

#### **Report from Week 944**

in which we asked you to finish an "Is it just me..." sentence. There were two basic categories of just-mes: the self-effacing entries saying, "I'm so pathetic/clueless/nerdy/weird" and those that served as an excuse for snarky observational humor. We got good entries in both categories.



Is it just me, or do you also think Texans must have had to sign a pledge to reinforce their stereotype when they're in public? (Neal Starkman, Seattle, a First Offender)

Winner of the lobster-tank fart-joke mug: Is it just me, or are more women becoming immune to charisma? (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge) BOB STARKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST BOB STARKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST So find it hypocritical that Certain Media Outlets won't cover third-party

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

### Is it just meh? Honorable mentions

Is it just me, or do other people arrive early at the dentist just to catch up on Goofus & Gallant in the waiting room? (Robert Schechter, Dix Hills, N.Y.)

... or do other people like to have pretend cellphone conversations with their proctologists while on crowded elevators? (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

... or is popcorn too loud for the movie theater? Shouldn't we be eating

pudding at the movies instead? (Dixon Wragg, Santa Rosa, Calif.)

candidates who have zero chance of

winning - but still continue to cover

the Baltimore Orioles? (Gregory Koch,

... or do other people get excited passing through Yonkers, N.Y., and realizing it's the home of Consumer Reports? (*Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn*)

... or are all porn videos unnecessarily long? (David Genser, Poway, Calif.)

... or do all Catholic kids growing up in Rhode Island think "INRI" is atop the crucifix only in that state's churches, and that, say, the ones in Pennsylvania say "INPA"? (Christopher Lamora, Guatemala City, who wasn't set straight till age 12 or so)

seen all the best parts of this movie"?

(Susan Geariety, Menifiee, Calif.)

... or are caterpillars getting saltier? (Chuck Smith)

... or does the voice on your GPS system appear barely able to contain an increasing rage as you continue to miss exit after exit? (Susan Geariety)

... or do other listeners wonder why WAMU-FM keeps announcing that

# THIS WEEK'S CONTEST: WEEK 948 Look back in Inker

If you failed to embarrass yourself over the past year with ink in one of our previous contests — or if you couldn't manage even that — here's another chance.

This week: Enter any Style Invitational contest from Week 891 through Week 945 (except for Week 896, which was the same contest for the previous year). You can send multiple entries for a single contest, as long as you don't send more than 25 entries in all. You may refer to events that have occurred since the contest was published; for contests that ask you to use The Post from a certain day or week, use today's or this week's. (For the "Dead Letters" of Week 901, the poems should still be about people who died in 2010, not 2011; the Week 898 predictions should be about 2012.) Since there's so little space in the print paper, longer-form entries are likely to run only online. You can find links to all the contests at washingtonpost.com/styleinvitational.

Winner gets the Inker, the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives the book "Thank You for the Giant Sea Tortoise," a 1971 compilation of entries from the New York Magazine Competition, which the Style Invitational was created to "honor." The Empress was shocked, but not saddened, to discover that many of the entries were, well, lame-o (e.g., recast a movie: "Royal Wedding" with Alan King, Steve McQueen and Patty Duke). Donated by Terry Reimer.

**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 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, Dec. 12; results published Jan. 1 (Dec. 30 online). No more than 25 entries per entrant per week. Include "Week 948" 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 is by Chris Doyle; this week's honorable-mentions subhead is by Tom Witte.

"the mind is Armenian"? (L. Suzanne Gordon, Takoma Park, a First Offender) [The slogan is "The mind is our medium."]

... or do other guys face the same direction when they use the toilet sitting down as they do when standing? *(Kevin Dopart)* 

... or do other women take an extra birth control pill every time they see that gushing mother of eight in the Giant supermarket ads? (Diana Todd, Silver Spring, a First Offender) ... or do you think Dave Barry would be a good name for a rock band? (Christopher Lamora)

... or do I sometimes get ink when I don't really deserve it? (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village)

More just-mes in the online Invite at washingtonpost.com/styleinvitational.

Next week: Another round of Bierce, or Ha la carte

### POP CD REVIEW

Nils Lofgren OLD SCHOOL

2011

POST • SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4,

WASHINGTON

THE



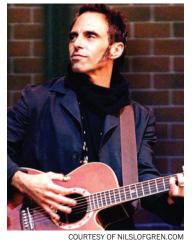
It's no wonder that Nils Lofgren guitarist for Bruce Springsteen's E Street Band,

underrated solo artist and sometime Montgomery County resident — has mortality on his mind. He recently turned 60, had both hips replaced and lost two bandmates, Danny Federici and Clarence Clemons, to whom his first album of new material in five years is dedicated. Alternately rueful and upbeat, "Old School" spotlights midlife crisis anthems ("60 Is the New 18"), get-off-my-lawn rockers (the title track) and graceful, just short of gloomy ballads ("Miss You

Ray"). "Old School" sounds like a distant musical relative of "Born in the U.S.A.," with a similar mix of barroom rave-ups and R&Bspiked rock, although it can feel excessively nostalgic.

Not helping: cameos from classic rock stalwarts such as Foreigner's Lou Gramm, Bad Company's Paul Rodgers and Sam and Dave's Sam Moore, who shows up for the self-explanatory rave-up "Ain't Too Many of Us Left."

 $-Allison\,Stewart$ 



AGING BALLADEER: On "Old School," Nils Lofgren focuses on mortality and midlife issues.

### **POP CULTURE**

## Australian artists use Legos to depict Challenger space shuttle disaster

Australian artists Claire Healy and Sean Cordeiro have traveled worldwide for their work, but a must-see stop on their first trip to Europe wasn't an art gallery or a museum. It was Legoland in Denmark, home of the toy blocks.

Cordiero and Healy chose Legos to make sense of the 1986 Challenger space shuttle explosion. The disaster killed all seven crew members, including teacher Christa McAuliffe.

Healy and Cordeiro, who are

married and have collaborated since 2001, built Lego wall sculptures that emulate the TV images of the explosion.

The Lego sculptures, part of a series called "Where We've Been, Where We're Going, Why," are featured in the pair's first U.S. show, "Are We There Yet?" It opens Dec. 3 at the Corcoran Gallery of Art. The show addresses themes of space travel, taking its cues from "2001: A Space Odyssey."

— Maura Judkis