KICKSHAWS

~ EDITOR'S NOTE: ONE THOUSAND PAGES OF KICKSHAWS

In the February 2009 issue of Word Ways, I will have completed my 1,000th page of Kickshaws. This count includes the columns that I've put together; it doesn't include columns by all the very talented guest editors or by the highly esteemed Dave Silverman, founder and long-time editor of Kickshaws. The February column will be 25-35 pages long. I would like to reserve page 1000 for my own use. I would also like to invite you, fellow Kickshavians, to submit old Kickshaws items you particularly liked or maybe didn't particularly like that appeared in any of the previous pages that I edited. Commentary on your choices would add to their effect. Of course, you are also free to submit new Kickshaws items. Any new items about the number name ONE THOUSAND would be especially welcome. It's been a long and wonderful journey. A thousand thanks!

~ TOP DOG PRESIDENTS

According to Rich Lederer, "Many of our American presidents have been top dogs: Thomas Jefferson, Androol Jackson, William Henry and Benjamin Hairyson, Zachary Taller, Abraham Lickin', Ulysses Pant, Rufferford Hayes, James Arfield, Chester Arfer, Rover Cleveland, William McKinleash, Fleadore Roosevelt, William Bow-Wow-ard Taft, Harry True to Man, Bice Eisenhowler, John F. Kenneldy, Richard Nips'em, and George H.W. and George W. Bushy-tail. Who will be our next top dog -- Bark Obama or John McCalcine?"

~ ON THE ELECTION

On the presidential election, Rich comments: "If the strategy of the Democrats is to HARASS SARAH, they have come up with a tactical Palindrome." He wonders, "After the November elections, will America be an Obama nation or will we have a president who will bomb a nation?"

~ REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE PALINDROME

John Agee has come up with a palindrome starring the Republican presidential candidate. The initials at the end belong to Chris Matthews, a liberal interviewer/commentator on MSNBC, who has a political show called "Hardball." The palindrome:

"MCCAIR A MANIAC!" -CM

~ DEEP IN THE HEART OF BAGHDAD

Two years ago I wrote a parody song for an anti-war demonstration. I usually don't care for anti-war poems or songs. They are usually angry or depressing, which leaves me angry and depressed. I'm not a very amateur singer, although I learned a lot when my son was young and I sang him to sleep. Tomorrow I'm going to record the song with a friend of mine on YOU tube. We'll be doing it in the Iowa City graveyard at the site of the famous Black Angel. If you'd like to check it out, go to YOUTube.com, and do a search for dr. alphabet. It will still be online. It's sung to the tune of "Deep in the heart of Baghdad."

(After the first line of each couplet, clap four times, then continue with the second line.)

The wars at night are big and bright, [clap clap clap clap]
Deep in the heart of Baghdad.

The desert storm gets mighty warm,
Deep in the heart of Baghdad.
We'll shock and awe, and rock them raw,
Deep in the heart of Baghdad.

We'll search and seize the WMDs,
Deep in the heart of Baghdad.

We'll fight at ten on CNN,
Deep in the heart of Baghdad.

Wolf Blitzer's view, Geraldo's too,
Deep in the heart of Baghdad.

What did we gain? Saddam Hussein!
Deep in the heart of Baghdad.

The Taliban! Afghanistan!
Deep in the heart of Baghdad.

Come bring your babe to Abu Ghraib,
Deep in the heart of Baghdad.

It ain't no crime, it's party time
Deep in the heart of Baghdad.

Now smile, please, and just say "cheese,"
Deep in the heart of Baghdad.

This photograph will make you laugh
Deep in the heart of Baghdad.

Al-Qaeda's here to drink our beer
Deep in the heart of Baghdad.

Osama's here to toast and cheer
Deep in the heart of Baghdad.

Our president don't pay no rent
Deep in the heart of Baghdad.

He says it's loyal to kill for oil
Deep in the heart of Baghdad.

Remember, oh, the Alamo
Deep in the heart of Baghdad.

Let's give a push, leave Dubya Bush
Deep in the heart of Baghdad.

~ DESPERATELY PALINDROMING SARAH

The following is a special political wordplay sonnet. It violates traditional rules, but it's fine for a campaign year. I wrote it just to see how easy or difficult it would be to put Sarah into a palindrome. The sonnet consists of 14 lines, each including the name Sarah. There is no intended rhyme, and no reason, which fits the temper of the times. The first 4 lines describe Sarah. The next line brings in McCain. The next two lines bring in three unidentified characters.
The next three lines revolve around Oprah and Harpo. The last five lines are parodies of well-known palindromes.

Dogs harass Sarah’s God.
Ergo: “Oh, Sarah, a rash, O ogre.”
Nite! Up Sarah, a Rasputin.
Har, Har, Ass! Sarah in it? Ram a Palindrome--Mord! Nila, Pam, Art in. I harass Sarah. Rah!
Harpo: “Harass Sarah, Oprah.”
Oprah’s Sarah, harass Harpo.
Harp olde: Sarah, harassed Oprah.
Able was Sarah. O, to harass, aw, Elba.
Madam, it’s Sarah: Harass Tim, Adam.
Harass a man, a plan, a canal: Panama’s Sarah.
Har, ass, nap. O tat op, Ana, potato pan’s Sarah.
Re: Red rums harass Sarah’s murderer.

~ PALIN-DROMES? NO, PALIN-GRAMS

“McCain, Obama, and Biden have all been in the national news for some time. But to figure out Sarah Palin, we may need to resort to other methods of divination. No copyright applies here—in today’s nasty politics, I don’t want my name on this.” In accordance with his wishes, I am not going to credit Mike Morton as author of the following item.

Top Ten Anagrams for “Mayor Sarah Palin”
10. Ah, Iran, my parasol!
  9. Parasol, hairy man
  8. Alpha mania, sorry
  7. Any amoral parish
  6. Alias, army orphan
  5. Hay is paranormal
  4. Salaam, iron harpy
  3. Say “Oprah!” in alarm
  2. Ah, pray I’m also-ran
  1. Plasma-ray on hair

Top Ten Anagrams for “Governor Sarah Palin”
10. Angel honoraria. RSVP.
  9. Hangover, or slap Iran
  8. Slogan: “Arrive on harp”
  7. An evil pagan’s horror
  6. Varnish on Al Gore rap
  5. Reagan’s poor NH rival
  4. Rove’s plan: hair (groan)
  3. Gosh, a proven liar ran
  2. Arraign love-orphans
  1. GOP: “Naval hero ran, sir”

Top Ten Anagrams for “Vice-President Sarah Palin”
10. Hi, Diana Spencer’s pet rival!
  9. Evil Saracen! Depart in ship!
  8. Chaste? Inspire naval pride
  7. Iran crises: TV headline pap
  6. Is clever, partisan pinhead
  5. A press interval: Hide! Panic!
4. Repaid relevant Hispanics
3. In a crisis: Reveal depth... nap
2. Preach Satan-inspired evil
1. A PR spin: “I HAVE credentials!”

