

The Style Invitational

THIS WEEK'S CONTEST

Week 675: Cut Us Some Slack



You know how it is by August: Your brain deserves its summer vacation already. The Empress's is lounging poolside (well, actually it's judging all those limericks from last week's contest) and so we'll just indolently slap up this contest suggestion from Peter Metrinko of Chantilly: **Come up with humorous ways to be lazy.**

Winner receives the Inker, the official Style Invitational trophy. First runner-up receives a very cool and pretty thingy called a hand boiler, which consists of two glass bulbs with coils of tubes between them and colored liquid inside. When your hands warm the bottom bulb, the increase in gas pressure makes the liquid rise through the coils to the top bulb. So it's educational, see? Because it's science!

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, Aug. 21. Put "Week 675" 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 Sept. 10. 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 Honorable Mentions name is by Brad Alexander. The Revised Title for next week's contest is by Brendan Beary. The hand boiler was donated by Dave Prevar.

REPORT FROM WEEK 671

In which we asked you to coin a hyphenated word by combining the beginning and end of any two words in the July 16 Style and Arts sections: A few of your more pathological Losers (accounting for more than half the entries below) must have pored over every last word of two or more syllables in both sections. One of them submitted 187 entries. The Empress awards Karen Bracey, the long-suffering wife of Chris Doyle, a boyfriend pillow.

- 4** **Prob-solutely:** A definite maybe. (Kyle Hendrickson, Frederick)
- 3** **Sound-adoxically:** How a tree falls in an uninhabited forest. (Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.)
- 2** **The winner of the Cat Butts field guide and magnets:** Hezbol-lywood: Where they make those terrorist video communiques. (Deborah Guy, Columbus)

AND THE WINNER OF THE INKER

Politi-geist: Al Gore, he's baaaack. (Kevin Dopart, Washington)



MISSED CONNECTIONS

- Suck-istan:** Transylvania. (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village)
- Ca-tock:** That NPR show with the two cackling guys from Boston. (Kevin Dopart)
- Accompa-tus:** The extra partner in a menage a trois. "We were joined by the accompanist of love." (Brendan Beary, Great Mills)
- Smorgas-wear:** Elastic-waist pants. (Pam Sweeney, Germantown)
- Taunt-o:** The Lone Ranger's first sidekick, the one who called him "Kemoslobby." (Chris Doyle)
- Down-George:** The German chancellor's urgent message to the U.S. president. (Peter Metrinko, Chantilly)
- Virgin-sult:** It used to be that "tramp" was the worst thing you could call a teenage girl. (Michelle Stupak, Ellicott City)
- Blush-mare:** One of those dreams where you're naked in public. (Tom Witte)
- Oy-veyances:** Where the seats hurt your tuchis and they serve what they should be embarrassed to call meals. (Kevin Dopart)
- Prince-phants:** Freakishly large ears. "Thank goodness William and Harry don't have their father's prince-phants." (Brendan Beary)
- Ador-ky:** Cute and nerdy at the same time. (Chris Doyle)
- Mag-nets:** The de rigueur accessories touted on "Pimp My Bass Boat." (Bob Dvorak, Saugerties, N.Y.)
- Privi-lelujah:** A shout of joy upon reaching the front of the restroom line. (Steve Fahey, Kensington)
- Self-fest:** Well, it doesn't take a pocket scientist to figure out what this means. (Peter Metrinko)
- Pseudo-harmonic:** The sound of an air guitar duet. (Russell Beland, Springfield)
- Car-ca:** Hubcaps, mufflers and other highway droppings. (Kevin Dopart)

