

# The Style Invitational

Week CXLIII: Portmanteautapping



BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

**Anecdotard:** An old person who keeps telling the same boring stories.

**Electionion:** When the results at the polls are enough to make you cry.

**Dachshundheit:** What you say after a dog passes gas.

**This week's contest** was suggested by John O'Byrne, from Dublin, modifying an idea originated by Lewis Carroll. The idea is to make a new word by squishing together two existing words, as in the examples above. (Carroll called this a portmanteau word, his most famous being "galumph," which is a combination of "gallop" and "triumph.") The key variation here is that we require that the constituent words share at least two letters. First-prize winner gets a human-head replica from a cosmetology school, complete with wig and an old cosmetology exam! This is worth \$50.

First runner-up wins the tacky but estimable Style Invitational Loser Pen. Other runners-up win the coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt. Honorable mentions get the mildly sought-after Style Invitational bumper sticker. Send your entries via fax to 202-334-4312 or by e-mail to [losers@washpost.com](mailto:losers@washpost.com). U.S. mail entries are no longer accepted. Deadline is Monday, Oct. 28. All entries must include the week number of the contest and your name, postal address and telephone number. E-mail entries must include the

week number in the subject field. Contests will be judged on the basis of humor and originality. All entries become the property of The Washington Post. *Entries may be edited for taste or content. Results will be published in four weeks. No purchase required for entry. Employees of The Washington Post, and their immediate relatives, are not eligible for prizes. Pseudonymous entries will be disqualified. The revised title for next week's contest is by Seth Brown of Williamstown, Mass.*

## Report from Week CXXXIX

in which you were asked to come up with bad ways to conserve water in the current drought. Many people, submitting under the name George W. Bush, suggested "Bomb Iraq."

◆ Second Runner-Up: **Issue everyone a special shower head attachment that plays the screech-theme from "Psycho."** (Art Grinath, Takoma Park)

◆ First Runner-Up: **Start a new ad campaign: "After a tough workout, nothing refreshes like a nice tall glass of eggnog."** (John Griessmayer, Roanoke)

◆ And the winner of the Battle Mountain, Nev., "Armpit of America" T-shirt: **Replace Casual Fridays with Stinky Thursdays.** (Roy Ashley, Washington)

◆ Honorable Mentions: **Get bitten by a radioactive camel; retain the water of 10 men.** (Peter Parker, New York) (Brian Broadus, Charlottesville)

**Introduce your children to "crunchy" Kool-Aid.** (Brian Broadus, Charlottesville)

**Instead of using ice, have pro hockey games played in socks on a really slippery floor.** (Art Grinath, Takoma Park)

**During your next visit to the health club Jacuzzi, wear several pairs of dirty underwear sprinkled with detergent.** (Stephen Dudzik, Olney)

**Outlaw water balloons and water guns and just let kids punch each other, like in the old days.** (William Zamojcin, Vernon, Conn.)

**Instead of Gatorade, dump canned peaches over Coach after the big victory.** (Gary Patishnock, Laurel)

**Require firefighters to just blow really, really hard.** (Seth Brown, Williamstown, Mass.)

**Get the president to try out some tongue twisters, and preserve the flop sweat.** (Mark Young, Washington)

**Replace Chinese Water Torture with West Virginia Drool Torture.** (Justin Kennedy, Alexandria)

**Ask yourself: Do I really need another shark tank?** (John Griessmayer, Roanoke)

**Add a country with high annual rainfall to the Axis of Evil. When we invade, take the water.** (Dale Fruchtnicht, Charlottesville)

**Buy or make a particle accelerator. Maintain an adequate supply of liquid hydrogen and oxygen in the fridge; combine as needed.** (Pete Hughes, Alexandria; Seth Brown, Williamstown, Mass.)

