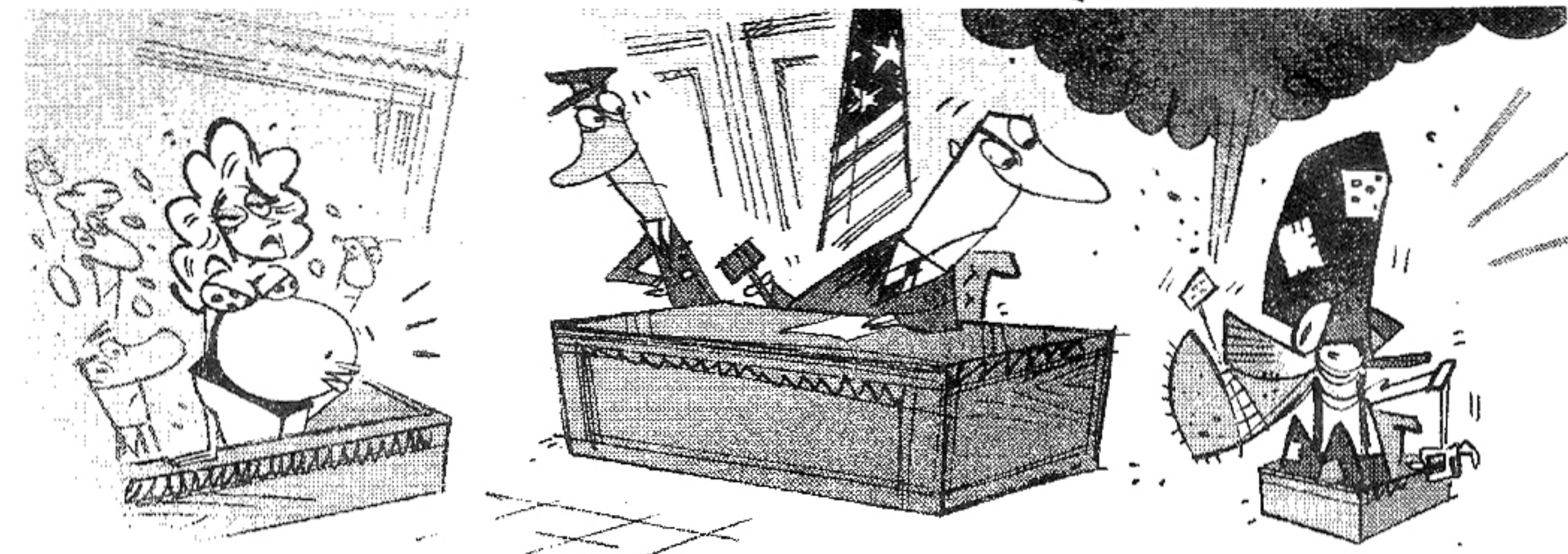


The Style Invitational

Week XXXII: Terse Verse



BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

What would you call the losing party in a successful paternity suit? *Unhappy pappy.*

What is another name for a professional copy editor? *Word nerd.*

What would be a fun science project if your tools were Pat Buchanan and a thermonuclear device? *Politician fission.*

What happened when Darryl Strawberry spied that hooker in the street? *Lanky Yankee hanky-panky.*

This Week's Contest: Ask a question and then answer it with a rhyme, as in the examples above. Your answer can be as many words as you wish, but all must have the same rhyme. First-prize winner gets a life-size stand-up cardboard cutout of Bill Clinton, suitable for snapshot-taking. This is worth \$35.

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 XXXII, c/o The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071. Deadline is Monday, Sept. 11. All entries must include the week num-

ber 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 XXVIII,

in which you were asked to provide a punchline to a joke using a menu of words to complete the sentence "How many (SUBJECTS) does it take to (VERB) an (OBJECT)?" Many people attempted to deviate from these rules and were punished by having their entries summarily defenestrated. The best of these, which still gets no prize, was by David Genser of Arlington: "Why did the International Olympic Committee member fix his dog? Force of habit."

◆ Third Runner-Up: **How many conservatives does it take to lift a baby?** *None—a baby ought to pull itself up by its bootstraps.* (Cindi Rae Caron, Lenoir, N.C.)

