The Last Word is an independent publication for tournament SCRABBLE® players. It is not affiliated with Hasbro, Mattel, the North American SCRABBLE® Players Association (NASPA), the Word Game Players’ Organization (WGPO), or the National SCRABBLE® Association (NSA). Our mission is to provide content of interest to all SCRABBLE® players, so please let us know if there are topics you would like us to add. We welcome contributions: stories, artwork, etc.

For the time being, we are hoping to provide this Newsletter at no charge; however, since it is a 100% volunteer effort, we would appreciate any donations. Advertisers are encouraged, too. If you would like to have The Last Word emailed to you, please send a request with your email address to CorneliaSGuest@gmail.com and we will add you to our mailing list.

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April was a busy month for me. I organized and directed the New England School SCRABBLE® Championships; I played in the Early Bird and Main Event at BAT (the Boston Area Tournament); and I took four teams of School SCRABBLE® players to Orlando to compete in the National School SCRABBLE® Championship. I came away from these events very impressed with the high level of SCRABBLE® I'm seeing—from players of all ages.

This issue of The Last Word includes some great plays by readers in “What’s Your Play?” You can also click a link to play along with the final game at the 2011 NSSC, won this year by a Canadian team of 8th graders: Alex Li and Jackson Smylie. Players are definitely thinking harder and playing better than ever!

Which brings up the question of studying. How do top players stay on top of their game? And how do new players move so rapidly up through divisions? This year’s NSSC featured young players who have bested seasoned adult players in top competition. There’s no doubt that more players are using electronic study tools such as Quackle, Zyzzyva, JumbleTime, and Aerolith, plus practicing games on ISC and Facebook. Words that were considered obscure just a few years ago are now in the arsenal of even first-time players. And players are poring through the excellent books available to improve strategy (see “Scrabble Resources” near the end of this issue).

I’m pleased that The Last Word has challenging puzzles and quizzes for players, and I’m grateful to Jeff Kastner, Siri Tillekeratne, Timothy Cataldo, and others for constructing these. I also appreciate seeing Diane Firstman’s “DEFALTS” each month--they definitely help me remember some odd words!

But will all this studying pay off? In success and pleasure, most definitely. But now there’s a chance for Collins players to earn huge prizes. Uber-organizer Michael Tang has announced that this year’s Causeway Challenge in Malaysia will give out US$180,000 in prize money. Tang is also planning a “Grand Slam of SCRABBLE®” for next year, with a four-tournament schedule offering enormous rewards. It will be interesting to see if more North American players start learning Collins words (thanks again to Chris Lipe for sharing definitions of the Collins-only threes in our last issue).

As there was confusion about SCRABBLE® words with the release of SCRABBLE® Trickster in the U.K., the general public seems confused about the announcement that the Collins dictionary will be including new words such as QIN# and INNIT# next year. It will be interesting to see whether any of these words make it into the OWL’s next revision.

In closing, I’d like to give a special thanks to Judy Cole, who is doing a fantastic job finding great stories to share in “SCRABBLE® and Scrabblers in the News.” This month Judy also has written “Crossing Words,” a piece about two recent crossword competitions. Another way to use these unusual words? A number of Scrabblers seem to think so!

Happy Scrabbling!

Cornelia Guest
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Emails to the Editor

Should you wish to comment on any of the Newsletter articles—or make suggestions or corrections—please email Cornelia Guest at CorneliaSGuest@gmail.com. Snail mail is also welcome at 135 Codfish Hill Road, Bethel, CT 06801. Emails chosen for publication may be edited at the editor’s discretion.

Dear Ms Guest

On 18 November 1998 I played Scrabble at the now defunct Highworth Scrabble Club, just outside of Swindon. I won the game by 505-377, scoring three 7-letter-bonus words. These were (1) INERTIA, (2) INERTIA and (3) INERTIA.

No one at the time claimed a similar true Scrabble hat-trick! Thirteen years later I thought I would send you an email to see what has happened since. Can anyone else in the world match my greatest Scrabble achievement? I imagine it's infrequent but could it be unique?

The hat-trick was witnessed by my opponent and a club official. There was also a letter published in No 68 (October 1999) of 'The Last Word', the bi-monthly magazine of the Association of British Scrabble Players (ABSP).

Yours sincerely

Nicholas E Gough
Swindon
ENGLAND
This year’s Boston Area Tournament (BAT) celebrated the event’s 30th anniversary (though director Sherrie Saint John announced that the tournament actually may be older). Among the players at the first recorded BAT, in 1981, was Lexington SCRABBLE® Club co-director Judy Horn, who has attended every BAT tournament! More on BAT history to come in the next issue!

This year’s event started with a 5-game early bird NAST (North American SCRABBLE® Tour) satellite, an open tournament supported by 30 players. The winner was Mike Wolfberg, who finished undefeated with a 5-0 +521 record, nosing out second-place finisher Steve Glass, also undefeated but with a lower spread: +416. Third was Karl Higby (4-1 +679) and fourth Rob Robinsky (4-1 +580). These top four finishers qualified for the NAST finals, which will take place this year in Revere, MA, on June 4th. Class prizes were awarded to Barb Kester and Larry Katz, and Richard Buck won the prize for high play: OVERHAUL, 102 (Barb had ABOLISH for 108, but had already won the class prize).

On Saturday there was a 6-game Newcomers Tournament, which attracted 12 players. The winner was high school junior Morris Greenberg, the top seed, who was undefeated with a 6-0 +485 record. Second was 9th grader Aron Klopper (4-2 +348), and third 8th grader Evan McCarthy (4-2 +145), who also won the class prize. Despite winning last year’s National School SCRABBLE® Championship on the Windham Whiptails team with Bradley Robbins, Evan was making his rated tournament debut!

The main event had 131 players in four divisions. Winner in the Premier Division was John O’Laughlin, with a 10-4-1 +538 record, in a close finish over Adam Logan, who was 10-5 +521. Third went to Rob Robinsky (9-4-2 +129). This was John’s third consecutive tournament win in a little over a month!

Division A went to Chris Lipe (11-4 +1063) over Kate Fukawa-Connelly (11-4 +571). Bradley Whitmarsh was third (10-5 +412). The win earned Chris a spot in next year’s Premier Division.

Mike Ecsedy dominated Division B, Gibsonized before the final round. He finished 12-3 +1116, over Don Finkey (12-3 +718). Adam Townsend was third (10-5 +308).

Yvonne Lobo, from Canada, won Division C with a 12-3 +430 record, with Susan Kirchhausen second (11-4 +752) and Marci Mikesell third (11-4 +493). Most notable in this division was Carol McDonald, who was playing in her first rated tournament. She finished fifth with a 10-5 +221 record to earn the class prize—and an initial NASPA rating of 1466! Another impressive finisher was 7th grader Nicholas Vasquez, who finished ninth with a 9-6 +113 record, winning the Robert Felt prize for the best record for a Youth Player.
Division D went to local player Joseph Waldbaum, who finished 13-2 +353. Second was Jane Conti (11-4 +978) and third Emily Lichtman (11-4 +256).


After the awards ceremony on Sunday a fourth tournament began: a 6-game Collins tournament. Twelve players competed in two divisions, with Premier winner John O’Laughlin showing supreme versatility between lexicons, winning his fourth consecutive tournament with a 5-1 +602 record over Marty Gabriel (5-1 +207). The B Division went to winner of the main event A Division, Chris Lipe, who finished 5-1 +713 over Puneet Sharma (4-2 +98).

Although Judy Cole did not get a win in Collins Division B, she more than made up for that by winning Frank Tangredi’s “Who Wants to Be a Hundredaire?” game contest on Saturday night. Judy was the only player to have a perfect score with no missed questions!
2011 National School SCRABBLE® Championship

Ninety-eight teams from eighteen states, the District of Columbia, and Canada gathered in Orlando, FL April 15-16 to battle each other for the title of 2011 National School SCRABBLE® Champion—and $20,000 in prize money. Players enjoyed the tournament venue, the Royal Pacific Resort, a short walk from the Universal Theme Park, which featured a new Harry Potter Theme Park. Jane Williams from the National SCRABBLE® Association did an excellent job of making players feel welcome. Activities included an ice cream party for players and their families and coaches on Friday night. Top players, including Joe Edley and Chris Cree, played with the competitors--and were very impressed!

This year an additional game was added, giving players seven games over the two days. The two top teams then played an exciting final round for the $10,000 first prize. The Toronto School SCRABBLE® Champions, Alex Li and Jackson Smylie, faced last year’s National Champions, the Windham Whiptails: Bradley Robbins and Evan McCarthy from Windham, NH. All four players were 8th graders.

After an interesting game with three unchallenged phonies (two by the Windham Whiptails, one by the Canadian team), Alex and Jackson emerged the winners, 475-345. Third was the New York team of Matthew O’Connor and Seth Tilliss, who had missed making it into the finals by just 8 spread points. (To play the final game, click here.)

The extra game brought an interesting result: No team heading into the finals was undefeated. There were 7 teams with a 6-1 record, so spread determined which teams would play in the final game for the championship. The teams finished in the following order:

1. Toronto School SCRABBLE® Champions (Alex Li & Jackson Smylie, ON, CAN): 7-1 +864
2. Windham Whiptails (Bradley Robbins & Evan McCarthy, NH): 6-2 +943
3. O’Connor & Tilliss (Matthew O’Connor & Seth Tilliss, NY): 6-1 +726
4. Luther Jackson SS (Josh Castellano & Jackson Whitcup, VA): 6-1 +584
5. Word Wizards of Westchester (Mack Meller & Kevin Rosenberg, NY): 6-1 +487
6. Salem MS 2 (Erik Salgado & Andy Hoang, NC): 6-1 +388
7. Texas School SCRABBLE® Champions (Amanda Sass & Emily Ward, TX): 6-1 +382
8. Salem MS 1 (Suhas Rao & Kenny Hoang, NC): 5-2 +578
9. Carlisle MA (Sam Heinrich & Max Bohn, MA): 5-2 +534
10. Ridgefield Library (Kell Pogue & Amy Rowland, CT): 5-2 +480
As is the tradition at the NSSC, the teams with the highest games won prizes by grade, and the team with the highest play won a prize. There was also a sportsmanship prize, which was awarded to 8th grader Briahanna Talbot from Our Lady of Victory in Baltimore, MD, who ended up having to play solo when her teammate did not arrive.

