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Style

# Style Invitational Week 982: The parody line



(Bob Staake for The Washington Post)

By **Pat Myers**

August 2, 2012

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,  
A chill runs up my spine:  
My pal's first name's escaped my thought,  
But he remembers mine.

Here's a different take on our annual-or-so song parody contests, this one suggested by Matt Monitto, an Elon University student and one of the Invite's most intrepid parodists: **Set your own, humorous words to the tune of a well-known song — except that you must preserve one of the original lines**, as in Matt's example above. Your song shouldn't be more than one verse and one chorus; the original line may be in either of them (indicate the original line plus the name of the song it's from).

Winner gets the [Inkin' Memorial](#), the bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives an adorable [plush Helicobacter pylori](#) ulcer bacterium, complete with flagella hanging out of its mouth (it also has cute, rather unbacterial eyes and fur). About 4.2 zillion times life size. Donated by life-size Loser Dave Prevar.

**Other runners-up** win their choice of a coveted [Style Invitational Loser T-shirt](#), a yearned-for [Loser Mug](#) or the ardently desired [Grossery Bag](#). Honorable mentions get a lusted-after [Loser magnet](#). First Offenders get a smelly, tree-shaped air "freshener" (Fir Stink for their first ink). E-mail entries to [losers@washpost.com](mailto:losers@washpost.com) or fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Monday, Aug. 13; results published Sept. 2 (online Aug. 31). No more than 25 entries per entrant per week. Include "Week 982" in your e-mail subject line or it might be ignored as spam. Include your real name, postal address and phone number with your entry. See contest rules and guidelines at [wapo.st/inviterules](http://wapo.st/inviterules). The subhead for this week's honorable mentions is by Beverley Sharp; the alternative headline for the "next week's results" line is



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The perils of being a woman who's just asking to be left alone

by Tom Witte. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at [on.fb.me/invdev](https://on.fb.me/invdev).

## Report from Week 979

in which we asked simply for ways to tick people off. Given that we asked this in the wake of the Washington area power outages, many people equated the verb “PO” with the noun “P----o.”



Cute as a bug: This week's second prize, a plush *Helicobacter pylori* bacterium. That's the ulcer one.

### The winner of the Inkin' Memorial

Whenever a colleague swears, tell him, “Every time you say something like that, a fresh tear trickles down the cheek of Our Savior.” (*John Shea, Philadelphia*)

### 2. Winner of the Annoying Orange key chain and Lil' Stinker Bubbles:

When the woman in your life tells you that “I need your support,” cup her breasts. (*Dion Black, Washington*)

3. In the supermarket, when a parent is refusing the request of a whining toddler, rush toward the product and load up your cart, exclaiming, “I LOVE these things! They're the BEST! I'm going to have as MANY as I WANT!” (*Amanda Yanovitch, Midlothian, Va.*)

4. Ask a woman in a bar, “Hi, babe, can I buy you a light beer?” (*David Genser, Poway, Calif.*)

### Tickling off: The seconds – Honorable mentions

Fill in a half-dozen incorrect answers in the crossword of the in-flight magazine, then leave it in the seat-back pocket for the next passenger. (*Christopher Lamora, Guatemala City*)

When reading responsively during a religious service, loudly try out various speech defects. (*Mike Gips, Bethesda, Md.*)

When arriving at your Red Line station, jump up from your seat, yell, “This is a Green Line train?!” and bolt out the door. As the train departs, watch the confused tourists hurriedly consult their pocket maps. (*Richard Wong, Derwood, Md.*)

Hashtag all sentences: in e-mails, documents and conversation.  
#hackneyedjoke #nomagnetforyou (*Martin Bancroft, Rochester, N.Y.; Daria Zahalsky, Vienna, Va., a First Offender*)

Use Metrorail's “doors closing” chimes as your ring tone for your daily commute. (*Anna Day, Rockville, Md.; Kathy Atkins, Fredericksburg, Va., a First Offender*)

When you call tech support and the guy asks if you have a pen handy to write down the case number, ask what a penhandy is. (*Gregory Koch, Storrs, Conn.*)

Answer the phone by saying, “It is I.” (*Ann Martin, Bracknell, England*)

When you're on jury duty, bring a daisy into the deliberation room and start to pull out each petal while saying “Guilty . . . not guilty . . .” (*Mark Raffinan, Reston, Va., a First Offender*)

Bring one of those huge foam “#1” fingers to the Metropolitan Opera. (*David*

5 Perspective  
Carolyn Hax: A kiss-and-don't-tell  
with an ex-boyfriend's buddy



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*Kleinbard, Jersey City)*

Taking a cue from tennis stars, scream-grunt while performing any task: Pushing the elevator button? “Huh-aaaaiiee!” Turning the doorknob? “Huh-aaaaiiee!” Playing your Scrabble tiles? “Huh-aaaaiiee!” (*Bird Waring, Larchmont, N.Y.; John McCooey, Rehoboth Beach, Del.*)

