The Last Word
The Independent Tournament SCRABBLE® Newsletter

A Monthly Newsletter
Issue 15: January/February 2011

Tournament of Champions

Record 8-Bingo Game

2010’s Top North American Players

School SCRABBLE® Capitol Cup

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From the Editor

As 2011 begins, I’m curious to see what changes the year brings to the world of tournament SCRABBLE®. Already there is an active online debate on cgp about whether Collins should become the dictionary of choice, letting North American players become familiar with the dictionary that is used by “the rest of the world.” At the recent Reno tournament, a night event was offered with 15-minute timers. I’m hoping there might be room for a Youth League, one-on-one games by players under 18 played using the Official SCRABBLE Players Dictionary, 4th Edition (OSPD4).

I believe that the success of online SCRABBLE® and benefit SCRABBLE® events, which have raised thousands of dollars for worthy causes, show that there continues to be a keen interest in SCRABBLE® with a much larger group than is playing in tournaments. I think it’s an exciting challenge for directors to figure out how to tap into this market--how to make tournament SCRABBLE® mainstream, not the oddity it is perceived as by the general public.

Is Collins the way to go? For players interested in competing for the large cash offerings at international tournaments like the Causeway Challenge, it must be frustrating to have to keep two dictionaries in their heads. I am not surprised to see many of our top players turning to Collins.

For the majority of players, Collins may be overkill. Players who have learned the game at the kitchen table with the OSPD already find it confusing when told that their “official” dictionary is not the one used in tournament play. Kids who have grown up playing School SCRABBLE® actually have to study the “POO List” to see which words unacceptable in School SCRABBLE® are acceptable in open play. New players arriving at my club bring their dogearred copies of the OSPD, and don’t appreciate it when they are beaten with words they don’t know.

What I wonder is why Collins is the preferred dictionary for World’s. Do the majority of players worldwide play Collins? In writing a story about a top young player from Thailand, I was surprised to learn that the Official Tournament and Club Word List, 2nd Edition (OWL2) is also used as the word source in Thailand, a country that has thousands more tournament SCRABBLE® players than in all of North America, thanks to the national school program for “Brand’s Word Game” (the Thai “version” of SCRABBLE®).

I’m wondering, too, whether there might be room for a U.S. National Championship (the current NASPA “national” championship allows players from other countries to compete as long as they are NASPA members). There is a Canadian National Champion, and a U.K. National Champion. Why is our country’s current national champion from New Zealand? I’d also like to see more state championships, limited to residents of those states. But I can’t imagine this being done with Collins--last year’s numbers at Collins tournaments don’t indicate enough interest with the general SCRABBLE® population. Perhaps the word source to use is the OSPD4, the “official” word source for the majority of U.S. citizens playing SCRABBLE®.

I’m all for different options for SCRABBLE® players--but I also want to see SCRABBLE® grow. Perhaps it makes the most sense to have a two-tiered system, with Collins for “professionals” and TWL (OWL2 plus the Long List)--or the OSPD4-- for the rest. Let’s see how 2011 goes!

Cornelia Guest
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Word Game Players’ Organization

Upcoming Tournaments
March 5-6: VANCOUVER, B.C.
Total of 14 games
Directed by John Aitken
Twin Cities March Madness!
March 12 & 13
Play a total of 16 rated games over the weekend, or sign up for just one 8-game tournament on either day!
$65 a night rooms at the Holiday Inn
Directed & organized by
Stephanie Steele
flamingjune45@gmail.com

February 18-21: PHOENIX
Total 28 games & 20 games of Collins
Larry Rand, Barbara Van Alen, &
Laurie Cohen directors
To find out more about the WGPO and get details regarding these tournaments and more, please go to
www.wordgameplayers.org
Certainly the biggest news of 2010 was the formation of the Word Game Player’s Organization (WGPO), with an Executive Committee of Stephanie Steele, Keith Hagel, and Rick Wong. Offering an alternative to the North American SCRABBLE® Players Association (NASPA), WGPO presented an democratic organization that was free to join, charged no “participation fees” for tournaments, and asked for membership input from the get-go: The name was decided by membership vote. As the year came to a close, the organization prepared for a membership vote on its next leaders.

From an initial “more is the merrier” approach, NASPA became less enamored by WGPO as the year went on and WGPO tournaments became more frequent. NASPA announced in November that its directors would not be permitted to direct a WGPO tournament or club, and that directors doing so would risk losing their NASPA certification. A number of directors resigned as NASPA directors, and the 2011 SCRABBLE® year has begun with the decertification of some former NASPA directors, most notably Jeff Widergren, who has directed Reno for many years, and Larry Rand, director of many cruise tournaments and Phoenix--and the 2004 NSA Director of the Year.

On the brighter side, 2010 saw three new tournament records: Ed De Guzman’s 771 game and Nigel Peltier’s 7-bingo game at Reno, and Marlon Hill and Ben Schoenbrun’s record low game (-22) at Albany. Nigel Richards won the National SCRABBLE® Championship, the European Open SCRABBLE® Championship, the World Players Championship, the Causeway Challenge, and the inaugural Tournament of Champions, the brainchild of SCRABBLE® uber-promoter Michael Tang. Nigel’s NASPA rating broke 2100. Breaking 2000 for the first time were 21-year-olds Conrad Bassett-Bouchard and Rafi Stern, and breaking 1600 for the first time was 13-year-old 8th grader Bradley Robbins, also the winner of the 2010 National School SCRABBLE® Championship with his partner, Evan McCarthy.

We greet 2011 with a new tournament record: Jerry Lerman’s amazing 8-bingo game at Reno. But NASPA maintains it is not an “official” record (Reno was WGPO-sanctioned). The NASPA/WGPO controversy strikes again. No matter. Scrabblers everywhere applaud Jerry for this amazing feat--a record in tournament play.

**JANUARY**


1/3: Kenji Matsumoto wins Albany.

1/2: NASPA announces rules changes, effective 2/2, including that verbal designations of the blank are not official and when clocks should be started after a challenge.

1/18: Kenji Matsumoto wins Reno West Coast Championship.

1/17: Tim Adamson wins Minnesota REDEYE.
1/23: Brian Bowman wins Summit Open.

1/21: Michael Tang announces the inaugural “Tournament of Champions” to be held 12/8-10 in Malaysia.

1/21: NASPA welcomes Bryan Pepper to the advisory board.

1/24: NASPA announces it will be sanctioning and rating Collins tournaments.

1/28: WGPO welcomes members to join for free.

FEBRUARY

2/1: Stefan Rau wins Atlantic City.

2/2: Mark Levesque’s Director! tournament-management software debuts at three tournaments.

2/4: NASPA announces appointment of Matthew Hopkins as Advisor Board Member Emeritus.

2/6: Jerry Lerman wins 2nd NAST final in Berkeley, CA, 6-0 +497. Nathan Benedict was 2nd (5-1 +379) and Ian Weinstein 3rd (5-1 +255).

2/7: Ben Withers wins Texas Nationals

2/10: Hasbro debuts SCRABBLE® Flash Cubes.

2/15: Joey Mallick wins East Coast Championship in Charlotte, NC.


2/13-15: Phoenix Collins Division becomes the first officially rated NASPA Collins event held in the United States.

2/19: Lily Gasperetti and Isaac Sarnoff of Washington, D.C., win the Virginia School SCRABBLE® Championship 4-0 +274.

2/28: Chris Lipe wins Saratoga.

2/28: Brian Bowman wins February Fury, Warren MI.

MARCH

3/3: WGPO announces the formation of its Advisory Board.
3/3: Robert Kahn has 801 game at Lauderhill (FL) Club #276—with 7 bingos.

3/7: Noah Walton wins Vancouver.

3/9: Seventh graders Alex Li and Jackson Smylie win 2nd Annual Toronto School SCRABBLE Championship

3/16: Michael Thelan releases a new version of Zyzzyva, 2.1.0.

3/18: Membership vote keeps WGPO name.


3/21 Dave Wiegand wins his second Dallas Open.

3/27: Bradley Robbins and Danny Bleeker win the New England School SCRABBLE® Championship in Ridgefield CT

3/28: Dave Wiegand wins Second West Coast World Championship Wordlist Challenge in Ashland.

**APRIL**

4/6: Mattel announces SCRABBLE® Trickster—media goes nuts.

4/10: Seventh graders Bradley Robbins and Evan McCarthy from New Hampshire win $10,000 first prize in the National School SCRABBLE® Championship in Orlando, FL, beating the New York team of Tim Bryant and Kevin Rosenberg.

4/18: Scott Appell wins BAT (Boston Area Tournament).

4/25: Stu Goldman turns 80!

4/26: NSSC winners Bradley Robbins and Evan McCarthy appear on Jimmy Kimmel Live!

4/28: Rita Norr Provost, only woman to have ever won a National SCRABBLE® Championship, dies.
2010: THE YEAR IN REVIEW

MAY

5/1: Carol Johnson wins Oregon Tile.

5/2: Joey Mallick wins first WGPO tournament in Bloominton MN.

5/2: Adam Logan wins Ottowa.

5/11: Nigel Richards wins European Open SCRABBLE® Championship.

5/20: Travis Chaney and Mandy Valencia announce STU: The Documentary.

5/31: Darrell Day wins Houston Bayou Bash.

5/31: Joel Sherman wins ArdenCup Memorial.

JUNE


6/20: Pakorn Nemitrmansuk wins King’s Cup.

6/20: Rod MacNeil wins Nashua.

6/20: Dean Saldanha wins Victoria.

JULY

7/1: Ed De Guzman scores 771 at Reno to set new record for high score in a tournament game.

7/2: Nigel Peltier plays record 7 bingos in a single game at Reno.

7/3: Marlon Hill and Ben Schoenbrun set low-score record of -22 at Albany (Marlon -6/Ben -16).

7/5: Dave Wiegand wins Reno West Coast Championship.

7/5: Marlon Hill wins Albany.


AUGUST

8/7: Dallas Johnson joins NASPA Advisory Board.

8/10: Nigel Richards wins National SCRABBLE® Championship in Dallas.

8/6: Nigel Richards wins World Players Championship (Collins) in Dallas.

8/25: NASPA announces changes in apprentice director requirements.

8/26: NASPA announces it will reconsider changes in apprentice director requirements.
2010: THE YEAR IN REVIEW

8/28: Winter wins Dover.

SEPTEMBER

9/6: Ian Weinstein wins Alpharetta (GA).

9/6: Carl Johnson wins Portland.

9/7: Release of Joel Wapnick’s *How to Play SCRABBLE® Like a Champion*.

9/19: Mack Meller and Kevin Rosenberg win first tournament in New England School SCRABBLE® Series in Ridgefield, CT.

9/25-26: Peggy Grant runs WGPO GRITS Tournament in Folly Beach SC--first all-woman SCRABBLE® tournament (won by Jan Dixon).

OCTOBER

10/3: Rob Robinsky wins Wisconsin Dells.

10/18: John Stardom wins Lake George.

10/18: WGPO bylaws ratified.

10/24: Mark Shellenberg wins Calgary.

10/31: Geoff Thevenot wins California Open

NOVEMBER

11/2: NASPA releases new policy for directors requiring exclusivity to NASPA.

11/7: Bradley Robbins & Nicholas Vasquez win 5th Annual “Terror of the Tiles” School SCRABBLE® Tournament.

11/7: David Gibson wins Asheville.


11/14: Jim Kramer wins Twin Cities.

11/21: Matthew Tunnicliffe wins Essex.


DECEMBER

12/5: Panupol Sujjayakorn wins Causeway Challenge Premier division--US $30,000 first prize.

12/10: Nigel Richards wins inaugural Tournament of Champions in Malaysia; David Boys is second.

12/10: Seventh graders Liam Hopfensperger & Amalan Iyengar from North Carolina win the Capitol Cup School SCRABBLE® Tournament in Washington, D.C.

12/10: Sixteen-year-old Ker Jen Ho of Malaysia wins World Youth SCRABBLE® Championship in Manila.
2010 Top Active North American Players by State & Province

**#1 USA**
David Gibson

**#1 CANADA**
Adam Logan

**ALABAMA**
Eric Harshbarger

**ALASKA**
Wes Morrison

**ALBERTA**
Eric Tran

**ARIZONA**
Nathan Benedict

**ARKANSAS**
Kenneth Kasney

**BRITISH COLUMBIA**
James Leong

**CALIFORNIA**
Conrad Basset-Bouchard

**COLORADO**
Dominick Mancine

**CONNECTICUT**
Robert Ellickson

**DELAWARE**
Jan Dixon

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**
Stefan Fatsis

**FLORIDA**
Ron Tiekert

SASKATCHEWAN
JASON HLADY

SOUTH CAROLINA
DAVID GIBSON

SOUTH DAKOTA
AARON DALEY

TENNESSEE
SCOTT GARNER

TEXAS
ORRY SWIFT

UTAH
MICHAEL THELAN

VERMONT
KEVIN COLOSA

VIRGINIA
JOHN LUEBKEMANN

WASHINGTON
RAFI STERN

WEST VIRGINIA
JEFF COOK

WISCONSIN
PETER ARMSTRONG

INACTIVE LEADERS: In certain states the top player did not play in 2010, so these inactive players are not listed as the state leaders. They are: Jimmy Upton (Arkansas), Ray Smith (Georgia), Jerry Miller (Indiana), Ted Blevins (tie; Kentucky), Peter Morris (Michigan), Michael Orford (Montana), Patrick Caulfield (Nebraska), Chuck Abbate (New Brunswick), Jeff Parsons (Newfoundland & Labrador), June Land (North Dakota), Anna Chisling (Nova Scotia), Brian Sheppard (Ohio), Steven Fisher (Ontario), Mike Yowonske (Pennsylvania), and Max Karten (Rhode Island).
2010 Top North American Youth Players

One of the fastest growing segments of the tournament Scrabble population is Youth Players: players under 18 as of the first of the year. In 2010, Youth Players not only were more visible at tournaments, they often took home the top prizes. Adult players have come to realize that a young opponent no longer means an easy win. Here are some of the top active Youth Players from 2010.

