Webster's Dictionary defines colloquy as mutual discourse. Readers are encouraged to submit additions, corrections and comments about earlier articles appearing in Word Ways. Comments received up to a month prior to publication of an issue will appear in that issue.

Frank Rubin adds to Edward Wolpow's "More About Number Names" the fact that FIVE THOUSAND is the longest (and largest) number name without repeated letters; the next is only EIGHTY-FOUR. He also constructed a number name with thirteen linguistic units in reverse alphabetical order: TWENTY-THREE SEXDECILLION SEVENTY-SEVEN CUATTUORDECILLION ONE NONILLION NINETY-NINE MILLION EIGHTY-EIGHT; notice that the first three -illions can be changed to SEPTENDECILLION, QUINDECILLION and OCTILLION.

However, his most interesting discovery is a proof that the letter I never overtakes the letter E in letter-frequency as one spells out the number names in increasing numerical order. From 1 through 999 the letter E appears 3130 times (900 in HUNDRED) while I appears only 1310 times. From 1000 through 999,999 each of the number names ONE through NINE HUNDRED NINETY-NINE appears 1000 times to the left of the word THOUSAND and 999 times to the right of THOUSAND; thus, the letter I has appeared 2,620,000 times and the letter E has appeared 6,260,000 times by the time ONE MILLION has been reached. From 1,000,000 through 999,999,999, each of the number names ONE through NINE HUNDRED NINETY-NINE has appeared 1,000,000 times to the right of the word MILLION and each of the number names ONE through NINE HUNDRED NINETY-NINE THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED NINETY-NINE has appeared 999 times to the right. In addition, the letter I has appeared 1,998,000,000 times in the word MILLION itself. Adding up all these occurrences, the letter I has appeared 5,928,000,000 times and the letter E 9,390,000,000 times by the time ONE BILLION is reached. Continuing these arguments, Rubin shows that the gap is never closed. If an -illion name has two (or more) Is and no Es, the gap is narrowed; but if one or more Es also appear (as in SEXTILLION, SEPTILLION) the gap is widened. Apparently the closest approach occurs at ONE SEXTILLION, when there have accumulated $2.0159 \times 10^{62}$ Is and $2.191 \times 10^{62}$ Es. In fact, the only letters which ever exceed E in frequency are O, at the end of TWO (two Os, one E) and T, before THREE is completely spelled out!

Is there a name for this sort of nonsense? According to Karl Menninger's book Number Words and Number Symbols (MIT Press, 1977), the 'numbering of letters' and the 'lettering of numbers' is called ISOPSEPHY.
An earlier reference to the letter-curiosity $\text{ONE} + \text{TWELVE} = \text{TWO} + \text{ELEVEN}$ has been located: it was featured in a puzzle by 'Emmo W' in the April 1948 issue of the Enigma, published by the National Puzzlers' League.

Leroy Meyers wonders how Wolpow's studies would be altered by the British system of number names in which one billion is $10^{12}$, one trillion $10^{18}$, etc., with intermediates like one thousand million ($10^9$).

Edward Wolpow 'found a French number name in which the sum of the letter-values ($A = 1$, $B = 2$, etc.) equals the number: DEUX CENT VINGT DEUX (222).

In the May 1981 Kickshaws, various words were proposed by Frank Rubin as the shortest ones containing $n$ syllables. Kyle Corbin has reduced the ten-syllable word from 20 letters to 18 with $\text{ep/i/o/log/i/}$, and the eight-syllable word from 14 letters to 13 with $\text{ep/i/zol}$.

A pangrammatic window is a sequence of letters in a literary text containing all the letters of the alphabet. Short pangrammatic windows are hard to find; the February 1974 Kickshaws cited one in Jane Austen's Mansfield Park that was 139 letters long, and speculated that the 67-letter window in Sarah Grand's The Beth Book was contrived. Recently Eric Albert found a pangrammatic window of 76 letters in John Milton's poem "Paradise Lost" (lines 486-489 of Book One):

$\text{Likening his Maker to the grazed ox,}$
$\text{Jehovah, who, in one night, when he passed}$
$\text{From Egypt marching, equalled with one stroke}$
$\text{Both her first-born and all her bleating gods.}$

The window is delineated by the virgules. If one draws letters at random (rom the alphabet according to the frequencies in English-language text, the probability that a set of 76 will contain all 26 different letters is only about $0.000002$.

Richard Lederer 'found numerous additions to Maxey Brooke's "English?" in the August issue: tssetse (Bechuana), cravat (Croatian), voodoo ( Dahomey), goober (Kongo), tundra (Lapp), bantam (Malagasi),umbo jumbo (Mandingo), okapi (Maba), coyote (Mexican Indian), mazurka (Polish), boodockos (Philippino), mammoth (Siberian), chimpanzee (Sudanese), messiah (Syria), mahogany (West Indian), and kibitzer (Yiddish).

