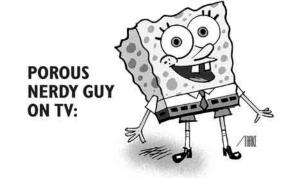
D2 Sunday, December 5, 2004 **STYLE** THE WASHINGTON POST

# The Style Invitational

#### Week 587: The B-List





BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

#### Out: Road rage. In: Rove rage.

Hard Sell: Stem cell research. Hard Cell: Martha Stewart's. **Books for Children: Lemony Snicket. Booked for Children: Michael** 

Every Jan. 1, for decades now, The Post's Style section has presented readers with "The List," a helpful guide to What's In, What's Out. All right, maybe "helpful" isn't quite the right word, since the List-creation is usually assigned to the hippest, in-the-loopiest writers on the staff; currently the task falls to Hank Stuever, whose beat is essentially Alternative Lifestyles and Novel Musings. And so even What's Out tends to consist of items you hadn't known were In in the first place. (Actual example from the 2000 list: "Out: 10-10-321; In: 867-5309.")

This week's contest, suggested by the indefatigable Russell Beland of Springfield: Let's come up with a supplementary list—to run Jan. 2, the day after the original. To avoid duplicating Hank's list, the Empress invites you to come up with other types of pairings as well as In/Out, as in the examples above. Unlike Mr. Stuever, you won't get ink if no one understands what you are talking about.

First-prize winner receives the Inker, the official Style Invitational trophy. First runner-up receives a plastic egg full of genuine Jasmine-Scented Angel Snot™, acquired by the Empress in the City of Angels, Seattle.

Other runners-up win a coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt. Honorable mentions get one of the lusted-after Style Invitational Magnets. One prize per entrant per week. Send your entries by e-mail to losers@washpost.com or, if you really have to, by fax to 202-334-4312.

Deadline is Monday, Dec. 13. Put the week number in the subject line of your e-mail, or it risks being ignored as spam. Include your name, postal address and phone num

ber with your entry. Contests are 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. No purchase required for entry. Employees of The Washington Post, and their immediate relatives, are not eligible for prizes. Pseudonymous entries will be disquali-

Report from Week 583, in which you had to reinterpret a Post headline by writing a new "bank" headline or lead sentence: Funny but submitted by too many Losers were plays on Yasser Arafat Pronounced Dead in Paris (Coroner Uses Strange French Dialect) and Judge Cuts Foreman From Peterson Trial (Feared He Wanted to Grill Defendant). Some of the headlines below were also among many on a theme, but they had that spit-out-yourcoffee wording.

♦ Third runner-up: Judge Says Detainees' Trials Are Unlawful 'From Now On, Just Shoot 'Em,' Court Advises (Donn Viviani, Berkeley, Calif.)

♦ Second runner-up: In Suit, Va. Teen Accuses Schoolmates of Bullying Sailor Outfit Was 'Special Gift From Mumsy' (Dave Zarrow, Herndon)

♦ First runner-up, winner of the promotional coconut:

Man on Terror Tape May Be Californian

Analysts Note Reference to Allah as 'Like, Most Excellently Primo' (Phil Frankenfeld, Washington)

♦ And the winner of the Inker:

**Compelling Body of Art** Simon Explains Real Reason for Reunion With Garfunkel (Michelle Stupak, Ellicott City)

### ♦ Honorable Mentions:

**NASA Breaks Ground With Craft** Next Time, Agency Plans to Point Rocket Skyward (Mike Hammer, Arlington)

E. Roosevelt Returns to Form

Dems Feel Mix of Excitement, Revulsion at Reincarnation: Could She Win in 2008?

(Brendan Beary, Great Mills) You Haven't Lived Here if You Haven't . . . And You Have Lived Here if You Have (Maja

Keech, New Carrollton) **Stocks Continue to Rally** 

Resurgence in Puritan Justice Seen; Tar, Feathers Also Selling Well (Chuck Smith,

Woodbridge) **Serial Killing Case Develops** 

The Sharper Image is expanding its Specialty Professional Luggage line with a stainresistant model complete with a firearm

compartment . . . (Veggo Larsen, Barboursville, Va.)

