

The Style Invitational

WEEK 164: MEAN MEANINGS

What they say:

"I have an amendment to offer ..."

"I am stepping down to spend more time with my family ..."

"I am an ardent supporter of term limits."

"I would like to introduce my wife and best friend, who has blah blah blah ..."

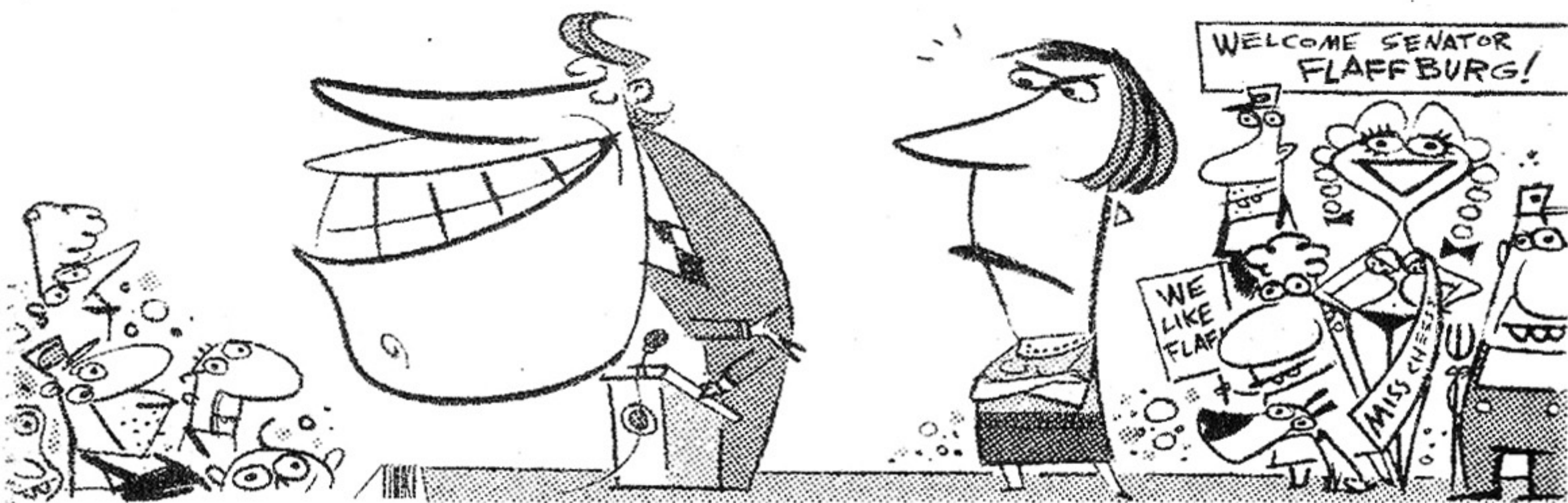
What they mean:

"I am appending a meaningless triviality to get my name on the bill ..."

"I am about to be indicted ..."

"... starting, of course, after I am dead."

"My wife is accompanying me to every single campaign stop because she knows I am a bonkomatic who will hit on every Dairy Days Queen in sight if ..."



This week's contest was suggested by Jeffrey R. Kern, of Montgomery Village, who wins two bottles of Dionysus® Drunkenness Dispeller Oral Liquid, a fine product from the People's Republic of China ("Directions: This oral liquid can relieve intoxication, defend drunkenness and dispel the effects of alcohol, protect brain

cadivascular system from harm, calming the jervrey and enriching the intelligence ..."). Jeffrey suggests that you translate things politicians say into what they really mean, as in the examples above. First-prize winner gets a clear plastic pillow stuffed with shredded U.S. currency, a \$25 value.

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 164, c/o The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071; fax them to 202-334-4212; or submit them via the 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, May 13. 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. The Faerie of the Fine Print & the Ear No One Reads wishes to thank Don Cooper, of Burke, Va., for today's Ear No One Reads. We also wish to respond to the many people who called and wrote to say they did not understand last week's Ear: We're sorry but we cannot hear you. Washington Post employees and their families are not eligible for prizes.

REPORT FROM WEEK 161,

in which you were asked to come up with very, very bad advice to tourists in Washington. Lots of entries informing people about the weekly weenie roasts at the eternal flame, and instructing them on how to chisel their names into the Vietnam Wall, how to sign their names to the Declaration of Independence, how to find and use the dining car on the Metro and how, if your cab doesn't have a meter, you ride for free.

