DAVID MORICE
Iowa City, Iowa

Readers are encouraged to send their own favorite linguistic kickshaws to the Kickshaws Editor. All answers appear in the Answers and Solutions at the end of this issue. Guest editors will continue to appear occasionally.

A Three-Ring Circus of the Mind

For Richard Lederer, wordplay is much more than a sideshow. As he writes: "When I was a kid, I used to love to go to the circus. Now that I am a grownup kid, I can create a three-ring circus of the mind whenever I want. The inveterate logologist loves to watch words clowning, words teetering on tightropes, words swinging from tent-tops, words thrusting their heads into the mouths of lions. Hurry! Hurry! Hurry! Step right up to one of life's great entertainments. All the fun will be in tents."

Palindromic Sports Lineups

Out of the BALL LAB, Win Emmons has concocted a list of reversible sports figures with appropriate commentary:

The Baseball Lineup

Flo Jo, LF (speed in lead-off position)
S. Sununu, SS (nephew of former NH governor)
F. Cleon Noel, CF
Bo Bobo, B
B. Bremer, BB (his uncle shot Governor Wallace)
B.B. (Boca) Jace, BBB (nicknamed for FL hometown)
Fred A. Dade, RF
Cal Lev Vella, C (of Jewish-Italian descent)
Price Mecir, P (cousin of Czech tennis player)

The Football Lineup

Cleon V. Noel, C (cousin of center fielder)
Glen A. Lane, LG
T. Lynn (Ed) Denny, LT
E.S. Harrah, SE
Greg A. Page, RG
Trey A. Kaye, RT
B. Hanna, HB (Dad is master cartoonist)
B. Fred (L.I.) Wilder, FB (from Long Island)
A Teacher's Prayer

My students all write chaise lounge
Which they rhyme with base scrounge.
Let me here iterate and reiterate
My yearning for one who's so literate
As to rhyme that apparatus with fez wrong
And correctly to spell it chaise longue.

First Person Plural Baby Talk

Kay Haugaard, author of the preceding quatrain, discussed third
person singular baby talk in the November Word Ways. One example:
"Mommie is very unhappy with Ashley for spilling her cereal all
over the floor." When my son was born, I tried to avoid this form
of baby talk, but I slipped into it on occasion. I felt that words
YOU and I would be more complicated for him to understand, since
those words shift meaning depending on the speaker. Now I realize
this is not true: a child can learn either with equal ease.

Instead, I found myself using another, perhaps subtler, form:
first person plural baby talk. "Come on, Danny, let's eat your
breakfast." Note that, unlike the third person singular structure,
the word YOUR doesn't agree with the plural subject. This form
is closely related to the spoken editorial "we" that speakers use
to address groups. It creates unity and a common identity.
With a child, it sometimes reflects the reality of what's
going on, e.g., "Let's put your clothes on." But it also
draws attention to the child's dependence on the parent.

Stories in the Present

In the Introduction to Children's Literature class that I teach,
each student gives a report on a children's book selected from
one of ten categories. The report includes reading a book aloud.
One category, Wordless Books, requires the student to make up
a story to accompany the sequential pictures. The student invariab­
ly places the story in the present tense. Most children's storybooks
are written in the past tense, and most personal true-life stories
that people tell are in the past tense,

Why switch to the present when making up a story to accompany pictures? My guess
is that the teller is describing the book instead of making up
a story to go with it, and descriptions are usually given in the
present tense.

Strained Dialects

Can you identify where these two written dialects of English
appear? Dialect 1: In the purest form, the writer uses only impera­tive verbs and omits A, AN, THE and OF. It's a very common
dialect, and books written in it can be found in many homes a­
round the country. However, libraries don't usually carry them.
Dialect 2: This is similar to the first dialect, and it has the
additional feature that single letters of the alphabet appear in
many of the sentences. Fewer books are written in it. Many people
become infuriated when reading it.

Ex-Ray Vision

Charles L.

words are gathered
of the game
using the Ex-Ray
sent fifteen

EXAMPLEs

EXCALIBUR

EXCITATION

EXCUSE

EXHALE

EXAM

EXILE

EXPENSIVE

EXPIRED

EXPLORER

EXTENDED

EXTENSION

EXTORT

EXTORTED

EXACT

EXALT

EXCEED

EXCEL

EXIT

EXTREME

EXXON

Dictionary of

Dictionary

Organizations

Music, Dance

Carlos Williams

Library

Individuals

Ogden Nash,

The book also

author Marti

of the hun

and they're

style. Autho

bastes a few

Wordplay

artists who

language

Robert Indiana

postage stamp.
Ex-Ray Vision

Charles Linnet has come up with a word game in which old words are given new meanings. As he describes it, "The essence of the game is to take words beginning with EX and split them, using the EX part to mean "used to be" and making any kind of pun/fun with the [sound of the] remainder of the word." Charles sent fifteen EXwords, and I've added eight more. Try it - it's fun!

