

# The Style Invitational

## WEEK 169: DIFF'RENT JOKES

Mount Everest

Joe Camel

A Chain Saw

Directory Assistance

A 1975 AMC Pacer

The Titanic

Mission: Impossible

Eddie Haskell

Dilbert's Necktie

The Red Line

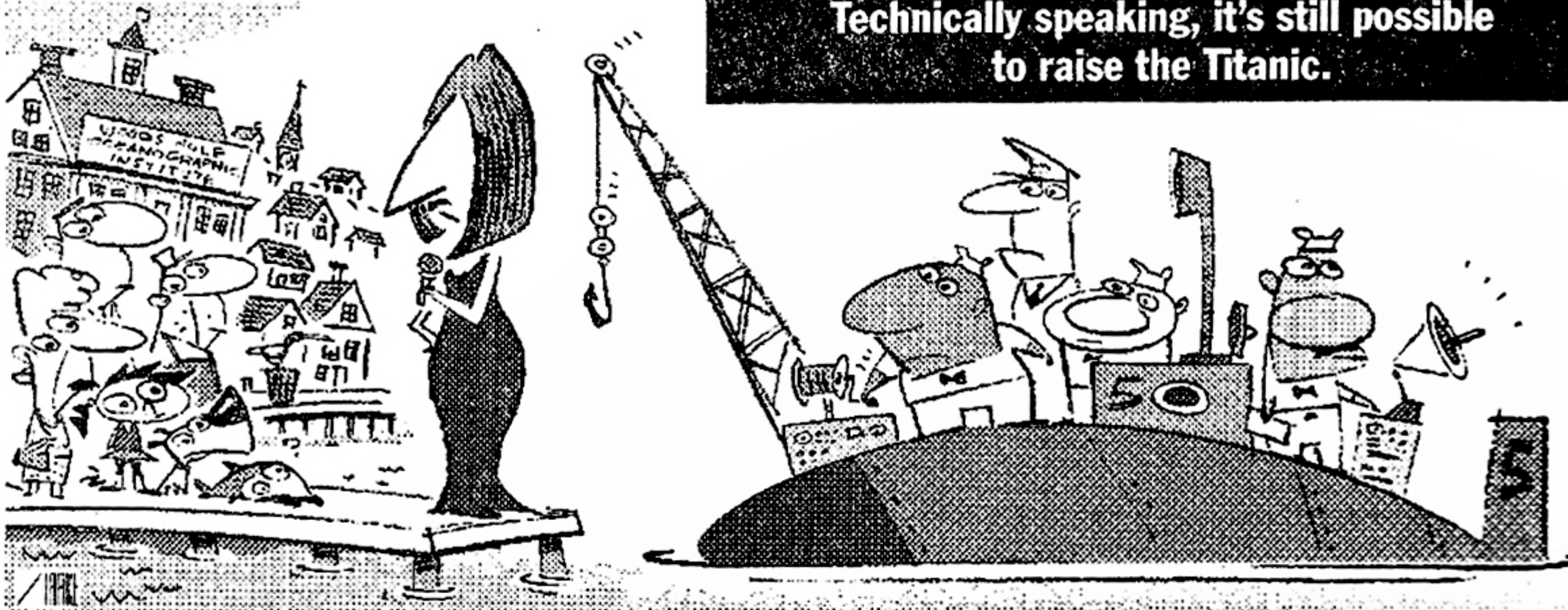
Marion Barry's Brain

A Horse With No Name

Barbra Streisand's Behind

Romantic Downtown Hyattsville

**Barbra Streisand's Behind and The Titanic:  
Technically speaking, it's still possible  
to raise the Titanic.**



BY BOB STANK FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

**This Week's Contest** is to tell us the difference between any two of the above. (As in, "What is the difference between Directory Assistance and

Mount Everest? Mount Everest is warmer.") First-prize winner gets a vintage Gerald R. Ford commemorative plate, a value of \$40.

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. Mail your entries to The Style Invitational, Week 168, c/o The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071; 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, June 17. 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 Dan Royer of Alexandria for today's Ear No One Reads. Washington Post employees and their families are not eligible for prizes.

### REPORT FROM WEEK 166,

in which we asked you to find the worst real rock lyrics ever, an effort endorsed by Dave Barry, who will be ripping off these answers for a book he is compiling on atrocious lyrics.

It is astonishing how many people were unable to distinguish great lyrics from terrible lyrics. You nominated as the worst lyrics of all time some of the finest words ever set to song, including: "They paved paradise and put up a parking lot" by Joni Mitchell, "There's a hole in daddy's arm where all the money goes" by John Prine, and "feelin' near as faded as my jeans," by Kris Kristofferson, not to mention the only good line ever sung by Nancy Sinatra: "You been samini' when you oughta been changin' ..."

The judging here was hard because of the voluminous selection of available bilge, some of which has already been dissed adequately elsewhere. The best of these is this stinker from Paul McCartney's "Live and Let Die": "In this ever-changing world in which we live in ..."

Two noteworthy items from the mailbag: First, Russ Beland of Springfield writes, "The Billy Jack theme ['One Tin Soldier'] is the only song so bad that when it comes on the car radio I deliberately swerve into oncoming traffic in an effort to stop it faster than I could by reaching for the dial."

