

The Style Invitational

Week XIX: A Laff Riot

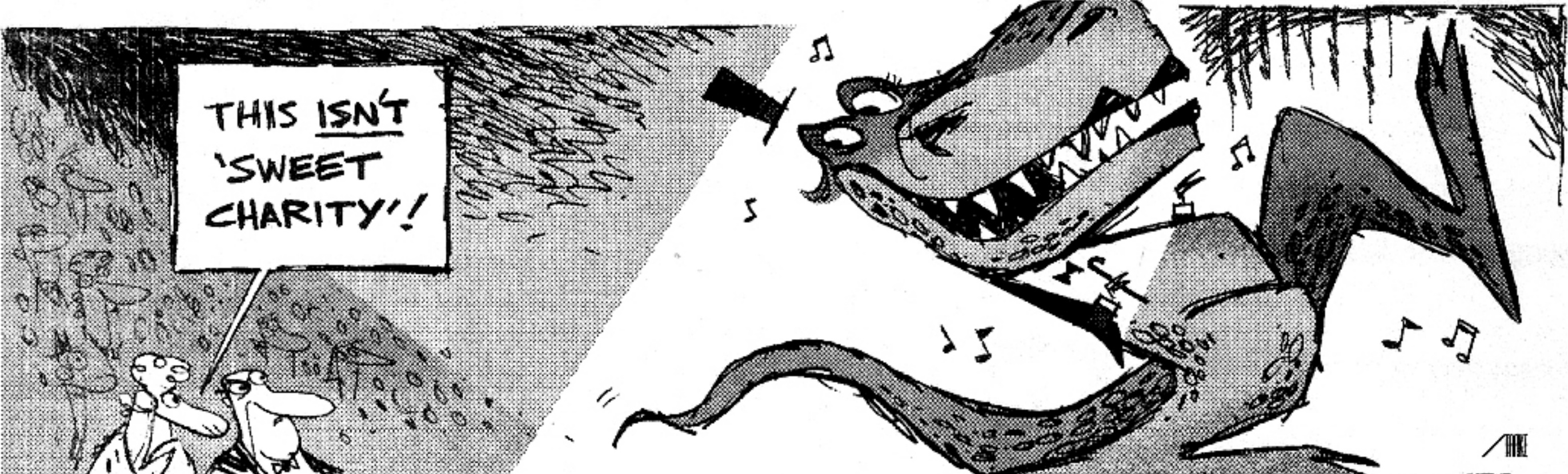
Westinghouse—*n.*, Elmer Fudd's vacation home.

Gore-Tex—*n.*, the crack staff of computer experts who helped the vice president invent the Internet.

Procter & Gamble—*n.*, the risky act of cheating on one's SATs under the watchful eye of a teacher.

Integra—*n.*, a trendy new pill that stiffens one's moral backbone.

Renuzit—*n.*, acne that does not respond to topical medication.



BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Memorex—*n.*, the precise moment that Shirley MacLaine recalls a previous life as a dinosaur.

This Week's Contest is a variation of Liffs, one of the most successful contests from years past. With Liffs, you had to take the name of a place and provide it a new definition. (Peoria—*n.*, That ecstatic feeling one gets from relieving a full bladder.) In this contest, which we'll call Laffs, you must do the same but with the names of companies and/or their commercial products. (Must be a trademark product: You can use "Bronco" but not "sport

utility vehicle." Products may be current, or from the past.) First-prize winner gets a stainless steel object the Czar picked up in an antique store in Charlottesville. It is a heavy-duty tool, with gears and a crank. It looks as if it might be used by a roofer or a plumber or drywall installer, but it turns out it is a previously owned surgical device used to spread one's chest in open-heart surgery. It is worth \$20.

First runner-up wins the tacky but estimable Style Invitational Loser Pen. Other runners-up win the coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt. The Uncle's Pick wins the yet-to-be-designed but soon-to-be-coveted "The Uncle Loves Me" T-shirt. Send your entries via fax to 202-334-4312, or by e-mail to losers@washpost.com, or by U.S. mail to The Style Invitational, Week XIX, c/o The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071. Deadline is Monday, June 12. All entries must include the week number of the contest and your name, postal address and a daytime or evening telephone number. E-mail 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. Editors reserve the right to edit entries for taste or content. Results will be published in four weeks. No purchase required for entry. Employees of The Washington Post, and their immediate relatives, are not eligible for prizes.

REPORT FROM WEEK XV,

in which you were asked to construct your own contest from a mix-and-match menu of formats, subjects and limitations, allowing 64 possible combinations.

