

# ANSWERS AND SOLUTIONS

## WEBSTERIAN WEIRDIES Darryl H. Francis

1. CHIN, a Chinese unit of weight; DJINN, a supernatural spirit; KIN, an 11th century Chinese Tatar dynasty. All three of these words are pronounced as if they were spelled JIN.
2. OSINOCYTE is a misprint for EOSINOCYTE, a white blood cell that is easily stained by eosin. It is listed under the E section. The fact that OSINOCYTE is a misprint will explain why the term has never appeared in any other dictionary.
3. BALGE. This occurs in the two-word term BALGE YELLOW, a brilliant yellow color. If the reader found a word other than BALGE we would be delighted to hear of it.
4. AS has six different pronunciations according to Webster's Second. Six meanings corresponding to those pronunciations are: i) the plural of A; ii) the adverb meaning "for instance"; iii) a hole made in one stroke at golf; iv) a narrow ridge of sandy drift; v) a Roman bronze coin; vi) a town in western Czechoslovakia. We make no attempt here to represent the actual sounds of each word. We leave the interested reader to check these for himself.
5. The two words OOLLY, a lump of iron, and OOLOGICAL, pertaining to the study of birds' eggs, are given in the wrong order. A second example from above the line is the following: the noun CROONER and the verb CROON are given in the wrong order. CROON means to wail, and a CROONER is one who croons. If the reader found other examples above the line we would most certainly like to hear of them.

## A CRUCIAL QUIZ Darryl H. Francis

The number of points scored for each word is given after the word.

archocystosyrinx (16); blennothorax (12); christianomastix or coadministratrix (16); dacryosyrinx or dispensatrix (12); englerophoenix or erysipelothrix (14); fornicatrix (11); glossanthrax (12); hydropneumothorax (17); impersonatrix or impropiatrix or interlocutrix or interrogatrix (13); janitrix or jasponyx (8); knisteneaux (11); lithanthrax (11); mesoappendix or metrosalpinx (12); nasopharynx or negotiatrix (11); odontopteryx (12);

pneumohydrothorax (17); quadruplex (10); rickettsialpox (14); seropneumothorax (16); trophothylax (12); ultraorthodox (13); versificatrix (13); wheelbox (8); xylanthrax (10); yunx (4); zelatrix (8).

KICKSHAWS David L. Silverman

The Epithet Game: 1. fervent servant 2. prosaic mosaic 3. truculent succulent 4. granite planet 5. raucous caucus 6. dire choir 7. puerile mural 8. saline praline 9. helot zealot 10. fecund second

Strictly for the Birdwatchers: 1. ortolan 2. reedowl 3. redwing 4. creeper 5. woodowl 6. lapwing

A Game of Crash: Yang's gamble in using 3 letters twice paid off well. Nevertheless, Yin has the best chance of getting his target word on shot #6. The only possibilities are HONEY and SUGAR. Yang must select from FERRY, KAYAK and SLOOP. Without considering psychology of target word selection, i.e. if Yin and Yang number their candidate words randomly, Yin will win with probability  $1/2$ , Yang with probability  $1/6$ , and with probability  $1/3$  they will tie. If you guessed that Yin has the edge, take a bow. But Crash is not played randomly; players tend to choose pesky target words. Yang should bet his wallet that Yin picked KAYAK. If you opted for Yang, take a bow. Between HONEY and SUGAR you might be able to make a stronger case for one over the other. Neither seems to offer much challenge as a target word. Anyway, if you concluded that Yin and Yang should tie on word #6, take a bow.

Assorted Contributions: GALORE is an adjective that apparently always follows its noun (should we call it a self-effacing adjective?).