Runners-up for “Vice-President Sarah Palin”:
- A parent crisis? Help! Invade!
- Advertise her plan is... panic
- Assert “Apprehend civilian!”
- Cervantes? Raphael? Insipid!
- I help invade Iran’s... carpets?
- PR specials: I invade Tehran
- Principal TV airheads seen
- Principles? Ha! Rave instead
- Ralph Nader visits in peace
- Sharp, parental, indecisive

And, if we're considering her for vice-president, we must be prepared for...

Top Ten Anagrams for “President Sarah Palin”
10. Paraphrase: Silent din
9. Inspire a slander path
8. Tehran plan is: Despair
7. Ralph Nader is sapient
6. Her inspired pal, Satan
5. Strain, perhaps denial
4. SNL? Tina? Perhaps I dare
3. I plan pinhead’s arrest
2. Learned partisanship
1. Insane PR spiral. Death.

**A LITTLE 'GRAM**

And this just in from Mike Morton: GRAIL = A GIRL.

**PUTTING WORDS IN MY MOUTH**

Susan Thorpe has gathered a collection of phrases based on words which sound like individual letters (ARE = R. etc.).

ARE YOU IN A RUT?
YOU ARE TWISTED AND IN A RUT

ARE YOU IN A RUSH?
YOU ARE IN A HURRY!
AYE, QUEUE IN A PIQUE!

ARE YOU IN RUINS?
YOU ARE INTO CURRY?
DID YOU SEE KAY IN MUCK?
YOU SEE WHY IN LUCY?
WHY ARE YOU INTO SYRUP?

OH, YOU ARE IN COURT
JAY, YOU ARE IN THE JURY - WHY?
GEE, ARE YOU INTO GRUBS?
OH, EX IS INTO FOXES!
OH, YOU ARE IN MOURNING
SEE, YOU ARE INCURABLE
HE’S IN THE SOUP

BEA OWES KAY A BOOK

DESCRIBING LETTERS

"The challenge is to identify a particular letter of the alphabet using just a single word, by means other than using the actual name of the letter, Susan writes. "Thus bee, cee etc. are not admitted. A, B, C, I, Q, T, U, Y have straightforward homophones which are not the actual letter names - very obliging! Other letters are identified by a variety of devious means. The letter A can be identified by its homophone 'aye'; it can also be identified by the word 'hearsay' (here's A). Alternatives are also offered for some of the other letters. Can you find words for H, W and Z (the last using either the UK or the US pronunciation - but remember that neither 'zed' nor 'zee' themselves can be used in isolation)?"

A  aye / hearsay
B  be / Sabey (say B)
C  sea / seamy (C me) / si
D  seedy (see D)
E  Uri (you're E) / itsy (its E)
F  effused (F used)
G  sagey (say G)
H  I  eye / aye
J  Jamie (J me)
K  Casey (K see)  L  Ivel (I've L - St. Ivel = a brand name)
M  emcee (M see)
N  'eden ('ed N - he had!)
O  hero (here O)
P  droopy (drew P)
Q  queue / Kew / cue
R  army (R me)
S  essay (S eh)T
T  tea /meaty (me T)/cutie (cue T)
U  you / ewe
V  ivy (I V) /groovy (grew V)
W
X  expair (X plain)
Y  why?
Z

SOUNDS DIFFERENT

Susan has found a number of single words, and 2-word phrases in which the repeated bigrams are pronounced differently:

OW  DOWNFLOW  LOWBROW  KNOW-HOW  POWER MOWER  POWDER BOWL
OU  BOUNTEOUS  THROUGHOUT  TROUBADOUR  COUNTY COURT

~ FORTIES

In response to the word SOFTEN (in the last Kickshaws) being composed of letters that begin all the number names, Jeremy Morse offers this unique feature of numerical wordplay: "Just as the counting numbers are a sequence, so should number names be; and an obvious way to achieve this is for each number name to be linked to its successor by a shared letter. This will be the case for number names above twenty in all languages where the number names for nine and one share a letter; but many of them have a break in the sequence early on, as the Greek words for είκοσι, Latin duo-tres, French deux-trois, German vier-fünf, Spanish siete-ocho, etc. Italian passes the test, and so does English; but what is extraordinary about English number names is that the first seven pairs (one-two..., seven-eight) share only one letter, whereas all pairs from eight-nine upwards share at least two letters. Furthermore, the seven single shared letters are all different, being OTRFISE, anagramming to the plural number name FORTIES.

~ RHYMES WITHOUT SHARED LETTERS

"In rhyming words," Jeremy notes, "one would expect a shared letter, but there are none in the following ten pairs and two trios: DAY-WEIGH, QUAY-BEE-SKI, FLY-HIGH, GO-SEW, DEW-GNU, BREW-TOO-FLEW, FREEZE-SKIS, SAYS-FEZ, BEAUX-KOWNS, DOES-BUZZ, LICKS-
PYX, AND STIFF-GLYPH. Perhaps your readers can find more. If one allows proper names, there is an amazing disyllabic example in the flower "busy Lizzie," a popular name for a plant of the Impatiens genus.

~ LONGEST TRANSDELETIONS AND TRANSADDITIONS

Jeremy asks, "What is the longest word with a full set of transdeletions and (within the same limited alphabet) transadditions? A Pocket Merriam-Webster example is AMEND, transdeleting to MEND, DEAN, DAMN, MADE, and AMEN, and transadding to ANADEM, MADMEN, DEMEAN, MANNED, and DEMAND."

~ CAPTAIN HADDOK DISPLAYS FACIAL WORDPLAY

Jeff Grant sent a drawing of the cartoon character Tintin’s friend, Captain Haddock, showing facial anagrams, some of which Jeff added:

~ A THEORETICAL 1785-POINT SCRABBLE MOVE

Jeff Grant will represent New Zealand geographically (and Word Ways logologically) in the World Scrabble Championships in Mumbai, India, on November 9th through 12th. (Best of luck, Jeff!) While preparing for the champs, he came up with a huge-scoring theoretical Scrabble Move. I have never scored even one-tenth of it in a single move. As Jeff describes it:

"The record for a theoretical single-turn Scrabble score using open sources currently stands at 1970, based on the 15-letter word BENZOXYCAMPHORS which appears in Webster's 2nd Edition. (1970-Point One-Move Scrabble, Word Ways, Feb 1993). What is the highest-scoring move possible using the actual current Scrabble reference? At the 2007 World Scrabble Championships in Mumbai, India, the authority was Collins Scrabble Tournament and Club Word
List' (2007), which incorporates American and British dictionaries for allowable words up to 15 letters in length. Using words found only in this book, it is theoretically possible to score 1785 points for a single move.