The high play of the tournament went to Johanna Balzer and Samantha Cortes from the Harding ES in Erie, PA, for the triple-triple TRACINGS, 140. The team also won the prize for High Loss in that same game, which they lost by 2 points to the Word Wizards of Westchester, Mack Meller and Kevin Rosenberg (437-439). Unfortunately, this game also had the tournament’s most upsetting incident: The teams discovered near the end of the game that the tile distribution in the bag was inaccurate. Sadly, this affected the final spreads. Before Round 2 every team checked distribution before playing.

Winners of the High Game prizes were as follows:

Grade 5 High Win: Nichols Sawmill ES, TX (Spencer Frazier & Koby-Lee Winters): 458
Grade 6 High Win: Smith MS 3, NC (Kevin Bowerman & Raymond Gao): 553
Grade 7 High Win: Jones and Dietz, MA (Nathaniel Jones & Zachary Dietz): 533
Grade 8 High Win: Windham Whiptails, NH (Bradley Robbins & Evan McCarthy): 669
Mixed Grade High Win: DC School Scrabble 1, DC (Charlie Williamson & Jack Radack): 605

There were many great plays and high scores over the two days, and many friendships were made. Thanks to the many organizers who made this another exciting event for North American School Scrabbler!
New England School SCRABBLE® Championship

By Cornelia Guest, photos by Jessica Meller

On Saturday, April 2, the best School SCRABBLE® players from five New England states--CT, NY, MA, NH, & NJ--gathered at the Ridgefield Library for the New England School SCRABBLE® Championship. This important championship was their final tournament before the National School SCRABBLE® Championship in Orlando, Florida, April 15-16.

Three teams finished with a 4-1 record, with spread determining the 2011 New England Champions: the New York team of 5th grader Mack Meller and 8th grader Kevin Rosenberg. Second was the 2010 champion, 8th grader Bradley Robbins from Wyndham NH, with his NSSC partner, 8th grader Evan McCarthy. Third went to another New York team: Matthew O'Connor (7th grade) and Seth Tilliss (6th grade). Mack and Kevin won the prize for High Game (557), and Brad and Evan won the prize for High Play (WARHEADS, 95).

A second division, for intermediate players, was won by 3rd grader Jared Tilliss, who played solo when his partner called in sick. Second went to 6th graders Quinn Barry and Drew Gregory. Quinn Vissak, an 8th grader, won the prizes for High Game (342) and High Play (85). Quinn also won the tournament sportsmanship prize; he missed the first two games because of a time misunderstanding, but played the tournament with good spirits. Two solo games were played in the morning by four players, with Drew Gregory the winner with a 1-0 +110 result.

There was a tie for Best "Small" Word, voted on by the audience. The winners were Kevin and Mack for WHALE, and Matthew and Seth for DAB. The winners won tiny trophies.

Top finishers at the New England School SCRABBLE® Championship (l-r): Drew Gregory, Jared Tilliss, Mack Meller, Evan McCarthy, Kevin Rosenberg, Seth Tilliss, Bradley Robbins, Matthew O'Connor (missing from photo: Quinn Barry)
Complete results follow:

DIVISION A
1. Mack Meller & Kevin Rosenberg 4-1 +562
2. Evan McCarthy & Bradley Robbins 4-1 +353
3. Matthew O’Connor & Seth Tilliss 4-1 +4-1 +226
4. Jacob Litt & Amy Rowland 3-2 +245
5. Thomas Draper & Nicholas Vasquez 2-3 +147
6. Kyle Imperato & Thomas Wiig 2-3 -564
7. Nathaniel Jones & Zachary Dietz 1-4 -552
8. DeeAnn Guo & John Schuman 0-5 -417

HIGH GAME: Mack Meller & Kevin Rosenberg: 557
HIGH PLAY: Evan McCarthy & Bradley Robbins: WARHEADS, 95

DIVISION B
1. Jared Tilliss 4-1 +226
2. Quinn Barry & Drew Gregory 3-2 -67
3. Quinn Vissak 2-3 +107
4. Stephanie Adams & Ava Turner 1-4 -266

HIGH GAME: Quinn Vissak: 342
HIGH PLAY: Quinn Vissak: SLENDER, 85

SOLO GAME DIVISION
1. Drew Gregory 1-0 +110
2. Stephanie Adams 1-0 +90
3. Ava Turner 0-1 -90
4. Quinn Barry 0-1 -110

3RD GRADE CHAMPION: Jared Tilliss
4TH GRADE CHAMPION: Stephanie Adams
5TH GRADE CHAMPION: Mack Meller
6TH GRADE CHAMPION: Seth Tilliss
7TH GRADE CHAMPION: Matthew O’Connor
8TH GRADE CHAMPION: Kevin Rosenberg
9TH GRADE CHAMPION: Jacob Litt

BEST "SMALL" WORD (TIE):
Mack Meller & Kevin Rosenberg: WHALE
Matthew O’Connor & Seth Tilliss: DAB

Ridgefield Library’s Amy Rowland and Jacob Litt finished 4th in the A division. Jacob, the 9th Grade Champion, won a giant SCRABBLE® Rug, courtesy of Sam Kantimathi, in the raffle.
# Tournament Results

## APRIL 1-30

### BLOOMINGTON MN 4/1-3
1. Joey Mallick

### MOOSE JAW SK CAN 4/2-3
1. George Macaulay
2. Annelies Kaufmann
3. Shirley Woodward
4. Angela Kappor-Dozois

### NEW ENGLAND SCHOOL SCRABBLE® CHAMPIONSHIP (RIDGEFIELD CT) 4/2
1. Mack Meller & Kevin Rosenberg
2. Jared Tilliss

### BERKELEY CA 4/3
1. Bruce Ward
2. William Barfuss
3. Jon Demeter
4. Michael White

### LAGUNA WOODS CA 4/3
1. Rachel Knapp

### PHILADELPHIA PA 4/3
1. Jason Keller
2. Edwin Roth
3. Nicholas Vasquez
4. Seth Weinstein

### AKRON OH (LCT) 4/7
1. Pete Zeigler
9

### BOSTON AREA TOURNAMENT MA NAST EARLY BIRD 4/8
1. Michael Wolfberg
3. Margaret Sutherland

### BOSTON AREA TOURNAMENT MA MAIN EVENT 4/8-10
Premier: John O’Laughlin
1. Chris Lipe
2. Michael Ecsedy
3. Yvonne Lobo
4. Joseph Waldbaum

### BOSTON AREA TOURNAMENT MA NEWCOMERS 4/9
1. Morris Greenberg

### BOSTON AREA TOURNAMENT MA (COLLINS) 4/10
1. John O’Laughlin
2. Chris Lipe

### SAN DIEGO CA 4/8-10
1. James Leong

### BATON ROUGE LA 4/9
1. William Clark
2. James Bahra
3. Brenda Smith
4. Joan Murphy

### EDMONTON AB CAN 4/9-10
1. George Macaulay
2. Moses Bodah
3. Dorothy Young

### FENTON MI 4/9
1. Daniel Stock
2. Carol Ravichandran

### LUBBOCK TX 4/9
1. Caesar Jaramillo
2. Vivian Brown

### SPRING LAKE PARK MN (WGPO) 4/9
1. Vincent Van Dover

### FENTON MI 4/10
1. Jeff Clark

### NATIONAL SCHOOL SCRABBLE® CHAMPIONSHIP (ORLANDO FL) 4/15-16
1. Alex Li & Jackson Smylie

### OKLAHOMA CITY OK 4/15
1. Paul Thornton
2. Michael Donegan

### BAYSIDE NY 4/16
1. Jeremy Hall
2. Colleen Shea

### COEUR D’ALENE ID 4/16
1. Michael Baker
2. Zana Anderson

### DANVILLE IL 4/16
1. Steve Hartsman
2. Beth Palmer
3. Troy Thompson
4. Beck Albin

### OKLAHOMA CITY OK 4/16-17
1. Jeffrey Purinton
2. Michael Donegan
<table>
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<th>Second Place</th>
<th>Third Place</th>
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<tr>
<td>PINELLAS PARK FL</td>
<td>4/16-17</td>
<td>Steve Glass</td>
<td>Daniel Stock</td>
<td>Pat Harwick</td>
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<tr>
<td>RICHLFIELD OH 4/16</td>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>Pat Harwick</td>
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<td>1.</td>
<td>Harriette Lakernick</td>
<td>John Fultz</td>
<td>Elizabeth Davis</td>
<td>Roxane Gay</td>
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<tr>
<td>GUELPH ON CAN 4/17</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Evan Berofsky</td>
<td>Heather McCall</td>
<td>Sophia Ozorio</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>MOUNTAIN VIEW CA</td>
<td>4/17</td>
<td>John Karris</td>
<td></td>
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<td>BERLIN NJ 4/30</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Jason Keller</td>
<td>Edwin Roth</td>
<td>Frances Shaw</td>
<td>Lucille Thornton</td>
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<tr>
<td>FORT LAUDERDALE FL</td>
<td>4/30</td>
<td>Trip Payne</td>
<td>Marla Riff</td>
<td>Marilena Souza</td>
<td>Louise Wright</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOUTH LYN ON MI 4/30</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Jason Idalski</td>
<td>Steve Anstandig</td>
<td>Margaret Sutherland</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEATTLE WA 4/23</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Chris Williams</td>
<td>Adam Henderson</td>
<td>Dawn Camille Wisniew</td>
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<tr>
<td>AUSTIN TX 4/30</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Becky Dyer</td>
<td>John Redding</td>
<td>David Zuckerman</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
New Faces

Since our last issue, 27 new faces have competed at NASPA, NSA, and WGPO tournaments. One notable debut was that of Carol McDonald, who finished 5th in Division 4 at the Boston Area Tournament 4/8-10 with a 10-5 +221 record to get an initial NASPA rating of 1466. Four new players won their divisions first time out: Vivian Brown, who won Division 2 at the Lubbock TX Tournament 4/9 (5-0 +798); Roxane Gay, who won Division 4 at the Danville IL Tournament 4/17 (5-2 +349); Louise Wright, who won Division 4 at the Fort Lauderdale FL Tournament 4/30 (6-2 +296); and Seth Weinstein, our featured “New Face,” who won Division 4 at the Philadelphia PA Tournament on 4/3 with a 6-1 +670 record, earning an initial NASPA rating of 1177.

