

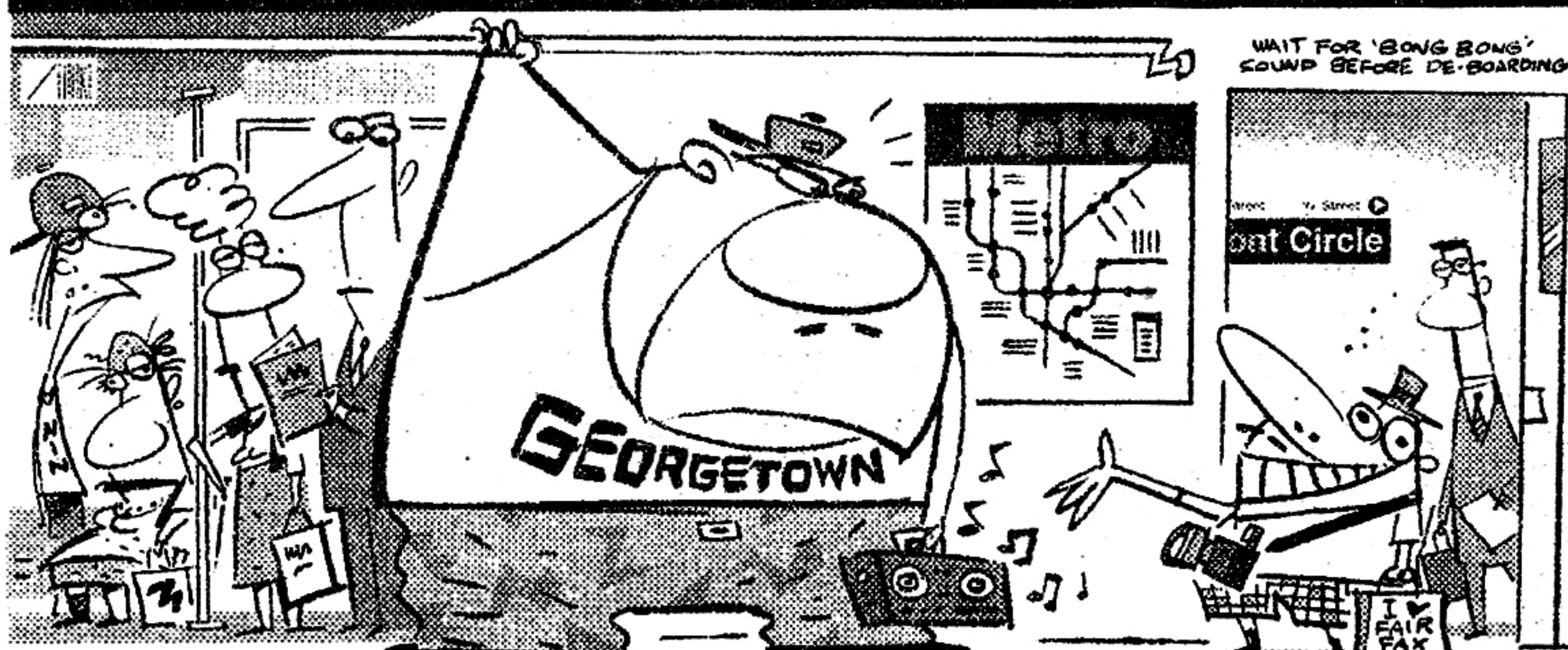
The Style Invitational

WEEK 161: CAPITOL MISTAKES

Do try out the famous echo in the center of the main reading room of the Library of Congress. Yodeling works particularly well.

On downtown street corners, prostitutes may be reliably identified by the displays of colorful neckties beside which they stand.

On the Metro, your fellow riders will take offense if you do not personally shake hands with each of them before taking your seat.



This week's contest is to come up with very, very bad tourist advice for first-time visitors to Washington. The contest was suggested by Winslow Tuttle, of Washington, who stole it from Christopher Hitchens, who wrote about it in last month's *Vanity Fair*, citing a contest held years ago by the *New Statesman*, which is evidently some sort of smug Brit magazine deserving of our contempt. We have never before awarded a prize to someone who stole a

contest from someone who stole it from someone else, and we frankly found ourselves up against it trying to come up with a sucky enough prize, but we think we have it here. Winslow wins a practically new trial-size squeeze bottle of Afrin nasal spray, used only in one nostril. The contest's first-prize winner gets a realistic, battery-operated rubber pulsating hand generously donated to the Style Invitational by Kevin Mellema, of Falls Church.

