

KICKSHAWS

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KICKSHAWS NAME OF THE YEAR

The 2010 Kickshaws Name of the Year, even though it's only February as I write, but this name is too good to be put off till 2011, and no other name could possibly top this one, is the name of a person who was involved in the production of *Stan Helsing*, a pretty good parody of recent horror movies, although the winning name is better, almost perfect even. Ladies and gentlemen, put your hands together ^^^^ for the beautiful, melodious, award-winning name, drum roll!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!@#\$\$%^& Kirk Shaw

KICKSHAWS WORD OF THE YEAR

Jeff Grant passed on "another possible Kickshaws item that was mentioned in the latest edition of 'Forwards', the New Zealand Scrabble magazine. Have a look at the entry for 'cactolith' on Wikipedia. A nice definition and story."

Yes, CACTOLITH is wonderful, and it is officially our Word of the Year for 2010. Here's the word and its story. Speak, word! Define thyself!

"A **cactolith** is a quasihorizontal chonolith composed of anastomosing ductoliths whose distal ends curl like a harpolith, thin like a sphenolith, or bulge discordantly like an akmolith or ethmolith."

This term and its associated definition were created by [Charles B. Hunt](#), a USGS researcher, in his paper "Geology and geography of the [Henry Mountains region, Utah](#)" (1953). Whilst he was in fact describing an actual geological feature - a [laccolith](#) which he saw as resembling a [cactus](#) [1] - he was also, tongue-in-cheek, commenting on what he saw as an absurd number of "-lith" words in the field of [Geology](#).

STAYING CALM

"Whilst trawling through *Chambers Dictionary of Synonyms and Anagrams*," Susan Thorpe writes, "I was struck by the number of times the word CALM appeared, particularly when used as an antonym. This set me wondering about the number of words for which CALM is an antonym. Below are these words, as found in CDSA, divided into nouns, adjectives and verbs respectively.

Nouns

anxiety, bedlam, excitement, frenzy, fuss, hubbub, pandemonium, passion, rout, row, sedition, storm, tension, trouble, tumult, turmoil, whirl

Adjectives

agitated, angry, anxious, berserk, blustery, boisterous, breezy, choppy, crabby, cross, crusty, deranged, distraught, disturbed, edgy, emotional, excitable, explosive, feverish, fierce, frantic, frayed, frenetic, frenzied, furious, gusty, heated, highly-strung, hotheaded, irate, jumpy, liverish, livid, nervous, nervy, obstreperous, overheated, ratty, restive, restless, rough, seditious, stormy, temperamental, tempestuous, tense, touchy, tumultuous, turbulent, uneasy, uptight, violent, wild, windy, worried

Verbs

agitate, alarm, anger, arouse, displease, disquiet, disturb, enrage, exasperate, fluster, frighten, harry, infuriate, madden, rouse, startle, stir, vex

“This makes a total of 17 nouns, 55 adjectives and 18 verbs, 90 words in all. Latterly, I began musing as to which word(s) would beat CALM in the antonym stakes in CDSA, but I was too tense to pursue this line of inquiry.”

HOMOPHONIC ANTONYMS

Susan notes that some phrases combine sound and meaning in contradictory ways: “The phrase LAST BALLAD contains two groups of letters (underlined) which sound the same as the antonyms LASS and LAD, respectively, although they are made from different letters. That is the idea of this little game. There is just one rule – however many words are in each phrase they must all be involved in the making of the two homophonic groups of letters.” She has found numerous examples that work in different ways.

2-word phrases

high - low hi Lola
lock - free loch freak
rich - poor Pritchard pours
done - raw Dunn roars
sick - well classic welcome
land - sea planned siege
old - new Faulds knew
and - or planned tour
dead - alive dreaded saliva
gain - loss Gaynor lost
there - here their shears
more - less Morse molests
come - go comfort ghost

3-word phrases

Here, one of the homophonic groups straddles two of the words.
huge - wee Hugh jumps wheel
delete - add Adele eats badly
stem - root test Emmy's fruit
even - odd Steve enjoys cod
apex - base jay pecks bass

raise - lower crazy fellow Ernie
store - use what's Tor using?
new - old Shaun, you bowled

4-word phrase
early - late their lease lay torn

Whole-word homophone
Rarely, whole words act as the homophones as in *wane - wax* Wayne whacks”

A TALKING SQUARE

This is a new type of word square.

R E G
A T E
T H E

The three ‘across’ words are read first, followed by the three ‘down’ words, in order to make a 6-word phrase or sentence, in this case

REG ATE THE RAT ETH, GEE!

Can the reader construct a talking square?

SCRABBLE LIMERICKS

I asked Susan to write a Scrabble Limerick—that is, a limerick that uses as many of the 100 tiles in a Scrabble set as she could. Her limerick has 67 tiles, and it is as she describes it, an “abbreviated limerick” that uses full words, and it goes like this:

O Scrabble tile, square,
One Limerick, one dare
From Dave.
His slave
Now. How did I fare?

