From time to time, Word Ways receives a variety of short poems related to recreational linguistics, some original, others previously published. As poetic output cannot be easily predicted, these will be presented on an irregular basis.

"Trials of a Trysting Typesetter", by Ralph A. Lewin of La Jolla, California, is published here for the first time. Notice how he has constructed the rhyme-scheme around the nonsense-phrase \textit{etaoin shrdlu} beloved by linotype operators.

\begin{verbatim}
Billet doux,

\*\*
In cloistered coign
With ingenue.

Barbecue
Or tenderloin
Or Irish stew?

(Revenu
Of paper, coin,
Or I.O.U.?)

Entre nous
Should one purloin
A steak or two?)

Mountain dew?

No bars adjoin
This rendezvous.

Etaoin
Or shrdlu?

!! !!!!

You misconstrue!

Alas! Eloign!
Alors - adieu!
\end{verbatim}

"Let's Have A Party", by Don Laycock of Canberra, Australia, takes the reader on a merry romp through the thesaurus. It was originally published in 1954 in a limited-distribution newsletter at the Australian National University, and may have also appeared in a...
Reach down the Thesaurus, put the Roget before us; send for the harlot, the street-girl, the courtesan, adulteress, adventuress, kept woman, the strumpet, the prostitute, the tart and the broad, the bussy, the trollop, the jade, bitch and whore; send for the whole of the frail sisterhood, and we'll have a cocktail a party and food in a gigantic reception a schnozzle, a rort, and that's no deception, no falsehood, no imposture, no untruth, no conjure, no joke; invite all the youngsters, the young -people, -folk, the youths and the boys, the lads, slips and callants and lassies, and wenches and virgins and damsels and colleens and flappers and hoydens and tomboys, codlins and tadpoles and cublets and striplings to indulge in some drinking, imbibing and tippling, in boozing and toppling and swilling and soaking, bousing, carousing, guzzling and swigging, draining and bibbing, lushing and sponging till we all get drunk, tipsy and temulent, inebriated, sewed up, befuddled, intoxicated, obfuscated, maudlin and mellow, groggy and beery; drunk as a piper, a fiddler, a Chloe, squiffy and plastered and flustered, musty and bosky, muddled and merry and fou, fresh and fuddled, so we'll wake up next morning all twitching with pain, with headaches and toothaches, migraine, neuralgia, neuritis, lumbago and got, tonsilitis, the tick, aching all over with spasms cricks, stitches and kinks; with itches, orgasms and soreness and redness and rawness or all our blood plasms, convulsions and throbbing, torment, to torture, discomfort and pangs; in anguish, in agony, with twinges that come from going on binges and having such fun as writing poems like this and exclaiming in chorus: "What a wonderful thing is a Thesaurus!".

The third poem, "My Ideosyncracy" by Joyce Greiner of Lebanon, Oregon, pokes gentle fun at regional (and individual) variations in pronunciation and spelling.

We all speak English; on this we agree, But some folks talk a little differenter than me. Some say "Many," and "Any," and "Pretty," too, When "Meny, eny, and purity" would do. Some argue for "creek," others for "crick." It's enough to make a simple man sick! Some folks wash, some woish. (Some don't.) Some say ether, but most of us won't.
I just talk, don't care how it's said,
People sneering that I'm wrong make me see red.
One word for sure makes their eyes turn glassy:
I always say "ignorant"; it's my ideosyncrasy.

QUERY

A group of letters in a word is alphabetically invariant if its component letters appear in the same relative positions as they do in the alphabet; for example, the capitalized letters in eIOPeRS form an alphabetically invariant group. (Note that gyMNOPedic and undeRSTUdy are special cases of alphabetically invariant groups of letters.) Any word can be divided into alphabetically invariant subgroups of various sizes; for example, in HICKEY the let­ters HIK are in one group, CE in a second group, and Y in a third group. Two questions can be formulated: (1) what are the longest words containing exactly one, two, ... alphabetically invariant subgroups? (2) what is the largest possible alphabetically invariant subgroup?

Using Webster's Second or Third as sources, tentative answers are (1) GHI; SPURS, ANODE, ABODE; OPER­ATIVE and (2) iNOPeRaTIve and coOPeRaTIveY for a total of six.