After carefully setting up the board, then playing the letters O, Y, P, B, A, Z and E, the final words formed are as follows: OPACIFYING (63), YEVEN (11), PREQUALIFIED (30), BLITHESOMENESS (63), AVOIDABLE (15), ZOOGAMETES (32), EJACULATING (63) and the 27-timer OXYPHENIBUTAZONE (1458). (Note: blank tiles are the N of EQUANT and the W of ARROW.) Adding the 50-point bonus this makes a grand total of 1785 points. Is a higher score possible?

OXYPHENIBUTAZONE
PIERDOLT VOW J
AVETI GO A
CEQUANT WIG C
INURH DAU
FAD EAML
YLSBEA
IIOALT
NFREERE I
GIERRSKIN
ENOG
D Ew
S

~ A WAKE-UP CALL

"This little anagrammatic 'nonsense' piece came to me while lying awake this morning," Jeff says, adds by way of explanation: "I won't even try to explain it!"

Not Me

En mot
et nom:
to men
Monet
met no
monte

~ SCRABBLE DOUBLE WORDS SQUARES

Sometimes people in Word Ways come up with the same wordplay problem independently of each other. Darryl Francis devised this problem: "Using the 100 letter tiles in a standard English-language Scrabble set, including the two blanks, create four 5x5 double word squares. Here's one solution, with all words valid for Scrabble as played internationally (but excluding North America). Is this solution unique, or are there many alternative solutions?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUILT</th>
<th>FJORD</th>
<th>BIMAH</th>
<th>AGATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNMEW</td>
<td>LAVER</td>
<td>AVISO</td>
<td>WAFER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORIBI</td>
<td>ELITE</td>
<td>TOXIN</td>
<td>AZONS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TINES</td>
<td>YONIC</td>
<td>CRUDE</td>
<td>ROUGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGENT</td>
<td>SPEAK</td>
<td>HYPED</td>
<td>DOL** (** = ES)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Is this solution unique, or are there many alternative solutions?"
I sent the problem to Jeff Grant, whose Scrabble expertise could shed light on the question, and he replied: “This problem was examined by Mike Keith using a computer some time ago. He found the four squares Darryl mentions, plus over one hundred other four-square solutions! If you google “mike keith” “unmew,” you will find a piece by Mike dated 5/1/2006 on www.encyclopedia.com with a picture of Word Ways too. I first heard of this challenge quite recently through an article by ‘Eric C Harshbarger’ on LOGOLOG, see www.ericharshbarger.org. It has also appeared in other sources I think. The four squares starting with the QUILT, UNMEW, ORIBI, TINES, AGENT one appear on the cover of the latest NZ Scrabble magazine.”

~ TOUCH SCRABBLE

I asked Darryl and Jeff, “What are the most tiles that a single word could touch in a single move (in an ideal, contrived arrangement of letters)?”

Darryl replied: “I suppose the most tiles that a single word could touch would be 30. Imagine 3 parallel 15-letter words, on adjacent rows (or columns). The one in the middle touches 15 letters of each of the adjacent words, for a total of 30. Theoretically possible, unlikely to be achieved in even a contrived board position. More likely is an arrangement of three parallel rows of 8 letters, with the middle word touching 16 letters.”

Jeff replied: “As to your query about the most words that could be touched in a single move, firstly let’s limit ourselves to standard Scrabble where each person has seven tiles on their rack. In theory you could maybe play all seven letters in a way to fill in the middle of an 11 x 5 rectangle, as set out below:

```
A B C D E F G H I J K
L M N O P Q R S T U V
W X   Y Z
A B C D E F G H I J K
L M N O P Q R S T U V
```

Now, if the four eleven letter combinations above were real words, and all sixteen 2-letter words were acceptable (CN, DO, EP....etc....WX, YZ), and each 5-letter word (ALWAL, BMXBM, JUYJU, KVZKV), and you could play your seven tiles in the middle to make seven new legitimate fives, and a new eleven-letter word, and if in the eleven by five rectangle formed every word was acceptable, THEN I guess you could say that your seven-tile play actually touched sixteen words previously on the board! The result would be that all sixteen two-letter words disappear and seven new fives and one new eleven-letter word are formed. Whether this is possible in practice I’m doubtful. Perhaps another problem for the computer?”

Later Jeff continued the discussion: “Going back to the query about how many tiles a single word could theoretically touch in a Scrabble move, the set-up could be simplified by removing the two 5-letter words on the ends (ALWAL, KVZKV) and the top and bottom 11-letter words. The 7-tile play as described would then form seven new three letter words and a new 9-letter word, still touching all 16 letters around it.

Example:

```
C A R A P A C E S
A   E
D E S O L A T E D
```

If this situation appeared on the board, and your rack was AABILMN, you could make ALABAMINE in the middle, forming a 9 x 3 rectangle with all words allowed (in World Scrabble), and the move ‘touching’ 16 different letters. There must be thousands of solutions to this.
In my earlier 11 x 5 rectangle, the 7-letter play actually touches 20 different words. I forgot to mention the two five letter words (BMXBM, JUYJU) and the two inner elevens. An interesting exercise."

And then Jeff concluded: "Just carrying the concept to the theoretical extreme......

A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A
A 1 2 A 3 A A 4 A A 5 A 6 7 A
A A A A A A A A A A A A A A

If all the A's above represent letters in a theoretical arrangement on the board, and you were able to complete the 15 x 3 rectangle by playing the 7 tiles represented by the numbers 1-7, your tiles, in the process of forming 7 new 3-letter words and a new 15-letter word in the centre, would actually touch 22 different letters already on the board - I think (it's getting a bit too complicated and theoretical for me!)."

~ ELECTION DAY WORDPLAY

Darryl writes: "Now that Obama has chosen Joe Biden, we can have some fun with his name....

1. JOE BIDEN anagrams to BE JOINED
2. Not far from where I live is a village called JOHNSTONEBRIDGE, which anagrams to JOE BIDEN THRONGS
3. All the letters of JOSEPH BIDEN can be found in PRESIDENT BENJAMIN HARRISON
4. All the letters of SENATOR BIDEN can be found in ONE-ARMED BANDITS, and also FIRE AND BRIMSTONE and BLUE RIDGE MOUNTAINS and LEONARD BERNSTEIN."