Two Sides to the Story Fox News Tries Radical Approach (Jane

Auerbach, Los Angeles) **Brown Will Be Out Until Dec.** 

Charcoal, Olive Are De Rigueur for Fall, Decree Fashionistas (Fred Dawson, Beltsville; Dave 7arrow)

**Red Line Service Operating Normally** It's Business as Usual as Lenders Continue to

Discriminate Against Urban Minorities (Roy

Ashley, Washington)

**Monkey Trials Show Promise for Men's** 

Contraceptive But Results Skewed by Men's Reluctance to

Have Sex With Monkeys (Howard Rubin, Falls Church)

**Sharon's Reason to Mourn** 

Kennedy Junior High sources reported that Sharon McGillicuddy is still depressed that Travis Gallagher asked Sheila Goldstein to the homecoming dance. (Roy Ashley)

**Should Roman Catholic Priests Be** Allowed to Marry?

Traditionalists Insist They Try It With Women First (Steve Fahey, Kensington, and Chris Doyle, Forsyth, Mo.; Pam Sweeney, Germantown)

**Anxiety Abounds for Mentally III** 

Advocates Law Firm of Manson, Dahmer & Son of Sam

Off to Rough Start (Jay Reiziss, Poolesville) **U.S. Remains Unprepared** 

With Nationwide Formaldehyde Shortage, Funeral Industry Speeds Up Services (Andy

Bassett, New Plymouth, New Zealand) **Spurrier Won't Coach Miami** 

'Ĥey, I Didn't Coach Washington Either, and They Paid Me Millions' (Robert Levin, Rockville)

For Virginia, Two Sides to Story After 107 Years, N.Y. Sun Prints

Clarification: There May or May Not Be a Santa Claus (Russell Beland, Springfield)

**Homeless Animals Rescue Team** Redskins Improve After Gibbs Replaces Offense With 11 Feral Dogs (Brendan Beary)

## **Microsoft Placates Two Foes**

'Only 5.9 Billion to Go,' Exec Estimates

Wizards Fall to Heat in Round 2 Next Bush Term Will Permit Burning of *'Satanic' Harry Potter Books* (Michelle

**Bengals Work on Next Step** 

Now Unemployed, Siegfried & Roy's Tigers

Put Together Dance Routine (Michelle **Top Ten Films** 

Gummy Stovetop Residue, Oily Beach

Perspiration Lead List (Peter Metrinko, Plymouth, Minn.)

**Lending a Nourishing Hand** Martha Stewart effusively thanked Hannibal Lecter for the surprise gift she received this week, but said prison rules forbid her to keep

it. (Peter Metrinko) **Tasers Approved for Commercial Flights** High Compliance Predicted for Stowing Tray Tables (Chris Doyle)

**Get Your Mind Into the Gutter** Sewer Dwellers Aspire to a Better Life (Chris

**Indonesia Puts Travel Ban on Journalists** Extra Deodorant Deemed Necessary for

Borneo Bus Trip (Danny Bravman, St. Louis) A 51 Percent Mandate? Dating Transsexuals Can Be Tricky (Kyle

Hendrickson, Dunkirk) **Airlines to Test Drinking Water** In Trial Run, Evian to Replace Jack Daniel's in

Cockpit (Steve Fahey) WNO Is Ready to Reach for the Grand

Cell Phones in Opera House Will Be

Immediately Confiscated (Brendan Beary) **Usher Sweeps American Music Awards** Popcorn Spill During Ceremony Quickly Cleaned Up (Danny Bravman)

Oh, What a Ball We Had Diners' Rave Spurs Popularity of Prairie

Oysters (Brendan Beary) **Taxpayers to Fund Brutality Award** 

Gala Planned to Honor Nominees for De Sade Prize (Maja Keech) **PeopleSoft Directors Reject Oracle's** 

Board Stands Firm Despite Threatened

'Wrath of Zeus' (Brendan Beary)

