Style Invitational Week 991: Tour de Fours IX: V-O-T-E now; and those messed-with heads

By Pat Myers
October 4, 2012

Vel-veto: A smooth, easy-to-swallow but ultimately cheesy rejection: “He gave her the old ‘it’s not you, it’s me’ vel-veto.”

Love-toad: The once and future prince.

Given that the results to this contest will be published the weekend before Election Day, we figured that the letter block for our ninth annual Tour de Fours neologism contest ought to be pertinent (but shouldn’t be a-r-g-h).

This week: Create a new word or two-word term containing the letter block V, O, T and E and define it, as in the examples above; those four letters may be in any order, but there may be no other letters between them. Hyphenate and capitalize (or not) as you wish. Using the word in a funny sentence is fine; using the word in a blah sentence is unfine.

Winner gets the Inkin’ Memorial, the bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a vintage but unused U.S. military surplus “Supporter, Athletic” from 1946. Donated by Loser Andrea Kelly, who dates from well after that. It’s the Style Invitational, where we give you an old jock for your new joke.

Other runners-up win their choice of a yearned-for Loser Mug or the ardently desired Grossery Bag. Honorable mentions get a hated-after Loser magnet. First Offenders receive a smelly, tree-shaped air “freshener” (FirSthink for their first ink). Email entries to losers@washpost.com or fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Monday, Oct. 15; results published Nov. 4 (online Nov. 1). No more than 25 entries per entrant per week. Include “Week 991” 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. The subhead for this contest is entirely serious.
week's honorable mentions is by Beverly Sharp; the alternative headline in
the "next week's results" line is by Chris Doyle. Join the lively Style
Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at on.fb.me/indev.

Report from Week 987

our perennial contest in which we asked contestants to take any headline
from a week's worth of The Washington Post and washingtonpost.com and
follow it with a made-up "bank head," or secondary headline, that either
misinterpreted the original or commented humorously on it:

The winner of the Inkin' Memorial

(Aactual Post headline) Romney: 'The sky seems to be crying'
(Fake bank head) 'It's called rain, sir,' explains butler who had accidentally
lowered boss's umbrella (Melissa Balmain, Rochester, N.Y.)

2. Winner of the Japanese teeny toy potty with rubbery yellow
mini-poo: Nats throw away chance at the end, fall to Atlanta
New version of 'Gone With the Wind' is big hit in Ga. (Steve Honley,
Washington)

3. With Senate at stake, GOP awaits Akin's next move
Many hope it's to Paraguay (Howard Waldman, Columbia, Md.)

4. Rookie Morris gives ground game just what it needs
New Redskins chef makes perfectly seasoned squirrelburgers (Larry
Carnahan, Arlington, Va.)

The outer banks: honorable mentions

Thousands protest new austerity cuts
'Keep government's hands off our austerity!' protesters chant (Gary
Crockett, Chevy Chase, Md.)

Bound for greatness, but not yet
New Obama campaign slogan announced (David Ballard, Reston, Va.)

Councilman's license suspended in past
Brown says he can't produce document because of 'time warp' problem
(Rob Cohen, Potomac, Md.)

Obama reaches out to middle-class voters in Colorado
GOP accuses president of 'inappropriate touching' (David Genser, Poway,
Calif.)

Capitals players prepare for lockout
Hide extra Verizon Center key under mat (Rob Wolf, Gaithersburg, Md.)

Garcon 'very limited' in practice
Matteo de ulvencaire for insufficient snottiness (Ira Allen, Bethesda, Md.)

Wooly Mammoth goes to the mat, artfully
But mastodon can't master backflip on the balance beam (Gary Sampiner,
Rockville, Md., a First Offender)

Prince Harry back in Afghanistan
Palace relieved he escaped Vegas to safer locale (Brad Alexander,
Wranmore, Australia)

Reiley loses job at MWAA
Aunt Edith deemed much better at making kissing noises (Christopher
Laurena, Guatemala City)
A rockin' place to be
Veranda is most popular area at Lazy Acres Nursing Home (Mae Scanlan, Washington)

Chris Christie versus the world
'May the bigger equator win,' says N.J. governor (Robert Schechter, Dix Hills, N.Y.)