I replied with a limerick that eased the rules. I used single letters as words, and I included a title, which gave me a big advantage. I also used the blanks to stand for two letters—an S and an O. My Scrabble Limerick goes like this:

FUN LETTER USE

I play a big game on my board.
I fuse a short "I" in my word.
I voice a long "U,"
Keep "J," "Z," "X," "Q"
In tiles that a word never scored.

STRIP SCRABBLE

In the February 2010 issue of Penthouse Magazine, Scrabble plays an important role in bringing three lovers together. Here, in a slightly condensed form, is the story:

*

My girlfriend, Kelly, and I had always wanted to try a threesome, but while I wanted to add another girl to the mix, Kelly wanted a guy. I was hesitant at first, but when Kelly promised the other guy wouldn't do anything to me—and that we could have as many threesomes with girls as I wanted afterward, I was convinced.

She invited a guy she'd met at a party to our place for drinks a few nights later, and she thought a great way to break the ice would be to play a game. A three-person poker game seemed silly, and videogames wouldn't exactly get anyone in the mood, so Kelly decided on Scrabble. "You can only spell dirty words," she said. "If you can't make a word, you take something off." Strip Scrabble. Clearly she'd thought this through.

Throughout the game, Kelly flirted with Todd and me, and eventually she started to fool around with both of us, making out with us and... She even... for a couple of minutes, but she refused to end the game. It wasn't until Todd and I were... and Kelly was... that she spelled out FUCK ME with her Scrabble tiles. Well, she didn't have to tell us twice! In seconds, the board game was shoved aside and the three of us were in a naked heap on the floor...

*

Okay, let's pause right there. It is obvious that Penthouse didn't contact any experts about the finer points of the game. First of all, Kelly was cheating when she used her tiles to spell out two words. The other two players should've called "foul," and Kelly should've forfeited her move. However, let's let her illegal move stand and play the two words as a single word, FUCKME. The question that lingers in every Scrabble player's mind is, how many points did she score with that play? The Scrabble values for FUCKME are F=4, U=1, C=3, K=5, M=3, E=1. Thus the total value of those tiles is 17. In actual play, what is the lowest value and what is the highest?

The lowest value is simple to figure out. If she used two blank tiles for F and K, and if she didn't place any tile on a double or triple letter or word square, and if she didn't make one or more other words by placing a letter next to a tile already on the board, then her score would be decreased by 9 points, resulting in the lowest value--8 points.

The highest value is more difficult to calculate. If K is played on a triple-word square, then the Scrabble values for the actual letters are tripled. Kelly's highest score that way would be $17 \times 3 = 51$. But there many other possibilities for raising the schore. The letters in FUCKME can be played in such a way that they touch other letters and spell more words. Let's allow all words and not just "dirty words" as Kelly required. If the

word GO, for instance, were already on the board and positioned properly, then the play would be be:

GO
FUCKME

The O in GO and the F in FUCKME form the word OF (1 + 4 = 5). The Scrabble Values of OF and FUCKME add up to 22. If the letter F is played on a triple-word square, then the move is worth $22 \times 3 = 66$ points. But OF is a low-value addition. And FUCKME could touch more than one word.

In order to find out what the upper limit might be, I emailed a few Scrabble players about the problem. Jeff Grant sent the following reply:

I've never played a Scrabble game like that! Have to see if my wife is interested (ha ha). Don't think too many guys would have queried Kelly's move somehow. Generally I avoid frivolous challenges like this (particularly involving a nonword) because they tend to waste a lot of time. Nevertheless this one is quite interesting so I've spent an hour or so seeing what can be done. The minimum for fUCKME is 8 points, as you say. This can be achieved by playing the word through an existing one-point letter, using both blanks (for F and K), and hitting no premium squares.

The highest score is trickier. I've spent only a short time and stuck to reasonable words (some are even in context for this game - COX, LOIN, LUST, EQUIPPING - if you have a dirty mind) taken from the Collins Official Scrabble Dictionary, which is used in international play. Higher scores are certainly possible using longer and more obscure words.

Starting with NOT (T on centre square) the board can be set up so that FUCKME is playable down from the top left corner as in the diagram below:

```
F R A Z z L E S   (z = blank)
U           U
C O X     S
K N I G H T L Y
M           O
E Q U I P P I N G
           N O
           T
```

I make the score for the move FRAZzLES, COX, KNIGHTLY, EQUIPPING, FUCKME $57+12+24+23+66 = 182$ points.

Five paragraphs later, the story ends with the following comment: "After a quick shower to revive ourselves, though, we were ready for another game. As it turns out, board games and threesomes go together pretty damn well!"

TWO BITS

Mike Morton sent these two bits of found wordplay:

The New York Times has a nice anagrammatic name for (apparently) their series about food around the U.S.: “United Tastes.”

I read “Hip Device Is Withdrawn” and thought the iPhone had run into a problem.