~ NEWLY FOUND 8-LETTER PALINDROMES

Darryl has found four previously unknown 8-letter palindromes. "Dr Darold Treffert is an expert on autism. Easily findable via Google. His surname is an 8-letter palindrome I'd not seen before. And then there's the company T.R.Eggert. Also findable via Google. Another 8-letter palindrome. And there's also TRELLETT. Ditto. And there's Jason Trennert. Also via Google."

~ MOOREEFFOC

What in the world is that? A word? Darryl read about it on the web in a discussion by Michael Quinion, wordseditor@WORLDWIDEWORDS.ORG. Word Ways is always pleased to introduce its readers to unusual words, and this one goes way beyond the unusual, and it has an amazing pedigree. Here is Quinion's description of it:  

Weird Words: Mooreeffoc

Relating to things suddenly seen in a new and different way.

Though this word is rare to the point of never being used in its ostensible sense, but only as a keyword to initiate discussion, it has been keeping illustrious company, since its few appearances in print have been in works by G K Chesterton, J R R Tolkien and Charles Dickens. Dickens invented it, if that's the right word. He mentions it in his autobiography, when he describes his poverty-stricken youth:

In the door there was an oval glass plate, with COFFEE-ROOM painted on it, addressed towards the street. If I ever find myself in a very different kind of coffee-room now, but where there is such an inscription on glass, and read it backward on the wrong side MOORE-EEFFOC (as I often used to do then, in a dismal reverie,) a shock goes through my blood.
In his biography of Dickens, Chesterton said that it denoted the queerness of things that have become trite, when they are seen suddenly from a new angle. Tolkien read more into it still in his work On Fairy-stories: The word Mooroeffoc may cause you to realise that England is an utterly alien land, lost either in some remote past age glimpsed by history, or in some strange dim future reached only by a time-machine; to see the amazing oddity and interest of its inhabitants and their customs and feeding-habits.

~ NEW PAIR ISOGRAM

Susan Thorpe has discovered a new pair isogram. BEDDY-BYE, which the OED defines as "a nursery and facetious term for bed or sleep," has 2 each of the letters B D E Y. And now for me it's off to beddy-bye.

~ BISTATE NAMES

Lisa Policano wrote "We're still in Pennsylucky." That little bit of state name wordplay caught me off guard. It sounds funny. There are other ways to combine Pennsylvania and Kentucky, such as Pennysucky. Imagine a time in the future when any two states can merge into one. These bistates need to have hybridized names. Can you come up with intriguing names for bistates? Below are four possibilities. The first forms a presidential candidate's name, and the other three combine for different reasons.

OHIO + ALABAMA = OBAMA
ALABAMA + NEBRASKA = ABLARASKA (suggests the magical word ALAZAKAM)
ILLINOIS + INDIANA = ILLINANA (has two of each letter, I, L, N, A)
MISSISSIPPI + MISSOURI = MISSISSISSOURI (has three ISSes in a row)
FLORIDA + CALIFORNIA = FLORIFORNIA (sounds like FLORA and FAUNA)

~MM..., WHAT A DECADE

Jumping the gun (literally?) on '08-'10, but dragging in '98-'00 as offsets," Anil offers "an antipodean precis of recent world (mostly US) headlines using Roman date acrostics, inspired by and continuing on from Paul Hellweg's "Creative Chronograms" (WW 82-144).

MIIM = Manic Infotech Investment Market
MIM = Mauled Infotech Market
MM = Minimal Millennialitis (feared Y2K disaster not realized)
MMI = Muslim Madmen "Invade."
MMII = Massdestruction Munitions: Iraq Implicated.
MMIII = Massdestruction Madmen Irresponsibly Invade Iraq.
MMIV = Mesopotamian Massdestructionism Isn't Visible.
MMV = Muslims Mock "Victors."
MMVI = "Massdestruction Mohammedans!" Visits Iran.
MMVII = "Muster More Volunteers!" Incumbent Insists.
MMVIII = Mauled Market Voters 'Interrogate' Iraq Invasion
(... to be continued)

~ SELF REFERENTIAL SCRABBLE ACROSTICS

Anil wrote two acrostics using the word Scrabble in a self-referential way.

Seven Chips, Rearranged, Allow Branded Board Logological Expression.
Set Certain 'Runes' And Bring Brilliant Lexical Entertainment. (slightly modified over WW version)
Inspired by Anil’s acrosticalization, I wrote a four-line cautionary tale about the dangers of Scrabble. Each line is a Scrabble acrostic.

Some Clever Rules Allow Bad Boys Less Entertainment
So Children Run Around Before Bullies Lick Everyone
Soon Cars Race Away, Breaking Boards, Lacking Equipment
See? Crashes Ruin All Boards Before Letters End.

~ STOP THE PRESS!

Anil stops the press with this suggestion: “Stop around, stop by stop in, stop off, stop over, and stop up (or down) all mean pay a visit. The preposition is obviously irrelevant, so why not drop it? Next time a friend asks to visit you, just say, ‘Please stop.’”

~ HEARD ON TV

“There are no invisible animals, so far as we know.” Anil heard that statement on television and quipped, “Don’t laugh, that’s what they said before Leeuwenhoek.”

“One-week-old baby scorpions are able to hunt for themselves.” And Anil’s wisecrack to this TV tidbit: “I hope they find themselves, poor little lost devils.”

~ BE UARY OF THE THIRTEENTH MONTH

Starting the year with March as in the original Roman calendar (M.Zerger, “Calendar Curiosae,” WW 96-176) and using the year as a metaphor for a lifetime as in “September Song,” the last 3 months are January, February, and Obituary. That’s why 13 is an unlucky number and the 13th month was suppressed.

~DIGITAL SELF-DEFINITIONS

Anil notes provided these self-definitions for the digits 0-9:

zer0 one tv vo thre-e-o four five s111X seV//en ei8ht niX (“neir”)

~TWO PHONETICO-MATHEMATICAL ANAGRAMS

Anil came up with this mathematical form, which combines a synonym and an antonym

Two: to “w”

Sounder: surd one

(Surd is a double pun-antonym of sound(er): a surd is a “voiceless” consonant in phonetics; in math’s it’s an irrational or “unsound” number.) (But “one” is not a surd. It’s absurd, isn’t it?)

~OH, NO, NOT MORE PALINDROMES!

