

Style Invitational

BY PAT MYERS

Report from Week 924

in which we asked for bogus historical trivia, another in our series of “fictoid” contests. We expect these entries to appear shortly on Internet lists of “answers from actual high school history tests.” Or maybe in history books.

THE
WINNER
OF THE
INKER

Susan B. Anthony's middle name was Barbie.

(Judy Blanchard, Novi, Mich.)

2 Winner of the dorky card game featuring photos of halves of people: William Howard Taft hated Theodore Roosevelt so much that, just to spite him, he spoke loudly and carried a twig. (Kathye Hamilton, Annandale)

3 Ponce de Leon did actually find what he was searching for in his explorations; he is currently living quietly in Hialeah, Fla., under the name Ramon Rodriguez. (Edward Gordon, Austin)

4 George Washington also had a wooden pancreas. (Mike Turniansky, Pikesville, Md.)

Walter Johnson, the great pitcher for the Washington Senators, once threw the rosin bag for a strike in a game against the Yankees. (Roger Dalrymple, Gettysburg, Pa.)

It's not true after all that the toilet was invented by Thomas Crapper. It was invented 30 years earlier by Parker Heine. (The Post's Gene Weingarten, who'd entered under a pseudonym)

George Washington's wooden teeth were made from the cherry tree he chopped down. (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village; Susan Gearity, Menifee, Calif.)

In homage to the Britons who lost their lives on the Titanic, English pub owners united in a pledge to never again serve ice in their drinks. (Tom Barnidge, Concord, Calif., a First Offender)

Archimedes designed the first vacuum cleaner. (Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.)

During his quest through Africa, Henry Stanley used his line “Dr. Livingstone, I presume” on three other white men before finding the correct person. (John Shea, Philadelphia)

Ironically, President Garfield was allergic to cats. (Allie Kay, Vienna, a First Offender)

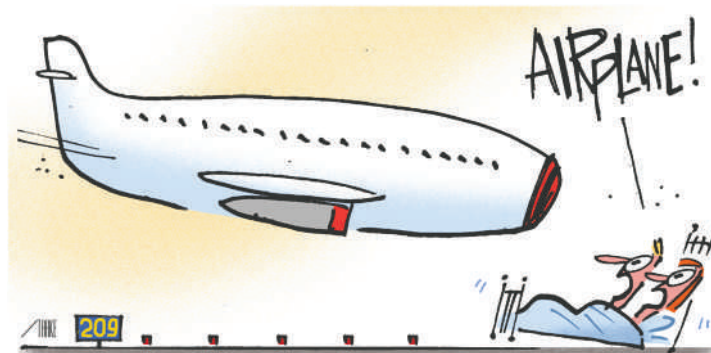
In 1271, Marco Polo brought back from Asia several colorful shirts embroidered with little dragons on the chest. (Kevin Dopart)

Roy Rogers's horse, first known as Omaha, was the winner of the 1935 Triple Crown. His name was changed to Trigger because the studio wanted moviegoers to associate the horse with the Wild West, not Nebraska. (Patrick Mattimore, Beijing)

The incompatibility between a square peg and a round hole was first noted in 1925 during the difficult birth of Margaret Thatcher. (Amanda Yanovitch, Midlothian, Va.)

Next week: A remeaning task, or Smart-Alexicon

THIS WEEK'S CONTEST



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Week 928: Play feature

Answer: Airplane!

Question: What is the last thing you want to hear when making love on what you thought was a deserted runway?

(Jennifer Hart)

A. Duck Soup.

Q. What is good advice for a food fight? (David Genser)

The Empress found this contest from 11 years ago while perusing a new online master list of all 928 Style Invitational contests, dating back to 1993, that was prepared entirely as a labor of love (or madness) by Proto-Loser Elden Carnahan of Laurel, who also has maintained elaborate statistics on ink accumulated by all 4,000-plus people who've had their name mentioned in the Invite. **This week: Use the title of a movie as the answer to a riddle or other question,** as in the examples above from Week XXX (we used Roman numerals for a while). You can see the rest of those winners at washingtonpost.com/styleinvitational.

Winner gets the Inker, the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place wins a pretty notepad and daybook made of genuine Chinese panda poo paper (lots of bamboo fiber in that). It'd be far too nice for an Invite prize were it not for the raw materials.

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” (FirStink for their first ink). E-mail entries to losers@washpost.com or fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Monday, July 25; results published Aug. 14 (Aug. 12 online). Include “Week 928” 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. See contest rules and guidelines at washingtonpost.com/styleinvitational. The revised title for next week's results is by Dixon Wragg; this week's honorable-mentions subhead is by Kevin Dopart.



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

Near myths: Honorable mentions

You know how the stone changes color partway up the Washington Monument? That's the water mark from the Great Flood of 1911. (Kathye Hamilton; Elden Carnahan, Laurel)

The footage of the first moon landing was filmed in a Hollywood studio, but only because astronaut Buzz Aldrin forgot to remove the lens cap during the real event. (Jason Russo, Annandale, a First Offender)

The replica of the Statue of Liberty that was installed in Paris in 1889 had visible underarm hair. (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

John Hancock sold insurance to 21 of the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence; unfortunately, they neglected to read the clause voiding payouts in the event of revolution. (John McCooley, Rehoboth Beach, Del.)

As a community organizer in the Windy

City, young Barack Obama walked down eight roads before someone called him a man. (Jonathan Hardis, Gaithersburg)

Gen. Ambrose Burnside was aided greatly in Civil War planning by his largely forgotten assistant, Col. Wendell Souppatch. (Malcolm Fleschner, Palo Alto, Calif.)

“Jingle Bells” was written to commemorate Paul Revere's ride. (Edmund Conti, Raleigh, N.C.)

The Chinese emperor Hsian-T'ung abdicated after he was found to have mailed etchings of his royal junk. (Larry Yungk, Arlington)

The actual Dr. Pepper was not really a doctor; he just had a master's degree. That's why, legally, they can't put a period after the “Dr” on the bottles and cans. (Russell Beland, Fairfax)

Due to a miscommunication, the Aztecs didn't realize that their war god Huitzilopochtli was actually a vegetarian. (Mike Gips, Bethesda)

POP CD REVIEW

Various Artists LIVE FROM NOWHERE NEAR YOU, VOL. II



The second volume of the “Live From Nowhere . . .” series places a heavy emphasis on indie rock

males, sensitive depressives division: Elliott Smith and Bright Eyes make appearances, as do a solo Isaac Brock (from Modest Mouse) and James Mercer (from the Shins) and a host of street musicians.

The tracks on this triple-disc benefit album (proceeds go to a

homeless charity) tend toward acoustic and electro folk or stripped-down, grunge-reminiscent rock, though there's a sprawling, indefinable cover of Marvin Gaye's “Mercy Mercy Me” by Eddie Vedder, Josh Homme and the Strokes and an equally great pairing of Bright Eyes and Spoon's Britt Daniel on the former's “Southern State.”

There are a few standouts (Duover's Nathan Jr., the Helio Sequence, Brad's Shawn Smith) and no clunkers; even though three discs means three times the mournful philosophizing, it's never a slog. And it's probably the only time you'll ever find Daniel Johnston and Third Eye Blind in the same place.

— Allison Stewart



LEFT: TONY AVELAR/ASSOCIATED PRESS; RIGHT: KARL WALTER/GETTY IMAGES

NO SLOG: Isaac Brock of Modest Mouse, left, and James Mercer of the Shins perform on the CD.