SEVEN DWARFS

Ray Love has a friend who always comes up one short when trying to name the Seven Dwarfs, and it is usually a different dwarf every time. Ray came up with “a foolproof mneomics for remembering all seven. The solution is to spell the city of BAGHDAD. The Seven Dwarfs are all there except for the two S’s, Sleepy and Sneezy—an amazing coincidence. However, a little creative thinking solves that problem. My friend suggested the two A’s can be a second-order mnemonics for Asleep and Achoo, thus SLEEPY and SNEEZY. There you have it: B=BASHFUL, A=ASLEEP, G=GRUMPY, H=HAPPY, D=DOPEY, A=ACHOO, D=DOC makes BAGHDAD. I’m sure SNOW WHITE would give her approval. Now, one problem: How to spell BAGHDAD - not an easy task remembering that!”

LITERARY JUDGMENT

Louis Phillips and I had a brief email exchange about literary judgment. The charade form played a vital role in each of our statements. Louis’s is on the left.

Prose cute?
Prosecute.

Prose cut, or
Prosecutor.

THREE IN THE APPLE SAUCE

Louis sent these three items, which continue his chronicling of the challenges of the English language in his sweet, sweet Applesauce Chronicles.

THE MONARCH EXPLAINS TO ONE
OF HIS UNDERLINGS ABOUT THE
HIGH COST OF HAVING SONGS
OF PRAISE COMPOSED IN HIS HONOR

I'm still payin'
For the paeon,
Peon.

*

I ASK A YOUNG WOMAN ABOUT HER
ROOMMATE AT A SOUTHERN COLLEGE
AFTER HER ROOMMATE HAD DROPPED
HER COURSE IN GREEK MYTHOLOGY

Will Miss Smith
Miss Myth
At ole Miss, Miss?

*

ON PLANNING A TRIP TO THE GOTO ISLANDS IN JAPAN

Got to
Go to
Goto.

OAP: TALE OF A TRIGRAM

This tale begins simply enough. Ray Love emailed me about a simple trigram, OAP. Ray asked me if I could come up with a word having the trigram in it. I immediately thought of SOAP. Then I wondered if there were any other common words with OAP in it. I asked Ray. He said he didn't know. An hour later, he emailed me this information about that trigram to me:

You asked if I had found any other words with the trigram OAP in them. Of course, SOAP has many extensions but it still has to do with SOAP. I spent an hour looking the other evening and found only one. That is the verb COAPT and its noun COAPTATION. However, I'm not computer literate enough to know how to do a thorough search. It is an interesting and rare trigram. Perhaps you could challenge others to look. Like you wrote below, "...finding others might produce some interesting results." Even capitalized words would be interesting. I'm washing my hands clean of the whole thing - with soap. Ha.

I wrote back to Ray:

"Very interesting about COAPT. I'll put it in as a challenge to the reader. I imagine Susan Thorpe might be able to turn up something. In fact, I'll forward this to her."

I wrote to Susan:

"Susan, can you find any words that have the OAP trigram in them? See Ray Love's email below."

Susan, under the title "MY SOAP OPERA," wrote:

"HYDROAPATITE is in the oed. Also in the oed are some 15+ OAP variant forms/obsolete words. Also some hyphenated words. There are 20+ OAP words

in Hodge's American Indians, and a LOT of OAP places. Let me know if you want me to list all these words.”

I didn't ask for the OAP words, but if the reader would like me to email Susan about it, please email me asking me to do so. Susan signed her email:

“Susan (a long time OAP).”

I then thought maybe Mr. Eckler (Ross, essay assessor) could shed some light on this trigram. I wrote and asked him, and he sent me this answer:

“OAP can be preceded by CDEFRS or T, or followed by BEFILMOPRSTW or Y, all forming legal tetragrams in Webster's 2nd. Some non-soap examples I found are pseudoapoplectic, proapproval, protoapostate and isoapiole. This leaves EOAP, OAPO and OAPP to be found.”

I was relieved to hear that the tetragrams were legal, and that Ross wouldn't get arrested for sending them through the email system, but still the question basically remains unanswered: Is there a relatively common word other than SOAP that has OAP in it? Ross's legal tetragrams include PROAPPROVAL. Does that qualify as relatively common? I'd say the answer is noap.

NEW ACCIDENTAL PILISH RECORD

Mike Keith reports his latest discovery: “I found a new record, that betters the old record by one digit, for the longest stretch of accidental Pilish (English whose word lengths follow the digits of pi, starting from the beginning of pi) in an existing book. It is from *Remembering Angie*, a novel by E. Ray Jones published in 2003. It appears on page 110. The words that lead up to the phrase are shown here as they lead into the record-breaking 9 words underlined—3.14159265—at the end of this passage. “Two” has three letters, “I” has one, etc.

It was only a few moments later.

Angie: "Hey, Number Two! Throw a towel over Number One's head and give me a dry towel. I'm coming out of the water. Please? Thank you."

So! I had a towel over my head. That didn't mean I couldn't see a naked, beautiful young woman. I was not looking at a "tom-boy."

Me: "Number Two, I have a large container of potato salad..."

WORDS TO THE WISE

As we all know, words conceal and reveal other words, but Ray Love lists some very surprising word slipping and sliding below:

Placing the word MA in the middle of the name of the fast-food restaurant TACO BELL reveals both a city (TACOMA) and a nickname for a communications giant (MA BELL).

