

COLLOQUY

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 at least one month prior to publication of an issue will appear in that issue.

Kyle Corbin recently discovered a 74-letter pangrammatic window, beating by one letter the 75-letter window reported by Tom Pulliam in the February 1984 *Word Ways*. The new record-holder is:

How do people in show business regard Vanna White, the young lady who turns the letters on the "Wheel of [Fortune" TV quiz show? What is her great talent, or is she considered a joke?
-- Kimberly Poindex]ter, Birmingham, Ala.

(Parade, The Sunday Newspaper Magazine, Aug. 2, 1987, p. 2)

The champion, of course, still remains the 67-letter window in The Beth Book (see May 1987 *Word Ways*, p. 94).

Jeremy Morse shortens Dave Morice's "Minotaur's String" (a sequence of letters in which all the Greek letter-names can be read off) by four letters: GKLAOMBDICLPRTHZEUPSXIGLMONTAU. R. Merrill Ely of Chicago suggests an improved English version of Dave Morice's trilingual anagram: A HOME CAN'T BE ALL I SAT IN.

Harry Partridge has asked for a chance to clarify Dr. Wombat's alleged May 1987 allusion to AIDS and homosexuals (editorial apologies for not allowing it to appear earlier). He asserts that Dr. Wombat's remark was not intended as an insult but as a statement of fact about a moral and medical crisis that, according to Steven Jay Gould, may eventually kill a quarter of the world's population. Noting such items as the oxymoron "military intelligence" (May 1987) Randolph Waller of Plainfield, New Jersey applauds the editor's intention to eschew political, religious, or medical partisanship in the pages of *Word Ways* ("please free the magazine from unseemly topical allusions - but do it fairly").

Ben Zimmer proposes the 24-letter THYROPARATHYROIDECTOMIZE (in Webster's Second Edition) as a candidate for the longest dictionary verb, bettering the August 1987 Kickshaws and November 1987 Colloquy candidates.

Kyle Corbin notes that a number of Charles Holding's sixteen-letter transposals in the May 1981 Colloquy are not dictionary entries, but rather hypothesized adverbial forms of dictionary-word adjectives. Logologists, of course, disagree as to whether such words ought to be allowed.

In "Pangram Variations" in the February 1977 **Word Ways**. Ralph Beaman was able to cram 22 different letters into two Websterian words: FORMALDEHYDESULPHOXYLIC VENTRILOQUIZING. Ben Zimmer has matched this feat, but done it in only 31 total letters instead of 39: PARATHYROIDECTOMIZING QUICKFLAWS. Can anyone get 23 different letters into two Merriam-Webster words?

Dave Morice asks "What is the shortest word-unit palindrome that changes meaning in reverse?" He proposes SUE SUE (bringing a lawsuit against Susan) which becomes SUE, SUE (Susan, bring a lawsuit against someone).

Dictionary error: Kyle Corbin discovered that TEMPORAT (below the line in Webster's Second) is defined as "temporate" -- but the latter word is nowhere to be found.

Philip Cohen notes in "Transposing Rates" that ESTA does not mean "I am" in Latin. ATRES can be found in the OED under "atter". and STERA is in Dunglison's Medical Dictionary. Responding to the six arrangements of the letters A, E, and R in "Transposing Rates", William Sunners sent the editor a page from an unpublished book in which he uses all six in a three-by-three crossword puzzle.

R E A
A R E
E A R

In the May 1983 Kickshaws, Eric Albert gave a list of dictionary words specifying various racial mixtures. To this, Ben Zimmer adds the word HAOLE from Webster's Third, designating a person who is half Hawaiian, half Caucasian.

Commenting on William Sunners' method for anagram solving (arranging the letters in a square array, alternating vowels and consonants), David Shulman notes that a famous cryptographer (not named) would sometimes try to find a new angle for solving a baffling cipher by dropping the paper on the floor.

In his May 1987 survey of pangrams, Maxey Brooke overlooked the really fine NEW JOB: FIX MR. GLUCK'S HAZY TV, PDQ which was printed in the August 1986 Games magazine.

Larry Urdang fears that the phrase "about 15 per cent as many [entries]" in the review of the Facts on File book on allusions in the November 1987 **Word Ways** may mislead readers. To ensure it does not, the Facts on File book contains 1300 entries, the Gale book, 8700 entries.

Kyle Corbin amends Alan Frank's "Two New Books on Scrabble" by noting that the highest-scoring opening move using OSPD words is MUZJKS, at 128.

Jeremy Morse suggests TDT outdate, DSN Edison, TDN outdone, DSL diesel, and LDT lydyate (in the OED) as fillers for the gaps on page 129 of "Mnemonics for Overlapping Groups".

SPAGHETTI JUNCTION may not be solely "Brit Wit": R. Merrill Ely points out that in Chicago the conjunction of four expressways with four different levels is referred to by locals as the SPAGHETTI BOWL. Many years ago, a complicated interchange in the Los Angeles area was dubbed THE STACK.

Ben Zimmer adds SPOONERISM/MARROWSKY to Dmitri Borgmann's list of matched pairs (words having the same numerical value) in his article "Mathematical Equivalence" in February 1986. Another bit of numerology: FERDINAND MARCOS has a numerical value of 144 (the square of 12), and his successor, CORAZON AQUINO, 169 (the square of 13).

Dave Morice writes "Don Sharp's 'Dial N for Negative' was a quite linguistically oriented study of the morpheme UN-, but it would've been logologically interesting to point out that UN- has the visual property that if U and N are considered as a set of opposites (i.e., U is not N, N is not U), then turning either one upside down negates it by converting it into the other [in the lower-case alphabet]."

R. Robinson Rowe's long-ago (February 1977) article on bathroom names still inspires reader comment: Maxey Brooke reports that the tourist office of the Evangeline Park in St. Pré, Nova Scotia, has three doors, the two end ones bearing the international stick figures for men and women, and the center with a question-mark. No, it's not what you think, but is merely the information office.

Kyle Corbin supplies the longest boldface transposal-pair in the Merriam-Webster Pocket Dictionary: JACK-IN-THE-PULPITS/JACKS-IN-THE-PULPIT.

Alan Frank has filled one of the holes in "The 4-Set Problem" in the May 1983 **Word Ways**: the word Quixotesque, containing the letters QQTX, was used in a travel article in World Press Review.