



CAROLYN HAX

## Let friend know she erred in booting overweight bridesmaid

Adapted from a recent online discussion:

Dear Carolyn:

So college friend B just disinvited college friend A from being a bridesmaid — because B is fat and would ruin the pictures and the look of her big day. Friend A did tell me that if B lost some weight, she'd let her back in the wedding party.

Her rationale is that B promised to lose the weight by the wedding but didn't, and that whenever there is a big bridesmaid everyone is looking at her and not the bride.

I am so angry about A's nastiness that I can't even think straight. Is it kosher for me to drop out in solidarity with B (with whom I am actually not that close)? What is the best way for me to communicate to A that she is a gigantic [idiot]? I don't know if I even want to be friends anymore.

B hosted a bridal shower, has come to all the fittings/food tastings/other assorted events. She's a good egg. I heard from mutual friend C that B spent the morning crying. I would too! What can I say to B?

Bridezilla

Wow. Everything you hope to accomplish, you can accomplish in one move: Trust your revulsion and end your friendship with A (which obviously includes dropping out of the wedding). When A asks, tell her exactly why. B doesn't even need to hear it from you; it'll make its way around. I hope C follows your lead.

Dear Carolyn:

Why do mooches always catch the breaks? Husband and I work and take care of our family. We're paycheck-to-paycheck, but we make it work (live within our means and all). Yet my brother- and sister-in-law live beyond their means and are CONSTANTLY having to be bailed out by family. Just found out they inherited a car from a family member who passed. I know they "need" it, they have only one car, but that's only because they don't take care of anything.

I don't think it's outright jealousy that has my dander up, more that the frivolous are rewarded while the responsible get stiffed. I will just get over it, but am I wrong to feel this way?

Peeved, USA

No, hard feelings are normal and justified. When you witness moochers indulge in what you regard as a luxury, and when you've sacrificed such luxuries yourself, it can really grate.

Still, you presumably have a work ethic that allows you to enjoy your hard victories more than the ones that fall in your lap. Presumably, too, the people you like and respect most are the people with similar values.

So now imagine being a mooch, and consider (1) how you'd feel about taking more than you deserve, and (2) how the people you like and respect would feel about you.

A true mooch would be oblivious to such things, but still — is that who you want to be?

Re: Mooches:

I have a sibling like this. But you know what? It's my folks' money. They earned it and can do as they like with it. How other people handle their finances is none of my business unless it affects me directly, and this doesn't.

Anonymous

Sanity break. Thank you.

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).



BY NICK GALIFIANAKIS FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

# THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

## REPORT FROM WEEK 864

In which we asked you to take the concept of a spoonerism and apply it to a single word or a name to create a new term: The little hitch was that we didn't define very well what a spoonerism was — we basically said that you had to move some letters around — and so we resolved to be flexible in what we allowed, in keeping with the primary Style Invitational dictum of It Has to Be Funny.

**THE WINNER OF THE INKER**  
**Impocchio: Imprisonment for lying.**  
 (Ann Martin, Bracknell, England)

- 2 winner of the genuine Splat brand Russian toothpaste in chili flavor:**  
**Thirber: Someone who makes up a story about the secret life of another person.** (Kathy Hardis Fraeman, Olney)
- 3 Karping: "You'll never fit in that space, Harold. You're too close to the curb, Harold!"** (Craig Dykstra, Centerville)
- 4 Scorohope: Believing you'll get lucky because of your sign.** (Chris Lopez, Reston, a First Offender)

## HASHED DOPES: HONORABLE MENTIONS

- Carsophagus: A hearse.** (Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.)
- Merthometer: Something to let you know how much fun you're having.** (Arthur Gardner, Brookfield, Wis., a First Offender; Mae Scanlan, Washington)
- Revizon: A cable company whose rates increase every month.** (Tom Kreitzberg, Silver Spring)
- Cardhore: A serious shopaholic.** (Craig Dykstra)
- Irefarms: Rural militia camps.** (Chris Doyle)
- Moca: The new anti-caffeinated drink from Starbucks.** (Kevin Dopart, Washington)
- Golypot: Oh gosh, I bet those those jabbering foreigners are conspiring against us!** (Edmund Conti, Raleigh, N.C.)
- Copmuter: A radar detector.** (Steve Fahey, Kensington)
- Spacerhype: A NASA press release.** (Gerald Diamond, London, Ontario, a First Offender)
- Batty-Batty-Ching-Ching: Michelle Bachmann's fundraising strategy.** (Pam Sweeney, St. Paul, Minn.)
- Limitiaman: A gun control advocate.** (Chris Doyle)
- Beenytopper: A yarmulke with Justin Bieber's picture on it.** (Kathy Hardis Fraeman)
- Bellyjeans: Your pants on Easter Monday.** (Craig Dykstra)
- Retromail: An even slower way to move things around D.C.** (Christopher Lamora, Arlington)
- Wishdasher: A husband who dines, then reclines.** (Judy Blanchard, Novi, Mich.)
- Doomy's: Bearish Wall Street ratings service. "The Dow is falling! The Dow is falling!"** (Chris Doyle)
- Cop porn: Blue movies.** (Ann Martin)
- Spintripe: A corporate spokesman.** (Peter Metrinko, Gainesville)
- Nagivator: A GPS that tells you where to go in that special tone of voice.** (Richard Gilliam, Hyattsville, a First Offender)
- Cureaubrat: An administrator at a reform school.** (John O'Byrne, on vacation in Budapest)
- Phedophile: What the public has gotten from the Vatican.** (Anne Kinney, Charlottesville, a First Offender)
- Notechlogist: A guy who still cuts trees with an ax.** (John English, Falls Church, a First Offender)
- Fedecate: To drop another load of unfunded congressional mandates.** (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn)
- Gamazine: A publication devoted to shapely legs.** (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village)
- Lasoon: Where cowboys go to tie one on.** (Jeff Contompasis)
- Lootlights: Broadway contract negotiations.** (Beverly Sharp, Washington)
- Medocrat: A liberal with big health-care ideas.** (Jeff Brechlin, Eagan, Minn.)