(from Anil’s The Palindrome as an End in Itself)

THE GOOD...

Do good. “Do, O God!!” (passing the buck, goodness-wise)

Mail: “L” I am. (L, as everyone knows, is a letter.)

THE BAD...

Ginterpretng (A palindromist is incoherently interpreting something while under the girfluence
THE UGLY...
  "Anil, oracle? Crap parcel!"—Carolina
  North Carolina is where I unfamously went to college (Wake Forest).

THE STOLEN
  Leyton, not yell? (antonym from TV)
    Leyton Hewitt, renowned for yelling "C'mon!" during his tennis matches
  Rotative levitator (by the Kuhns, but here given two totally different interpretations:
    A helicopter, or Archimedes' screw

and THE FRAUDULENT (but of little stature)
  Frawd dwarf (It's not easy to pass as a dwarf. I can only think of José Ferrer in Moulin Rouge.
  Alternatively, fraud dwarf. Or use both and let two wrongs make a right, like multiplying two negative numbers.

~A GROANED UP CONVERSATION

This conversation is tween Anil and himself. It is made most of charades—in two senses)

"Growned!" "R' gowned?"
"Gowned." "G, owned?"
"Owned." "'N', owed?"
"Wed." "We'd?"
"Wa." "w. E?"
"El" "e!!!"  (E is energy or ecstasy, and yes that's a frience "we.")

~IT'S ALL FRENCH TO WE.

"NOUS" = NO US. (When I say "us," says Anil, I mean "not us," s'il vous plait.)
This is a macaronic charade antonym, nous being "us" in French. In turn, forgetting French, the
English "nous" (mind, common sense) is synonomous with a homophonic pun on the charade,
"Know, us." This is unfortunately not a very good homophone of nous itself but it is in turn sort of
an antcynm of "no us," absence (of mind), "not there." Feel like you've been watching tennis?
C'mon! Well, there's more—a Franco-American political statement: "Nous = no U.S!" Or sides
reversed is "Nous? No, U.S.!!"

~SOME NEAR-WORDS

dispulsion According to Anil, if ever a "non-word" deserved to be a word this is it. Consider all
the verbs that end in -pel (from Latin for drive, push): compel, impel, propel, repel, expel, and
dispel. The first three of these words are almost synonyms, the other three almost their
antonyms. All have a noun form ending in -pulsion—except for dispel! C'mon, be fair, Mr.
Webster. (Has dispulsion ever been a word?)
typwritr The machine used for typing Gadsby, the famous e-less novel (famous -less novl?)
renew endless fame (No, just re the present*)
etycot (pronounced like etiquette) short for etymologically correct. (For example it is not etycot
to mail someone a gift. It's an oxymoron, an absent present!)

*Present is a valuable word which via this syllogistic poem disproves the widely held belief that
English is not a spiritual language:

PRESENT = HERE
PRESENT = NOW
PRESENT = A GIFT
HERE = NOW = A GIFT?
~ON BEING DOTTY

Anil notes that his very favourite anagram from his book up/dn is “tadpoles=leapdots.” (Leapcommas, actually,?) But on second thought was that parenthetical apology necessary? Do dots have to be round? If so, how round? No dot is a perfect circle. Ink-drop dots might be just 10% round. Those leapcomas above are 90% round. Tadpoles are 80% round. People can be up to 60% round. (That’s why some of them are named Dot. Especially if they look a lot like tadpoles.)

~MORE ETYMOLOGY JOKES

“DOTAGE (speaking cf dotty) etymologically means silliness,” Anil writes. “Don’t be insulted, my fellow seniors, take heart! This is our license to drop all pretense of dignity and have fun in any silly way we please. Even in foolish word play! BACCALAUREAT or bachelor (of arts, etc.) is from the Medieval Latin baccalarius, a farm worker! That’s exactly the opposite of its purpose for most students, whose aim is to avoid real work. How you gonna keep ’em up on the farm now that they’ve seen Uni? (Chambers Dictionary of Etymology adds that the baccalaureus was a pun, as if connected with bacca lauri or laurel berry.)

~COMMENT ON KICKSHAWS AND CHICKENS CROSSING ROADS

Anil’s PS: “Another great Kickshaws (Feb 08), despite your disaster. I especially liked Three Lambs, the Post beheadment contest (I plan to have a go at this fun game later), iTil, Top Country Songs, the Mo-Urban Dictionary quotes, Male or Female, and your great lines “caught between Iraq and a hard place” and “better stop... or I’ll risk continuing.” It was gratifying to see Susan pick up on Ostrich Anagrams as well as recognize my lovely fingernails. (Or did she mean the hard as a puppy dog’s tail type nails? Or neither?) I also offer some goes at the chicken vs. road problem.”

MISTAKEN IDENTIES
The Chicken Who Wasn’t
Why did the chicken cross the road? Because it wasn’t chicken!
The Duck Who Didn’t
Roll model for the chicken who didn’t in Susan’s “Brief Encounter.”

HAIKU (inspired by the chicken who wasn’t and didn’t)
Don’t count your chickens
Before they’ve crossed
To the other side of the road.

LIMERICK (I couldn’t resist adding mine—DM)
There once was a chicken who crossed
The road, and like salad, was tossed.
While running for corn,
But missed the old warn-ing sign. A truck squared—at what cost!

~MORE COMMENTS ON KICKSHAWS FUNNY BITS

“Dear Avid Dormice,” Anil address, “Another fun Ks (May 08), as usual. I especially enjoy the funny bits—Take the Money Enron, Church Bulletins, Investment Tips, Tourist Motors, Another W.Post, Strange Song Titles and Somebody Heard Wrong.
Speaking of monograms, there's a recent book of them. Martin Toseland's The Arts Are My Friends (Portico: London, 2007). Not too many repeats of the Ks list. I'm glad you clarified the lyric in "Blinded by the Light" (an old favorite). I heard the line "cut loose like a deuce, another runner in the night" as something ever funnier than the one cited, viz, "wrapped up like a douche in the middle of the night!"

Ove's political limericks? Cute, not Hillary-us. The sampling from Ed Conti's Quiblets were marvelous and I have ordered a copy. [9/24: I've bought and devoured it.] Just Dale also sounds fascinating but I don't read fiction anymore.

I liked Jeremy's reply to Susan's chicken poem and anagram, but I was disappointed you didn’t use my follow-ons as well—the two "Mistaken Identities" and the haiku [sorry, Anil, see above]. Speaking of Jeremy, was "value" a typo for "vale" in his quiz? He wouldn’t galue us, would he?"

