

Style InvitAational

BY PAT MYERS

Report from Week 919

in which we asked you to start with a 13-letter word, name or phrase; add a letter, drop a letter, switch two letters somewhere in the word, or substitute one letter for another; and describe the result, which might have 12 or 14 letters. The most frequently submitted phrase: “Osama Sin Laden.”

THE
WINNER
OF THE
INKER

Doom with a view: Recent listing for penthouse in Abbottabad. (*David Ballard, Reston, a First Offender*)

2 Winner of the “I Eat Losers for Breakfast” mug:

Typochondriac: A paranoid proofreader. (*Ward Kay, Vienna*)

3 Sodamasochist: Someone who drinks Diet Coke after eating Mentos. (*Sylvia Betts, Vancouver, B.C.*)

4 Watercoorist: A brewer of tasteless, weak beer. (*Tom Witte, Montgomery Village*)

Streptococcus: The acting bug. (*Susan Gearity, Menifee, Calif.*)

“The Naked Ruth”: TV ratings plummeted after Dr. Westheimer began giving live demos. (*Kevin Dopart, Washington*)

Interrigation: Rejected euphemism for waterboarding. (*Johnny Lanham, Columbia, S.C.*)

Breakfast menu: A few old danishes on the motel sideboard. (*Roger Hammons, North Potomac*)

Freudian ships: Submarines. (*Ann Martin, Bracknell, England*)

Bloomingdale’s: For great deals on irregular fashions. (*Valerie Matthews, Ashton*)

Goop and Plenty: Melts in the box, not in your mouth. (*Frank Mullen III, Aledo, Ill.*)

Pen and teller: Minimal banking. (*Dixon Wragg, Santa Rosa, Calif.*)

Breastfeeling: What’s promoted by the La Lecher League. (*Kathye Hamilton, Annandale, a First Offender*)

Sintermission: Pausing to have a cigarette and regain strength. (*Tony Phelps, Washington*)

Big Bong theory: Cosmological theory of expan . . . hey, dude, you done with those potato chips? (*Donald Carter, Wayne, N.J.*)

Gratification: Faking it. (*Craig Dykstra*)

E pluribus anum: Out of many, we elect you-know-whats. (*Matt Monitto, Bristol, Conn.*)

Imperceptable: Describing an error that hardly anyone will notice. (*Ward Kay, Vienna*)

And last: **Lexhibitionist:** Someone who sends in 120 neologism entries in a single week. (*Tom Witte*)

Next week: Sarchiasmus, or Transprosing

THIS WEEK’S CONTEST: WEEK 923



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Chemical wordfare

Carpin’ Jonoxide: A chief contributor of emissions to a poisonous political atmosphere.

Newton: A highly charged part of a political element at the lowest level.

Back in 1997, the Invitational contributed to modern chemistry by adding such elements to the periodic table as Limbaughium (“emits heat but no light . . . repellent to protons and electrons; only succeeds in attracting morons”) and, yes, Newtium (“does not possess magnetic properties”). While obviously some of the 14-year-old entries are still painfully timely, we agree with Obsessive Loser (and chemical engineer) Jeff Contompasis that it’s time for an update. **This week: Create a new chemical element or other chemical term**, as in Jeff’s unfair-and-balanced examples at the top.

Winner gets the Inker, the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a full-size football made of solid — or as solid as it can be — clear Bubble Wrap, embellished with blue Bubble Wrap “laces” and stripes. It was sent to The Post around Super Bowl time by the Bubble Wrap people, probably in a last-ditch attempt to hold on to their brand name before it officially turns into the lowercase generic noun it really already is.

Other runners-up win their choice of a coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt or yearned-for Loser Mug. Honorable mentions get a lusted-after Loser magnet. First Offenders get a smelly tree-shaped air “freshener” (Fir Stink for their first ink). E-mail entries to losers@washpost.com or fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Monday, June 20; results published July 10 (July 8 online). Include “Week 923” in your e-mail subject line, or it may be ignored as spam. Include your real name, postal address and phone number with your entry. Complete rules at washingtonpost.com/style/invitational. The online version of this column contains extra entries. The revised title for next week’s results is by Mae Scanlan; this week’s honorable-mentions subhead is by Beverley Sharp.



STYLE CONVERSATIONAL Have a question for the Empress or want to talk to some real Losers? Join us at washingtonpost.com/stylconversational.

Treizepassers: honorable mentions

Nosama bin Laden: Better “never,” but “the late” will do. (*Barry Koch, Catlett, Va.*)

Sinfinitesimal: Hardly worth going to confession for. (*Lois Douthitt, Arlington*)

Panticommunism: Even Marx didn’t mean for the abolition of private property to go *that* far. (*Pam Sweeney, Burlington, Mass.*)

Defibillator: A lie detector. (*Craig Dykstra, Centreville*)

Total meltdow: A stock market crash. (*Christopher Lamora, Guatemala City*)

Hoverachievers: Helicopter parents. (*Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn*)

Sunderachievers: Divorce lawyers. (*Tom Witte*)

Membarassment: An open fly. (*Theresa Kowal, Silver Spring, a First Offender*)

Offender)

Childpoofing: What pageant moms do. (*Kurt Stahl, Frederick*)

Duchess of Dork: Beatrice. (*Nancy Schwalb, Washington*)

Let’s Mike a Deal: Recruitment slogan for DEA agents. (*Loris McVittie, Rockville*)

To bed or not to be: The worldview of a sex addict. (*Submitted under a pseudonym and revealed after judging to be The Post’s Gene Weingarten; he gets no prize except questionable glory*)

Sirendipitous: Describing a man’s ability to find, without really trying, the woman who will ruin him. (*Brendan Beary, Great Mills, Md.*)

Seventh heaven: The apotheosis of worshipping the porcelain god. (*Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.*)

Gruel, to be kind: Airline food in economy class. (*John McCooey, Rehoboth Beach, Del.*)



JASON FRANK ROTHENBERG/JASON FRANK ROTHENBERG

In its second CD, Battles replaces its frontman with an exotic array of guest vocalists. But most of the disc doesn’t feature vocals at all.

POP CD REVIEW

Battles GLOSS DROP

Sometime during the making of their sophomore disc, “Gloss Drop,” NYC-based experimental art rockers Battles lost Tyondai Braxton, their guitarist and ersatz frontman, to his solo career.

Braxton was also the group’s singer, and “Gloss Drop” replaces him with an exotic array of guest vocalists: Gary Numan makes the grim, Germanic “My Machines” interesting — and instantly nostalgic — just by showing up; Chilean techno artist Matias



Aguayo grounds the Tilt-A-Whirl clamor of “Ice Cream,” and Blonde Redhead’s Kazu Makino helps convert “Sweetie & Shag” into a bottom-heavy disco-funk track.

Most of “Gloss Drop” doesn’t feature vocals at all, instead favoring instrumentals that range from formless and almost poppy (such as “Futura,” which works a strange, reggae-inspired groove) to short, atonal and tweaked (“Toddler”).

Restless and engaging and smart, “Gloss Drop” feels like less of a math-rock exercise than the band’s much-loved 2007 full-length debut, “Mirrored,” and more . . . human, as if it were following some unspoken, post-Braxton mandate: less proggy, more cuddly.

— Allison Stewart