And we got this from Sarah Worcester of Bowie: "Why don't you have a contest to write a program to create bibliographic record change specifications from keyed input? The program should be in PL1, must execute under CICS, and due to the nature of the character set required, must use Terminal Control instead of BMS. (As long as you are having everyone do Dave Barry's work for him, you might as well have them do mine for me.)"

### Okay. The winners.

In the category of *Bad Rhymes*, the first runner-up was perpetrated by Steve Miller in "Take the Money and Run." It was cited by many people:

**Billy Mack was a detective down in Texas.  
You know, he knows just exactly what the  
facts is ...**

◆ And the winner of very worst rhyme is Creedence Clearwater Revival, for this ear-shattering couplet from "Lookin' Out My Back Door":

**Dinosaur Victrola / Listenin' to Buck Owens...  
(Carolyn Armstrong, Front Royal; Dave Ferry,  
Leesburg)**

In the category of "Well, Duh," first runner-up is from "The Rain, the Park and Other Things," by the Cowsills:

**I saw her sitting in the rain,  
Raindrops falling on her...**

(Jennifer Garrison, Burlington, N.C.)

◆ And the winner, by Steve Miller in "Fly Like an Eagle":

**Time keeps on slipping, slipping, slipping  
into the fuuuu-ture.**

(Don Beale, Arlington; Jane Hanna, Leesburg;)

In the category of "If It Don't Fit, Just Force It," first runner-up goes to the Doors. The Doors are famously bad for rhyming with a blowtorch and crowbar ("Till the stars fall from the sky / For you and I"), but here is their finest effort, from "L.A. Woman":

**I see your hair is burning / The hills are filled  
with fire. / If they say I never loved you / Well,  
you know they are a liar.** (Steve Carnahan,  
Syosset, N.Y.)

◆ And the winner, from "Play Me," by Neil Diamond:

**Song she sang to me / Song she brang to me ...**

(Jessica Steinhice, Washington)

In the "Gag Me With a Spoon" category, first runner-up goes to Cream, for this warmly romantic line from "Sunshine of Your Love":

**I'll stay with you till my seeds are dried up.**

(Dave Zarrow, Herndon)

◆ And the winner, from "Lightning Strikes," by Live:

**Lightning crashes, a new mother cries  
Her placenta falls to the floor.**

(Scott Barney, Washington)

◆ In the category of Worst Song Title, the winner of course is:

**"I Honestly Love You," recorded by Olivia  
Newton-John** (Dean Meservy, Laurel)

◆ And now for the worst lyric of all time, winner of the Mr. Dip Lip, the dental model. It is from "Tonight's the Night," by Rod Stewart, the gravelly balladeer of requited love. It not only sounds moronic, doesn't scan, and quarrels with the romantic theme of the song, but the words say precisely the opposite of what the artist intends:

**Don't say a word, my virgin child.**

**Just let your inhibitions run wild ...**

(Jessica Steinhice, Washington; also, Steve Rouzer, Randallstown)

In the category of "Aww, You Shouldn't Have," first runner-up goes to Dr. Hook for this ode to rape in "Love You a Little Bit More":

**When your body's had enough of me,  
And I'm layin' flat out on the floor,  
When you think I've loved you all I can,  
I'm gonna love you a little bit more.**

(John Chamberlain, Silver Spring)

◆ And the winner, which requires no further exposition, from "Chestnut Mare" by Roger McGuinn for the Byrds:

**I'm going to catch that horse if I can,  
And when I do, I'll give her my brand,  
And we'll be friends for life,  
She'll be just like a wife...**

(Arthur J. Murphy, Chicago)

In the category of Just Plain Dippy lyrics, first runner-up goes to Lesley Gore for this, from "Judy's Turn to Cry":

**One night I saw them kissing at a party / So I  
kissed some other guy / Johnny jumped up and  
he hit him / 'Cause he still loved me, that's why!**

(Rachel A. Bernhardt, Takoma Park)

◆ And the winner, from one of the dorkiest songs ever written, "Reach Out in the Darkness" by Friend and Lover. This song is noteworthy not so much because it contains this lyric: "It's so groovy now, that people are finally gettin' together / Wonderfulla now, that people are finally gettin' together," but because that is not the worst lyric in the song. That distinction goes to this painfully earnest stanza:

**I met a man that I did not care for  
And then one day this man gave me a call.  
We sat and talked about things on our minds  
And now this man, he is a friend of mine.**

(Sandy Tenenbaum, Silver Spring)

In the category of "Huh, Wha?," first runner-up is this from "Birdhouse in Your Soul," by They Might Be Giants:

**I'm your only friend / I'm not your only friend /  
But I'm a little glowing friend / But really I'm  
not actually your friend / But I am.**

(Paul Evans and Mary Rock, Great Mills)

◆ And the winner is this triplet, soulfully delivered by the Beatles in "Sun King":

**Cuando para mucho mi amore de felice corazon  
Mundo pararazzi mi amore chicka ferdy parasol  
Cuesto obrigado tanta mucho que can  
eat it carousel.**

(Jeff and Pam Wadler, Alexandria)

Next Week: Crapsey