- Fan-ter:** The Oh-My-Gosh-Trouble-With-Tribbles-Is-My-Favorite-Star-Trek-Episode-Too school of communication. (Lawrence McGuire, Waldorf)
- Scot-agogue:** Temple Macbeth-El. (Chris Doyle)
- Pun-flection:** After hearing someone say "so to speak," racking your brain for the joke. (Jay Shuck, Minneapolis)
- Pre-jected:** When she's decided she's just not into you, even before you've told her all about your bottle cap collection. (Brad Alexander, Wanneroo, Australia)
- Bare-axed:** Fired from Chippendale's. (Elwood Fitzner, Valley City, N.D.)
- Islam-vice:** Whatever horrible offenses committed by those 72 virgins that doomed them to an afterlife servicing a suicide bomber. (Pam Sweeney)
- Pseudo-room:** One of the BRs in many a "2BR" apartment. (David Kleinbard, Jersey City)
- Count-spanking:** Probably the least effective way to rid the world of Dracula. (G. Smith, Reston)
- Abom-shell:** Disgustingly sexy, e.g., Paris Hilton. (Kevin Dopart)
- Edu-stick:** The newest fad in teaching — a motivational aid that uses a limb from a hickory tree. (Peter Metrinko)
- Enem-mans:** Ex-Lax coffee cake. (Chris Doyle)
- Ques-ties:** Softball inquiries by suck-up interviewers, e.g., "Mr. President, do you worry that you may be jeopardizing your health by working so tirelessly to achieve freedom around the globe?" (Michelle Stupak)
- Oklaho-house:** Where the gals just can't say no. (Brendan Beary)

- Ef-nology:** Sex education. (Tom Witte)
- Nether-plex:** A multi-screen adult movie house. (Stephen Dudzik, Olney)
- Smorgas-mic:** Enjoying a buffet that really hits the spot. (Kevin Dopart)
- Roo-room:** Believe me, you'd rather die than go in there. (Chris Doyle)
- Prose-ly-jacked:** When what was a pleasant conversation turns to whether you've been saved or were you planning to go to Hell. (Pam Sweeney)
- Trump-beaver:** That thing on top of The Donald's head. (Peter Metrinko)
- Trou-droponic:** Clintonian. (Brendan Beary)
- Per-vitation:** You want me to WHAT? (Ross Elliffe, Pictou, New Zealand)
- Pre-voiding:** Gathering a cup of coffee and the newspaper before visiting the john. (Dave Pre-Var, Annapolis)
- Tax-raiser:** A last-term congressman. (M. Lilly Welsh, Oakton)
- Tumble-folded:** What a bachelor's laundry is. (Brad Alexander)
- Hang-tendeep:** The crowd at the surfing championship. (Chris Doyle)
- Philharmon-dieu:** A bad night at l'Orchestre de Paris. (Brendan Beary)
- Wilder-seum:** Future name for what'll be left of the Amazon rain forest. (Jay Shuck)
- Poly-front:** A hermaphrodite. (Tom Witte)
- Hell-billies:** Beelzebubbas. (Chris Doyle)
- Urine-vitalional:** See, it's not just poop jokes anymore. (Kevin Dopart)

Next Week: Just Sign Here, or Your Way O'er the Highway

First Runner-up Prize: The pretty, but educational, hand boiler. It's science!



The Reporter's Most Frightening Situation

PETER. From D1

She's learned to go with her instincts, so when she initially sensed that something might be wrong last winter during her second pregnancy, it gave her a start. "Toward the end, I just had this sense that the baby was sick," she says, sitting in the living room of her Southwest Washington townhouse with Peter gurgling on her lap. Out in the garden, her other son, 23-month-old Jamie, is playing ball with his grandfather.

"I kept telling the doctor," she recalls, "but all the tests, the sonograms, were normal."

Delivered on Dec. 30 at Georgetown University Hospital, Peter was yellow with jaundice by his second day of life. Liver tests showed severe elevations of certain enzymes. It took more than four weeks to determine the diagnosis: biliary atresia, a rare condition — only one in 15,000 U.S. children a year is born with it — that causes the liver to destroy itself. Despite stopgap surgery when Peter was 6 weeks old, Herridge and her husband, J.D. Hayes, came to understand that only a liver transplant could save their son.

"When they told us he needed the transplant, it was difficult," Herridge says, "because you know that to get another organ, another child is going to have to die."

Peter went on the transplant list at the end of March. On April 26, Herridge got a call: There might be a liver for Peter. Herridge and Hayes had decided beforehand to have the procedure done at the renowned liver transplant center at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. Herridge was at a courthouse in Virginia, awaiting the verdict in the trial of (eventually convicted) terrorist Zacarias Moussaoui. She called Fox News and begged her boss to send a backup immediately.

The liver went to another child. Shortly after, Herridge went to Pittsburgh to be screened as a potential live donor for her son. Because the liver is an organ that can regenerate, a healthy individual can donate a portion of her liver and go on to live a normal life.

