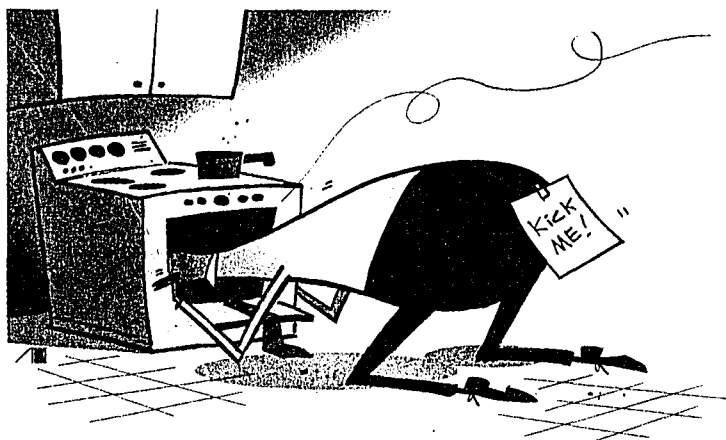


The Style Invitational

Takes a Breather



BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Week C1: No contests until mid-January. Instead, Everything You Always Wanted to Know About the All-Time Stars of The Style Invitational in 100-Word Autobiographies That Contain One (and Only One) Falsehood. The revised title for next week's column is by Chris Doyle of Burke.



RUSSELL BELAND

BY ZACHARY BELAND

■ Fame and celebrity are no strangers to me. When I was 7 one of the Kingston Trio held a door open for my family. Then, in high school, I sold Ernie Banks a Coke. In college I was introduced to Milton Friedman, but I didn't have time to chat. Graduate school in Los Angeles brought me even closer to the paparazzi. I took a class taught by John Lithgow's wife and once warned Cathy Lee Crosby that her dog was trying to jump out her car window. So when I ended up on an airliner sitting next to one of the Bangles, I wasn't fazed.

(Russell Beland, Springfield)



SARAH W. GAYMON

FAMILY PHOTO

■ It's probably genetic. I have relatives who would sneak into each other's houses and rearrange the furniture. Other family members once spent all afternoon cutting drip and splash shapes out of white paper and arranging them on top of the piano my grandmother had sternly warned them to cover while they were painting the room. Larry Storch is a cousin of mine. My sister and I have made eight movies to date featuring inflatable alligators in principal roles. A young nephew included deodorant sticks in his birthday party goody bags. We're sure he got the gene. I wrote this myself.

(Sarah W. Gaymon, Gambrells)



JOHN KAMMER

BY JOHN KAMMER

■ Mr. Kammer is the son of immigrants whose marriage was arranged to end a war between rival clans in the backwaters of Eastern Europe. He earned a computer science degree, becoming a certified techno-geek, although he prefers beer and pretzels to Coke and Twinkies. The proud alleged father of two (no contested paternity test results exist) has twice scaled Mount Everest (using Adobe Photoshop) and is trying to organize a dangerous motorcycle gang in his community. Unfortunately, the leading contenders for the gang's name, "The Geezers" and "The Midlife Crises," have left the local populace relatively unconcerned and distinctly unmenaced.

(John Kammer, Herndon)



PAUL KONDIS

BY JENNIFER HART

■ I was born on Oct. 13, 1960, and made my first mistake shortly after. There followed a long series of flubs, gaffes and miscues ranging in awkwardness from mildly embarrassing to extremely disconcerting. These events formed a running theme of my life, culminating in the character The Man Who Did Everything Wrong, featured in a book yet to be written.

(Paul Kondis, Alexandria)

Next Week: Fool Disclosure

ANN LANDERS

Dear Ann:

I recently spent a long weekend at a resort, and asked my oldest, married daughter to look after her two teenage siblings while I was gone. She and her husband said they would be happy to stay with my kids. No problem.

When I returned home, my 15-year-old confided that my son-in-law offered her marijuana while he was baby-sitting. (He apparently didn't offer any to my 13-year-old son.) She declined his offer, but felt uncomfortable and ended up staying at a girlfriend's house. She swore me to secrecy and begged me not to mention this to him because she does not want to create a problem in the family.

Ann, this man has a preteen son. He also volunteers as a soccer coach at the local high school. What kind of influence is he on these youngsters? I am worried sick about what could happen and furious that he would offer my daughter drugs in my own home. I don't want to betray my daughter's confidence, but I also don't want him to get away with this. What should I do?

*In Need of Guidance
in St. Petersburg, Fla.*

This is no apology for what your son-in-law, the part-time soccer coach/baby sitter, did. He is getting no pass from me, but try to understand that people of another generation do not consider marijuana a "drug." They view it as harmless recreation, similar to having a beer. This is not my opinion, but I am giving your son-in-law the benefit of the doubt. Let's say he was immature and thoughtless, but I doubt that he was attempting to become a drug source for your daughter. Nonetheless, marijuana is illegal, and offering it to a teenage girl is completely irresponsible. Thank heavens your daughter had the good sense to turn him down.