◆ Second Runner-Up: **How many politicians does it take to defenestrate a baby?** *One, while attempting to defenestrate the bathwater.* (Carol June Hooker, Landover Hills)

◆ First Runner-Up: **How many British people does it take to embrace a dog?** *The British will never accept Camilla.* (Russ Beland, Annandale)

◆ And the winner of the "Flintstones" alarm clock: **How many French people does it take to produce a bad smell?** *Depends on how bad a smell you want.* (Edward Asher, Mount Airy)

◆ Honorable Mentions:
How many teenagers does it take to destroy a man? *One—Anna Kournikova—but it would be worth it.* (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

How many French people does it take to fix a bad smell? *One. He is called the saucier.* (Phil Frankenfeld, Washington)

How many dogs does it take to appreciate a Mars mission? *Only one if it is a Mars Rover.* (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

How many politicians does it take to ruin a car? *Give me a break, will you?* (Edward M. Kennedy, Boston; Russell Beland, Annandale)

How many lawyers does it take to ruin a sporting event? *One—Peter Angelos.* (Adam Terio, Great Mills)

How many dogs does it take to destroy a house? *Two, apparently. If you'd like to adopt two dogs, or buy a house, please call.* (Mary Lou French, Lorton)

How many lawyers does it take to produce a bad smell? *One, if you don't bury him deep enough in your cellar.* (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

How many conservatives does it take to destroy a House? *Two hundred eighteen, a simple majority.* (Christopher Keene, Arlington; David Genser, Arlington)

How many models-turned-actresses does it take to eat a sandwich? *Three: One to eat it. A second to put a feather down her throat. And a third to hold her hair.* (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

How many computer nerds does it take to defenestrate a man? *None, because true computer nerds never use Windows.* (Ed Wilson, Arlington)

How many models-turned-actresses does it take to jump over a man? *You mean all the way over?* (Edward Asher, Mount Airy)

How many computer nerds does it take to produce a baby? *Only two, unless some are Unix.* (James J. Winebrake, Harrisonburg, Va.)

How many conservatives does it take to appreciate a baby? *Any number, just so long as the baby isn't born yet.* (Russell Beland, Annandale)

How many clergymen does it take to produce a Mars mission? *Only one, if he is good at conversions.* (James Winebrake, Harrisonburg, Va.)

How many Reform Party presidential candidates does it take to punt a dog? *I don't care so long as they try it on a pit bull.* (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

How many philosophers does it take to fix a sandwich? *One, but don't expect a smile or correct change with your Whopper.* (Elden Carnahan, Laurel)

How many French people does it take to ruin a car? *However many are employed at Renault.* (Scott Dillon, Winchester, Va.)

How many philosophers does it take to produce a consensus? *One fewer than the number preventing consensus from being reached.* (Robin Grove, Silver Spring)

How many models-turned-actresses does it take to fix a car? *Three, one to stand by the road and signal for help, and . . . never mind, one is plenty.* (Mike Genz, La Plata)

How many politicians does it take to appreciate a poem? *One, and his pollster.* (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

How many liberals does it take to destroy a flower? *One, when he confiscates its pistils.* (Mike Genz, La Plata)

How many liberals does it take to produce a baby? *2.000000001 persons: The mother, her girlfriend and a spermatozoan.* (Paul J. Kocak, Syracuse)

How many teenagers does it take to appreciate a dictionary? *Too.* (Meg Sullivan, Potomac)

How many "Survivor" contestants does it take to destroy a man? *Look, the ratings may be down a little, but I'm not destroyed. Sheesh.* (Regis Philbin, New York; Meg Sullivan, Potomac)

How many French people does it take to produce a peace treaty? *One, the first to see a German soldier.* (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

◆ The Uncle's Pick: **How many computer nerds does it take to love a woman?** *One. But it must be done with a very special "one" and a lot of "oohhhhs!"* (Phil Frankenfeld, Washington)

The Uncle Explains: *This is a reference to the binary language of computers, adroitly combined with the binary language of true love between monogamous, married adults of opposite sexes.*

Next Week: What's Missing?