

The Style Invitational

THIS WEEK'S CONTEST

Week 682: Punkin'd!



ILLUSTRATIONS BY BOB STANKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Though (or because?) we ticked off some of the word-centric folks in the Loser Community this past spring with a contest seeking funny photos of fruit, we're back to play with the rest of the produce, in a contest whose results will run the weekend before Halloween: **Send us a funny, clever, entirely original photo featuring one or more pumpkins and/or other vegetables.** Fabulous hand-carved pumpkins would be very cool, but digitally altered versions of your own photos are fine, too. You can also use funny captions or titles. Our big fear is that we'll be burned by a jack-o'-lantern stolen from the Web. If that happens, and the creator of that image finds out and contacts us (and you can be sure he will), we will put that person in touch with you directly. We prefer that you e-mail the photos as attachments in standard digital formats (we'll contact you if we can't open them properly; try for jpegs no more than 1,500 pixels wide) or you may mail them to the address below. (Sorry, photos won't be returned.)

Winner receives the Inker, the official Style Invitational trophy. First runner-up gets, given the enormous effort and time required for this week's contest, a container of Fart Putty, which is supposed to make some sort of noise when you pull it out of the jar, PLUS two whistles in the shape of the Oscar Mayer Wienermobile, all donated by Peter Metrinko Esq., the same public servant who also posed for The Washington Post with his underpants encircling his face.

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 postal mail to The Style Invitational, The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071. Deadline is Tuesday, Oct. 10. Put "Week 682" 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 Oct. 29. 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 Seth Brown of North Adams, Mass.

REPORT FROM WEEK 678

The first time in its history that *The Style Invitational* lived up to its name, inviting two premier limerick-writers, Chris Doyle and Brendan Beary, to a smackdown in which they each submitted limericks meeting 10 individual challenges specified by the Empress: The peripatetic (and

retired) Chris worked on his entries from Fairbanks, Vancouver and finally Tokyo, while Brendan stayed put on the shores of St. Mary's County. Except for one category that didn't pan out for either of them (each was to write a limerick about the other), they done right good.

ROUND 1: A limerick about an obscure mammal.

**The coypu has breasts on her back,
So whenever her pups need a snack
While she floats in the water,
This kin of the otter
Is glad for her roof-mounted rack.**
(Brendan Beary, Great Mills)

**In Floridian waters, insanity
Rages as man, in his vanity,
Powers his boats
Through a mammal who floats.
Oh, the crimes that we do to you, manatee!**
(Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.)

Tough call between two great punch lines. Point to Beary for sheer funniness and a cooler mammal. Beary 1, Doyle 0.

ROUND 2: A limerick containing five consecutive words beginning with five consecutive letters of the alphabet.

**I wear long flowing dresses each night;
And with makeup and heels, I'm a sight.
Then I flounce, watching "Wheel,"
For my dream, I'll reveal,
Is someday to unseat Vanna White.** (Beary)

**A brazen-faced Clinton denies
Ever fooling around, then replies,
To a question on sex,
That in certain respects
"It depends on what 'is' is." (He lies.)** (Doyle)

Point to Doyle for the crafty Line 5, though it's a hoot to imagine the bearlike Beary doing the Vanna thing. Beary 1, Doyle 1.

ROUND 3: A note from George Bush to Condoleezza Rice.

**Hey, the thought just occurred to me, Condi:
You're the gentle persuader, like Gandhi;
Dick's the bossy old grouch;
I just snooze on the couch —
Cheney's Dithers; I'm Dagwood; you're
Blondie!** (Beary)

**At the Cabinet meeting today,
Let's make fun of Dick Cheney. What say
We start gasping for air
And then slump in the chair
When he opens his yapper, okay?** (Doyle)

No doubt about this one. Beary 2, Doyle 1.

ROUND 4: Include five or more body parts.

**"Oh, my pancreas, kidneys and spleen —
They've been better, you know what I mean?
And my lungs never clear . . ."**

Grandpa grates on the ear With his organ recital routine.

**Since I'm hip that this liver of mine
Is a bust, I've been toeing the line.
But your wine has a nose
Like a cheeky merlot's,
So my heart says a nip'll be fine.** (Doyle)

Another clear winner. Eight, yes, eight body parts, and seven of them used figuratively. Beary 2, Doyle 2.

ROUND 5: Each line must begin with a vowel.

**"Eh? You need a spell cast onto Chris?
'E won't know what we've done!" witches
hiss.**

**"Eye of bat, ear of horse,
Eau de swamp, and of course,
Ewe saliva — now watch his gags miss!"**
(Beary)

**All the Russians who live in Rostov
Eye an anthracite statue and scoff.
It's a new piece of art,
And the mayor is smart,
As he's hauling the coal thing right off.** (Doyle)

Ooh, tough one. That's a classic Doyle chiasmus pun in the last line, his stock in trade. But! Beary has not only started every line with an E, but used them, in order, to make the long sounds A, E, I, O and U. Beary 3, Doyle 2.



ROUND 6: Directions on doing some task.

