D2 Sunday, January 14, 2007

The Style Invitational

The Washington Post

THIS WEEK'S CONTEST





BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

A drunken kangaroo is madly hopping; staying the course has people hopping mad.

a drunken kangaroo a prescription for Levitra the new speaker of the House a teacup Chihuahua staying the course a Mini Cooper convertible a urine sample the Washington Nationals Shakira's hips a Cheez Whiz souffle 24 cents plus tax 11 pipers piping the Poincaré Conjecture Kim Jong II's pompadour a Style Invitational Loser magnet

his week, an Invitational favorite: Take any two items from the truly random list above — really, the Empress just threw a dart 15 times at various parts of her brain — and explain why they are different or why they are similar.

Winner receives the Inker, the official Style Invitational trophy. First runner-up gets a promotional copy of "Black and Blue," a CD by "Roy D. Mercer," a character created by Brent Douglas, a Tulsa radio host who calls up people to play practical jokes on them, usually accusing them of having wronged him, and promising "an ass-whupping." Right there on the CD case is the testimonial "It ain't funny!"

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Other runners-up win a coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt. Honorable Mentions (or whatever they're called that 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, Jan. 22. Put "Week 697" 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 Feb. 11. No purchase required for entry. Employees of The Washington Post, and their immediate relatives, are not eligible for prizes. Pseudonymous entries will be disqualified. This week's Honorable Mentions name is by Roy Ashley of Washington. The revised title for next week's contest is by Dave Prevar of Annapolis

REPORT FROM WEEK 693

In which we asked for fanciful sequels to actual movies. Offered by many was something like "Passion of the Christ II: The Second Coming: He's back . . . and he's mad!" (The folks from "Family Guy" already did a little video with that one, though.)

"Bonnie and Clyde II": The troopers just keep shooting into the car for another 127 minutes. (Russell Beland, Springfield)

3 "Snakes on a Blimp": Hey, what's that hissing noise . . . hev. what's that BIG hissing noise? (Beth Baniszewski, Somerville, Mass.)

The winner of the nostril pencil *sharpener and snot key chain:* "Kramer vs. Kramer: The Next **Generation": Ted and Joanna reconcile** and have another son. But little Cosmo goes terribly wrong. (Drew Bennett, Alexandria)



AND THE WINNER "Gandhi II": No more Mister Nice Guy! (Andy Bassett, New Plymouth,

ON THE CUTTING ROOM FLOOR

"Upper West Side Story": The remaining Jets grow up and become bond traders, taking ballet classes in their off-hours. (Ira Allen, Bethesda)

"Brokeback Molehill": Even in the rural West, some traditional attitudes are softening, so Ennis's new love interest is just no big deal. (Russell Beland)

"The Other 603 Commandments": Moses sits up there on Mount Sinai taking notes about such topics as pigeon sacrifice and whether bats are kosher. Except for the slightly racy Commandments 82 through 105, which cover forbidden sexual relations, the tale is a bit short of epic. (Andrew Schneider, Fairfax)

"Amadeus II": Mozart's Requiem is ready for posthumous production when the scheming impresario Snydieri closes Vienna's last concert hall. (Brendan Beary, Great Mills)

"The Great Escape 2": Capt. Hilts, in another daring escape attempt, makes it out of the camp but wrecks his motorcycle trying to avoid a governess and her seven children. (Tom Galgano, Bowie)

"A Brief History of Time 2: Downforce": When Stephen Hawking is dropped off a 20-story building as the result of a David Letterman prank gone horribly wrong, his valuable brain is transplanted into the nearest available body, which happens to be that of the guest immediately before Hawking, Arnold Schwarzenegger. (Andrew Malone, Washington)

"War of the Worlds II": Back on Mars, the invaders smack their three-fingered hands against what passes for their foreheads, brew up a batch of penicillin and prepare to try again. (Andrew Schneider)

"Rocky 13": Rocky Balboa, now 92, winds up in the same nursing home as his nemesis Clubber Lang, 87. The rivalry is reignited after their wheelchairs bump on the way to bingo. They throw some Jell-O at each other, then take a nap. (Michael Levy, Silver Spring)

"Seventy Brides for Seven Brothers": The brothers relocate to the Utah mountains. (Beverley Sharp, Washington)