'Commissions' for Detainees Ruled Invalid

Atty. Gen. Must Remain on Straight Salary (Chuck Smith)

**Baggage Complaints Are Piling Up** "She won't throw out her ex's love letters, she's always accusing me of flirting with other chicks, we can't go ANYWHERE without her inviting her mom along . . . "

(Mike Cisneros, Centreville) **Binding the Bird** 

New Moral Values Code Requires Taping Down of Middle Finger (Michelle Stupak)

## Next Week: **Deliver Us a Post,** or **Revised Titles**

#### **MISS MANNERS**

Judith Martin

## Nothing to Sniff At

hen the handkerchief went out of general use after centuries of faithful service, nobody even waved goodbye.

It would have been useless anyway. Bare wiggling fingers cannot be seen from a distance.

Nor was there a fond tear shed for this resourceful companion. That would have been foolhardy, as it would have necessitated the yucky gesture of dabbing at the face with wadded paper Fortunately for Miss Manners, handkerchiefs

did not cease to exist just because a generation grew up without being able to figure out their use. Her problem of having goods she likes disappear from the marketplace—white kid gloves, for example, or for that matter, short white cotton ones—was not the case here.

Handkerchiefs can still be found for sale, although not yet with instruction manuals. Goodness knows what the purchasers do with them. other than attempting to distract basketball players taking foul shots.

But there are many legitimate things you can do with them, which is why handkerchiefs were carried by both ladies and gentlemen for centuries. Even the two functions already mentioned are fraught with dramatic possibilities. Extending the visibility of hand signals is not

limited to running along the train platform miming "I can't bear to let you out of my sight." It can also be for attracting attention while screaming, "You've got the keys! The keys, the keys! Open the window and toss me the keys!" to the departing passenger who smiles from behind the glass and waves back.

Anyone who might have occasion to declare "Don't shoot—I surrender!" should be sure to carry a clean white handkerchief, although under the circumstances, a dirty one might do. The same is true of those who might like to notify passing helicopters and ships that they are not lolling on desert islands for their health and very much want to leave now if someone would be kind enough to offer them a lift.

Tears come in so many varieties that everyone would profit from the ability to wipe them away gracefully. There are tears of happiness at weddings, tears of sadness at funerals and tears at peeling onions. True, the last can be handled with a paper kitchen towel, but surely not the previous two. Should one's emotions be at variance with the occasion, the handkerchief can be used as a

mask to hide sadness at weddings and satisfaction at funerals.

Wiping away the tears of others is also a charming gesture—the child whose knee was scraped, the lover who was scrapped. The rule was that a gentleman always carried two handkerchiefs, one for himself and the other to hand to a distressed lady. Should he be a cad, this would be all the more necessary, as it is only sporting to offer to mop the tears one has caused.

Ladies had another reason for carrying spare handkerchiefs. A bit of lace dropped at the foot of a strange gentleman gave him an excuse to run after her to open an acquaintanceship.

Handkerchiefs can smother ill-timed laughter, as well as impromptu noises that would be improper at any time. They can dry perspiring hands and wipe outdoor chairs free of dew. And, as a last resort, they can even be used to blow the

What item takes up so little space for the number of functions it has? All right, your pocketknife. But a handkerchief doesn't make trouble passing through security.

#### **Dear Miss Manners:**

In a conversation with my cousin about the upcoming holidays, she told me that she had ordered some clothing out of a catalogue, which her husband would then reimburse her for. This is his Christmas gift to her. Is this some new tradition I am unaware of?

Which one? The tradition of husbands who don't give presents, either because they don't trouble themselves or because they can't figure out what to get? Or the one of wives who charge them for it but buy their own either because they aren't given any or because they prefer to choose their own?

Miss Manners suspects that neither is new. If neither of them minds the fact that this defeats the emotional value of presents as symbols of thoughtfulness, she supposes it works.

Feeling incorrect? E-mail your etiquette questions to Miss Manners (who is distraught that she cannot reply personally) at MissManners@unitedmedia.com or mail to United Media, 200 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016.