**The Sudoku is easy to play
If you hold your impatience at bay,
So just keep a cool head
And don't start till you've read
The solution the following day.** (Beary)

**Here's a task that for husbands must be
Quite demanding, since many, you see,
Find it irksome to do
When they're using the loo:
Lift the seat before taking a pee.** (Doyle)

Don't know if you'd call either of these directions, but so what, they're funny. Beary's is funnier. Beary 4, Doyle 2.

ROUND 7: Include the word "nasopharyngeal"

**Indecisive, that's you — and it shows
In your nasopharyngeal woes.
A new schnozz every week
Is what's made you a freak —
Jacko, once and for all, pick your nose!** (Beary)

**In the nasopharyngeal span
'Tween my nose and my pharynx, I can
Mix a dollop of phlegm
With saliva — a gem!
Soon the spit will be hitting the fan.** (Doyle)

Great round. Nice disgusting stuff from Chris, but you can't top Brendan's. Beary 5, Doyle 2.

ROUND 8: Explain a scientific or philosophical concept.

**Cogito ergo sum:
"If I think, then I am," says Descartes.
"That don't mean what I'm thinking is smart;
I'm a skeptical guy
So it may not imply
A whole lot, but y'know, it's a start."** (Beary)

**Free will:
Since God is all-knowing, He can
See beforehand what destiny man
In the end must fulfill,
So I had no free will
When I slept with your sister Joanne.** (Doyle)
Doyle, hands down. Beary 5, Doyle 3.

ROUND 9: Their favorite limerick submitted for the "ca-word" contest that did not get ink.

**Little Junior's a finicky kid,
So we keep foods' identities hid
With deception and games
And exotic-type names —
"Calamari" sounds better than "squid."** (Beary)

**A dwarf bent on saving his neck
Leaves from Prague on a perilous trek.
To a man loading casks
At a truck stop, he asks,
"Tell me, sir, can you cache a small Czech?"** (Doyle)

Beary's is fine but not that novel; we think he sent better ones. Doyle's, however, was one of the last limericks cut from the pool. In other words, his eighth-best limerick that week was this good.

FINAL SCORE: Beary 5, Doyle 4.

Next Week: Ask Backwards, or This Punnish Inquisition

At George Mason, Last Call for Underage Drinking

BARNES, From D1

cohol possession — for any amount, whether on or in the body — will lose his or her driver's license for six months.

Barnes, 51, may be the Washington area's most visible campus alcohol cop and not just because he's 6 feet 9, weighs close to 300 pounds and wears size 16 high-top Nikes. It's also because he has made alcohol enforcement the top priority in the day-to-day police operation at an increasingly prominent institution with 30,500 students on four campuses, many of whom are under the legal drinking age.

The numbers show the change in emphasis: In 2002, George Mason's police force made 59 arrests for liquor law violations on the main Fairfax County campus; in 2005 there were more than five times that, or 311. Hundreds more students were referred to the dean's office or to counselors in each of those years.

Barnes is not satisfied, however. Cruising the campus in his navy Crown Victoria, he says not everyone on the force is pulling his or her weight. One of his four squads rarely makes arrests on weekends, when most alcohol-related incidents occur. That's going to change.

He drives by a group of six students on a street corner. "Freshmen," he growls. He stops and lowers his window.

"How ya doin'?" he calls out. And then, "What are ya doin'?"

"Just hangin' out," a young man answers.

Fat chance. And Barnes knows it. He proceeds to a small parking lot where, he says, the pack is headed. Other first-year students already there are waiting to be picked up by fraternity guys who will take them to parties off campus. Barnes spies a subcompact packed with so many students it looks like a car crammed with circus clowns. He sees one of his officers.

"They've got too many kids back there," he tells the officer. "Make some of them get out. And then park your car on the corner so students can see that police are around."

Within minutes, the lot is deserted. Barnes can't prevent students under 21 from drinking, but he can sure make it more difficult.

Cracking Down

Barnes is well aware that college students are going to drink. Heck, he drank in college, though not a lot. His coaches saw that, sending him out to run laps if he dared stum-



Lt. Norman Barnes talks with GMU juniors Catherine Gronemus, Elizabeth Bacon and sophomore Ish Hussain. Barnes's priority: stopping underage drinking.

ble back to his apartment early in the morning.

He grew up in the east end of Richmond, the son of a house painter and a nurse. Western Texas College, a basketball powerhouse in the junior college circuit, offered him a full scholarship, and as captain he led the team to a national championship in 1975.

Barnes played ball with an American all-star team for one season in South America, then returned to Richmond for two more years of school and basketball at Virginia Commonwealth University. Upon graduation he signed with a club team in Brazil before being told by his physician that his knees were shot. He spent a year as recreation director at a maximum-security prison, then entered the police academy at VCU where he was dubbed "Moses Hightower" after the car-ripping bruiser in the "Police Academy" films. Upon graduating from the academy, he went to work as a police officer at VCU.

