

The

Consecutive Issue Number 120 (2001)

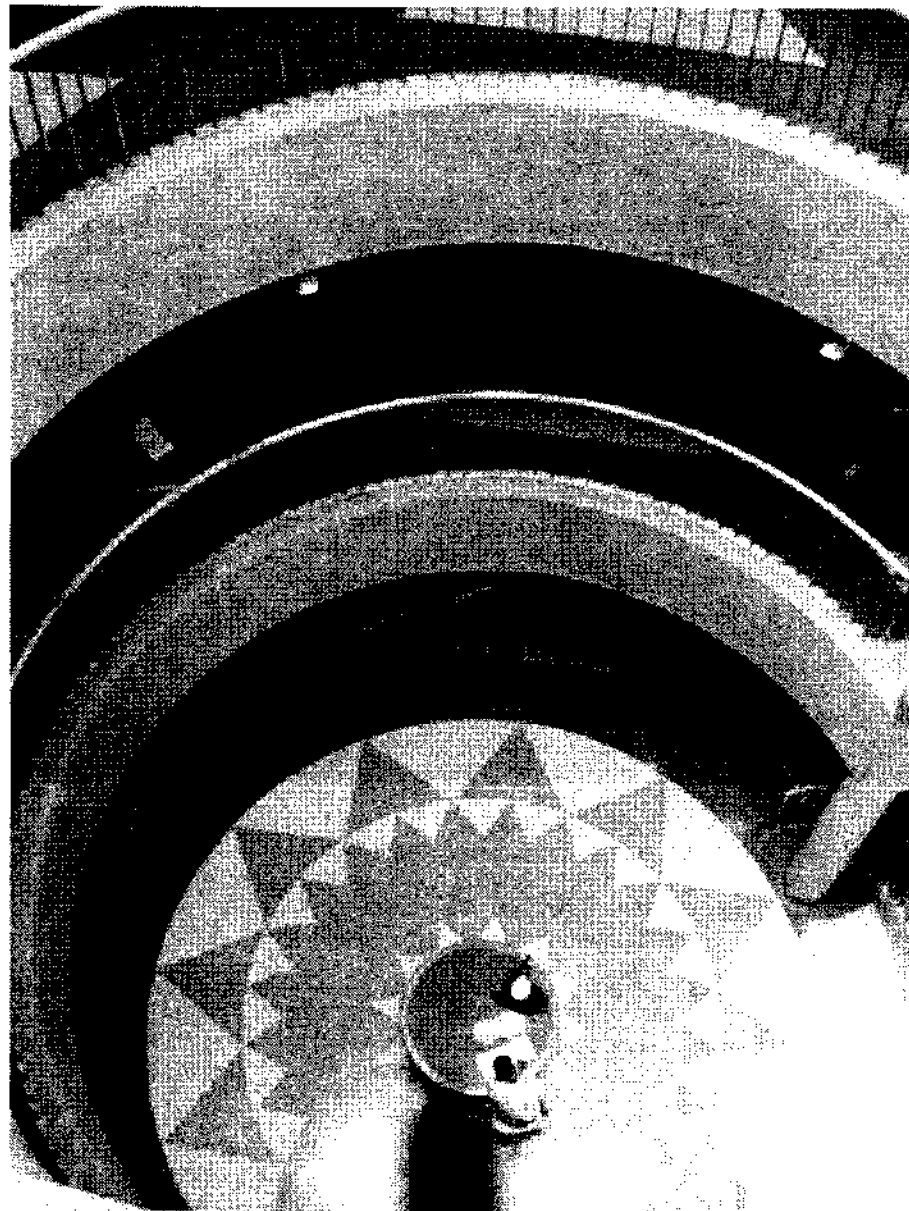
US ISSN 0049-514X

U*N*A*B*A*S*H*E*D™

Copyright 2001, THE U*N*A*B*A*S*H*E*Dtm Librarian, the
"How I Run My Library Good" letter sm, P.O. Box 325,
Mount Kisco, N.Y. 10549. Reprinted with permission
from issue #120.

