

The Style Invitational

Week II: A Lover's Spat

A note to the readers from the editors of The Washington Post. Last week, six candidates made their bids to be the editor of the new Style Invitational. With your votes, you have narrowed the field to two finalists:



The Uncle



The Czar

The Uncle of The Style Invitational, who plans a more friendly, life-affirming, family-oriented contest, without losing the old contest's sense of "fun"; and, **The Czar of The Style Invitational**, who refuses to consider any changes from the vulgar, leprous format of the past,

drenched as it was in negativity and cynicism.

That was the primary. Now comes the general election. The Washington Post will remain officially neutral, trusting in the decency of the American people, confident that they love their children and will do what is necessary to safeguard them from debasing and corrupting influences.

To decide this contest, we have created a sudden-death playoff, a "toss-up" question. We are challenging each candidate to design a contest around the same subject. As Valentine's Day approaches, we ask them to turn their attentions to . . . love.

To vote, you must enter the contest that is run by the editor of your choice. If you enter both contests, then specify which editor you prefer.

All entries must be received by Valentine's Day, Feb. 14. Send your entries via e-mail to losers@washpost.com, or fax them to 202-334-4312, or mail them to The Style Invitational, c/o The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071. Be sure to include your name, address, and a daytime or evening phone number. E-mailed entries must include the Week Number in the message field. Contests will be judged on the basis of humor and originality. All entries become the property of The Washington Post, which reserves the right to edit them for taste or content.

The Uncle of the Style Invitational:

First, I would like to thank you all for your heartwarming show of support. And might I take this opportunity to share with you a photo of my family? (The little twins, Dorcas and Throckmorton, are quite the dickens.)



FILE PHOTO

My contest this week: Propose amusing and/or surprising ways in which a man might tell his wife he loves her on Valentine's Day.

Example: He could tell her that he got her nothing for Valentine's Day. But after a brief interval (he should not make this too long at the risk of genuinely hurting her feelings) he could present her with a ring. Then he could explain, holding up the circle of the ring, that it really looks like a big zero, in other words . . . nothing!

(The joke here is that, after initially disappointing her, he actually gives her a nice present that could be defined as "nothing" only through a mischievous bit of wordplay.)

The first-prize winner gets a mince pie baked by my wife.



The Czar of The Style Invitational:

Well, here's a photo of my family.



BY MICHELE MCDONALD

My contest this week: Coo badly. Come up with some inept "sweet nothings"—graceless terms of endearment.

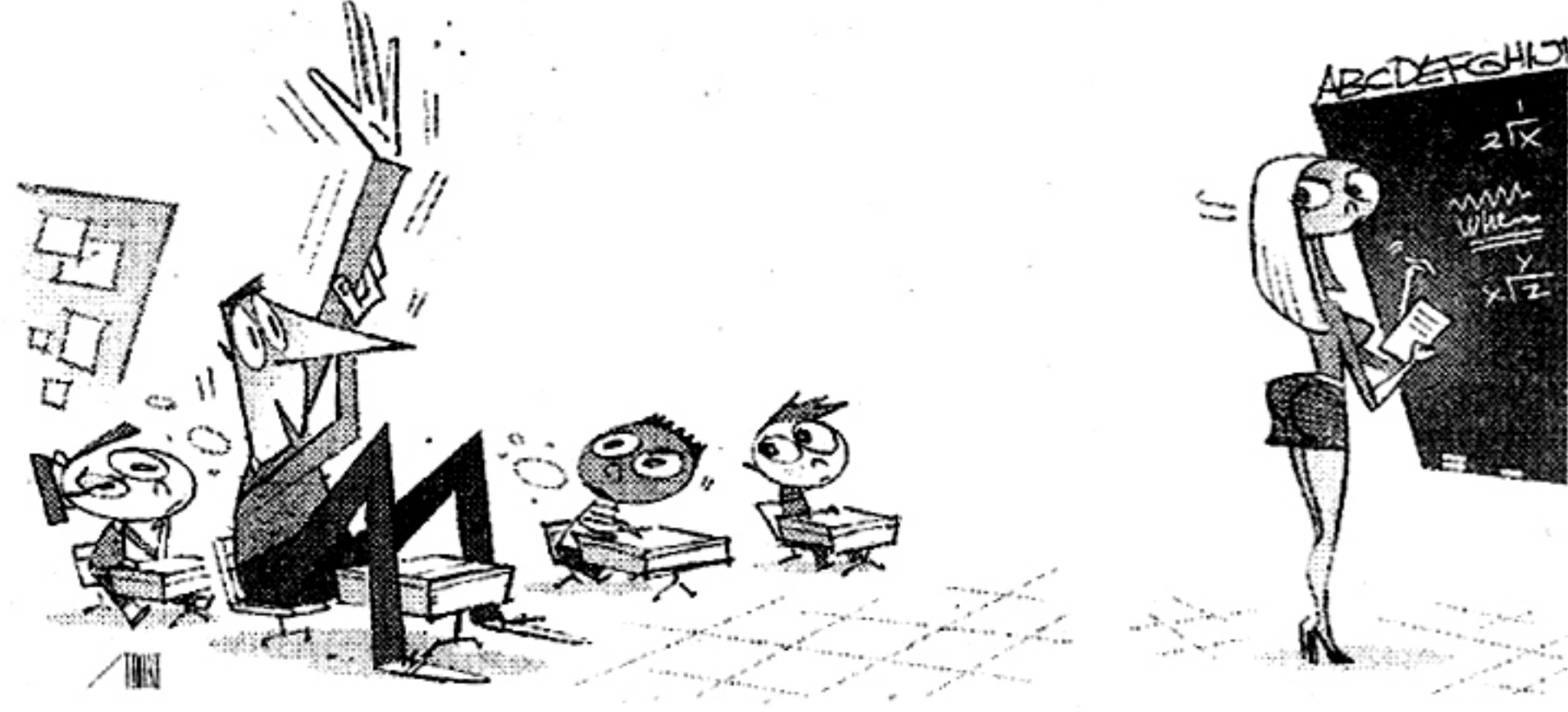
Examples:

