

# The Style Invitational

Week 616: Picture This, Kids



BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

When not inflicting his cartoons on The Washington Post, Style Invitational cartoonist Bob Staake, among other things, pens children's picture books. We surreptitiously borrowed this sketchbook labeled "Staake's New Kids' Project," but unfortunately Bob hadn't written a title or a synopsis of the new book. **This week's contest:** Supply title and one-sentence synopsis of same. You can also include some sample text to accompany one of the pictures. The winner receives the Inker, the official Style Invitational trophy. First runner-up gets a large ceramic coffee mug, or perhaps small planter, with prominent facial features, including a handlebar mustache, jutting out of it. And we'll even throw in a genuine souvenir mini-mug from the 1982 World's Fair in Knoxville, Tenn.

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](mailto:losers@washpost.com) or, if you really have to, by fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Tuesday, July 5. 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 number with your entry. Entries 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. Results will be published July 24. 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 was submitted by both John O'Byrne of Dublin and Tom Witte of Montgomery Village. The mugs for this contest were donated by Michelle Stupak of Ellicott City.

**Report from Week 612**, in which we asked for a "No. 102" that wouldn't have made it onto a list of "101 Whatevers" of your choosing:

First, an interruption: It has come to the Empress's attention, via several tattling readers, that one of the retorts printed in Week 612 was nowhere close to original. Since the offender did fess up and apologize upon being confronted, it is not necessary to name names here. Suffice it to say that the next person caught pulling a Steal Invitational will be presented with a Veggo Award, and banned from the contest thenceforth.

Now back to the 102 Ideas: Some of the ideas were just too good to have been down there at No. 102. Surely making the Top 10 of their respective lists, for example, would have been: "Names for Pit Bulls: Lorena," by Jeff Covell of Arlington; not to mention "How to Win the Style Invitational: Use 'Heideggerian' and 'colostomy' in the same sentence," from Phil Frankenfeld of Washington.

◆ **Third Runner-Up: 101 Ways to Save Money, No. 102:** Spit your mouthwash back into the bottle to be used again. The alcohol kills all the germs, so one bottle can last for years. (Stephen Greene, Boston)

◆ **Second Runner-up: 101 Reasons to Believe in Intelligent Design, No. 102:** All that evidence for evolution couldn't have gotten there by chance. (Dave Kelsey, Fairfax)

◆ **First Runner-Up, winner of the 102 nasturtium seeds from Bob Staake's garden, plus the barbecue-scented car air fresheners: 101 Fun Prom Themes, No. 102:** "Prescience 2025: Glimpsing Our 20-Year Reunion." (Deborah Guy, Columbus, Ohio)

◆ **And the Winner of the Inker: 101 Ways to Stay Looking Young, No. 102:** Iron your face. (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village)

◆ **And no, we're not giving out 102 Honorable Mentions:**

**101 Ways to Cope With Stress, No. 102:** Set aside a little quiet time for yourself and update your enemies list. (Dennis Lindsay, Seabrook)

**101 Fun Activities for Family Car Trips, No. 102:** Blindfold Dad and see if he can steer just from your directions. (Wayne Rodgers, Satellite Beach, Fla.)

**101 Great Cookbook Themes, No. 102:** "The Fear Factor Feast." (Roger and Pam Dalrymple, Gettysburg, Pa.)

**101 Ways to Torment Your Cat, No. 102:** Look at him, whisper behind your hand and snicker. (Most people don't know this, but cats are very paranoid.) (Michelle Stupak, Ellicott City)

**101 Best Concepts for a Reality Show, No. 102:** The Polygamist Bachelor. Watch as a polygamist whittles a group of 16 potential brides down to 15 and marries them all. (Wayne Rodgers)

**101 Ways to Lose Weight, No. 102:** The Mouth Beach Diet: Sand fills you up quickly, and works better than bran to clean you out. (Marty McCullen, Gettysburg, Pa.)

