The Style Invitational

THIS WEEK'S CONTEST Week 647:

newsroom denizens had a case of giggles the it-could-have-been-us giggles — over a brief item in the Purdue University student newspaper that began by discussing Judge Samuel Alito and suddenly segued into: "His motive for shooting John Paul in the abdomen . . . remains unclear. Simultaneously, Eager Beaver Loser Kevin Dopart of Washington scratched at our door with this contest idea: Change a headline or sentence that appears in The Post or on washingtonpost.com through Feb. 6 either by deleting up to 40 consecutive characters from it or by adding up to 40 consecutive characters FROM THE SAME ARTICLE OR AD. Include the date and page number from the paper, or the date

and capital letters for the insertions would work. Winner gets the Inker, the official Style Invitational trophy. First runner-up receives a genuine 1958 edition, donated by Russell Beland of Springfield, of "Amy Vanderbilt's Complete Book of Etiquette" — and it does seem complete: The Empress just now was reviewing Chapter 41, "Dress and Duties of the Household Staff." (Oops, she seems to have provided the incorrect socks to

from the Web site. Show what words you are deleting and

what words you're adding; brackets around the deletions

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 by fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Monday, Feb. 6. Include "Week 647" 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. Contests are judged on humor and originality. All entries become the property of The Washington Post Entries may be edited for taste or content. Results will be published Feb. 26. No purchase required for entry, Employees of The Washington Post. and their immediate relatives, are not eligible for prizes. Pseudonymou entries will be disqualified. The revised title for next week's contest is by Chris Doyle of Forsyth, Mo.

REPORT FROM WEEK 643

Our annual contest seeking rhyming poems commemorating people who died last year: The Empress received a great variety of dead subjects, from the pope to Rosa Parks to the voice of Tony the Tiger. But a lot of Losers out there must be wearing tin earrings, because hundreds of entries displayed an astonishing failure to rhyme: Soldier/older. Dreck/regret. Krebs/dread. Lend a hand/Off the island. And this doesn't even count those with a geographical excuse, like Ross Elliffe of New Zealand, who offered "mourn the passin' Of Johnny Carson." But there were still plenty of ink-worthy paeans (as well as the negative sentiments, which we'll call poopans); more honorable mentions can be found on the Style Invitational page at washington post.com.

J.B. Stoner, convicted in planning the 1964 Birmingham church bombing: Refused to let the races mix. Now just a redneck in the Stvx. This nasty fellow, no reformer, Occupies a place far warmer. (Mark Eckenwiler, Washington)

Elmer Dresslar Jr., voice of the Jolly Green Giant His ho-ho-hos were said with ease; It's fitting that he rest in peas. (Stephen Dudzik, Olnev)

Winner of the Long Kong from the Hong Kong Winner of the DVD set government: Don Adams **Though Maxwell Smart has** passed away. His style lives on in the CIA. (Dan Seidman, Watertown, Mass.)

AND THE WINNER OF THE INKER

Robert Hunter, founder of Greenpeace Bob Hunter has gone to his final repose; From cancer his health had been failing. His passing was marked by his friends and his foes, Respectively weeping and whaling. (Brendan Beary, Great Mills)

HONORABLE MENTIONS

Joseph Owades

Light beer's inventor is no more; Come, ye who love good brew, And let your elegies to him, Be flat and tasteless too. (Brendan Beary)

Richard Prvor

As we all mourn the passing of ol' Richard Pryor, Let us hear what he once had to say: "When you run down the street and your head is

Other people get out of your way." (Scott Campisi, Wake Village, Tex.)

Saint Peter said to Gabriel, "This place had been too quiet; I'm glad that Richard Pryor's come -That guy's a bleepin' riot." (Brendan Beary)

Publisher Henry Luce III: Henry Luce 3 made many a dime. He raked in a Fortune, but ran out of Time. (Andrew Hoenig, Rockville)

John DeLorean

This entrepreneurial wizard who often Surprised and dismayed us has died. Put doors, not a lid, on DeLorean's coffin That open just out to the side. (Chris Doyle, Forsyth, Mo.)