Seth Weinstein

New Yorker Seth Weinstein, 36, has been honing his SCRABBLE® skills for about a year on Thursday nights at Joel Sherman’s Club 56, one of the toughest and most competitive clubs in the country. He finally decided he was ready for a tournament in April, and his Philadelphia debut demonstrated just how ready he was: He finished 6-1 +670 to win Division 4 over 15 other players.

When not playing SCRABBLE®, Seth is a pianist and composer in theatre and classical music. “The job is a hodgepodge of giving classical concerts, playing for cabaret shows, conducting musical productions or playing in the pit orchestras, coaching actors, transcribing songs from recordings, and accompanying people at auditions and audition classes. The biggest highlights of my career were performing my original Marc Chagall–inspired piano suite at the Chagall museum in Nice (last fall) and having my Off-Broadway musical, How to Save the World and Find True Love in 90 Minutes, run for two months (in 2006).”

Seth also enjoys traveling, especially by train, and trying new foods. “The four-day ride from Ulaanbaatar to Moscow was a particularly memorable experience, and last year I wore out a three-week Japan Rail Pass and indulged on sushi, fugu, crickets, and silkworms.”

Seth prepared for the Philadelphia Tournament by inventing mnemonics to help learn the three-letter words. “My favorites are those for ‘MO?’ (completable with any of the letters in GOLD BACON STRAP, a tribute to a friend who likes to dress sexily and eat bacon, sometimes simultaneously) and ‘TA?’ (DEVOUR MOST WORMS -- I guess I do think about food too much). I’d study these during dialogue scenes at auditions (which didn’t require my attention) or mutter them to myself while walking down the street. I also practiced the bingos on the Cheat Sheet. And I’d like to specifically thank Donna Eisenstadt of the New York club, who spent about 45 minutes giving me tips, making me wary of late-game bingo attempts but giving me confidence to try out bingos I was unsure of (I’m not sure I’d have tried MASONED and MANURED, both good, both challenged, without her encouragement).”
Seth had great fun at his first tournament. “Everyone was friendly and encouraging, and it was nice to know that my only responsibility for the day was to play SCRABBLE®. I was a little nervous in the first game, but I don't think it affected my play. I did start out nervous in the last game -- the fight for the top -- and began the game with MEWN* (unchallenged). I didn't even mean to put the N down; it just happened!”

The best moment in the tournament for Seth was in his final game for the division win. “At the end of the last game, I was down 315-267 with a pretty tight board, and I knew I probably needed a bingo ending in A, E, or I (to fit under a P) to catch up. I held EGIILUV and realized that if I sloughed an I for 12 points (QI) and drew the last D or R, I could make DIVULGE or VIRGULE (a word that came back to me from my days as a professional proofreader -- it's a slash). I drew the R, the spot under the P stayed open, VIRGULE got challenged, and that was that!”

Seth suggests new tournament players get familiar with playing with the clock, maybe with less time than the 25 minutes allowed. “I'm glad we play 23-minute games at the New York club; I almost always have less than a minute left. Having the extra two minutes in the tournament was helpful.” He also recommended tracking the tiles (which saved him in his last game at Philadelphia) and avoiding “fishing” for bingos. “Above all, enjoy the game!”

Seth looks forward to playing in more tournaments, though he finds that last-minute music opportunities often make it hard to play in all the tournaments he'd like. He does plan to return to Philadelphia on May 29th.

Welcome to Seth Weinstein, Carol McDonald, Vivian Brown, Roxane Gay, Louise Wright, and the following other new faces:

**MOOSE JAW SK CAN 4/2-3:** Debby Lee

**LAGUNA WOODS CA 4/3:** Nancy Douglas

**PHILADELPHIA PA 4/3:** Margaret Avener

**SAN DIEGO CA 4/8-10:** Danny Goldstein, Anita Smith

**BATON ROUGE LA 4/9:** Elaine Livers

**BOSTON AREA TOURNAMENT MA NEWCOMERS 4/9:** Alyssa Held, Evan McCarthy, Rachel Pleasants, Stephen Shea, Eric Van Riper, Janice Vasquez

**LUBBOCK TX 4/9:** Asha Lakhani

**OKLAHOMA CITY OK 4/15:** Ashley Sizemore, John Trobare

**DANVILLE IL 4/16:** Rebecca Carlsberg, Roscoe Townsend

**RICHFIELD OH 4/16:** Joe Roberdeau, Andrew Ward

**GATLINBURG TN 4/22:** Adrianna McCorkle

**AUSTIN TX 4/30:** Bruce Aupperle
What’s Your Play?

Doug Brockmeier, Frank Tangredi, Eric Tran, Mack Meller, and Stu Goldman had interesting plays this past month. If you have a play you’d like to share with our readers, please send it to CorneliaSGuest@gmail.com.

From Doug Brockmeier:

Here’s a position I had playing Quackle:

While there are several bingos, there is one amazing one. See the play on the next page.
From Juraj Pivovarov on a game vs. Eric Tran:

I was playing Eric Tran recently at our May Madness tournament in Calgary. I was trailing a little and bingo-ed with ABALONE, exposing a triple-triple with -A------, emptying the bag, and taking a 50 pt lead.

Eric held DDIMNSY, layed down the 3x3, but then rejected it as sounding too ridiculous, and scored only the plain old vanilla 36 pt play. The 203 points would have been a nasty steal.

From Stu Goldman:

Playing on line recently I had the rack AEIIPRT, which looked like it might develop an 8, for which there were a number of possible letters available. Struggling and searching, I spotted an F open (I think) all the way, but definitely a possibility if the F was pretty far down in the word. Then it hit me!

Spoiler on next page.
**From Mike Baron and Frank Tangredi:**

In an online game with Frank Tangredi, Mike opened with AZON (8g). Frank’s rack was ?BELMRS.

See next page for the play Frank made.
Mike writes: “He came back, extending it fore and aft, with EML(AZONER)eRS. Only 11-lw I've ever seen after turn two. He noted he could've scored more, with a 7, but noted it'd never have been as memorable. :)

Frank comments on the play: “It was definitely not the highest scoring play, but it drew a challenge, which more than made up the difference.”

From a Mack Meller vs. Diane Firstman game at Club 56 in NYC:

Mid-game QUAD was on the board at 11e, with the D 5 squares above the bottom middle tws.

Mack had AEIGLRS on his rack.

He could have played GLAIRES for 67, but he found QUADRIGAE for 63 points. He played QUADRIGAE as allowed him to keep LS, which is worth way more than 4 points. In addition, he felt QUADRIGAE might draw a challenge -- which it did!
Nullam arcu leo, facilisis ut

Crossing Words

By Judy Cole

Forget Collins and the OCTWL2! For one weekend at least, some tournament SCRABBLE® players have to worry about another lexicon – Shortz!

The 34th American Crossword Puzzle Tournament (ACPT) took place in Brooklyn (NY) on March 18 through 20, 2011. Will Shortz, editor of the New York Times crossword puzzle, directed the event attended by almost 700 cruciverbalists from around the world. Solvers tackle seven original crosswords created and edited specially for this event. Scoring is based on accuracy and speed. After seven puzzles, the top three contestants in Divisions A, B, and C compete in successive sudden-death rounds conducted on giant grids. Prizes are awarded in more than 20 categories, including age, geography, and division (based on past performance).

SCRABBLE® players attending the event included:

- **Trip Payne** – Trip, who is ranked among the top 200 SCRABBLE® players in the country, is a 3-time champion at the ACPT and a regular participant in the championship playoffs. Trip is featured in the 2006 documentary Wordplay about crosswords and the ACPT. Trip placed 5th this year in the competition and won the South trophy.

Trip can be seen in the “Ready, Set, Solve: A Crossword Showdown” video about this year’s competition.

http://www.time.com/time/video/player/0,32068,70512402001_1970843,00.html
• Doug Hoylman – Doug, known as the “Iceman” for his cool solving demeanor, is a 5-time champion at the ACPT. Doug placed 35th this year in the competition and took home the Sixties and Mid-Atlantic trophies.

• Judy Cole – Judy, who has competed at the ACPT for over 20 years, won the Handwriting award (and a standing ovation from the judges who choose the winner) one year. Judy placed 54th in the competition this year.

• Jeffrey Schwartz – Jeffrey, a veteran of the ACPT, is active in the National Puzzlers’ League and appeared as a contestant on Jeopardy! in 2007. Jeffrey placed 67th in the competition this year.

