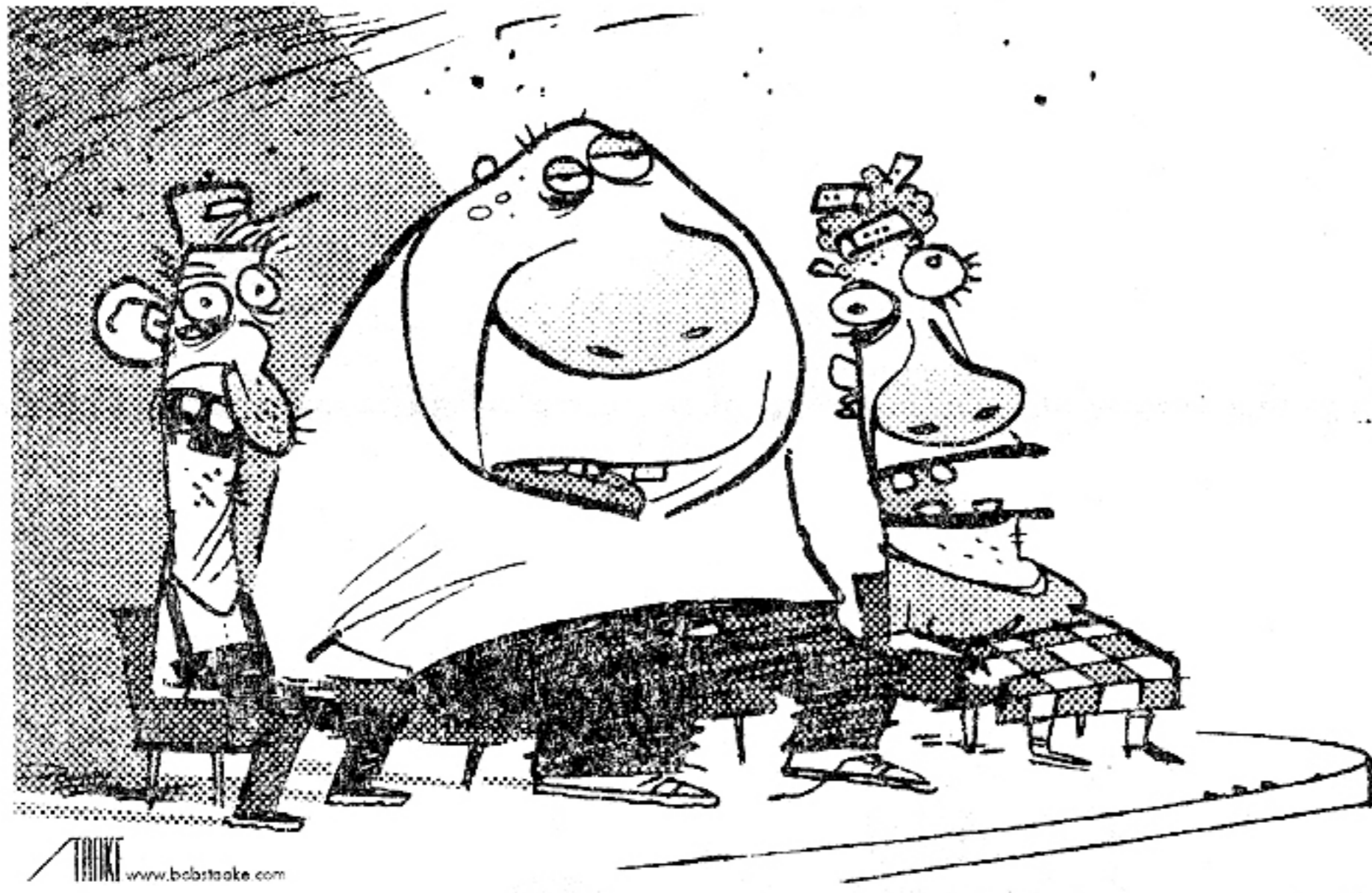


The Style Invitational

WEEK 249: BAD NEWS, GOOD NEWS

Tornadoes: Help prevent trailer park overcrowding.

Athletes Acting Like Jerks: Nike execs have to swallow their swoosh.



BY BOB STAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Illiteracy: Guarantees a steady supply of guests on Jerry Springer.

