

# In Va. court, the Salahis work out plan to settle a debt

HEARING FROM C1

some peace and quiet?"

Tareq Salahi stared ahead, lifted his left arm and pointed at his counsel.

"He has *no* comment," Silek said.

At 9:01 a.m., with Judge W. Dale Houff presiding, the couple were sworn in. J. Daniel Pond III, the lawyer for landscaper Mike E. Dunbar, placed the Salahis in two witness rooms and asked them individually about their ability to pay. Paper had been placed in the windows to prevent outsiders from peering inside.

Under the law, the landscaper could demand almost whatever valuables the Salahis had on them for the unpaid work. The couple offered a few payment plans, Dunbar said.

What the two parties settled on was this: Tareq Salahi was wearing a Patek Philippe watch. That watch would be sold to generate the cash.

While the lawyers negotiated, Warren County Sheriff Daniel T. McEathron strolled upstairs to check in with the gaggle of reporters. On the force for 27 years, he said, he knew the Salahis by name before the brouhaha. Almost every day since President Obama's state dinner for the Indian prime minister, though, his deputies have responded to three or four calls at the address with either the couple or neighbors complaining about media activity outside.

After the Salahis' lawyer walked between the two witness rooms several times, Dunbar decided that the best thing would be to sell the watch — after its authenticity is verified — then collect what he's owed from the proceeds. Patek Philippe, an expensive brand, is known for its quality and pedigree.

The two parties still couldn't agree on exactly how the sale would proceed. At 10:56 a.m., both lawyers went back into the courtroom.

The judge said there was no question that Dunbar, 43, of Front Royal, was entitled to the watch. The Salahis' lawyer said the watch would be worth more than the amount owed, but also said he had no idea how much it would fetch on eBay. (Patek Philippe watches can typically cost well more than \$15,000.) The judge said the clerk's office could hold on to the watch until the lawyers worked out the best way to sell it.

"It makes a Rolex look like a Swatch," Silek said, as he rushed out of the courtroom.

At 11:13 a.m., Dunbar walked out to take questions from the assembled media. But when the Salahis walked out 90 seconds later, the reporters began running after them.

Michael Salahi wore large sunglasses, and she walked a pace ahead of her husband as reporters shouted out questions. They responded to none, including a query about why the couple was jaywalking when a crosswalk was just down the street. One passing motorist slowed his car and jeered the couple once they stepped back on the sidewalk.

Michael tugged on Tareq's hand as they walked briskly down Main Street and took refuge inside a law office.

Reporters dashed to the back parking lot, where the Salahis' 2006 Audi A8 — with 60-day temporary tags — was sitting. A watchband stuck out from the center compartment. Written in pencil on blue paper stuffed between the passenger seat and the center compartment were the words "security breach."

Meanwhile, in the law office reception area, Tareq Salahi played with his cellphone, picked up a recent issue of People and drank a couple of cups of water.

As reporters staked out the front and back entrances of the law office, a police officer came by — and ticketed the Audi for an expired inspection sticker.

At 11:44 a.m., a Front Royal police officer came to escort the couple out. A minute later, the locks clicked on the car and the Salahis jumped in to drive away. Tareq Salahi looked peeved when he grabbed the \$20 ticket from under his windshield wiper.

Dunbar, wearing cowboy boots and a polo shirt advertising his business, AIA Home Improvement, told reporters:

"Right here, right now, it doesn't feel like anything because I still don't have my money."

hohmannj@washpost.com

ON WASHINGTONPOST.COM For more on the Salahi saga, visit [washingtonpost.com/obama-state-dinner](http://www.washingtonpost.com/obama-state-dinner).

# THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

## REPORT FROM WEEK 842

in which we asked you to play off any of 12 given phrases in the form of a question, "Jeopardy"-style: Dozens of people told us that a bad electric-car color would be shocking pink or lemon, and Bo Obama's chew toy was everything from a copy of "Going Rogue" to Charles Krauthammer's lips.