**101 Ways to Improve Your SAT Scores, No. 102:** Wite-Out. (Russell Beland, Springfield)

**101 Ways to Lower Your IRS Bill Legally, No. 102:** Make quarterly tax payments of 13 cents each, then, when you do your taxes, round the 52 cents up to a full dollar. (Russell Beland)

**101 Best Members of the U.S. Senate, No. 102:** Sen. Rick Santorum. (Brendan Beary, Great Mills)

**101 Things You Want to Hear Your Surgeon Say, No. 102:** "Nurse, bring me my lucky scalpel." (Herb Greene, Catonsville, Md.)

**101 Ways to Entertain Yourself on the Metro, No. 102:** Close your eyes and try to guess the station stop by listening to the driver. (Art Grinath, Takoma Park)

**101 Great Pickup Lines, No. 102:** "Hi, I'm Ms. Letourneau. I'll be your teacher this year." (Heather and Tim Allen, Westford, Mass.)

**101 Ways to Quit Smoking, Idea No. 102:** After purchase, dip each cigarette in kerosene. Let dry and replace in pack. (Katherine Hooper, Jacksonville)

**101 Cocktail Recipes, No. 102:** Tuna Daiquiri. (Kyle Hendrickson, Frederick)

**101 Tips for a Killer Resume, No. 102:** Under "Honors, Prizes and Distinctions," be sure to include "Honorable Mention, Washington Post Style Invitational Contest CIX (March 24) 2002." (Verbatim from the curriculum vitae of an actual English professor, discovered by Martin Bancroft, Ann Arbor, Mich.)

**101 Meals for People on the Go, No. 102:** Toaster Ribs. (Molly Norton, San Francisco)

**101 Ways to Survive a Dull Sermon, No. 102:** Slap your neighbor. See if he turns the other cheek. If not, raise your hand and tell the minister. (Ben Schwalb, Severna Park)

**101 Job Interview Tips, No. 102:** Ask for the name of the interviewer's cosmetic surgeon. (Marjorie Streeter, Reston)

**101 Great Educational Gifts for Children, No. 102:** Li'l CSI Kit, with real blood, semen, urine and fecal samples. (Ron Stanley, Reston)

**101 Wedding Planning Ideas, No. 102:** Be sure to slip away for some "you time" before the big day arrives. (Sharon Seeger, Herndon)

**101 Ways to See the Sights of Washington, No. 102:** Rent a Cessna. (Jeff Covell; Guy de Blank, Hamilton, Va.)

**101 Dremel Tool Projects, No. 102:** Hemorrhoid removal. (James A. Noble, Lexington Park)

**101 Ways to Make Your Child Feel Special, No. 102:** Give him an all-day pass to Disneyland and a bus ticket to Anaheim. (Jeff Brechlin, Eagan, Minn.)

**101 Uses for the Old VCR, No. 102:** Plug it in each New Year's Eve to celebrate with the blinking "12:00." (Robin D. Grove, Woodbridge)

**101 Excuses for the Redskins, No. 102:** Maybe they're just not all that good. (Tom Kreitzberg, Silver Spring)

**101 Highest Floors of the Empire State Building, No. 102:** The lobby. (Greg Arnold, Herndon)

**And Last: 101 Ways to Get Ink in The Style Invitational, No. 102:** Make fawning compliments about the judge's rugged masculine good looks. (Mark Eckenwiler, Washington)

**And Even Last: 101 Ways to Get the Most Out of Life, No. 102:** Spend every spare moment writing gags for a newspaper. (Russell Beland)

## MISS MANNERS

Judith Martin

### Office Ours

**W**hen contemplating taking a new job, Miss Manners would consider it prudent to inquire the amount that the salary will be depleted by paying good fellowship dues.

This would be the cumulative amount that an employee will be cajoled or bullied into contributing to presents and parties for fellow workers. Every workplace has a volunteer social director who comes to collect money and goods to support the heavy schedule of social events held during working hours:

"Ethan in Accounting is getting married, and we've decided to buy him a crystal bowl. Your share is \$20, but some people are giving more, and that's all right, too."

"We're having a Fourth of July party on Friday, instead of our usual end-of-the-week bash. Would you prefer to bring a casserole or a pie?"

"Have you met the new receptionist? She's having a baby, and it's \$5 each for the cake and sodas for the shower. This is her third, but her first girl, so everyone should buy her a pink or frilly outfit."

