

Style Invitational »

REPORT FROM WEEK 813

in which we asked for jokes in the basic form of "I was shocked, shocked that [non-shocking thing]": This contest proved a wee bit problematic (i.e., sucky), despite many valiant Loserly efforts.

The Empress caused confusion in the first place: The original source she cited, from "Casablanca," was a line brimming with wink-wink cynical sarcasm, while the illustrated example for the contest was of the naive-ignorance blonde-joke genre. The Losers diligently sent in both types; the cynical entries, unfortunately, often tended toward what we call the screedy: so passionate and bitter that the poor li'l humor just didn't have a chance.

THE WINNER OF THE INKER

I'm shocked, shocked to learn that teenagers think smoking makes them look cool — rather than making them look like sophisticated adults who happen to be affluent and attractive. — Joe Camel, Winston-Salem, N.C. (Jeff Hazle, Woodbridge)

2 the winner of the two cans of Pocari Sweat energy drink: I'm shocked, shocked to learn that, despite the signs that say "full body massage," the women working there mostly concentrate on one small, er, I mean, particular part of the body. (Russell Beland, Fairfax)

3 I was shocked, shocked to discover, while conducting an independent investigation into unsavory activities in our town, that my neighbor is a hypocrite who goes to strip clubs, particularly the one where Brandi does that special dance at 11:30 almost every Wednesday. (Roy Ashley, Washington)

4 I was shocked, shocked when my wife's fantasy of a threesome involved three different people than mine did. (Charles Koelbel, Houston)

SOUS-PRIZES: HONORABLE MENTIONS

I started using Twitter and I was shocked, SHOCKED, to learn that it has a limit of 140 characters! Goodness, how does one ever finish a tho (John Bunyan, Cincinnati)

I'm shocked that women can talk to men without visualizing us naked. (Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.)

I turned on Fox News hoping to see a hottie or two, and yecch — you should call it Hog and Weasel news! (Chad Pridgen, Marshall, Va.)

I was shocked, shocked to learn that California's mania for all things natural doesn't tend to include hair or breasts. (Beverly Sharp, Washington)

I was shocked when I found out I didn't have to practice, practice, practice to get to Carnegie Hall. I just took a cab up Seventh Avenue. (Larry Yungk, Arlington)

I was shocked, shocked how many people there are in other countries who don't understand English, even when it's shouted. (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

I was shocked, shocked to find that the first person I met in Petersburg, Va., was female. (George Smith, Frederick)

I ws shokt 2 lrn th Mprss ddnt wanna rn a txtng cntst Bcuz sh ddnt thnk NE1 wd wanna rd it (Ellen Raphaeli, Falls Church)

I was shocked to discover that partisan politics could survive the last election! — James Carville (Russell Beland)

I was shocked to learn that that there are Farsi editions of Bette Midler albums! — Mahmoud A., Tehran (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

I was shocked to learn that "Toy Story 2" was not based on a true story, like the first one. (Russell Beland)

I was shocked to realize that Obama still hasn't been able to find a place in the administration for John Edwards. (Russell Beland)

I was shocked that the Nationals game didn't sell out, even with the Tony Williams bobblehead promotion. (Kevin Dopart)

I'm flabbergasted that the morning-after pill didn't cure my hangover. (Chris Doyle)

After seeing all the videos on the Internet, I was really disappointed in my trip to Hilton Head. (Mark Eckenwiler, Washington)

I was shocked when I went to see "Casablanca" for the fourth time and still never heard Humphrey Bogart say, "Play it again, Sam." (John O'Byrne, Dublin)

I was shocked, shocked by what the police did after I told them where they could stick their damn Taser! (Steven Amter, Washington, a First Offender)

