

THIS WEEK'S CONTEST

Week 668: Cut From the Chase



BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

The dog did his business on the hardwood floor — and realized that this was one mess that couldn't be swept under the rug!

One of the all-time great Losers, Jean Sorensen of Herndon, wrote to tell us about one of her family's favorite pastimes, watching "World's Wildest Police Videos" and the melodramatic narration of its host, retired sheriff John Bunnell. At the close of each get-the-bad-guy segment, after the bad guy has been gotten, Bunnell sums up the moral with some colorful tagline: "This crazed madman used a cellphone while trying to escape the LAPD," Bunnell intones, "but the only phone he'll be using from now on is the one at the state pen." Or: "This idiot is going the wrong way down a one-way street. The cops gave him a one-way ticket — straight to jail!"

This week: Write an original Bunnell-style wrap-up to a crime story — or one for a more minor transgression, such as having too many items in the express lane. Jean's own example of the latter type accompanies the cartoon above. Winner receives the Inker, the official Style Invitational trophy. The first runner-up gets a bottle of lobster-scented (really!) bath gel by the weird fragrance company Demeter, which also sells *eaux de Funeral Home* and *Dirt*. This fine product was donated by Mark Eckenwiler of Washington, whom people have been sidling away from lately in the elevator.

Other runners-up win a coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt. Honorable Mentions (or whatever they're called this week) 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, July 3. Put "Week 668" 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 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 23. 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 Elden Carnahan of Laurel. The Honorable Mentions name is by Tom Witte of Montgomery Village.

REPORT FROM WEEK 664

In which we asked for creative "signature" lines to run at the bottom of the e-mails sent by 1,000-ink Loser Russell Beland, or anyone else: After dabbing on that 1,000th blot of Ink four weeks ago, the Empress hit upon a way to ensure that, for once, her most persistent and pesky contestant wouldn't have a single winning entry in this contest: She let him judge it instead. (Oh, settle down: When you get your own 1,000th ink, she'll let you do it, too.) All the entries were forwarded to Russell, with the authors' names and other identification replaced with a numerical code. With a couple of rare, accidental exceptions, he learns today, along with you, the names of the winners.

4 Ideas in this e-mail are bigger than they appear. (Matt Schaffer, Nokesville)

3 Caution: E-mails may be monitored by the government and/or my extremely suspicious wife. (Stephen Dudzik, Olney)

2 The winner of the enormous comb and pencil from Canada: For Al Gore's BlackBerry: All the thanks I get for inventing the Internet are Nigerian scams and penis enlargement ads, only one of which has worked out. (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)



NOKIA VIA BLOOMBERG NEWS

HACKOLADES

This rambling free-association made possible by the amazing substance known as Play-Doh, which has kept my 2-year-old engaged for the last 20 minutes. (Jeff Brechlin, Eagan, Minn.)

Feel free to bow down to my superior intelligence. (Elaine Chung, Rockville, and Ramita Dewan, Burtonsville)

Tomorrow's another blog. (Chuck Smith)

Please jihad responsibly. (Drew Bennett, Alexandria)

You didn't hear this from me. (Gene Brown, Concord, Calif.)

Stop reading e-mails and get back to work, you slacker. (Beth Baniszewski, Somerville, Mass.)

It is important to realize that each of us has a role in advancing my future. (Brad Alexander, Wanneroo, Australia)

My other signature line isn't stupid. (Ernie Staples, Silver Spring)

Writer may be smarter than he appears. (Phil Frankendorf, Washington)

In lieu of reply, please send cash. (Carol June Hooker, Landover Hills)

This e-mail was lovingly handcrafted from the finest fonts available. (Stephen Dudzik)

Although I studied Wittgenstein and Chomsky, I will not take unfair advantage of that to ridicule the many obvious faults in any reply you may send. (Brad Alexander)

Sending this e-mail does not constitute endorsement of the contests. By that I mean, if I don't agree with what I wrote, then I can disagree with it later. (Fil Feit, Annandale)

My fiance snuck into my e-mail account and changed my signature. He's waiting to see how long it takes me to notice this, so please don't say anything. (Andy Wardlaw, Burbank, Calif.)