EXAMPLE someone who used to be fat
EXCALIBUR a transmogrified bullet
EXCITATION residue of tearing up a traffic ticket
EXCUSE when long lines are fully serviced
EXHALE someone who used to be healthy
EXAM someone who just died
EXILE Atlantis
EXPENSIVE someone who used to think a lot
EXPIRED when all the church steeples collapse
EXPORTER someone who used to work on the railroad
EXPUNGED a former sea creature used to wash a car
EXTENDED when the shepherd abandoned his flock
EXTENSION yoga
EXTERMINATOR if Arnold Schwarzenegger stops making movies
EXTORT if you drop your lawsuit
EXACT a large part of a play deleted
EXCEED a grown-up plant
EXTRACT to return merchandise for a full refund
EXCLAIM obtuse
EXIT to stand
EXTREME a river in the Midwest, summer of 1993
EXXON off

Dictionary of the Avant-Gardes

Dictionary of the Avant-Gardes (a cappella books, 1993, $16.95), edited by Richard Kostelanetz, is a fascinating catalog of people, organizations, movements, and other aspects of innovative writing, music, dance, television, and the other arts. It lists the well-known movers and shakers, such as Picasso, Duchamp, William Carlos Williams, and James Joyce, as well as many lesser-known individuals. There are some surprising entries - Walt Disney and Ogden Nash, for example - that fit into the scheme of things. The book also includes, as a tribute to his ubiquitous influence, author Martin Gardner, well-known to Word Ways readers. Most of the hundreds of entries are fairly short, from 50 to 200 words, and they're written in a fast-paced, entertaining, and opinionated style. Author Kostelanetz speaks well of those he likes, and lambastes a few he doesn't like.

Wordplay people would enjoy reading about the different ways that artists have played with words. The use of wordplay-influenced language appears in numerous entries, such as Concrete Poetry, Robert Indiana (for painting words, like his famous LOVE on the postage stamp), Walter Abish (for Alphabetical Africa), Ogden
Nash (for unusual rhymes), Hypertext (for "multipath fiction"), Aram Saroyan (for one-word poems), and Zaum. What is Zaum? It's a language made up of invented words that have no meaning. In the language of Zaum, this book is beevprpg ththav wxzitzl!! (Read it to find out why.)

**World War Two Wordplay**

Peter Newby tells two harrowing tales of wartime wordplay, one with a pun, the other with a palindrome.

During the Second World War, a lexicographer was drafted into the U.S. Navy and served aboard a destroyer that was torpedoed during the Battle of Midway. At the time that his ship was struck the young man was revising that part of the dictionary concerned with the letter S. He had got as far as SIN when he suddenly found himself in the Pacific clinging to a piece of wreckage and within yards of safety aboard a raft manned by some of his colleagues. As he contemplated his next move, an apt definition of the troublesome word came to him. Hence, the phrase you'll find in your pocket edition of Webster's International: SIN, COARSE WHIM.

When Lord Greystoke abandoned his baby son in the jungle, the babe was adopted by gigantic vegetables and raised as the Lord of the Peas. Adolf Hitler heard of this magnificent man, clad only in a lioncloth, so he despatched an expedition to capture the mythical Tarizan and have him displayed to the world as a model of Aryan manhood. The headline of a 1937 despatch from Berlin by a reporter of the Village Vice, when Tarizan was first put on public display at a Nuremberg rally, read TARIZAN, NAZI RAT!