Richard Frank located aioli (Provencal) and dong (Annamese) in Webster’s 6000 Words; he also cites kvetch (Yiddish), tugrik (Mongolian) and indri (Malagasi). William Sunners asks: since English is such a polyglot tongue, it has the advantage of teaching the sounds and pronunciations of words that other languages perhaps do not; does this make learning a foreign language easier for us?
Darryl Francis has proved that the word POTASSISATATE, supposedly taken from Foster's Medical Dictionary, is a spurious example of a three-I word. There are in this work several Latin entries such as 'linimentum potassii iodidi' in which the three Is are separated by a space, and there is an English entry P. ISATATE which Palmer Peterson apparently concluded could be POTASSISATATE. If foreign languages are allowed, the holes in "Consecutive Identical Letters" in the August issue with the Romanian FIJI ('the sons' from fii) or COPIII ('the children' from copil) according to Leroy Meyers. He adds that German is especially good, since many words are joined in compounds; however, when this results in three identical letters one is usually omitted. The exception is when a word ends with a double S (for which German has a special symbol) and the following one begins with S as well: MASSSTAB ('ruler' or 'scale'), FUSSSCHEMEL ('footstool'), etc. He adds that the JJJ blank can be filled by the name KKKHJJJERRR, in Robert G. Heinlein's "Double Star", a story in Astounding Science Fiction for February, March and April of 1956. How is this pronounced? Heinlein says

...Human vocal chords are not as versatile as a Martian's tympanum, I believe, and, in any case, the semi-phonetic spelling of these sounds in Roman letters, for example 'jjj' or 'kkk' or 'rrr', have no more to do with the true sounds than the 'g' in gnu has to do with the inhaled click with which a Bantu pronounces gnu. 'Jjj', for instance, closely resembles a Bronx cheer...

Frank Rubin wonders why DEMIGODDESS-SHIP in Webster's Second has a hyphen when GODDESSSHIP does not. Darryl Francis cautions against using Mrs. Byrne's Dictionary as a source of odd words without referring to the (uncited) dictionaries she mined. For example, Dorland's Medical Dictionary puts a hyphen in LAPAROYSTEROSALPINO-OOPHORECTOMY whereas she does not.

William Sunners wishes Frank Rubin well in his effort to launch a puzzle contest business, but believes that he will not succeed unless he takes the capabilities and expectations of his audience into account. Specifically, most contestants are retired or pensioned folk for whom five dollars is a large entry fee; the fee for a top prize of $500 should be two dollars. To promote a profitable contest, the first prize must be huge, the advertising must be nationwide, and the preliminary puzzles must be simple. Since the average entrant can't write, can't reason, and hates mathematics, he feels that puzzles involving words-and-pictures are the best bet.

Boris Randolph located 2500 words in Webster's Second and Third that can be made out of the letters of NOAH WEBSTER; is this the most fecund eleven-letter name? Experimenting with the computer on the Official Scrabble Players Dictionary word list, Alan Frank discovered that PIASTER is not the best seven-letter choice; PSALTER contains 273 words, SEAPORT contains 271, PIASTER, 269 and SALTIER, 268. Of course, this small advantage may not be preserved in larger dictionaries.
Helen Gunn, Frank Rubin and Leroy Meyers inundated the editor with examples of plural words changing to singular ones with the addition of a second S: cables, gables, lables, tables, stables, nobles, trickles, tackles, cockles, chuckles, pickles, sickles, buckles, whirls, crackles, hackles, shackle, tangles, bangles, rubles, garbles, gristles, castles, bustles, rustles, handles, snuffles, pas, mas, bos, pis, mus, asses, bas, needles, amas, moras, kindles, rumples, carles, footles, rustles, gamines, cosines, marques, abys, intestines. Some of these are found in the Official Scrabble Players Dictionary rather than Webster's; others are plausible -less coinages not listed in the dictionary. Asks Meyers: "Does Douglass suffer from the same disease? What is a Dougla?"

No one sent in a solution to the English riddle in Kickshaws; apparently it is more difficult than the ones by Wilberforce featured in Omni.

Frank Rubin has known several Jewish Coras, but no Cora Stein. However, he did verify one of Darryl Francis's other transposals of ACEINORST: 'riot canes' are cited in newspaper accounts as wooden rods about four feet long, used by Japanese police against demonstrators.