Making the incomprehensible merely hard to figure out. (Cheryl Davis, Arlington)

Note to NSA: This e-mail does not contain hidden messages to terrorist groups. (Dennis Lindsay, Seabrook)

If you believe you received this e-mail in error, you are sadly mistaken. (Jay Shuck, Minneapolis)

Caution: This e-mail may have been sent in haste. If any of its contents are offensive, inappropriate or inaccurate, it is not my fault, damn it. (Bill Szymanski, Vienna)

If you have received this e-mail in error, aren't you lucky? (Phyllis Reinhard, East Fallsfield, Pa.)

My other PDA is an iPod. (Matt Schaffer)

Damn, e-mail is annoying. (Brian Broadus, Charlottesville)

Next Week: Your One-in-a-Million, or -ion Bombardment

BRIDGE | Frank Stewart

South dealer
Both sides vulnerable

NORTH

♠ 8 6 4
♥ 10 4
♦ A Q 4 3
♣ A 10 5 3

WEST

♠ Q 3
♥ A 9 7 6 5 3
♦ J 10 9 7
♣ 6

EAST

♠ J 10 9 7 5 2
♥ K Q
♦ 8
♣ J 9 7 4

SOUTH

♠ A K
♥ J 8 2
♦ K 6 5 2
♣ K Q 8 2

The bidding:

South	West	North	East
1 NT	Pass	3 NT	All Pass

Opening lead: ♥ 6

"How's your diaper stock doing?" I asked Unlucky Louie. Since Louie has so many kids and grandkids, he figured investing in a baby-products company was a sound idea.

"It was unchanged for a while," Louie sighed, "but yesterday it touched a new bottom."

Louie has been beating his head against Wall Street for years. He says that it's easy to make a small fortune in stocks: First, you take a large fortune

... I watched Louie turn nine tricks into eight at 3NT. At first, his luck seemed to change: East took the K-Q of hearts but next led the jack of spades. Louie perked up, won with the king and took the K-A of diamonds. East threw a spade.

Louie then tried the K-Q of clubs. This time West threw a heart, and Louie glumly threw in his cards, conceding down one.

"My suits behave as well as my stocks," he grumbled.

Louie could make 3NT in two ways. After he saw the break in clubs, he could take his ace of spades and lead to the queen of diamonds. East would have to pitch a second spade, and Louie could exit with dummy's last spade, forcing East to lead from the jack of clubs at the end.

Louie could also count East-West's distribution. Before he started the clubs, he could cash his second high spade. When West followed, Louie would know West had started with six hearts, four diamonds and at least two spades, hence one club at most. So Louie could lead a club to the ace and return the ten. If East covered, Louie could win and return to dummy with a high diamond to finesse against East's nine.

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Barbie, Still Livin' the Dream on Tour With 'Fairytopia'

BARBIE, From D1

Barbie tells us that she's been on the road since April 1, performing in 90 shows, bringing with her two suitcases, a carry-on and her pink Vera Bradley backpack, and we're so flummoxed at *really meeting* her that at first we can't calculate: Since April 1? How long has that been? Math is hard. Which reminds us:

The Washington Post: Does Barbie still think "math class is tough?"

Barbie: (Holding her tongue about those nasty commentators who vilified her in 1992, when she spoke so honestly about the rigors of, say, trig and differential calculus) I think everybody has things that are difficult for them. And what's so special about Barbie is, she overcomes what's difficult.

And she *does!* Barbie even sits up taller after issuing that deft answer, here on the striped settee in the Holiday Inn Rosslyn's mezzanine, where we're talking because the hotel's restaurant is closed. Or something. So we don't actually get coffee with Barbie. And we don't actually get Barbie, either, technically speaking.

The 24-year-old actress beside us is Erin Elizabeth Coors of Cincinnati, who now lives in New York with several friends from her alma mater, Kent State, and her 9-month-old peekapoo puppy named Jack. The eldest of seven children, she grew up in a house headed by an ear, nose and throat doctor and a stay-at-home mom. The Coors family basement was "covered with Barbies and Barbie accessories," she tells us, and the Coors children were so well behaved that the only untoward thing ever to happen to their 50-plus Barbies — who drove the pink Star Vette and lived in the pink Dream House and got strapped into the Barbie Carrying Case — was when Erin lost the dolls' tiny shoes.