"There are three birthdays this week. We were going to throw them in together, but it doesn't seem fair to those who have had their own parties, so we're scheduling them for Monday, Wednesday and Friday. But you can pay a lump sum for all three."

"We're taking Greg out to lunch for his retirement. Oh, of course, you know him. Everyone knows Greg. He's been here forever. Well then, this will be a chance to meet him, because we're taking him to the Bistro Francaise. Naturally, we'll each pay for our own lunches, but we're also contributing toward paying for his."

"We've decided to do a Christmas-in-July party for everyone who's not taking a summer vacation. Otherwise, we'll all just get depressed watching the others go. You'll get a slip telling you whose Secret Santa you are. Gifts should be not more than \$25, but not less than \$10. Senior employees err on the generous side, and I guess you qualify."

"Arthur's mother-in-law died, and we thought we'd send flowers. You know, as a sort of appreciation for him as our boss."

Miss Manners is not against cordial relationships in the workplace. On the contrary, she considers a pleasant demeanor and a cooperative attitude to be requirements.

Nor is she against friendships forming among co-workers, which is not the same thing as hanging around with colleagues who will lose interest in anyone whose employment has terminated.

But compulsory socializing at work has assumed frightening proportions. It started with the notion that co-workers who got to know one another in a personal way would become 1) fond of one another, and 2) more productive. That they might waste an inordinate amount of time in becoming acquainted with people they turned out to dislike does not seem to have been considered.

In the same period, businesses were slashing their budgets, dropping such courtesies to their employees as holiday and retirement parties and flowers for funerals. It became in their interest to allow employees to take over the cost.

The workers-as-friends convention obscured this. And it seems to have obscured from many workers the fact that they are entitled to choose their own friends.

**Dear Miss Manners:**

**If I haven't seen an old friend of the opposite sex in a year or two, is it proper to exchange hugs in front of others, or should a handshake be the best thing to do?**

Were you on social hugging terms before?

If you were on handshaking terms then, Miss Manners fears that you will find your arms encircling a mass of confusion. Your old friend will be doing a memory search, on the chance of having forgotten how things got so warm.

However, if you were on more-than-social hugging terms in the past, it will be whoever is accompanying your friend who is doing the wondering.

So unless you are resuming an old greeting, it is best to start with a hearty handshake. It is easier to increase warmth than to explain it.

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

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## ASK AMY

**Dear Amy:**

**My husband and I have been together for more than 17 years, and our inability to constructively solve disagreements is getting worse as time goes on.**

**Whenever I do something that upsets him or inconveniences him, not only does he give me grief for the offense, but he also accuses me of acting deliberately to jerk him around and play control games.**

**If I try to deny malice as a motive for my actions, he accuses me of being defensive and refusing to admit that I was wrong. I don't mean to downplay the original fault, but I get upset and insulted about how he interprets my motives.**

**If I try to apologize for the original offense but not for my "motivations," then my apology is unacceptable. My apology is also unacceptable if I don't promise to never commit the offense again.**

**It's not acceptable if I merely promise to try not to commit the offense again, because that's not a "real" promise. If I apologize too quickly, then I'm just saying that to avoid dealing with my real problems.**

**On those rare occasions when I complain about something he does that bothers me, he either exaggerates what I've said to make it sound ridiculous or he misinterprets what I say and then accuses me of changing my story when I try to clarify it, or he accuses me of hyperbole and says that I'm blowing things out of proportion. I know he's controlling, paranoid, negative and critical. We are both in individual counseling and just began marriage counseling for the fourth time.**

**What is the correct approach for fixing this relationship?**

*Running Out of Patience, Energy and Love*

Let me get this straight. You are both in individual counseling and have just begun marriage counseling for the fourth time. I assume you have sent several marriage counselors running screaming into the night because even reading your letter has given me a terminal headache.

So far, therapy seems to have taught you to describe your husband's anger mismanagement in minute detail. From what you say, he has learned the exact same thing and throws it right back at you.