"It's a Wonderful Life for You, Maybe": An angel shows an elderly George Bailey how much happier everyone he knows would be without the burden of taking care of him. (Beth Baniszewski)

"You've Got Spam": Kathleen breaks up with Joe and fears she'll never love again, until she starts a new e-mail relationship with a Nigerian banker. (Brendan Beary)

"Pay Per Moon": Addie gives up the grift and settles down to an honest life as a stripper. (Steve Langer, Chevy Chase)

"Rear Window 2": Jeff is hired to apply his knowledge of photography, lenses and lighting to develop the first colonoscopy camera. (Phil Frankenfeld, Washington)

"Old Yeller II: Night of the Living Dog": Rabies and a bullet to the head can't keep down a vengeful undead hound. (Lawrence McGuire, Waldorf: Andrew Hoenig, Rockville)

"Ferris Bueller's Flex Day": Our hero, all grown up, spends a day away from the office waiting for the cable guy to arrive, paying bills, mowing his lawn and finally sneaking in that trip to the bank he's been needing to make. (Russell Beland)

"Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind II": Two lovers are so happy with each other that they erase everything except their memories together. Unfortunately, they thus lose the ability to drive, work and feed themselves, and they perish in a few romantic weeks. (Jeff Brechlin, Eagan, Minn.)

"An American Tail 2007": The cute little mouse gets to the border, sees a big fence, and goes back to his house. - Rep. Tom Tancredo, R-Colo. (Matthew Hertz, Buffalo)

"King Kong: The Next Generation": After her mother pretty much explodes in childbirth, Fay Darrow Kong tries to adjust to life in New York as a 20 foot human-ape hybrid. Kids learn to stop teasing pretty quickly, but she is isolated and lonely until World War II, where she single-handedly captures Okinawa in 27 minutes. (Jeff Brechlin)

"Raging Steer": Jake LaMotta finds that years of low blows have left him impotent. (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village)

"Raging Cow": This time it's Rosie O'Donnell who beats up on all comers. (Paul Kocak, Syracuse, N.Y.)

"Camelot II," directed by Oliver Stone: Hark! 'Tis newly betrothed Lancelot and Guinevere, set upon while touring Toulouse! What ho? An arrow hast pierced the bony orb of fair Lance, whilst Guinevere doth save her arse by crawling o'er the arse of her 'arse. Arthur of Camelot is captured with a crossbow in yon parapet, but wast there a second arrow? Aye, 'twas Merlin on yonder grassy knoll who didst let another cruel stick fly. (Jeff Brechlin)

"Ei8ht": A serial killer murders seven people who have committed one of the "deadly sins," plus this guy who cut him off on the highway without signaling or anything. (David Kleinbard, Jersev Citv)

"The Passion of the Christ 2, 3 and 4": The Jews go on to cause more trouble in the world in 476, as Rome falls to the lewish barbarians: 1431, as Joan of Arc is burned at the stake by Jewish mobs; and 1941, when Jews of the Imperial Navy send their Zeros to attack Pearl Harbor. (Arthur Litoff, York Springs, Pa.)

"The Red Balloon II": A balloon-propelled boy suffers a hard landing on a Parisian street, leaving him pigeon-toed, helium-voiced and missing two teeth. The locals declare him a genius. (Jay Shuck, Minneapolis)

"Rent II: Mortgage": The bohos move to Loudoun County, struggle to make ends meet on their dual GS-15 salaries, and sing ballads that decry the trials and tribulations of home improvement contractors, homeowner associations, HOV lanes and mall parking. (Ed Gordon, Hollywood, Fla.

"Groundhog Day II": Only the title is different. (Ben Aronin, Washington)

Next Week: Hopelessly Ever After, or Just Doom It

Historic



BRIDGE | Frank Stewart

South dealer N-S vulnerable jor suits, but South's hearts are far stronger. A freespirited South might even open one heart, treating his

Yenching's Days Are Numbered

YENCHING, From D1

lavish dinners she hosted. "It was the place where you'd just call everybody up and say, 'Let's meet for dinner at Yenching.