**NOAH WALTON**
Noah, 17, from Portland, OR, finished the year rated 1900—with a peak rating of 1927. Featured in our October issue as the Youth Player of the Year, Noah ended the year ranked 38th in North America. He played in 14 tournaments, winning Vancouver (3/6), Berkeley (7/11), and the Portland v. Seattle TCC (9/27). He also had a spectacular 2nd place finish to Carl Johnson in the Oregon Tile (4/30). Noah’s first rated game was in September, 2007.

**SAM ROSIN**
Sam, 18, from Bernardsville, NJ, finished the year rated 1899—with a peak rating of 1942. Featured in our October issue for his excellent finish at Nationals (12th out of 116 in Division 1), Sam ended the year ranked 39th in North America, with his peak rating the year’s highest for any Youth Player.

**JOEY KRAFCHICK**
Joey, 16, from Roswell, GA, finished the year rated 1656—with a peak rating of 1708 after finishing 16th out of 97 at the Dallas Open. He started this new year with a bang at Albany, finishing 3rd in Division 2 to raise his rating to 1703.

**STEPHEN SNEED**
Stephen, from Fort Worth, TX, finished the year rated 1649—with a peak rating of 1700 after a spectacular 2nd place finish in Division 2 at Nationals.

**BRADLEY ROBBINS**
Bradley, 13, from Windham, NH, finished the year rated 1610—his peak rating to date—after a sensational Division 1 win at the Wilmington DE tournament on 12/26. Bradley and his partner, Evan McCarthy, were the 2010 National School SCRABBLE® Champions, winning $10,000. Other School SCRABBLE® wins included the New England School SCRABBLE® Championship (with Danny Bleecker) and the “Terror of the Tiles” tournament (with Nicholas Vasquez).
MATT CANIK
Matt, 18, from Austin, TX, finished the year rated 1632--his peak rating to date--after finishing 23rd of 87 in Division 2 at Nationals.

NATHANIEL JONES
Nathaniel, 12, from Northampton, MA, finished the year rated 1552--with a peak rating of 1567 after his 8th-place finish at the Essex VT NAST 11/19, his first tournament.

KEVIN E. ROSENBERG
Kevin, 13, from New Rochelle, NY, finished the year rated 1540--his peak rating to date. In 2001, his first year playing tournament SCRABBLE®, he played in 9 tournaments, winning 4--including a Division 1 win at Ardsley. Kevin and his partner, Tim Bryant, were 2nd in both the 2010 National School SCRABBLE® Championship and the New England School SCRABBLE® Championship. Kevin and his new partner, Mack Meller, lead the New England School SCRABBLE® Series with 4 wins.

JUSTIN MORRIS
Justin, from Holliston, MA, finished the year rated 1322--his peak rating to date. Justin played in two tournaments in 2010: BAT and Cape Cod, winning Division 4 at BAT (12-3 +1043).

AARON P. GREEN
Aaron, from Hopkinton, MA, finished the year rated 1307. He played in two tournaments this year.

RICHARD SPENCE
Richard, 16, from Tucson, AZ, finished the year rated 1455 (he is now rated 1491). He won 3 of his 4 tournaments, with his most spectacular win at Nationals, where he won Division 4 (26-5 +2185). He started 2011 with a Division 1 win in Tucson.

ANDREW BEATON
Andrew, from New York City, finished the year rated 1296 after his first two tournaments. His Bayside Division 4 victory in his debut earned him his 2010 peak rating: 1327.

TED BARRETT
Ted, a high school junior from New Jersey, finished the year rated 1279--his peak to date--after winning Division 4 of the Albany Early Bird 12/30. Ted played in 9 tournaments in 2010, winning 5. He had the year’s top rating gain (+428) and the 5th best win percentage (70.91%). Ted’s biggest win was Division 5 at Nationals (24-7 +1935).
MACK MELLER

Mack, 11, from Westchester, NY, finished the year rated 1273, his 2010 peak, after playing in two tournaments. Mack’s first tournament was in November, when he won the Ardsley NY Tournament with a 7-1 +1504 record. He has started 2011 off impressively, winning Division 3 at Albany 19-2-1 +2217 (he was Gibsonized), to raise his rating to 1454. Mack and his partner, Kevin Rosenberg, also lead the New England School SCRABBLE® Series, with 4 wins to date. Mack’s overall win percentage (unofficial until he plays 12 more games) is 80.3%.

MATTHEW NELSON

Matthew, 15, from Poulsbo, WA, finished the year rated 1216—with a peak rating of 1264. He won two tournaments, including Division 2 at Portland OR 4/30.

OTHER TOP YOUTH PLAYERS

Thomas Ensey, high school sophomore from Hanover, MD: 1197 (new peak).

Tim Bryant, high school freshman from Brightwaters, NY: 1177 (new peak). 2nd with his partner, Kevin Rosenberg, at the 2010 National School SCRABBLE® Championship and the New England School SCRABBLE® Championship. 3 tournament wins.

Matthew O’Connor, 7th grader from DeWitt, NY: 1167 (new peak). Won Division 5 at Lake George.

Jackson Smylie, 8th grader from Ontario: 1151 (peak 1195). 4 tournament wins in 6 tournaments. Won Toronto School SCRABBLE® Championship with partner, Alex Li.

Noah Lieberman, 16-year-old high school junior from Charlotte, NC: 1147 (peak 1246).

Sam Heinrich, 7th grader from Carlisle, MA: 1115 (now rated 1178). 1 tournament win at Albany 4th of July Early Bird #2.

Nicholas Vasquez, 7th grader from Livingston, NJ: 1089 (peak 1190). 3 tournament wins. Won “Terror of the Tiles” School SCRABBLE® tournament with partner, Bradley Robbins.

Matthew O’Connor, 7th grader from Montclair, NJ: 1078 (peak 1105).


Hannah Lieberman, 14-year-old high school freshman from Charlotte, NC: 1011 (peak 1098). 3 tournament wins, including Division 4 at Columbia SC.

Ruben Radlauer, high school freshman from Los Angeles, CA. 1 tournament win. 4th with partner, Tristan Vanech, at 2010 National School SCRABBLE® Championship.

John Schuman, 7th grader from Cold Spring Harbor, NY. 2 tournament wins in first and only 2 tournaments; 1 School SCRABBLE® tournament win with partner, DeeAnn Guo.
Erik Salgado, 7th grader from Cary, NC. Winner NC School SCRABBLE® Championship with partner, Andy Hoang. 1 tournament win.

Andy Hoang, 7th grader from Cary, NC. Winner NC School SCRABBLE® Championship with partner, Erik Salgado.

Kenny Hoang, 6th grader from Cary, NC: 1 tournament win.

Liam Hopfensperger, 7th grader from Chapel Hill, NC: Winner Capitol Cup School SCRABBLE® Tournament with partner, Amalan Iyengar. Started 2011 with a win in Division 3 in Durham, NC.

Conor McGeehan, 8th grader from New Jersey: 2 tournament wins.

DeeAnn Guo, 6th grader from Westchester, NY: 1st Division 2 New England School SCRABBLE® Championship with partner, Aidan Courtney; 1 School SCRABBLE® tournament win with new partner, John Schuman.

Amalan Iyengar, 7th grader from Chapel Hill, NC: Winner Capitol Cup School SCRABBLE® Tournament with partner, Liam Hopfensperger.

Sheng Guo, 4th grader from Westchester, NY: 2 School SCRABBLE® Tournament wins.

Alexandra Kung, 8th grader from Chappaqua, NY: 3rd in Capitol Cup School SCRABBLE® Tournament with partner, Amy Rowland.

Amy Rowland, 8th grader from Ridgefield, CT: 3rd in Capitol Cup School SCRABBLE® Tournament with partner, Alexandra Kung.

Jeffrey He, 7th grader from Chapel Hill, NC: 2nd in Capitol Cup School SCRABBLE® Tournament with partner, Edward Zhuang

Edward Zhuang, 7th grader from Chapel Hill, NC: 2nd in Capitol Cup School SCRABBLE® Tournament with partner, Jeffrey He.

Alex Li, 7th grader from Ontario: Winner Toronto School SCRABBLE® Championship with partner, Jackson Smylie.


Amanda Sass, 8th grader from Magnolia, TX: Winner Texas School SCRABBLE® Championship with partner, Elizabeth Wroten.

Elizabeth Wroten, 7th grader from Magnolia, TX: Winner Texas School SCRABBLE® Championship with partner, Amanda Sass.

INACTIVE LEADERS:

Matthew Silver, high school junior from Westport, CT: 1592.

Gabe Sadowsky, high school junior from Nashua, NH: 1319.
Friends Who Have Left Us

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HILDA SIEGEL

DAVE ZIMMERMAN
On January 26, 2010, six players started the Word Game Players’ Organization, acting mostly on a gut feeling that SCRABBLE® tournament players deserved an alternative, and that if a new organization offered good tournaments, democratic principles, transparency and minimal or less cost, the members would come.

Our gut feeling was correct, and then some, beyond our expectations and even our dreams for the first year. As of December 31, we had 569 members, a number which, buttressed by the Reno and Redeye tournaments as well as by our usual steady growth, has swelled to 610 as of January 24. In addition, to the best of our knowledge, we have only had one player request to be removed from the membership rolls in the first year. Our members hail, roughly, from 34 states, 6 Canadian provinces and four other foreign countries. In the U.S., the largest concentrations of members are in California, Minnesota, New York, Arizona and Washington State.

In 2010, WGPO rated approximately 35 tournaments (Early Birds, etc., counted as separate events, since they had separate prizes), with 5 more so far in January. We have a great roster of tournaments, including our first nationals in Reno in July: the 2011 Word Cup Championship.

In 2010, Melissa Brown won laurels for most WGPO games played: more than 100. We have stats on top 10 players, etc.—with Joey Mallick topping the charts at 2006—and these players should be congratulated for their sterling performances. But so should the players, whether newbies or vets, at the lower end of the rating pole. They all are valued equally in WGPO.

A very gratifying statistic, with a tip of the hat to ratings chair Brian Galebach, is that 275 WGPO players (mean WGPO rating 1242, median WGPO rating 1270), or nearly half the current membership, played in at least one WGPO event in 2010. That shows us our members are active and committed to playing in good, fun tournaments.

2010 was incredibly busy for our all-volunteer organization, as we started, from less than scratch, to build, in a transparent, democratic way, a durable foundation that will be here for decades to come. Without any "participation" cost to members, we have, besides the exciting tournaments, solid bylaws, our own ratings, a functional website that will be improved in the coming year, a number of great committees with committed leaders who are listened to, and, perhaps most importantly, our open election of officers, which will conclude on February 1.

The election, of course, also confirmed our early prediction that WGPO would be a work in progress, since our leadership committees (amazingly convened in the middle of the Christmas holidays) voted to throw the first results out because of a glitch in notification of members. That glitch, and how we responded to it, acknowledging quickly and correcting in accordance with our bylaws, showed to me that we are committed to walking the walk, not just talking the talk. Our early returns, furthermore, indicate the probability of an excellent turnout for the revote.

In 2011, you can expect much more from WGPO and its leaders: everything from added--and more geographically diverse--tournaments to a better website, to more committees directing us both for now and for the future. And we've only just begun. But we remain as committed now as we were on January 26, 2010, to a democratic, transparent organization designed to encourage members to play often, play fair and have fun. We have in 2010, and we will, even more so, in the years to come.
A SCRABBLE® Festivus for the Rest of Us

By Dan Horowitz

The inaugural Delaware SCRABBLE® Festivus, held December 24-27, consisted of three separate tournaments and featured many exciting milestones. Although many players who wanted to participate were thwarted by a snowstorm, we still had 41 people who participated in at least one event.

Winter Completes an Impressive Streak and Starts Another; Verna Richards Berg claims the HILTON prize with “THOLING”

In many ways, the main event was all about Winter. He blew away the rest of the field and claimed first place in Division 1 with a 15-5 record, and he was Gibsonized for the final two rounds. The tournament also enabled Winter to complete a streak of 52 consecutive weeks of tournament SCRABBLE®, and also kicked off a new streak of 10 consecutive days of tournaments. Although she finished second to Winter with a 12-8 record, Verna Richards Berg earned a free night in the Hilton for next year’s Festivus by making a play using all the letters in “HILTON” (THOLING – for 79 points). First place in Division 2 went to Adam Ginzberg with a 14-6 record, and David Klionsky won Division 3 with a record of 15-4-1.
Bradley’s Big Night

2010 National School SCRABBLE® Champion Bradley Robbins achieved several impressive milestones in the December 26 late bird event: Not only was it his first Division 1 win, but he swept the competition, compiling a 5-0 record against Mitchell Brook, Sam Rosin, Winter, Jeff Jacobson, and Alan Kraus. The impressive win also represented the first time his rating reached 1600—which may make him the youngest U.S. player to date to have reached that “expert” rating. Tobey Roland won Division 2 with a record of 4-1, and Roberta Borenstein swept the competition in Division 3.

Two Winter Storms

Our final event was dominated by two “Winter Storms.” The first winter storm was weather related: 20 players that had been planning to attend had to cancel due to the weather. The second was a dominant 6-1 performance by Winter in Division 1. This event also featured two great comebacks: After disappointing performances in the first two events, Jeff Jacobson and Ruth Brower mounted impressive comebacks and won Divisions 2 and 4 (respectively) with 6-1 records. Division 3 was a close contest, with Susan Kirchhausen beating Gwen Stewart on spread after both players compiled identical 5-2 records.

Everyone had such a good time that I have decided to make the Delaware SCRABBLE® Festivus an annual event. The 2011 event will feature 7-game one-day tournaments on Friday, December 23 and Monday, December 26, and a 20-game multi-day tournament from December 23rd-25, with 4 games starting at 5 PM on December 23, and 8 games on December 24 and 25. More information can be found on www.cross-tables.com.
Causeway Snapshots

By Albert Hahn

Causeway Challenge player Albert Hahn gives a great sense of what it was like to be at the Causeway Challenge in Johor Bahru, Malaysia, the year’s premier international SCRABBLE® tournament.