Perot running mate James Stockdale When Admiral Stockdale came to bask In Heaven's golden glare, I'm sure he had no need to ask What he was doing there. (David Smith, Santa Cruz,

George Atkinson, who founded the first video

"He'll be reincarnated": That was the wish For which his sad relatives yearned. In fact, there's a charge of a buck and a half For each day that he isn't returned. (Brendan Beary)

Three Variations on Johnnie Cochran If the coffin fits, you're in the obits. (Dan Seidman) If the body won't stir, you must inter.

If the breathing desists, he no longer exists. (Brian Barrett, New York)

Bill Frist, he thought he could diagnose better, Making you wonder just who was brain-deader. (Ira Allen, Bethesda)

Johnny Carson

Once upon a midnight's viewing, watching the late-nighters spewing Endless, tired, wretched and unfunny jokes about the news,

As I channel-surfed the idjits, morons, bores and mental midgets, I realized I was suffering from the Lack-of-Johnny-Carson Blues. (Judith Cottrill, New York)

Welcome to Heaven, now don't blow a gasket: Your exes have called — they want half of your casket. (Jon Reiser, Hilton, N.Y.)

Shelby Foote **For tales of Antietam**

You just couldn't beat him. (Jeff Brechlin, Eagan, Minn.)

Anne Bancroft

Onscreen she Worked a Miracle

For each role she created. So here's to you, Mrs. Robinson, We're sad you Graduated. (Bob Dalton, Arlington)

A famous cut without a paste: Rose Mary Woods has been erased. (Dan Seidman)

Max Schmeling

The Aryan myth was Maxing out, When he and Louis clashed, In two short minutes of their bout. Along with him it crashed. Who guessed he'd be a friend of Joe's And end up Schmeling like a rose? (Steve Ettinger, Chevy Chase)

James Doohan

(Frank Mullen III, Aledo, III.)

Scotty was beamed up to Nebulax 4; His engine, it just couldn'a take anymore. (Seth Brown, North Adams, Mass.)

"So you're Myron Floren of Lawrence Welk's

show?" Said Saint Peter, Assigner of Fate. "I'll let vou in Heaven as long as vou stow Your accordion outside the gate."

Ismail Merchant Cinema for grown-ups was this producer's

Movies for an audience they tend to undersoeuvre. (John Conti, Norfolk, Mass.) Robert Moog Nnnn000WWWW

yyyoooouuuu""rrrrrre ddddEEEEEaaadddddd. PITTI-pitti-pitti-pitti... (leff Brechlin)

Prince Rainier of Monaco, Has gone, as even monarchs go. And long will mourn his loyal nation, For the lost tenth of its population. (Hannah Easley, Charlotte)

Hunter S. Thompson just couldn't go on, so He picked up a gun. Now it's dead time for Gonzo.

Saul Bellow and Arthur Miller A single year has never claimed such literary pillars!

What stock have we remaining of Saul Bellows? **Arthur Millers?** And Miller married Marilyn! and Bellow, 84,

Became a father; holding out a hope forevermore To every brainy little boy named Goldberg or Shapiro Of turning out a sexual, not just artistic, hero.

(David Smith)

Next Week: Winter Limp Picks, or Apres Moi, le

Sweaters Warm His Heart

Bolivia's New President Knits an Informal Image

By Colin McMahon Chicago Tribune

LA PAZ, Bolivia — In the days before Evo Morales's inauguration, Bolivians had to confront some critical questions: What would Morales say in his first speech as president? Whom would he appoint to his Cabinet? And most crucial: What would Evo wear?

Not, God forbid, The Sweater. The Sweater, as any Bolivian knows and the rest of the world is coming to understand, is an old, wool, multicolored pullover that has become a Morales trade-

It's red, or reddish. It's striped in white, blue and gray (bluish and grayish, really). And it's all Morales ever wears when he meets with other presidents, kings and people like that.

The Sweater has visited more dignitaries in the past month than President Bush might in a year. On a tour celebrating the December victory that made him the first indigenous president in Bolivian history, Morales donned The Sweater on four continents, ignoring protocol and, to some

He wore it to chat with, among others, President Hu Jintao of China. He wore it to visit South African President Thabo Mbeki. He even wore it to see King Juan Carlos of Spain.

The Sweater, or *chompa*, in the Bolivian vernacular, is a symbol, a way for Morales to say that he remains a man of the people. But remarkably, it has also become a fashion item.