Runners-up, as always, receive the coveted Style Invitational Loser's T-shirt. Honorable Mentions get the mildly sought-after Style Invitational bumper sticker. Winners will be selected on the basis of humor and originality. Mail your entries to the Style Invitational, Week 161, c/o The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C., 10071, fax them to 202-334-4312 or submit them via Internet to this address: losers@access.digex.net. Internet users: Please indicate the week number in the "subject" field. Entries must be received on or before Monday, April 22. Please include your address and phone number. Winners will be announced in three weeks. Editors reserve the right to alter entries for taste, humor or appropriateness. No purchase necessary. Washington Post employees and their families are not eligible for prizes.

REPORT FROM WEEK 158,

in which you were asked to come up with frivolous lawsuits.

But first, some housekeeping. It has come to our attention that we have recently misattributed at least a few winning entries; there may well have been more, but for some reason, readers tend to be hesitant to point out our errors, silently and stoically accepting them as one might accept an act of God. This is ridiculous—you would think they fear petty retribution for daring to assert themselves. Anyway, several readers have actually complained, and we checked into it, and they were right, and we would like to hereby forthrightly set the record straight: In the hyphen contest, the disgusting F-word entry should have been attributed to Jean Sorensen, not Jennifer Hart. The somewhat predictable Ear No One Reads about chain letters was by Jonathan Paul, not Russell Beland, whose work tends to be far more creative. We accidentally misspelled David Genser's name, possibly because it sounded wrong, like an eructation. And it was not Kevin Cuddihy but Vance Greer who came up with the scenario of one's cheating wife getting a headache from the fur coat she won at bingo—a concept that seems just a little too detailed to have arisen entirely from one's imagination, if you get our drift. Anyway, apologies to all.

As to the frivolous lawsuits:

◆ **Second Runner-Up: A lawsuit against Baskin-Robbins because a customer put a cone between his legs while driving and froze his groin off.** (Paul DeMaio, Burke)

◆ **First Runner-Up: A negligence suit against United Airlines for failing to provide toilet paper on the serving cart alongside the honey-roasted nuts and liquor.** (Kitty Thuermer, Washington)

◆ **And the winner of the "Born Again" comic book:**

A lawsuit by your heirs against the police department for drawing a chalk outline around your corpse that made you look three sizes too large.

(Sue Lin Chong, Washington)

◆ **Honorable Mentions:**

A lawsuit by Hugh Grant against Ford because the Escort is not equipped with a prostitute. (Stephen Dudzik, Silver Spring)

A lawsuit by F. Lee Bailey against himself for bad legal advice. (Jim Day, Gaithersburg)

A lawsuit by Jeffrey Dahmer against Procter & Gamble because a Head & Shoulders bottle is filled with a viscous blue fluid and not tasty body parts. (Stephen Dudzik, Silver Spring)

A lawsuit by Dracula against the surgeon general for not requiring warning labels on crucifixes. (Jonathan Paul, Garrett Park)

A lawsuit against Wendy's for not making their coffee as hot as McDonald's so I could spill it on myself and sue them. (Wayne McCaughey, Columbia)

A lawsuit against Michael Jackson because A-B-C is not easy as 1-2-3. (Jean Sorensen, Herndon)

A discrimination lawsuit by the Fair Housing and Equal Employment Opportunity

commissions against Metro's Red Line, for the obvious. (Stephen Dudzik, Silver Spring)

A lawsuit against Apple Computer because it shouldn't give people the idea that you can eat those things. (Ellen Lamb, Washington)

A lawsuit by the Ford Motor Co. against Al Cowlings for making the Bronco look slow. (Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)

A lawsuit against the heirs of Dr. Seuss for inducing verbal mania. Plaintiffs seek injunctive relief and damages not to exceed 14.6 gazillion bombadillion fannfannajillion dollars. (Elden Carnahan, Laurel)

◆ **And Last:**

A lawsuit by Style Invitational contestants against Chuck Smith of Woodbridge in which it is alleged that, by virtue of the many gifts and other gratuities received in compensation from the Style Invitational, he has become a de facto employee of the Washington Post and therefore ... (Greg Arnold, Herndon)

Next Week: **Oddballs**