"I am a part of all that I have seen and heard.”

Trampling about Singapore tired me out so I hailed a taxi and asked the female driver to take me to the new casino, if my shorts and T-shirt were acceptable wear. She didn't know as she had never entered it. Although the sign included "no bare arms for men," they let me in after showing my passport. Huge, huge casino. Well-attended. I think locals have to pay a fee to enter. No real poker, just Singapore Stud, which is played against the house. There is a decision to be made, so it is slightly more intellectually engaging than the slot machines. I had to show my passport again when leaving.

Huge shopping mall of several levels surrounding this casino in what's called Marina Bay Sands, I think. Connected by underground walkway to the hotel across the street, which is one of the neatest structures I've seen. Make sure you see the backside, which is shaped like the curving right lower side of a capital R. This shape allows each room to have a flowered terrace. Three 55+ story buildings separated by about 50 meters, connected at the bottom by a lobby of several stories and at the top by what looks like a vessel from far away. That is a massive observation deck and swimming pool for the hotel guests. It costs U.S. $15 for the elevator. A bargain. Looks like that view has put the Singapore Flyer (similar to the London Wheel) out of business as it's only 42 stories high. I recommend going at just before the sudden equatorial sunset so you can see both Singapore and harbor by daylight and dark within half an hour. The only negative was the music played at the top. A guy on guitar with taped accompaniment and a women singer were performing. She was excellent and sang in perfect English, but it was the repertoire. Cheesy pop love songs that is probably what will be playing for me 24 hours a day in hell. Except it won't be her signing; it will be someone like Siri. Man, just evoking his name gives me pangs of longing for home. That godfather of Calgary Scrabble is the reason so very many of us found that scene.

The last sound I heard in Singapore before the taxi came to take me, Naween and Marty Gabriel across the Causeway? The call of the muezzin at 11:55 a.m. I love this sound. It is the singing/chanting of a male voice played by loudspeaker and lasting about four minutes. I also heard it most mornings at 5:30 and I also heard it at 8:20 p.m. My hotel was in Little India, mind you, and India has the second most Muslims in the world, next to Indonesia. What is the first sound I heard in the Muslim country of Malaysia at the hotel? Frosty the Snowman sung by Willie Nelson. And I loved it. Of course that guy could sing the phone book and give me goosebumps.

The Zon Regency site hotel has a shopping center on the lower four or five floors and the music playlist was all Christmas songs and carols. Once again I got that great view out of my hotel window. The water and the lush greenery. The last view I had in Singapore while I was waiting outside my hotel for the taxi was of a monsoon rain that immediately covered the street to a flip flop soaking depth. It was the lunch hour and there were many schoolgirls in short skirts trying to protect
themselves with a little umbrella against the onslaught of the raging downpour, which didn't let up for an hour. At least most of the students had umbrellas. Some pedestrians had more creative means of warding off the deluge. Some just toughed it out and would occasionally duck under the cover of my hotel's verandah for a few seconds of respite before steeling their nerve and heading out again. Well, guess I'll start packing and prepare to head home. Oh, I almost forgot, there'll be 45 games of scrabble first. Yippee.

* 

Shark fin soup, chicken, bass, prawns, abalone and, served last, about two hours after the meal started, rice as is the custom. For dessert a sago, pumpkin, yam melange with cream of honey dew. Lots of entertainment: orchestra, singing and three troupes alternating performances of traditional Malaysian dance. The biggest applause came after a number where the emcee prodded about seven scrabblers to join the dancers. Anand Buddhev was shaking it pretty good. Many thanks to the Johor Chief Minister for the banquet and show. Sam Kantimathi took to the podium to give us a scoop on the new Sam Flip Timer (or Flip Sam Timer). This is a very small unit that has several new wrinkles. He wanted to present this prototype to the Scrabbler making the biggest difference in the last year. But, he said, since the Phenom couldn't make it, Michael Tang was the recipient:-) I look forward to 15 more meals at tables of 10, that are part of the package deal most of us took, and the four complimentary afternoon teas (small meals) that break up the six-game afternoon schedule. Time to catch a few winks and get up at 5:30 if we want to catch the first call of the muezzin.

* 

I stopped in at Starbucks but decided against eating there. Before leaving I surveyed the scene: One table had David Boys at the laptop with Adam Logan and Helen Gipson leaning forward in their chairs to help David gang up on Quackle. Peter Morris was leaning back in his chair alternately surveying the screen and studying his flash cards. Brian Cappelletto, standing, had wedged himself in between Adam and Helen. Looking over the top of the monitor was Henry Yeo. At a nearby table was Joel Wapnick reading some Saul Bellow short stories on his iPod. I realized then what Canada's national dress should be: a World Champion T-shirt. Four of the people in that scene qualify for one. Only Ron Hoekstra, Andrew Golding and I can say "I haven't a thing to wear". Well, Ron can wear a "Canadian Champion T-shirt."

I left to find somewhere else to eat. I came back about a half hour later and the scene was exactly the same! I asked Peter Morris if it was just like riding a bicycle. Dave suggested that it might be more like riding a unicycle since there have been about three vocab updates since Peter last competed. But he'll be fine. Peter had quite a layoff before competing in a Canadian championship and he still made the final, ahead of several of the world's best. What a tourney for prize money. The Open section entry is $60 and more than that will be recovered in extras. But there will still be over 55% return in prize money. In the Masters section there is a $120 entry fee and about 130% return. In the Premier section the entry fee is $300 with 406% return. Well I'm off to the first extra: the banquet given by the state.

* 

Walking into the Melbourne hotel lobby before the 1999 WSC I sat down opposite the 2000+ rated Boys and Paul Epstein. I was eager to practice up in a team game with the International lexicon. They said "Hm, who can we get for your partner? Didn't that kid want to play?" Beautiful, I was
going to have to play with some guy whose name they didn't even know. When he came over he looked about 14, but I figured it would be a little tacky to ask for I.D. But I soon realized that I needn't be worried about this young Brit's ability. He was Brett Smitheram. Now 11 years later he's in the lead at Causeway, by 2.5 games!!! Over Naween. Also unusual is that someone other than Nigel has the highest spread. I remember in 1999 someone wearing a T-shirt that said "I beat Nigel Richards." I had never heard the name before and figured he must be some local player. When all the smoke cleared, although Joel Wapnick won that year, he had only the second highest spread. Nigel in seventh had a spread 600 points higher than Wapnick.

How do our ten champions stand, those ten that will be playing off starting Tuesday? Here is their standing, mind you after schedules of varying strength.

Nigel
Panupol
Cappelletto
Pakorn
Logan
Eldar
Boys
Nyman
Wapnick
Peter Morris

Nigel shows up at one tourney almost clean shaven and then at another, like this one, with the most amazing bushy, long. salt and pepper beard. There could be anything in there: word lists, pets, weapons. It probably takes them an hour to search that beard at the airport.

At the other extreme from Nigel is Helen Maurus. She doesn't conceal too much. So she's more like me:-) Helen is one of the 40 Australians here at Causeway. I was happy to finally share a table of ten with Helen at one of the dinners. She's a pleasure to be around. Just as friendly as Nigel but, unlike him, she will always initiate conversations. With Nigel you pretty much have to start. She's presently in second in the Open. Frank Nsidibe is first. At 7-12 is Mahani Mohamed. She wondered before the tourney what in the world she was getting into; 45 games. She told me she wished it was single knockout so she could leave after losing a game:-) Mahani was a very welcome member of the Calgary club for a year. But now she works in Kuala Lumpur and has actually had Nigel to her house for a dinner/scrabble party. She said that he was very kind to her in their game.

In the Masters Alastair and Kian Boon are two games ahead. Alastair beat me twice. The first game I out-bingo-ed him 3-1 but he still won by over 100. Young Alastair is ready to join the top ranks of Australian scrabble, I'm sure.

40 Australians are here.
23 Nigerians.
20 Thais.
Malaysia is in fourth place for participants, I think.

*
Why do I love Scrabble? When I use Protiles to make a word I feel just like Gutenberg.

First I wanted to note that Helen Maurus is in first place in the Open after 29/45 games. Frank Nsidibe is now second. In third is the only U.S. entrant outside the Premier, Tim Michaels who is the former Youth Participant. Tim’s happy to be back in Collins country. He has overcome a rocky start and found his C-legs. With C standing for Collins of course:-) Btw, SEALEGS* is no good. SEABOOT is good. And so is SEALINE#, Tim, but just for this tourney. If you have AEILNES or AEILNESS back home you have no bingo.

What's the Calgary connection with Causeway? It's the format with which Michael is experimenting this year. You'll notice that the top players in the Masters have been pretty much competing with each other. The format is round robin groups of four, by standing. Pairing after every three rounds. The Calgary Club has used this Scrabble ladder approach for about 14 years. Except that we don't pair by overall record in the 10 years:-) At the end of our Thursday meeting, the top two exchange places with the bottom two of the next higher group. This way we get a good mix of opponents and occasionally a low-rated player will make it into the top groups, and vice versa. Newcomers are seeded into their approximate strength by using their rating. Unrated players are usually better off starting in the bottom group, although they sometimes surprise us with their strength, gained online. This structure has helped the Calgary Scrabble scene. Although the flexibility of a more casual structure is lost, every club session is like a mini tourney with the reward being you get better opponents next week plus the prestige of a higher group. Or you drop down to a lower group which is probably more your speed anyway:-) Sure this format in the Masters means that the top players have a tougher schedule than others. But that's why they're top players, and they can always be grateful that their schedule still won't be as tough as if they had made it into the Premier:-) I think in the Open it may be groups of six, but the idea is generally the same. I would suggest that anyone using this format make the group of three pairings the round before the last of the three games has been finished. Fontes pairings in effect. The lack of accuracy is hardly important as after the first game of the round robin the participants will no longer have equal wins anyway. The time saved is worth making up the groups one round early. This format will work beautifully for tourneys with one division. This means that players will gravitate to their level, a blessing when overrated or underrated players are stuck in the wrong small division for the entire length of a tourney. Of course the king-of-the-hill pairing used in Open tourneys also accomplishes this. The group of four round robin saves some time, especially when Fontes-style pairing is used.

* The biggest cheer of the awards ceremony was when Mikki was called up to collect his 15 grand U.S. for second place. Prolonged enthusiastic applause. And the Malayan minister had the pleasure of shaking his hand and being photographed multiple times beside a lovely collection of party dress lace, earrings, high heeled boots, mascara all topped by a smart-looking styling of long black hair. Mind you Panupol did as well get nice applause and a bit of a standing ovation for his great result, Gibsonized with one round to go. I feared Mikki may not live to spend the $15,000 because of his rickety trip down the makeshift stairs of the awards platform. Darn high heels.

Someone who couldn't even negotiate the stairs was Ryan Anderson, tenth place in the Masters. Bob Jackman was going up to help collect Ryan’s $200, but the presenter came down the
stairs to shake Ryan's hand and give him his prize. Just as well. Can we really trust Bob? He was probably a tad desperate, having won not a sausage. Ryan and I played the last game for tenth place and he won by three points. Early in the game I had challenged ENMOVED# and a shorter word. I didn't challenge his MOLERATS#. The first time we played I gave him an extra 5 points for WHENUA#. He beat me that game too. Ryan lives four hours from Cairns. His nearest competition is Helen Maurus, who took first in the Open. She sensed a Vannita-like nightmare in the making as Helen had to beat Frank Nsidibe one game out of four to clinch, but lost the first three! Vannita's nightmare was Ganesh, who had to sweep Vannita in four (or was it five) King of the Hills. And he did, to represent Malaysia at the worlds, several years ago.

Ryan overcame cancer in 1999 as a fifteen year old, but the chemo had a very rare side effect. It left Ryan with cerebrum damage. One of the world's rare cases to suffer to this extent. It's been a bitter struggle for Ryan to get out of the wheel chair, relearn speech and the use of his hands. It was actually suggested by his therapists to manipulate Scrabble tiles to improve manual dexterity. Pumping tiles has been used as a humorous name for Scrabble but for Ryan it meant much more! Ryan played Scrabble online for a few months and has now been in the live scene for two or three years. He can just barely make the 25-minute time limit. Drawing tiles and writing the score are tough. To save time and effort he uses just a dot beside each letter for tile tracking.

Before our last game for tenth place (and $200 prize) Mahani came up to our table and told me "Ryan has to win this game, you know. He's my favorite Scrabbler." No big deal. Mahani's a friend and that is in the order of good-natured kidding between friends. But then some woman I didn't know came up and wished Ryan good luck! Hey, what about me? I thought she was rather rude. But later when four draws were made for a free flight to the next Causeway tourney, she won one and I found out that her name was Kay Anderson. I understand now that she was wishing her son luck or what kind of a mother would she be:-)

Complete Causeway Challenge results are at http://causewayscrabble.com/stories/frontpage.html
Michael Tang, the world’s most interesting SCRABBLE® promotor, presented at this year’s Causeway Challenge in Johor Bahru, Malaysia, the inaugural “Tournament of Champions,” featuring nine of the ten former World SCRABBLE® Champions, plus David Eldar, a former World Youth SCRABBLE® Champion. The champions included four Canadian players—David Boys (1995), Adam Logan (2005), Peter Morris (1991), and Joel Wapnick (1999); two Thai players—Pakorn Nemritrmansuk (2009) and Panupol Sujjayakorn (2003); one U.S. player—Brian Cappelletto (2001); one Australian player—David Eldar; one British player—Mark Nyman (1993); and one player from New Zealand, Nigel Richards (2007).

The ten Champions, who were also playing in the Premier division of the Causeway Challenge, played 27 rounds, a full round-robin each day, from December 7-9, vying for top prize money of US $10,000.

