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Style

# Style Invitational Week 962: Be a smart-ask; and the wellest wellerisms



(Bob Staake for The Washington Post)

By Pat Myers

March 8, 2012

**“They also spent the most time in elite undergraduate and law school settings.”** (*Washington Post*, March 5, in an article about the current Supreme Court)

**Q. I’ve heard your lab rats are the healthiest, but why do you say they’re the smartest on campus?**

Here’s a contest we’ve run at least nine times already, but not for more than two years. It was requested by Biggest Loser Ever Russell Beland, who, incredibly, seems to have found life outside the Invite and hasn’t had an entry published since his 1,505th blot of ink 30 weeks ago. **This week: Take any sentence (or a major part of it) that appears in The Post or in an article on washingtonpost.com anytime from March 9 through March 19 and supply a question it could answer.** For stories and ads in the print Post, include the page number; for online articles, please copy part of the story or the URL of the page where you found the sentence. More guidelines for this contest appear in [the Style Conversational](#), the Empress’s weekly column about the new contest and results.

Winner gets [the Inker](#), the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives — directly from India, where it was picked up (gingerly) by Loser Beverley Sharp — a very pretty little blank-page journal of paper made with cow dung (it’s very fibrous, evidently). We will accept snail-mail entries to the Invite only if they are on cow-dung paper.

**Other runners-up** win their choice of a coveted Style Invitational [Loser T-shirt](#) or yearned-for [Loser Mug](#). Honorable mentions get a lusted-after [Loser magnet](#). First Offenders get a tree-shaped air “freshener” (FirStink for their first ink). E-mail entries to [losers@washpost.com](mailto:losers@washpost.com) or fax to 202-334-4312.



## Most Read Lifestyle

- Analysis**  
 A short investigation into Trump's claims of 'RIGGED' Google results against him
- John Goodman reveals Roseanne will be killed off in 'The Conners' spinoff**
- Perspective**  
 The perils of being a woman who's just asking to be left alone
- Why our culture's mild obsession**

Deadline is Monday, March 19; results published April 8 (online April 6). No more than 25 entries per entrant per week. Include “Week 962” 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 [washingtonpost.com/styleinvitational](http://washingtonpost.com/styleinvitational). The revised title for next week is by Kevin Dopart; the subhead for this week’s honorable mentions is by Samuel Enriquez of Annapolis, Md., a First Offender. Join the Style Invitational Devotees on Facebook at [on.fb.me/invdev](https://on.fb.me/invdev).

### Report from Week 958

in which we asked for wellerisms, wordplays that take the form of a quotation followed by something that usually makes the reader see a different meaning in the quote:

### The winner of the Inker

“God bless us every one!” said the president of the Allergic Rhinitis Society as the banquet began. (*Jason Russo, Annandale, Va.*)

2. **Winner of the little bobble-butt bucking horse:** “Give me a ballpark figure,” Greta said, asking the vendor for six hot dogs with the works. (*Lawrence McGuire, Waldorf, Md.*)

3. “No, I’m not free tonight!” responded the indignant prostitute. (*Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn, Va.*)

4. “Drop dead,” ordered the pilot as the Ashes to Ashes plane flew lazy circles over the target zone. (*Dan Steinbrocker, Los Angeles*)

### Well . . . er: Honorable mentions

“Heads will roll,” vowed the bulldozer operator before clearing a row of port-a-johns. (*Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.*)

“Well, it’s a growth industry,” said the oncologist. (*Kathye Hamilton, Annandale, Va.*)

“Your paintings pass with flying colors,” said the art show curator to Jackson Pollock. (*Dixon Wragg, Santa Rosa, Calif.*)

“Now I can retire in peace,” said the old mechanic, admiring the new hydraulic lift in his home garage. (*Andrew Ballard, London, a First Offender*)

“You can count on me for model behavior,” my daughter said just before she put her fingers down her throat. (*Ward Kay, Vienna, Va.*)

