

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.

Elsewhere in this issue, Leonard Gordon and the editor show how one can make 74 number names between 0 and 99 self-descriptive by assigning suitable real numbers to the 17 different letters of the alphabet which spell them out. As noted in "The New Merology" in the February 1990 *Word Ways*, these can be augmented by a factor of 128, leading to a total of 9472 self-descriptive number names, by assigning suitable values to D,A,M,B,Q,C and P.

Frank Rubin continues to turn up interesting partial ten-squares in his computer-based search (see the November 1989 *Word Ways*). The following pleasing square is both 8,8 and 5,10:

```

      C S E A S C A N
      A C Y C L O N E
C A N O E T E N T S
S C O O B L E D O O
E Y E B A N K I N G
A C T I N I S T I A
S L E E K S T O N E
C O N D I T O R I A
A N T O N I N L A N
N E S O G A E A N S

```

Jeff Grant notes that word ladders whose end words are reversals of each other have appeared in *Word Ways* earlier than February 1990; this topic was explored by several readers in the May 1980 Colloquy. Six-letter examples were shown for SPACED-DECAPS, DE-CART-TRACED, HALREN-NERIAH and REKNIT-TINKER; REKNITS-STINKER was a seven-letter example.

Michael Helsem reports that the Albanian town ZIQ-XHAFEJ, notable as one of the few non-coined examples of a word containing JQXZ, is in the title of a poem ("Do You Know the Way to Ziq-Xhafej?") just published in his new collection, Raps Clack Calcspar (Slough Press, Austin, 1989).

Dictionary-entry humor or wordplay has been mentioned several times in *Word Ways*, most recently in May 1988. Under TOCO in Webster's Second, one finds the following couplet: "A flogging or thrashing; sometimes a tongue-lashing."

Lee Sallows corrects the calculation of UMPTEEN and K in "The New Merology." The former equals 1,000,000,000,000,000,000,999,866, and the latter equals -1,000,000,932.

Lee Sallows writes "I note THIRTEEN is unluckier than first thought. We know that if THREE, TEN, and THIRTEEN are perfect then E must equal 1. Now, from NINE, $1 = 9 - 2N - E$. So if $1 = E$ then $E = 9 - 2N - E$, from which $2E = 9 - 2N$. But $2E$ is an even number, while $9 - 2N$ is odd. So even if we allowed letters to share the same values, THIRTEEN will remain unlucky for all integer assignments."

However, Lee Sallows notes that half-integer assignments as well as non-distinct letter values enable one to make ZERO through TWENTY-NINE self-descriptive, with the exception of EIGHTEEN.

E	F	G	H	I	L	N	O	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
0	$2\frac{1}{2}$	$7\frac{1}{2}$	-5	0	4	$4\frac{1}{2}$	$-3\frac{1}{2}$	$2\frac{1}{2}$	0	$5\frac{1}{2}$	$2\frac{1}{2}$	$2\frac{1}{2}$	0	6	$4\frac{1}{2}$	1

Leonard Gordon shortens a few of his November 1969 Carrollian ladders:

ARMY-arms-aims-nims-nams-name-nave-NAVY
 POOR-pook-rook-rock-rick-RICH
 TREE-tret-trot-toot-woot-WOOD
 HAND-fand-fond-font-FOOT
 BLUE-blur-baur-bauk-bank-bink-PINK
 FOUR-foud-ford-fore-fire-FIVE

The final one is a variant of a ladder given by Sir Jeremy Morse in the February 1990 Colloquy.

Leonard Gordon writes "Sarah Hautzinger's article is amusing. A carnival passed through my home town about 1935 or 1937 and one of our neighborhood urchins picked up carny and taught the gang. My brother, I and a few friends have used it ever since. In later years I discovered that carny is used in American whorehouses, so suggest Miss Hautzinger be careful in showing her knowledge. How many Z-sounds to put into a word is up to you. It's a trade between your need to conceal and the cost of having to articulate all those Zs. You think ahead as you talk. I can not imagine a kee-izop tee-izoo dee-izum tee-izoo ee-izunder-stee-izand kee-izar-ny, but you can get some additional concealment by incorporating dialect. We kids developed our own jargon."

Leonard Gordon further writes "We have had enough chatter about computers vs. people, but I must comment on Chris Cole's remarks. He is correct. If you don't want to compete with computers, work on problems that the computer programmers can't handle, but I don't like his implication that mere possession of a list can make a difficult problem trivial. If any hack with a list can solve a problem with a computer, then that problem always was trivial (tedious, maybe, but still trivial)."