Move the U in the word RUINATION to the front of the word and we have an Amber Alert.

Replacing the first two letters of the word EXODUS with the 2-letter abbreviation of United Kingdom and reading the result backward names a craze that first achieved widespread popularity in that country.

If you remove the first two letters from the word ILLUMINATION, the remaining letters spell out, in order, the names of three different models of cars. There is the Chevrolet LUMINA, the Ford Model "T" and the Saturn ION. With the word INNOVATION we add the Chevrolet NOVA.

The word CHOIR is the only common uncapitalized 5-letter English word that ends with the letters -OIR. However, it is unique for another reason. It (and its extensions) is the only word among hundreds beginning with the consonants CH whose beginning sound is "KW" as in words that begin with a Q like QUIET and QUARTER.

OOD FOR THOUGHT

Ray Love observes that: "The words FOOD and DUDE rhyme, yet their endings (-OOD and -UDE) are spelled differently. There are many others spellings of this terminal sound. Here is a list of 13 more I came up with, with examples. If you are in the MOOD can you think of any others? Is there another terminal sound with such spelling PLENITUDE?"

- EUD (FEUD)
- EUED (QUEUED)
- EWD (SHREWD)
- EWED (BREWED)
- O'D (WHO'D)
- OED (SHOED)
- OOED (BOOED)
- OOHED (POOH-POOHED)
- OU'D (YOU'D)
- OUGHED (SLOUGHED)
- OUSED (RENDEZVOUSED)
- UED (GLUED)
- UTED (DEBUTED)

SING, SANG, SUNG, SONG are four closely related words differing by only one letter, the vowel. SONG is the surprise and makes this grouping

unique. Why do we say we sing a song? Why don't we sing something else, a different word? We say we hum a tune. Why don't we hum a hom or warble a werble or whistle a whostle. Why sing a song? I'll answer that. Because that's what songwriters write. Are there any other sets of four related words that differ by one letter?

Remove one s from INDONESIA and the remaining letters spell the name of another country. What is it?

Place the letters RE in the exact middle of the word CADILLAC, remove the first two letters, then spell the result backward and you have a telephone service option. "Hello, anybody there?"

The past tense of STAMP is formed by adding the letters ED to the end of the word. If another ED is added to the end of this word, it becomes the past tense of another word. STAMP is the only verb that has this uniqueness."

DOUBLE T TROUBLE

Finally, Ray is having major problems with his keyboard. He has a hard time explaining it, but here's what he typed:

"TThere iis aa gglitch iin tthe kkeyboard oof mmy ccomputer tthat ccauses ddouble ffirst lletters wwhen II ttype ssingle oones. II ddon't kknow hhow tto sstop iit. LLet mme ssee...ooh hhere iis aa kkey II've nnever tried bbefore. LLet's ssee wwhat hhappens wwhen II ppress iit. Okayy, thatt problemm seemss too bee solvedd.. Butt noww II havee anotheerr onee.. Thee LASTT letterss aree doubledd!! Myy keyboarddd hass runn amokk. Whatt too doo?? Doo II daree strikee thee keyy againn?? YYiikkeess!! YYiikkeess!! Eevveerrytthhiinngg Eevveerrytthhiinngg iiss iiss ddoouubbbleedd ddoouubbbleedd. II II ggiivvee ggiiivvee uupp uupp!!

CCheers, RRay LLove

THE PEZTAQUEET: AN ALPHABET SONG

The following is one of 64 nonsense poems from a book called *Jnd-Song of the Golden Gradrti*. I've been working on it now and then for 30 years or so. It is about a land called Fhra, where many unusual, sometimes unpronounceable creatures appear—the avb, the pnf, Rackflitch the Righteous, and my own personal favorite, the bleeprt. The creatures write with a 32-letter alphabet. They learn the names of the letters when they are very young by reciting the Peztaquet to their parents, who give them a book as reward. The numbers in the column count up the letters in each line.

Pezta, queeta, fonj, and vrall, Listen to me sing it all.	4
Terga, squerga, haw, and zroo, Now I'm half of half-way through.	4
Zekka, portav, mozo, qwelp, I don't need a bit of help.	4
Dilma, jamma, vipplecrast, Now I'm half-way through at last.	3
Stinvo, crarf,	2
Veeb, weeb, sneeple,	3
Weerz and plarf,	2
Quabz, fabz, teepale.	3
Then comes reerow, joz, and hrend, Now I'm almost at the end.	3
Thirple, quoofoof, grinkabock, Last of all is tinkatock.	3
There! I've said my peztaqueet. Now give me a book to eat.	1
	<hr/> 32 letters

HUTAREE

An anonymous contributor emailed the following anagrams, sans name, for fear that the Hutaree might trace the rock on which the message was written before it was thrown through my window, landing just inches from my computer. The Hutaree are a group of white supremacist Hitler wannabees who have been arrested recently. The anonymous contributor made anagrams out of the name Hutaree. For your own safety, people, back up a little before you start reading this out loud. And for God's sake, don't hoot at the Hutaree!

Hutaree
Rue hate.
The urea.

Hutaree Militia
Irate? Humiliate!

