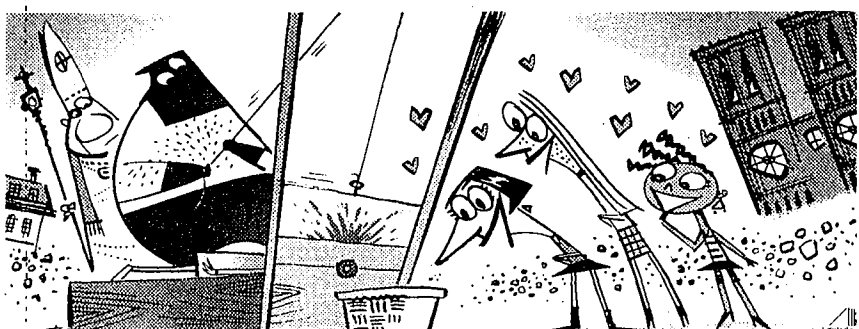


# The Style Invitational

## WEEK 256: THE PYLE INVITATIONAL

**How did the Spanish conquistadors save money on fuel?**  
They went 3,000 miles on a galleon!

**Why did they arrest the automobile factory worker?**  
Because he took a brake!



**How can Texas make executions more palatable to women?**  
It can buy a guillotine, and call its executions "Leonardo DiCapitations"

**This Week's Contest** was proposed by the czarovich of the Style Invitational, a lad who attends Thomas W. Pyle Middle School in Bethesda. In an effort to show how modern and cool it is, Thomas W. Pyle Middle School encodes its math homework assignments so that the proper answers provide a solution to a riddle. Unfortunately, the riddles appear to have been composed during the Depression era by WPA gag writers with fedoras. The two at the top of the page came directly from the czarovich's math homework. This week's contest is to help Thomas W. Pyle Middle School enter the 21st century by coming up with hipper, more contemporary riddles and

answers. The punch line must contain a painful pun. First prize receives a spectacularly realistic water snow dome, handmade by Sarah Worcester of Bowie. It is a tableau featuring sagebrush, two cute ponies and a cowboy. The cowboy is lying on the ground. The ponies have ripped off his arms and legs, and are devouring them. There is a great deal of blood. The entire globe sits atop a cookie tin filled with those tiny pastel hearts that appear to be made of congealed confectioners' sugar and contain two-word romantic messages like 'Be Mine' or 'Eat Me.' This one-of-a-kind objet d'art is worth \$65,000.

First runner-up gets the tacky but estimable Style Invitational Lose Pen. Other runners-up receive the coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt. Honorable Mentions get the mildly sought-after Style Invitational bumper sticker. Winners will be selected on the basis of humor and originality. Mail your entries to The Style Invitational, Week 256, c/o The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071. Fax them to 202-334-4312 or submit them via Internet to this address: losers@access.digex.net. Internet users: Please indicate the week number in the "subject" field. Entries must be received on or before Monday, Feb. 16. Please include your address and phone number. Winners will be announced three weeks from today. Editors reserve the right to alter entries for taste, humor or appropriateness. No purchase necessary. So me and Jonathan were caroming through the zirconium night alight on ludes and pig snot we took through the ear and the Victorian mansions of Garrett Park were blurring past the windows, looking like giant malevolent sarcophaguses with mailboxes. Next Week: New York Times Ear Credit. Employees of the Washington Post, and members of their immediate families, are not eligible for prizes.

### REPORT FROM WEEK 253,

in which you were asked to enter one of four simple contests. The catch was that instead of "humor and originality," the criterion for choosing the winners was "lamest attempts at humor." Skeptics predicted that this would not work, and that we would be forced to adopt a humor criterion after all. Wrong. Sure, there were several funny answers, but we exempted them from prizes on grounds that they were too good: All of these were for captioning this cartoon:

**Bill Gates suspects that some of the zeros had been left off his paycheck.** (Nick Crettler, Front Royal; Jose Cortina, Washington); **After waking up the next morning, Lars discovered that he had unwittingly brought home the bar instead of his date.** (Laura Miller and Sarah Smith, Reston); **Dumbrowski is contemplating the age-old question of how many poles does it take to screw in a light bulb.** (Michael O'Leary, Huntington); **The key to the city got really awkward when the city changed over to the new magnetic-card system.** (Elden Carnahan, Laurel); **The fortunes were very detailed at Tolstoy's Chinese Restaurant.** (Tom Witte, Gaithersburg).