**Pull your umbrella inside out, employ as usual during inclement weather, and drain the captured water for later use.** (Art Grinath, Takoma Park)

**Throw only the baby out.** (Mary K. Phillips, Falls Church; Gary Patishnock, Laurel)

**Learn French, then stop bathing.** (Bird Waring, New York)

**Start a generous buyback program for SuperSoakers.** (Jon Rice, Charlottesville)

**Make the nation's water supply taste like new Vanilla Coke.** (Gregory Krakower, New York)

**Drive bigger and more piggy cars, thereby releasing much-needed CO<sub>2</sub> for melting all that water trapped at the North and South poles.** (Carey Johnson, Arlington; Seth Brown, Williamstown, Mass.)

**Tell the kids the dog got run over, and collect their tears to boil the pasta.** (Stephen Dudzik, Olney)

**Witnesses at congressional hearings will not be given glasses of water unless they ask for them first.** (David Kleinbard, Jersey City)

**Shower with an ugly person; this will cut your shower time.** (Bird Waring, New York)

**Move to Philadelphia. They don't have a water shortage. They have a "wudder" shortage.** (Marc Leibert, New York)

**Switch from drugs that must be taken with water to drugs that may be smoked, snorted or injected.** (John Griessmayer, Roanoke)

**Water your garden's veggies with urine and sell them to buy bottled spring water.** (Stephen Dudzik, Olney)

**Encourage the Mets to use joints, not bongos.** (Gregory Krakower, New York)

**Get The Washington Post to stop putting the papers in plastic bags. That should result in heavy rains for weeks.** (Fred Dawson, Beltsville)

**Wash shirts in pasta water; saves on starch, too.** (Tom Matthews, Fairfax Station)

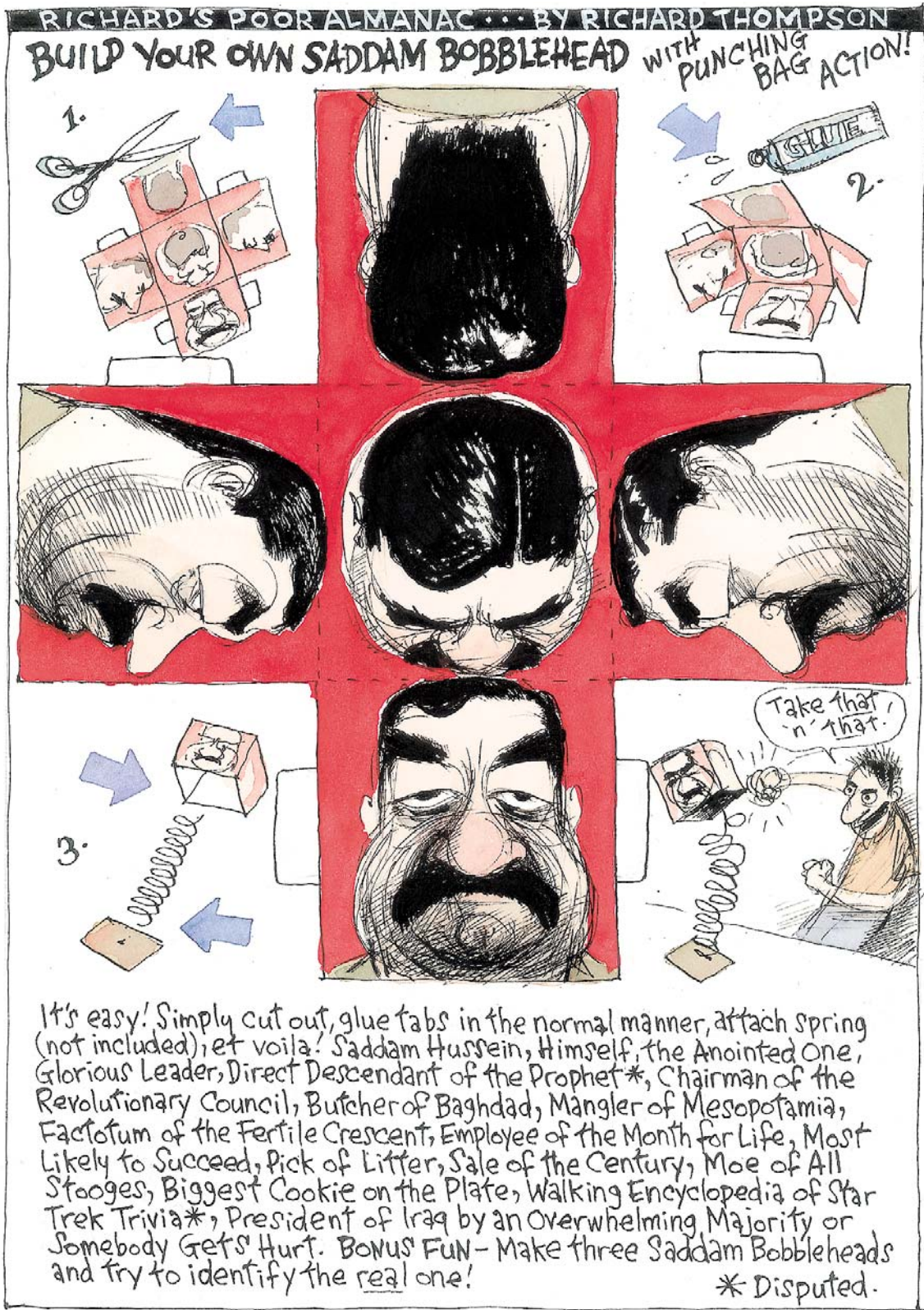
**Fill Olympic diving pools with those little plastic balls.** (William Zamojcin, Vernon, Conn.; Susan Thompson, Rockville)