Hutaree Christian Militia
Antisemitic aura? Hi, Hitler
Criminal threat: i.e., U.S., Haiti
I hesitate; I hurt a criminal

I limit a hurricane, atheist
Inarticulate hate: I'm Irish!
I... I hit the American rituals
Nilihist, hieratic amateur
Reich-amateurs' initial hit
Unit: Hit America, hit Israel

ANOTHER WASHINGTON POST STYLE INVITATIONAL

Ray Love tells about a Washington Post Style Invitational that he participated in: "I've always liked combining words to make a new word with a humorous or silly definition. I never knew this exercise in meaninglessness had a name until a friend sent me the results of a contest on portmanteau words. In November of 2009, The Style Invitational section of the Washington Post held a contest inviting readers to send in portmanteau words (starting with A-D) with definitions. The Empress of the Style Invitational explained that portmanteau words are made from two words that overlap two or more letters. The judges smiled on these loser submissions."

Bygonerd: Someone who can work a slide rule
Academythology: Get a degree so you can get a good job
Detroitis: What's left of a once-thriving industrial city
Coffeeble: Decaf latte with skim milk
Ancestorment: Thanksgiving dinner with the entire family
B-flatulence: The lowest note on a bassoon
Bar mitzvamoose: To forsake Jewish training one month after one's 13th birthday
Audibleed: The sound level at Ozzfest
Beersatz: Miller Lite
Coffinish: The deceased's destination
Benignominious: Telling a little white lie
Accidenture: Putting your foot in your mouth

"Intrigued by another frivolous way to spend my time," Ray recalls, "one evening I curled up with my best friend, the dictionary, and proceeded to see what my fertile and futile mind could find worthy of portmanteauship. Hence, 30 of my losers follow."

Alligatorade: Swamp water
Barack-ack: Potshots taken at Obama
Bishoplift: Stealing from the church
Breakfasting: Skipping the first meal of the day
Cowboycott: Rodeo protests by PETA
E-mailment: Spam and Phishing
FedExpletives: Words said when your package doesn't arrive on time
Forecastigate: Berating an inaccurate weatherman
Genitally: Number of sexual conquests
Gianteater: Aardvark

Heartthrobbery: Stealing someone's affection
Henclosure: Chicken coop
Honeymoonshine: Alcohol at a redneck wedding
Kickshawful: Description of material you are now reading
Lasagnats: Pesky flies on pasta
Mugwumpire: An indecisive referee
Neighborders: Canada and Mexico
Outcomedy: NBC's final word on the Conan O'Brien show
Palcoholics: Boozing buddies
Penissues: Erectile dysfunction
Phantomfoolery: Actions of Casper the Friendly Ghost
Pumpkinship: Members of the gourd family
Spiritual: A seance
Standbystander: Ticket holder of a cancelled flight
Thembyros: Twins in the making
Twincome: Moonlighting wages
Voodoo-doo: A shitty hex
Waterlooded: Sitting down on the toilet in the dark with the seat up
Winterference: Slippery sidewalks and icy roads
Zoomph: Speed and glamour of a muscle car

SACKTER HOUSE MISSION STATEMENT

Sackter House Media is the publishing name of the publishing house where I am working. Recently, we had to put together a clear mission statement that didn't violate the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). As you might guess, writing mission statements can be a funny job. You say things, not because you want to say them, but because if you don't say them, you'll wish you did later on. It started becoming quite repetitive, with the four board members emailing new statements back and fourth. I couldn't help but writing the following mission statement and emailing it to the board:

"Sackter House Media publishes books by or about people with disabilities. However, because it might upset some people, we won't tell you what the disability is. You have to figure it out by reading the book. If the book is ABOUT a character who has a disability, you'll easily figure out what that disability is. But if it's BY someone with disabilities but whose work has nothing at all to do with being disabled, then you might not figure out the author's disability. Trust us. The author is disabled or we wouldn't publish him or her. If we find out that one of our author's was pretending to be disabled just to get a book published, by the time we get through with him, he will be disabled."

DESCRIPTIVE JOB TITLES

Regarding the job-hunting situation, Bill Brandt points out that "some job titles describe the work that is done, for example someone who is called a shoemaker would be someone who makes shoes. Other job titles do not. If all job titles were required to describe the work, then..."

Anesthesiologist	- would be a historian who studies missing Russian princesses
Archeologist	- would be a historian who studies boats used during large floods
Cardiologist	- would be someone expert at playing cards
Chiropractor	- would be a doctor working in Egypt
Cosmologist	- would be an astronomer who studies the cosmos
Cryptologist	- would be a builder who specializes in constructing burial vaults
Cartographer	- would be someone who takes photographs of cars
Gynecologist	- would be a male college student
Illusionist	- would be a doctor who treats your ills
Kinesiologist	- would be a doctor who asks about you eye sight
Lyricist	- would be someone who helps the person playing the lyre
Manicurist	- would be a doctor who only treats men
Meteorologist	- would be an astronomer who studies meteors
Numerologist	- would be someone who studies numbers
Oncologist	- would be a doctor available 24-7
Pharmacist	- would be a farmer's helper
Physicist	- would be someone who makes soda fountain drinks with seltzer water
Prestidigitator	- would be a physical therapist who provides finger massages
Rheumatologist	- would be a home interior designer

THE ELEVEN OF SYMMETRY

Ove Michaelson writes: "Eleven letters of the alphabet, printed in standard capitalized form, are symmetrical. A H I M O T U V W X Y. It is very appropriate that the number of symmetrical letters is a palindromic number (11)."