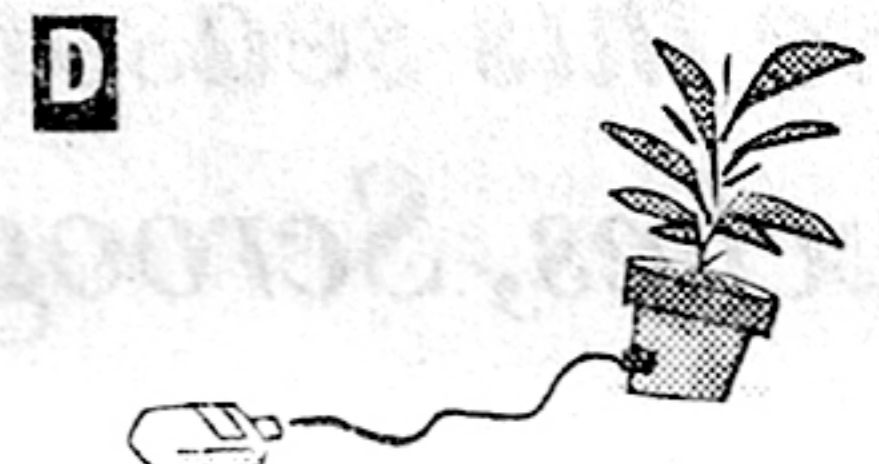
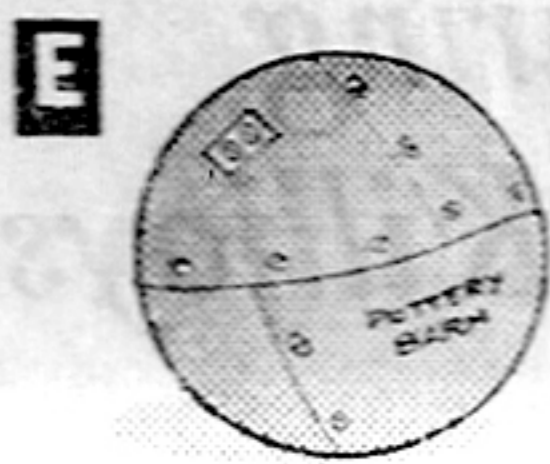
This Week's Contest was suggested by Jean Sorensen of Herndon, who wins a can of a Japanese coffee drink named "Mr. B.M." Jean suggests that you supply a silver lining for any scourge or social ill facing America or the world.

First-prize winner receives what appears to be a genuine 1964 Russian lapel pin endorsing the presidential candidacy of Barry Goldwater and William E. Miller. We declare this to be a value of \$100.

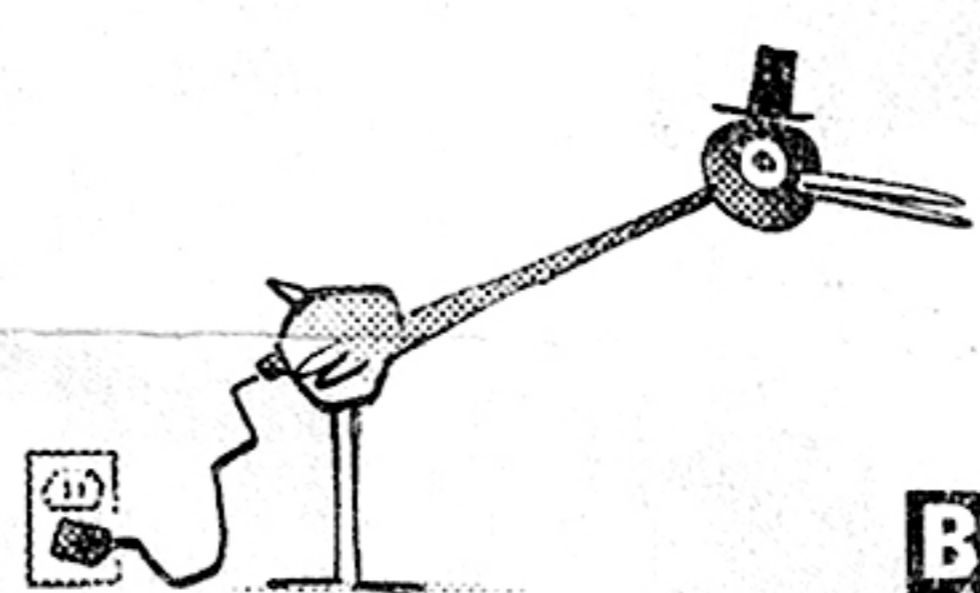
First runner-up gets the tacky but estimable Style Invitational Loser's Pen. Other runners-up receive the coveted Style Invitational Loser's T-shirt. Honorable Mentions get the mildly sought-after Style Invitational bumper sticker. Winners will be selected on the basis of humor and originality. Mail your entries to The Style Invitational, Week 249, 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, Dec. 29. 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. Blockage or dysfunction of the eustachian tube is believed to be the pathophysiologic basis for purulent discharge from the ear, suggesting labyrinthitis, fistulization and Beland's Syndrome, which causes extreme pouting and crankiness in adults. Next week: J.D. Salinger Ear Credit. Employees of The Washington Post, and members of their immediate families, are not eligible for prizes.

