Webster's Dictionary defines colloquy as mutual discourse. Readers are encouraged to submit additions, corrections, and comments about earlier articles appearing in Word Ways. Comments received at least one month prior to publication of an issue will appear in that issue.

Rod P. Selden’s entry in the Games magazine Word Marathon contest (“In Search of Perfection”, November 1984 Word Ways) finished in a five-way tie for fifth place. The winning substitute-letter transposal chain was devised by Michael Wolfberg of Concord, Massachusetts. Although aesthetically marred by repeated words (allowed by the rules), it is so remarkable that Word Ways has reproduced it below for the delectation of logologists. In each word, the capitalized letter replaces the underlined letter in the preceding word:

terminations, Cremationist, Gastrocnemii, cremationism, craniotomies, exorcismation, conspiration, incinerators, contrariwise, rhetoricians, orchestrinas, erato- rhines, secretariness, reflectorians, necrolatries, celebriations, neuroblastic, subjunctional, discountable, elucidations, unsocialized, equinoctials

Can logologists construct a closed substitute-letter transposal chain of 26 words, all words different, and all 26 letters introduced in turn? in both directions simultaneously?

Dmitri Borgmann adds DIHYDROXYCHOLECALCIFEROL and PHOSPHATIDYLETHANOLAMINE, two 24-letter words from Webster’s Third Addenda, to the long-ago May 1972 list of the longest dictionary words. He also notes the hyphenated PRESENTATIVE-REPRESENTATIVE from Funk & Wagnalls, and ECCLESIASTICO-STATISTICAL, MONARCHICO-ARISTOCRATIC, and NICENO-CONSTANTINOPOLENT from Webster’s Second.

Tom Pulliam proposes two more words in Webster’s in which all 24 permutations of four different letters are found; ELECTROTELE- THERMOMETER (e, o, r, t) and INTESTINOINTESTINAL (e, i, n, v). Dmitri Borgmann adds the hyphenated examples URETERO-URETEROSTOMIES (e, o, r, t) and NIEVIE-NIEVIE-NICK-NACK (e, i, n, v); for a fuller account of how to look for such words, see his “Three Miraculous Solutions” in this issue.

The minimum-length word containing all 24 permutations of four different letters is not 13, as asserted in “All Letter-Orders in a Word” in November, but 12. Eight patterns for such words have been identified, all with a 4-3-3-2 letter distribution, and all with the double letter appearing in the fourth and ninth positions:
Can readers find any more? Are patterns possible not satisfying these conditions?

In the same article, the editor asserted that no Websterian 13-letter word using only four different letters exists. Dmitri Borgmann quickly reminded him of SENSELESSNESS in Language on Vacation. WAHIAWA, HAWAII is a sizable city on Oahu, listed both in Webster's Second and Webster's New Geographical Dictionary, and KINNICKINNICK is an Ohio village in the 1984 Rand McNally Commercial Atlas and Marketing Guide. BIBLIA ABIBLIA, listed in Webster's Second, is a term for books that are not books. Longer words include the dictionary plural SENSELESSNESSES and the non-dictionary MISS MISSISSIPPI, a term that could collectively refer to the 1959, 1960 and 1980 winners of the Miss America pageant.

The Word Wurcher adds FERTILIZER (i.e., begetter) to FERTILIZER (i.e., manure) to "Life-Cycle Recycle," but adds "Most of the life-cycle from/to's sound as though they had been dreamed up during the Happy Hour at Camozzi's Saloon."

Dmitri Borgmann notes the odd names of ELSEWHERE LANE and WHERE ELSE LANE, two streets in Milwaukie, Oregon. Alan Frank found SELDOM GOOD PASTURE ROAD on the Greater Boston street map. None of these appears in the 1908 Post Office Guide.

Ed Wolpow believes that Charlie Bostick should have given the source of his Celestial Shaggy Dog and Two Bilingual Jokes to avoid the inference that they were original with him. His comment on the French Bilingual was "Six!", echoed by Sam Edelston's "Cease! 'Nuf [of] dis!" Mary Louise Gilman enjoyed both, and plans to reprint one in the National Shorthand Reporter. John Henrick adds "Everyone to whom I have shown the two bilingual jokes has enjoyed them greatly."

Ed Wolpow points out that letter-changes, such as bad-bag-ban-bat-bay, are special cases of Charlie Bostick's Collinear Words.

F or four te enth
I ight
F for four te nth
T welfe n
E ve n
E n

Philip Cohen notes that Charlie Bostick's numerical crossword was published in the April 1982 issue of Crossword. Alfreda Blanchard's improvement, shown at the left, appeared in the January 1983 issue of the same magazine. All the integers from one through sixteen (except for thirteen) occur in this grid.