MOST WANTED LOGOREXICS

"Yes, officer, I've got that handicapped parking permit because I'm logorexix."

"Really, son? I'm sorry to hear that. My grandmother died from it. She wouldn't stop talking wordplay, so we shot her."

"Did she know these palindromes: Able was I ere I saw Elba. A slut nixes sex in Tulsa. A man, a plan a canal--Panama. Too hot to hoo--"

POW!

"Captain, can you get an emergency hearse down here immediately. Yeah, another logorexix. What? There's another one three blocks away going up to people on the street and reciting limericks to them? An Ove Michaelson? Be right there as soon as I load my gun."

And so ends another episode of Most Wanted Logorexics.

QUOTES FROM OFF-CENTER IN SPORTS

Ove has put together wordplay involving people in various sports. A large selection appears in his future book *Verboddities*.

"Are you any relation to your brother Marv?"

—New Jersey Nets guard Leon Wood, to TV sports commentator Steve Albert

Basketball player Shaquille O'Neal, in response to whether he had visited the Parthenon on his visit to Greece, replied, "I can't really remember the names of the clubs that we went to."

After Tonya Harding proclaimed herself as "the Charles Barkley of figure skating," the basketball player stated to the press: "My initial response was to sue her for defamation of character, but then realized that I HAVE no character."

Upon hearing Joe Jacoby of the Redskins say, "I'd run over my own mother to win the Super Bowl," Matt Millen of the Oakland Raiders said, "To win, I'd run over Joe's mom, too."

"Winfield goes back to the wall. He hits his head on the wall—and it rolls off! It's rolling all the way to second base! This is a terrible thing for the Padres." —Jerry Coleman, San Diego Padres announcer

Stu Grimson, Chicago Blackhawks left wing, on why he kept a color photo of himself above his locker: "That's so when I forget how to spell my name, I can still find my clothes."

Steve Spurrier, Florida football coach, in 1991, telling Gators fans that a fire at Auburn's football dorm had destroyed twenty books: "But the real tragedy was that fifteen hadn't been colored yet."

“My sister’s expecting to have a baby, and I don’t know if I’m going to be an uncle or an aunt.” —a nervous Jim Valvano in 1982

“I want to rush for 1,000 or 1,500 yards, whichever comes first.”
—George Rogers, running back for the New Orleans Saints

“I have two weapons: my legs, my arms, and my brains.”
—quarterback Michael Vick for the Atlanta Falcons

“He ain’t no rocket surgeon.”
—now a well-known phrase, by unidentified member (possibly Larry Walker) of the Montreal Expos, referring to a fellow player

“Nobody in football should be called a genius. A genius is a guy like Norman Einstein.”
—Joe Theisman, football commentator and former Redskins quarterback, in 1996

“There’s a fine line between genius and someone who just doesn’t have a clue.”

—Don Meredith (football legend and TV sportscaster), as quoted by Boone Arledge (sports TV innovator)

“Reporter to Washington Redskins quarterback Doug Williams (before Super Bowl XXII): “How long have you been a black quarterback?”

“I’ve been a country and music Western fan since that 9th round with what’s-his-fist.”
—“The Canvas Kid”

Boxer Teddy Mann’s response to
“Are you all right?”
“No, I’m half left.”

“Most games are lost, not won.” —Charles Dillon [Casey] Stengel (1890-1975), baseball manager

BUSINESS NAMES

”On your visit to Illinois, be sure to stop for a meal at Sam-N-Ella’s River Club in Kankakee,” Ove writes, “and on your way to the left coast, you might want to stop for a trim at Western Hairlines in Canon City, Colorado. (There are at least two other haircutters with that name, and many named United Hairlines.) Roadkill Heaven is an establishment in Tulsa.

French Liquors is the name of a store just outside French Lick, Indiana, near the First Baptist Church of French Lick (a few miles from the home of Basketball legend Larry Bird).

Kripalu (cripple you)Yoga Center is a business in Albany, New York. Austin, Texas, has The Trickey Law Firm (Senior Associate: David G. Crooks). Amigone Funeral Home can be found in Quenns, New York. Dead Fish is a restaurant in Crockett, California. Reid and Wright were printers in Belfast, Ireland.

Paul Dickson cited these partnerships in his book Names:

Burnham and Overbake were bakers in Newark, New Jersey.
Diggs and Hurtz, a dental partnership in Columbia, Missouri, in the 1930s
Goforth and Ketchum was a patrol car team based in Long Beach, California, in the 1950s.

O'Neill and Pray were Chicago manufacturers of church equipment.”