~ MORE KAY JEWELERS ALPHABET

Anil is referring to the wordplay on Kay's Jeweler, whose slogan is "Every Kiss Begins with Kay." Ray Love and I found other letters that could work in "Every __ begins with __." 

Alphabetization... A cruise... sea demolition... de-
"Habit"... H. introspection... I. nirvana... -in
ouch... "oh!" quest... queue! (nowadays SOB... -ass
reality... are (unless you're a grammarian, urge... you,
an actor, or hallucinating) youth... "why?"
 xenophobia... 'hex'
 zone-out... Z...

~ LAMBGRADUATIONS TO MARK ISAAC

Anil wishes to congratulate Mark Isaac for two more good logological lambs. About the next to, he says, "The following aren't, they're just gags."

Yet another Mary Lamb (not Charles' sister). Mary had a little lamb, plus nine and ninety others. The latter didn't go astray, they boned tight like brothers. When the stray one went to school they stayed back in a huffer rage: "Oh, Unfairness of it all—damn punk gets all coverage."

(Astray thought: Why do 99 people out of 100 identify with the 1 sheep in 100 that went astray?)

And another, tasteless perhaps but not for Mary (at first): Mary had a little lamb With mint and sauce But choked on it, wondering Is this one Bo Peep lost?

~A CHARADE QUARTET

WOMEN! "Women w/o men! —w. omen: Wo, men!"

This is a feminist-terrorist manifest composed by Anil. Can you think of other words that can generate three charades that fit together with it in a semi-coherent way? You may argue with my use of abbreviations, but for a short word it's almost unavoidable if you want more than one charade. (But you have to really want it.)
~TWO ERRANT CONTRONYMS

FORMIC ACID, Anil claims, is a cheater’s contronym, being 1) an acid; 2) an antacid. MEANS SHIT is a funny sort of contronym in that its antonym DOESN’T MEAN SHIT is its synonym.

~BEER NOW

This, Anil points out, is the mantra of alcohol-enlightened mystics. And here’s a pretzel to have with your brew. Fowler’s _Modern English Usage_ (Oxford, 1926) says that “the agent termination –er can be added to any existing English verb.” So I like _beer_ because _I am_ one. Actually, beer, one who exists, was once a real word, as seen in the etymology of forebear from forebeer.

~ERRER

_Errer_ looks like a misteak, Anil observes, but you’d be one if you thought so. The two bold words above are not in Web-3 but I justify them by Fowler’s rule. Doing this used to get me into a lot of trouble in Scrabble before official word lists appeared and restricted the fun of the game.

~COME WHAT MAY

Isn’t it interesting that in the northern hemisphere cumquats come into season in May, Cumquat May. Anil discovered that welcum fact.

~ THE * STRANGE * CASE * OF * THE * THIRTEEN * GORILLAS * SEEN * STANDING * IN * A * ROW

_The Strange Case of the Thirteen Gorillas Seen Standing in a Row_

“It all happened rather innocently and unexpectedly one day when I thought it necessary to counter her vanity by explaining the zoological-taxonomic facts of life to my pet gorilla* (*Gorilla gorilla gorilla), Gorilla Gorilla Gorilla. “Gorilla Gorilla Gorilla, Gorilla gorilla gorilla gorilla means you’re just one subspecies of Gorilla gorilla, so come down of your high ape,” Anil said.

~ HOT COUPLETS

Ove Michelson sent this couplet:

While hearing Van Cliburn,  
She suffered a thigh burn.  

To which I replied:

While watching George Burns,  
She suffered large burns.  

THE SEARCH FOR ANAGRAMS

Ove Michelsen, an expert anagrammatist, has found a number of remarkable anagrams by hand and a four (indicated by asterisks) using the online search engine anagramgenius.com. Most of the anagrams were done the old-fashioned way, by hand. Check out the website! In the list below, Ove intends for the two different Seattle anagrams to be put together as a single statement.
Seattle, Washington = He’s gettin’ a slow tan
Seattle, Washington = Hating wetness a lot.
Indigestion = Gin is no diet.
A psychiatrist = Sit, chat, pay, sir.*
Angelic = Nice gal
Charismatic = I’m a chic star!*
A computer = Our pet “Mac”**
Non-ceremonial = Online romance*
G. Dubya = Bad guy.
Mister Bush = It’s Me! Shrub!*“
You’re fired = I’d refer you!
Evil-doer = Rove lied.
The late, great Dr. Martin Luther King = Think tall! A dreamer greeting truth.
Sarah Palin = “A plan, sir? Hah!”

~ R.E. LEE: POTATO PEELER

Ove came up with the Lee palindrome above, and then he composed a limerick with the palindrome for its title:

    When I learned of this, I was aghast,
    But the truth was uncovered, at last:
    That Robert E. Lee
    Was assigned to K.P.
    It’s a little-known niche of the past.

~ POLITICAL SELF-ABUSE

Ove describes an amazing bit of accidental election-year wordplay: “Yesterday I was doing something in the kitchen while listening to CNN. The report was about McCain and Obama removing their coats and rolling up their sleeves before addressing middle-class voters. The female news anchor began the report with ‘Jacket OFF.’ Stunned, I darted to the living room for a closer listen in disbelief. I’m sure her one-second two-worded embarrassing remark will be on YouTube. Broadcasting is tricky business.”

~ TAKE A DEEP BREATH AND READ ALOUD

Thinking back to those lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer, I wrote the poem below. Take a deep breath and see if you can read it all the way from start to finish before you run out of hot air. It can be done. Just barely. (Gasp.)

THE HAMMOCK SONG

Lying in a hammock
Munching on a ham hock
Feeling my whole arm lock
Hearing the alarm clock
Make its little tick-tock
Though it’s got a nick knock
Now I spot a knick-knack
Leaning on my trick sack
Next I watch a stick stack
Topple on my backpack
Doggie sees a brickbat
Flying at a quick cat
Birdie tells a knock-knock
Joke that causes flock shock
Everything gets slapstick
Then I put on Chapstick

~ AIN'T, THE A-WORD

I was raised to not say the word ain't. To my mom, it was like a cuss word. My dad never used it either. They both had excellent vocabulary, and it excluded that one, single word. Well, that and butt, as in, "Kick his butt." Nor do my brothers and sister, and especially not I, use the A-word. It I don't cuss much either, but I've probably said the F-word or the S-word much more than the A-word, as in "that's a bunch of bullain't, or Hey, ain'thead! Ain't for brains! Go ain't yourself, ain'tsucker."