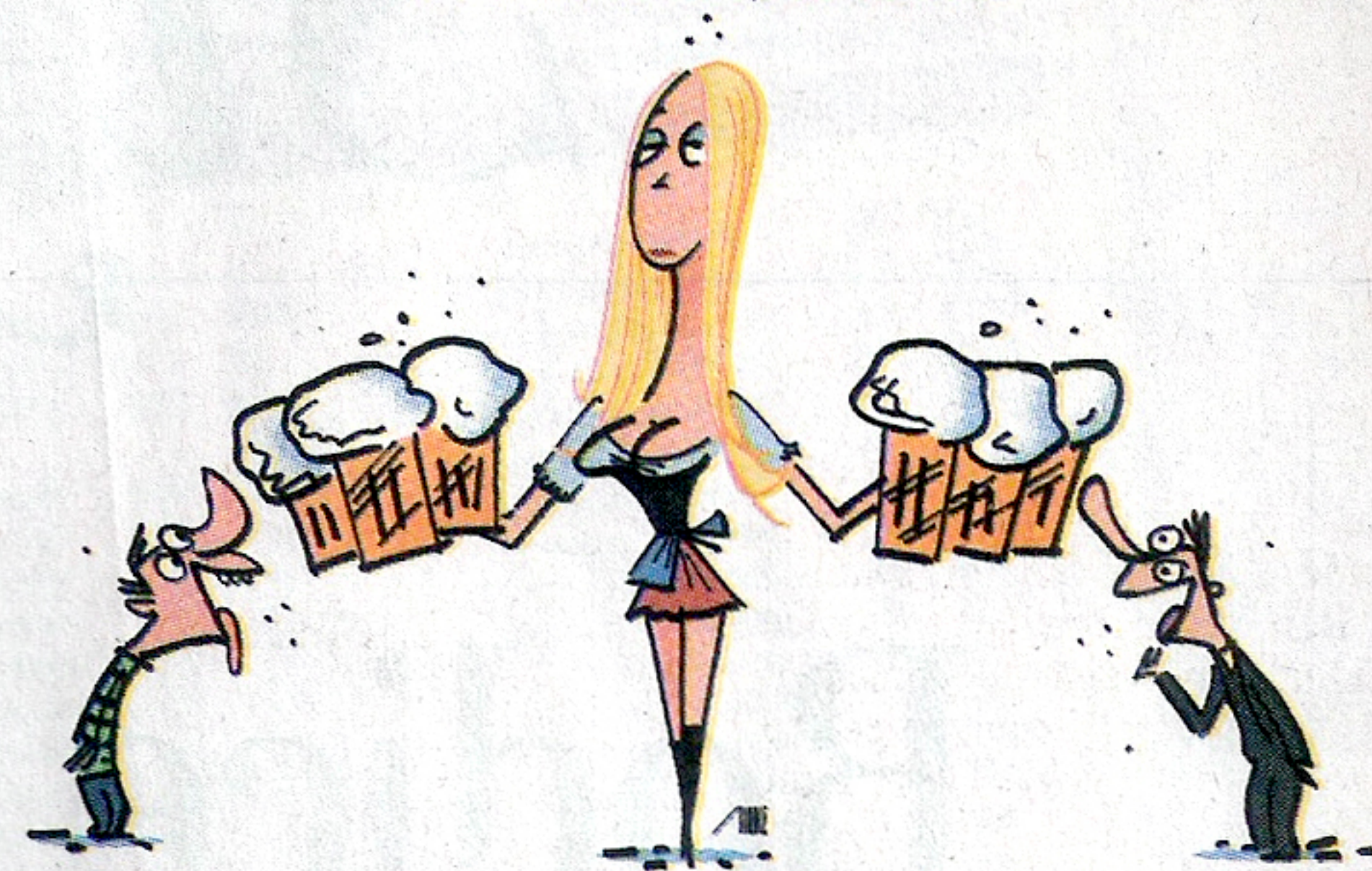
I'm shocked, shocked that I wasn't. — B. Franklin (Kevin Dopart)

I'm shocked, shocked not to find gambling in this establishment! — M. O'Malley, Annapolis (Sam Engel, Columbia, a First Offender)

I was shocked, shocked to discover, while hacking into the e-mail accounts of a few other Style Invitational contestants, that some of these people will do anything to get ink. (Roy Ashley)

Next Week: There Will Be Bloodline, or Foal Me Twice
ONLINE DISCUSSION *Have a question for the Empress or want to talk to some real Losers? Join the discussion group the Style Conversational, at washingtonpost.com/styleconversational.*

THIS WEEK'S CONTEST



BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Week 817: Flopflip

Alefem: St. Pauli Girl.

Le Ma: A more polite use of a term for "mother" to define a nasty man.

Kingban: No job for you, Mr. Ex-Hotshot Financier.

O boyoboyoboy, a neologism contest we've never done before! This idea is from the unstoppable Loser Kevin Dopart, and it's wonderfully simple: **This week: Reverse the first half and second half of a word or name and define the result, as in the examples above. Count the letters, not the syllables, to determine the halfway point. For words with an odd number of letters, you can tag the middle one onto your choice of halves.** We don't want to make it an out-and-out rule, but the Empress has a hunch that the definitions in most of the inking entries will relate in some way to the original words. You can hyphenate the word or break it into two words: **Send no more than 25 entries:** If it turns out to be a great contest, we'll run it again.

Winner gets the Inker, the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives, thanks to Zack Beland and his father, Biggest Loser Ever Russell, a nifty book called "Paper Airplanes With Dollar Bills," with instructions on making same. If you're going to throw your money away, why not have it do a smart loop-de-loop first? Currency not included: We are nondenominational here at the Invitational Palace.



BY RUSSELL BELAND

This week's prize: Plane is so not included.

Other runners-up win a coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt or Loser Mug. Honorable Mentions get one of the lusted-after Style Invitational Magnets. First Offenders get a smelly tree-shaped air "freshener" (Fir Stink for their First Ink). One prize per entrant per week. Send your entries by e-mail to losers@washpost.com or by fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Tuesday, May 26. Put "Week 817" in the subject line of your e-mail, or it risks being ignored as spam. Include your name, postal address and phone number with your entry. Contests are judged on the basis of humor and originality. All entries become the property of The Washington Post. Entries may be edited for taste or content. Results will be published June 13. No purchase required for entry. Employees of The Washington Post, and their immediate relatives, are not eligible for prizes. Pseudonymous entries will be disqualified. This week's Honorable Mentions name is by Mark Eckenwiler; the revised title for next week's results was submitted by both Ed Gordon and Russell Beland.