

Style Invitational

by Pat Myers



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

THIS WEEK'S CONTEST: WEEK 1000

We now have 4 digits, you now have 7 letters

Today we commemorate the 1,000th time that The Washington Post's illustrious masthead has been besmirched by The Style Invitational, its weekly repository for clever, pointed, sophisticated, irreverent, off-color and occasionally juvenile humor and wordplay — sometimes all of those in a single joke — from more than 4,500 devoted readers to date, some of whom have been entering the contest since Week 1 in 1993, sending entries first by mail, then by fax, then digitally (occasionally the third digit has come into play), to the Czar through 2003 and to the Empress since.

Worldwide, the Invitational's name is best associated with what we've come to call Our Greatest Hit: a neologism contest to change a word by a single letter and define the result. Though we've repeated this contest several times over our almost 20 years of existence, it's a list of results from back in 1998 that continues to be shared the most on the Internet, sometimes with the hyper-inaccurate name of "Mensa Invitational" and usually including words that weren't Invite entries, but lame additions stuck onto it like deer ticks along its endless tour through cyberspace.

So let's saddle up our most trusty of warhorses one more time: This week: Choose any word, name or two-word term beginning anywhere from T through Z; then add one letter, drop one letter, substitute one letter for another, or transpose two adjacent letters, and define the result. Remember that it's the original word, not your neologism, that has to begin with T through Z.

Winner gets the Inkin' Memorial, the bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives the fine volume "Stuck Up!: 100 Objects Inserted and Ingested in Places They Shouldn't Be," donated by JeffContompasis.

Other runners-up win their choice of a yearned-for Loser Mug or the ardently desired Grossery Bag. Honorable mentions get a lusted-after Loser magnet. First Offenders receive 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, Dec. 17; results published Jan. 6 (online Jan. 3). No more than 25 entries per entrant per week. Include "Week 1000" in your e-mail subject line or it might be ignored as spam. Include your real name, postal address and phone number with your entry. See contest rules and guidelines at wapo.st/inviterules. The subhead for this week's honorable mentions is by Tom Witte, whose first Invite ink was in Week 7; he now has more than 1,200 blots. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at on.fb.me/invdev

Report from Week 996

in which we asked you to combine two magazines and describe the results, or name a story that might be included: Some combinations that were funny on their own without descriptions: Martha Stewart Living + American Jail = Better Homes & Pardons (Richard Wong, Derwood); Road & Track + Gourmet = Autobahn Appetit; plus Horse & Rider + Playboy = Undressage (Kathy El-Assal, Middleton, Wis.); and Mad + GQ = Goofus & Gallant (Amanda Yanovitch, Midlothian, Va.).



Army Times + Playboy:
Featuring the special
Biographers Issue. (Lawrence
McGuire, Waldorf)

- 2 Winner of the rolling toy rat : Astronomy and Astrophysics + Nuclear Physics: Sure, it has pictures of heavenly bodies, but I buy it for the particles. (Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase)
- 3 Real Simple Sports Illustrated: This month's action-packed issue highlights the 2012 International Tag Open. (Rob Huffman, Fredericksburg, Va.)
- 4 Parenting + Commentary: Nagging (David Genser, Poway, Calif.)

sweet, sweet silence." (Melissa Balmain, Rochester, N.Y.)

Scouting — Out: A magazine filled with blank pages for gay boys to write on while their friends are on a camping trip. (Brian Cohen, Potomac)

Readers Digest People: "Hannibal Lecter's secret liver recipe!" (Joe Neff, Warrington, Pa.; Rob Huffman)

Psychology Today + Cigar Aficionado: Sometimes just cigars. (Tony Medici)

Celebrity Hairstyles + Highlights for Children: "Honey Boo Boo Goes Blond on Blond!" (Gary Crockett)

Where + AARP the Magazine: This month: "10 Most Likely Places You Left Your Keys" and "10 Most Likely Places You Left Your Keys" (Frank Osen)

Science Prevention: How to keep the evils of evolution from reaching your schoolkids. (Howard Zahalsky, Vienna, a First Offender)

Cat Fancy + American Atheist = Dog does not exist! (Lawrence McGuire)

Self O: Free with a subscription to Playboy. (Jason Russo, Annandale)

Papercrafts Magazine + Hustler: Creative origami for dirty fold men. (Lawrence McGuire)

More magazine mashups in the online Invite at bit.ly/inv1k.

Still running — deadline Monday night — is your chance to enter any of the previous year's contests. See bit.ly/invite999.

Weaklies: honorable mentions

Food & Wine + the International Journal of Transgenderism: How to Eat, Drink and Be Mary. (Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.)

Popular Mechanics + Oil & Gas Journal: This month: DIY fracking in your backyard. (Dave Prevar, Annapolis)

Philosophical Review + High Times: The college freshman's deep-thinking journal. Featuring "But Suppose, Like, We're All Living in an Alternative Universe Right Now, You Know?" (Josh Feldblyum, Philadelphia)

Playboy + Popular Science: "Silicone: It's Not Just for Bathtub Caulk!" (Frank Mann, Washington, a First Offender)

Southern Living + Guns & Ammo: "How to Deal With Lingerin' Guests" (Tony Medici, Oakton, a First Offender)

Stone Soup + Cooking Light: "Pumice, the New White Meat" (Robert Schechter, Dix Hills, N.Y.)

This Old Penthouse: "Grab your tools, fellas, 'cause it's time to get busy!" (Rob Huffman)

History Today + Sunset: Continued coverage of Mitt Romney. (David Genser)

Women's Health + American Conservative: "Which Involuntary Invasive Ultrasound Is Right for You?" (Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)

AARP the Magazine + Boxing News: "Sick of being patronized by people half your age? This month, Sugar Ray Leonard shows you how to turn "How ARE we today, Mrs. Johnson?" into

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