**Letter Maze**

The object of the maze is to go down the rows, selecting one word from each row. Successive words are selected based on how many letters they have in common; each word must have at least one letter in common with the next one. Can you find that sequence of ten words which has the fewest common letters? the most common letters? (Hint: the first sequence has only one common letter at each step, totalling nine; the second sequence has a total of 25.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>time</th>
<th>dog</th>
<th>bank</th>
<th>play</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>goal</td>
<td>mink</td>
<td>yawned</td>
<td>it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trust</td>
<td>limber</td>
<td>does</td>
<td>night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sweet</td>
<td>rode</td>
<td>history</td>
<td>borrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>donors</td>
<td>whittle</td>
<td>cwm</td>
<td>believe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>awry</td>
<td>shunt</td>
<td>more</td>
<td>chicken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hungry</td>
<td>yearn</td>
<td>preen</td>
<td>lusty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>asking</td>
<td>gnu</td>
<td>steel</td>
<td>card</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ideas</td>
<td>pestle</td>
<td>gains</td>
<td>shock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hard</td>
<td>cats</td>
<td>sandy</td>
<td>list</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Local and National Poets of America**

In a musty antique shop a few years ago, I discovered a won-
drous treasury of poetry. Local and National Poets of America, edited in 1890 by Thomas W. Herringshaw. More than a thousand men, women and children who had published one or more poems in newspapers or books achieved fleeting immortality in its pages. A few old masters, like Walt Whitman, are represented, but most are primitives, whose muse was as rugged as the Wild West itself. The Civil War, the Gold Rush, pioneer life, racial equality, white supremacy, the woman's role, gambling, thievery - all are facets of this panoramic vision of two thousand verse-infamed eyes. The poems range the spectrum from Whitman's "Leaves of Grass" to Mrs. Eura Brooke Bisant-Delaney's "Petals of Poetic Passion". Biographies accompany all the bards, and half of them are shown in photographs or etchings. Here is a sampling of lines and titles from some of the unsung unknowns:

Near yon willow sand I heave up (John Jordan)
Where the golden balls of nature
I Hang on branches bending low (Carrie Smith)
Be tender and affectionate | In all thy intercourse with men (Thomas J. MacMurray)
That incubator beats the dickens For hatching little downy chickens (Jeremiah Long)
Have you a beauty rather pale than fair? (Zitella Cocke)
From my bed two pistols drew, | Then slowly whispered to my wife, "Wake up and try to save your life" (Charles Cargile)
All he's got is sure my money (Josiah Giberton English)
Before his love he speaks, | Your restless tongue outslips, |
In its long accustomed way (Traverse Eugene Stout)
Ioline, Ioline, | Will you be no more my queen (Eugene Fitch Ware)
Now my pillow, tear-drenched nightly, | Is my throbbing temple's bath (Jacob G. Grossberg)
Methinks a moss from the land of Utopia, | Soft as a damsel's eyelash, |
Has in some mysterious way come forth To mold thy moustache (Ella Chandler)

"Unclad Thoughts" (Florence N. Bowen)
"The Elms of Elmo" (John William Boxell)
"A Mr.'s Not Always a Man" (Phil Hoffmann)
"Doc Baby" (Henry H. Johnson)
"Heart Pictures" (William H. Bushnell)
"The Dead Violinist" (Simeon Tucker Clark)
"Loud Praying" (Charles Cargile)
"Compliment Your Wife" (Irving J.A. Miller)

**Klavenism**

Cliff Klaven, the oddball mailman on "Cheers", can speak...
loquaciously on any subject. Each monolog, however, is a nonsensi-
cal interpretation of the topic that exceeds in its detail the verbal
gaffes of Sheridan’s Mrs. Malaprop or “Love and Marriage”’s Kelly
Bundy. A Klavenism is a whacked-out scientific, political, sociolog-
ical, economic, religious or other theory that usually relies on
some form of wordplay for its logic and humor.

In this classic example employing an acronym, Cliff jumps easi-
ly from one topic to another. Standing next to a blackboard on
an easel, he sketches a chalk diagram that is supposed to repre-
sent DNA. After discussing it a little, he concludes "DNA is an
acronym for Dames are Not Aggressive."

He sees that his audience doesn’t believe him, so he turns the
blackboard on its side, points to the sideways diagram, and says
"Let's talk about the gas turbine engine for awhile."

Cliff is the consummate mama’s boy. In this Klavenism, powered
by a Malapropism, he makes a self-referential blooper:

Cliff: That’s a Freudian slip, Woody.
Woody: What’s a Freudian slip?
Cliff: That’s when you say one thing and mean a mother.

Transaddition Names

GARY GRAY and EDNA DEAN are transposal names. LEON NOEL
and ROBERT TREBOR are palindrome names. GENE GREEN, Democratic
representative from Texas, has a transaddition name. Can you
come up with other examples of this last type from well-known
or unknown people?