Dmitri Borgmann suggests that Jeff Grant should have included QQ in his "Q Palindromes" - the Acronyms, Initialisms and Abbreviations Dictionary (Gale) defines this variously as an abbreviation for queaque or quaque in medicine, Questionable Questionnaires, Queen's Quarterly, Aerovias Quisqueyana, and Quantile-Quantile. Is the Argentine town NEUQUEN the only internal-Q palindrome?
Mark Isaak of Palo Alto, California has added 34 more long-E sounds to "The Ultimate Homonym Group", and Dmitri Borgmann suggested three that Isaak overlooked:

A- do-sa-do (DOEseeDOE) IDHE ceilidhe (KAYlee)
-A- dos-a-dos IER loup-cervier (LOOsee VEE)
-A- dos-a-dos ILH Anouilh (aNUUee)
EE urdé (URdee) IT'E jeune fille (zhun FEE)
EE urdée IS- gris-gris (GREEgree)
EG impregn ITZ Agassiz trawl
EGH Raleigh IZ Agassiz trawl
ER catercorner (KAdee-) LLI' Bernoulli's theorem (berNUUeez-)
ET chalet (SHAlee) O geoduck (GUUeeduk)
EU grand jeu (gran ZHEE) OIX chamoix
EZ rendezvous RTHEA northeast (norEEST)
'l' istesso tempo THEA northeast
I' Isma'ili (izmAAEElee) UEF plaguary
I caíque (kaaEEK) UILL guillotine
I calesin (KA盧SEEN) YIE brulyie (BRUULee)
IAE mediaeval d,l (DEE-ell)
IDH cellidh (KAYlee)

For good measure, Isaak appended four more sounds produced by X: TSH paixtle, KH xat, S ixtle, and W Latinxua (LATnwaa). He concedes "The last one is iffy. One could say that the X is silent and the U makes the W sound." The Word Wurcher writes "...one can take any foreign word whose orthography represents a more or less English-like sound ... and say 'Look, Ma, ain't this a weird way of writing this sound?'

George H. Roberts professes bafflement by Louis Phillips' "AppleSauce Chronicles" movie title "Hair, starring James Beard and Fuzzy St. Knight". He thinks that the latter character is an inadvertent meld of Fuzzy Knight and Al "Fuzzy" St. John.

Mary Hazard follows up the November Colloquy with some more real-life ambiguous headlines from magazines and Rochester papers:

POPULATION STUDIES AGE PREMATURELY are these studies of the population, which are going out-of-date too soon, or is an unspecified group carrying out gerentological studies before they are supposed to?
JAPAN PLANS TO LOOK TO THE STARS FROM HAWAII Japanese actresses don't fill the bill?
BANKS TO GIVE UP TODAY a new financial crisis [Dennis Banks, Indian leader]
MARIJUANA SEIZED IN RUSH haste makes waste? [Rush township]
LIGHT TURNOUT EXPECTED TODAY let's conserve energy
Kyle Corbin answers the alphabetic word-chain query in the November Word Ways with the 39-letter ABC defog hijack elm no PDQ rest up TV waxy zoo, an improvement of three. However, purists may object to words such as ABC that are merely concatenations of letters pronounced in sequence, even though listed as nouns in Webster’s Third. His Official Scrabble Players Dictionary lists, at 39 letters apiece, are less controversial:

aby, cod, ef, ghi, jack, limn, opaquer, stun, vow, ox, oyez
lazy, ox, wave, uts, or, quip, on, milk, jig, hog, fed, cobra

Two more oxymorons from Philip Cohen: actual potential and solo concert (“so common nowadays as to hardly raise an eyebrow”). Louis Phillips asks “Is spendthrift a one-word example?”

Dmitri Borgmann augments Ed Wolpow’s “Flora Americana” with 12 plants possessing genus names apparently related to American states: Colorado and Utahia (family Cactaceae); Georgia, Montañoa and Wyomingia (family Compositae); Hawaiaria (family Orchidaceae); Louiseania (family Rosaceae); Maineia (family Trigoniacae); Michiea (family Epacridaceae); Nebra (family Nyctaginaceae); Vermontia (family Flacourtiaceae); and Washingtonia (family Umbelliferae). These are all found in A Dictionary of the Flowering Plants and Ferns (Cambridge University Press; 1966), by J.C. Willis, 7th edition revised by H.K. Airy Shaw.

On Henry Burger’s Wordtree, The Word Wurcher comments that he thought this sort of stuff went out with Dalgarno’s Ars Signorum in 1661.

In “Infinite-Tile Scrabble” in the November issue, the word BENZDIOXDIAZINE was misspelled. For the record, the diagram below details the order in which a Scrabble board is tiled with Zs (or Qs) to maximize the total score (50,210); I am indebted to Alan Frank for this tour de force.

208 208 208 208 201 200 199 208 198 197 58 208 140 196 208
189 175 150 149 148 147 146 145 144 143 57 97 139 177 180
188 156 141 109 108 107 106 105 104 103 56 96 136 137 138
187 157 116 101 70 69 68 67 66 65 55 95 98 99 100
186 156 115 76 63 25 26 27 28 29 54 59 60 61 62
185 155 114 75 30 21 9 10 11 22 40 77 117 159 181
184 154 113 74 31 12 5 2 6 18 41 78 118 160 182
183 153 112 73 32 13 4 1 1 19 42 79 119 161 183
179 152 111 72 33 14 7 3 8 20 43 80 120 162 190
178 151 110 71 34 23 15 16 17 24 44 81 121 163 191
53 52 51 50 45 35 36 37 38 39 64 82 122 164 192
94 93 92 89 46 83 84 85 86 87 88 102 123 165 193
135 134 131 90 47 124 125 126 127 128 129 130 142 166 194
176 175 132 91 48 167 168 169 170 171 172 173 174 177 195
209 202 133 209 49 203 204 209 205 206 207 209 209 209