

THE POET'S CORNER

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.

Jay Ames of Toronto, Canada likes to browse through dictionaries. The following poem celebrates a few of the "weird and merry" words he found there:

My ampullaceous older sis
Gets far too fast annoyed.
Would she be better-tempered if
I called her balanoid?

Botuliform is Auntie's pooch,
But then, he's like a sossidge.
Perhaps she's glad he's as he is
And thus less vermifossidge?

Ulotrichous are our kids,
And have been, since their birth,
Though spouse and I are bald as coots --
Is that why all this mirth?

Pisiformic isn't how
I know I'd like to be,
But, better that than others think
I'm pissie as a pea.

Fair blow the flowers of the fields
On yonder bonnie banks,
But rotten blubber for my blooms?
I have to say, 'No fenks'.

Harry Stern of Seattle, Washington wrote the following anagrammatic paean to Thomas Baer; his mother's reaction was "Basta, Homer".

Thomas Baer
Bats a homer!
Tom, bare, has
Beth's aroma.
A somber hat,
To bar shame.
Beat or mash
Ham or beast.
Ham be roast.

Thomas Baer
Abhors meat.
Ham be a sort.
Tom? He's Arab,
Boast harem.
Brahma's toe?
To Sheba, arm.
The arm? A sob.
Has to be arm.

Math's a bore.
To be a marsh:
Bore, as math.

Ah, best roam -
Oh, be at Mars!
A short beam,
Oh, star beam.

Atom basher:
O, harm betas!
Bash at more.
Be rash, atom!

Moshe, a brat,
A brash mote;
Sam, a bother.

Rome's a bath,
Hot as amber
Or the samba,

Ear shot: bam!
Arab shot me.
Share a tomb,
Or bash me at
Home, bastar-.
Shame? Abort!

Kay Haugaard of Pasadena, California examines a spelling problem:

My students spell all right ALRIGHT,
But I don't think it's worth a fight.
Usage backs them, slow but steady,
Although all write ALRIGHT already.

Finally, she casts a dubious eye on -person words:

Of chairpersons I've had my fill.
And now, I fear, freshpersons will
Precede the sophomores in school,
And fireperson will be the rule
Unless, of course, some diehard frail
Decrees that person's much too male.
Take horsemanship and such-like words:
Horsepeopleship is for the birds!
Why not use old-fashioned names
Although it may annoy some dames?
Horsepersonship could make one swear;
It's all just horseship, I declare.