And, as former manager K.C. Chow puts it bluntly, "It just hasn't changed." But the world has. Once the place to go for Peking duck and General Tso's chicken, Yenching has become a relic in a time when Asian restaurants are abundant. and high-end Asian-fusion cuisine is wildly popular.

"It's a matter of taste," says current owner Larry Lung. "Chow mein, egg foo yong - older people like that, but the younger people, they don't."

Members of the Lung family have owned the place since Van Lung (Larry's uncle, who was the son of Chinese governor and warlord Lung Yun) opened it in 1955. Larry bought it from his uncle's estate upon his death in 1991. But Larry is about to turn 65 and his health, he says, is an issue - and his three children have career ambitions that do not include the brutal day-to-day demands of running a family restaurant. Business is not what it once was. According to Chow, the fact that the family owns the building itself — a large and valuable piece of real estate in an upscale neighborhood — is the only thing that made it tenable to stay open in recent years.

So Larry Lung has decided it's time to let it go. He has a tentative deal for a long-term lease with Walgreens, a large drugstore chain making its first forays into the local market. Once the final details are approved, Lung expects the handover will take place in late spring or early summer. He's already getting daily calls from panicked customers who have heard the news and wonder if the closing is imminent. It's not. Large parties are booked for the coming months, and those reservations will be honored. Still, the closing is inevitable.

"I walk in here and look around this place and think, 'This is going? No!' ' says Chow, who started working at Yenching as a busboy when he was 15, and spent two stints as manager, once in the 1970s and again in the 1990s. "I Yenching Palace has been a Cleveland Park landmark since 1955.

grew up here. This place is history.

The three old leather guest books read like a who's who: Mick Jagger, Danny Kaye, George Balanchine. Ann Landers, Jason Robards, James Baldwin, Arthur (that's how he signed it) Garfunkel, famed architect I.M. Pei (whose signature is completely unreadable). Daniel Ellsberg, "Alex" Haig, Lesley Stahl, Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein. So many ambassadors and senators it's hard to keep track. Even in more recent years, folks like George Will still called for delivery. Anna Chennault, widow of Gen. Claire Lee Chennault — the leader of the famous Flying Tigers, who fought the Japanese during World War II — was a stalwart customer and still remains a close Lung family friend.

The most famous and oft-told story about Yenching Palace is how emissaries representing President John F. Kennedy and Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev met there to negotiate during the Cuban Missile Crisis, and legend has it that they hammered out the final details, and avoided a war, in the second-to-last booth on the left. In the early 1970s, Henry Kissinger was a regular visitor, Chinese diplomats often his companions. Kissinger, Chow says, used to drink Moutai a powerful liqueur popular in China — and eat the duck.

"Kissinger has a mesmerizing voice," Chow says. "It just carries. There would be 100 people in here and you knew he was here.'

Van Lung, the original owner, could be a helpful source of information to journalists, who also considered the place a hangout. Perhaps at their peril, upon occasion. Scott Armstrong, a former Washington Post reporter and longtime customer, once got a call from a source at the FBI after he took someone from Kissinger's of-

fice to Yenching. Armstrong was told, as a favor, to never again interview sources in the first booth, the one next to the office.

"That's what I want — the first booth," says Armstrong, who lives in the neighborhood and still comes in, though he bemoans the fact that the duck doesn't drip as much fat as it used to. "We can rip it out and check for the wires."

For all its famous customers, though, Yenching was always a family restaurant.

"When the kids were still around, we used to go there a lot," says New Yorker writer Seymour Hersh, who remembers Van Lung introducing him to the man who served as an interpreter for the Cuban Missile Crisis negotiations. "It stayed the same. Everybody else got yuppified. We're very fancy here [in Cleveland Park] now. I live in Yuppieland.'

Once the only restaurant on its block, Yenching is now within walking distance of hip, popular restaurants like Ardeo and Bardeo, Palena, Spices and Indique. Meanwhile, behind its unchanged storefront, the original faux leather booths — "whatever it is, it lasted!" Chow says - still exist, and there's still a phone booth in the entryway, though hardly anyone uses it anymore.

But that's all going to go, Larry Lung says. He is effusive in thanking all his long-term customers and neighbors, and is torn by those who have called or stopped by recently to bemoan Yenching's demise. Still, it's time.