People in Spain, or at least those who support Morales's socialist ideas and respect his stature as an indigenous leader in Latin America, have taken to applying stripes across red sweaters to replicate the Evo effect. A Mexican radio station wrote a song about The Sweater, which goes in part:

'The president-elect of Bolivia / Has a sweater, nothing more / It's striped, cozy / The truth is, it's not so pretty / Ohhhh, yeah / Buy him another sweater

Monday, that very sweater (or some-

thing like it) was on sale in La Paz. 'We were under pressure from our salespeople to come up with a garment to address the interest in Evo," said Sergio Valda of the La Paz clothing manufacturer



At his swearing-in ceremony last week, Evo

Morales is decked out in his preferred garb. Punto Blanco.

Unlike the president's sweater, the Punto Blanco model is made of acrylic and not alpaca wool. That will keep the cost under the equivalent of \$10, Valda said, and keep the sweater in reach of the target audience of young urbanites.

The Punto Blanco version is not a direct copy. It has fewer stripes. It does away with the gray (grayish). And it adds a true blue ring to the collar. Stylish would

be a stretch, but it's getting there. "The *chompa* is more than a garment; it's a symbol," Valda said. "The garment represents President Morales.

Part of the appeal of Morales's dress is that no Bolivians have ever seen their leader do such a thing. Indigenous people make up more than 60 percent of the population. About the same percentage of Bolivians live in poverty. For these groups, dress is merely one of the chasms separating them from power.

Vice President Alvaro Garcia Linera, who wore a dark suit and a conservative tie for his swearing-in last Sunday, addressed that divide in his speech. He called for a new Bolivia in which "a poncho is valued as much as a tie, and darker skin is valued as much as lighter skin."

An Aymara Indian, Morales wore traditional garments for a special indigenous inaugural ceremony Jan. 22. But in a meeting that night with Thomas Shannon of the U.S. State Department, and in a meeting the next day with Chilean President Ricardo Lagos, Morales returned to the comfort and symbolism of The Sweat-

Morales abandoned The Sweater for the inauguration, however. He donned a black alpaca jacket and a white shirt, leaving it open at the collar. The outfit had a classy look. But it did not violate the president's strict informality.

Crop of Laughter at Alfalfa Club Dinner

You began to understand more about the purpose of this dinner organized by the Alfalfa Club, an exclusive circle of the rich and the powerful founded in 1913 for no real purpose except to organize a banquet each year to honor the birthday of Gen. Robert E. Lee. (The club takes its name from the legume whose roots probe deeply for liquid. An Alfalfan, it is said, will do anything for a

"It's an evening that helps restore the bipartisan tone of the town at least for one night and that's good," said Landon Parvin, a member. "You get a patriotic sense when the Marine Band marches in, whether you are a Republican or a Democrat or an independent, you are thrilled."

Because no reporter is allowed inside the ballroom, we gazed from the outside, hoping to catch a glimpse, a quip, a meaning. Standing behind the ropes. Spying. Desperate for leaks. Before the night was over, we had gathered enough information to make a sketch of what happened inside. For the sake of democracy, this is what we found.

On the guest list: Chief Justice John Roberts, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida. Vice President Cheney, who seems to emerge from wherever he goes when there is something really important to be said.

We learned that the powerful and the rich sit next to each other at a head table spanning the length of the ballroom. President Bush was to sit next to Roberts, who was seated next to the ambassador of Germany, who sat next to Rice, who sat next to O'Connor. In between was the secretary of the Treasury and the ambassador of Japan. Then came Rumsfeld and Attorney General Alberto Gonzales. According to a seating chart, to the president's left were places for George H.W. Bush, Justice Anthony Kennedy, Mayor Anthony Williams. And down the line was Laura Bush, who was to sit next to EPA Administrator Stephen Johnson and OMB Director Joshua Bolten and Alan Greenspan, who was to sit next to Barbara Bush. And somewhere in the room was Karl Rove.

And for four hours, we are told, they dined on \$230-a-plate meals of corianderpoached lobster with artichoke and fried dill lotus root. They ate filet mignon and pistachio-encrusted sea bass with roasted beets and baby carrots and black currant sauce. And they were served a salad with dates and raspberries and brie with table water crackers.