• Jason Keller – Jason, who is ranked among the top 100 SCRABBLE® players in the country, has attended the ACPT since 2006 and is starting to move up the ACPT ranks. Jason, who never travels to competitions without his vuvuzela, placed 149th in this year’s competition.

• Virgil Talaid – Virgil recently joined the SCRABBLE® tournament scene with tournaments in Bayside (NY) in December and Philadelphia (PA) in February. Virgil, who has attended the ACPT for over ten years, placed 306th in this year’s competition.
Evening activities included a cryptic crossword competition, the performance of a 1-act play Life Is Shortz, and a puzzle competition based on TV’s “The Amazing Race.” In “The ACPT-zing Race,” teams solved a variety of puzzles, each of which yielded a world capital and password. Once a puzzle was solved, a team member visited that capital (represented by the flag of the capital’s country) to deliver the password and receive the next puzzle in the race around the puzzling world. Judy and Jason teamed with two SCRABBLE® civilians, Marcia Sander and Todd Dashoff, and placed 5th in the race.

Next year’s ACPT will again be in Brooklyn on March 16 through 18, 2012.

Judy and Jeffrey again crossed words at the Boston (MA) Crossword Puzzle Tournament held at Harvard University on April 23, 2011. In first place after the first four puzzles, Jeffrey clinched the victory in an on-stage final among the top three solvers. Judy, who placed 13th in the competition, won the handwriting award from the judges.

Photo appears courtesy of Jeffrey Schwartz.

Judy Cole is co-director of the Lexington (MA) NASPA SCRABBLE® #108 and solves crossword puzzles when not playing SCRABBLE®.
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.

The puzzle grid is in the shape of 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 STOVE and HERS are acceptable, but not REST, because the “E” and the “T” 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, EVER and SHOOT are acceptable. But ROOT would not be acceptable because the “R” and the “O” 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 “H.”
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:

**300 points (Novice); 450 points (Intermediate); 575 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**
SOLUTION

Word Star Solution for: The Last Word May 2011

ERE        HOTSHOT        OVERS        SHH        THE
ERR        HOTSHOTS        OVERSHOOT        SHOO        THEE
ERRS        HOVE        OVERSHOOTS        SHOOT        THERE
ERS        HOVER        OVERSHOT        SHOTS        THO
ERST        HOVERER        OSHOTS        SHOT        THREE
EVE        HOVERERS        REE        SHOOTS        TOO
EVER        HOVERS        REEVE        SHOTT        TOOT
HEH        OHO        REVS        SHOTTTS        TOOTH
HEHS        OHS        REVERSE        SHOVE        TOOTHS
HER        OOH        REVERER        SHOVER        TOOTS
HERE        OOHS        REVERERS        SHOVERS        TOT
HERS        OOT        REVRS        SHOVERS        TOTER
HOOT        OOTS        RHO        STOT        TOTS
HOOTS        OTHER        REV        STOTS        TOTSS
HOOVER        OTHERS        REVER        STOTT        VEE
HOOVERS        OTHERS        SHEER        STOTTS        VEEER
HOT        OVER        SHOERS        STOVE        VEERS
HOTS        OVERHOT        SHEEVE        STOVER        VERST

**PAR SCORES:** 300 points (Novice); 450 points (Intermediate); 575 points (Advanced)

**BEST SCORE:**
2 Points for each WORD found:
   90 Words = 180 points.

5 Bonus Points for each BINGO found:
   15 Bingos = 75 points.

1 Point for each LETTER of every word found:
   444 Letters = 444 points.

1 Bonus Point for each CENTER STAR of every word found:
   59 H’s = 59 points.

**TOTAL = 758 Points**

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](http://whosontheshow.com/shows.html).
The Wordsmith

In the word museum -- don’t touch!

By Chris Sinacola

While doing some spring cleaning the other day, a task that invariably morphs into moving some books around, and then ends with my sitting amid a half-completed cleaning project engrossed in one volume or another, I happened upon Jeffrey Kacirk’s *The Word Museum*, whose subtitle, “The Most Remarkable English Words Ever Forgotten” hooked me immediately.

As soon as I opened the book, I suspected that here I would find exactly zero useful words for SCRABBLE®.

How about landjobber, as in one who buys and sells land for another? No. Scleroticks, a kind of medicine? Well, SCLEROTIC, -S, is good, but not with a K. Tittynope, as in a small quantity of something that is left over? Nope. Fuzzle, a verb meaning to make fuzzy or indistinct with drink? No.

But the further I searched, the more I found that it was a mix of familiar and unfamiliar words – some commonly seen in SCRABBLE®, but most very unusual and very unfamiliar indeed.

Kacirk writes in the introduction that he based his selections on “a number of subjective considerations,” and when you consider the many, many thousands of words that exist in English, and how utterly impossible it is to put them all in one book, I would say that was a good idea.

One of those goals, he notes, “was to spotlight endearing, rough-hewn, and humorous aspects of Old World life…”

In this he has succeeded.

Take STANG, for instance. The SCRABBLE® dictionary defines this simply as “to sting.” This is true, inasmuch as stang derives from an Old Norse verb, *stanga*, meaning to prick or goad. But there is a second meaning that makes the first seem downright impoverished.

STANG can be used as a noun, Kacirk reports, as in “to ride the stang,” which means “to be carried on a pole on men’s shoulders through the town for the amusement of a hooting crowd.” This was punishment for a breach of decorum or morality, “especially on the part of a married man.”

The *Oxford English Dictionary* notes that some of the colleges at Cambridge University employed this punishment for scholars who missed chapel at Christmas time. And one who meted out the punishment was a STANGSTER*.

Many of the words in *The Word Museum* are actually hyphenated, or two words, or a short phrase.
There’s Billy-winks, for example, a child’s term for sleepy.

Beggar’s velvet refers to downy particles “that accumulate under furniture from the negligence of housemaids.”

I had actually heard that term once, but the more familiar term is “dust kitties,” and around our house they can’t be attributed to negligent housemaids, but are merely the byproduct of a busy, working couple. (Actually, some of the kitties in my house have grown frightfully large, and I have dubbed them “dust lions.”)

Tailor’s mense is another instance of two acceptable SCRABBLE® words coming together to express something subtle. In this case, MENSE, which means to do honor to, is applied to the small amount of food that a tailor who works at his customer’s home, and takes his meals there, would leave on the plate as a signal that he has had enough to eat.

Few of us have tailors these days, and fewer still can afford to feed them, or have any need to have them come to the house. But, if nothing else, that’s one more five-letter word whose meaning I won’t likely forget.

There are some “common” SCRABBLE® words in Kacirk’s book, including OROTUND, RULY, SCART and RUTH, and some longer, arguably less common ones, like CATCHPOLE, POSTILLION, XYSTER, and MAJUSCULE.

Most interesting of all, however, are those words that are either wholly unfamiliar, or familiar to us, yet with divergent meanings, or parts of speech that render them unacceptable.

ABORTIVE, for example, is a common adjective acceptable in SCRABBLE®. Kacirk uses it as a noun, meaning “fine vellum made from the skin of a cast (stillborn) calf or lamb.” But ABORTIVES* won’t work in SCRABBLE®.

ACCUBITUS* is among the entries that really ought to be good. It means “lying together in the same bed, but without any venereal commerce,” and if I have to explain that, you’re probably too young to be reading this column.

Or CATRICK*, “a supposed disease of the roots of the fingers from too frequent handling of cats.” Great, I have three of the beasts.

CHRISOM is acceptable, and defined as a chrism or holy oil, but Kacirk goes one better. In his book, it’s defined as a child who dies before baptism, or within a month of being baptized, and is also used in some English dialects today to mean a pitiful person.

CRAGSMAN, CRAGSMEN is not much in vogue, but perfectly acceptable. It means one who climbs crags for the purpose of procuring seabirds or their eggs.

Another word that is sadly out of bounds is ISABELLE*, which is the yellow of solid calico. “It is said,” Kacirk writes, “that Isabel of Austria, daughter of Philip II, at the siege of Ostend, vowed not to change her linen till the place was taken.”

That took three years.
I also love SLOOM*, to sleep heavily and soundly, SLAMMACK*, to walk slovenly or do anything in an awkward way, TULIPOMANIA*, with reference to the tulip bulb craze and speculation (which ended badly), and WANGARY*, an adjective meaning soft and flabby, used by butchers “to express the condition of meat which will not get solid, a very common fault in warm weather, or if the animal was out of condition when slaughtered.”

Nearly the last word in Kacirk’s book is ZUGGERS*, an interjection “like others of the same class, the precise meaning of which is not easy to define.”

I like that “not easy to define” part, because it is applicable both to many of the acceptable words that we all play, yet can only vaguely define, as well as to unacceptable words that we play in hopes that they might be good, stuff like TRITONAL* and BLOODER*, to cite just two of my recent phonies, both of which went unchallenged.

What leads any of us to try such stuff? Speaking for myself, it’s often that I miss the anagram I’m holding, such as BOODLER, rather than BLOODER*. Sometimes, as with TRITONAL*, I really need to bingo before the game gets out of hand. And then, once in a while, I’m just feeling GUESSIVE*.

Yeah, that’s another one from The Word Museum, and you can easily guess its meaning.

But I can’t resist one more: QUACKLE*. Oh sure, you know it as the name of a popular program for playing and studying SCRABBLE®. But Kacirk actually has a definition for it: “To interrupt breathing, to choke; from the noise uttered by a person in the act of being choked.”

Fairly appropriate, given that I win fewer than one game in four with the sly silicon stangster. Perhaps you know the routine yourself. You’re ahead, things are looking OK, and then, well, you just QUACKLE*.

Like Kacirk, I enjoy collecting words, mostly culled from my reading. Next month, I’ll share some of the ones I’ve run across recently, a kind of personal museum of words. And I promise that every one of them will be valid in SCRABBLE®.