Your son-in-law was clearly out of line, and you should let him know it. Don't worry about creating a "family problem." You already have one. Also, I hope you realize this man is not an appropri-

ate baby sitter. Under no circumstances should you ask him to "help you out" again.

Dear Ann:

I attended a funeral last July. During the visitation the day before, the casket was open, and everything seemed normal, until the widow's sister took a camera out of her purse and began to take pictures of the deceased. This bizarre behavior brought comments from several mourners each time the flash went off. The funeral directors were glancing at one another, obviously at a loss for what to do.

At the grave site the next day, the sister handed out complete photo packages to the widow and her three children. She saw absolutely nothing wrong with it. As a matter of fact, on the three-month anniversary of the death, she hand-delivered an additional set of funeral pictures to the widow.

What sort of person would do this? Has the woman lost her mind, or were we all overreacting?

Still Shocked in Vancouver, B.C.

Get a grip, girl. While taking photos of the deceased in the casket may seem grotesque to you, some people cherish those last pictures and hope to pass them on to their children. This may not be your thing, but others view it as their responsibility to keep future generations informed, and this is one way to do it.

As far as I am concerned, the only people whose opinions count are the widow and her children. If they did not object, there is no reason you should.

Gem of the Day: One reason computers can do a lot more work than people is because they never have to stop to pick up the phone when folks mis-dial.

To find out more about Ann Landers and read her past columns, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com.

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TODAY'S HOROSCOPE | Sydney Omarr

ARIES

(March 21-April 19): Full moon in Cancer is your Fourth House; you discover individual who is harmonious to your "vibrations." Leo, Aquarius individuals will play outstanding roles.

TAURUS

(April 20-May 20): Accent on cooperative efforts, marriage and partnerships. Move slowly but surely. Temperamental outburst from relative should not be taken seriously. Cancer native involved.

GEMINI

(May 21-June 20): Use intelligence, wit and humor to locate what had been lost, missing or stolen. Money comes from surprise source; don't ask too many questions. Sagittarius involved.

CANCER

(June 21-July 22): Lunar cycle high. Your personality is "overwhelming." Ride with tide; you will do right thing at right time almost effortlessly. Taurus, Leo and Scorpio figure in scenario.

LEO

(July 23-Aug. 22): Provide enlightenment for family member who is frightened by the unknown. You learn many things, perhaps more than you care to know. Gemini, Virgo and Sagittarius play key roles.

VIRGO

(Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Many of your fondest hopes and wishes can be fulfilled. You receive gift—a luxury item that helps beautify home. You are number one in popularity poll. Libra involved.

LIBRA

(Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Accent on business, career and standing in community. You may be puzzled by actions of one in authority. Deception involved, deliberate or otherwise. Heed inner feelings.

SCORPIO

(Oct. 23-Nov. 21): News from a distance may upset or change your plans for New Year's Eve celebration. Take greater control of your destiny. Do not give up something of value for mere thrill.

SAGITTARIUS

(Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Don't be afraid to ask pertinent questions. By delving deep, you uncover the true state of financial affairs, assets; that includes your own as well as those of a partner, mate.

CAPRICORN

(Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Check legal affairs, bring records up to date. Avoid bookkeeping errors; partner or mate could have much to say about budget. Leo, Aquarius will figure prominently.

AQUARIUS

(Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Legitimate help received in resolving dilemma. Scenario highlights food, family and marriage. Questions relating to partnership and marriage will dominate. Seafood dinner tonight!

PISCES

(Feb. 19-March 20): Romance flourishes; physical attraction very much in evidence. Be careful; don't give up something of value for temporary satisfaction. Gemini will play fascinating role.

IF DEC. 30 IS YOUR BIRTHDAY: You are charming and witty, and possess intellectual curiosity. You tend to scatter forces by becoming involved in too many activities at one time. Learn to channel energies; also, pay special attention to weight, diet, to ensure continued health. Gemini, Sagittarius individuals play special roles in your life, could have these letters in names: C, L, U. You have unloaded burdens this past year; in 2002 you make a fresh start in new direction. July most memorable.

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Q&A by the yard.

Ask the horticulturist your landscaping questions in Digging In. Thursdays in Home.

The Washington Post

If you don't get it, you don't get it.

Reason #3 To Read Apartment Living

You want advice about your rights as a tenant.



Read *Apartment Living* for the most current apartment listings in the area, advice on how to deal with crazy roommates and noisy neighbors, short-term housing options for business travelers, and more. *Apartment Living*, every Saturday in The Washington Post.



The Washington Post



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