ANAGRAM: HE'LL DO IN MELLOW VERSE

From original research, Ove has found the following material published in 1877: Puzzlist "Ahmed" (George M. Woodcock) gave the clues to this anagram in limerick form. It appeared in "Our Puzzle Circle," a column in the June 1887 issue of "The Western Plowman," published in Moline, Illinois. (See Answers and Solutions.)

It's not for his poems alone,
This magnate of letters is known;
For his prose is replete
With the wisest conceit,
And fertile by seed thickly sown.

Our philosopher poet is gray,
But youthful his heart is today,
Though the years gather fast,
(Still) no clouds ever cast
The genius his writings display.

TEN ANIMAL LIMERICKS

Ove sent this menagerie of animal limericks. All sorts of critters barking, flying, and just acting like a bunch of animals.

Our dog marked the house—every PLACE in it.
We thought he might see the disgrace in it,
But his learning was poor,
For he flew out the door
After rubbing his own ugly FACE in it.

A bird that was too young for pickin’

Was in shock, but alive and still kickin'.
I did what was best,
Placed it back in the nest,
But then when I got home I had chicken.

Egrets, I've welcomed a few,
When the most I could cope with were two.
The birds eye our cat
As he sits in my hat
At the window, enjoying the view.

"Young Fido plays poker," said Gail.
"Just give him some Alpo with ale."
But he can't understand
When he gets a good hand,
He reveals it by wagging his tail.

—based on a joke my father passed along, ages ago

My dog has his mental agility.
He still has that same old ability,
But he seems to be keying
On things we aren't seeing.
It's floaters, I say, not senility.

Some pigs have been known to eat pork,
But no creatures are known to eat cork.
Though one lousy meal,
Some have tried eating steel.
Only man has tried soup with a fork.

OW!

So tall, and gives birth while she's standing,
We watch the free-fall 6-foot landing.
The female giraffe
And her sky-diving calf
Give you pause when you find life demanding.

(The new-born was 6'4.)

—Written at the Caffe Mediterraneo in Berkeley, where it was erroneously claimed that Alan Ginsberg wrote his 1955 poem "Howl." The only resemblance to his poem are the two middle letters of the title.

RAVENS AND CROWS

Their caws and effects are askew.
Of more crafty birds, there are few.
Like bored human teens
And by most cunning means
They wreak havoc for something to do.

A ladybug happened to be
Quite a he, when I thought it's a she.
This "lady," I'm sure,
Is a male quite secure,
To endure the presumptuous me.

We look at the ways we have been,
And it seems that man doesn't fit in.
Most animals fear us.
Not many get near us.
Here's hoping this race has no twin.

BANKING ON DOUBLE-TALK

My bank sent me the following letter about 10 years ago. I unearthed it recently while going over some files. It is a wonderful example of lying by changing the name of something unpleasant to make it warm and fuzzy. The bank is basically saying that it has a new benefit for you, called the "Discretionary OverDraft Privelege Pollicy." I call it "bouncing a check." Notice how many times the phrase "Discretionary OverDraft Privelege" is used in describing absolutely nothing: The word "discretionary" means that the bank is exempt from actually coming through with its offer. It can decide that it wants to charge you \$25 anyway. By the way, I like the people very much who work there; it's the hidden wizards somewhere else in the Midwest who make up the rules, and the rules never benefit the customers.

"Congratulations! Because of your very good relationship with Iowa State Bank & Trust Company, a \$500 discretionary overdraft privilege has been placed on your account in accordance with our Discretionary OverDraft Privelege Policy, a copy of which is enclosed. Therefore, should you inadvertently overdraw your account for any reason, we can at the Bank's discretion elect to cover your overdrafts up to \$500, as outlined in the Discretionary OverDraft Privelege Policy. When your checks are paid, this service will save you the embarrassment and inconvenience of a returned check as well as the fee normally charged to you by merchants for checks returned to them. [Up to this point, it sounds like they are saving you money and are pointing out the greed of the merchants who are the real thieves. Read on....]

There is no additional monthly fee for this service. [Hooray! They are saving you money, aren't they?] Should an overdraft occur, your account will be charged \$25.00 for handling each item paid by the discretionary overdraft privilege. [Boo! Where's the warm fuzzy?] This is the same fee that Iowa State Bank & Trust charges for checks drawn

against insufficient funds and returned to the payee. [Okay, the deal now is they'll pay the payee and charge you \$25 instead of sending it back to the payee, who will charge \$25 along with the \$25 the bank charges. Either way the bank gets \$25.] Please take a moment to review the enclosed Discretionary OverDraft Privelege Policy notice. [I'm afraid to review it.]

This service is offered as an additional benefit of doing business with Iowa State Bank & Trust Company. [Uh, what is the other benefit?] We are pleased to make this courtesy available to you as a means of expressing our appreciation for the confidence you have placed in ISB&T by entrusting us with your banking relationship [Whew! Much ado about zilch.] Please be aware that this notice does not constitute either a written agreement of an obligation or a prearranged agreement for Iowa State Bank & Trust to pay your overdrafts [Right. It's just a piece of paper with words on it.] Payment of any overdrafts will continue to be at the discretion of the bank [and the all-powerful wizards behind the curtain].

