

## COLLOQUY

Mahoun ar Rowsky of Horley, Sussex, England comments on Oren Dalton's article on hyphen abuse:

The trouble with hyphens is that they're tasked with (a) separation (also performed by the space) i.e. distancing and (b) connection (also performed by zero-spacing), i.e. cosyng-up. That leads to simple compounds suffering a variety of interpretations. When two such simple compounds are cosied-up/distanced, we got trouble. Providence may well have provided the virgule...but (a) it has many disclarifying uses (e.g. as a comma...) [and] (b) Latium furnishes both a treatment-plant-cum-fish-hatchery and clarity. German creates monster-words; whilst, in Chinese, everything is a string of unrelenting syllables, only some of which are stand-aloneable words...when transliterating [news-paper Chinese], the decision as to whether to join or separate is not just difficult--its bl\*\*dy impossible!

As for cow-orkers, he adds "On behalf of all residents (workers and co-workers) of the Isles Of Whales (who are too busy in the fields, milking their cash cows to do so themselves), I really must protest at the unwarranted suggestion that they engage in orking. It is a slur upon the good name of all decent upright members of the Orcadian community!"

Enoch Haga comments on "Bringing Home the Cryptographic Bacon":

Since an author may easily embed his name in a text without resorting to ciphers, the effort must be purely an intellectual exercise...There is no point in asking a question unless one knows how to recognize a reasonable answer. If a valid decipherment can pass unrecognized, then creating the cryptogram was a waste of time and effort...If an author uses a cipher to embed his name in a text, may a reader, upon deciphering that author's name in the text, be statistically confident that its placement was intentional? In other words, it would have to be improbable that the placement was not intentional. To approach this problem, I looked at Gaines' *Cryptanalysis* (Dover, 1956). The chart of contact percentages on p 220 looks promising. For FEGSR I calculated a mean contact percentage of 2.875 (23/8, not 10 [left and right contacts, or 2x5 letters], because there is no left contact on the first letter, and no right contact on the last letter). I calculate a mean of 11.5 (92/8). For TSVKI I calculate 3.125, no appreciable difference between a Caesar cipher and Bacon's biliteral cipher.

The Julian Calendar by Jan Anderson emerged from the Morrystown word mill with some of April missing. Should have been "A PRO TEM TAX

HIKE? Census Shows Most Scofflaws Rich. Who Pays?" for proper scan. Also, though Rome may be a resort of last resort, December should have read "A LAST REPORT." And for its sense, the first jewelweed in Xenia Unstung (Fledge Ledge Edge) mourns its lost comma (not as significant as a missed period!). While we're nit-picking, Jan writes that Olive Noaf is literally beside herself over the period somebody placed between "serieux" and "O messieurs" in "Voila Fone" (Nov 1996). "No! Vile! O, Fa!" she demurs demurely. "No, evil oaf! Lo, vain foe! Serieux was supposed to rhyme with Santa Cruz!" Quelle catastrophe, mes regrets, O fan I love.

Dan Tilque adds a few words to Peter Newby's article on English: ALFALAFEL falafel made from alfalfa, BRAGGARB clothes that do your bragging for you, GRAMMARG the expression of frustration and anguish experienced by a grammarian upon having one of his pet peeves flaunted, er...flouted.

In Aug 1989 Ira Brilliant of Phoenix AZ asked for the longest-possible letter-sequences into which one can insert AEIOU (as mate mete mite mote mute). He recently added to his one seven-letter example (blander blender blinder blunder) another seven-letter one (massing messing missing mousing). Moss is a verb in the Unabridged Random House Dictionary.

Susan Thorpe notes an error in one of the "Number Name Equations" in the February issue: EIGHT + THREE - TWO (163) = SEVEN + FIVE - THREE (163). Sorry! She also wonders: does D NUFER get a REFUND?

Sir Jeremy Morse adds to Rex Gooch's "Word Arithmetic" the words BESEEMS (all prime), HAHA (all cubes), BETWEEN COLOURFUL MAYDAYS (all sequentially -1,0,1, mod 3), and GNU (7,14,21).

Edward Wolpov writes "If you take the HEART from a SHEARTAIL, all you have is a lifeless sail. This transplant has the same beginning and ending -- perhaps it is an Organ Exchange!" (ALASEHIR is in the NI2 Gazetteer.)

SHEARTAIL		SAIL
asterial	H	hails
lariats	E	sheila
strial	A	Malesia
alist	R	Alasehir
SAIL	T	SHEARTAIL

Answering the November Jotto challenge to find two ten-letter words using 20 different letters, Chuck Fendall noted befumingly-patchworks, befumingly-patchwords, blacksmith-gunpowdery, campfights-unworkedly, fightbacks unprovedly, fightbacks-unprowedly, fightbacks-unwormedly. The -ly words are non-dictionary coinages by Jack Levine, and among the remainder fightbacks does not appear in any dictionary, either.