◆ Fifth Runner-Up: **The quickest way to get around town is by "bicycle taxi." They come right up on the sidewalk! Signal one that you wish a ride by standing directly in its path, with your arms spread wide.** (Melinda Holcomb, Alexandria; Mary Beth Hastings, Takoma Park)

◆ Fourth Runner-Up: **Play a game of pickup handball at the unique, V-shaped black marble court on the Mall near the Lincoln Memorial.** (Paul Styrene, Olney)

◆ Third Runner-Up: **Make sure you visit the 19th-century French impressionist "Scratch and Sniff" Room at the National Gallery.** (David Genser, Vienna)

◆ Second Runner-Up: **Give your departed Fido or Tabby a suitable resting place in Arlington National Cemetery; remember to bring your own shovel.** (Ruth Donnalley, Falls Church)

◆ First Runner-Up: **Prostitutes can be identified by their outfits—ordinary business apparel, incongruously accessorized by sneakers or running shoes.** (Stephen Dudzik, Silver Spring)

◆ *And the winner of the groping hand:*

Fun fact—according to the Guinness Book of World Records, the youngest person ever to scale the White House fence unassisted was 8 years old!

(Phil Plait, Silver Spring)

◆ Honorable Mentions:

Help keep the nation's capital clean. After entering the Metro through a turnstile, deposit your used fare card in the trash can. (Howard Rosenman, Arlington)

If you miss your exit on the Beltway, don't worry. Remember, it's a circle, so just keep on going around, and before you know it, you'll be back at your desired exit! (Laura M. Appelbaum, Silver Spring)

Trinkets are awarded to anyone who can get the Secret Service agents guarding the president to laugh. (Scott O. Christy, Alexandria)

The best way to get to D.C. is to take the Capitol Beltway until you hit the Capitol. (Jocelyn Gill, Gaithersburg)

After a long day walking around Washington, enjoy Metro's world-famous butt massagers. Just sit yourself down on any Metro escalator. Remember, stay to the left. (Ruth Donnalley, Falls Church)

Flashing floor lights in the Metro signal an oncoming earthquake. Run for your life. (Michael Eisenstadt, Washington)

Cheering is encouraged during oral arguments at the Supreme Court. (Paul B. Jacoby, Washington)

Single women should not miss Dupont Circle, where you will find many good-looking unmarried men. (Jerry Pannullo, Kensington)

For best results, crinkle up your dollar bills real good to "soften" them before using the Metro card machines. (Bob Sorensen, Herndon)

When taking a taxi, ask to see as many "zones" as possible. This is a delightful way to see the city! (Scott Sabey, Falls Church)

There's free parking for Ryder rental trucks next to the FBI building. (Tommy Litz, Bowie)

Help yourself to the mementos supplied at the foot of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, provided by the local business community. (Paul Kondis, Alexandria)

If you get thirsty while walking around town, stop in at the mayor's residence and ask for some Coke. (Dana E. Wollney, Columbia)

No matter how hard you try, it's impossible to extinguish the eternal flame at JFK's grave. (Jennifer Hart, Arlington; Jerry Pannullo, Kensington)

At the Kennedy Center, rather than "Bravo!," it is customary to shout, "Someone has shot the president!" (J.S. Adams, Washington)

To avoid blocking pedestrian traffic, press up real close to the person in front of you who is using the ATM. (Elden Carnahan, Laurel)

Going to the zoo? Don't forget your swim trunks for a refreshing dip in any of the conveniently located moats. (Glenn and Beverly Magda, Waldorf)

Bring your clubs! Wednesday is ladies' day at Burning Tree. (Sarah Worcester, Bowie)

If your car sustains pothole damage in the city, bring the broken axle or wheel hub to the D.C. Department of Motor Vehicles for a free, quick, courteous repair job while you wait. (Sarah Worcester, Bowie)

Washington boasts many exciting ethnic restaurants. Ask any policeman to give you directions. Our favorites are Hei Pigh, and Ah Pyourzkop. (Sandra Hull, Arlington)

Caught in a sudden downpour? Help yourself to one of the free umbrellas thoughtfully provided by downtown street vendors. (Sandra Hull, Arlington; Nigel J. Wallis, London, and Heidi C. Scanlon, Washington)

In all Metro stations, be sure to stop immediately at the top or bottom of each escalator and take a "roll call" of everyone in your party before proceeding. (Jessica Steinhice, Washington)

Wednesday is Bingo Nite at the Washington National Cathedral. (Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)

You may lie down on the very bed on which Lincoln died. Take care not to let your shoes smudge the sheet. (Stephen Dudzik, Silver Spring)

Those Army guys marching around the tomb at Arlington National Cemetery may look serious, but they'll be happy to stop and fashion balloon animals for your kids if you ask them. (Julie Thomas and Will Cramer, Herndon)

If you are going to be in D.C. for a week or two, and don't think you will need your car while here, then a good place to park is the short-term lot at National Airport. It is close to downtown and convenient to ground transportation. (Perry Farrar, Montgomery Village)

Give Ronnie Mervis a call and ask to see the slides of his trip to Africa. (Bill Strider, Gaithersburg)

◆ And Last:
The Style Invitational alone is worth the price of the Sunday Post! (Jonathan Paul, Garrett Park)

Next Week: **May We Have Your Pretension, Please?**