Librarian

the "how I run my library good" letter sm



Library, University of California, Berkeley. Underground stacks and
table lit by ground-level skylight. Photo, Maurice J. Freedman, 2001.

the library." If the offense recurs sometimes a numerical standard is applied. For example, after two warnings the patron is asked to leave the library. Expulsion, or asking the patron to leave the library, differs from barring the patron from the library in that it restricts the person from coming into the library for a specified period of time. Barring a person from the library is reserved for the most serious offenses and is usually permanent, although this can be reviewed at a later date. Typically, barring a person from the library results from the Class I type behaviors.

In the next issue of the *Regional Rag*, how to implement the problem patron policy will be discussed as well as handling various situations that may arise in the library from diffusing the angry patron to dealing with the most dangerous confrontation.

Sources and Additional Reading

- Canal, Bruce A. "Libraries Attract More Than Readers: Investing in Library Safety." *Indiana Libraries*, vol. 17, no. 1, 1998, p. 15-17.
- Rubin, Rhea Joyce. "Defusing the Angry Patron," *Library Mosaics*, v.11, no.3 (May/June 2000), p. 14-15.
- Shaman, Bruce A. "Down and Out in the Reading Room: The Homeless in the Public Library," *Patron Behavior in Libraries: a Handbook of Positive Approaches to Negative Situations*. Edited by Beth McNeil and Denise J. Johnson. American Library Association, Chicago, 1996. p. 3-17.
- Smith, Kitty. *Serving the Difficult Customer: a How-To-Do-It Manual for Library Staff*, Neal-Schuman Publishers, Inc., New York, 1994.
- Willis, Mark R. *Dealing With Difficult People in the Library*, American Library Association, Chicago, 1999.

Susan Henricks, *Regional Rag*, bimonthly newsletter from *Southeastern Library Services*, Southeastern Library Services, 4209½ Locust Street, Davenport, IA 52804.

<http://www.sls.lib.ia.us/>

Berman's Bag--Updates and Additions

By Sanford Berman, U*L Contributing Editor

"Why Catalog?" (U*L 116, p. 11) cited a number of bizarre, unfamiliar Library of Congress subject headings that would surely frustrate searching in the all-too-many catalogs that lack adequate cross-references, and in any event reflect poorly on libraries as up-to-date, user-sensitive places. Here are a few more such "news of the weird" examples, the last two courtesy of AACR2, as interpreted by LC:

| | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| +LC form | +Instead of |
| METHYLPHENIDATE | |
| HYDROCHLORIDE | RITALIN |
| SILDENAFIL | VIAGRA |
| PHENTOLAMINE | VASOMAX |
| TRASTUZUMAB | HERCEPTIN |
| KIDNEYS—CALCULI | KIDNEY STONES |
| DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES ON INTERIM SELF-GOVERNMENT ARRANGEMENTS, 1993 | |
| | OSLO ACCORDS, 1993 |
| JABHAH AL-ISLAMİYAL LIL-INQUADH (ALGERIA) | ISLAMIC SALVATION FRONT (ALGERIA) |

The lemming-like weeding frenzy—earlier cited as a "Top Censored Library Story" (U*L 118, p. 17)—continues nationwide, erupting most recently in West Virginia and Minnesota, where collections are in danger of being decimated and dumbered-down. Here are three documents related to that ongoing madness, the *first* a 4-28-01 letter from Fred Whitehead (P.O. Box 5224, Kansas City, KS 66119) to Abby Smith at the Council on Library Resources (Suite 500, 1755 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20036):

"Dear Ms. Smith:

"I am writing to comment on the draft report of the Task Force on the Artifact in Library Collections. My credentials: Co-Editor, *Freethought on the*

American Frontier (Prometheus, 1992), Contributing Editor, *Encyclopedia of the American Left* (several editions), Editor and Publisher, *People's Culture and Freethought History* (newsletters since 1992). The full list of my publications includes more than 80 entries, among them oral histories, philosophical essays, medical history, book reviews, journal issues edited, etc. Therefore, I am writing you in my capacity as an independent scholar.