◆ **Second Runner-Up:** (A short poem about an undergarment, in the style of a famous author, Allen Ginsberg)

**I saw the best buns of my generation
clad in bikini-cut briefs.
High-hanging models gaunt-cheeked
staring from bulimiated pages
of Victoria's Secret,
whose readers intoned impossible
pantyhosannas.
Who flipped through hip images
juxtaposed in slick IPO capitalist
layouts,
flipping through a dark satin underworld
S/M/L/XL,
flipping backward and forward
mumbling incantations of papercut
delirium, a doomed hollow-eyed joyride
endlessly seeking out London and
France.** (Jonathan Paul, Garrett Park)

◆ **First Runner-Up:**

(An analogy related to a household appliance that contains an unfortunate factual error)
**The vacuum cleaner is the FBI agent of
appliances. Its job is to track down, suck
up and bag the dirt of society. Then, just
like its inventor, J. Edgar Hoover, it
spends its off-duty time in the closet.**
(Susan Reese, Arlington)

◆ **Honorable Mentions:**

(A short poem about an undergarment, in the style of Ernest Lawrence Thayer)

**There is no joy in Mudville.
Our team has given up.
Casey's writhing on the ground.
The dork forgot his cup.**
(Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

(A short poem about a household appliance that would absolutely enrage Marisleyxis Gonzalez)

**My coffee machine does not work.
Though it boils the water it does not perk.
The stuff it spews no one swallows
It's exactly like Marisleyxis Gonzalez.**
(Mary Jane Mitchell, Ellicott City)

(A short poem about an undergarment that contains a clever double-entendre)

**What a strange thing the thong
seems to me.
It takes "brief" quite too literally.
As it flosses your rear,
You will find it, I fear,
Not as fun as it's cracked up to be.**
(Susan Reese, Arlington)

(An analogy about NAFTA and its effect on pending minimum-wage legislation that would absolutely enrage Marisleyxis Gonzalez)

**NAFTA has done to the American worker
what NAMBLA wants to do to
Elian Gonzalez.**
(Mike Elliott, Oberlin, Ohio)

(A short poem about a household appliance, written in the style of John Keats)

**Ode to a Lint Trap
Thine aerie perched amidst the vents,
In multihued magnificence,
Bears wonders washroom
weavers wrought
From soiled shirts and
speed-dried frocks,
Might somewhere in your net be caught
Those e'er elusive missing socks?**
(Steve Fahey, Kensington)

(A short poem about an undergarment that would absolutely enrage Marisleyxis Gonzalez)

**The Cuban nationals were elated
Knowing Elian's return was fated**

◆ **And the winner of the buck grunt call:**

(A short poem about NAFTA and its relationship to pending minimum-wage legislation in the style of Dr. Seuss, that also contains an analogy, an aphorism and a sentence beginning with "Did you ever wonder why," as well as references to an undergarment, a household appliance and a 19th-century event, while committing an unfortunate factual error, executing a clever double-entendre and including a statement that would absolutely enrage Marisleyxis Gonzalez)

**Did you ever wonder why
The lowest wage is not so high?
It's the fault of Uncle Sam.
Am I angry, Sam? I am!
It started very long ago
With a man named James Monroe
Who made us one with other lands
—With peons and their outstretched hands.
James began the paycheck-steal.
An act of Congress nailed the deal.
And sired the monster that is NAFTA.
(Can't you hear the Mexicans' lafta?)
And now that the populace panics and panics
We bring in bureaucrat budget mechanics!
The boys in the press give this barely a mention
As one Cuban brat distracts their attention.
And now our poor wages NAFTA will gnaw
Which just goes to prove that clever old saw:
"Government's like a bad laundry machine:
It goes round and round, yet our undies ain't clean."**
(Mike Elliott, Oberlin, Ohio)

**As his granny glanced
In his underpants
And confirmed he had been Castro-ated.**
(Art Simpsen, Alexandria)

(A short poem about a household appliance containing an unfortunate factual error)

**My hair dryer is a great machine,
A staple in my daily routine.
It runs on clean electric power,
Safe to use in tub or shower.**
(Annette Florence, Ithaca, N.Y.)

(A short poem about an undergarment, in the style of Dr. Seuss, containing a clever double-entendre)

**Yertle the Girdle was ruler of all
In the kingdom of Gluteus Max.
He was ruler of lumpies and
Big plumpy bumpies and
Things that fell through the cracks.**
(Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

(A short poem about an undergarment that contains a clever double-entendre)

**Unhooking bras,
Backseat a-haze!
Everything but . . .
Such heady days!**
(Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)

(A short poem about an undergarment that contains a clever double-entendre)

**These days Tanzania
Is getting pretty chic.
Its fame grows on beaches
Cheek by cheek by cheek.
See, men's slingshot bikinis
Are driving women balmy
Where'er one's appearing,
It's "Dar-es-salami!"**
(Phil Frankenfeld, Washington)

◆ **The Uncle's Pick:**

(An analogy about a household appliance that contains a clever double-entendre)

**My garbage disposal is like my stomach. It eats a
lot of offal; I eat an awful lot.**
(Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)

The Uncle Explains: The joke here is a pun on the words "awful" and "offal." (Not all double-entendres have to be smutty.)