The winner was New Zealand’s Nigel Richards, with a 19-8 record, over Canadian David Boys (17-10 +518). Third was Panupol Sujjayakorn from Thailand (16-11 +692); with the Australian David Eldar fourth (14-13 +239). Complete results are at the event website: [http://causewayscrabble.com/champs/latest.html](http://causewayscrabble.com/champs/latest.html)

Michael Tang hopes to hold a “Tournament of Champions” every four years, making it almost an Olympics of SCRABBLE®.
The School SCRABBLE® Capitol Cup

By Stefan Fatsis, Director

Seventy-nine School SCRABBLE® players from nine states and one unrepresented but taxed district joined the first School SCRABBLE® Capitol Cup in Washington December 10. The event was sponsored by the National SCRABBLE® Association (NSA) and the District of Columbia Public Schools chancellor's office, was held at a public school, and kicked off a year-long effort to bring SCRABBLE® into all D.C. public schools.

The back story: Last spring, I met a D.C. schools official at an event at my daughter's elementary school. I told her about the School SCRABBLE® clubs and tournaments I'd been running, and she was psyched to do more citywide. I connected her with Jane Williams, who proposed holding a midyear national event here in Washington. Many emails and conference calls later, we had a tournament.

In 2011, the NSA and I are planning to run workshops for D.C. schools teachers and after-school program coordinators. Hasbro is donating School SCRABBLE® kits to all 127 public schools--elementary, middle and high school--in the city.

I directed yesterday's five-game event. Vince Castellano did the pairings. Local expert David Koenig and School SCRABBLE® veterans Sam Rosin, Lily Gasperetii and Quincy Cerabino-Hess donned the refs' jerseys. The field of players from grades 5 through 8 included the past two National School SCRABBLE® champions and another half dozen who finished in the top 10 at the last two NSSCs. All the kids received NSA goody bags that included the new SCRABBLE® Flash game. The first-place finishers won $2,000, second place got $1,000 and third place $500.

Liam Hopfensperger & Amalan Iyengar, 7th graders from R.D. & E.P. Smith Middle School in Chapel Hill, NC, accepted a check for $2,000 at the first annual School SCRABBLE® Capitol Cup in Washington, D.C. Also in the photo are Peggy O'Brien, Chief of Family and Public Engagement for DC Public Schools; Shereen Williams, Director of Family and Public Engagement; Stefan Fatsis, Tournament Director; and John D. Williams, Jr, Executive Director of the National SCRABBLE® Association. (Picture by Patricia A. Hocker, National SCRABBLE® Association)
Much thanks to the NSA, DCPS, and the School SCRABBLE® coaches and players who traveled from California, North Carolina, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New York, Connecticut, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia and Washington, D.C. I had a blast, and I think everyone else did, too.

The Top 10:

1. Liam Hopfensperger and Amalan Iyengar (Smith Middle School, NC) 5-0 +452, $2,000
2. Edward Zhuang and Jeffrey He (Smith Middle School, NC) 4-1 +436, $1,000
3. Alexandra Kung and Amy Rowland (Ridgefield Library, CT) 4-1 +418, $500
4. Bradley Robbins and Sammy Heinrich (Windham Whiptails, NH and MA) 4-1 +408
5. Charlie Williamson and Jake Radack (D.C. School Scrabble) 4-1 +356
6. Nicholas Vasquez and Richard Pairazaman (Heritage Middle School, NJ) 4-1 +152
7. Emma Keyes and Lucy McCurdy (D.C. School Scrabble) 4-1 +134
8. Paolo Federico-O'Murchu and Conor McGreehan (Glenfield School, NJ) 3-2 +361
9. Erik Salgado and Andy Hoang (Salem Middle School, NC) 3-2 +327
10. Elise Mitchell and Philip Grotz (Floyd T. Binns Middle School, VA) 3-2 +304

Twenty-two players competed in the December 5 Ridgefield Library School SCRABBLE® Tournament, the fourth in the New England School SCRABBLE® Series running this 2010-2010 school year. There were three divisions; however, because one team did not attend, Division C had only three teams, so a special “Solo” division was included, where the members of the team not playing in that round would play each other while earning a bye.

Division A was extremely competitive. Each of the teams featured a player who had placed in the Top 10 at the National School SCRABBLE® Championship. Going into the final round, Nicholas Vasquez and Richard Pairamazan were undefeated with two wins. But Kevin Rosenberg and Mack Meller eked a narrow 16-point victory to take the division. Third, just 70 spread points back, were Jacob Litt and Josefina Altamiranda; they won the prizes for 9th Grade Champions. Kevin was 8th Grade Champion and Mack 5th Grade Champion. Nicholas and Richard won the tournament High Play Award for RESIZED (92).

Division B was dominated by DeeAnn Guo and John Schuman, playing together as a team for the first time. They finished with a 3-0 +285 record, the best in the tournament, over brothers Seth and Jared Tilliss, who were also playing together for the first time in a tournament. Seth and Jared’s only loss was to DeeAnn and John--by a mere 5 points. DeeAnn was 6th Grade Champion and John 7th Grade Champion. The duo also won the tournament High Game Award (431).
Division C went to Mike Shofi, playing in his first tournament, teamed with Stephanie Adams, who was in her second tournament. Stephanie was the 4th Grade Champion. Evan Winston won the Solo Division and was 11th Grade Champion.

A prize was also awarded by popular vote for Best “December” Word. The winners were Jacob and Josefina, who played FROST and HALO. They also played RUNNY, noting next to the entry “as in nose.”

Complete results follow:

DIVISION A
1. Mack Meller & Kevin Rosenberg: 2-1 +145
2. Nicholas Vasquez & Richard Pairamazan: 2-1 +99
3. Jacob Litt & Josefinat Altamiranda: 2-1 +29
4. Amy Rowland & Alexandra Kung: 0-3 -273

DIVISION B
1. DeeAnn Guo & John Schuman: 3-0 +285
2. Seth Tilliss & Jared Tilliss: 2-1 +29
4. Siya Chauhan & Manisha Kanula: 0-3 -362

DIVISION C
1. Stephanie Adams & Michael Shofi: 3-0 +88
2. Sharon Rowland & Evan Winston: 2-1 +37
3. Emily Welch & Jason Welch: 1-2 -78

SOLO DIVISION
1. Evan Winston

High Game: DeeAnn Guo & John Schuman: 431
High Play: Nicholas Vasquez & Richard Pairamazan: RESIZED, 92
Best “December” Word: Jacob Litt & Josefina Altamiranda: FROST

4th Grade Champion: Stephanie Adams
5th Grade Champion: Mack Meller
6th Grade Champion: DeeAnn Guo
7th Grade Champion: John Schuman
8th Grade Champion: Kevin Rosenberg
9th Grade Champions: Jacob Litt & Josefina Altamiranda
11th Grade Champion: Evan Winston

SERIES STANDINGS

DIVISION A
1. Mack Meller, Kevin Rosenberg: 18
2. DeeAnn Guo, Nicholas Vasquez: 8
3. Jacob Litt: 7
4. Amy Rowland: 6
5. Stephen Alt, Bradley Robbins, John Schuman: 5
6. Josefina Altamiranda, Alexandra Kung: 4
7. Richard Pairamazan: 3
8. Jerray Chang, Matthew O’Connor, Kell Pogue: 2

DIVISION B
1. Sheng Guo: 10
2. Quinn Vissak: 8
4. Nick Krasnow, Sharon Rowland, Jason Welch: 4
6. Drew Gregory, Emily Welch: 2
7. Ignacio Altamiranda, Siya Chauhan, Manisha Kanula: 1
Tournament Results 12/1-31

AKRON OH 12/2
1. Pete Zeigler

ATLANTA GA 12/4-5
1. David Gibson
2. Carl Davis
3. Mattie Harpp
4. Kate Graham

AUSTIN TX 12/4-5
1. Chris Cree
2. Tony Cook
3. Bryan Pepper

BERKELEY CA 12/4
1. Chris Patrick Morgan

CALGARY AB CAN 12/4
1. Eric Tran
2. Terri Morigeau

CLEVELAND OH 12/4-5
1. Brian Bowman
2. Carol Ravichandran
3. Michael Bassett
4. Jason Steuber

EASTERN CARIBBEAN CRUISE 12/4-11
1. Steve Glass
2. Barbara Epstein

FORT LAUDERDALE 12/4
1. Ron Tieker
2. Angela Hellman
3. Sophie Marques
4. Marlene Weithers

MADISON WI (WGPO) 12/4
1. Charles Reinke
2. Linda Finn
3. Helen Flores

VANCOUVER V. SEATTLE, BELLINGHAM WA (WGPO; RESTRICTED) 12/4
1. Chris Grubb
2. Mark Peltier

NORTHAMPTON MA 12/4
1. Richard Buck
2. Elouise Pearl

BERKELEY CA 12/5
1. Jesse Day
2. Emely Weissman
3. Bennett Jacobstein
4. Dan Unger
5. S. E. Scott

LAGUNA WOODS CA 12/5
1. Bruce D’Ambrosio

RIDGEFIELD CT (SCHOOL SCRABBLE) 12/5
1. Mack Meller & Kevin Rosenberg
2. DeeAnn Guo & John Schuman
3. Stephanie Adams & Michael Shofi
4. (Solo Division) Evan Winston

BAYSIDE NY 12/11
1. Sal Piro
2. Jim Fonti
3. Tim Bryant

CAPITOL CUP, WASHINGTON DC (SCHOOL SCRABBLE) 12/11
1. Liam Hopfensperger & Amalan Iyengar

GUELPH ON CAN 12/12
1. Jason Ubeika
2. Roger Cullman

PORTSMOUTH NH 12/12
1. Alyssa Faria
2. Judy Cole
3. Wayne Yorra
4. Megan McMahon

LAGUNA WOODS CA 12/18-19
1. Rachel Knapp

CHARLOTTE NC 12/19
1. Ryan Fischer
2. Joann Goddard

MOUNTAIN VIEW CA 12/19
1. Jerry Lerman
2. Andrea Michaels

STRONGSVILLE OH 12/19
1. Brian Bowman

WILMINGTON DE 12/24-26
1. Winter
DECEMBER TOURNAMENT RESULTS

2. Adam Ginzberg
3. David Klionsky

MINNEAPOLIS MN (WGPO) 12/26
1. Scott Jackson

WILMINGTON DE 12/26
1. Bradley Robbins
2. Tobey Roland
3. Roberta Borenstein

WILMINGTON DE 12/27
1. Winter
2. Jeffrey Jacobson
3. Susan Kirchhausen
4. Ruth Brower

PRINCETON NJ 12/28
1. David Koenig

ALBANY NY 12/29
1. Kenji Matsumoto
2. Sue Gable
3. Shauna Petrie

ALBANY NY 12/30
1. Bradley Whitmarsh
2. Rob Robinsky
3. Heather Drumm
4. Ted Barrett
5. Susan Blanchard
6. Kurt Kopitz

ALBANY NY 12/30-1/2
1. Kenji Matsumoto
2. Joel Horn
3. Mack Meller

ROSEVILLE CA 12/31
1. Peter Dolgenos
2.
New Faces

Since our last issue, 21 new faces have competed at NASPA, NSA, and WGPO tournaments. One player won his division first time out: Jason Steuber, our featured “New Face,” who won Division 4 at the Cleveland OH tournament on 12/4-5 with a 10-3 +1130 record, earning an initial NASPA rating of 1082.

Jason Steuber

Visitors to the Columbus Metropolitan Library might know Jason Steuber, who works there as a library clerk (“which means I work in customer service, not reference,” says Steuber). They probably don’t know that this 33-year-old Columbus resident is also a strong SCRABBLE® player. At his first tournament in Cleveland this December he bested nine rated players to win Division 4 with ten wins.

Originally from Highland Heights, Ohio, Steuber has always been a fan of word games, and has played SCRABBLE® off and on his whole life. “I started getting into it again when I found out that Facebook had a free online SCRABBLE® application. My word knowledge grew, but I didn't start learning all the inherent strategies until I started to go to a Meetup group devoted to SCRABBLE® play about a year and a half ago.”

“It was about that long that I felt comfortable and confident enough to enroll in a SCRABBLE® tournament.” He entered the two-day Cleveland Tournament, where he won his first five games on his way to the division win.

“When I was in the tournament, it felt like another Meetup group, so it didn't feel overwhelming at all.” Overwhelming, perhaps, for his opponents!

Jason enjoyed the tournament, and hopes to play in more. “I play online on Facebook all the time and go to the Meetup group just about every week, so I'm pretty sure you'll see me in another tournament soon.”

This time his opponents will be ready....

Welcome to Jason Steuber and the following other new faces:

**ATLANTA GA 12/4-5:** Preston Kilgore, Eliza Lieberman, Hope Lusignan, Matthew Miller

**CLEVELAND OH 12/4-5:** Todd Deboe, Eugenia Johnson

**EASTERN CARIBBEAN CRUISE 12/4-11:** Reginald Crosby

**MADISON WI 12/4:** June Scott

**NORTHAMPTON MA 12/4:** Albert Gardner
BERKELEY CA 12/5: Julie Exley, Nikhil Joshi, Jacob Kay, Pam Pappone, James Sutton

RIDGEFIELD CT SCHOOL SCRABBLE 12/5: Richard Pairazaman, Michael Shofi, Emily Welch

BAYSIDE NY 12/11: Virgil Talaid

PRINCETON NJ 12/28: Yognandan Pandya

ALBANY NY 12/30-1/2: Joshua Castellano

ROSEVILLE CA 12/31: Douglas Patterson
One of the more interesting study topics is the list of adjectives ending in –ID, like AVID or RAPID. I have just frittered away a weekend in a semi-successful effort to wrap my arms around this list. First, a few disclaimers:

1) Many –ID words are nouns, for example CUPID, LIPID or MILKMAID. These take an –S, and we will not concern ourselves with them in this quiz.

2) I omitted all –OID words from this discussion. The –OIDs deserve their own article – some are nouns and others adjectives, with few clues as to which category any given –OID word belongs.

3) I also skipped those words which are formed by adding a front extension to another –ID adjective. These extended adjectives usually begin with NON-, SEMI- or SUB-, for example NONRIGID or SUBHUMID. Ditto for COMORBID, PERFERVID, UNCANDID, ILLIQUID and the adjective INVALID (accent on the second syllable!). These extended adjectives generally follow the same rules as their unextended brethren, but exceptions do apply and I will leave those for another rainy weekend. I will have more to say about INTREPID on the Answers page.