No scalplings. No decapitations. Barbie was good to Barbie.

Because Barbie is not about tragedy or disturbing violence or even slightly dark humor. Barbie is "courage and friendship and love," Coors says, which are also the lessons of "Barbie Live in Fairytopia," where Coors plays Barbie, who is an actress playing Elina, who is the heroic but wingless savior of Fairytopia. Elina wears a pink costume made with 15,000 beads and performs on a stage decorated with 100 pounds of glitter, and she rides on the back of a butterfly, and she sleeps in a pink peony. (*She sleeps in a pink peony:* Shades of Georgia O'Keefe, anyone? And we thought *Ken* was the ambiguous one.)

But the part Coors plays best of all is Duct Tape Barbie, the silent, dutiful creature whom Mattel straps into her very own Barbie Carrying Case, giving handler duties to the "Barbie Live" tour manager, Cliff Kellas. He clears his throat and explains that Mattel has "very strict restrictions" on what Coors can say, so conducting this interview using our imaginations — something Coors repeatedly extols as one of Barbie's greatest virtues: With Barbie, girls can dream big! And pretend bigger! — is, instead, a scary



BY LINDA DAVIDSON — THE WASHINGTON POST

Let's not talk current events, okay? Erin Coors, who plays Barbie in "Fairytopia," at a pre-show meet-and-greet with kids.

corporate no-no.

(Yet when Barbie is posing for pictures, Mattel is happy to have Coors *be* Barbie, and all the girls who come to the show call her Barbie, and the meet-and-greet Coors conducts before shows is called a "Pre-Show Party with BARBIE.")

Still. We love Barbie. Whatever ground rules those persnickety adults at Mattel try to impose, we've got imaginations honed by years of dressing our own Barbies in go-go boots and gold lamé. And Coors agrees to play along by being Barbie's spokesperson, even as she sometimes slips and refers to Barbie in the first person.

So we begin.

The Washington Post: Barbie, what's your favorite movie?

Barbie's stand-in: I love all the movies! "Rapunzel." "Pegasus."

TWP: (Momentarily confused, until we get it: She's Narcissist Barbie) But how about movies starring someone other than yourself? You know — regular movies.

BSI: Barbie's a little bit of everything.

She's had all these different careers, and 80 different nationalities. She can appreciate a lot.

TWP: Of course she can. Whom did she appreciate best on "American Idol"?

BSI: I'm not quite sure. Barbie is very dedicated to her career. She's very focused.

TWP: Nick Lachey or Justin Timberlake?

BSI: She's very sincere and honorable and honest, and that's what I try to take onstage with me.

Barbie is "very worldly," too, as Coors says repeatedly. And that is *so true:* Everyone assumes that Barbie's pretty face and squishable soft head, and her super-sexy, anatomically impossible body are obvious indicators of inarticulate stupidity. And that is *so not fair.* Barbie has been an astronaut! And an Olympic skater! And a chef! A circus star! A presidential candidate! A ballerina! A Marine! An Army officer! An Air Force jet fighter pilot! And a *diplomat!* Helloooooo!

No one ever respects her mind. But we do. And seeing as how she's in Washington, and these are the issues of the day, and she was

so nonplussed by our pop-culture frivolities, we turn to geopolitics.

TWP: Iraq — stay the course or pull out?

BSI: I can't speak for her on that issue. Barbie's very good, and she wants what's best for everyone. She would want what is good for everybody.

TWP: Of course she would. How about Iran? Nuclear weapons? How scared should we be?

BSI: I'm sure, like other human beings, Barbie's touched by other people's problems.

TWP: Kim Jong Il — menace or idle threat?

BSI: I don't know.

Not long after this, the tour manager ends the interview. Time to pack the Carrying Case and head to the theater, so we walk down Fort Myer Drive toward Metro's Orange Line. (No "Vette?") At Metro Center, Barbie disembarks, and as the rush-hour crush of Red, Orange and Blue lines surrounds her, we hear her startled cry: "Oh, goodness!"