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#### **DEAR ABBY**

I met my biological father last June, after waiting 15 years to do so. His side of the family was very warm and welcoming. They treated me as though they had known me all my life. I was nervous about meeting them, so I took my boyfriend. They treated him like family too.

I have not told my mom that I went to see the me, and I don't want her mad at me. My parents had an extremely bitter divorce. Mom still holds a grudge, and she expects me to as well.

I am being married soon, and now I am being forced to choose between my mom and my biological father. I would like everyone to be there, and for my stepdad to walk me down the aisle. My fiance likes my biological father and his side of the family and wants them all to be there, too. I am stuck in the middle. What should I do?

In the Middle Out West

It's time to grow up and tell your mother what you did. Although the divorce was devastating, you have the right to know your father and paternal relatives if you wish. Ask her, as her wedding gift to you, to bury her enmity for one day so you can have the wedding of your dreams. Many other families have done this, and the experience can be healing.

Dear Abby:

E-W vulnerable

♣ J98752

**EAST** 

**¥** 6

**♠** A K J 9

♦ A986

♣ A K 10 4

NORTH

**♠** Q53

**♥** A 10

**♦** J 10

SOUTH (D)

♦ K532

None

**South West North East** 

4 ♥ Pass Pass Dbl

Opening lead—♠ 4

▼ KQJ98752

**♠** 6

WEST

**♥** 43

**♦** Q 7 4

♣ Q63

The bidding:

Pass

**♠** 108742

I experienced a random act of kindness and want to share it with you.

I was driving alone from Atlanta to a small town near Greensboro, N.C. It was raining hard, and my car hydroplaned and slid off the road.

A woman returning to work after lunch saw my car, stopped and asked me if I was okay. I assured her that I was fine, but felt a little panicky about being so far from home. She calmed me down, helped me out of my car, and invited me to sit with her in her car until help arrived.

While the police wrote up the report and the tow truck hauled my car back onto the highway, this caring lady stood poyt to me in the rai me dry with her umbrella. After the police were finished, she insisted that I come to her office to catch my breath and compose myself. She telephoned some friends who worked near

my final destination (which was five miles from the scene of the accident) so I would have somewhere to go if I ran into more trouble on the road. Then she escorted me to a nearby auto repair service where a friend of hers worked, and asked

him to fix the minor damage to my car. He did it immediately without charging a penny—and I was on my way within a half-hour. Abby, I want to express the depth of my gratitude to this woman—her name is Suzanna—for

her help and concern, and to her friend, Andrew, for fixing my car. They reminded me that good Samaritans still

exist in this world. I will forever be . . . Grateful in Georgia

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box

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## **BRIDGE** | Frank Stewart

s a double of a four-heart opening bid for takeout or for penalty?" a reader asks. "My partner and I had a mix-

As East, my reader hammered four hearts, and West passed and led a spade. East took the jack and tried to cash the king, but South ruffed and led a low diamond. West grabbed his queen and led a trump, and South won and led another low diamond. East took the ace and led a high club, but South ruffed, ruffed his last low diamond in dummy and easily won the rest.

"I thought West should have bid four spades," my fan says. "He said he never considered bidding with such a weak hand. He preferred to try for four tricks on defense. Who was wrong?"

Well, everybody. East's double was, by definition, for takeout. (A double of four spades or higher would be for penalty.) Players sometimes pass high-level "takeout" doubles, hoping for any plus score, but here West should have bid four spades since he had a fivecard suit and a few values.

No defense beats four spades. If North led a club, or if he led the ace of hearts and shifted to a club, the defense could win three tricks. Otherwise, after South's opening bid, West would have no trouble picking up the trumps to make an overtrick.

East-West can avoid a complete disaster by beating four hearts doubled. At Trick Two East must lead a trump since dummy's only source of a trick can be a diamond ruff. If South wins in his hand and leads a low diamond, West wins and leads his last trump, and South loses two more diamonds.

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## See HOW TO SOLVE THAT DECORATING DILEMMA

Eye On Design. Thursday. Home.

If it's important to you, it's important to us. The Washington Post