4) I arbitrarily left in BIFID but left out TRIFID, QUADRIFID and MULTIFID.

5) I also left out those adjectives that coincidentally end in –ID, but whose ending is not of Latin etymology: MULTIGRID, NONSKID, STAID, TAXPAID, UNBID and so on.

This leaves us with 61 adjectives, namely:

ACID    FLACCID    INSIPID    NITID    SAPID    TORPID
ACRID   FLORID     INTREPID   PALLID   SOLID    TORRID
ALGID   FLUID      LANGUID   PELLUCID  SORDID   TREPID
ARID    FRIGID     LIMPID    PINGUID   SPLENDID TUMID
AVID    FULGID     LIQUID    PLACID    SQUALID  TURBID
BIFID   GELID      LIVID     PUTRID    STOLID   TURGD
CANDID  GRAVID     LUCID     RABID     STUPID   VALID
CERVID  HISPID     LURID     RANCID    TABID    VAPID
FERVID  HORRID     MORBID    RAPID     TEPID    VIRD
FETID   HUMID      MUCID     RIGID     TIMID    VISCID

Quiz:

1. Identify the 8 adjectives that are also nouns and therefore take the ending –S.
2. Identify the 11 adjectives that do NOT take the ending –LY.
3. Identify the 13 adjectives that take the endings –ER and –EST.
4. Identify the 2 adjectives that take the ending –A.
5. Identify the 1 adjective that takes the ending –ITE.
6. Identify the 16 adjectives that do NOT take the ending –ITY. For 2 Bonus points: Name the two –IDITY words that are formed by adding –ITY to a NOUN (not in the above list).
7. Identify the 18 adjectives that do NOT take the ending –NESS.
8. Which 3 words take the ending –ATE?
9. Identify the 1 adjective that takes the ending –LIKE.

ANSWERS ON NEXT PAGE
ANSWERS

1) ACID, CANDID, FLUID, LIQUID, RAPID, SOLID, STUPID, TORPID
2) ALGID, CERVID, FULGID, HISPID, MUCID, NITID, PINGUID, SAPID, TABID, TREPID, VIRID
3) ACRID, ARID, CANDID, HORRID, RAPID, SOLID, SPLENDID, SQUALID, STOLID, STUPID, TIMID, TORIZ, VIRID
4) CANDID, GRAVID
5) TURBID
6) CANDID, CERVID, FULGID, HORRID, LANGUID, LURID, NITID, PALLID, PELLUCID, PINGUID, SORDID, SPLENDID, SQUALID, TABID, TREPID, VIVID. Bonus points for CUPIDITY and HYBRIDITY.
7) BIFID, CERVID, FLACCID, GRAVID, HISPID, INSIPID, MUCID, NITID, PELLUCID, PINGUID, PUTRID, SAPID, STOLID, TABID, TORPIT, TIREPIT, VIRID, VISCID
8) CANDID, LIQUID, VALID.
9) FLUID

Notes: Oddly, INTREPID takes the –LY, -NESS and –ITY endings although its little brother TREPID doesn’t. CERVID, NITID, PINGUID and TABID are the most “useless” adjectives in the list. They take no endings.

Scoring:

The maximum number of points is 75.

70+: You are my IDol
60-69: You are an IDial SCRABBLE® player
50-59: You have IDle time
40-49: You are an IDylist
30-39: I can IDentify with you
20-29: Beware the IDes of March
10-19: You spend too much time with your IDolatry
0-9: You are an IDiot!
How Did I Get So Lucky

by Stu Goldman

My last piece dealt with bad luck, so it’s only natural that something concerning good luck should follow. Since the most amazing instances of good luck are either broadcast far and wide, or humbly concealed in private, I will provide three pieces of very good luck I have had.

First, the very first time good luck showered on me. It was a club game, after I had played in only one or two tournaments. I went second and my rack was AINQTUZ. I saw immediately that an E would give me QUANTIZE. When I looked at what my opponent played, the E was on the star! 131 points!

The second amazing piece of luck was in the first big tournament I won. There were not a lot of players, because this was a Game Room tournament, circa 1980. Experts came to New York from California to Florida to compete. It was not any play of my own, but a careless error on my opponent’s part that was my good fortune. In a close game, I had previously challenged a phony bingo using a blank off the board. Trying to prevent any further bingos for two or three plays, I finally had to leave an N hanging, wide open. I don’t remember what the blank was, but GRANITES came down, only the player called the blank the wrong letter! After that I was able to prevent any bingos, and won the game as well as the tournament.

The last example gave me the greatest thrill I ever got in this game. It was the last game of a South Bay weekend tournament, and the winner would finish third. I planned to play VANITIED at 5h, perhaps with a blank, when my opponent played BEAU at l1, so I could play VANITIED and BEAUT. My opponent challenged, saying later that if the word was no good he would exchange all his tiles to pick up the case blank, as there were just seven tiles in the bag. The word was good, of course, and I drew all those tiles: EINOHS (). It took me only a few seconds to find (W)ISHBONE off that B in BEAUT for a 158-point triple-triple and out!

The nature of the game is such that extraordinary strokes of good and bad luck can strike at almost any time.

Stu Goldman lives in California and has been playing tournament SCRABBLE® for 36 years.
**SCRABBLE® and Scrabblers in the News**

See something about SCRABBLE® or a SCRABBLE® player in the news? Let us know! Send your stories to CornelioSGuest@gmail.com.

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**Jerry Lerman has 8-bingo game in Reno**

Jerry Lerman played a nine-turn game with Kenji Matsumoto on January 15 at the Reno Tournament and 8 of his plays (including his first 6) were bingos! Jerry didn't draw either blank. Kenji had 3 bingos of his own, including the 3x3 HOISTING, for a total of 11 in the game. The final score was 671-450.

Jerry’s plays were FISTULA, FENLANDS, LEAGUER, PALEWISE, ECOCIDES, ROSULATE, FIX, TRAINING, and PREARMED.

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**DECEMBER MILESTONES**

**JESSE DAY** reached 1900 for the first time at the Berkeley (CA) Tournament.

**BEN SCHOENBRUN** reached 1800 for the first time at the Albany (NY) Early Bird Tournament.

**BRADLEY ROBBINS** reached 1600 for the first time at the Wilmington (DE) Tournament.

**WES EDDINGS** reached 1600 for the first time at the Austin (TX) Tournament.

**DAVE RAUPPIUS** reached 1500 for the first time at the Atlanta (GA) Tournament.

**VICTOR TANTUA** reached 1500 for the first time at the Laguna Woods (CA) Tournament.

**JACOB WILLIAMS** reached 1500 for the first time at the Austin (TX) Tournament.

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“**Top 10 SCRABBLE® Developments of the Past 10 Years**”

Tim Bottorff has posted a unique blog on the major historical developments in the competitive SCRABBLE® scene over the past ten years. The post has received numerous hits (as well as some comments and suggestions). Notable mention: the publication of *The Last Word!* The post is at: [http://tilehead.blogspot.com/2011/01/top-10-scrabble-developments-of-past-10.html](http://tilehead.blogspot.com/2011/01/top-10-scrabble-developments-of-past-10.html)
SCRABBLE® Tips on About.com from John D. Williams, Jr., and Matt Silver

National SCRABBLE® Association Executive Director John D. Williams, Jr., and two-time National School SCRABBLE® Champion Matt Silver appear together in a series of short instructional videos on About.com, a site that explains how to do a variety of things.


Capitol Cup School SCRABBLE® Tournament in the press


Keith Smith Inducted into Texas SCRABBLE® Hall of Fame

Mike Willis comments on the 2011 inductee into the State of Texas SCRABBLE® Hall of Fame:

“Every serious SCRABBLE® player owes a large debt of gratitude to Keith for his efforts to establish an archived history of all of the players records as far back as could be found. Keith painstakingly made copies of old newsletters and everything else he could locate and began to enter and collaborate a detailed history of virtually every player in the game. The challenge was overwhelming, but Keith succeeded and later with the assistance of Seth Lipkin created the nothing short of miraculous SCRABBLE® website, Cross-tables.com. Keith published his book Total SCRABBLE®, based on one of his personal favorites, Total Baseball.”
Portland’s Jesse Warnum and son on “The Biggest Loser”

Scott Pianowski mentioned on Yahoo.com
One of the writers on sports on Yahoo mentioned a tweet from Scott Pianowski: http://sports.yahoo.com/nfl/blog/shutdown_corner/post/Video-Polamalu-imitates-Superman-in-jumping-ove?urn=nfl-302562
Is that Really a Word?

By Tony Rasch

“Is that really a word?” We’ve all heard that one when playing living room players or newcomers to the club. I had just played ZEKS at L8 on top of an “A” at L9 and with a certain amount of glee announced “102” points. “Is that really a word?” was not long in coming. “ZA is short for pizza and ZEK is a Soviet inmate,” I said with certainty. I opened The Official SCRABBLE® Players Dictionary to the “Z” section. And, of course, they were there. “But are they in a real dictionary?” my opponent asked. I explained how the SCRABBLE® dictionary was compiled by combing through four of the most commonly used desk dictionaries. I said that if the word was in any one of those four dictionaries, it would be deemed an official SCRABBLE® word. “Prove it,” she demanded.

I had bought all four dictionaries when I was compiling Brow-Raisers Edition II. I took them off my shelf and confidently went to the “Z” section of Merriam-Webster. Whoops neither “ZA” nor “ZEK” appeared. “It just has to be in one out of four,” I reiterated. I tried Webster’s next. Aargh! Same story. American Heritage was next. Whew! I showed her “ZA,” which was slang for pizza. But when I looked on the next page there was no “ZEK” between Zeitgeist and zemindar. “Well, I guess it has to be in Random House,” I said with just a tinge of doubt. Once more “ZA” made it, but not “ZEK.” Good grief! What could I do? Wanting to maintain a friendship, I removed my 102-point play from the board, and when the game was over, I started doing some research.

I was shocked to find 5 Twos, 66 Threes, 316 Fours, and 875 Fives were not in any of the source dictionaries. No doubt a good many of the longer words would be missing as well. I went to the NSA website and found that Jim Pate is the head of the Dictionary Committee. I sent him an e-mail asking, “What gives?” He sent me back a very nice explanation. When new editions of standard desk dictionaries come out, some words are dropped. The National SCRABBLE® Association doesn’t have any official policy about what to do about dropped words. However, the de facto policy is to grandfather in any words that were ever in the original OSPD (Official SCRABBLE® Players Dictionary) or the OWL (The Official Word List). The only exceptions are for words that were included in error, such as DA and VIN. The reasoning is that it would be extremely disruptive to longtime club players to take away words they had become accustomed to. That argument is hard to argue with. Which of us wants to lose AL, BO, ES, NA, or YA? Or ZEK, heaven forbid!

If you’re curious about which words no longer exist in current editions of the source dictionaries, go to www.browraisers.com. I’ve listed all of the 1,262 that are no longer recognized by any of the source dictionaries.

What do you think about the NSA’s de facto policy of retaining such words? Would it make sense to retain them for club and tournament play, but remove them from the Official SCRABBLE® Players Dictionary, which is used for school play? Send comments to BrowRaisers@lycos.com.

Tony Rasch is a retired statistician who loves words. He is the author of Brow-Raisers, which is an excellent study guide geared towards the success of beginning and intermediate players. When Tony isn’t playing SCRABBLE® he loves to backpack and has hiked from Mexico to Canada.
Joe Bihlmeyer, a top Connecticut SCRABBLE® player, presents a video demonstrating how you can use tracking and board control to set yourself up or deny your opponent a place to play.

Creating white space on a closed board
In a standard Sudoku, your object is to fill in every square of the grid so that all nine rows across, all nine columns down, and all nine 3-by-3 boxes contain the numbers 1 through 9, with no repeats.

Same rules apply to this Scrab-doku, but I’ve added a few twists to help you solve it. First of all, I use letters to replace the numbers. These letters are part of a “Keyword” which I’ve scrambled below. I’ve also provided a clue to help you find the correct anagram. Once you’ve unscrambled the Keyword, one of the rows or columns will contain all of its 9 letters in the proper order.

This week’s “Scrambled” Keyword: ROBSQUIET

Clue:
This word means “a nickname so familiar that it can be used instead of a real name.” One example is the nickname “Stella” for (OSPD List Goddess) Cheryl Cadieux.

SOLUTION on page after next.
Word-Finder Challenge:

Here’s an additional test of your anagramming ability. Your object is to find as many bingos as possible using only the 9 letters of this month’s (Scrambled) Keyword: ROBSQUIET.

All words must be at least 7 letters long, as well as OWL2 or Long List acceptable. Each letter of the Keyword may be used only once within any word you find. Multiple forms of the same word are acceptable. For instance, if OUTLINE, OUTLINES, OUTLINED, OUTLINER, and OUTLINERS were contained in the Keyword, they could all be used.

Par Scores for this month’s Word-Finder Challenge:

5 bingos (Novice); 8 (Intermediate); 12 (Advanced)

Once you’ve compiled your list, check out my SOLUTION on the next page.
See you next month with another Scrab-doku puzzle and Word-Finder Challenge! …Jeff Kastner

Jeff Kastner, originally from New York City, has been living in Phoenix, AZ since 1985. Jeff is one of a handful of players who has ever been ranked in the USA-top-50 in both SCRABBLE® and chess. He is the 2009-2010 Phoenix SCRABBLE® Club champion as well as the 2008 and 2009 Scottsdale SCRABBLE® Club champ. His chess, Sudoku, and word puzzles appear weekly in The Jewish Press newspaper and on its website. He has recently begun hosting the Internet program Who’s on the Show?, where one of his first interviews was with directors Larry Rand and Barbara Van Alen: http://whosontheshow.com/shows.html
Word-Finder List

Keyword (Unscrambled): THROWBACK (15 Bingos)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BOSQUET</th>
<th>ORBIEST</th>
<th>ROQUETS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BRIQUET</td>
<td>OUREBIS</td>
<td>RUBIEST</td>
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<td>BRIQUETS</td>
<td>QUERIST</td>
<td>SOBRIQUET</td>
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<td>BUSTIER</td>
<td>QUESTOR</td>
<td>STOURIE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OBTUSER</td>
<td>QUOTERS</td>
<td>TORQUES</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Diane’s DEFALTS
by Diane Firstman

Diane Firstman published her first book of DEFALTS, Generous to a DEFALT: Vol. 1-3, in 2006. Since then, she has published a second volume of her humorous alternative definitions to common (and not-so-common) words—DEFALTS Vol. 4—and selected DEFALTS have appeared in SCRABBLE® News and on the online SCRABBLE® discussion groups crossword-games-pro (cgp) and OSPD. The Last Word is pleased to offer the following selection of DEFALTS.