After robbery, church won't change open-door policy
Action delayed until door is recovered (Elden Carnahan, Laurel, Md.)

Lessons learned in College Park
Experimental academic offering complements football program (Elden Carnahan)

Where are all the Redskins bars?
Fans complain of poor cellphone reception at FedEx (Matt Monito, Elon, N.C.)

 Tuskegee Airman broke barriers
WWII Army deducted barrier cost from his paycheck each month (Mel Loftus, Alexandria, Va.)

A 60-day drive to Election Day gets underway
Romney vows this time Seamus will ride inside car (Robert Schechter)

DNA considered in MacDonald case
Farmer to stick with EIEIO (Jonathan Hardis, Gaithersburg, Md.)

Citing leak, Netanyahu defers security meeting
'When you gotta go... prime minister explains (Roy Ashley, Washington)

He had the world on a violin string — until it unraveled
New theory of creation poses challenge to Flying Spaghetti Monster (Adam and Russell Beland, Fairfax, Va.)

The top cars for tailgating
Models with good brakes top the list (Zack Beland, Fairfax, Va.)

A president cornered
Obama stunned to find his office no longer oval (Ira Allen)

Take the kids this weekend
Desperate for break, local mom goes public with plea (Beverly Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

Born with a one-way ticket south [an article about dragonfly migration]
Breast-sagging linked to genetics (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn, Va.)

Love of the Boss crosses party lines
Holidays especially tricky time for office romance (Steve Honley)

Vick salvages ugly opener
Inexplicably scores in bar with 'Hey, baby, what's your sign?' (Mel Loftus)

Friday's top rushers, passers
Police release list of Beltway's most obnoxious drivers (Beverly Sharp)

Become a snap organizer
Clothing factories offer jobs you've never even heard of (Christopher Lamora)

Precipitation, participation, perspiration
'...preparation! THAT's what I was supposed to do,' Eastwood says (Gary Crockett)
Medvedev: Release three punk rockers
A. 'And give them a five-minute head start' (Gary Crockett)
B. Hope he didn't really say 'rockets' (Marty McCullen, Gettysburg, Pa.)

Bartlett says he regrets remark
'Just wanted to get in my own dang book,' says quotation compiler (Mike Gips, Bethesda, Md.)

Obama doubles down
White House pillows restuffed with extra feathers (Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.)

Maryland at Temple
Jewish holiday draws entire state population (Rick Haynes, Boynton Beach, Fla.)

Clinton urges calm as Asian nations feud
Stress, for once, dampens ex-president's libido (Roger Hammons, Ashburn, Va.)

Recognizing the sacrifices of grandparents
Continued denial of Nana and Pop-Pop's Santeria rituals is futile (Jeff Contompasis)

Breast-feeding professor spurs debate
'If students can have a snack in class, why can't I?' he asks (Kevin Daport, Washington)

Ovarian cancer screenings not recommended as a routine
Miss America contestant must find new talent (Bird Waring, Larchmont, N.Y.; Melissa Balmain)

Strasburg decision will be felt for years to come
Pitcher invited to choose Nats' new bell caps for next decade, goes retro (Pie Snelson, Silver Spring, Md.)

More officials on board to connect Loudoun, Prince William
Critics claim a road would work better (Barry Koch, Catlett, Va.)

Millions saved by teleworking
New no-visit strategy pays off for Jehovah's Witnesses (Steve Honley)

Nicaragua refuses departure of U.S. citizen after prison release
Farting in jail cell earns him another 30 days (Rob Wolf, Gaithersburg, Md.)

And last: Influential imbeciles
But others claim Style Invitational Losers actually have no clout (Roy Ashley, Washington)

Still running — deadline Monday night — is Week 990, jokes about people with the same last name. See wapo.st/inv990.

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 (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: A Faster Break, or Fools Speed Ahead, the contest for how to make sports and other activities go faster or be more exciting

Going Out Guide newsletter
What to do, where to eat and where to go in the D.C. area — a can’t-miss list delivered Mondays and Thursdays.

Sign me up

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 campaign.