

WORDPLAY IN RADIO CONTESTS

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A Word To The Wise

An automobile dealer in Tucson, Arizona ran a radio commercial in October 1985 which featured a word game. The advertisement was on twelve different stations, and saturated the airways for two weeks with six to eight spots a day. It was the talk of the town. This is how the commercial aired:

Hi. Here I am again with another word game. This one's a little tricky so don't get mad at me. I've got one hundred dollars for the first person to send me a four-letter word from an English dictionary that can be correctly pronounced as a six-syllable word. Sounds impossible, but there is at least one. [Commercial] And be the first to send me a word of four letters that Mr. Webster says can be pronounced as a six-syllable word, and I'll send you a hundred bucks.

There were some interesting responses to this word game. Just saying that "This one's a little tricky .." caused some contestants to look for a trick answer. Hence, among the first entries to be received were the words COED for coeducational and MONO for mononucleosis, both shortened versions of six-syllable words. These contestants obviously didn't get the word as their entries didn't follow the instructions. Another contestant submitted the word HOME, referring to Tucson, Arizona (six syllables). Although clever and a personal favorite of the sponsor, it was also incorrect.

A few imaginative contestants sent in ASAP (as soon as possible) and RSVP (répondez s'il vous plaît), two abbreviations or acronyms for words which are pronounced with six syllables. These submissions were on the right track, but were also judged incorrect since they aren't considered words by Mr. Webster. However, it was becoming apparent that people were correctly beginning to think along acronym lines. The word was definitely out.

Finally, entries started coming in which contained the letter W. This was a valuable discovery since it is the only letter that is pronounced using more than one syllable. The words WASP and WACS were submitted, intending to be pronounced by spelling them. However, according to Webster's, neither of these acronyms is pronounced as a six-syllable word. Close, butt no cigar.

Then, on the third day of the contest, the word YWCA was received. Although this word was correct and acceptable by the judges, it was not the one they were looking for. There was a better word - one that had the look, feel, and spell of a word. Surpris-

ingly, one person found it on the first day of the contest. And, being a man of his word, the car dealer paid off.

Before the commercial ran its course, almost 400 entries were received. Among these submissions, over eighty had included the word YWCA. However, 17 contestants eventually found the correct word. Did you get the word? See Answers and Solutions at the end of this issue.

I'll Drink To That

Recently, a local radio station in Tucson and a beer company jointly sponsored a slogan contest.

Entrants in the contest were to come up with a one or two line slogan for Pacifico Beer, a Mexican beer being introduced to the Tucson area. The one requirement of the contest was that the slogan had to contain the words PACIFICO and TUCSON. The contest was heard on radio station KRQ, and was promoted for three weeks.

There were three grand prize winners, each of whom received a trip for two of four days and three nights to Mazatlan, Mexico. Over 300 entries were received during this contest. The winning slogans were read over the air after judging was completed. Here are ten of the slogans which were submitted. Three of these were the winning entries. Can you pick the winners? See Answers and Solutions at the end of this issue.

1. IF IT'S MAGNIFICO, IF IT'S TERRIFICO -
IT'S PACIFICO - TUCSON'S BEST!
2. THE LABEL SAYS PACIFICO BEER
THE TASTE SAYS TUCSON'S BEST!
3. PACIFICO AND TUCSON -
THE FUN NEVER SETS!
4. PACIFICO BEER - LIKE FINDING SHADE IN TUCSON!
5. PACIFICO BEER - TUCSON'S LIQUID SUNSHINE!
6. PACIFICO AND TUCSON MAKE A GREAT COMBINATION.
WHERE THE BEER AND THE ANTELOPE PLAY!
7. TUCSON'S BEST BEER IS PACIFICO -
A HEAD OF ITS TIME!
8. TO MAKE THAT TUCSON SUN REALLY SHINE,
TRY A PACIFICO WITH A TWIST OF LIME!
9. IN TUCSON, ONE WORD DESCRIBES PACIFICO - TERRIFICO!
10. THE SLOW LANE ... THE GOOD LIFE ...
TUCSON'S BEST - PACIFICO BEER!