THE WASHINGTON POST

Style Invitational >>









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REPORT FROM WEEK 809

in which we asked you to supply cutlines — or captions, as they're known outside the newspaper world — for the photos above. Too many people were reminded by Photo A of hamming it up at the "American Idol" tryouts, while the most common quote prompted by the Rock and fellow cast members in Photo B was "Which mountain?" and, not surprisingly given the season, everyone thought of ancient Easter egg hunts.



Photo C: Jim Cramer offers a manly handshake to Jon Stewart to distract audience attention from his newly ripped orifice. (Jean Bonner, Chantilly)

Photo D: Hopes were dashed at Asimo Robotics when the Robbie 2009 flunked its driver's test at Step 1: "Failure to locate vehicle." (Martin Bancroft, Rochester, N.Y.)

Photo A: Capitol Police have apologized to pork stuck in the Fourth Street tunnel during the historic stimulus bill. (Ben Aronin, Washington)

THE CUT LINES: HONORABLE MENTIONS

РНОТО А

It dawns on Arnold that "this little piggy goes to market" might not mean he's **going shopping.** (Larry Yungk, Arlington)

Preparations begin for the annual Running of the Pigs in South Pamploma, Iowa. (Jeff Brechlin, Eagan, Minn.)

Babe finds out what happens to pigs "that won't do." (Larry Yungk)

The sagging economy has produced a **sharp uptick in sow-ear values.** (Larry Wilbur now regrets that he did not teach

Charlotte's kids how to write. (Larry

House Democrats meet to approve \$875 billion in this year's budget for earmarks for their home districts. (Ronald Nessen, Bethesda, a First Offender [yes, the

Deeming it too cute for sophisticated Style Invitational readers, the pig submitted his photo to the Harrisburg Patriot-News instead. (Richard Wong,

РНОТО В

"Really, Dad, he's very sweet," Kayla reassured her father as Tyler arrived to take her bowling. (Ross Elliffe, Picton, New

"Hand me the script, slowly — they can smell the fear when you've forgotten

your lines." (Russ Taylor, Vienna)

Juneau resident John Danvers warns his family not to make any sudden movements until Sarah Palin's helicopter is out of sight. (Jennifer Rubio, Oakton)

"You guys run for it — I'm due for a colonoscopy anyway." (Tom Murphy, Bowie)

Jim Cramer considered his arm-wrestling bout with Jon Stewart a mere warm-up before facing the women on "The View." (Mike

Stewart falls for the old booger-in-the-handshake trick. (Ned Bent, Oak

"Jon, can they move the camera so I don't have to hunch over to not block my employer's logo?" (Russ Taylor)

After years of sharing fake news, CNBC formalizes its merger with Comedy Central. (Ira Allen, Bethesda)

Jon Stewart interviews an actual toxic asset. (Jay Shuck, Minneapolis)

Helpless because it had no hands to "raise in the air," the car lost yet another round of Simon Says. (Jeff Brechlin)

Asimo finds that, sadly, robot proms are just as awkward as the human ones. (Kevin Dopart)

The new Insight comes with a "slug" for quicker commuting. (Rick Haynes, Potomac) The gang at the MIT mixer lines up for the Chicken Dance. (Jeff Brechlin)

At Honda, they use only crash test smarties. (Larry Yungk)

GM's new CEO is prepared to work 24/7 and will forgo all bonuses till 2012. (Howard Walderman, Columbia)

While it is no longer popular among sentient humans, the inanimate still enjoy the Macarena. (Russell Beland, Fairfax)

"My other car is a Large Hadron Collider." (Peter McMenamin, Silver Spring, a First Offender)

It's the egg! The egg came first! (Dudley Thompson, Carv. N.C.)