REPORT FROM WEEK 246,

in which we showed you several contraptions and asked you to tell us how they worked. Niels Hoven of Silver Spring wins a T-shirt for a bawdy entry that we briefly considered printing until we were informed that the consequences would involve (1) published apologies to the readers by Donald Graham and (2) an abrupt termination of our employment, possibly via the discharge of a firearm.



- ◆ Third Runner-Up: (Cartoon E) **It was only a matter of time before they began selling advertising space on the Times Square New Year's Eve countdown ball.** (Art Grinath, Takoma Park)
- ◆ Second Runner-Up: (Cartoon A) **Alvin asked for the avocado interior in his new Hyundai, but there was a mix-up at the factory.** (Dave Ferry, Leesburg)
- ◆ First Runner-Up: (Cartoon D) **Required by law to reduce its electric bills, the D.C. government tries its hand at designing its own power plant.** (Tony DiTrapani, Reston; Niels Hoven, Silver Spring)
- ◆ And the winner of the Joe Camel pool cue caddy: (Cartoon B) **The septuplets' stork was electrocuted for its crime.** (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)



Honorable Mentions:

Cartoon A



The eye-catching delivery van of "Bagpipes to Go." (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

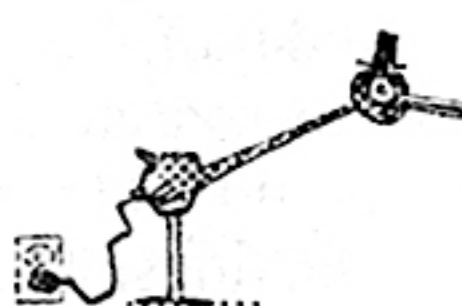
Before Zambonis, they used strombolis. (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

Some teenagers are so desperate to have their own cars, they'd drive a huge cow teat if it had a steering wheel. (John Kammer, Herndon)

Some people who have a bumper sticker that says "My Other Car Is a Piece of Crap" really mean it. (Elden Carnahan, Laurel)

The Model T Gourd. (Kelli Midgley-Biggs, Columbia)

Cartoon B



The first electric rectal thermometers were tested on peacocks. (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

After AA complained that the so-called drinking duck perpetual-motion machine encouraged and glorified binge drinking, the manufacturer developed this "dry duck." (Joseph Romm, Washington)

Spielberg's first electronic velociraptor was neither realistic nor scary. (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

Cartoon C



To operate Dan Quayle's ingenious "Mr. Caramel Maker," just remove the plastic wrap from a caramel, roll it on a flat surface with the palm of your hand until round, then place it into the funnel, and Mr. Caramel Maker does the rest! (Jose Cortina, Centreville)

Cartoon D



Gives point-and-click access to the entire root directory. (Sarah Worcester, Bowie)

A very early prototype of the Apple computer. (Joseph Romm, Washington)

Cartoon E



A mothball for suits of armor. (Mike Genz, La Plata)

Detail from Cartoon C. (Paul Laporte and Lee Mayer, Washington)

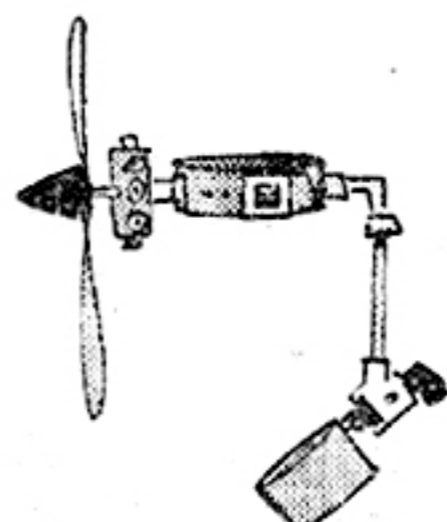
A microwave oven for big round things. (Caution: Place on level surface.) (David Genser, Arlington)

Never lose at marbles again! (Art Grinath, Takoma Park)

Insta-Store MailBall. Place MailBall in vacant 15,000-square-foot mall space and plug in the power cord. In just hours a fully stocked, staffed and merchandised Pottery Barn emerges, ready for the busy holiday season. MailBall is also available in Gap, Sbarro and Victoria's Secret. (Janet Galope, Garrett Park)

The proverbial ball in a china shop. (Dave Zarrow, Herndon)

Cartoon F



An early Depends prototype, complete with ventilation system. (Sandra Hull, Arlington)

A prop from the movie "Those Magnificent Men and Their Flying Latrines." (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)