“Abandon hope, all ye who enter here!” roared the Devil as he raised his arm to reveal his fiery pit. (*Dudley Thompson, Cary, N.C.*)

“Tourists are never right,” fumed the D.C. commuter who was blocked on a [Metro escalator](#). (*Kevin Dopart, Washington*)

“There I was, at my wit’s end,” said Mrs. Robert Benchley after her husband expired. (*Mae Scanlan, Washington*)

“Ctrl-Alt-Del!” the cowboy ordered the shoemaker. (*Fazli Sameer, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, a First Offender*)

“Temper, temper!” Sir Gawain admonished the smith. (*Ann Martin, Bracknell, England*)

“Don’t forget your stub,” said the Saudi Sharia Court parking lot attendant.

with Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen  
may never end



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



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(Kevin Dopart)

"Your problem is monumental," said my Jamaican psychiatrist. (Barbara Turner, Takoma Park, Md.)

"Here I am, at your service!" he said with a grin as he filed past his ex-wife's coffin. (Beverley Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

"That's a perverse payment system," complained the poet's agent to the publisher. (Jerry Deily, Charlottesville, Va., a First Offender)

"I'm going postal," said Tipper, confiding her divorce plans. (Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase, Md.)

"You are dismissed," said the doctor after Chaz Bono's successful surgery. (Barbara Turner)

"Not by the hair of my chin, chin, chin," said Gov. Chris Christie when asked whether he'd run for president. (Mark Wales, Washington, a First Offender)

"The accident left her looking quite homely," said the Munchkin forensic investigator. (Trevor Kerr, Chesapeake, Va.)

"This is untenable," sniffed the makeup artist as he worked on the Bo Derek wannabe. (Melissa Balmain, Rochester, N.Y.)

"All she does is yak," lamented the Sherpa about his wife's cooking. (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village, Md.)

"I must deserve you," said the waitress as she transferred plates to the correct table. (Jeff Contompasis)

"I feel so weak — I'm totally distressed," said Samson. (Barry Koch, Catlett, Va.; Jeff Loren, Manassas, Va.)

"We are reaching out our hands to brothers and sisters of every creed," proclaimed the TV evangelist, who eagerly accepted all denominations. (Susan Thompson, Cary, N.C.)

"Let us repair to the courthouse," said Richard Burton to Elizabeth Taylor in 1975. (Mae Scanlan)

"Keeping geese has some painful aspects," mused the farmer, rubbing the seat of his pants. (Martin Bancroft, Rochester, N.Y.)

"A man is known by the company he keeps," said Ken Lay. (Jason Russo)

"It appears I was distracted," complained the street preacher, as the thief made off with his pamphlets. (Jerry Birchmore, Springfield, Va.)

"Don't get your panties in a wad," warns the opening line of the Victoria's Secret employee training manual. (Gary Crockett)

"I'm looking for a sleeveless sweater," said Rick Santorum, right before he walked into the thumping confines of the dance club. (Chris Muldrow, Fredericksburg, Va., a First Offender)

"I must remember to take everything out of the taxi driver's trunk," noted Jeffrey Dahmer. (Kevin Dopart)

"I'm nonplussed!" screamed the young woman upon finding out she wasn't pregnant. (Mike Gips, Bethesda, Md.)

"You gotta fly by the seat of your pants," said the instructor, noting that I had my jeans on backwards. (Gary Crockett)

"We don't want that to recur," said the breeder after his pedigreed pooch



mated with a mull. (*Katny Et-Assat, Maaaleton, Wis.*)

"Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," said the man arrested for groping women on the subway. (*Robert Schechter, Dix Hills, N.Y.*)

"Boy, I'm bored!" announced the shop teacher right after his drill mishap. (*Jeff Contompasis*)

Visit the online discussion group [The Style Conversational](#), where 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: Out of Network, or Channel Crossings**




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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 Trump's campaign.