**THE WINNER OF THE INKER**

A. Not even at Wal-Mart. Q. Where can you see a smiling face in Michigan? (Judy Blanchard, Novi, Mich.)

## UNNATURAL ASKS: HONORABLE MENTIONS

- A bad color name for GM's electric car: What is maroon? (Yuki Henninger, Vienna; Ira Allen, Bethesda; Michael Peck, Alexandria)
- What is Burning Flesh? (Judy Blanchard)
- What is the least of GM's problems? (Sue Lin Chong, Baltimore)
- 349 Facebook friends: What's the next best thing to having a friend? (Russell Beland, Fairfax)
- Who didn't help you move into your new apartment? (Kevin Dopot, Washington; Stephen Dudzik, Olney)
- Who learned about your marriage before your mother? (Kevin Dopot)
- What did Megan Fox have roughly one second after she posted her relationship status as "it's complicated"? (Elwood Fitzner, Valley City, N.D.)
- What is the square root of loneliness? (Ring Alexander)
- A Hefty drawstring balloon: What was the Wall Street float in the 2008 Macy's Thanksgiving parade? (Dudley Thompson; Kevin Dopot)
- How can the Heenes get rid of their TV ambitions? (Mark Richardson, Washington)
- What did Paul Bunyan use for birth control? (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village)
- What does the regular worker get

- Instead of a golden parachute? (Judy Blanchard)
- Bo Obama's chew toy: What is the only bone the president has thrown to the left since reaching the White House? (Pam Sweeney, St. Paul, Minn.)
- Compared with the health reform bill, what is less covered in tooth marks and spit? (Michael Reinemer, Annandale)
- What took a National Security Council session, a Council of Economic Advisers meeting, a congressional delegation huddle and three White House briefings for the president to finally purchase? (Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.)
- Not even at Wal-Mart: Where can you find a genuine virgin walking down the aisle? (Beverly Sharp, Washington)
- Have you found any discount Elvis-themed caskets? (Kevin Dopot)
- What an unfortunate URL! What did the Cockney say after 'is best mate barfed on 'Er Majesty'? (Craig Dykstra, Centreville)
- The Beltsville Kazoo and Drum Corps: Whose music finally broke the enemy at Gitmo? (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn; Beverly Sharp)
- Who hates marching behind the

- 2 the winner of the cow that does the Mexican Hat Dance: A. Squeeze relish. Q. What is green and always stopping up, but isn't a toilet in a gas station? (Barbara Turner, Takoma Park)
- 3 A. William Shakespeare's Flying Circus. Q. What is Sir Francis Bacon's Flying Circus? (Ring Alexander, New York)
- 4 A. The Beltsville Kazoo and Drum Corps. Q. What group annually bestows the honor of Comb-Humming Queen? (Dudley Thompson, Cary, N.C.)

- College Park Hurling Frat Boy Float? (Cy Gardner, Arlington)
- Squeeze relish: What did Mr. Whipple do after he retired? (Stephen Dudzik)
- What do you call a pimple-popping fetish? (Judith Cottrill, New York)
- A rectangle and his father: What does Denny Hastert holding a briefcase look like? (Jay Shuck, Minneapolis)
- William Shakespeare's Flying Circus: What is in its 412th season of reruns on PBS? (Daniel Bunce, Woodstock, Md., a First Offender)
- Only with the public option: Can I get one of those death panels to "advise" my mother-in-law? (Russ Taylor, Vienna)
- How did the philanderer respond to the marriage proposal? (George Smith, Frederick; Mark Richardson)
- The new Loser T-shirt and two magnets: What are two things that attract and one thing that repels? (Tom Witte; George Vary, Bethesda)
- What is the only threesome I can possibly look forward to these days? (Tom Witte)
- Next Week: Prefrains, or Starting Oeuvre

Online discussion Have a question for the Empress or want to talk to some real Losers? Join the Style Conversational at [washingtonpost.com/styleconversational](http://www.washingtonpost.com/styleconversational).



## Advice for the dorky: Cool is as cool does

Adapted from a recent online discussion.

**Dear Carolyn:**

I almost never spark with people. I thought part of it was the venue — a dating site, say, just puts too much pressure on first meetings. That is certainly part of it.

But I do spark with some people: almost always people who give clear, interested signals, I realized recently, and who are "cool." Not bumbling dorky guys who can barely talk to you 'cause you have girl parts, but guys who are confident and collected and know how to make interest known. And they do. To basically everyone.

But, as a dorky person myself, I get bumbly and take their signals to mean interest in me in particular. And of course they have no particular interest in me, I'm just another girl, and they move right along to the next.

This dynamic sucks. Any thoughts on how to break out of it? Thanks.

Lameland

The bumbling, the dorky and the otherwise socially unsure are all populations who need time to flounder around before they become their regular selves (as in, the person you'd see if you became friends or a couple).