In "O Lucifer!" Frank Rubin does not find the Biblical reference to the planet Venus wounding nations (Isaiah 14:12) to be mystifying if one recalls that ancient peoples took astrology very seriously; even the Jews of Isaiah's time did not reject astrology as incompatible with their religion. Could not an astrological prediction in which a nation placed great faith, one involving the planet Venus, have proved catastrophically false?

Errata: Several readers noted that DESSERTER (August 1981 Colloquy) reverses to RETRESSED; this is not listed in Webster's, but the verb 'tress' means 'to braid or plait hair'. Perhaps, Frank Rubin suggests, the word might be used by a wigmaker fond of oblique speech. In "The Contest Center" the letters in MONEY did not have numerical values of 21, 22, 16, 9 and 6; these were the counts of the letters in the winning entry. In the May 1981 Colloquy, ANATIPESSTIFER lost an A, and in the August 1981 Colloquy the Scrabble diagram 'bunn, bo, un, in' should be 'bun, bo, un'.

Old updates: Leroy Meyers discovered the beauty parlor Hair After in Orono, Maine, not listed in "Hair-It-Is", May 1979. He also gives the oxymoron 'dual monarchy'. Richard Lederer adds the oxymoron 'fresh frozen' (from a Safire column), and Edward Wolpow discovered 'Superior Undercoating', a rust-proofing firm near Vancouver, British Columbia. He also found a new -ifer word: LEGIFER, an obsolete word for 'lawmaker' in Webster's Second. David Rosen unearthed the Tudor Nomenclature PLUGS and SOCKETS from the June 1981 issue of Creative Computing, January, 1973, two-letter values of O:

Alan Frank has found several examples of multiple rules being proposed 'enlarging' the American Government. The American International is quite a numocracy, beocracy, jobocracy, oiligacy, oligocracy. By contrast, a couple of months after Lehnert's recent The Pleasure is in the Quest, Leroy Myers discovered a number of new -aries, including sexnocracy and squireocracy.

Kyle Corbin reports that they are to make the official Scrabble new alphabet, in the 1986 edition. They are to make a couple of changes to the standard Scrabble alphabet, the 1986 edition. They are to make a couple of changes to the standard Scrabble alphabet, and one of these is to change the letter A to a

Andrew E. Be

name which reads LION ONE TH

letter A first.
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The 181 Colloquy put the verb 'bin suggests, ch. In "The small values of the winning entry, in the August 1 be 'bun, bo.

After in lao gives the moron 'fresh ered 'Super-

The explanation for verbs is the same except for the substitutions of 'verb' for 'noun' and 'principal parts' for 'plurals'.

Andrew E. Beresky of New York City notes that the smallest number name which requires all eight typing fingers to be used is ONE SEPTILION ONE THOUSAND -- the letter P first appears at septillion, and the letter A first appears at thousand.


Alan Frank has found a new record score for a subtransposal with no letters in common. Setting A = 1, B = 2, etc., the product of the letter-values of OUTPOUR is equal to the product of the letter-values in either ANGELICALLY or BIENNially (571,536,000).

Leroy Meyers questions Paul Hellweg's 'nonarchy' coinage in "Pick a Government" -- since most of the -archy names for governments with multiple rules are based on Greek roots rather than Latin ones, he proposes 'ennarchy' instead. Looking to Berrey and Van Den Bark's The American Thesaurus of Slang (Second Edition, 1953) and Roget's International Thesaurus as well as Webster's, Rudolf Ondrejka found quite a number of new -cracy and -archy words: acreocracy, landocracy, beecracy, cottonocracy, dese-doze-and-democracy, gnuocracy, jobocracy, meritocracy (in 6000 Words), millionocracy, moneyocracy, oligarchy, oligarchy, puritocracy, snobocracy and squattocracy. By coincidence, Larry Seits sent in an article on -cracy words a couple of months after Hellweg; he added virocracy (undefined, in Lehnert's reverse dictionary), oligocracy (undefined, in Maleska's A Pleasure in Words, 1981), landocracy, physiocracy, cottonocracy, squireocracy, squattocracy and strumpetocracy (OED). Edward Wol-pow discovered Popocracy and the simpleocracy in Webster's Second and sexnocracy, healthocracy and pianocracy in Mencken's The American Language.

Kyle Corbin concedes that readers who wish to relax the rules of Scrabble in their personal game-playing are at liberty to do so, but high-scoring records and the like must adhere strictly to Scrabble rules if they are to mean anything. He agrees with Alan Frank that, for words of nine or more letters, Webster's Collegiate does comply with the official Scrabble rules for forming inflections of words that show none. Page 13a of the 1980 edition says "The plurals of nouns are usually not shown when the base word is unchanged by suffixation, when the noun is a compound whose second element is readily recognizable as a regular free form entered at its own place..." The explanation for verbs is the same.

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