If your husband is manipulative, abusive and perpetually angry with you, why do you stay in this marriage? I assume you stay in order to fight with him. If this is the case, please tell your therapist that I said you should stop it.

As an outside observer, it seems that perhaps

you should consider sticking with a therapist and changing husbands.

**Dear Amy:**

**I have been single for almost three years. I consider myself a pretty attractive guy. I am caring and have a pretty good sense of humor. I am also interested in the arts and sports.**

**My problem is I can't get past the heartbreak of my last relationship. I don't want to get back together with her, but I feel like the wind has just been completely taken out of my sails.**

**I also feel that I push people away on purpose before they can get to know me, or I can get to know them. I am truly afraid I will be alone forever.**

**What should I do to liven up myself?**

*Cold in Chicago*

One way to get the wind back in your sails is to let other people help put it there.

You need a wingman. A wingman doesn't only help a person troll for dates, but in those moments when you are feeling low, will look at you and tell you the good things about yourself that you may have forgotten. If you are interested in arts and sports, look into joining the young adults committee at your local museum. Many museums now offer sort of faux-singles nights where you can go to a members-only cocktail hour and lecture. If you have a similarly arts-oriented friend, perhaps the two of you could sign up together. If you know some guys from work or school who belong to a beach volleyball league, force yourself to join.

Getting busy like this won't stitch your heart back together. But it will get you out there in the world, mixing it up and having experiences, while you work on your own heart-valve replacement.

Because you are introspective and concerned about what's going on with you, a thoughtful therapist can help you navigate your feelings. You will learn that there is no statute of limitations on getting over heartbreak; you'll also learn how to work harder to mend your heartbreak, rather than let it get the best of you.

A book you might appreciate is "Heal Your Heartbreak: How to Live and Love Again," by Chuck Spezzano (2001, Marlowe & Co.). Spezzano gives encouragement and advice from a guy's perspective.

*Write to Amy Dickinson at [askamy@tribune.com](mailto:askamy@tribune.com) or Ask Amy, Chicago Tribune, TT500, 435 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60611.*

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## BRIDGE | Frank Stewart

Both sides vulnerable

**NORTH**  
 ♠ A K 10  
 ♥ K 10 9 8 3  
 ♦ A 10  
 ♣ K 8 3

**EAST (D)**  
 ♠ Q 7 6 5  
 ♥ Q J 6  
 ♦ K 7 4 3  
 ♣ 9 4

**SOUTH**  
 ♠ J 9 8 3  
 ♥ None  
 ♦ J 5  
 ♣ A Q J 10 7 5 2

The bidding:

East	South	West	North
Pass	2 ♣	Pass	2 ♦
Pass	2 ♠	Pass	2 NT
Pass	3 ♠	Pass	4 ♣
Pass	4 ♥	Pass	4 ♠
Pass	5 ♣	Pass	6 ♣
All Pass			

Opening lead: ♦ 9

**R**ichard Schwartz-Mike Becker, Larry Cohen-Dave Berkowitz and Italian imports Andrea Buratti-Massimo Lanzarotti won the prestigious Vanderbilt Teams at the ACBL Spring Championships.

SCHWARTZ's closest call came in the semifinals against a team led by former Disney executive Peter Schneider. The match was in doubt when today's deal arose. At one table, North-South for SCHNEIDER made five clubs. In the replay, Lanzarotti-Buratti for SCHWARTZ were more ambitious: South's opening bid showed long clubs and eight to 14 points; North's first two bids were artificial inquiries. Cue-bidding led to slam.

When West led a diamond, declarer's chances seemed to rest on the spade finesse. But Buratti took

the ace and led dummy's three of hearts. East played the queen, and declarer ruffed, led a trump to dummy and returned the eight of hearts.

If East played low, South would discard his losing diamond. West would take the ace, but Buratti would later discard spades on the good hearts. So East covered the eight of hearts with the jack.

Buratti ruffed, drew trumps, went to the king of spades and led the nine of hearts, pitching his last diamond. West won, but South later threw two spades on the K-10 of hearts and made the slam, gaining 13 crucial IMPs.

If East plays low on the first heart, South can still succeed. Whether he would have, nobody can know.

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