Chris Sinacola is director of Worcester (MA) NASPA SCRABBLE® Club #600 and is regularly stampointed* by the amazing words that Quackle plays.
Word Trivia Quiz

By Siri Tillekeratne

The following words, the meanings of which are given, were added to the OSPD in March, 2006. What are the words?

1. Azerbijan currency
2. A crown made of flowers
3. A Turkish bath
4. The right to worship
5. A shoe extending above the ankle
6. Select sides for a children's game
7. An electronic communication system
8. Uprising of Palestinians against Israelis
9. The balanced state of the earth's crust
10. The passenger boarding bridge at an airport

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. Azerbijan currency   GOPIK only
2. A crown made of flowers   HAKU/S
3. A Turkish bath   HAMMAM/S
4. The right to worship   HIERURGY/GIES
5. A shoe extending above the ankle   HIGHTOP/S
6. Select sides for a children's game   HOSEY/S/ED/ING
7. An electronic communication system   INFOBAHN/S
8. Uprising of Palestinians against Israelis   INTIFADA/S
9. The balanced state of the earth's crust   ISOSTACY/CIES
10. The passenger boarding bridge at an airport   JETWAY/S
Challenging a play in SCRABBLE® is not always dependent on whether you think the word is acceptable. There are at least two situations when challenging or not challenging might depend on the consequences of the action.

Refraining from challenging a known phony can help get a big play on the board. I will use as an example a time when I did not challenge something nonsensical when the player could have played SOUPIER (I forget what he played and what the blank was.), which enabled me to play a phony triple-triple that I knew would not get challenged. My play was SIGNORES and it was not challenged.

Another time, in a tournament, my opponent played SO?KAGE and called the blank a C. I knew SOCAGE, but was skeptical of SOCKAGE. However, I had just played the Z vertically on the top TWS row and was prepared to play horizontally to use the Z again. If SOCKAGE was good and I challenged it, my opponent would probably use the Z after I lost my turn; and if it was not good, he would play SOaKAGE for his next play after I played off the Z, so I had very little to gain by challenging, since I knew SOAKAGE was good. True, SOCKAGE is phony, but not being 100% sure of that, I was quite right not to challenge.

And a good word can sometimes be challenged for advantage. The most obvious situation in which that is true is when there are few tiles left to draw and one of them is an unplayable Q (or, occasionally a different tile). This may not happen as often now that QI is available, but it's still possible. One time I did this was when my opponent played SHOALIER and I challenged. It was fascinating to watch his expression when he saw the tiles he got after I had lost my turn.

And if you're not sure whether to challenge or not, be sure to survey the consequences of your challenge, whether the word stays on the board or you lose your turn. After all, the idea is to win the game, not make sure each word on the board is acceptable.

Stu Goldman lives in California and has been playing tournament SCRABBLE® for 37 years.
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.

ANTINOME: a deep dislike for Alaska

ANTIPILL: the ultimate wonder drug, rumored to cure every conceivable malady

ANTIPOPE: the head of the Antichrist following

ANTIROCK: some who only likes to roll

ANTIROLL: some who only likes to rock

ANTIWEAR: being in favor of nudity

AQUAFARM: 1) extremely over-irrigated farmland; 2) where water chestnuts really ought to be grown

AQUALUNG: a man "sitting on a park bench, eyeing little girls with bad intent"

AQUATICS: nervous body movements while in bodies of water

AQUATONE: low-impact exercise done in swimming pool

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.
Scrab-doku
By Jeff Kastner

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:  FRENCHAID

Clue:
Any comic book or cartoon superhero worthy of a cape will inevitably face challenges from this nemesis.

SOLUTION on the page after next.
**Word-Finder Challenge:**

Here’s an additional test of your anagramming ability. **Your object is to find as many words as possible that end in the letter “D”, using only the 9 letters of this month’s (Scrambled) Keyword: FRENCHAID.**

Words can be of any length, from 2 to 9 letters, and must be OWL2 acceptable. Each letter of the Keyword may be used only once within any word you find. So, for instance, CAD is acceptable, but not DAD.

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

**55 Words (Novice); 70 Words (Intermediate); 82 Words (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**

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*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): ARCHFIEND (92 words total)

ACED  CANID  FACIEND  HAND  NICHED
ACHED  CARD  FAD  HARD  RACED
ACID  CARED  FAIRED  HARED  RAD
ACNED  CARIED  FANCIED  HEAD  RAID
ACRED  CHAD  FARCED  HEARD  RAINED
ACRID  CHAFED  FARED  HERD  RANCHED
AD  CHAINED  FARED  HID  RANCID
AHED  CHAIRED  FED  HIED  RAND
AID  CHARD  FEND  HIRET  RANID
AIRED  CHARED  FID  ICED  READ
AND  CHID  FIEND  ICED  RED
ARCED  CHINED  FIND  ID  REND
ARCHED  CRANED  FINED  INARCHED  RICED
ARCHFIEND  CRED  FIRED  INCHED  RID
ARID  CRIED  FRIED  IRED  RIND
CAD  ECHARD  FRIEND  NACRED  NERD
CAID  END  HAD  NARD  NICAD
CAIRNED  ED  HAED  NERD  NICAD
CANED  FACED  HAIRED  NICAD
SCRABBLE® and Scrabblers in the News

Edited by Judy Cole

See something about SCRABBLE® or a SCRABBLE® player in the news? Let us know! Send your stories to Judy Cole (judithcole@msn.com).

Play Ball

Diane Firstman combined her love of baseball and SCRABBLE® to produce the SCRABBLE® All-Star Team in the April 11, 2001, post to her Value Over Replacement Grit blog (http://valueoverreplacementgrit.com/2011/04/11/the-scrabble-all-star-team/).

To make the All-Star team, a player must have both a first and last name that is an acceptable word in SCRABBLE®. The outfield, for example, consists of MICKEY MANTLE, WILLIE MAYS, and BABE RUTH - not a bad lineup in SCRABBLE® or baseball.

The Washington Post picked up the story and published her team:


The Baseball Prospectus weekly podcast Up and In interviewed Diane about tournament SCRABBLE® in Episode 43, "That Just Happened," on March 31, 2011. Diane’s interview begins at the 1:09 mark and lasts about 17 minutes. You can download the podcast at:


Global Winter

Winter continued his travels in pursuit of Starbucks with a two-week stay in South Korea. SBS TV sent a camera crew along with Winter and produced a 50-minute documentary on his mission.

If you’re not fluent in Korean, you can still enjoy the jazzy soundtrack and see Winter’s words turned into Korean subtitles. For example: “And they always know where the Starbucks are.”

Shortly after the special aired on SBS, Winter gained several hundred followers on Twitter. https://docs.google.com/leaf?id=0B_wrGCjcB_wyY2EwZTFIY2ltZDY4Zi00NGEyLTg2NWWyYTZjMGQ0Y2FhNzQw&hl=en&authkey=CJWQt8O&pli=1

APRIL MILESTONES

STEVE GLASS reached 1900 for the first time at the Boston (MA) Area Event Tournament.

KELLY MCKENZIE reached 1800 (COLLINS) for the first time at the Gatlinburg (TN) Tournament.

GABRIEL GAUTHIER-SHALOM reached 1800 for the first time at the Guelph (ON) Tournament.

JIM BROOKS reached 1600 for the first time at the Ottawa (ON) Tournament.

ADAM TOWNSEND reached 1500 for the first time at the Boston (MA) Area Event.
Winter hopped continents with stops in Africa and Europe where he was the first customer at the first store in Amsterdam on April 21, 2011. 

http://www.zie.nl/video/algemeen/Starbucks-opent-deuren-in-Amsterdamse-binnenstad/m1gz3ikf9qnu

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**A Man of Many Words**

Word Buff, a web site focused on word games, features a lengthy interview with Darryl Francis, chairman of the Dictionary committee for the World English SCRABBLE® Players Association (WESPA).

The interview includes some tidbits about the upcoming revision to the Collins Official Scrabble Words (CSW) scheduled for May 2011:

- Approximately 2,800 words will be added.
- Approximately 400 words will be removed.
- Problems with the treatment of plurals of New Zealand and Maori words in the current edition will be addressed.
- At least two more “Q-No U” words will be added: QIN# (a Chinese stringed musical instrument) and FIQH# (Islamic jurisprudence).
- The 2-letter Internet domain names for countries – e.g., ZW (Zimbabwe) – will not be added.
- The verdict is out on whether GRRRL, as in RIOT GRRRL, will be added. If you need to know now, you can preview the lexicon updates at [http://www.wespa.org/features/downloads.shtml](http://www.wespa.org/features/downloads.shtml).

http://www.word-buff.com/darryl-francis.html

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**The Answer Is: April 22, 2011**

The question is: When did San Francisco (CA) SCRABBLE® player KC Frodyma appear on Jeopardy!? KC led through most of the show and diplomatically handled Alex Trebek's reaction to the fact that her cat is named after the show's announcer, Johnny Gilbert, rather than Alex.

You can view the episode in two parts at:
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A9xfi50nV28
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2-YQbfzJkrk
Spatial Relations

*The New Republic* (04/06/2011) wondered why most SCRABBLE® champions are male when women typically outscore men in tests of verbal memory.

In 2007, Vanderbilt’s Jonathan Wai and Claremont McKenna’s Diane Halpern pitted expert SCRABBLE® players against “high-achieving college students on a battery of cognitive tests” and found that the best SCRABBLE® players relied not on verbal abilities, but on spatial abilities, where men tend to score better.

It makes you wonder if I.M. Pei or Frank Gehry plays SCRABBLE®.

http://www.tnr.com/blog/the-study/86334/why-are-most-scrabble-champions-male

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Kitchen Table SCRABBLE®

You’ll soon be able to stock your kitchen with Cooking and Garden SCRABBLE® editions.