However, by and large, the contest produced hilariously unfunny results, the best of which are below.

◆ Third Runner-Up: What is happening in this cartoon?

**A guy is holding a really long "yardstick" and he is thinking, wait a minute, my "yard" is a lot wider than this. Then he remembers he lives in Arlington, and it isn't! Larger. Than the stick.** (Scott Richlen, Annandale)

◆ Second Runner-Up: What is happening in this cartoon?

**It's O.J., but he's white and has a long nose and is holding a long thing.** (Paul Laporte and Lee Mayer, Washington)

◆ First Runner-Up: What does this gadget do?

**This is a solar-powered sigmoidoscope. See, it's solar powered, yet you have to stick it where the sun don't shine! It'll never work! Oh, what delicious irony!** (Jonathan Paul, Garrett Park)

◆ And the winner of the Piddlers Toilet Targets:

Write a four-line poem about the federal budget deficit:

**Bill Clinton has fixed the federal budget deficit  
For that he deserves wonderful gifts for Hanukah,  
It is obvious to me that such a great man  
Could never have had relations with Monica.** (David Sherman, Arlington)

◆ Honorable Mentions:

**What is happening in this cartoon?**

**The man is holding a rectangle, but—this is the funny part—he is not wearing any underpants!** (Jonathan Paul, Garrett Park)

**Former president George Bush and his wife, "Bar."** (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

**Chester's plan was foiled when he realized not only would he not be able to hide behind the barre when the scantily clad ballerinas came in, but he was stuck!** (Lori Lossman, Boonsboro)

**Newton's law of gravitation states that the attractive force between two bodies is equal to Gm<sup>1</sup>m<sup>2</sup>/d<sup>2</sup>. However, the gravitational pull on the board in this cartoon appears to be equal on each extremity, even though one end is clearly a greater distance from the fulcrum!** (Niels Hoven, Silver Spring)

**This guy is, like, "duh" because he hasn't got a clue what this big white thing is he's holding.** (Steve Fahey, Kensington)

**The man with the world's longest name has received a letter from somewhere he's never even heard of!** (A.D. Zeleny, Boonsboro)

**Bob wonders how his favorite pet tapeworm managed to wander into the freezer again.** (Paul Ponton, Mount Airy)

**Brian gets a parcel from the UNEXPLODINGSALAMIER.** (Jonathan Paul, Silver Spring)

**Obviously, this man is feeling bored. (Bored)** (Stephen Dudzik, Silver Spring)

**The man is so annoyed by the question mark that has been following him around that he is about to whack it with a giant two-by-four.** (Ivan Wasserman, Washington)

**What the world needs is a cheap ...**

**... way to fly in from Cleveland that doesn't make your arms tired.** (Jonathan Paul, Garrett Park)

**... rip-off of Bob Levey's neologism contest. See, "neologism" is a clever combination of "neolo," as in "neologism," and "gism," as in, um, "neologism."** (Jonathan Paul, Garrett Park)

**... prosthetic limb. You know, one that won't cost an arm and a leg.** (Thomas Wallick, Washington)

**... date. And if you haven't got a cheap date, I guess a cheap fig would do. Ha ha. Get it? Not a "date," like a romantic encounter, but like those things used in Fig Newtons, if they were made with dates instead of figs.** (Roger Gilkeson, Washington)

**Cartoon 2: What does this gadget do?**

**It gadges.**

(Paul Laporte and Lee Mayer, Washington)

**I don't know what it does, but it gives me an idea!** (Sandra Hull, Arlington)

**It's a three-way light bulb with a stick shift.** (Chuck Smith, Washington)

**This is a machine that lights a 40W light bulb. It takes four D batteries, connected in series, and draws 4A. 20V times 4A is 80W. This stupid thing is only 50 percent efficient!** (Ned Bent, Herndon)