~ FROM CHRISTOPHER MORLEY, ON THE WEB

Christopher Morley, twentieth century writer (1890-1957), wrote something very powerful in the old pen-is-mightier-than-the-sword category. Take it away, Chris: "Ink is handicapped, in a way, because you can blow up a man with gunpowder in half a second, while it may take twenty years to blow him up with a book. But the gunpowder destroys itself along with its victim, while a book can keep on exploding for centuries."

~ OLD ELEMENTARY PALINDROME CHALLENGE

A few years in Kickshaws, I showed a palindrome that contained twelve chemical elements in a row and asked if any reader could top it, or could produce a palindrome with twelve items in the same category, such as colors. Here is the original palindrome, back for a return visit. If you can top it, you're a logoscientist of the first order:

Tie carbon, boron, iron, tin, radon, gold, neon, xenon, nitrogen, iodine, platinum, argon? No gram unit, Al! Pen "I do" in (e.g., "or") tin. None? X no end, log. No, darn it! Nor I? No, rob—no, brace it!

~ DIRTY WORDY

One night last summer I drew a 39-page cartoon, very free-wheeling and surreal in style, in which one of the characters is judging a smiley face contest. The smiley face characters don't look very smiley till she gets to the last one, who is a perfect smiley face, and she says, "Shootsy-wootsy, you're the winner!" And I thought, shootsy-wootsy is a great word, and I made it up all by my lonesome. Well, the days went by, and it occurred to me that I ought to do a Google search before staking my claim to it, so just now I did, and guess what, there IS one hit for "shootsy-wootsy," and the guy even brags that he created it! Here are his exact words: "shootsy-wootsy (date my word...no biterz now)...lol. wellz it seems lyk team b is all split up...im on team D...."

Anyway, I made up the same word, and that Jimmy may have cracked corn, but I don't care. Shitsy-witsy, mon, I mean yuh can't evun make up a woid anymoo. Hey, I just made up shitsy-witsy, and, feeling on top of the world, I'm going to do a Google search for it. Guess what...4 people beat me to the finish line. Okay, I'm going to get down and dirty and try fucksy-wucksy...and guess what. One other guy made it up, and here's how he used it: "FUCKSY WUCKSY LOVES BOOBSY WOOBSY." Alrighty-dighty, let's try titsy-witsy and titty-witty... As you might expect, there are lots—250 for the first one, and 40 for the second. Wait. Let's try "dicksy-wicksy." Yes, there is one hit, and the quote it's used in is bizarre: "I'll take 2nd for now, before I
piss all over Dicky Wicky. .... " Dare I try "pissy-wissy"? I dare... And I lose. There are 371 hits for it.

I give up. English is officially dead. No more wordsy-birdsy. They've all been created, and they're flying south for the winter. James Joyce must be rolling over in his grave. Or should I say "gravesy-wavesy"? I'll leave it up to you to Google that one.

~ THE A-WORD

I was raised to not say the word ain't. To my mom, it was like a cussword. My dad never used it either. Nor do my brothers and sister, and especially not I. I still think of it as cuss word, as in "that's a bunch of bullain't, or Hey, ain'thead! Ain't for brains! Ain't you, motherain'ter!"

~ MAKING LOVE TO AN OLDER WOMAN

Tom Walz gives a blow by blow detail of passion between those over the age in which, as the poet W.B. Yeats said, "that is no country for the old men...." Here are the loving details:

HE She moved quietly towards the bed silhouetted by the semidarkness of the room. He could see the mummified outline of her body layered with a variety of night clothes, which she proceeded to remove one piece at a time, concluding with the removal of a pair of dark wool socks.

SHE "I know I look funny, don't laugh, I am just cold blooded." She crawls into bed next to him.

HE He rests his head upon her left breast, snuggling as close as their bodies permit. His head over her breast registers an irregular heartbeat.

SHE She senses his concern. "It's only a mild arrhythmia, nothing to worry about."

HE inspired by the warmth of her body, he reaches for her hand and holds it tightly communicating his growing emotion.

SHE "Ouch," she cries, "sorry but that is the hand with the arthritis."

HE He withdraws his hand away and, unsure of where to go next, he lets his hand come to rest on her breast.

SHE "Sorry, bud," she states with some authority. "Ever since I have had my breasts downsized to relieve the pressure of the weight on my back, I have had no feeling there."

HE Confused by the many detours he comments, "No hand, no breast, how about if I could massage your feet?"

SHE "That would be fine, but please only the left foot. I am still recovering from my bunion operation on my right foot."

HE Somehow this single foot massage didn't pack much of a bang, so he asked her outright, "are there any other body parts that are off limit?"

SHE She smiled warmly. "No, not really, nothing except for the lack of range of motion in my left arm. In fact it might be best if we changed sides, so that I can more comfortably put my arm around you."
Before shifting sides, she added, “And I guess I should mention, so you won’t be surprised, that ever since my hysterectomy I have had some gas issues.”

HE: No sooner were these words out of her mouth than several short volleys of passing wind occurred during her effort to change sides.

It then occurred to him that the safest route through this encounter would be a soft peck on the cheek, followed by a gentle pat on the thigh and a whispered goodnight.

~ CAT TALE

Ray Love heard this story from his farmer neighbor: “His wife had once cut off the tail of their cat while mowing. As tragic as that sounds, there was a good ending to his story. Her solution to the mishap, he said, was to take the cat to WalMart! I asked him why in the world would she do that. He replied, ‘Because they’re the largest retailers in the country.’”

~ WE THREE KINGS

Just in time for Christmas, Ray has identified three of the major players in the holiday season, the Three Kings:

PARKING = Tiger Woods
SINKING = The Devil
WINKING = Michael Phelps

~ IMAGINARY WORDS

The list below is a selection that Ray took from the book *Bloom’s Bouquet of Imaginary Words*. Used copies of the book are available from Amazon.com for one cent and up, plus shipping. The idea is to form new words by adding or changing one letter and defining the result.