Archaeologist Martha Diggs displays evidence that even in brontosauruses, size of the footprint isn't much of a clue. (David Safavian,

Paleontologist Ellie Sattler proves that Tyrannosaurus Rex had nipples. (Kevin Dopart)

Prudence Alwaze, who got out of the stock market in 2007 and closed her account with Bernard Madoff in 2008, prepares to place her nest egg in the safest location she can find. (Dick Barnes, Washington)

Alexandra L. Bancroft PhD, author of "Transgressive Tropes in Late-Period Chaucer," delights in finding two truffles as part of the White House stimulus package for furloughed humanities professors. (John Shea,

THIS WEEK'S CONTEST

Week 813: Aw, Shocks

I was shocked, shocked when I was vacationing in the Virgin Islands and learned that the nice girl I invited to my hotel room was not a virgin!

s Capt. Renault noted so famously and disingenuously in "Casablanca" about gambling at Rick's Café Américain, there's the shocking and then there's the "shocking not." This week: Give us a humorous example of the latter, as in the example above by 10-time Loser Richard Lempert of Arlington, who suggested this contest.

Winner gets the Inker, the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives two cans of genuine Pocari Sweat, a Japanese energy drink, donated by 259-time Loser Peter Metrinko. We will also be happy to accept donations of Pocari Phlegm and Pocari Earwax.



Other runners-up win a coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt Honorable Mentions get one of the lusted-after Style Invitationa Magnets, First Offenders get a smelly tree-shaped air "freshene (Fir Stink for their First Ink). 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. April 27. Put "Week 813" 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 May 16. No purchase required for entry. Employees of The Washingt Post, and their immediate relatives, are not eligible for prizes. Pseudonymous entries will be disqualified. This week's Honorable Mentions name is by Dave Prevar; the revised title for next week's

Lansdowne, Pa.)

PHOTOS A, B, C AND D: As soon as they expand the definition of marriage again, they're set. (Jeffrey Contompasis, Ashburn)

Next Week: What Kind of Foal Am I, or The Jokey Club

BY NICK GALIFIANAKIS FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

CAROLYN HAX

Adapted from a recent online discussion.

Dear Carolyn:

I have a family member who is behaving in a way that I and other family members find appalling. For example, she needs a job but is making demands of potential employers that we find surprising in the current economic environment. She gets an otherwise perfect iob offer, but finds the 45-minute commute too far and so demands to work from home.

That's mild compared to how she has been treating people she cares about. She is getting married soon. Her future mother-in-law had been saving a family heirloom engagement ring for years for her son to give his future wife. This family member refused the ring because she doesn't want an engagement ring.

Her mother loves weddings more than anyone I know and has been looking forward to her engagement for years. This person recently bought her wedding dress without including her mother at all because it was on sale, totally missing that saving a couple of hundred dollars deprives her mother of a priceless opportunity and really hurting her mother's feelings.

I'm of the mind that adults don't need unsolicited advice. It's getting more and more difficult, though, to make noncommittal statements like, "Isn't that interesting." I just want you to tell me that we who are doing our best to say nothing are doing the right

Minding My Own Business

So she's supposed to take on a long commute, a ring she doesn't want and extra expenses for a dress (um. when she doesn't have a job), because you all think she should?

You'd be doing the right thing if you stopped judging her and wishing you could run her life for her. But, short of that, I suppose biting your tongue is a start. Not nattering about her every move with "other members of the family" would be an excellent second step.

Re: Business:

What??? I'm sorry Carolyn — I don't agree. Someone needs to tell the woman to stop being a self-centered, ungrateful twit. No, you shouldn't have to live your life to please other people all the time — but would it kill her to accept the ring as a token of history, share the dress-choosing memories with her mom (mothers aren't permanent), and be grateful she has a potential job in this economy? It just seems ungrateful when you can't do simple things for others when it clearly means so much to them.

How is she self-centered? She is who she is. Would you have her accept the ring and not wear it? Wear it and hate it? Shouldn't another relative who does cherish it have an opportunity to own it instead?

And why does the mother's love of weddings have to be satisfied by dress-shopping, and only dress-shopping? Surely, there are other things they can

As for the job, unless she's mooching off her critics, she can accept or refuse whatever job offer she wants. It's her life, her 1.5 hours per day she'd be burning on the road.

I see someone maintaining integrity under significant pressure to act like someone else. But even if I got the wrong impression and she is a twit, these are her decisions and the writer has no direct standing to judge.

Read the whole Read the whole transcript or join the discussion live at noon Fridays on www. washingtonpost.com/ discussions.

Write to Tell Me About It. Style, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071, or tellme@washpost.com.

