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Entertainment

Style Invitational Week 1290: Bobbing for Witte words

We celebrate a 25-year Loser with a neologism contest



Speaking in the furnacular. (Bob Staake for The Washington Post)

By Pat Myers July 26 [Email the author](#)

(Click [here to skip down](#) to this week's replace-the-P neologism winners.)

"Ooooooooooh, you're my baaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaby! Heeeeeere, honey sweetness snookums! The way people talk to pets is unlike the way they talk to anyone or anything else. The cutesy, sing-songy voice that people use to address pets is called . . ." **furnacular.** (Neologism by Tom Witte in Bob Levey's contest, 2002)

"While some kids are having sex at younger and younger ages, others are actually waiting longer. Someone who waits a really long time is called a cherryatric. (Neologism by Tom Witte in Style Invitational Week 542, 2004)

With his honorable mention this week, Loser Since Week 7 Tom Witte blots up his 1,500th blot of Style Invitational ink, a feat accomplished previously only by Russell Beland and Chris Doyle. Along the way in those 25-plus years, Tom has won the whole contest 29 times and has been a runner-up a crazy 105 times over.

But the Invite isn't the only vehicle in The Post in which Tom has shown off his facility with wordplay, especially in coining new words: From 1993 through 2003, Tom was lauded dozens of times by longtime Metro columnist Bob Levey in his monthly neologism contest. While the Invite and the Bob had different formats — Bob would offer one situation that needed a word for it, and everyone would submit neologisms for that single instance — another signal difference was that the entries Bob would run were always




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G-rated, while those from the Invite are often . . . well, not G-rated. Tom is obviously good at both blue and beige, but has become notorious here in Loserdom for the spicy.

Back in 2004, the Empress celebrated Bob's retirement by running a Levey-style neologism contest, except that you also had to submit a situation. With Tom's Triple Hall of Fame ascension, we thought we'd do it again: **This week: Come up with both an object/situation and a neologism for it**, as in Tom's examples above.

Submit entries at the website wapo.st/enter-invite-1290 (all lowercase).

Winner gets the [Lose Cannon](#), our Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a useful but Offensive to Everyone gadget: [a bottle opener in the form of a guitar](#) that is held by a little wooden stick-figure man. Who is painted black. And wearing a sombrero. And a hoop earring. It was made in Japan, back when Japan made knickknacks. Donated by Loser Matt Monitto.

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, "We've Seen Better" or "IDiot Card." First Offenders receive only a smelly tree-shaped air "freshener" ([FirStink](#) for their first ink). **Deadline is Monday night, Aug. 6**; results published Aug. 26 (online Aug. 23). See general contest rules and guidelines at wapo.st/InvRules. Chris Doyle, Jesse Frankovich and Jon Gearhart all submitted the headline "P's Out"; Jeff Contompasis wrote the honorable-mentions subhead. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at on.fb.me/invdev. "Like" Style Invitational Ink of the Day on Facebook at bit.ly/inkofday; follow @StyleInvite on Twitter.

The Style Conversational The Empress's weekly online column discusses each new contest and set of results. This week we'll feature the results of our 2004 Levey homage. So especially if you plan to enter, check it out at wapo.st/conv1290.

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

P'S OUT: WINNING AND LOSING NEOLOGISMS FROM WEEK 1286

In [Week 1286](#), inspired by IHOP's momentary change of name to IHOB, the Empress asked you to replace one or more P's in a word, name or phrase with some other letter and define the result. Many people suggested "Trumb," as in, well, not "numb."

4th place:

Ingut/Outgut: Middle-aged guy's reflex when a young woman passes at the beach. (Larry Gray, Union Bridge, Md.)

3rd place:

IHOB: International House O'Besity (Dave Silberstein, College Park, Md.)

2nd place and the [Poo Pinata](#):

Muerto Rico: Where paper towels just didn't do the trick. (Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)

And the winner of the Lose Cannon:

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The Tee-Tee Tapes: Compromising videos of the president swinging and missing a golf ball. (Robert Schechter, Dix Hills, N.Y.)

Wower failures: Honorable mentions

Limp my ride: What I did when I added the child seat to my muscle car. (Drew Bennett, West Plains, Mo.)

Bride goeth before the fall: What Vanessa Trump wrote under “reason” when filing for divorce from Don Jr. (Matt Monitto, Bristol, Conn.)

Banacea: A remedy for all political troubles. (Chris Damm, Charles Town, W.Va.)

Foultry: Chicken *way* past its sell-by date. (Beverley Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

Lackage deal: A not-so-“inclusive” vacation. “Oh, you want potable water on your cruise? There is a nominal extra fee for that.” (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn)

Mediatricians: Spin doctors. (Jesse Frankovich, Grand Ledge, Mich.)

Mommin’ Fresh: Mascot for a fertility clinic (“Look who’s got a bun in the oven!”). (Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.)

The national wastime: Head down, phone in hand, 18 hours a day. (Lennie Magida, Frederick, Md.)