**It's a think tank. The light bulb is the "think" part.** (Dan Rosenzweig and Jen Kellner, Bethesda)

**Write a poem about the budget deficit:**

**Someone left the federal budget deficit out in the rain,**

**Now my life ain't got a purpose  
Cause there's gonna be a surplus ...** (Jonathan Paul, Garrett Park)

**There was a young man from Nantudget,  
Who tried to balance the federal budget ...** (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

**In FY1992 it was \$290.3 billion.  
In FY1996 it had fallen to \$155.5 billion**

**And, thanks in part to Clinton (William)  
By 2000 it will be in the millions!** (David Genser, Arlington)

By Richard Thompson



### Datebook

## Bad Weather, Good Times

By Robin Groom  
Special to The Washington Post

Love letters, Wynonna Judd and an Alfred Hitchcock event lend sparkle to February benefits.

Feb. 9

◆ "Love: A Bipartisan Affair," a benefit at the National Press Club for Literacy Volunteers of America - National Capital Chapter, features Christopher Buckley, Tara Holland (Miss America 1997), D.C. Councilwoman Charlene Drew Jarvis and others reading love letters from the new anthology "Letters of a Nation: A Collection of Extraordinary American Letters." Tickets: \$30. Call 202-387-1772.

Feb. 12

◆ "Love Letters for Literacy," a benefit for the Washington Literacy Council at the Embassy of New Zealand, features Ruth and Daniel Boorstin, Christopher Buckley, Patrice Gaines, Kate and Jim Lehrer, Derek McGinty, James Symington and New Zealand Ambassador John Wood reading love poetry and prose. Tickets: \$75. Call 202-387-9029.

Feb. 13

◆ "A Tribute to Alfred Hitchcock," a gala at the Embassy of the Russian Federation, with special guests Pat Hitchcock O'Connell (the director's daughter), Janet Leigh, Tippi Hedren and John Forsythe, is sponsored by the Metropolitan Washington D.C. Chapter of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. Tickets start at \$350. Call 301-951-4422.

◆ Candlelight, wine, love songs of Gershwin, Porter and more are offered at a benefit for the Paul Hill Washington Singers at the Embassy of Austria. Tickets: \$75. Call 202-966-3869.

◆ The Virginia Opera is sponsor of a benefit dinner that includes a discussion with Erik Johns, librettist of Aaron Copland's "The Tender Land," at George Mason University's Mason Hall. Tickets: \$45. There is also a brunch with Johns on Feb. 15. Tickets: \$25. Call 703-352-7515.

◆ The Prince George's Philharmonic and the Maryland Opera Society's "An Evening of Romance," featuring cocktails, dinner and more, is at the Greenbelt Marriott. Tickets: \$55. Call 301-454-1462.

Feb. 14

◆ The Fairfax Symphony Orchestra's annual "Valentine's Pops Gala," which includes a silent auction, is at the Sheraton Premiere at Tysons Corner. Tickets start at \$100. Call 703-642-7200.

◆ "An Exotic Affair," a benefit at the National Zoo in support of its research on the reproduction of endangered species, is sponsored by Friends of the National Zoo. Tickets: \$50. Call 202-673-4613.

◆ "An Evening in Swingtown," featuring Raggs Classic Big Band at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, is presented by the 1869 Society, the Corcoran's young professionals organization. Tickets: \$25 (\$20 for members) and \$35 at the door. Call 202-639-1753.

Feb. 17

◆ "Help Is in Fashion" is a benefit at the Embassy of Finland for the National Capital Chapter of the American Red Cross. Tickets: \$75. Call 202-728-6469.

◆ AFS-USA, a nonprofit, volunteer-based educational organization created after World War II by members of the American Field Service Volunteer Ambulance Corps and that arranges intercultural exchanges for youth, is having a 50th anniversary celebration reception at La Colline restaurant. Tickets: \$25. Call 212-299-9000.

Feb. 20

◆ The J. Willard Marriott Foundation's "A Global Tribute to Our Children" is a benefit at the Gaithersburg Marriott Washingtonian Center for the American Red Cross in Montgomery County. Ambassadors from more than 40 countries are expected to attend this event, which will feature dinner, music by Escapade, an auction and more. Tickets: \$180. Call 301-588-2515, Ext. 212.

