The Style Invitational

THE WASHINGTON POST



Week 748: Dead Letters

Higgledy piggledy Thomas F. Eagleton Ran with McGovern, got **Dumped as insane.** Electromagnetically Tainted, he learned that raw Politics packs a worse Jolt to the brain.

nother year, another fascinating group of dead people. Once again, we shall not fail to ensure that they and their deeds be enshrined forever in verse. It's okay, they won't know. This week: Write a humorous poem about a well-known personage who died in 2007, as in the double dactyl above, contributed by a Gene N. Weingarten of Washington. Lists of "notable deaths" and the like abound online.

Winner gets the Inker, the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a little Steve Irwin beanbag doll, donated by Marleen May of Rockville. No, no, he's entirely intact.

Other runners-up win their choice of a coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt or yearned-for Loser Mug. 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 Tuesday, Jan. 22. Put "Week 748" 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; your work must be your own idea. All entries become the property of The Washington Post. Entries may be edited for taste or content. Results will be published Feb. 9. 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 Larry Yungk; this week's Honorable Mentions name is by Chris Doyle. Larry Yungk also suggested that we note the rookie ink, while Beverley Sharp came up with the name "First Offender.

REPORT FROM WEEK 744

In which we asked you to create totally fictional meanings for any in a list of words gleaned from the beginning pages of the Oxford English Dictionary. Lots of Losers defined "deboise" as Sen. Larry Craig's friends from Idaho, and a "barling" as a young lady best eyed with beer goggles. A list of the words' actual meanings (or sometimes one of several meanings), according to the OED, is at washingtonpost.com/styleinvitational.

ADJECT: To modify a noun. "He couldn't just describe his emotions as 'an earthquake,' no - he had to adject it into a 'violent earthquake.' " (Russell Beland, Springfield)

DEBOISE: The male package. "Billy won't be playing in the second half against Bensonhurst. He got smacked in deboise." (Tom Sullivan, Highland, Mich. — a First

The winner of the "Find It: A Compass for Chronic Losers" cardboard wheel: BIZCACHA: Motivational blather before a sales meeting. "We set our monthly goal for syrup pickles, but we first had to wade through all that bizcacha." (Lawrence McGuire, Waldorf)

AND THE WINNER OF THE INKER DENNAGE: The stuff that Dad is allowed to keep only in his own room. "An arcade Pong console AND a Visible V-8 Engine — whoa, that's some serious dennage."

(Bill Spencer, Baltimore)

NEAR DEF EXPERIENCES: HONORABLE MENTIONS

ADAD: A commercial for an infomercial. (Pam Sweeney, Germantown)

ADAD: A very early clue that a baby will be dvslexic. (Dave Prevar. Annapolis)

ADAD: The husband of an imam. "We don't have any adads in Iran." (Chris Doyle, Ponder,

ADJECT: A campaign commercial deemed too slimy to run. [Now archaic.] (Elwood Fitzner, Valley City, N.D.)

ADJECT: Catchphrase of District Attorney Buckwheat in the new series "Law & Order: Our Gang." "I adject, I adject! Your Honorableness Alfalfa, Mr. Spanky is witnessing the badger!" (Jeff Brechlin, Eagan,

ADURE: To experience life before TiVo. "I don't think I can adure this Toyotathon commercial again." (Russ Taylor, Vienna)

AESTUATION: The use of the "æ" symbol in words that already have enough letters, like "encyclopædia." (Andrew Hoenig, Rockville)

AGAZED: Grandson of Aga X. (Elwood Fitzner)

ALEPINE: The Olympic skiing event that Bode Miller could win. (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

ALMAGRA: Contributions to a church's endowment fund: Through regular use of almagra, Pastor Bob raised enough to erect a steeple that everyone admired. (Larry Yungk, Arlington; Dave Zarrow, Herndon)

ANTHYPOPHORA: A rock power ballad that's been turned into Muzak. "The anthypophora in this elevator — is that 'Free Bird' or 'Smells Like Teen Spirit'?" (Russ Taylor)

APTOTE: An honor student's extra-large backpack. (Peter Metrinko, Chantilly)

ASSYTHE: A heavy-duty surgical instrument: "When the scalpel is too small for the butt

For Winning Losers

We've been told occasionally of readers - very funny ones - who have hesitated to enter the Invitational because they see the same names week after week, and figure we never choose anyone new. Well, this would be news to the 3,925 people (as of last week) who have earned one or more blots of Invitational ink. This week we'll begin noting the Invite's first-time Losers we'll call them First Offenders. And thanks to the suggestion of fairly-new-himself Loser Russ Taylor, we'll award each of them one of those tree air "fresheners" for your car, and call it the Fir Stink. First Ink, get it? Hahaha. Ow.

reduction surgery, the plastic surgeon pulls out the assythe." (Horace LaBadie, Dunnellon,

ASSYTHE: What toothless hockey players shout when they help a teammate to score a goal. (Peter Metrinko)

AUGE: Reaction to being assigned a dirty job. "Upon being told to clean the stables, Hercules grumbled, 'Auge whiz!' " (Horace

BELSWAGGER: The characteristic strut of a coach with a perfect season. (Beth Baniszewski, Somerville, Mass.)