Barnes acknowledges that cops, including campus cops, are known for throwing back a beer or three. He tells a story about being on duty at VCU when a bunch of his police pals, including a wet-behind-the-ears dispatcher, went out to party after their shift ended. The dispatcher returned drunk and, despite several warnings from Barnes, climbed in

his car and sped away. Barnes chased him down and gave him a ticket for drunk driving.

Barnes had not just fingered a fellow officer. The dispatcher was his boss's nephew. The VCU force ignored him for more than a year after that, he says.

So why is he on a tear now about college drinking? There are several reasons. When he left VCU to join the Mason force 20 years ago, the university was a commuter school with about 15,000 students, only 1,600 who lived on campus. Whatever drinking was done happened off campus for the most part. Today, the school has a much larger enrollment, with 4,200 students living on campus and thousands more nearby. More students equal more problems.

The nature of the consumption has changed as well, according to Barnes. Students do not drink as often as they did a generation ago, but more of them drink to get drunk, he says. Vodka, whiskey and other high-proof beverages are common.

At conferences around the country, he hears the same story from other campus police officials: Fights related to excessive alcohol consumption are up and so are sexual assaults. More students are being taken to the hospital to be treated for alcohol poisoning.

The reaction by college adminis-

trations has been striking, particularly to those who grew up in the toga-partying days of the 1960s and '70s. One out of three colleges and universities now bans alcohol on campus for any student, including those 21 and older, according to an ongoing study by the Harvard School of Public Health. Two out of five forbid it in any university housing. Half of small colleges restrict alcohol at football games, tailgate parties, concerts and alumni events.

Georgetown University is considering a campus ban on kegs. At the University of Oklahoma, no alcohol is allowed for students of any age in residence halls, fraternity houses, sorority houses or on the surrounding grounds. No more three strikes and you're out for students at the University of Colorado at Boulder who violate drinking laws on or off campus — two times will send you packing. At the University of Maryland at College Park, a school employee now lives in each fraternity house on campus to keep an eye on parties and alcohol.

That's just the rules side of the equation. On the counseling side, approximately four out of five schools ask new or prospective students to take an online alcohol education program. About the same number offer students alcohol-free dorms or residence halls.

Students' welfare is not all that's

at stake. So is institutional liability and reputation. From the 1960s until the mid-'90s, courts generally rejected the idea that colleges were supposed to protect students from harm. In 1997, that trend started to reverse after Scott Krueger, a student at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, died of alcohol poisoning in the Phi Gamma Delta fraternity house. Krueger's parents sued MIT, which eventually paid out \$6 million: \$4.75 million to the family and \$1.25 million to a fund in Scott's honor. According to Brett Sokolow, a risk management consultant, universities have been scrambling ever since to reduce the odds of being sued. Demonstrating that you're doing all that you can to stem drinking may reduce the size of a potential judgment.

At a national conference Barnes recently attended, "liability was all we talked about," he says.

Mason officials also don't want to see an alcohol-related tragedy mar the school's reputation, says Barnes. That's become a bigger concern since the basketball team's trip to the Final Four of the last NCAA tournament.

"College presidents don't like negative publicity," he says.

Most days, Barnes likes his work, but sometimes it gets to him. Last winter, an officer called him in the middle of the night and said that he

was wanted at Fairfax Hospital. A freshman at George Mason was so intoxicated that she had been put on a ventilator, and the attending physician had asked that someone from the university notify her family.

"That someone would be me," Barnes says, cruising up the ramp of a parking garage on the night of Yun's arrest looking for drinkers or stashes of booze. His normally booming voice has gone soft. "She had been drinking with her sorority sisters before the basketball game. At a phenomenal rate. When she got to the game she was highly intoxicated. Her sorority sisters tried to get her back to her room, but she slipped outside and hit her head.

"Her blood-alcohol level was so high, the doctor was more concerned about that than the head trauma. She came out of it okay, but it was touchy for a while. Could have been a situation where she didn't survive."

The Dilemma of Consistency

As Alex Yun discovered, the Virginia General Assembly handed Barnes and his fellow officers a new weapon last year in their fight against underage drinking.

"Once that law passed, I knew exactly what the legislature wanted us to do," says Barnes. "The courts are enforcing the law boom, boom, boom."

It's noon on a weekday, and Barnes is sitting in his small office filled with metal cabinets of old arrest forms and cardboard boxes of tickets yet to be used. A large calendar sketched on dry board shows the arrests each day by each of his four squads. He's proud of the squad he's been after: On Saturday, Sept. 16, its officers made 17 arrests. "That squad hadn't made 17 arrests in five years," he says.

Down the hall is the office of Police Chief Michael Lynch, Barnes's boss, who checks the dry board from time to time. Lynch, a friendly, barrel-chested fellow, wasn't thrilled about the way Yun's arrest was handled. "That one incident doesn't describe the philosophy of the department," he says with a slight harrumph, declining to elaborate. A couple of minutes later, however, he says: "Are we too heavy-handed? I can't say that we are. That 19-year-old, maybe he just had a couple of beers, but maybe he had been setting up keg stands and beer bongs."

Lynch says he's satisfied with Barnes's initiative. "We only had one al-

See BARNES, D3, Col. 1