England Swings Like a Pendulum Do

The November issue of the University of Iowa's International
Highlights newspaper had a front page story about MacArthur Fel-
lowship recipient Nora England, who lives in America and works
in Guatemala. This is an automatic set-up for how's-that-again
international wordplay:

- New York-born England has become a much loved and familiar
  face in Guatemala...
- England has two distinct wardrobes and diets...
- Antigua...is the headquarters for most of the research
done by England...
- Being an American in Guatemala has been fairly trouble-free
  for England...
- England believes her work will help rebuild people's self-esteem

Alphabetical Word Title

Ted Clarke saw a film about an African people, and the title
included the phrase EFIK MOVY, two words whose letters are in
alphabetical order. In Language on Vacation, Dmitri Borgmann
lists BILLOWY, ADELLOPS and AEGILOPS as the longest single
alphabetical words. Are there any other phrases or names
whose letters occur in alphabetical (or reverse-alphabeti-
nonsensical. Kelly, a sociologist, relies on which DNA is an easy keyboard on turns the and says into.

LEON NOEL
Democratic

Can you make up a plausible sentence with the letters in alphabetical order? Short ones are easy: ABEL LOST. Perhaps they should have at least 14 letters, one more than half the alphabet. I’ll start with a line about a man cleaning a pigpen: ABE HILL MOPS STY. Reverse alphabetical order is harder, so the 14-letter limit must be waived. This could be the title of a story about the Post Officer discussing how it delivers a well-known magazine: USPO ON LIFE. It’s your turn. BEGIN NOW!

Sign Off, Sign On

Sometimes a letter in a sign can be removed to make a naughty word. For instance, in Iowa City many years ago a prankster removed the G from a sign announcing a reading by fiction writer ANGUS WILSON. Now, thanks to CNN, the reverse can be done — a letter insertion prank. A recent story about the plot to blow up US national monuments showed a building with a large sign that begged to have a letter added: FU KING FOOD STORE.

Self-Love Song

Batley, the bat on the children’s program Eureeka’s Castle, sang “I Love Me,” the greatest parody of a love song that I’ve ever heard. It included such logical wordplay as “If I left myself, I’d die” and “I couldn’t live without me”. This suggests changing the words of songs with YOU in it to achieve a similar effect, like the Beatles’ “I Wanna Hold My Hand”, with the lines “Oh, yeah, I tell me something, I think I’ll understand, when I say that something, I wanna hold my hand...And when I touch me I feel happy inside.” Fight co-dependency! Rewrite a song and send it to Kickshaws.

The Rotten Egg Dilemma

"Last one to touch the door is a rotten egg!" My son likes to call out the “rotten egg” challenge at the drop of a hat. Then he and I race to beat the other to the goal (the door, the car, the couch, etc.). One day I caught him by saying “First one to touch the door is a rotten egg.” He touched it first, and I said “You’re the rotten egg!” Since then, he shouts that out when he sees that I’m going to win. The other day I tricked him by saying “Last one to say ‘First one to say this is a rotten egg’ is a rotten egg.” He said quickly “First one to say this is a rotten egg.” And I replied “You’re the rotten egg!” But, on reflection, I was really the first one to say it, and he was the last one. Ergo, we both were the rotten egg.
Lettershifting the World

Lettershift words still have some steam in them. The other evening, I cranked up the word calculator to see what could be found in the names of countries. I looked for partial shifts. In full shifts, the letters in one word are the same number of alphabetic steps away from the corresponding letters in another word, as in CHEER to JOLLY (C is seven steps from J, H is seven from O, etc.). In partial shifts, only part of the letters travel a common number of steps. Two apt examples are DAY to LIGHT and TO to Night, in which the capitalized letters are partial shifts of 8 and 20, respectively. With the extra freedom allowed by partial shifts, the results can be more meaningful. In fact, some of the sets create poetic pictures worthy of the Imagists or the Surrealists. The last set, a quote by Saint Patrick about the snakes, is the first shift triangle of its kind. A lettershift challenge: what is the longest sentence that can be formed by partial shifts from a single word? Disallowing repetition of words formed by the same shift values, the maximum would be a base word plus 25 shifts.

A H I O H
M E A M L A
X
I A
F U R
A M
V E T
A S
R E B I A N
I F
Y M
S H E
A R P
S E X
A T I N
S E X
A N O R W A Y
M E
N O R W A Y
M E
T A
C R O A T I A N
D A M
A M E R I C A
U S
T A P
V I P E R
I R E L A N D

The English Language

Martin Gardner ran across a poem with the above title in a pre-1900 scrapbook. Its author was, as you'll see, a homophonomaniac.