If you have any questions regarding this or any other matter, please contact your Personal Banker at Iowa State Bank & Trust Company [who is trained in gobble-de-gook and will pour it on thick].

PUN ENCHANTED EVENINGS—746 ORIGINAL WORD PLAYS (book review)

Pun Enchanted Evenings, by David R. Yale, is highly recommended, or, considering it's a book full of puns, maybe I should say "lowly recommended." It is a 108-page paperback priced at \$9.97. It is also available as an eBook from www.smashwords.com for \$5.97. Smashwords offers a free sample of the first hundred puns in the book. For more information, go to www.bestpuns.com. Meanwhile, here are seven examples, arranged in clownological order:

Why wouldn't the senator accept the lobbyist's gift of a leather jacket?
His constituents would know he was suede!

What would you think about a potion that turns people into cats?
I don't know, but it would give me paws!

Why did the moron take several swings at the street light with his axe?
He wanted big lamp chops!

What kind of cereal do uncouth people eat?
Oafmeal!

Why are women attracted to a man who figures on his fingers?
Because he's a hand summer man!

What do you get if a matador falls in an olive press?
Oil of olé!

What would you call a lavishly catered private party where bankers dream up new ways to grab your money?

A fee-esta!

CONCRETE BLOCKS: AN ANAGRAM LOVE STORY (book review)

Concrete Blocks, by Joyce Holland, is a love story made by taking individual chapter titles (“blocks”) and anagramming them using the Internet Anagram Generator. There is a total of 52 pages, two pages for each of 26 blocks. The story goes from meeting to loving to parenting to cheating to divorcing to still loving their children. It combines wordplay with concrete poetry. It is available for \$12 on Amazon, or it can be ordered from me. You can read more about Joyce Holland in my Wikipedia entry. Here are examples of two pages from block 1 and block 4 respectively, with block titles listed first in each case.

FRED MET LILY

Medley Flirt
Termed Filly
Metred Filly
Meted Frilly

Flied Termly
Flied Myrtle
Field Termly
Field Myrtle

Filed Termly
Filed Myrtle
Firmed Telly
Deftly Miler

Milder Lefty
Milted Flyer
Dimly Lifter
Ed Elf Trimly

Ed Flyer Milt
Ed Millet Fry
Ed Telly Firm
Ed Let Firmly

Ed Term Filly
Ed Met Frilly
Feed Mill Try
Feed Trill My

LILY SLAPPED FRED

Add Flipper Yells
Add Flippers Yell
Add Fell Slippery
Dad Flipper Yells
Dad Flippers Yell
Dad Fell Slippery
Dead Fells Ripply
Pedalled Firs Ply
Pedalled Fly Rips
Pedalled Fry Slip
Pedalled Fry Lips
Pedalled Fry Lisp
Pedaled Fill Spry
Pedaled Frill Spy
Pedaled Fills Pry
Pedaled Fry Spill
Pedaled Fry Pills
Pleaded Fill Spry
Pleaded Frill Spy
Pleaded Fills Pry
Pleaded Fry Spill

THE IDIOT AND THE ODDITY (book review)

I wrote *The Idiot and the Oddity*, a children's epic poem, starting on March 21, 1965, and ending 10 minutes before my 21st birthday on September 10, 1967. In Missouri, you're still a child until you reach 21. Thus, the poem is for children in two ways—it was written by a child and for children. It has lots of illustrations.

It's about a Leprechaun named Scratch O'Flattery. He loses his magical ring. To get it back, he has to do the five Trials o' the Trolls. It consists of more than 60 pages of rhyming couplets. The story begins with the invocation to the Muse:

I sing, O Muse, of a story I know
Of a Leprechaun boy just three inches low.
Grant me the words, O Gods of Green;
Sharpen my memory ever so keen.
Help me recall that tale of old,
Of wars that were fought over Leprechaun gold,
Of a Leprechaun seeking to find a lost ring,
Who gained for himself the title of "King"
And found in the end a wife to match;
So to tell the whole story, I'll start from scratch!
Scratch O'Flattery lived in Dorn,
The Leprechaun town in which he was born....

It has just been published, and it is available for \$10 from Amazon (which shows the cover pictures), or you can order it directly from me. (Order both *The Idiot and the Oddity* and *Concrete Blocks*, discussed in the previous item, for \$20 ppd.)

THE AND TWINS

Here is a poem that twists and turns and makes very, very little sense. I wrote it one nonsensical night in October.

A man named And
Stood on the stand.
His twin, named And,
Stood on the stand.

A woman named Stand
Came up and said, "And?"
And And said, "And...?"
"I'm Stand," said Stand.

"I stand on that stand.
You, And, don't stand,
And you, And, don't stand.
So And and And got off the stand,

And Stand got on the stand,
And And and And threw sand
At Stand, who couldn't stand sand,
And she toppled off the stand.

And landed on the sand
As And and And had planned.
And And took the stand from Stand
But up came her triplets Sand and Tand.

And Sand tanned And
And Stand tanned And
And Tand threw sand
At And and And.

The And