Whinoceros: a thick-skinned, bitchy mammal
Domesticated: a wild animal trained to chew politely
Raconteur: a small, bushy-tailed, anecdotal mammal
Baloney: lunchmeat for singles
Lufthaffle: Traditional breakfast of the German air force
Bracist: having an irrational hostility toward orthodontic appliances
Sherpes: a skin disease common to Tibetan mountain-climbers
Doledrums: a feeling of despondency after eating canned pineapple
Princest: How royalty got to be so inbred
Sharer: a sultan’s invitation to his friends
Pretaliation: official justification for U.S. invasion of Iraq
Polstergeist: Gallup’s ghost
Kohlrabbi: cabbage served at a temple
Violince: a stringed instrument played with great passion
Bungalow: small, cozy bathroom
Steamina: having the energy to keep ironing
Castoturf: Cuban ground
Tumblesweed: a Scandinavian gymnast
Pillgrimage: a long drive to the pharmacy
Cactush: accidentally sitting on a succulent

Ray adds: “While trying to retain my sanity, keep from arguing with my wife, and ward off dementia in the back country, I did spend some time with my favorite book, the dictionary. When I’m asked what book I would most like to have with me if I were stranded on a deserted island, that is my stock response. So here is MY list of “Imaginary Words”: 
Palcoholics: boozing buddies
Crookies: what Girl Scouts donate to inmates
Aromatic: the Apaches' answer to the Gatling gun
Himitator: cross-dresser
Ohmelets: what an electrician has for breakfast
Filibuster: tamer of wild horses
Flingerpainting: abstract art
Superseede: what Jack used to grow his beanstalk
Prawnbroker: shrimp seller
Fembryo: earliest stage of a woman's development
Misnomer: winner of an Alaskan beauty pageant
Pisstol: squirt gun that shoots yellowish water
Pandamonium: description of bears performing in a circus
Calambity: sheep following each other over a cliff
Harneuter: novice over-emoter
Boweling: using the bathroom in a kegler establishment
Beehind: where the stinger is located
Weldon: what was written on Lawrence's front doormat
Craftmanship: what "Made in Japan" meant 50 years ago
Magnify: a 500 foot home run
Supervisor: person in charge of the evening meal at a restaurant
Dietrib: weight-watcher group
Wheather: a bad spell of weather
Catalyst: roster of steers
Knightmare: dreaming about falling off a joust's steed
Spayment: cost of removing the ovaries of a female animal
Contraction: price for removing the testes of a male animal
Peony: a small hearse
Pupulation: number of dogs born each year
Orientall: description of Yao Ming, center for the Houston Rockets
Flavorite: favorite flavor
Corridor: an exit from a hallway
Grower: corny joke told by an adult
Treemendous: sequoias of coastal California
Moaney: complaining about a lack of funds
Panteaters: goats in a petting zoo
Coinucopia: a vending machine
Teapee: drinking the first causes the second
Libra-Aries: repositories for reading material on the zodiac
Zoomph: speed and power of a muscle car

~ I WANNA HOLD YOUR WHAT?

The Beatles' first American hit song was "I Wanna Hold Your Hand." I heard the first radio broadcast of it in St Louis. Later on, there was an underground version for fetishists titled "I Wanna Hold Your Foot." It begins, "Oh, yeh, I'll tell you something, I think it's understood, that you got that something. I wanna hold your foot!" And then it has the lines "And when you kick me I feel happy inside. It's such a feeling that your toes are so wide, are so wide, are so wide..."

FROM WORDPLAY TO GUNPLAY

I was at the Iowa City Community Auction last Wednesday night, strolling through the aisles of trash and treasures, when I noticed that a man about 40 feet away from me was pointing a rifle at my head. This had never happened to me before, and I didn't know what the proper etiquette
was for making a graceful escape. I didn't think it was a real gun, or if it were, I didn't think it was loaded, or if it were, I didn't think he was going to shoot. Still, I felt compelled to remove myself from the line of fire, so I kind of eased away without too much rabbit-like movement. When I was safely behind a crowd on the other side of the room, I looked back and saw that the man was pointing the rifle at someone else.

Now it's Friday night. I told the incident to a group of friends who come into Uptown Bill's coffee bar, where I work. One happens to be a gun collector, and another works at the Crisis Center. They were all shocked at the incident. I realized that I had underestimated the potential danger I was in. The gun collector said no one should point a gun at another person unless they're planning to shoot the other person. The woman from the Crisis Center told me that calmly stepping out of the line of fire without making the gunman's trigger finger twitch was the correct thing to do to save my skin, but I also should've contacted someone in charge of the auction and/or called the cops. Fortunately, there was no shooting.

In retaliation, I came up with the following gun-related piece of wordplay: "Point blank" means that someone is pointing a gun very close to you. A blank, however, is a fake bullet that just makes noise but doesn't have a metal point. A real bullet has a point, which is either hollowed out, making it a dum dum, or smooth and curved, with nothing imprinted on it, in which case its surface is blank. Thus a marksman could point a blank point blank, but there'd be no point if it were a blank, which wouldn't have a point, blank or otherwise.

~ MOON LETTERS

Louis Phillips divided the moon into a very simple linguistic sequence, which results in three letters in the middle of the alphabet having a moonlight glow.

M = quarter moon
MO = half moon
MOO = three-quarter moon
MOON = full moon

~ AND NOW FOR A MOMENT OF SILENCE

The next poem, by Louis, is an engaging study of what it would like to omit the basic units of text from poetry, the highest form of linguistic expression and language art. As the title indicates, this will be a silent piece, a piece that you can't read in any language, because it is based on the absence of language. Poets, of course, are known to express great truths in beautiful language, to share with us their passion for communicating through printed, written, and/or spoken text, to show the magic and wonder of life. Louis is an expert at expressing such truths in his sweeping images, his rapid changes of scene, and basically his awesome poetic spirit. His is the poetry of truth. This poem shows him to be a troubadour, a bard, a scop, an epic poet of his time. And of all the poems I have ever read of his, I would be the first to say that you will never find a truer poem than the one that follows. Consider it to be Louis's statement on the honesty of life on earth and perhaps even in the universe at large. Here it is, in all its majesty, Louis Phillips poem, deftly titled "Poem Without Words." Please enjoy it, for it has the grandeur that was Greece and the glory that was Rome.

POEM WITHOUT WORDS

O.K. So I lied.
~ MIND

As I mentioned at the very beginning of this column, the next issue will reach my 1,000-page mark. This poem, by Louis (from his recent book, No Poems Beyond This Point, provide a perfect curtain going down on this Kickshaws.

This page—
Since no one else
Seems to be using it
Mind if I
Place a short verse
On it?

A POEM

MARTIN GARDNER
Norman, Oklahoma

This is an excerpt from Gardner’s 1969 book Never Make Fun Of A Turtle, My Son (Simon and Schuster, illustrated by John Alcorn).

Soap

Just look at those hands!
Did you actually think
That the dirt would come off, my daughter,
By wiggling your fingers
Around in the sink
And slapping the top of the water?

Just look at your face!
Did you really suppose
Those smudges would all disappear
With a dab at your chin
And the tip of your nose
And a rub on the back of one ear?

You tell me your face
And your fingers are clean?
Do you think your old Dad is a dope?
Let’s try it again
With a different routine.
This time we’ll make use of the soap!