

# ANOTHER ALMANAC

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Willard Espy has done it again! Another Almanac of Words at Play (Clarkson Potter, 1980) copies the successful (over 100,000 books sold) format of his classic An Almanac of Words at Play (Clarkson Potter, 1975), an anthology of wordplay from a wide variety of books, newspapers and magazines, enlivened by Espy's witty poetry. It is a dazzling feast of verbal legerdemain that deserves to be on the shelf of every Word Ways reader. I know of no better way for Word Ways readers to reach a large audience than to catch Espy's eye, and many did so. In the list below, 'quoted' means that the author obtained the item from some other published source.

- Jay Ames - Mother Goose rhymes out of Toronto surnames (Jul 7)
- Martha Awdziewicz - wacky conjugations (Jul 19)
- Ralph Beaman - quoted a Seattle student (Apr 26)
- Thomas Bernard - college-name etymology (Jun 17)
- Dmitri Borgmann - isograms (Oct 22), strange paradoxes (Dec 5),  
quoted old acrostic poem (Jun 2)
- Charles Bostick - different point of view (Feb 4)
- Maxey Brooke - stammers (Oct 22), strange paradoxes (Dec 5),  
complete the quotation (Apr 28), Ps and Qs etymology (Feb 8)
- Betsy Burr - rebus (Aug 28)
- Philip Cohen - odd initial-bigram telephone book names (Apr 2)
- Faith Eckler - language update (Sep 30), troping the text (Dec 23)
- Ross Eckler - Cavett anagram (Sep 2), quoted Farrell pangram (Sep 18)
- R. Merrill Ely - stammers (Oct 22)
- Darryl Francis - given-name anagrams (Nov 5), quotes of double  
superlatives (Mar 30)
- Robert Funt - strange paradoxes (Dec 5)
- Virginia Hager - apt book titles (Oct 25), saintly names (Nov 1)
- Sam Harlan - Presidential surname interlock (Feb 22)
- Robert Kurosaka - strange paradoxes (Dec 5)
- Richard Lederer - strange paradoxes (Dec 5), strange past tenses  
(Feb 9)
- J. A. Lindon - Tom Swifties (Aug 8)
- John McClellan - figures of speech (Jul 3), alcoholic anagrams, plus  
quoted Enigma anagrams (Jul 17)
- D. H. Monro - alphabetical poem (Jul 24)
- Mary and Frank Oberlander - strange paradoxes (Dec 5)
- Rudolph Ondrejka - long words of 26 to 52 letters (Jan 17)
- Tom Pulliam - strange meanings for common words (Mar 27)

- James Rambo - single-vowel AEIOU sentence ( May 4)  
 Boris Randolph - paired reversals ( Oct 7)  
 Walter Shedlofsky - acrostic poem ( Jun 2)  
 Will Shortz - quoted old rebus ( Aug 28) , quoted old charades ( May 24) ,  
 strange paradoxes ( Dec 5)  
 David Silverman - acrostic puzzle and charitable/hospitable words  
 ( May 4) , punctured poetry and quoted Armour ( Jul 27) , quoted  
 Weiss on neuter pronoun ( Aug 21) , quoted Graves on code error  
 ( Dec 27) , euphemisms ( Nov 20)  
 David Stephens - word palindrome ( Apr 18)  
 Mary Youngquist - mixed proverbs ( Feb 10) , 10x10 word square  
 ( Mar 31) , 'y is an x of x' ( Jun 20) , rebus ( with Harry Hazard)  
 ( Aug 28) , punctured poetry ( with Harry Hazard) ( Jul 27)

This list serves two purposes: (1) it captures the flavor of Espy's wordplay choices, and (2) it gives credit to Word Ways authors (Espy does not always do so, sometimes citing only 'Word Ways' or no source at all). I may have missed some authors; in particular, I cannot trace the Word Ways authorship of 'Sanka' and 'dry martini' (May 4) or 'how do I love thee?' (Jul 18). The book is available in paperback for \$ 8.95 or hardcover for \$ 14.95.

## PHONETIC PANGRAMS

The September 1980 issue of the IEEE Transactions on Information Theory (1980) reprints a 1956 Bell Telephone Laboratories internal memorandum by Edward F. Moore on the construction of phonetic pangrams -- the aural analogue of letter pangrams such as SOUDGY FEZ BLANK JIMP CRWTH VOX, BATZ JINK FREV SOUDGY CWM PHLOX, or SHIV FYRD CWM QUNG JAB TEZ PHLOX. Somewhat arbitrarily deciding that there are 42 distinct sounds in English, he came up with the cryptic admonition HUM, THOU WHIRRING FUSION; YES, JOY, PAY EACH SHOW; VIE, THAW TWO WOOL DOCK BAGS. He suggests that sentences like these might be used to test intelligibility of various sounds over telephone circuits suffering impairments in transmission.