A pretty deer is dear to me,
A hare with downy hair;
I love a hart with all my heart
But barely bear a bear.
'Tis plain that no one takes a plane
To halve a pair of pears.
A rake, though, often takes a rake
To tear away the tares.
All rays raise thyme, time razes all;
And, through the whole, hole wears.
A write, in writing "right," may write
It "wright," and still be wrong—
For "write" and "rite" are neither "right,"
And don't to write belong.
Beer often brings a bier to man,
Coughing a coffin brings,
And too much ale will make us all,
As well as other things.
The person lies who says he lies
When he is but reclining:
And, when consumptive folks decline,
They all decline declining.
A quail don't quail before a storm—
A bough will bow before it;
We cannot rein the rain at all—
No earthly powers rein o'er it.
The dyer dyes awhile, then dies:
To dye he's always trying,
Until upon his dying bed
He thinks no more of dyeing.
A son of Mars mars many a sun;
All days must have their days,
And every knight should pray each night
To Him who weights his ways.
'Tis meet that man should mete out meat
To feed misfortune's son;
The fair should fare on love alone,
Else one cannot be won.
A lass, alas, is something false:
Of faults a maid is made:
Her waist is but a barren waste—
Though stayed she is not staid.
The springs spring forth in spring, and shoots
Shoot forward one and all;
Though summer kills the flowers, it leaves
The leaves to fall in fall.
I would a story here commence,
But you might find it stale;
So let's suppose that we have reached
The tail end of our tale.

Namely, A Love Story

How many different names and nicknames appear in one form or another in this short short story? All names are listed as regular words in most standard dictionaries; some are disguised as nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc. What's so special about the names that appear more than once?

Bob rocks Carol merrily. Jenny frankly hopes John chuck Shelly in April. Red daisies, ferns, and herbs grace the carmine heather in Dixie, as Earl grants Sandy an olive for her sherry. Holly and laurel dot the lane between the brooks. "Hi, Bud," Lily blanches
at Rosemary's charity in the flora, while Jay hectored Jimmy over felicity in the dale. And Bill pats Sue.

In June, Barb marks the hazel, but in August, Iris nicks a penny with prudence. Will Mike sally from the berries, where Jack rose at dawn with ruth? Violet rays of joy on the clay of art's bliss! Norm wards off the kitty with cherry candy, for the robin is victor. Bunny skips over Hank's opals, because Homer, an urban guy at her beck, has bucks. So Sue bills Pat.

When merry reeds trace eve's melody, Roger has faith in the forest. "Chastity is a jewel," the randy dean stews, "but Timothy may lance Myrtle's ruby." Polly dons a pearl in Basil's van before a gale carries it miles away. Gene and Dolly harry the gray porter for ginger. Dawn peters out. Rod marches curtly to Bonny and chips her sapphire! Then Pat sues Bill.

Good Knight, Everyone

"After mentioning serious knighthoods such as the British orders of chivalry," Peter Newby writes, "the OED gives self-appointed 'orders' such as the American Knights of Labour (certain trade unionists) and a secret society called the Knights of Pythias founded in Washington in 1866. It then goes on to list what it terms 'formerly various jocular phrases' such as Knight of the Blade (a hector or bully), Knight of the Brush (painter, artist), Knight of the Cleaver (butcher), and Knight of the Collar (one who has been hanged). It continues through a host of others including these gems: Knight of Industry (swindler), Knight of the Vapour (smoker), and Knight of the Whipping Post (disreputable person). The OED concludes by saying 'and the number of such phrases may be increased indefinitely'. It sets out the rules of creativity, and you might care to produce your own 'awards'." For a famous person, Peter gives Knight of the Jelly Bean (who could that be?), and for a computer buff Knight of the Byte. I have jotted down some below. I could add many more if I wanted to continue writing knight after knight, but I'm afraid I'd have knightmares. It's your turn to joust.

Knight of the Diamond (baseball umpire, jeweler, suitor)
Knight of the Ring (wrestler, person who has just taken a bath, jeweler, suitor)
Knight of the Living Dead (zombie)
Knight of the Night (pimp, who works with Ladies of the Night)
Knight of the Naught (zero)
Knight of the Neat (obsessive-compulsive type of person)
Knight of the Knot (ship's captain, boy scout)
Knight of the Nut (squirrel, Jerry Lewis, psychiatrist)
Knight of the Note (composer)