Church Pays Lip Service to Country, but Worships at Rock's Altar

Not that he was apologizing. He emphatically declared, "I like my

country ROCKIN'.' The line was from the banjodriven rave-up "How 'Bout You," which was the lead single from Church's intriguing 2006 debut album, "Sinners Like Me." It's a fiery declaration of blue-collar Southern pride, with its uncompromising lyrics about scarred knuckles, scuffed boots, disdaining the entitled, respecting mother, saluting the Stars and Stripes and generally just living

it up — and, of course, rocking out. Give me a crowd that's redneck and loud," Church sang as the young crowd — which did, in fact, appear to be fairly redneck — chewing tobacco, NASCAR, "Best Things" is like "Love Your (sorta) country singles of the past roared loudly. "We'll raise the roof / Hell, I might just stay all night long.

mirrored aviator Wearing shades, scuffed boots, frayed jeans and a snap-button shirt with the sleeves rolled halfway up, Church had come onstage holding a red plastic cup as if he'd just swept in from a kegger.

And maybe he had: Lines about cold beer were included in at least three of his songs, including a new single, "Love Your Love the Most," a down-tempo power ballad about Things Eric Church Likes. Among them: college football, good barbecue, Faulkner books, "anything my mama cooks," bass fishing,

George Strait. "And hell, yes, I love my truck," he drawled — a red-meat line that got a big hoot out of the crowd. "But I want you to know / Honey I love your love the most."

A tough guy trying to be tender without losing his Southern swagger — it was hardly Church's finest

Although he's a talented songwriter with a knack for crafting sturdy hooks and turning the occasional gem of a phrase ("I believe that Jesus is comin' back / Before she does," he sang in one particularly memorable song), his writing is sometimes obvious and unoriginal. So much so that Rodney Atkins had

the exact same idea: His recent song

Love the Most," only with Merle Haggard replacing Strait, among other very minor modifications.

But when Church hits his mark, he hits it hard, as with "Two Pink Lines," a brilliantly written and rendered story-song about a pregnancy scare. "We were young and on fire and just couldn't wait," Church sang. "Six weeks in, she was three weeks late." And, of the pregnancy test itself: "One means none, and we're home free / Two means three and a diamond ring."

The rootsy, harmonica-infused song crackled onstage, with Driver Williams contributing pealing, metal-edged licks that only added to the narrative tension of one of the great three years. Later, on "Lotta Boot Left to Fill,"

Church turned his attention back to the genre itself, dismissing the latest crop of country pretenders — albeit without naming names.

"You say you're the real deal / But you play what nobody feels," Church seethed. "You sing about Johnny Cash / The Man in Black would've whipped your" ... well, vou know.

The song was an update of Waylon Jennings's 1975 state-of-country survey, "Are You Sure Hank Done It This Way." Only its sinewy riffs and stomping beat were just a little bit country and a whole lotta rock-and-



Screen Actors Guild Reaches Deal With Hollywood Studios

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES, April 17 — The Screen Actors Guild and the Hollywood studios said Friday they have reached a tentative deal on movie and prime-time TV show productions, capping a year-long battle that ended with SAG giving up its fight for better Internet compensation.

SAG said its leaders would recommend approval by the board and ratification by guild members, which could be completed next month. The contract would replace one that expired in June.

The new deal follows the Internet provisions that were earlier agreed to by writers, directors and another actors' union, and the deal will expire June 30, 2011, according to two people who were briefed on the contract. The two requested anonymity because the details were not supposed to be disclosed before SAG's board reviews the contract over the weekend.

The date means SAG's contract will expire around the same time as other unions, maintaining the future threat of a joint strike. That expiration date had been one of the final points of contention. By allowing the contract to lapse

for nearly a year, SAG members lost wage increases the studios said have amounted to nearly \$70 mil-Before the stalemate, the studios

had offered a 3.5 percent increase on minimum pay in the first year. That will now be scrapped, and actors will only get pay raises from the date of ratification moving forward — 3 percent over the next year and 3.5 percent for the final year plus the extra time through June 30, 2011, one of the sources said.

On many counts, people who follow the industry say SAG is worse off than where it began.

Infighting and a stalemate with the studios pushed talks past the June 30, 2008, expiration date, and since then, the actors' resolve for a strike has waned while the studios' unwillingness to bargain strengthened as DVD sales fell apart.