Players earn bonus points for theme words and can use Recipe or Seed Packet cards to boost a play’s value.

http://www.usaopoly.com/ttc/SCRABBLE/cPath/64.html

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Time to Tango

Buffalo (NY) SCRABBLE® player Ember Nelson was a featured guest on “The Oracle of Enlightenment” on ThinkTwice Radio on April 3, 2011.

At about 26 minutes into the broadcast, Ember is interviewed about her book *The Race Towards the Light: Hardscrabble*, her acting roles, and her past career as a tango singer in Argentina.

Ember concludes the broadcast with a tango.

http://www.thinktwiceradio.com/monaco/audio/110403.mp3

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SCRABBLE® With the Stars

The seventh annual SCRABBLE® With the Stars took place on April 4, 2011, to benefit the Performing Arts Lodge in Toronto (ON). The Performing Arts Lodge provides assistance in the areas of health, well being, and affordable accommodation for members of the entertainment industry.

Guests dined and played SCRABBLE® with over 40 celebrities from the entertainment and SCRABBLE® community. The advisory services
of expert players – including Robin Pollock Daniel and Joel Wapnick – were available via auction.

As a warm up to the competition, Robin helped Canadian actor R.H. Thomson defeat Quackle at the Performing Arts Lodge.

http://www.torontosun.com/video/879678260001

Composer David Warrack debuted the "SCRABBLE® With the Stars Anthem" on the evening of the event.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMnp8mHEeE0&feature=youtube_gdata_player

On the Road to Orlando
In the weeks leading up to the National School SCRABBLE® Championship, local media promoted the teams heading to Orlando.

* Braintree (MA) – Cousins Jack Flynn and Bobby McNiff played for the Thayer Public Library in Braintree. Jack learned to play SCRABBLE® from his father, Mike, who plays him via Skype while on business trips.


* Erie (PA) – Johanna Balzer and Samantha Cortes, both in 8th grade, represented Harding Elementary School in Orlando. To prepare for the competition, Johanna, who competed last year, and Samantha met with tournament player and 7th grade teacher Bryan Lewis.


* New Jersey - Paolo Federico-O'Murchu and Nicholas Vasquez, who, as a team, placed second in the 2009 Nationals, competed this year with new partners.
Paolo and his partner, **Conor McGeehan**, are both 8th graders at Glenfield (NJ) Middle School and in recent weeks, studied probabilities, worked with a SCRABBLE® coach, and memorized words.

Nicholas, who once scored 250 points for QUIPSTER, partnered this year with 5th grader Thomas Draper from his hometown of Livingston (NJ).


- **Rome (GA)** – The Armuchee Elementary School SCRABBLE® Club fielded five teams of 5th graders in Orlando. The SCRABBLE Club, which meets for an hour after school on Thursdays, is open to students in 3rd through 5th grade.


- **Woburn (MA)** – *The Burlington (MA) Patch* saluted the three teams from the Woburn Public Library SCRABBLE® Club as the Whiz Kids of the Week:
  
  - Alex Brodeur and Kristen Brodeur
  - Max Marshall and Adil Sageer
  - Michael Cerullo and Kevin Dukas


**Home from Orlando**

In the weeks after the National School SCRABBLE® Championship, local media promoted the teams returning from Orlando.

- **Toronto (ON)** – Champions **Alex Li** and **Jackson Smylie** discuss the final game and declare OLESTRA to be the favorite word played. Alex and Jackson are among the 20 members of the SCRABBLE® club at Jack Miner Senior Public School.
InsideToronto.com interviewed Jackson and his mother who took the champion to Disney World the day after. Alex and Jackson will be flying to California to appear on Jimmy Kimmel Live.


Eyeweekly.com interviewed the champions and revealed that:

• Jackson learned approximately 1,500 7-letter words before the tournament.
• The team uses a whiteboard and jabs to communicate during a game. For example, one jab in the leg means that they are confident that a word is good.
• Both plan to invest the prize money after springing for pizza for the SCRABBLE® club.
• When playing Jimmy Kimmel, the team plans to go for maximum points from the get go.


• **Brookline (MA)** – The Brookline Patch saluted Nathaniel Sandalow-Ash and Quinn Lewis, 8th graders at the Lawrence School, for their 4-3 record in Orlando.

Brookline Patch (04/20/2011) http://brookline.patch.com/articles/whiz-kids-lawrence-school-scrabble-wizards#c

• **Eastern Greene County (IN)** – The Eastern Greene School SCRABBLE® club raised about $10,000 to send four teams to Orlando this year. Fundraisers included a silent auction, a walk-a-thon, concessions at basketball games, and the sale of SCRABBLE® necklaces, chocolates, and locally made candles.

Tattoo Q

Hazel Q. from Orange County (CA) explains her choice of tattoo in the Tattoo Tuesday feature of USA Today (04/26/2011): "I've always been geekily proud that I have two 10-point SCRABBLE® letters in my name (Z and Q), so I figured it was time for me to represent with some ink."


Now Is the Hour

The Hour (03/26/2011) provided an in-depth look at the first SCRABBLE® tournament that Cornelia Guest directed at the Chess Club of Fairfield County (CT).

Comments from the players underscored how appropriate a choice of venue the Chess Club is:

• Joel Sherman - "Why do I play SCRABBLE®? It combines my best skills: Vocabulary, spelling and math. It's also interesting because it incorporates a lot of strategic thinking."

• Paul Avrin - "SCRABBLE® is a combination of three things: Word knowledge, strategy and luck. You can't diminish any of those elements."

http://www.thehour.com/story/501718

SCRABBLE® Fundraisers

SCRABBLE® tournaments and events as fundraisers are in the news:

• Atwater Library and Computer Centre – The second annual SCRABBLE® tournament took place on April 2, 2011, and raised over $1,500 to benefit the Montreal (QC) library’s community and educational programs.

The 20 participants, each of whom paid a $50 entry fee, could purchase the advice of SCRABBLE® champions David Boys and Joel Wapnick for a $5 donation. David and Joel then took on all challengers and played up to six games at the same time.


• Literacy Volunteers of Roanoke Valley (VA) – More than 46 teams competed in the sixth annual SCRABBLE® tournament held on March 24, 2011, to benefit the Literacy Volunteers of Roanoke Valley. The event was expected to raise $13,000.
If the tiles were unlucky, teams could still vie for the prize for best team name. Team names included Flipping the Word, Scrabbled Eggs, The Early Bird Gets the Word, and in the obligatory Charlie Sheen reference, Winning! Duh.

*Roanoke Times* (03/25/2011)  

- **Greater Homewood Community Corporation (MD)** – Over 100 people attended the tenth annual SCRABBLE® tournament on March 26, 2011, to benefit the Greater Homewood Community Corporation’s adult literacy program.

  In addition to playing a few games of SCRABBLE®, participants enjoyed a gourmet meal that included a cake in the shape of a SCRABBLE® board and bid on items in a silent auction.

  Among the attendees were tournament regulars **Tobey Roland** who played MOUSIER for 83 points and **Dave Engelhardt** who is a volunteer tutor for Greater Homewood.

*Baltimore Messenger* (03/30/2011)  

- **Literacy Volunteers of Greater Worcester (MA)** – The ninth annual SCRABBLE® tournament attracted 75 players on 16 teams on April 2, 2011, to raise about $15,000 to benefit the efforts of the Literacy Volunteers of Greater Worcester.

  Teams played three rounds where each team had the same starting word and then placed the tiles around the board to maximize the score. This year’s winning team, the Bay State Savers, used funds raised from coworkers to purchase extra power tiles - the Z, in particular - and concentrated their words around the edge of the board to gain bonus points.

  That strategy was all too familiar to Worcester club regular **Paula Meszaro** who was a member of last year's winning team from Unum Group. Paula played this year as part of the Worcester Sharp Scrabblers who placed second in the tournament.

*Worcester Telegram* (04/03/2011)  

- **Literacy Volunteers - Androscoggin (ME)** – Sixteen teams participated in the 13th annual SCRABBLE® Fest Letters for Literacy on April 10, 2011, to benefit the Literacy Volunteers of Androscoggin County. Over $2,600 was raised with the top fundraiser, **Marty Corey**, bringing in $255.

  **A.J. Riseman** and **Diane Sleek**, who comprised Team Sleek, won the top prize with a total of 1,279 points over 3 games and a high word of OUTFISH for 101 points.
**Rowan County (NC) Literacy Council** – The annual SCRABBLE® Scramble on April 12, 2011, was estimated to raise more than $3,000 for the Rowan County Literacy Council. Teams could buy peeks at the dictionary and extra letters to increase their scores.

The winning team from the Trinity Oaks Retirement Community attributed their success to practice and sleeping with the dictionary.

**Edson (AB) Adult Literacy Program** – Eleven teams with over 50 players took part in the fourth annual SCRABBLE® Night to benefit the Edson Adult Literacy Program on April 8, 2011. Everyone went home with a prize thanks to the generosity of Edson businesses and individuals.

**Literacy Volunteers of Chippewa Valley (WI)** – The tenth annual SCRABBLE® Bee took place on April 7, 2011, at 29 Pines in Eau Claire (WI). WQOW News 18’s Jerry Gallagher emceed the fundraiser and cheered on a team fielded by his colleagues at the station.

**Senior Games**
Seniors at the Thorpe Park Community and Senior Center in Flagstaff (AZ) meet weekday afternoons to play SCRABBLE® and other games, including Mexican Train Dominos, after lunch.

The Senior Center provides boards, tiles, dictionaries, and color-coded “cheat sheets” with the 2- and 3-letter words while the players provide the competition and camaraderie.