"For more than 20 years, I have had a strong and abiding interest in this very issue of preservation of our historical record. I enclose some items I have written and edited that bear on this topic. In particular, I call your attention to my essay, "Whatever Happened to the Rare Books?" which protested the privatization and sale of the rare book collection of the Kansas City Missouri Public Library. While that essay was subsequently reprinted by various library-related journals and anthologies, I have to say that my effort to save this collection was a failure. The books were sold at auction by Swann Galleries of New York City.

"In the wake of that disaster, I contacted the Spencer Library of the University of Kansas, with the aim of arranging to deposit with them (eventually) my extensive archives. In the discussion with them on this matter, I attempted to stipulate that they could not "sell, exchange or discard" anything that they accepted. The Library refused to agree to this, and hence I presently retain these materials.

"Among these materials are some 50 audiotaped oral histories with political radicals on the Left, which I began making circa 1980. These constitute a project I have called "Radicals in the Heartland." I also have extensive correspondence with Midwestern writers such as Jack Conroy, Meridel LeSueur, Thomas McGrath, etc.

"Your report should address materials such as this that perforce remain in private hands, because libraries will not guarantee their safety and preservation. In the 1930s, various federally-supported programs ensured that many local records were put in order and saved from discard or decay. For example, many counties in this nation had records that were chaotic. WPA-type workers organized these and saved them for the

future. Similar projects produced the remarkable State Guides, many of which have now been reprinted.

"Nicholson Baker is referenced in your report, but his new book *Double Fold* should be included and assessed for its overview of issues around this topic. In his original *New Yorker* article on newspaper collections and in *Double Fold*, Baker mentions in passing the sale of the newspapers of the Kansas State Historical Society. I enclose for your reference the issue of my newsletter *Freethought History*, which reviews my fruitless attempt to protest this sale, especially their holdings of the *Boston Investigator* newspaper.

"Subsequently, I devoted an entire issue of my newsletter *People's Culture* to the issue of "Defending Library Collections." However, I can count on one hand the librarians who offered to assist with the Task Force I proposed. Scholars around the world, however, were interested, but isolated and frustrated. So the Task Force never came to fruition. I did publish some further updates on this in the newsletter; see, for instance, issue #42, which includes a bitter and powerful protest poem by William Witherup, along with more horror stories.

"The record on any response from the Library profession to my efforts is one of apathy, confusion, and indifference. Indeed, until I received word of your draft report, there was literally no organized response to these serious problems. People like Baker and myself were voices in the wilderness.

"Concerning the Library of Congress, see my note about them in my "Defense of Library collections" issue. Other "national libraries" are somehow able to take a more pro-active approach to the saving and preservation of their cultural record. Yet, as Baker records, the British Library has a terrible record of discarding newspapers. So some kind of effective approach, such as you propose in your report, should be taken in the United States. I have NO confidence in the present leadership at the Library of Congress to undertake this responsibly. If Congress itself can be persuaded to affirm and support the role of its Library (OUR LIBRARY, in my view, since it is a tax-supported institution almost entirely), it would be welcome. But such a

mission must be clearly outlined, assessed by scholars, and carried out conscientiously.

“With reference to the passage in your report (p. 22,) dealing with those who get “hooked” on digital sources, I can tell you this story. About five years ago, I taught a community college course in American history. I asked students to write short papers, not full-fledged research papers, but supplying a few references. Almost all students used Internet sites; in their papers, some listed only the site’s address, with no indication of its name. I then explained proper documentation to them. I asked: “Is there a ‘down side’ to using only Internet sources?” No one could answer, i.e. they could not see any problem in such dependence. I went on to explain that there are many resources that a historian would draw on that have not been digitalized—such as manuscript collections, newspaper files, and so on. They were amazed. The point of this story is that unless our young students understand the nature of the historical record, we will truly go into the world of 1984, memory holes and all. There needs to be a vision for developing respect and knowledge and support for documentation, by the general public. I think this should be brought more into focus in your report. Depending only on librarians (a doubtful prospect, in my experience) and even scholars will not attain the goal. We need to bring these objectives before our fellow citizens and taxpayers.