BENJOIN: To create a new name every time two celebrities hook up. (J. Larry Schott, Gainesville, Fla.: Jav Shuck, Minneapolis)

BENJOIN: Backwoods music playing. " 'Deliverance' had some kinda dadgum benjoin." (George Vary, Bethesda; Chris Doyle)

BIZCACHA: The act of going number one and number two at the same time. (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village)

BLIN: Third-rate costume jewelry: "Yo, you drop a G on that blin?" (Horace LaBadie; David Zvijac, Annandale, who almost counts as a First Offender: He got his only other ink in 1993, when he won the contest)

BLIN: The capital of Ireland before its expansion. (Kevin Dopart, Chris Doyle) **BROWSTER: KGB code name for Leonid** Brezhnev. (Elwood Fitzner)

BULSE: The quickened heart rate of a liar. "The polygraph operator immediately noticed his bulse." (Tom Witte)

CHAVEL: A surgical instrument designed to

turn an outie into an innie. "After a boob job, Brazilian plastic surgeons often provide a quick turn of the chavel as lagniappe." (Hillel Weinberg, Falls Church — a First Offender)

CHAVEL: A perfume company whose No. 5 smells about as good as a horse's No. 2. (Fred

CHEBEC: Shouting distance. "He's your husband, so he's expected to be at chebec and call." (Chris Dovle)

DEBOISE: To ask for the rice pilaf instead of the baked potato. (Pam Sweeney)

DENNAGE: Gross weight measurement. The Grand Slam breakfast remains one of America's most vital sources of dennage. (Larry Yungk)

Next Week: Hurry Up and Slow Down!, or The **Tortuous and the Harried**

Moiseyev Delivers Vibrant Perfection

DANCE, From C1

in which dozens of dancers stream across the stage in a winding daisy chain, bouncing lightly to the rhythms of an upbeat folk tune, in an expression of collective energy at once resolute and deeply charming. When eventually they reel off into two spinning wheels, each prancing foot catching air at the same moment, each head held just so, each face identically beaming, you think of minutely calibrated watchworks. These dancers must bear them in their innards.

GUILLERMO DEL TORO

'PAN'S LABYRINTH"

"THE YEAR'S SCARIEST MOVIE.
GO SEE IT ALREADY!

"A TERRIFYING HORROR THRILLER

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NOW PLAYING

This piece, a Moiseyev classic, works a curious spell: To watch it is to wonder at its perfection, which is not icy and mechanical but elevating, like good manners. You wish everyone, every human endeavor, could be so.

What dance is there, if not Moiseyev dance? Ballet? Oh, pish posh, what a mess it seems in compari-

This was, of course, Igor Moiseyev's thought as well. He had no desire to replicate rural celebrations or to approximate the abilities of apple-cheeked babushkas. His goal was to use national customs as a jumping-off point for his



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The Moiseyev Dance Company performs at Strathmore during the troupe's two-month national tour marking the 50th anniversary of its first U.S. appearance.

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own choreographic imagination. And to make the dancing as respected and rigorous as that of the world-class classical company where he got his start.

He patterned his group after ballet companies in many ways. By dance standards, his troupe is immense, with 200 dancers. And like the Bolshoi and St. Petersburg's Kirov Ballet, the Moiseyev Dance Company is fed by its own school, with a dance curriculum tailored to its needs. The company's popular appeal, like that of the more estab-

THE ONE MOVIE ON OVER 350 TOP TEN LISTS **BEST PICTURE**

PLAYING

St. N.W. VIRGINIA AMC LOEWS SHIRLINGTON MARYLAND

lished ballet ensembles, was recognized early on by the Soviet government as a prime propaganda tool. The Strathmore appearances Thursday and last night kicked off a two-month national tour, which marks the 50th anniversary of its first American appearance. The company boasts that that 1958 tour was also the first time a Russian dance group of any kind had performed on these shores.

There are limits to the Moiseyev formula, however, A certain schmaltz creeps into some pieces, particularly the "Egyptian Dance" for a group of hip-thrusting women in spangled gowns. A disco beat kicked in (all the music was taped, some easier on the ears than others) and the hipbones feverishly upped the ante. We give! Better the frank athletic prowess

in "Dance of Argentinean Cow-

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boys," a tour de force for three men outdoing one another in percussive, boot-stomping solos, or the sinuous backbends in "Gypsies," a Romanian-derived dance that had nothing to say but a lot to see, namely the sweeping fluidity of the women's arms and their liquid spines. I thought the men's candycolored blouses worked against the mood here, but spectacle is part of the Moisevey effect.

Sometimes it's subtler than others. The grand finale included no women and was costumed in a monotone of blue, for it was a tribute to the "good spirit" of sailors. But "Yablotchko," as this simple and heart-filling work was called, had a profound emotional power like that of the miraculous "Summer." In its kick line (not since "La Cage Aux Folles" have you seen so many male limbs firing to the skies

FOCUS

in unison) and interweaving patterns, it celebrated impressive human dynamics, the satisfying effect of unity, of everyone pulling togeth-

This is a particularly poignant quality now, as the company moves on despite its founder's death. Though Moiseyev had long ceded day-to-day control of his company to others, he remained involved in its affairs even during the lengthy hospital confinement that preceded his death. Those connected with the company say his passing falls hard on the troupe, which had long anticipated that this tour would be especially celebratory, given the significance of the anniversary. (It is also the company's 15th tour to the United States.)

In an interview earlier this week, Director Elena Shcherbakova expressed the company's dedication to Moiseyev's ethic, and said her primary goal was not to change a

"He left this for all the people in the world, and our company needs to keep everything that Mr. Moiseyev did, in the form that he conceived it, and not change anything. Every step has stayed the way it was as he set it." As Moiseyev himself had started doing, Shcherbakova said the company will bring folk dances from other cultures into its repertoire.

"But we can't have a full-time choreographer like Moiseyev again," she said. "That is nowhere in the world. I don't think in the next 100 years you'll find anyone like that." And she's right.

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1/2