**Arizona Daily Sun** (04/04/2011) [http://www.azdailysun.com/news/local/article_7bb96583-a89d-5fac-9403-b2c650487ae0.html](http://www.azdailysun.com/news/local/article_7bb96583-a89d-5fac-9403-b2c650487ae0.html)
In Framingham (MA), seniors flock to the Callahan Senior Center to play SCRABBLE®, exercise, and enjoy the “Club Med” lifestyle offered there.


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### Always Check the Bag

On the April 13, 2011, episode of *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire*, contestant **Neal Racioppo** recounted how he proposed to his wife by concealing the engagement ring in a bag of SCRABBLE® tiles. When the game ended and Rebecca had still not found the ring, Neal asked her to check the bag one more time.

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZvLkyl_bHLE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZvLkyl_bHLE)

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### SCRABBLE® Celebrities

Celebrities share our love of the game.

- In her old age, author **Ayn Rand** spent evenings playing SCRABBLE® with a few regular visitors to her Murray Hill apartment.


- In an interview on CNN's *Piers Morgan Tonight* (04/12/2011), **President Obama**'s sister, **Maya Soetoro-Ng**, was asked what the President could do better halfway into his term.

  "Well, I would say that he needs to be more cheerful when he loses to me in SCRABBLE®," Soteoro-Ng answered.

• While filming Joker, Indian actors Sonakshi Sinha and Vindu Dara Singh played SCRABBLE® between shots. Among cast and crew, Sonakshi was the best player and always won however tough a fight Vindu put up.


  section=Movies&Id=ENTEN20110173704&keyword=bollywood&subcatg=MOVIESINDIA&nid=99492

• Country singer Chely Wright announced her engagement to Lauren Blitzer and revealed that their passion for SCRABBLE® holds them together.

  People (04/06/2011) [http://www.people.com/people/article/0,,20476360,00.html?xid=rss-topheadlines]

• While on tour in Europe, intellectual indie chanteuse Glasser plays loads of SCRABBLE® on her favorite electronic gadget, the iPhone.

  Clash (04/27/11) [http://www.clashmusic.com/feature/culture-clash-glasser]

Lights, Camera, SCRABBLE®

Southern Oregon University senior Jotham Porzio spent an entire day last fall filming a 5-minute, stop-motion movie about a teddy bear and stuffed caterpillar who play SCRABBLE®.

The work paid off when Porzio's short film, Simon Grady, won the college section of the Ashland (OR) Independent Film Festival's student competition.

Rumor has it that the Dr. Dolittle lexicon is used to adjudicate challenges in the film, which was screened at the film festival on April 10, 2011.

Sew You Say
Hasbro has licensed Quilting Treasures to produce SCRABBLE® fabrics. There's no excuse now for not wearing a costume to your next tournament.


SCRABBLE® -- Better than Mystery Meat
Students at Westwood Primary School in Middleton (UK) are finding that a daily dose of Scrabble is a great way of spending their lunchtime break.

After finding that many 5th and 6th year students had not heard of SCRABBLE®, John Cockcroft set up a lunchtime club that met once a week with eight students. The club became so popular that it now meets four times a week with over 30 members and a waiting list.

Middleton Today (03/24/2011) http://www.middletontoday.co.uk/news/south_leeds_scrabbling_around_is_a_big_hit_with_pupils_1_3216645
**Visiting the SCRABBLE® Zoo**

The March 28, 2011, episode of “Late Night With Jimmy Fallon” featured some animals well known to SCRABBLE® players – the two-toed sloth (UNAI/UNAU) and a pair of Mexican salamanders (AXOLOTLS).

![Salamander Image](image-url)

http://www.latenightwithjimmyfallon.com/video/jeff-musial-part-1-32811/1316540/

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*Judy Cole is co-director of the Lexington (MA) NASPA SCRABBLE® Club #108 and solves crossword puzzles when not playing SCRABBLE®.*
While gulping oloroso
I became quite amoroso
Made advances grandioso
To a dashing mafioso

His father, Don Gusto
Became so furioso
He unwound his cabresto
And flogged me to pesto
Hats off to Michael Tang, the man who raises SCRABBLE® to a whole new level.

SCRABBLE® organiser extraordinaire Michael Tang has done it again! The man from Bintangor, Sarawak, has taken the SCRABBLE® world by storm and stoked enthusiasm in the hearts of Scrabblers everywhere with his latest brainchild.

On Feb 28, Tang announced that he will stage the Causeway Grand Slam in 2012. The impact on the Scrabbling fraternity was instantaneous and almost as earth-shattering as the movie, 2012.

From Christchurch to Dallas, from Capetown to Dublin, the talk has been of nothing else but the upcoming Grand Slam of SCRABBLE®.

The first leg, the Melbourne Causeway Challenge, will be held in Melbourne, Australia, from March 9 to 12; the second leg, the Vancouver Causeway Challenge, in Vancouver, Canada, from May 25 to 28; and the third leg, the Manchester Causeway Challenge, in Manchester, England, from Aug 17-20.

There will be three divisions: Premier, for players with WESPA (World English Scrabble Players Association) ratings of 1800 and above; Masters, for players rated 1500 to 1799; and Open, for players with ratings below 1500.

There will be 36 games played over four days of each of the first three legs. The winner of the Premier Division will walk away with US$10,000; the winner of the Masters Division will be US$2,000 richer; while the winner of the Open Division will receive US$1,000. There will also be attractive cash prizes down to the 10th position. At the conclusion of each of the first three legs, a lucky draw will be held and the winner will receive a return air ticket to Johor Baru for the fourth and final leg of the Slam.

The final leg will be held in Johor Baru, the “Woodstock” of SCRABBLE®, from Nov 28-Dec 2 next year. The prize structure for that event will be announced at the end of this year’s Johor Baru Causeway on Dec 4.

This year, being the 10th edition of Causeway Challenge, the total prize money on offer will be US$180,000. There will be four divisions in the Johor Baru Causeway Challenge:

> The Premier Division, open to players with a WESPA rating of 1900 and above, will carry a first prize of US$50,000.

> The Masters division, open to players with a WESPA rating between 1600 and 1899, offers a first prize of US$10,000.
The Advanced Division, open to players rated between 1300 and 1599, offers a first prize of US $2,000.

The Open Division, for players rated below 1300, carries a first prize of US$1,000. As usual, there will be cash prizes for all placings down to the 10th position.

Even though Tang is keeping everyone guessing as to what the prizes in Johor Baru will be like in 2012, one thing is for sure – the first prize for the 2012 Premier Division winner will not be less than US$50,000 which this year’s winner will get.

In addition to the top prizes for the Premier Division, Tang has given all participants in the Grand Slam tournaments a further incentive. Each of the Grand Slam winners and those who finish up to 10th position will be given Causeway Points. At the end of the series, the player with the most Causeway Points will be rewarded with a bonus of US$10,000. So far, Tang has not said anything about what the person who manages to overcome the well-nigh impossible odds and win all four Grand Slam tournaments in one year will receive. One can only speculate on the figure. It could well be truly amazing.

Needless to say, Scrabblers all over the world are looking forward with eager anticipation to the Grand Slam. Those who may not be able to make it to all four tournaments will certainly try to shine in their local legs.

Andrew Fisher, Naween Fernando and David Eldar will be looking forward to the Melbourne leg. David Boys, Adam Logan and Joel Wapnick will want to dominate the Vancouver leg. Former World Champion (1997) “G.I.” Joel Sherman, who lives in New York, has already indicated that he would be playing in this year’s Causeway in Johor Baru. He will almost certainly make the trip from the Big Apple to Vancouver to make his presence felt in the second leg of the 2012 Grand Slam. Mark Nyman, Mikki Nicholson and Brett Smitheram will relish participation in the Manchester leg and will be sure to feature among the prize winners.

However, the man they will all have to beat is Kiwi Nigel Richards, undoubtedly the greatest player in the world today. Richards, who has laid bingos down on Scrabble boards from Christchurch to Dallas and from Singapore to Coventry – and won tournaments everywhere he has played – loves a challenge, and he will be geared up to meet the challenge posed by the Causeway Grand Slam. Incidentally, I understand that Richards is the first scrabbler to register for all four Causeway Grand Slam tournaments in 2012.

The other player who will make a bold bid for top honours will be Thailand’s word wizard, Pakorn Nemitrmansuk, who will try his utmost to garner as many points as he can and, hopefully, topple the New Zealander from his cock-of-the-roost perch.

Of course, one shouldn’t rule out the chances of that other wonderful player from Thailand, Panupol Sujjayakorn. The young, soft-spoken graduate has already won the World Scrabble Championship (in Kuala Lumpur in 2003, when he was a mere 17-year-old schoolboy) and the Causeway Scabble Challenge (2010). If he decides to throw his hat into the ring, you can be sure that he will give Richards and Pakorn a run for their money.
With the inauguration of the Grand Slam, the game of SCRABBLE® has been raised to a whole new level. As Tang, the man who has single-handedly revolutionised the game, put it in his online announcement: “I strongly urge players from all over the world to come out in full force to show the sports world why we are going professional with the Causeway Challenge”.

It should now be apparent that Tang’s dream is to make SCRABBLE® as popular as golf or tennis. Tang has been dreaming the impossible dream all his life – and so far, most of his dreams have come true.

When the first Causeway tournament was held, the first prize was RM500. Today, 10 years on, the first prize money has ballooned to US$50,000, or just over RM150,000. Who knows what the prize money will be like in another 10 years’ time?

So, Scrabblers, what are you waiting for?

As for those of you who haven’t been playing SCRABBLE® competitively, there’s no time like the present to make a start. All the more so, in order to encourage the growth of local talent, Tang has agreed to donate a Special Prize of RM1,000 to the highest-finishing Malaysian player in each of the four Divisions at the Johor Baru Causeway.