“Several times in your report, you refer to the National Endowment for the Humanities. Yet in my own experience, they have been completely indifferent to the preservation of such records as I have described. This has been so much the case that I concluded early on that applying to them for any kind of support was futile. Other scholars working in similar fields to mine have had the same experience. Unless some sort of “political test” was met, generally of the “mainstream” type, we were “on our own.” Professor Sheldon Hackney of your Task Force can probably supply some insights on the process of politically “vetting” projects for funding.

“To summarize, while I welcome your report, I remain skeptical that anything decisive or even helpful will be accomplished unless the problems Baker and I have brought out are squarely

addressed.

“I would like to ask that you share my letter with all members of your Task Force.”

Second, this is the press release issued 5-1-01 by a library watchdog group in suburban Minneapolis:

HENNEPIN COUNTY LIBRARY “DUMBS DOWN”/ABANDONS COMMITMENT TO SUPPORT “LIFELONG LEARNING,” DIVERSITY, AND THE LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

Although Hennepin County Library (HCL) has often touted itself as the “people’s university” and a partner in “lifelong learning” for its relatively affluent and well-educated users, it now appears that the most intellectually and spiritually challenging materials available to suburban readers may soon be artificially-hyped “blockbusters” and the collected works of Martha Stewart.

Without first consulting frontline staff or library users, HCL’s top management has decided to cancel some 1,120 current periodical subscriptions, the “savings” presumably to be expended on DVDs, “popular” materials, and ever-more electronic resources. About 500 titles are to be dropped from the hitherto-flagship Southdale collection alone. And overall, about 340 of the axed magazines are *not* available online, while approximately 170 are not even received by the neighboring Minneapolis Public Library system.

Among the journals and newspapers to be wrenched from HCL shelves are dozens of business, labor, technical, medical, cultural, consumer, and political titles whose absence will markedly shrink the breadth, depth, and vitality of the library’s resources, seriously eroding its adherence to the Library Bill of Rights’ strictures to provide materials “for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all the people of the community” and present “all points of view on current and historical issues.”

Unfortunately, HCL’s impending mag-extinction coincides with a nationwide trend to dumb-down library collections, a development spawned partly by the profession’s mindless embrace of purely digital resources on the one hand, and a desire to impress funders with big circulation

numbers on the other. What gets lost, of course, is the public library's traditional commitment to unfettered access to a wide variety of ideas, activities, and information—to being a genuine, noncommercial alternative to profit-driven bookstore chains, dot-com vendors, and conglomerate-owned mass media. Also increasingly lost is the importance of the library as *place*, a physical space for browsing, reading, and socializing. Current managers don't seem to grasp that turning the pages of *Advertising Age* in comfortable, mouseless surroundings is not the same as "accessing" the full-text version online.

Citizens irate about HCL's coming magazine massacre and its growing emphasis on fluff should contact Charles Brown, Library Director (12601 Ridgedale Drive, Minnetonka, MN 55305-1909; 952-847-8580) and Mike Opat, Chair of the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners (A-2400 Government Center, 300 S. Sixth Street, Minneapolis, MN 55487; 612-348-7881.)

SELECT LISTS—BY CATEGORY—OF PERIODICALS SLATED FOR REMOVAL

+Business/technology/consumers

- Accounting Review
- Ad Busters
- American Economic Review
- Amusement Business
- Appraisal Journal
- Business and Health
- Business History Review
- Chemical & Engineering News
- Chemical Week
- Computer Graphics World
- Computer Reseller News
- Computer Shopper
- Constructor
- Convenience Store News
- Design News
- Dollars & Sense
- Farm Journal
- Finance & Commerce
- Finance & Development
- Food Technology
- Journal of Accountancy
- Journal of Broadcasting
- Journal of Business
- Journal of Communication

- Journal of Consumer Affairs
- Journal of Consumer Research
- Journal of Finance
- Journal of Marketing
- Journal of World Business
- Land Economics
- Logistics Management
- Mergers and Acquisitions
- Metalsmith
- Monthly Review
- Multinational Monitor
- Music Trades
- National Tax Journal
- New Internationalist
- Pensions & Investments
- Progressive Grocer
- Public Relations Quarterly
- Pulp & Paper
- Real Estate Review
- Realtor Magazine
- Risk Management
- Successful Farming
- Supervision
- Taxes
- Technology and Learning
- Textile World
- Trusts & Estates
- U.S. Banker
- Vending Times
- Windpower Monthly