◆ Bishop John Richard Keating of Arlington is host of the annual Catholic Charities Ball, "Carnevale di Venezia" at the Ritz-Carlton Tysons Corner. Music by Odyssey. Tickets start at \$175. Call 703-998-0255.

Feb. 21

◆ Children's National Medical Center is the beneficiary of the "Bartenders' Ball," which features music by the New Rascals, the Blues Brothers, the Nighthawks and Reel Big Fish. The event will be at the Washington Convention Center. Tickets: \$100. There is also a "Chairman's After Party" with entertainment by Clarence Clemons with Steve Smith and the Naked. Tickets: \$25. Call 202-296-7200.

◆ Wynonna Judd will perform at the Leukemia Society of America's ball, "Diamonds and Denim," at the Washington Hilton. Tickets: \$500. Call 301-468-2262.

◆ A "Mardi Gras Masquerade Ball," a benefit for Bread for the City and the Zaccareus Legal Clinic, will be held at the Omni Shoreham Hotel; it is sponsored by the Young Lawyers Section of the Bar Association of D.C., the Asian Pacific American Bar Association, the Medical Society of D.C.'s Young Physicians Section, the Greater Washington Society of CPAs and the Women's Bar Association of D.C. Tickets: \$75 (\$65 for members of sponsoring organizations). Call 202-223-6600.

◆ The Arlington Symphony Associa-

tion's "Musical Champagne Reception with Art Show and Auction" is at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association building. Tickets: \$10. Call 703-528-1817.

Feb. 24

◆ Morton's of Chicago celebrates 15 years in Georgetown with a cocktail party and dinner at the restaurant. The event benefits the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation. Tickets: \$100. Call 202-371-0044.

Feb. 26

◆ The Friends of the Law Library of Congress will present the 1998 Wickersham Award for Exceptional Public Service and Dedication to the Legal Profession to Jamie S. Gorelick, vice chairman of Fannie Mae, at the group's dinner at the Supreme Court. Dinner proceeds will support an international legal conference by the Library of Congress planned for the year 2000. Tickets: \$150. Call 202-707-5076.

◆ The National Foundation for Infectious Diseases Awards Dinner will honor Colin L. Powell and renowned vaccine researcher Maurice R. Hilleman at the Ritz-Carlton, Pentagon City. Tickets start at \$350. Call 301-656-0003.

◆ The National Press Foundation's awards dinner at the Washington Hilton honors Sam Donaldson of ABC News, Mike Jacobs of the Grand Forks (N.D.) Herald, Carl Rowan of the Chicago Sun-Times & King Features, Bob Gorrell of the Richmond Times-Dispatch and Michael Bloomberg of Bloomberg L.P. Tickets start at \$250. Call 202-955-1369.

Feb. 28

◆ "An Evening in the Stacks," a benefit for the Howard County Library and the Maryland Center for the Book, is sponsored by The Washington Post at the East Columbia Branch Library in Columbia. Featured are Maryland authors, jazz performances, light dining and more. Tickets: \$45 (\$75 per couple). Call 410-313-7750.

◆ "Hearts Are Wild," the National Kidney Foundation of the National Capital Area's casino night gala, is at the Embassy of France. Tickets: \$80. Call 202-244-7900.

◆ "Carnival '98," a Black History Month masquerade ball at the Smithsonian Institution's Castle building, is a benefit for the Smithsonian's Anacostia Museum and Center for African American History and Culture. Tickets start at \$75. Call 202-357-2286.

◆ The Theater Chamber Players' 30th anniversary benefit gala is at the Embassy of Finland. The evening offers a supper of Finnish cuisine and a performance by soprano Phyllis Bryn-Julson and pianist Donald Sutherland. Tickets: \$125. Call 301-386-2186 or 301-925-7203.

◆ Howard University's "Seventy-Fourth Annual Charter Day Dinner" at the Washington Hilton features a special performance by Richard L. Smallwood. Tickets start at \$250. Call 202-806-2180.

Next Week: Double Jeopardy