In the meantime, I’m sure Scrabblers all over the world will join me in drinking a toast to the man who is making massive waves in Scrabbledom.

See you at Causeway!
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 your interest piqued by some of these books.

Non-fiction:

The Color of Water: A Black Man’s Tribute to His White Mother

By James McBride

This book is a tribute to the author's mother. In it, the author, a man whose mother was white and his father black, tells two stories: that of his mother and his own. Tautly written in spare, clear prose, it is a wonderful story of a biracial family who succeeded and achieved the American dream, despite the societal obstacles placed in its way.

The author's mother was a Polish Orthodox Jew who migrated to America at the age of two with her family during the early 1920s. The family ultimately settled in Virginia, where she led an isolated and lonely life, shunned by whites because she was Jewish and shunned by blacks because she was white. She was raised in a predominantly black neighborhood, where her father, a despicable and harsh man who brutalized his handicapped wife, ran a local grocery store, where he price-gouged his black clientele.

She left home and moved to New York when she was nineteen and never looked back. She met and married the author's father, a black man, when mixed race marriages were still frowned upon by both whites and blacks. Still, she always felt more comfortable around blacks than around whites. When he died sixteen years later, she married another black man who nurtured her eight children by the author's father and proceeded to give her four more children.

The author tells of his childhood, of his family, and of the issue of race that ultimately colored his life while growing up in predominantly black neighborhoods, where his mother stood out like a sore thumb because of the color of her skin. It was always an issue his mother avoided discussing with him, as for her it was not an issue. It was not until the author wrote this book that his mother discussed the issue of race within the context of her own life. From this dialogue emerges a fascinating look at the issues of race, as well as religion, and how it impacts on an individual's identity within our race conscious society.

It is also a very personal story. While the author's family was economically disadvantaged, his eccentric and independent mother always stressed education. She was a strict disciplinarian who brooked no nonsense from her twelve children. A convert to Christianity through her first husband,
with whom she founded a Baptist church, she provided her children with the will to succeed. Consequently, all twelve eventually went to college and did her proud.

The story of this unique family is told from two distinct, parallel perspectives: that of the author and that of his mother. While both are interesting, it is his mother's story that dominates this beautifully written book, which is, indeed, a tribute to her. It is truly a story told from the heart, as the love that the author has for his mother is evident with every written word.

The Color of Water is available at Amazon.com.

Fiction:

House of Sand and Fog
By Andre Dubus III

This book is simply a masterpiece. It is an exceptionally well-written and brilliantly told story of two people whose destinies become intertwined through a simple twist of fate. It is the story of what happens to them and to those who love them, when their respective worlds collide in a climactic and tragic ending.

It is the story of Colonel Behrani, a formerly wealthy Iranian, who had thrived under the regime of the Shah, only to have lost everything during his country's revolution. Now, he and his family find themselves undergoing the immigrant experience in America, working to maintain appearances among their fellow exiles, and finding the going hard. Working long hours at menial jobs, Colonel Behrani longs to be a master of the universe again.

It is also the story of Kathy Nicolo, a woman with some serious issues. She is a sad and pathetic bottom feeder, who has lost nearly everything in life, including the one thing that has kept her somewhat anchored: the house she inherited from her father. When she loses that which she holds most dear, her house, and is summarily evicted from it, she meets Sheriff Lester Burden, a married man with children, who is smitten with her. His obsession with her would lead him down a path from which there would be no return.

When Colonel Behrani's quest for the American Dream finds him with an opportunity to buy a house at a bargain-basement price at a county auction, he plunks down the remainder of his family's life savings. At the time, he knows nothing of the circumstances of the county's possession of that house, Kathy's house. He and his family move in. He truly believes that America is the land of opportunity. He still believes in the American Dream.

Kathy, on the other hand, has done nothing with the opportunities afforded her. She has simply squandered them by marrying the wrong men, boozing, and drugging herself into oblivion. An untrustworthy and totally amoral person with little regard for others, she is living a marginal existence by cleaning houses; her life is the antithesis of the American Dream. Still, she has this house, and when she loses it due to a bureaucratic error, the bottom totally falls out of her life. For now she truly has nothing. Like a dog with a bone, she refuses to let the issue go and will stop at
nothing to get her house back from the Behranis, whom she views as greedy usurpers. Her view of
the situation is supported by Sheriff Lester Burdon, who becomes embroiled in Kathy's struggle and
takes it to a level that not even Kathy could have anticipated.

As the author takes the reader to the book's climactic ending, the reader will not be able to put down
this beautifully crafted, literary tour de force. The author evokes a distinct mood in his narrative of
the Behrani family through a clever use of language and sentence structure that seems to match the
syncopation of their first language, giving the book a rich, three-dimensional flavor. The language of
Colonel Behrani has a strong infusion of the cultural milieu out of which he arose. It is a wonderful
literary contrivance used to great effect by a very talented and gifted writer.

When the author writes about Kathy, the language and sentence structure of the narrative is simpler,
baser, reflective of the individual around whom the author is trying to create a mood. Again he
succeeds, as Kathy is a very primal character, unlike Colonel Behrani, who is more introspective.
She is someone who ruins almost everything that she touches without meaning to do so. She is a
person totally lacking in self-control. When she meets Sheriff Lester Burden, a tightly wound,
conflicted man, very much in control of himself, his passion for her causes him to start losing his
self-control. He begins a downward spiral that ends in a personal meltdown. The character of Kathy
is somewhat pitiable, as she is the catalyst around whom the tragic events unfold. They unfold,
however, in a way that she never intended.

This modern-day Greek tragedy, with its layers of moral and cultural complexities, is a spellbinding
and suspenseful page-turner, crafted by an enormously talented author who is able to construct a
rich and powerful novel of the first order. It is simply a great book.

*House of Sand and Fog* 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.*
One Up! Cup for May

By Timothy Cataldo

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. (For rules on playing One Up! click here.)

Here's May's challenge:

Linda Stephens wins the April challenge with this clever play: PREDESIGNATE from TEENAGER with the Uppity Tile as an 'I'. Congrats Linda!
Club News
Larry Sherman, Editor

If you'd like your club to be considered for an article or if a newsworthy event has taken place at your club in the last month, please submit material to CorneliaSGuest@gmail.com.

Bingo Birthday
By Judy Cole; photo by Susan Kirchhausen

Members of Worcester (MA) NASPA SCRABBLE® Club #600 joined friends and family to celebrate Megan McMahon’s 50th birthday on April 18, 2011. Club members chipped in to surprise Megan with a FoldBoard from SamTimer.
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.

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.

Anagramming/Practice Tools

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.
SCRABBLE RESOURCES

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 SCRABBLE® and home play. Gives useful information on how to find bingos, plus the 2s, 3s, vowel dumps, and short high-point-tile plays.

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.)
MAY TOURNAMENTS

WEST
Berkeley CA 5/1
Laguna Woods CA 5/1
Portland OR 5/13-15
Mountain View CA 5/15
Laguna Woods CA 5/21-22
Campbell CA 5/28-30

MIDWEST
Twin Cities MN 5/7
Independence OH 5/10
Hudson OH 5/14-15
Linden MI 5/21
Skokie IL 5/28-30

NORTHEAST
Ridgefield CT School SCRABBLE® 5/22
Norwalk CT 5/7
Utica NY 5/7
York PA 5/7
Bayside NY 5/14
Portsmouth NH 5/14-15
Saskatoon SK CAN 5/14-15
Valens ON CAN (TCC) 5/14
Mountain View CA (WGPO) 5/15

SOUTH
Pinellas Park FL 5/21
College Park (Atlanta) GA 5/28-30
Fort Lauderdale FL 5/28-30

SOUTHWEST
Dallas TX 5/7
Austin TX 5/21
Tucson AZ 5/21
Houston TX 5/28-30

CANADA
Victoria BC CAN 5/1
Calgary AB CAN 5/7-8
Guelph ON CAN 5/8
Saskatoon SK CAN 5/14-15
Valens ON CAN 5/14
Kelowna BC CAN 5/21-23
Cote St. Luc/Montreal QC CAN 5/28-29

INTERNATIONAL
TransAtlantic Cruise 5/7-22
### June Tournaments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>West</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berkeley CA</td>
<td>6/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laguna Woods CA</td>
<td>6/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain View CA</td>
<td>6/19</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Midwest</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Akron OH</td>
<td>6/2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lansing MI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Madison WI</td>
<td>6/4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Madison WI</td>
<td>6/5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Romulus MI</td>
<td>6/25-26</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Northeast</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>NAST Final, Revere MA</td>
<td>6/4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pittsburgh PA</td>
<td>6/4-5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revere MA</td>
<td>6/5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bayside NY</td>
<td>6/11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wilmington DE</td>
<td>6/12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hancock MN</td>
<td>6/16-19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Norwalk CT</td>
<td>6/25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Albany NY</td>
<td>6/30-7/4</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>South</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Charlotte NC</td>
<td>6/4-5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kenner (New Orleans) LA</td>
<td>6/4-5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kansas City MO</td>
<td>6/11-12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oldsmar FL</td>
<td>6/11-12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wilmington DE</td>
<td>6/12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Austin TX</td>
<td>6/18</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Southwest</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Corrales NM (SWILLLNS)</td>
<td>6/11-12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dallas TX</td>
<td>6/18</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Canada</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Toronto ON</td>
<td>6/1-15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Calgary AB</td>
<td>6/4-5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mississauga ON</td>
<td>6/4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canadian Nat'l Championship, Toronto ON CAN</td>
<td>6/10-13</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>International</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mekong River Cruise</td>
<td>6/27-7/4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Albany NY</td>
<td>6/30-7/4</td>
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Archives

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