So maybe Lung will keep some of the Chinese artifacts that decorate the room, maybe he'll sell some. In any case, soon folks won't be coming in for the beloved noodle soup, with its hot broth and the raw meat to be cooked at the table. They'll be coming in asking where they can find the cough medicine.

WEST	NOR ♠ 8 ♥ 6 ♦ 8	76	EAST
♠ KQ10	🐥 A	K 5	▲ J 9
♥ 873			♥ 9 5
 ♠ A K J 10 4 ♣ 7 3 		5432 KQJ10	◆ 9 6 5 ♣ Q J 9 8 6 2
The bidding:			
South	West	North	East
1 🔺	2 ♦	2 🔺	Pass
3♥	Pass	4 🔺	All Pass

Opening lead: ♦ K

he "Vondracek Phenomenon," which sounds like a Robert Ludlum novel, was noted almost 50 years ago. When you have two possible trump suits, the weaker suit may serve you better.

Today's North-South have eight-card fits in both ma-

hearts as a six-card suit and his spades as a four-carder. Then North-South might play at four hearts — and find that contract unmakable.

West would lead high diamonds, and South would ruff the second diamond and attack his side suit by leading the ace and a low spade. West would win and lead a third diamond, forcing South to ruff again. If South then conceded another spade, a fourth diamond would force him to spend another honor to ruff, and West's eight of trumps would score.

If South opens normally in the weaker but higherranking of his long suits, he'll land at four spades. This time if West leads high diamonds, South ruffs and leads the ace and a low trump. West wins and forces with a diamond, but now South can start the hearts, ignoring West's high trump and keeping control. The defense will get two trumps and a diamond.

"Vondracek" isn't infallible and is of more theoretical than practical value. It's hard enough to find one good trump suit, much less two, and it's often impossible to discern the quality of suits in the auction. Still, you might file away the possible benefit of using a weaker suit for trumps.

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TODAY'S HOROSCOPE

Holiday Mathis

You can do it. That's the surest thing you know. Charge forward before you have a chance to listen to the peanut gallery. They always say the same thing anyway - let them say it to someone else.

Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Aries (March 21-April 19)

You're walking the fine line between showing off and sharing your talent. Once you prove you don't need it, loved ones will give you all the attention you want.

Gemini (May 21-June 21)

Your schedule is packed. This is even more true if your plans are to do nothing. "Nothing" takes up even more hours than "something" does. So honor your plans and do them — or don't do them — to the fullest.

Cancer (June 22-July 22)

Your charm has no limits, and so you apply it generously. What you get away with is amazing. (For those of you who lost your charm somewhere in last week's bustle, this is your day to retrace your steps and find it.)

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22)

Your vantage point is no more remarkable than the person's to your left, or to your right. And yet you are seeing an entirely different world. Quietly review your astounding findings tonight.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

If you're still hurting from a past injury, be it physical or emotional, it's now time to call in a professional to help your healing process along, one of the many ways you can be good to yourself.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23)

You'll meet people who are very different from you, and you'll still be able to communicate beautifully. Create space. When there's space, others tell you more than

you would ask of them.

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21)

The stars align to help you fulfill your intellectual or artistic potential. You're learning to turn neutral events into opportunities. And there are more coming, so don't feel that you must jump at the first one.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

Creative ventures are a process, unproven and wonderfully surprising. That said, the project is probably taking more time and money than originally planned. It's par for the course.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

You're more likely to feel centered and generous when your definition of success is being met. If you don't have a definition of success, invent one now. (It doesn't count unless you put it on paper.)

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

As the sign of technology, you can use computers to make your life easier and better without all the hassle and learning curve that others must go through to enjoy the same functions. Poor everybody else!

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20)

Your brand of diplomacy is crucial to maintaining a happy home, and also useful in casual socializing. Others see through your flattery, but that doesn't mean they don't want to hear it.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY, JAN. 14: The trick to mastering your environment this year is not to take it all too seriously. New choices reveal themselves to you over the next 10 weeks. As a result, this spring you earn your money differently, spend time with new people and make key upgrades to your home. Your relationships with Scorpio and Pisces people are profoundly satisfying. © 2007, Creators Syndicate Inc.

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