REROLLER: paintbrush apparatus used to touch up spots missed the first time

RESORTER: obsessive-compulsive arranger of sock or underwear drawers

RETROFIRE: reminiscent of a famous building fire, such as the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire of 1911

RETRORSE: 1) reminiscent of a famous horse, such as Secretariat; 2) a racehorse that runs so fast, it needs a retrorocket to slow it down

RICERCAR: alternative fuel vehicle that runs on rice wine

RICERCARE: instruction manual for utensil used to extrude soft foods into the consistency of rice

RIVERWARD: 1) Irish troupe famous for dancing to "Take me to the River"; 2) a river under the protection of a larger body of water

RUMRUNNER: sprinter whose elixir of choice is not Gatorade, but Bacardi

SERRATURE: the "signature serration" of Zorro

SORROWER: a very sad canoeist

Diane Firstman is a lifelong New Yorker and has been playing SCRABBLE® competitively since 1994. When not thinking up DEFALTS, she attends crossword puzzle tourneys and writes on the New York Yankees for www.bronxbanterblog.com. She is adept at math, can reach items on top shelves in supermarkets, and does a dead-on impression of a sea lion. The collected “DEFALTS” are available at http://stores.lulu.com/dianagram.
Los Angeles NASPA SCRABBLE® CLUB #44
By Alan Stern

Club 44 was formed in 1977 and has been in existence ever since, always meeting on Wednesday evenings. I started attending in 1978 and took over directing duties in 1991. I met my wife, Ruth, at the club in 1984, and we got married in 1990.

Throughout its history Club 44 has always been a strong one, with many expert players peppered amongst the attendees at every session. Games of better than 500 and 600 points are not uncommon. One of our top players, Judy Levitt, has twice topped 700 (756, 758)! For a time Club 44 boasted the highest combined club score at 1,111 points as Ira Cohen bested Bruce D'Ambrosio 653-458. Scoring tons of points has never been a problem for our players.

We play four games in a session squeezed into exactly as many hours. Light refreshments are available. Our average attendance hovers about 25-30, but we often exceed 30, so pairing each round's opponents and keeping the club running smoothly and promptly are demanding chores. To keep rounds on schedule, our rule states that if someone goes over five minutes on the clock that player automatically loses the game even if they are winning at the time of infraction. Their score is reduced by 50 points; if this does not bring them below the opponent's score then they incur a one-point loss.
We play in one big division regardless of ratings or skill. It is a "structured" club. Round-one matchups are basically at random; subsequent rounds have players paired with those of like records. Computer lookups handle challenges. Anyone going an undefeated 4-0 is refunded their $4 session fee. A scratch-off lottery ticket is awarded every round for the high play in a category announced before the round commences. All games are recorded, with the previous week's session and current standings posted at the club. I use the old Focus software for stats and maintain a website, www.thescrabbleclub.com, for Club 44 so players can check the session results or current standings, or download a selection of one of 16 scoresheets and other club info. It's not too detailed a website, is easy to navigate, and is uncluttered and easy on the eyes of visitors.

Each spring we hold an eight-game, two-week club championship tournament. The winner holds the rotating trophy for their reign and plays at the club for free until the next championship. The second-place finisher plays for free for the remainder of the calendar year. Limiting the tourney to just eight games allows for the chance that any player can catch a hot streak and win. It's the reason we've had so many different champs through the years.

A club that has been around for so long has seen its share of oddities: a player missing the center star to start a game and the opponent allowing it so he could play a rare triple-double; tiles of different colors played in the same word; two Q's played in a game using a new set of unverified tiles; a player starting with five consecutive bingos; a player drawing the Z to go first in three consecutive rounds; opponents being separated by an 82-year age difference. And many more events which I can't recall.

Los Angeles (CA) NASPA SCRABBLE® Club #44 meets each Wednesday evening at Plummer Park in West Hollywood, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd., beginning at 5:45 p.m. sharp. We play four rounds concluding by 10 o'clock. Contact: Alan Stern, 818-951-1745, alan@thescrabbleclub.com. Club website: www.thescrabbleclub.com.
News from Lubbock TX NASPA SCRABBLE® Club #124

Recently co-director Cheryl Tyler couldn't make it to the club until the last game, so she was asked to play three players at once. She won two of the three games.

Co-director Caesar Jaramillo competed in the Tournament of Champions in Dallas, TX and scored a 601. He had previously scored a 600+ game at a past Nationals.

Lubbock (TX) NASPA SCRABBLE® Club #124 meets Saturdays at 1:00 p.m. and Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m. at Market Street, 3405 50th Street (at Indiana), Lubbock TX 79413. Contacts: Cheryl Tyler, 806-470-8085, lubbockscrabble@aol.com; Ann Skylstad, 806-791-1119, kakisky@sbcglobal.net; Caesar Jaramillo, 806-332-9212, scrab55@yahoo.com.
One-upmanship
The One Up! Game and Contest for Word Lovers

Timothy Cataldo, a successful advertising copywriter, did what many parents of three do in New York City: He left the rat race and competitive preschool scene and moved with his wife and three daughters to picturesque Weston, Connecticut. And because he believed parents should raise their children, rather than leave them in the care of nannies, he became a stay-at-home dad (“My wife had a job at a top publishing house, so she became the family breadwinner.”)

But in 2007, as his three children--Jane, James and Cate--started spending much of their day at school, Timothy decided to start a small business designing and selling T-shirts. “With the Internet it was fairly easy to do. I had some clever ideas, and I could do order fulfillment online. The paradigm was that I would be my own client; the products would be ones I would want to purchase. I christened the company UPPITYSHIRTS--UP-I-TEE SHIRTS--and took over a cottage at the back of the property as my office.”

For the first three years the company was more of a hobby. He hadn’t invested a whole lot in the company, and his focus was primarily on his family. However, in 2009 he was ready to expand and spend more time on marketing.

Timothy had always loved words, and his T-shirts did well. Two of the designs: OLD’S COOL and I’D RATHER BE GRAMMATICALLY CORRECT, reflect Timothy’s desire to celebrate older values he felt being replaced in the computer age. “In today’s politically correct environment people are afraid to be smart.”

“As the company grew, I thought it would be good to add some other merchandise besides T-shirts. One Christmas my daughters were playing an anagrams game a friend had introduced them to, and they were completely engrossed. It occurred to me that it was a perfect product to make ‘uppity.’ I love it, there’s a large target audience, it’s fairly easy to play, and I can actually make it in the cottage, picking and packing the sets with my kids, then sell it on my website. I called the game One Up!, and added an “Uppity” tile [basically a blank] to make the game more interesting.”
Timothy recognizes that the game of anagrams has been around since Victorian times, and he knows others have tried to commercialize it [the English game Snatch and Dr. Ifay Chang’s game Scrammble are two variations currently available]. However, Timothy believed smart packaging could make it a popular game, as well as having a catchy tagline: “The Wicked/Smart Word Game.” He did not know that anagrams is the popular after-hours game of Scrabblers until he received an enthusiastic endorsement from Bob Gillis, author of Bob’s Bible. “I was delighted to hear from Bob, and I realized when I read his explanation of anagrams rules for Scrabblers that my game was much simpler. But I also recognized that here was a group of word-lovers who might help promote One Up!”

Right before the holidays Real Simple Magazine approached Timothy to see about writing an article for their January issue. At first he was disappointed, since the story would appear after the busy holiday shopping season. What he hadn’t realized was that the January issue would be released on December third. Suddenly he was swamped with orders. “I sold out,” said Timothy, who had been packaging the One Up! sets with the help of his children with hopes of selling maybe 20-30 a month. “The magazine called One Up! the ‘cure for Snow Day Fever.’ The response was phenomenal--they put us on the map. A whole new crowd wanted the game.” Now he is catching up with backorders and getting ready for the game to take off. He understands that with success his company may need to start working with a fulfillment house, rather than packaging the games as a family project.

Timothy hopes to expand One Up! into schools, where teachers have been impressed with its vocabulary-building potential, plus offer tournaments--perhaps as a Saturday night event at SCRABBLE® tournaments. To introduce Scrabblers to the game, he will be presenting the One Up! Cup, a monthly contest he has started on his website, in The Last Word. The winner each month will win a One Up! set, and the winner for the year will win a $250 gift certificate to Uppityshirts.

Read on to learn the One Up! rules, then try the contest. And be sure to visit the Uppityshirts website, www.uppityshirts.com, to see current offerings and new products in the works.

(NOTE: The One Up! rules and the One Up! Cup instructions are copyrighted by Uppityshirts, and are reprinted here with permission)

Getting Started -- How to One Up! Like a Pro

To start, place all the tiles face down in the center of the table. Randomly chosen first player turns over 3 tiles, and if a word can be formed, anyone can shout it out. In the example above, the letters T, O, and I are turned over. Since a 3-letter word cannot be formed from these letters, players take turns flipping over one tile at a time until a word of at least 3 letters can be formed, and is shouted out. It usually doesn't take more than 4 or 5 flipped-over letters to make a word.
As we can see, another letter I was flipped over, then an E. Player 4 shouted out “TOE” and placed the word in front of him.

Words can now be formed in 2 ways -- by using 3 or more letters from the center, as discussed above, OR by adding one or more letters to any existing word, as long as the new word has a different core meaning. In our game, Player 4’s TOE becomes Player 1’s TOME when the M is flipped over and he shouts it out first.

All words are in play at all times, and you can even expand on your own words. However, if you add a letter or letters to make a new word, you must use all the letters from the original word. RETARD can't be made into RETARDED by adding an ED because it doesn't change the meaning, nor can it be made into DARTED by adding a D and discarding an R. But it can become STARRED by adding an S, because it's a completely different word. We continue to flip over more tiles until Player 2 calls for a “CAB.” More tiles are turned.
No proper nouns, abbreviations, or contractions are allowed, but you can decide which slang words are acceptable in your house. Use sound judgment, and good sportsmanship at all times, of course, especially when 2 players shout out the same word at the same time. In our case, Player 3 shouted out “BIN” at the same time as Player 1, but since he didn't have any words yet, and is only 10 years old, we let him have “BIN.”

Play continues, with all words vulnerable at all times. Stealing is encouraged, and rewarded. In our game below, BIN was made into BING, and then was stolen back as BINGE and then finally became BRINGER. CAB was taken and made into SCAB, since CABS wouldn't have been allowed. Once all the letters in the center are turned over and no more words can be formed, players count their scores. There are usually a few letters left over, which are not counted (or discounted). The first letter of each word is removed, and the remaining tiles are tallied, 1 point for each, except the "Uppity" tile (in this case the letter S), which is worth 4 points. Highest score wins.

House Rules Rule

First and foremost, follow the instructions. But creativity and a level playing field are sometimes just as important. At our house, we have our own variations that make it fairer for all of us to play together -- we let the kids (ages 10, 9, 8) make any words; my wife can only make 4-letter words (which she's really good at!); and I can only make 5-letter words or longer. Piece of cake.

We've heard from 2 different people saying they subtract the first 2 letters of each word when adding up the score (instead of one), which gives even more weight to superior thinking ability. An old friend of ours who is always flying back and forth between L.A. and New York for business tells us that he has 5-minute speed games before meetings, or on the set between takes, and it really gets everyone’s synapses fired up. The too-cool-for-schoolers who used to be late or were bent gaga over their Blackberrys all the time, he tells us now actually show up early and eager to sharpen their wits!
One Up! Cup

Since we're well aware that the brainiacs in the crowd love a real challenge, and to ultimately conquer the rest of the world with their big dictionaries and high IQs, we've come up with what we're calling the One Up! Cup. Every month we'll post a “game situation” and ask the word heads to send in their best answer for the next play.

We've decided that since there will be no “perfect” or “right” solution, necessarily, we will randomly pick a winner from what we think are the most deserving. Being fastest and first is all well and good, but we want you to be a bit creative, and to show some originality and cheek, too. Send your best guess (one entry per person, please) to One Up! Cup. The winner will receive a One Up! and have his or her name put in the drawing for the grand prize at the end of the year, which will be a $250 gift certificate to Uppityshirts.com.

January’s Challenge (completed):

The winner for January is Sisir Anand, who enlightened us with this play: THISTLE + I = THELITIS. Since it's way over our heads, we'll let Sisir explain:

"In medical jargon it means (for those who have it, embarassingly) an inflammation of the nipple usually due to gangrene.

The more common version is also called mastitis and has severe economic implications in the dairy business. It is usually very difficult to detect (hence also called subclinical or asymptomatic) and hence affects the whole herd undetected, quickly. The usual cheap household test is to add detergents (that are anionic) or shampoo having the very common sodium lauryl sulfate.

As can be surmised, it is very painful for the cattle in question."

Here’s February’s Challenge:
Word Trivia Quiz

By Siri Tillekeratne

The following unusual words whose meanings are given were first adopted in the OSPD in 2006. What are the words?

