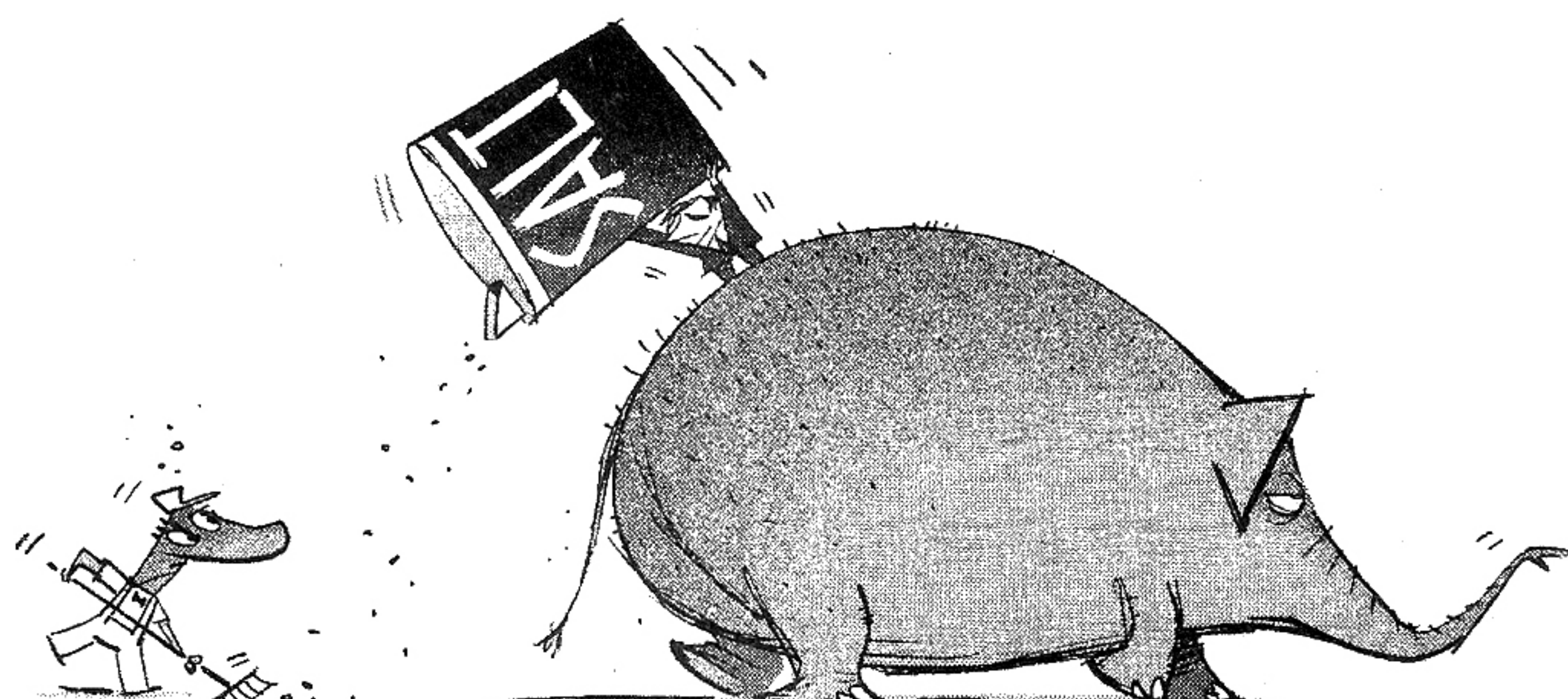


The Style Invitational

Week XXXI: Low Marks



BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

The Grain of Salt (.) Used to indicate how the sentence that follows it is to be taken.

Ex: "(.)Ours is the true party of diversity," said George W. Bush.

The Missed Period —○— Denotes a pregnant pause.

Example: "Of course the president and I will be living in the same home after the election," Hillary Clinton said firmly. —○—"The basement is quite large."

The semicolone √ Used before and after a phrase to warn that it is a euphemism employed to perfume an unpleasant word or concept.

SWF professional mid-30s √full-figured/ ISO SWM . . .

This Week's Contest was suggested by James Pierce of Charlottesville, a high school English teacher who wants you to come up with a new punctuation mark. Tell us what it looks like (you can just describe it if it's not on a keyboard), and what it is used for, and use it in a sentence. First-prize winner gets a 45 rpm recording of Tammy Faye Bakker (pre-scandal, 1980) singing "If It Had Not Been." In her photo on the dust jacket, Tammy Faye's makeup—and we mean no disrespect here—seems to have been applied by a blind mortician.