## THIS WEEK'S CONTEST



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

## Week 868: Count the ways

On Facebook recently, the poetically inclined Loser Brendan Beary mused that he "heard '99 Luftballons" for the first time in about 20 years or so. Of course I wonder how many Luftballons that would be today, if they were adjusted for inflation. The more pragmatically inclined Loser Peter Metrinko read his post and thought: Style Invitational contest.

This week: Give us some musings of a technical wonk.

Winner gets the Inker, the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place gets a book called "Pun Enchanted Evenings," which was sent to the Empress in hopes that she would publicize it. Okay! Among the "746 original word plays" that will "make you laugh out loud — guaranteed": "What would you call an illness you get every six months? Sicklical." "What would you call a washroom on Mount St. Helens when it's erupting? A lava-tory!"

Other runners-up win their choice of a coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt or yearned-for Loser Mug. Honorable Mentions get one of the lusted-after Style Invitational Loser Magnets. First Offenders get a smelly, tree-shaped air "freshener" (Fir Stink for their First Ink). One prize per entrant per week. Send your entries by e-mail to [losers@washpost.com](mailto:losers@washpost.com) or by fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Monday, May 17. Put "Week 868" 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, and their immediate relatives, are not eligible for prizes. Pseudonymous entries will be disqualified. The revised title for next week's results is by Phil Frankenfeld; this week's honorable-mentions subhead is by Jeff Contompasis.



### Junk on the trunk:

Uberloser Russell Beland's car is defaced (at least temporarily) with some of the hundreds of Loser bumper stickers and magnets he's won over the years. Surely he'll be driving it to Saturday's Flushies, the Losers' annual awards luncheon, in College Park.



**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).

# First lady lauds role of women in politics and home

## OBAMA FROM C1

stantly rejecting the cynicism, casting aside the doubts and working day after day to continue what we've already started."

Joined onstage by the vice president's wife, Jill Biden, the first lady highlighted her husband's achievements in his first 15 months in office — including enacting health-care reform and an economic stimulus package, progress toward halting the spread of nuclear weapons and overhauling student loan systems. She also took a moment to tout Let's Move, her own ambitious initiative to combat childhood obesity.

"Even with all the challenges that we've faced over the past year or so, and all the obstacles that we've had to overcome, we have achieved all of this — and more — in just the first 15 months," she said. "So if this is what we can do in 15 months — did I say 15 months? — just imagine what we can achieve in the next 15 months. Just imagine what we can do in the next few years."

After rallying Democrats, Obama returned to the White House for an afternoon tea with spouses and mothers of American troops and young women and girls from the first lady's mentoring program.

The guests, all women, sat on gold chairs with lilac seat cushions around circular tables in the State Dining Room. They were surrounded by history — specifically, the history of women with family ties to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. Joining them were former first lady Rosalynn Carter and granddaughter Sarah Carter; President Richard Nixon's daughter Tricia Nixon Cox; and President Dwight D. Eisenhower's granddaughters Susan and Anne Eisenhower. They were served Bolivian, Darjeeling and Earl Grey tea in President George W. Bush's teacups and saucers. The bamboo centerpieces and glassware were from President John F. Kennedy's era.

Even President Abraham Lincoln was there — looming in an oil painting hanging above Obama's podium.

Obama steered clear of politics in her teatime remarks, instead ruminating on the importance of mothers and female role models in modern society. She got emotional paying tribute to "my mommy," Marian Robinson, who sat quietly at the head table. Michelle Obama said it was special raising her two daughters, Malia and Sasha, with her mother moved in upstairs, and thus three generations of family living in the White House.

"There's no way that I could ever fully measure all that my own mommy has done for me," Obama said, her voice breaking. "This woman who tries to take absolutely no credit for who I am, for some reason — she is my rock. She has pulled me up when I've stumbled. She's



PHOTOS BY RICKY CARIOTI/THE WASHINGTON POST

AWWWW! Michelle Obama thanks mom Marian Robinson, far left, at a Mother's Day tea. Below: Patricia Nixon Cox.

pulled me back when I've run out of line, talking a little too much. She'll snap me up. She really does push me to be the best woman that I can be, as a professional, and as a mother, and as a friend." The first lady had the room's rapt attention and Robinson broke into a proud smile.

"As our family have grown, she's managed to expand her love for all of us," Obama continued. "And raising our girls in the White House with my mom... is a beautiful experience. And the opportunity to have three generations living in the White House, it's beautiful. And I'm pretty sure the president is happy about it, too."

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## DOONESBURY BY GARRY TRUDEAU