1. Indian film music
2. A Spanish American estate
3. A combined flap and aileron of an aircraft
4. Registering no heartbeat or brainwaves
5. Inhale with an open mouth and a curled upper lip
6. A table game like soccer
7. A sliding partition in a Japanese home
8. An ecological community in S. Africa
9. A non-gypsy
10. An Irish policeman

ANSWERS ON THE NEXT PAGE

Siri Tillekeratne is a director of the Calgary NASPA SCRABBLE® Club #374 and a former Director of the Year.
ANSWERS

1. Indian film music: FILMI/S
2. A Spanish American estate: FINCA/S
3. A combined flap and aileron of an aircraft: FLAPERON/S
4. Registering no heartbeat or brainwaves: FLATLINE/S/ED/NING
5. Inhale with an open mouth and a curled upper lip: FLEHMEN/S/ED/ING
6. A table game like soccer: FOOSBALL/S
7. A sliding partition in a Japanese home: FUSUMA/S
8. An ecological community in S. Africa: FYNBOS only
9. A non-gypsy: GADJO/JE
10. An Irish policeman: GARDA/I

Siri Tillekeratne is a director of the Calgary NASPA SCRABBLE® Club #374 and a former Director of the Year.
Linda's Library
By Linda Wancel

As an avid reader and book lover, I have found that many other Scrabblers also share my passion for books and for reading. So I am happy to have this opportunity to share some of my favorite books with you. These reviews, for the most part, were written for Amazon.com, where I have been writing reviews under a pseudonym for over ten years. I hope that the book lovers among you may find their interest piqued by some of these books.

Fiction:

Haunted Ground: A Novel
By Erin Hart

This stunning, lyrically written debut novel was nominated for the Anthony Award for Best First Novel and for the Agatha Award for Best First Mystery. The author was also the recipient of the Romantic Times Best First Mystery Award, as well as the winner of the Friends of American Writers Award. Having read and loved the book, I fully understand why the author has been so lauded, as this Minnesota native can certainly write.

When the perfectly preserved head of a beautiful woman with long red hair is unearthed in a peat bog in a rural village in County Galway in Ireland, a mystery is born, bringing together Irish archeologist Cormac Maguire and American pathologist Nora Gavin. Together they join forces to try to solve the mystery of this grisly find. While doing so, they become enmeshed in a more contemporary mystery, that of Mina Osborne and her young son, who one day went for a walk, never to be seen again. Suspicion has rested upon Mina's husband, Hugh Osborne, a wealthy landowner, as the likely suspect in the disappearance of his wife and child. As in small villages everywhere, such suspicions are often toxic.

As both mysteries slowly unravel, the reader is drawn into this rich atmospheric tale of past and present. The village and its inhabitants come to life under the skillful pen of the author, who weaves a suspenseful and intriguing multilayered mystery that keeps the reader riveted to the pages. As the author slowly peels back the layers, the reader is transfixed by the richness of the author's prose, the depth of its characters, and the complexity of the tale. Redolent with rich atmospheric detail of contemporary village life, the book also delves into Ireland's tumultuous history under Cromwell, providing a feast for those readers who enjoy both historical and contemporary mysteries.

Haunted Ground is available at Amazon.com.
This is a well-written, gripping true-crime tale. I simply could not put the book down! It is a tragic story that is profoundly sad, as it deals with the murder of a woman, Jane Bautista, by her older son, Jason Bautista, with the knowledge and blessing of the younger one, Matt Montejo. Jane Bautista was mentally ill, and the sons simply could no longer deal with her erratic and frightening behavior. Jason's regrettable act was one that he deluded himself into thinking would restore normalcy into his and his brother's lives, only to find that his young life would never be normal as a result.

The book lays out the pattern of the children's lives over the years, living with a mother that had, undoubtedly, developed paranoid schizophrenia in her early adulthood. Her behavior was erratic, frightening, and totally paranoid. Although she came into contact with adults, including her own family, displaying frightening, irrational, and peculiar behavior, no one did anything or notified anyone to intervene in what certainly must have been a very difficult situation for her poor children. Their life was anything but normal.

The Deputy District Attorney who tried the case seemed to be totally without compassion, seeking the maximum penalty for this murder. He saw it simply in black and white terms. It is true, however, that Jason, who was about twenty years old at the time of the murder, could have sought outside help or simply left the household instead of murdering his mother in cold blood. Instead, he not only killed her but chose to dispose of her remains in a way that shocks the conscience. Given his home life, it is difficult to expect him to have been totally rational; however, there is simply no way one can condone what he did. Still, one cannot help but feel that the criminal justice system dealt with Jason too harshly, given the context out of which his actions arose.

This is an excellent true crime book, three-dimensional in the telling and well-researched. It is certainly one that aficionados of the genre will greatly enjoy reading.

Such Good Boys is available at Amazon.com.

Linda Wancel loves reading, writing, watching films, traveling, and Scrabbling. She is the mother of 28-year-old twins and has been a criminal prosecutor for nearly 25 years.
The Wordsmith

Hooked by macaroni
by Chris Sinacola

Some of the most spirited -- and sometimes divisive -- debates in the SCRABBLE® world occur when folks get to discussing why some unusual and foreign words are acceptable, while others equally (or arguably less) unusual are excluded.

I have just about given up trying to use logic in these matters, and have accepted that the line between good and no good is somewhat arbitrary. Considering how many thousands of words there are in the dictionary, the remedy for that bitter lost challenge is invariably to learn a few hundred more words.

Of course, the further down the list one studies, the less probable the words become. Some time ago, my daughter Lucy undertook a study of seven- and eight-letter bingos to get a rough idea of where the point of diminishing returns can be found -- in short, she was seeking an answer to the question of how far down the list of anagrams one would have to study in order to capture roughly 95 percent of the words likely to come up in the course of play. The answer, to be brief, was roughly 15,000 words.

There can be no firm answer to the question, of course, since the more one knows, the more wonders one can coax from racks previously thought to be a jumbled and barren mess. The point of diminishing returns becomes something of a moving target, and we find ourselves studying on and on in the belief -- probably mistaken for most of us -- that finding that one highly unusual word is going to make a major difference in our tournament fortunes or life happiness.

But how might such study pay off?

Well, given enough time and a bit of luck, many players will find themselves eventually moving into the upper reaches of their division, whichever division that may be. While differences in basic vocabulary are always important and often decisive, games between players of roughly equal strength often turn on other factors.

Those factors include clock management, accurate tracking, maintaining mental focus, patience, good instincts on when to challenge, and balancing difficult racks. But assuming the opponents are equally matched, certain advantages in vocabulary and language use might come into play. There are abundant surprises in the dictionary, often involving front and back hooks, variant spellings, and just plain astounding words.

My winter hibernation has included a good deal of study of eights, and one that stuck me as quite useful was the rack ADIIRSTT. Many players will recognize this as DIARIST (2268
among the sevens) plus a T, which yields DISTRAIT, which is 6280 by probability among the eights. That's getting someplace, I think.

But going a little further in SCRABBLE® always requires more. A player who knows that distrair is taken directly from French and means absent-minded will quickly realize that it is an adjective and cannot take S. But it can take an E! French works that way, and, at least in this case, the word DISTRAITE is also acceptable in English -- and fairly “common” (#1144) among the list of nines, for those (whose ranks do not include me) who have dared venture that far.

Another example is the eight-letter combination AACIMNOR, which has three anagrams: ARMONICA, MACARONI, and MAROCAIN. I daresay everyone loves macaroni, and many would find that word. Armonica, a term for the glass harmonica, is more difficult, and if there's still an H unseen, well, look out for HARMONICA.

I think it's fair to say that very few players would know MAROCAIN unless they were obsessed with fabrics -- or eight-letter anagrams. It was new to me.

But the other news in that rack is this: You can add two letters to macaroni. There's S, of course -- well, I say “of course,” but you could have a long debate with Italian speakers about the propriety of pluralizing macaroni with an S. It certainly grates on my Italian-American ear a bit, although not as much as ZITIS, a word my mother-in-law has been using for years, much to my chagrin. (I forgave her once I started playing SCRABBLE® seriously.) But enough of that.

The other letter is C. That's right, MACARONIC is acceptable. Upon learning this the other day I immediately assumed that it was an adjective meaning “of or pertaining to macaroni.” Not quite. It's actually a noun to denote medieval verse forms that combined the Latin of late antiquity with vernacular tongues.

Since this is not something we run into every day, an example will help. Many of us are familiar with Carl Orff's stirring composition “Carmina Burana,” which was composed in 1935-36 and is a setting of 24 poems from the eleventh and twelfth centuries. These poems were found in a Benedictine monastery in Bavaria, and their words are a mixture of Latin, German and French. In short, they are macaronic verse. And you can put an S on the word, too, to make MACARONICS.

But how did such verse come to be so named?

The Oxford English Dictionary defines MACARONIC as a “kind of burlesque poetry... with words of the vulgar tongue latinized, and latin words modernized.”

“The word seems to have been invented by Teofilo Folegno,” the OED reads, “whose ‘macaronic’ poem (Liber macaronices) was published in 1517. He explains (ed. 2, 1521), that
the ‘macaronic art’ is so called from macaroni, which is ‘quondam pulmentum, farina, caseo, botiro compaginatum, grossum, rude, et rusticum.’”

Meaning, roughly, “a certain food made from flour, cheese, butter -- thick, coarse and peasant fare.”

(My wife, Nancy, provide that translation, by the way, in the midst of which we realized -- with mock horror -- that we do not own an adequate dictionary of medieval Latin. Oh, the horror.)

The point of all this is simply that you can never really be sure -- short of having a truly encyclopedia memory and perfect recall -- what interesting and unusual words might present themselves in the course of a SCRABBLE® game.

A final example cropped up this past week as I was reading about communes and other intentional communities in 19th century America, and in particular about the ideas of the French utopian philosopher Charles Fourier. I wondered, naturally, whether Fourier had made the SCRABBLE® cut. Many words, after all, trace back to proper names. Science abounds in such words -- curie, roentgen, gauss, lambert, ohm leap to mind.

Well, Fourier's ideas seem to have faded away before he could make enough dictionaries to justify inclusion in SCRABBLE®. FOURIER* and FOURIERISM* are no good. But my search for FOUR- roots did yield another surprise: FOURDRINIER!

Once again I had that feeling that comes in time to all SCRABBLE® players: Really? That's good?

Indeed it is. The Fourdrinier machine is a paper-making machine invented by brothers Henry and Sealy Fourdrinier in England in the early 19th century. Theirs was the first machine capable of producing a continuous paper roll -- an indispensable step for many industries, including my own profession of journalism (yes, we still print on dead trees!) -- yet a word I had never met.

It is perfectly possible that you will find yourself staring at a rack of DEIINRR sooner or later, as those are common letters, and while that rack has no bingos, it is close to many that do. But the odds of finding FOUR on the board at that very moment, with adequate space to slap down DRINIER after it are, I would guess, vanishingly small.

But you never know. Should it happen to you, compose some MACARONICS about it and publish them to the world. Of such stuff legends are made!

Chris Sinacola is director of the Worcester MA NASPA SCRABBLE® Club #600. He ate macaroni and cheese just before writing this column.
Word Star
By Jeff Kastner

Play Word Star, a word game with similarities to Boggle, created and presented each month by Phoenix, AZ expert Jeff Kastner.

New Year…New Format…Many more possibilities! Starting this month, the puzzle expands from a pentagram to a hexagram…also known as the “Star of David.”

Your object is to find and list as many words as possible, using only the 7 letters contained in the Word Star puzzle. All words must be OWL2 or Long List acceptable.

There are 3 basic rules to finding words within a Word Star puzzle:

1. **Words must be at least 3 or more letters long** (with no limit on how long the word can be).

2. **Words are formed by using letters that adjoin each other.** For example, the words LANE and ZIT are acceptable, but not LENT, because the “L” and the “E” are not neighboring letters.

3. **Letters within a word may repeat as many times as possible,** as long as such letters are repeated twice (or thrice) in a row, or as long as Rule 2 is followed. So, for example, ALL and TENT are acceptable. But, INN would not be acceptable because the “I” and the “N” are not adjoining.

• Note that the **Center Star**, located in the white middle portion of the puzzle, is the most important letter. It is the only letter that adjoins each of the 6 others in the puzzle. In addition, there are bonus points awarded for using the Center Star as often as possible. The Center Star in this month’s puzzle is the letter “T.”
Multiple forms of the same word are acceptable (for example, RATE, RATED, RATER, RATERS, and RATES would all be fine, if they were in the puzzle). No points are awarded (and no penalty points are assessed) for any entries on your word list that are not in OWL2 or the Long List, or that do not adhere to the above rules.

**Points are scored as follows:**

- 2 Points for each WORD found.
- 5 Bonus Points for each BINGO (7 or more letters) found.
- 1 Point for each LETTER of every word found.
- 1 Bonus Point for each CENTER STAR of every word found.

**Example of Points Scored:**

Let’s say a Word Star puzzle has an “S” as the Center Star letter, and your list consists of the following words:

ATTIRE
ATTIRES
SAT
SATE
SATIRE
SATIRES
TIRE
TIRES

Your score would be:

- 16 Points for the 8 WORDS found.
- 10 Bonus Points for the 2 BINGOS (ATTIRES and SATIRES) found.
- 42 Points for each of the 42 LETTERS used in the 8 words.
- 7 Bonus Points for each CENTER STAR used (the letter “S” is used 7 times).

**TOTAL SCORE** in this imaginary example = 75 Points.

**Par Scores for this month’s Word Star:**

340 points (Novice); 500 points (Intermediate); 625 points (Advanced)

Once you’ve compiled your list, check out my SOLUTION on the next page.

See you next month with another Word Star puzzle! …Jeff Kastner
Jeff Kastner, originally from New York City, has been living in Phoenix, AZ since 1985. Jeff is one of a handful of players who has ever been ranked in the USA-top-50 in both SCRABBLE® and chess. He is the 2009-2010 Phoenix SCRABBLE® Club champion as well as the 2008 and 2009 Scottsdale SCRABBLE® Club champ. His chess, Sudoku, and word puzzles appear weekly in The Jewish Press newspaper and on its website. He has recently begun hosting the Internet program Who’s on the Show?, where one of his first interviews was with directors Larry Rand and Barbara Van Alen: http://whosontheshow.com/shows.html.
Know the Rules
By Jan Dixon, NASPA Rules Committee Chair

Jan Dixon, a longtime expert player and chair of the NASPA Rules Committee, writes this monthly column on rules for The Last Word. We are thrilled to have Jan sharing her rules expertise with our readers, and we encourage you to email any questions you may have about tournament and club rules to CorneliaSGuest@gmail.com. (Photo credit: Jill Jarrell)

Question:

I was in a recent match and said "wait" rather than "hold" to try to stop play so I could decide if I wanted to challenge, but my opponent failed to respect the request. Is this accurate? Is it necessary to always use the word "hold"?

