COLLOQUY

JEFF GRANT wrote:

Well done on the latest 'Word Ways'. Lots of interesting articles.

I enjoyed Tim Heath's 'Return of the Magnificent Seven - as Palimericks'. Just a couple of comments on his sources for the original palindromes:

'Satan! Oscillate my metallic sonatas' first appears in print (as far as we know) in 'Word Ways', May 1982, p80, in an article titled 'Epic Error Recipe', written by yours truly. It was later (1992) used as the title of an EP by Soundgarden. This has been confirmed by Mark Saltveit, 'Palindromist' magazine and website, who has been researching the origins of palindromes for around 20 years.

'Doc, note I dissent. A fast never prevents a fatness. I diet on cod' is considered one of the finest palindromes of all time. Quoting Michael Donner in his book 'I Love Me, Vol I, S. Wordrow's Palindrome Encyclopedia', re this palindrome: 'According to [Howard] Bergerson, it was told to James Mitchie by a mathematician in 1944 who did not make it up either. According to [Martin] Gardner, Mitchie won a prize for it in a *New Statesman* palindrome contest in 1967. So much for pinning down its authorship. Moreover, since the text is so greatly and widely loved, it is a good proof of the proposition that success has many fathers (while failure is a bastard).'

ALAN FRANK notes: "A while back, you printed a list of county names with transposals. One of my favorites is Lamoille (NY)/malleoli. I had been thinking of submitting this to the Enigma, but it does not lend itself well to being clued in light verse, so I would be pleased to have it noted in Colloquy."

DARRYL FRANCIS submits the following 2 Scrabble posers:

In a game where you can only play bonuses (ie all 7 tiles in a move), and ALL the tiles are blanks, what is the fewest number of moves possible that can be made where no more bonus words can be played?

Solution below from Nathan Benedict.

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        K
   ZYZZYVAS
        R
   ZYZZYVAS              >>>>> 3rd Z is on middle square
        T
   VULCANIC
        C
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ANOTHER SCRABBLE POSER

Imagine this idealised version of Scrabble:
- **Only bingos (bonuses) can be played - ie all 7 tiles must be played at each move;**
- **Any of the 100 tiles, with the usual distribution of letters, can be used.**

What is the fewest number of moves possible that can be made after which no further moves can be played? Find a solution with this number of moves. Don't forget – only moves using all 7 tiles are allowed.

Solution

This solution was created by Scrabble player Nathan Benedict, of Phoenix, Arizona.

Four moves is the minimum number. In the board layout below, the sequence of moves is:

    1. QAWWALI   (the 2nd W is on the central square)
    2. KARSTIC, QAWWALIS
    3. ZYzzYVAS   (the 2nd and 3rd Z are blank tiles)
    4. VIBRONIC

              K
        ZYzzYVAS
              R
        QAWWALIS
              T
        VIBRONIC
              C

According to Nathan, there are bingos (bonuses) down through the column with Y-L-O. They are YELLOCHING and any of 14 other words all beginning YELLOW, but all require either a C or W, both of which have already been played.