Russy-whipped: How Trump emerged from the summit. (Frank Osen)

“Womb, womb!”: SCOTUS in 2019, telling women where to stuff it (and keep it stuffed)? (Nan Reiner, Boca Raton, Fla.)

Beer review: Highly popular volunteer work among academics. (Pam Sweeney, Burlington, Mass.)

Blaster of Paris: A French horn. (Joe Ruane, Dunmore, Pa.)

Blaque: *Really* nasty stuff on your teeth. (Kathy El-Assal, Middleton, Wis.)

Bomb and Circumstance: What they play at graduation at Terrorism U. (Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)

Broductivity: I did 10 keg stands and crushed 20 beers in 30 minutes, dude! (Jessica Garber, Washington, a First Offender)

Burple: The color that comes out when your toddler decides to eat a whole jar of grape jelly. (Roy Ashley, Washington)

Buu-buu blatter: An inept Polynesian trombonist. (Bill Spencer, Cockeysville, Md.)

C-3BO: Day 2 at Comic-Con. (Chuck Helwig, Centreville, Va.)

Bryce Harmer: One way or another he is going to do some damage with that bat. (Bruce Johnson, Churchton, Md.)

Carbe diem: Cheat day on your keto diet. (Pam Sweeney)

Combatible: Fights well with others. (Jeff Strong, Fairfax, Va.)

Cornos: Movies for foot fetishists. (Melissa Balmain, Rochester, N.Y.)

Costpartum depression: What sinks in when you see the obstetrician’s bill. (Beverley Sharp)

Dudenda: The surprise from that one scene in “The Crying Game.”

(Brendan Beary, Great Mills, Md.)

Dumbster fire: A crisis of a moron's own making. (Jesse Frankovich)

Emberor: A ruler who fiddles while his land burns. "The emberor spent the weekend playing golf at his seaside villa." (Frank Osen)

Estresso: *Really* strong coffee. (Larry Gray)

Geekaboo: Baby's First Coding Project. (Beverley Sharp)

Harpy birthday: On Dec. 8, wish it on Ann Coulter. (Kathy El-Assal)

Hater Noster: Prayer to the deity that created mosquitoes and Justin Bieber. (Mark Raffman)

Hatriotism: We don't need no stinkin' immigrants! MAGA! (David Young, Falmouth, Mass.)

Holygraph: "Remember, that's a Bible you're swearing on . . ." (Roy Ashley)

Kiñata: One who's routinely bashed by one's family. (Jerome Uher, Alexandria, Va.)

Lootholes: Loopholes. (Jesse Frankovich)

Mathetic: Unable to balance one's checkbook. (Kathleen DeBold, Burtonsville, Md.)

Nana's Got a Brand New Bag: The tune Grandma whistles on her way home from the Coach boutique. (Frank Mullen III, Aledo, Ill.)

Naypal: A friend without benefits. (Antonym: Yaypal.) (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village, Md.)

Scammi: Shrimp nuggets with garlic powder. (Mark Raffman)

Snotify: Streaming only the highest-quality music to a very selective group of subscribers. You probably wouldn't qualify. (Roy Ashley)

Tennsylvania: Home of the chicken-fried cheesesteak. (Mark Raffman)

Tizza: The most popular dish at Hooters. (Melissa Balmain)

Toilet gaper: A commode with the seat up. "There's nothing like the surprising chill of sitting down on a toilet gaper in the dark." (Ivars Kuskevics, Takoma Park, Md.)

Ugholstery: Fabric used for covering sofas in the 1970s. (Jesse Frankovich)

Yentathlon: Bubbe and her sisters at every family get-together. (Brendan Beary)

"A Whiter Shade of Male": Neo-Nazi anthem. (Frank Mullen III)

Abathy: "Eh, who needs a six-pack? My cat likes me better this way anyway." (Jeff Strong)

Bar for the Course: A beer cooler that fits in a golf bag. (Warren Tanabe, Annapolis, Md.)

Barabola: The "straight line" a drinker walks when pulled over by the police. (Rob Huffman, Fredericksburg, Va.)

Barsimony: Leaving the pub just when the next round is on you. (Warren Tanabe)

Be-a-Body Award: Recognition first given to Kevin Costner for playing a cowboy in "The Big Chill" (John McGovern)

corpse in *The Big Chill*. (John McCooley)

Bedestrian: “Any fireworks with the you-know-who last night, Stormy?”
“Nope, pretty bedestrian.” (Duncan Stevens)

Zenultimate: It is not the last. It is not the next-to-last. There were never any. Have some more. (Brendan Beary)

Fake News: I TOLD YOU THERE WAS NEVER ANY P! (Eric Nelkin, Silver Spring, Md., a First Offender)

Loseurs: Witty, sophisticated humorists pretending to be juvenile, crude boors with a poop fixation. (John McCooley)

Still running — deadline Monday night, July 30: our contest for fake trivia about animals. See wapo.st/invite1289.

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Pat Myers

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](#)

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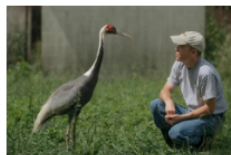
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