According to George Mazariegos, the hospital's director of pediatric transplantation (and Peter's surgeon), hospitals exercise caution about recommending live donation as a first option because there is a "small but real risk" to the donor; generally, he says, recommendations are heavily influenced by the status

of the patient. In Peter's case, he was deteriorating rapidly.

Peter's mother was a "perfect match," says Amadeos Marcos, chief of the transplant division at the hospital and the man who performed Herridge's surgery.

"I felt that whatever happened, even if it didn't work out, I would know that I had gone to the mat for him," Herridge recalls. "That, as a parent, there was nothing else I could have done."

The surgeries took place on June 6. Herridge's lasted 7 hours; Peter's, 10. Afterward, the medical team told Herridge that, judging from the scarring on his liver, Peter had been so sick by the time they operated that he probably wouldn't have lasted the summer. He might not have been able to survive a surgery if they had waited even a few weeks.

The family remained in Pittsburgh for two months; while Herridge was released after eight days, Peter needed to be constantly monitored, and struggled with a collapsed lung and not-unusual rejection symptoms three weeks after the transplant. But overall, he responded very well, and the family returned home last week. Hayes, a matter-of-fact guy who works as an independent contractor doing science and technology research, spent his days with Jamie, a generally happy-go-lucky kid.

Jamie, his parents say, seemed pretty resilient, save for the day when his father heard him crying in the bedroom of the family's rented apartment in Pittsburgh. Hayes found him sitting in the middle of his mother's open suitcase, holding two of Peter's little undershirts, each pressed to a cheek. "Baby! Baby!" he wailed.

Now, Jamie, an adorable showoff, is climbing the couch as if it were a mountain, pulling some hair, offering to put Daddy's tie on Mommy. Peter's gotten hungry, and Herridge has turned him over to the nanny. He's an eating machine these days, up to 14½ pounds.

"We were joking today that it's time to put him on a diet," says Herridge, who is still recuperating and cannot engage in serious physical exercise — or lift anything over 15 pounds.

Still, she is going back to work in September. Earlier in the day she was on the phone with the office, eager to hear reports about the terror-



Letters and e-mails of support poured in after Catherine Herridge's Fox News Channel colleague Greta Van Susteren broadcast parts of the family's story on her show. "You start to think maybe you're pretty tough," Herridge says. "But that's an illusion."

tough field, it's going to help me fight for what I deserve."

The ordeal had an opposite effect on Hayes. Talk to him about the illness, about the wait for the transplant, about sitting in a waiting room for hours while his wife and baby were both in surgery, and he is very calm. He knew what had to happen, he knew what had to be done, he went forward with the plan.

What comes next seems, to Hayes, so much more fraught with peril. What happens the first time that Peter — whose immune system is suppressed by the antirejection drugs he must take — catches a virus? Hayes can clean the house vigorously, he can try his best to protect his little boy, but he can't stop it from happening, he can't predict when it will happen, he doesn't know what effect it will have when it does.

"I worry much more now than I did then," he says. Both Marcos and Mazariegos stress that the levels of immunosuppressants used are lower now, and Marcos says Peter can have very close to a "normal life."

Herridge is doing paperwork to apply for Medicaid for Peter. The family has good health insurance

ist threats that had resulted in mass arrests in Great Britain and had thrown air travel into chaos. This, after all, is her work universe.

Peter's crisis has changed her. Before, she thought she could handle anything. War zones. Terrorist attacks. This was the true test of her life.

"You start to think maybe you're pretty tough," she says. "But that's an illusion."

Peter, she says, taught her the value of time. Even when he was sick, he was a smiler, a happy baby. She felt like she needed to absorb every minute with him, because she didn't know how many more were left.

Now it's different. Now, she says, she's fearless. And it's affected her in ways she didn't expect.

Herridge has kept up with all the recent coverage of her female colleagues in the industry; the dustup over whether Katie Couric, as a single mother, would be willing to report from Iraq, the fact that Elizabeth Vargas's departure from the ABC anchor chair was attributed to her pregnancy.

Would she go back to Iraq? Her answer is an unequivocal yes. "I think this lack of fear I have is really going to help me as a journalist," she says. "As a woman in a