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 XXXI, c/o The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071. Deadline is Monday, Sept. 4. 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. Entries 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 XXVII,

the tribute to Mary Ann Madden, creator of the now-defunct New York Magazine Competition. You had to create a chain of 25 names, beginning and ending with Mary Ann Madden, with each name linked in some fashion to the name before it. The Academy confers upon Ken Kaufman of Derwood the coveted Dweebie, not only for making a series of links based on his knowledge of the last names of the Professor (Hinkley), Mary Ann (Summers) and Ginger (Grant), but also for linking Vince Lombardi with Molly Pitcher by the obvious fact that there's a restroom named after each on the New Jersey Turnpike. (Ken somehow neglected to mention the full name of the Skipper: Jonas Grumby.)

◆ Second Runner-Up: **Mary Ann Madden, Ginger Grant, Make a Wish Foundation, Jiminy Cricket, Buddy Holly, The Beatles, Liverpool, Mickey Mantle, Joe DiMaggio, Mr. Coffee, Starbucks, The Gap, David Letterman . . .** (Sandra Hull, Arlington)

◆ First Runner-Up: . . . **The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air, ♀, Horse With No Name, John Steed, Mrs. Peel, Gypsy Rose Lee . . .** (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

◆ And the Winner of the Kevorkian CD: **Mary Ann Madden, Mary Tyler Moore, Grant Tinker, Tinky Winky, Jerry Falwell, Oral Roberts, Monica Lewinsky, Bill Clinton, Isis, King Tut, Steve Martin, Mary Martin, J.R. Ewing, Stella Dallas, Stanley Kowalski, Dr. Livingstone, Jonathan Livingston Seagull, Richard Bach, W.A. Mozart, Figaro, Red Barber, Mel Allen, Gracie Mansion, New York, Mary Ann Madden.** (Chris Doyle, Burke)

◆ Honorable Mentions:

Mary Ann Madden, Mary Landrieu, Mack Sennett, Keystone Kops, Police, Sting, Aunt Bee, Barney Fife, Barney Frank, Marvin Gaye, Lee Marvin, Cat Ballou, Tiger Woods, Rose Mary Woods, Eraserhead . . . (Chris Doyle, Burke)

Mary Ann Madden, Marion Barry, Krakatoa, Mount St. Helens, Saint Helena, Napoleon Bonaparte, John Wayne Bobbitt . . . (Chris Doyle, Burke)

Mary Ann Madden, Mary Bono, Sonny, Tree Rollins, Forrest Gump, Gumby, Eddie Murphy, Velvet Jones, Ho Chi Minh . . . (Chris Doyle, Burke)

Mary Ann Madden, Marianne Faithfull, Frank Kathie Lee Gifford . . . (Steve Fahey, Kensington)

. . . Richard Nixon, Mary Pickford . . . (Bruce M. Evans, Washington)

. . . Homer Simpson, Odysseus, Dr. Seuss, Horton, Michael Dukakis . . . (Dave Zarrow, Herndon)

. . . Popeye, Sinbad, Bill Clinton . . . (Kevin and Joan Maloy, McLean)

. . . Jesus Christ, Karen Carpenter, Calista Flockhart . . . (Russ Beland, Springfield)

. . . The Wizard of Oz, The Wizard of Id, Sigmund Freud . . . (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

. . . Jerry Mathers, Sharon Stone . . . (Sarah W. Gaymon, Gambriels)

. . . Hillary Clinton, Mount Everest, Mount Rushmore, Dakota, Rosemary's Baby . . . (John O'Byrne, Dublin)

. . . Tarzan, Cheetah, Rosie Ruiz . . . (Chris Doyle, Burke)

. . . Batman, Batwoman, Tonya Harding, Tai Babilonia, Hammurabi, M.C. Hammer, Tom DeLay, Stonewall Jackson . . . (Chris Doyle, Burke)

. . . Heckle and Jeckle, Russell Crowe, Fort Bragg . . . (Sandra Hull, Arlington)

. . . Fala, Toto, Kansas, Styx, the Stones . . . (Michael J. Hammer, Arlington)

. . . Pee-wee Herman, Jacques Offenbach . . . (Chris Doyle, Burke)

. . . Mr. Potato Head, Dan Quayle, Aaron Spelling . . . (Chris Doyle, Burke)

. . . Hillary Clinton, Capitol Hill, Faith Hill, Mount Sinai . . . (Morgan Hall, Harrisonburg)

. . . Orson Welles, Harry Lime, Jack Lemmon, Edsel Ford . . . (Kevin and Joan Maloy, McLean)

. . . Louis Armstrong, Al Hirt, the Big Hurt, the Big Easy, Monica Lewinsky . . . (William C. Kennard, Arlington)

. . . Renee Descartes, Mr. Ed . . . (Chris Doyle, Burke)

. . . Tony Kornheiser, Werner Heisenberg, Doubting Thomas, John the Baptist, Ethelred the Unready, George W. Bush . . . (Gary Oxford, Scottsville)

◆ The Uncle's Pick:

. . . Peter O'Toole, Mr. Goodwrench . . . (Chris Doyle, Burke)

The Uncle Explains: *This isn't all that funny, but it was the only linkage involving Peter O'Toole that did not go for a cheap, smutty laugh. I commend good taste.*

Next Week: Bad Libs