Answer:

"Wait" could be referring to almost anything and not necessarily your opponent’s play. The rule in question reads as follows:

**IV.I.2. Holding the Play**

If you wish to consider challenging a play, call “hold” to notify the opponent not to draw tiles. A play may be held only to consider challenging and not as a ploy to delay an opponent from drawing. End a hold by saying “OK” or “I accept.”

When your opponent failed to acknowledge your "wait," you might have rethought your wording and said that you wished to hold the play in order to consider a challenge.

And, yes, in future games, remember to use the correct term, which is "hold."

Jan Dixon has been playing competitive SCRABBLE® for 32 years and in tournaments for 29 years. She has been a member of the Rules Committee since its inception. She divides her time between New York City with her fiancé, Aldo Cardia, and Delaware, where her children and grandchildren all reside.
DEATHS

FRANK KUEHNRICHT
By Ann Sanfedele and Jeff Kastner

Frank Kuehnrich, the 1975 and 1976 New York City SCRABBLE® Champion, died January 17 from lung cancer in New York City. He was 68. Two friends, Ann Sanfedele and Jeff Kastner, share their memories of Frank.

Ann Sanfedele: Frank was a good friend of mine and especially my late partner, Richard Gilston. He was much beloved and respected by anyone who knew him for his good heart, his brilliance, his wit and a kind of sweet melancholy. Frequenters of the Game Room and the Chess House knew him long after he stopped playing in tourneys.

I had not known he was terminally ill -- we were living in different parts of the city and Frank had a tendency not to answer his phone. Those on the Upper West Side got to encounter him on occasion. Things had not been so smooth for him in recent years.

Frank was a great story teller, and would occasionally show up at Club 56 just to visit after he had stopped playing. He could tell wonderful tales of the "good old days" and the characters and stars of our game and other games. He would tell stories about specific games and people that they would not have told about themselves -- he could do their boasting for them.

He won the NYC Championship two years in a row, and finished 4th another year later. He was 13th in the 1978 North American Invitational -- the tourney we commonly refer to as the first Nationals.

Frank would never have let on if he could hide it that he was ever in ill health. That he died of lung cancer, and so early, was a particular shock since he never smoked at all.

Jeff Kastner: I was so sorry to read about Frank's untimely passing. Doesn't seem fair that a man who never smoked a cigarette should die from lung cancer. He was a kind of private person, as Ann pointed out, and had little if any family left, so his last few months must have been spent in quiet agony. May he rest now in peace.
I knew Frank from the 1970's game scene in NYC, and he was quite health conscious. He'd go jogging in Central Park or on the streets of Manhattan for hours and miles each day. Then he'd reward himself by stopping at Zabar's and buying a pound or more of gourmet meat and cheeses. He was the nighttime shift front-desk manager at the House of Games (a.k.a. Chess House) for several years, and when he'd bring back the Zabar's goodies to start his shift he would always share food with the people there. He loved pleasing people and he was a generous, good-hearted soul.

As a games player, he was an expert at SCRABBLE®, chess and backgammon. There were others in NYC with better word knowledge, myself included. But he was able to win two championships based on his superior strategy. In chess, he never quite made it to Master. But in the only tourney we travelled to together, in upstate NY, Frank finished second, upsetting me in the penultimate round.

I didn't like playing him backgammon because he had the nervous habit of putting his hand in his mouth before moving the checkers. So the checkers were always wet. But he was good at everything he played and was generous at sharing his expertise with beginners.

He was conversant on a wide variety of topics. I had heard that he was a packrat and never threw away his daily newspapers, but I never visited his apartment to see for myself. He had a great sense of humor and sprinkled a lot of sarcasm into his conversations. But never in a mean-spirited way. In fact, as brilliant as he was at games, he would never brag about his accomplishments, preferring to relish in the achievements of others. As Ann pointed out, he had his favorite stories about brilliant players and impressive plays, and took great pride in telling them, as if they were about himself.

Personality-wise, Ann's description of him as "sweet melancholy' is perfectly appropriate. He could be obsessive/compulsive, manic/depressive, a hypochondriac, but in general he was good-natured, happy and well-adjusted. A very private person, to be sure, yet at the same time, generous, outgoing and sociable. Game Room Club director Mike Martin's nickname for him, "Cranky Foonrich," was quite fitting.

I'll miss you Frank. You were a unique character in the NYC games world. I learned a lot from you, and I greatly enjoyed our brief friendship.

**JOSEPH F. LEONARD**

Renowned word sleuth and statistics maven Joe Leonard died of cancer on December 4 in Philadelphia. He was 76. Joe was a recluse -- only half a dozen or so players ever met him.

Raised in Pottsville, PA, Joe was the winner of the Pottsville Spelling Bee of 1950. He was a statistical analysis and word reference expert, a tutor, a SCRABBLE® master, and an expert proofreader with an incredible sense of detail.

Ted Rosen, who met Joe twice and corresponded with him for some 27 years, recalled how for about five years during the 1980s, the two of them put together a list of about 22,000 words in the Chambers dictionary that were NOT in the *Official SCRABBLE® Players Dictionary (OSPD)*. He and Joe shared a love of statistics, particularly demographics and tall buildings.
The SCRABBLE® community is indebted to Joe for his work on word lists. He spent over 8,000 hours cross-checking the words in the OSPD against the source dictionaries, looking for omissions (he found about 2,000). He checked new editions of the source dictionaries as they were released against the OSPD, and recorded changes, all without the use of a computer. In 1989 he sent to a list of 5,500 words to the National SCRABBLE® Association (NSA), and these words were incorporated into the 1991 OSPD2. He was never acknowledged or paid for this work.

Joe is survived by his friend and caregiver, Robert W. Dennen, and a few close friends.
SCRABBLE® Resources

There are many study tools to help SCRABBLE® players hone their skills, including a number of programs that can be downloaded for free. This section will offer suggestions and links for both players and directors.

Play SCRABBLE® On Line

POGO SCRABBLE®
The official SCRABBLE® online game. Created under agreement with Hasbro in 2008.

SCRABBLE® ON FACEBOOK
Select the SCRABBLE® application on the Facebook home page to play the official SCRABBLE® game. Various groups hold tournaments at this site, including a group called “Mad Scrabblers”.

INTERNET SCRABBLE® CLUB
A Romanian-based site and application for interactive games. A favorite site for many of the top players.

Play Live

SCRABBLE® CROSS-TABLES
Lists all upcoming tournaments, as well as results of past tournaments.

Anagramming/Practice Tools

Has SCRABBLE® tournament aides.

NASPA CLUB LISTINGS
Lists clubs throughout North America with their meeting times and locations.

NSA CLUB LISTINGS
Lists casual clubs throughout North America with their meeting times and locations.

JUMBLETIME
A free web site for practicing anagramming skills.

MAC USERS: After you do a Jumbletime quiz on a Mac, the scroll bar to view the results is missing. To make it appear, go to the lower right corner and grab the striped triangle and shrink the window all the way to the top left corner. When you pull it back, the scroll bar to the right of the answers to the quiz appears. (Make sure you do this before you check your score against other players.) Also, before running a quiz, you might want to first press Control and scroll with the mouse to enlarge the screen so that you can more easily view the jumbles. (Thanks to Larry Rand and Monique Kornell.)

AEROLITH
A free application for practicing anagramming skills and learning words.

QUACKLE
A free application for playing, simulating, and analyzing games.

ZYZZYVA
A free application for practicing anagramming skills and learning words. Also has Word Judge capabilities.

SCRABBLE® DICTIONARY
Type a word to check for acceptability. OSPD4 words.

LEXIFIND SCRABBLE® HELPER AND WORD GAME WIZARD
WORDFINDER FOR GOOGLE CHROME
A full-board SCRABBLE® word-finder program that shows you every word that can possibly be made on an entire SCRABBLE® board, and continuously updates its results as you type letters onto the board or into the rack. Full version available at http://bit.ly/ecwHPt

FRANKLIN SCRABBLE® PLAYERS DICTIONARY
An electronic handheld dictionary and anagrammer, with many helpful options and games. Includes the latest word lists, and can be adjusted from OSPD4 to OWL2 lists with a code.
CLICK HERE TO HELP END WORD HUNGER AS YOU LEARN WORDS
A free vocabulary testing site. For every correct word, grains of rice are donated through the United Nations World Food Program. Feed hungry people as you expand your vocabulary!

Online SCRABBLE® Discussion Groups

**CGP (crossword-games-pro@yahoogroups.com)**
This group, for tournament players and directors only, has the largest membership of any online tournament SCRABBLE® discussion group. Most important events and changes in the SCRABBLE® world are discussed on cgp. Admission is by approval only. Details can be found in the NASPA Tournament SCRABBLE® Newsletter #1.

**OSPD (ospd-scrabble@yahoogroups.com)**
This group, dedicated to players using The Official SCRABBLE® Players’ Dictionary, offers light-hearted humor, daily word lists, and more. Admission is to all SCRABBLE® lovers. Details can be found in the NASPA

**Tournament SCRABBLE® Newsletter #1.**

**SCRABBLE® Blogs THE BADQOPH DIRECTORY**
This is a database of blogs by known SCRABBLE® bloggers, primarily tournament players. As of March 29th there were 196 blogs in the directory.

**Cheat Sheets**

**MIKE BARON’S CHEAT SHEET**
A great cheat sheet with 2s, 3s, vowel dumps, short high-point-tile words, and good bingo stems. Includes useful front and back hook letters to make 3s from 2s. Adapted from Mike Barron’s SCRABBLE® Wordbook and the Official Tournament and Club Word List, 2nd Edition.

**MIKE BARON’S CHEAT SHEET (for School SCRABBLE® and home play)**
A great cheat sheet with 2s, 3s, vowel dumps, short high-point-tile words, and good bingo stems. Includes useful front and back hook letters to make 3s from 2s. Adapted from Mike Barron’s SCRABBLE® Wordbook and the Official SCRABBLE® Players Dictionary, 4th Edition.

**COOL WORDS TO KNOW**
A terrific cheat sheet from the National SCRABBLE® Association for School

**COLLINS-ONLY CHEAT SHEET**
A cheat sheet of short Collins words NOT found in the OWL2. 2s, 3s, short high-point-tile words, and Q-without-U words.

**COLLINS WORD LISTS**

**Tournament Management Software**

**DIRECTOR!**
Marc Levesque’s software for managing tournaments. Also has a Yahoo user group you can join as a support option.

**TOURNEYMAN**
Jeff Widergren’s software for managing tournaments.

**TSH**
John Chew’s software for managing tournaments, recently updated with new features.
Books

BOB’S BIBLE
A terrific book to build word power for tournaments.

BOB’S BIBLE, SCHOOL EDITION
For School SCRABBLE® and home play.

BROW-RAISERS II
A brilliantly organized study guide geared towards the success of beginning and intermediate players.

HOW TO PLAY SCRABBLE® LIKE A CHAMPION
A new guide to winning SCRABBLE® from World SCRABBLE® Champion Joel Wapnick. Fantastic insights into expert playing techniques. (See review in the October issue of The Last Word.)

ENGLISH LANGUAGE WORD BUILDER
Bob Jackman’s guide to building a strong Collins vocabulary, organized by word length, familiarity, and part of speech.

EVERYTHING SCRABBLE®, THIRD EDITION
The ultimate guide to winning at SCRABBLE® by 3-time National Champion Joe Edley and John D. Williams, Jr. Completely updated to include all new words. (See review in the January issue of The Last word.)

THE OFFICIAL SCRABBLE® PLAYERS DICTIONARY, FOURTH EDITION
The official word source for School SCRABBLE® and casual play.

THE OFFICIAL TOURNAMENT AND CLUB WORD LIST, 2ND EDITION
The official word source for NASPA tournament and club play.

SCRABBLE® TOURNAMENT & CLUB WORD LIST (COLLINS)
The official word list for international tournament play. (Available at SamTimer.com.)

SCRABBLE® WORDBOOK
A great word book for SCRABBLE® players by Mike Baron. OSPD4 words. (POO Lists available with words excluded from the OWL2.)
**FEBRUARY TOURNAMENTS**

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<td>Salado TX (Restricted TCC)</td>
<td>2/4-6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baltimore MD</td>
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<td>Boston MA (Collins)</td>
<td>2/5-6</td>
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<td>Seven Hills OH</td>
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<tr>
<td>Berkeley CA</td>
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<td>Laguna Woods CA</td>
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<td>Edmonton AB CAN</td>
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<td>Charlotte NC (Eastern Championships)</td>
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<td>Phoenix AZ (NASPA Collins; WGPO)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ridgefield CT (School SCRABBLE®)</td>
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**WEST**
- Berkeley CA 2/6
- Laguna Woods CA 2/6
- Portland OR 2/12

**MIDWEST**
- Akron OH (LCT) 2/3
- Seven Hills OH 2/5
- Canton MI 2/26-27
- Johnston IA 2/26-27

**NORTHEAST**
- Baltimore MD 2/5
- Boston MA (Collins) 2/5-6
- Philadelphia PA 2/13
- Bayside NY 2/26
- Ridgefield CT (School SCRABBLE®) 2/27

**SOUTH**
- Charlotte NC 2/18-21
- Lakewood Ranch FL 2/19
- Fort Lauderdale FL 2/26
- Pinellas Park FL 2/26

**SOUTHWEST**
- Salado TX (Restricted TCC) 2/4-6
- Phoenix AZ 2/18-21
- Austin TX 2/26

**CANADA**
- Edmonton AB 2/12
- Guelph ON 2/13
Archives

To download previous issues of *The Last Word* click [here](#).