When someone says, “Glad to meet you,” reply, “Why?” (*Travis McKinney, San Antonio*)

Post a comment under someone’s Facebook photo of cute kittens: “Cats have their place, and that place is under water.” (*Elden Carnahan, Laurel, Md.*)

In conversations, let your gaze drift gradually to the left until you’re looking at a space about a foot from the other person’s head. Suddenly say “Ding!” and shift your attention back to the face. (*Larry Gray, Union Bridge, Md.*)

At a watch-the-game party, stand up and announce that you are NOT ready for some football, nor are you ready to rock. (*Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase, Md.*)

Make this your answering machine message: “Hello? [pause] Hello, is anyone there? [pause] Could you speak louder? [pause] If anyone is there, hang up and call again.” (*Art Grinath, Takoma Park, Md.*)

When you’re about to pass gas, first strike the John Travolta disco pose from “Saturday Night Fever.” (*Drew Bennett, West Plains, Mo.*)

Carry a box of apostrophes with you, so you can insert them around town in correctly punctuated signs. (*Bruce Niedt, Cherry Hill, N.J.*)

Breathe. — B. Obama, Washington (*Jeff Hazle, Woodbridge, Va.*)

Stage-whisper “That’s what He said!” throughout the minister’s sermon. (*Rob Huffman, Fredericksburg, Va.*)

On the Metro, loudly suck your teeth, and if somebody looks at you, wink. (*Bird Waring*)

Ask your waiter what members of his tribe typically have for lunch. (*David Genser*)

When asked your name, preface it with an emphasized “the.” (*THE Marty McCullen, Gettysburg, Pa.*)

When someone says, “May I ask you a question?” reply, “You already have and I only allow one per day.” (*Drew Bennett*)

Constantly interrupt people to make pointless rhymes: If they say they’ve been to New York, ask them, “Did you eat with a fork?” If they say they’re from Detroit, reply, “Did you meet with Jon Voight?” (*Robert Schechter, Dix Hills, N.Y.*)

Five minutes before the Super Bowl starts, tell your husband that you reset the V-chip password to your anniversary date. (*Dion Black*)

Whenever you disagree with someone, start your rebuttal with “*Au contraire, mon ami.*” (*Roy Ashley, Washington*)

Apparently, just ask my wife for sex. (*Kevin Cuddihy, Fairfax, Va.*)

Put “URGENT” in the subject line of an email to a co-worker, then state in the email that you’d forgotten to say thank you after borrowing that pen. (*Anna Day*)

When fundraising for police charities, always call on a Saturday night,



identify yourself as Officer Mumble-Mumble and pause for several seconds. This is guaranteed to concentrate the minds of all parents of teenage drivers. (Harold Mantle, Lafayette, Calif.)

And last: Tick off all the perennially unsuccessful Style Invitational contestants by getting ink on your first try. (Doug Norwood, Washington, a First Offender)

**Still running — deadline Monday night — is the [Week 981](#) contest for funny test questions for particular jobs.**

Visit the online discussion group [The Style Conversational](#), in which the Empress discusses today's new contest and results along with news about the Loser Community — and you can vote for your favorite among the inking entries, since you no doubt figured the Empress chose the wrong winner. If you'd like an e-mail notification each week when the Invitational and Conversational are posted online, write to the Empress at [losers@washpost.com](mailto:losers@washpost.com) (note that in the subject line) and she'll add you to the mailing list. And on Facebook, join the far more lively group [Style Invitational Devotees](#) and chime in.

**Next week's results: Def Jam, or Defternitions**, our "reologism" contest ([Week 980](#)) to improve on the Losers' own neologism entries.



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#### Pat Myers

Pat Myers is editor and judge of The Style Invitational, The Washington Post's page for clever, edgy humor and wordplay. In the role since December 2003, she has posted and judged more than 700 contests. She also writes the weekly Style Conversational column and runs the Style Invitational Devotees page on Facebook. [Follow](#) 

### The Post Recommends

#### Dershowitz says federal probe in New York, not Mueller, is 'greatest threat' to Trump

"There are no constitutional defenses to what the Southern District is investigating," Dershowitz, an informal Trump adviser, said Sunday.

1 day ago



#### Opinion

#### Distinguished persons of the week: Breaking into Trump's inner circle

Who stood tall?

2 days ago



#### Trump recently sought his lawyers' advice on possibility of pardoning Manafort, Giuliani says

Trump attorney Rudolph Giuliani said Trump was seeking advice on pardons generally, and was upset that Manafort faced criminal exposure on charges unrelated to his work on



