Play right from this page



Klondike Solitaire  
Card game



Mahjongg Candy  
Matching game

ADVERTI

Calif.)

### 3rd place:

This Loser-commissioned T-shirt printed in Maori and English is this week's second prize.

I am appalled by the sexist photo you published that focused lasciviously on

men's muscular buttocks. Of course, it was by a female photographer — a man would never have taken a picture of NFL players bent forward in a huddle. (Dave Prevar, Annapolis, Md.)

### 2nd place

and the [Romney campaign magnets plus the "I Believe The Post" magnet](#):

I have experienced your unbalanced coverage firsthand: Two of my obnoxious neighbors — one had a dog that once pooped on my lawn; the other never returned my pruning shears — died in the past year. And each received a glowing obituary — yet not once was I contacted to provide my side of the story. (John Hutchins, Silver Spring, Md.)

### And the winner of the Lose Cannon:

My well-intentioned but not-so-bright friend wrote some time ago to alert you that some of the people pictured in your death notices did not look dead. It's silly, I know. But going forward, you can eliminate this problem simply by superimposing X's over their eyes. (David Garratt, Silver City, N.M.)

### Rants' tomb: Honorable mentions

If The Post claims to care about the truth when it comes to science, then tell me why the [Sept. 10 "Doonesbury"](#) shows the crescent moon pointing the wrong way in the Northern Hemisphere! Cancel my subscription immediately. (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

I don't understand why you have a category of advertisement called "**Legal**

I don't understand why you have a category of advertisement called "**Legal Notices.**" Is there also a page of "Illegal Notices" that I need to look for? (Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.)

Enough already with all the **fake news about President Trump!** Now for the truth — please tell us how things have been going for President Clinton all year! (Jesse Frankovich, Grand Ledge, Mich.)

Why have the media not applied more pressure to Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin? It is patently wrong that **U.S. money** honors a president who forcibly relocated nonwhite Americans into deplorable conditions. The FDR dime must go! (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn, Va.)

Yet again, The Washington Post has entirely ignored the state sales tax battle in Olympia *and* the trash pickup controversy on the Seattle waterfront! **#LiveUpToTheName** (Kyle Hendrickson, Frederick, Md.)

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The White House chief of staff does not own this town! So why does The Post print on Page B3, five times a week, "**John Kelly's Washington**"? Besides, dude, get a new photo! (Mike Creveling, La Plata, Md.)

Tell your owner that we're on to his subliminal shenanigans. The bottom of the front page of Monday's A-section directed us to an article on Page 11 — **a prime number. As in Amazon Prime.** And what did I also find on that page? An ad for a kitchen remodeling company. What do you put in kitchens? That's right, food. Which you can buy from, oh, perhaps . . . Whole Foods? Coincidence? I think not. (Hildy Zampella, Falls Church, Va.)

Hey, Gregg J. Fernandes, Washington Post vice president for customer care and logistics: My daughter Olivia, who's a big fan of KidsPost, was sick today. **But when I called you to come watch her**, you didn't show up or even arrange for someone to do it! That's not "care" and it's not even "logistics!" (Mark Raffman)

Judging by the putrid quality of your publication, I can only assume the name "The Washington Post" was chosen as an **anagram of "That news logistics!"** (Mark Raffman)

Judging by the putrid quality of your publication, I can only assume the name "The Washington Post" was chosen as an **anagram of "That news thing's poo"** — not to mention an anagram of "**What pigs! Not Honest!**" (Jesse Frankovich)

Why did you print **the crossword puzzle right below the Sept. 21 KidsPost?** Our 9-year-old figured out the clue "Big glitch" was for "snafu," then looked it up in the dictionary and learned a disgusting word. Shame on you! (Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.)

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Since it's not very useful to dwell on whether you needed an umbrella *yesterday*, your paper sensibly focuses on what weather to expect in the *future*. Yet in the same section, you print only **yesterday's lottery numbers!** Why the inconsistency? (Kevin Dopart)

Yet again the liberal elite Post shows an insulting failure to understand us regular Americans. That op-ed headline "**Just when you think Republicans can't get more irresponsible . . .**"? I assure you that I have NEVER thought that Republicans couldn't get more irresponsible. (Todd DeLap, Fairfax, Va.)

I'm sick and tired of trying to decode those **secret messages** that The Post prints in tiny type at the top of its pages, like "EZ RE K" at the top of my Sept. 24 Weather page. Is that a subliminal advertisement for a tow truck company? And who is "EZ SU?" I'd sure like to meet her! (Ivars Kuskevics, Takoma Park, Md.) [We'll leak this top-secret code in this week's [Style](#)

[Conversational](#) column.]

Browsing the online classifieds today, I was appalled to discover a link for The Post's "**Place a death notice**" service. I can't believe the paper would take money to publish mortal threats! Can't people make do with a "Place a stern warning" service instead? (Frank Osen)

I am both appalled and terrified that **The Post published my Social Security number** in its Sunday print edition. Sure, you broke up the digits and placed them randomly throughout the page numbers. But it took me less than a minute to hunt down all nine — and surely a sophisticated hacker could do it even faster. (Hildy Zampella)

Must your **lingerie advertisements** be so graphic? I don't mind having to take cold showers in the summer, but chilly weather is approaching. — M. Pence, Washington (Roger Dalrymple, Gettysburg, Pa.)

So according to your ad, The Post is giving a \$5 discount off Taste of DC — "**the largest culinary festival in the mid Atlantic.**" Like that's going to help much toward paying for a cruise to the middle of the ocean. (Dave Prevar)

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#### Eats & Drinks newsletter

The latest buzz on the D.C. area dining and bar scene, featuring restaurant critic Tom Sietsema, every Wednesday.

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The Post wrote on and on about **the Redskins' game-winning touchdown** against the Rams — but *not one word* about my grandson's near touchdown reception in Saturday's flag football game at the community center. Even though the quarterback made a terrible pass, Tyler made a valiant effort to catch it, and the defensive back was all over him. Did the refs call interference? No! Were they paid off? This clearly calls for a media investigation. (Roy Ashley, Washington)

The Washington Post has a "**Vice President for Audience Development & Insights**"? Perhaps that VP is not yet aware of my many insightful Style Invitational entries that have gone unrecognized by the Empress! And I must note that my mom said that if she doesn't see my name in the results soon, she's going to cancel her subscription. (Ivars Kuskevics)

**Still running — deadline Monday night, Oct. 16: our contest for Colbert-style "midnight confessions."** See [wapo.st/invite1248](http://wapo.st/invite1248).

0 Comments



Pat Myers is editor and judge of The Style Invitational, The Washington Post's page for clever, edgy humor and wordplay. In the role since December 2003, she has posted and judged more than 700 contests. She also writes the weekly Style Conversational column and runs the Style Invitational



Devotees page on Facebook. [Follow @patmyersTWP](#)

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