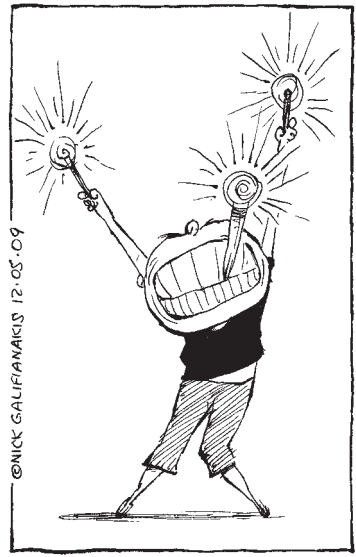
So if your efforts to be cool among the cool aren't working out, then you need to take a deep breath and start granting people the second chances you wish they would grant you.

That includes putting yourself in venues that allow you and your fellow dorks to become acquainted: say, joining groups that meet regularly, becoming a regular at a particular hangout, and avoiding bars (which only reward charmers and punish the dorky).

One caveat: Give second chances only to the dorky — not to the creepy.

To Lameland:

I used to be the same way. You have to spark with yourself. Do things that you think are cool and interesting and that you love to do. Talk about them in social



NICK GALIFIANAKIS FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

situations. When you talk about something you really love, the elusive "spark" will be in your eyes and voice. People will notice it and will want to connect with the girl who is saying interesting things. This is what you have noticed in the "cool" (a.k.a. confident) people.

In short, to get the spark, you must be the spark.

Anonymous

Whoa — trippy. Thanks. The effect you describe is also why it helps to be a regular or join a group. Essentially, you connect with the place or activity,

and your (eventual) comfort and familiarity will show.

**Dear Carolyn:**

I have just started seeing a wonderful man who also happens to burp all the time. Loudly. Rarely does he excuse himself. I've looked at him pointedly several times, or commented that he burps often — but my subtle hints aren't cutting it.

Intellectually, I know this is not a big deal, but it's starting to become gross and annoying. Any advice on the right way to ask that he at least burp quietly and excuse himself?

Washington

What on Earth has kept you from saying, "Okay, that was really disgusting?"

Seriously. Enough with the "subtle hints." I'm no fan of them in general, but they're a particularly curious choice when he wears his lack of subtlety as a gaseous badge of honor.

Besides, it's easier for you to talk than for him to read your mind.

Read the whole transcript or join the discussion live at noon Fridays on [www.washingtonpost.com/discussions](http://www.washingtonpost.com/discussions).

Write to Tell Me About It, Style, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071, or [tellme@washpost.com](mailto:tellme@washpost.com).

# 1787 Washington letter sells for \$3.2 million

BY MICHAEL E. RUANE

An impassioned letter penned by George Washington in 1787 about the strengths of the newly written U.S. Constitution was sold at auction in New York on Friday for a record price of \$3.2 million.

Christie's had estimated that the letter, written from Mount Vernon, could fetch up to \$2.5 million at auction, but some experts doubted it would bring that much in the poor economy.

The previous auction record for a Washington document was set in 2002, when one of his military reports fetched \$834,500, the auction house said.

The letter's "hammer" price Friday was \$2.8 million, but the buyer's premium, or auction fee, boosted the overall cost, Christie's said.

The letter, owned by an unidentified British descendant of Washington's family, was written Nov. 9, 1787, to his nephew, Bushrod, weeks after the Philadelphia convention that drew up the U.S. Constitution. Washington had presided over the convention and was praising the Constitution's benefits.

The bidding began at \$950,000 and quickly surged. It slowed around the \$2.7 million mark, as two anonymous telephone bidders battled it out. Auctioneer Francis Wahlgren banged his hammer at \$2.8 million a few minutes after 5 p.m. The room broke into applause. The purchaser was not identified.



FINBARR O'REILLY/REUTERS

**LASTING WORDS:** George Washington's signature marks a letter to his nephew touting the new U.S. Constitution.

fied.

The letter is written on handmade English paper in Washington's orderly, legible handwriting.

Washington, then 55, expresses his passion for the Constitution and for a union of the states into one strong nation. "If . . . the Union of the whole is a desirable object, the parts which compose it must yield a little," he writes.

He assails critics of the Constitution, and points to its strengths.

"The power under the Constitution will always be with the people," he writes. "It is entrusted for certain defined purposes and for a certain limited period to representatives of their own choosing; and whenever it is exercised contrary to their interests . . . their servants can, and undoubtedly will be, recalled."

ruanem@washpost.com

## DOONESBURY BY GARRY TRUDEAU