**Since the human body is 85 percent water, use a wine press to squeeze water from fresh cadavers before burial.** (Chris Doyle, Forsyth, Mo.)

**Drink everything out of test tubes, to minimize evaporation.** (Tom Witte, Gaithersburg; Russell Beland, Springfield)

**Start a small brush fire near your home and run out with soap when the firefighters arrive to put it out.** (Stephen Dudzik, Olney)

Next Week: Offend for Yourself



## TELL ME ABOUT IT

TELL ME, From F1

what's going to happen. How can I convince her that we need to use protection for both our sakes, or, failing that, convince her that we shouldn't have sex as often?

—Young Lover in L.A.

Less often, eh? You know exactly what I'm going to say, don't you—to stop having sex entirely because you're too young. Well, you're way off. I'm going to say why you're too young and why you should stop having sex. So there.

The universal sign that you're responsible enough to have sex (attention all irony enthusiasts) is having the sense and willpower to choose not to have it. You don't need to "convince" anyone, ever, not to have consensual sex. You simply keep your pants on, and sex is successfully not had.

You apparently don't need to convince yourself of a whole lot more, either. You asked your parents' permission, which is proof you recognize their authority over you and you therefore are not an adult yet; you admit you're not ready to be in their shoes; you know your girlfriend is shaky on the birth-control thing; you know how unwise that is.

These are all good things, signs of an unusual maturity that, when it's fully baked, will serve you well. Your caving to hormones

in spite of it, however, just proves that the center's still raw—and that, at 16, those hormones will fight you hard. Still, "underage" and "too young" are two different things. Underage means society tells you not to do something. Too young means the barriers are on the inside, in you. See them, please, and heed them.

"Love" could use some definition clarity here, too: Love is recognizing that your girlfriend is in a position she's not ready to handle, much less even than you are. Love is not putting her in that position.

If you want a less abstract reason to stay fully zipped, consider that the pill is only as effective as the person taking it and, even then, isn't effective immediately.

You aren't taking it, she is. She is: "hesitant." And 14. If you want any say at all in your future at this point, you're going to have to say no.

And if you have no intention of listening to anything I just said, please remind all involved in the impending calamity that babies find parents who are ready to be parents when you put them up for adoption. Speaking of other definitions of love.

Write to Tell Me About It, Style, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071 or [tellme@washpost.com](mailto:tellme@washpost.com), and join Carolyn's live discussion at noon Fridays at [washingtonpost.com/liveonline](http://www.washingtonpost.com/liveonline).



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