Your teeth are like pearls with fillings. I want to hug you so hard your bladder bursts.

Oh, Duane, Duane, Duane, hold me like there was no tomorrow, Duane, buffet me like the howling winds of a hurricane of the soul, take me, Duane, and own me. I mean, Wally.

You get me as excited as a second-grader yelling, "ooh, ooh, I know, I know . . ."

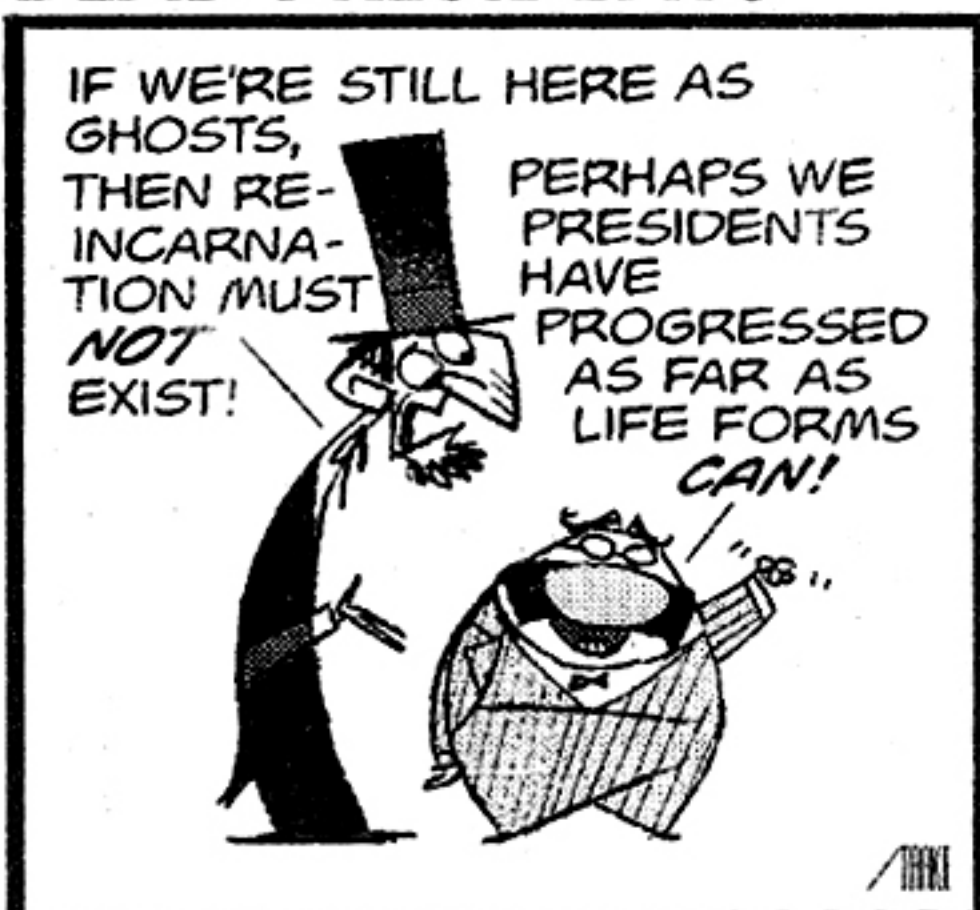
First-prize winner gets a genuine Buzz Aldrin action figure, from the G.I. Joe Classics collection.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

DEAD PRESIDENTS

by Jennifer Hart, Arlington



BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Send Us Ideas, or These Ghosts Are History

This is Week 2 of our reader-generated cartoon strip, "Dead Presidents." In it, the ghosts of deceased chief executives wander Washington interacting with modern America.

Will they continue to haunt us? It depends on you. We're ready and willing to exorcise this strip unless so many great ideas come in we can't bear to pull the trigger.

You don't have to draw the pictures, just send a description of what the panels should look like and what they should say to: Dead Presidents, Style, The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071, or by e-mail to losers@washpost.com. Winning entries will earn their creators at least a few minutes of valuable satisfaction.