

The Style Invitational

WEEK 204: DOUBLE EXPRESSO

Old Expression: "Picking the low-hanging fruit."

Meaning: Taking the easy way out.

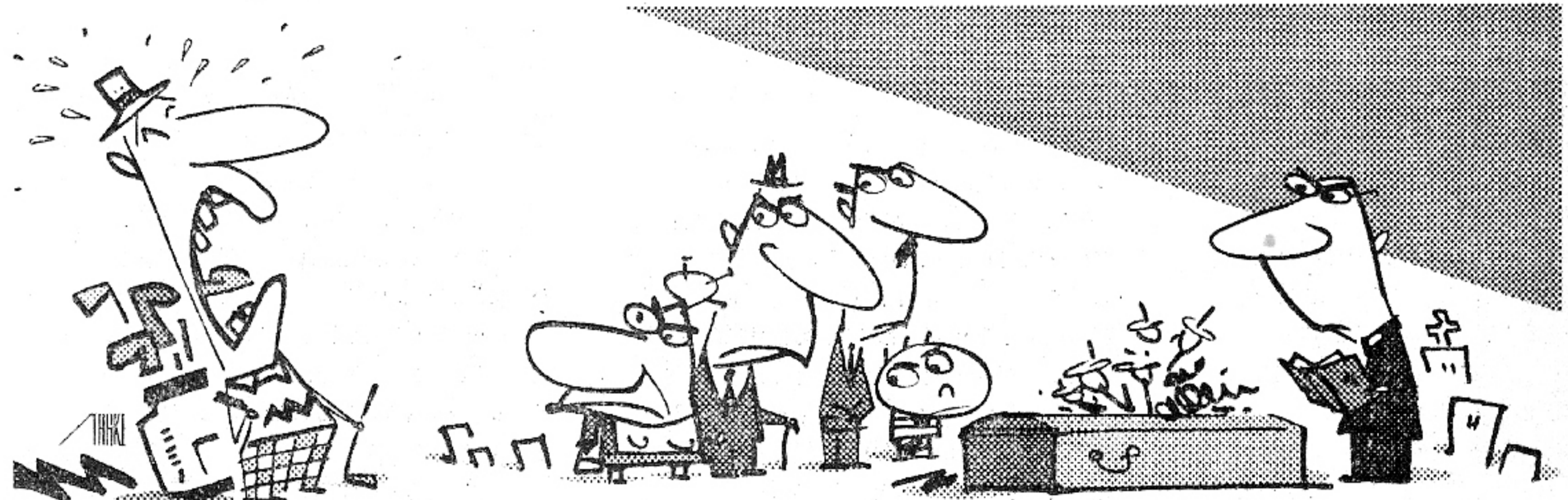
New Expressions: "Firing the unarmed postal worker." "Flossing the big gaps."

Old expression: "Gilding the lily."

Meaning: Making unnecessary or excessive cosmetic changes.

New Expression: "Giving Dolly a Wonderbra."

Old Expression: "Shedding crocodile tears."
New Expression: "Pulling an O.J. at the funeral."



BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

This week's contest was suggested by Russell Beland of Springfield, who wins the Archies' greatest hits. Russell suggests that you take any well-known colorful expression, and modernize it. You may use any of the above, or any other,

so long as it is well known. (Carrying coals to Newcastle, making a mountain out of a molehill, etc.) First-prize winner gets a foot-tall George Bush pincushion, a value of \$25.

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 204, 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, Feb. 17. Please include your address and phone number. Winners will be announced three weeks from today. 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 David Genser of Vienna for today's Ear No One Reads. Employees of The Washington Post and their immediate families are not eligible for prizes.

REPORT FROM WEEK 201,

in which you were asked to come up with new elements for the Periodic Table. As often happens when a contest provokes political response, we had to wade through a heavy diet of humorless ax-grinding. As in: "**CLINTONIUM—An element that has no morals and keeps taking blood money from places like Indonesia and is married to Hillarium, an element which has thick ankles and I hate her.**"

◆ Fourth Runner-Up: **LIMBAUGHIUM—Lb—The heaviest known element. It possesses an ever-expanding mass. Very white. Acidic. Emits heat, but no light. Instantly polarizes all elements that come in contact with it. Repellent to protons and electrons; only succeeds in attracting morons.** (Bobby Uppot, Baltimore)

◆ Third Runner-Up: **BILLCLINTIUM—Bc—Undergoes a series of interesting changes when in hot water.** (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

◆ Second Runner-Up: **BARRYUM—Bm—Very slippery. Tends to crack. Does not exist in any known state. Disappears when in the presence of ice and snow. This element has an inexplicably high durability.** (Paul Bobowiec, Bowie; Marty Schulman, Herndon)

◆ First Runner-Up: **CANADIUM—Eh—Similar to Americium, but a little denser. Much more rigid. Often called Boron.** (Joel Knanishu, Hyattsville)

◆ *And the winner of kangaroo-scrotum change purse:*

INOFFENSIUM—Pc—Precisely equal numbers of electrons, protons, neutrons, leptons, quarks. Completely inert, utterly useless, but smells like a rose.

(Irwin Singer, Alexandria)

◆ Honorable Mentions:

NEWTIUM—Nt—Extreme irritant. Carries a strong negative charge. Does not possess magnetic properties. Can be purchased cheaply. (Papan Devnani, Arlington; Cissie Owen, Leesburg; Bob Sorensen, Herndon)

SLATKIN—Sk—Excellent conductor. (Jerry Pannullo, Kensington; Stephen Dudzik, Silver Spring)

POLITICIUM—Po—Contains a great deal of brass. Similar to radon in that it can reach lethal concentrations in the House. (George Johnston, Bowie)

MOMENTIUM—Mo—Highly prized by sports teams and candidates for public office. Elusive. Almost impossible to manufacture synthetically. (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

QUAYLIUM—Vp—Einsteinium it ain't. (Elden Carnahan, Laurel)

WASHINGTONCAPITALIUM—Wc—Must be kept on ice. Tends to break down under high pressure. Caution: choking hazard. (Steven Liu, New Haven)

CLINTONITE—Bc—With a slick appearance and slimy texture, this element appears impervious to intense heat. Fatal to the unborn. (Guy de Blank, Herndon)

CONGRESS—Cg—Atomic number, 535. Can never be found in a solution. (Andrew Brecher, Washington)

STROMIUM—Th—Very durable. Specimens

continue to flourish even when their outward appearance is of advanced decomposition.

(Sandra Hull, Arlington)

BUDWEISIUM—Ps—Has no taste or smell; is often indistinguishable from water. (Dale Rose, Hyattsville)

CABMIUM—Cb—Found in abundance except when needed. Exists in two states, in motion and at rest. When in motion, it often cannot be stopped, no matter what you do. Cabmium has a charge associated with it. The charge is variable and scientists have not yet determined the formula for calculating it. (Mark Nielsen, Rockville)

FOODLIONIUM—Fi—Explodes when exposed to light. (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

GORIUM—Zz—Latest discovery in group of inert gases. Also known as Tedium.

(Milt Eisner, McLean)

SNOT—Sn—Bonds forever with corduroy.

(Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

KRYPTONITE—S—Kills Superman. That's it. That's all it does. (Dave Ferry, Leesburg)

CZARBON—Cz—Has no taste. (Joseph Romm, Washington; Dave Zarrow, Herndon)

◆ And last:

STYLEINVITEUM—F2—Combusts at 451 degrees Fahrenheit. No other known useful properties. (David K. Ronka, Bradford, Mass.)

Next Week: The Elements of Smile