The salad course gave them the break they needed to get up and shake hands. We were told the night was filled with

And President Bush would split sides

with unexpected laughter. The first speech was reportedly given by the outgoing Alfalfa Club president, Sen. Jim Sasser (D-Tenn.). We do not know



Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld arrives

at the annual dinner.

what he said because we were not there. But next we heard that Sen. Mitch McConnell of Kentucky spoke as the incoming president. According to an excerpt of his remarks, McConnell told the audience that it was an honor to have been selected as president of the club. "I also want to thank the man upstairs," he reportedly said. "I'm talking of course about the NSA

agent who's listening to all of this.' To President Bush, McConnell said: "Mr. President, it is good to see you. I was distressed to read press reports that there was a rift between you and your father and that you are now speaking only at Bush family functions such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, the Alfalfa dinner and invading Iraq."

We assumed they laughed because it was a pretty funny line. Get it: Iraq has been a family affair.

McConnell continued, according to the excerpt: "I want to acknowledge my wife, our nation's secretary of labor, Elaine Chao. ... And she is the motivation for what will be my platform as president of the Alfalfa Club. It is time we take our culture of cronyism and replace it with a different culture. A new culture, a better culture. It's time we replace a culture of cronyism with a culture of nepotism. Alfalfans one. Alfalfans all: Ask not what this club can do for you. Ask what this club can do for your family.'

More applause, we can assume. Cheers,

Then we are told that Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) was to give a "surprise" speech given jokingly each year by the Alfalfa Club nominee for president of the United States. We could not find out what he said.

But we are told it was Bush, who is getting ever funnier, who stole the show.

"It's always interesting going through the Alfalfa seating chart to see who's here,' Bush was to have told the audience, according to a working script. "There are a number of Bushes present.

"My dad, Ole 41, is with us. A little earli-

ing to Jeb, Marvin and me. Surrounded by his sons, he got a little choked up. Amidst the tears, he said, Boys, this evening would be perfect if only your new brother Bill Clinton could've been here.'

Then Bush must have paused. "Mom's

here. Mom, you got in any trouble lately?" Bush congratulated Rice. "Glad Secretary Rice could be here. She just returned from a fact-finding mission to New Hampshire and Iowa." Then, turning to Rumsfeld, he reportedly said: "And we have with us tonight a man who understands the importance of a strong defense, a man who's an institution, a leader among men. Not you, Rummy. Joe Paterno. Joe, would you stand? Great to see you."

Ooops. Bush continued, according to excerpts from the script: "It's always good to see Vice President Cheney. Lynne and Laura were out of town recently, so I called up Dick and said, 'Why don't we go to a movie? "He said, 'Great idea, let's go to a cowboy movie.'

"Yep, finally went to see 'Brokeback

Mountain.' Let me tell you. Whooo-eee. "Dick sat through the movie, didn't say a word. We come out, after a while. He says. . . . 'Nice horses.' I said, 'Yep.' Then he became real quiet again and kind of serious.

nally he turned to me and said " "You don't suppose the Lone Ranger and

"I knew something was on his mind. Fi-

Tonto. . . . ' And we assumed they laughed, because

this one was funny. Bush joked about the Jack Abramoff scandal. "Now I also note from the seating chart that Alfalfa has its normal share of billionaires in the audience. By the way, one of the things that surprised me about the Abramoff scandal is how much money some of the Indian tribes have. In fact, it wasn't until tonight that I learned that Warren Buffett and David Rockefeller are Chip-

Bush continued cracking them up, joking about his current state of political affairs.

"You know," he said, according to the script, "you can't please some people no matter what you do. Half the time, they say I'm isolated and don't listen. Then when I do listen, they say I need a warrant."

And he reportedly closed with a note on what happened at the Supreme Court confirmation hearings for Judge Samuel Alito. "And let me clear up something else. I do not support torture . . . which is why from now on we're abolishing Senate confirma-

tion hearings." And in answer to the many inquiring minds wanting to know why Alito's wife burst out of that hearing crying, Bush explained: "Martha Alito won America's heart. What a warm and wonderful woman. I talked to her. You wanna know what really caused her to cry at those hearings?