+Culture/arts/literature

- African Arts
- American Art Journal
- American Cinematographer
- American Music Teacher
- American Theatre
- Amusement Business
- Aperture
- Arts of Asia
- Ballet Review
- Design News
- Film Quarterly
- Index on Censorship
- Journal of American Culture
- Journal of American Folklore
- Journal of Negro History
- Journal of Popular Film & Television
- Journal of the West
- Landscape Architecture
- Modern Drama

Modern Language Quarterly
 Musical Quarterly
 Partisan Review
 Poetry
 Public Art Review
 Rain Taxi
 Rock & Rap Confidential
 Sculpture Review
 Sewanee Review
 Sing Out
 Small Press Review
 Symphony Magazine
 Women's Review of Books
 Yale Review

+Health/medicine

American Journal of Psychiatry
 American Journal of Public Health
 American Journal on Mental Retardation
 Business & Health
 Journal of Learning Disabilities:
 Journal of Studies on Alcohol
 Lancet
 Mental Retardation
 Nursing Outlook
 Nutrition Today

+Politics/world affairs

Ad Busters
 Asian Survey
 Covert Action Quarterly
 Dissent
 Dollars & Sense
 Extra!
 Human Events
 Index on Censorship
 International Affairs
 Journal of Modern African Studies
 Journal of World Business
 Manchester Guardian Weekly
 Middle East Journal
 Militant
 Monthly Review
 Multinational Monitor
 New Internationalist
 Phyllis Schlafly Report
 Radical America
 Socialist Review
 Spotlight
 Z Magazine

+Science/environment

American Forests
 American Journal of Botany
 American Naturalist
 Bioscience
 Canadian Geographic
 Journal of Soil and Water Conservation
 Journal of Wildlife Management
 New Scientist
 Physics Today
 Recycling Today
 Science
 Science and Children
 Windpower Monthly

+Men's

Men Talk
 Playboy

+Social science/human services/education

American Anthropologist
 American Journal of Education
 American Music Teacher
 American Psychologist
 Child Development
 Child Welfare
 Childhood Education
 Chronicle of Higher Education
 Contemporary Education
 Early Childhood Education Journal
 Journal of American Indian Education
 Journal of Counseling and Developmental
 Psychology
 Journal of Educational Research
 Journal of Family Issues
 Journal of Family Psychology
 Journal of Marriage & the Family
 Journal of Psychology
 MEA Advocate
 NEA Today
 Prison Mirror

+Labor/work

Business & Health
 Dollars & Sense
 Labor's Heritage
 MEA Advocate

Militant
 Monthly Review
 NEA Today
 Pensions & Investments
 Public Employee
 Radical America
 Socialist Review
 Z Magazine

+Women/feminism

BBW (Big Beautiful Woman)
 National NOW Times
 Off Our Backs
 Women's Review of Books

+Communication/Journalism

Ad Busters
 Communication Arts
 Extra!
 Index on Censorship
 Journal of Broadcasting
 Journal of Communication
 Language Arts

+Newspapers

Dallas Morning News
 Des Moines Register
 Fargo Forum
 Miami Herald
 Milwaukee Sentinel
 New York Times Large Type Weekly
 San Francisco Chronicle

+History

American Antiquity
 American Historical Review
 Business History Review
 Historic Preservation
 History
 History Today
 Journal of American History
 Journal of Negro History
 Journal of the West
 Labor's Heritage

+Law

American Lawyer

Bench & Bar of Minnesota
 Government Information Quarterly
 Judicature
 Minnesota Lawyer
 National Law Journal

Third, this letter—by Robert F. Gates, President of the West Virginia Filmmakers Guild (1117 Virginia St. E., Charleston, WV 25301)—was directed on 5-30-01 to Governor Bob Wise (Capitol, Charleston, WV 25305):

“Dear Governor Wise:

It has come to our attention that important films have been disposed of from the collection of the West Virginia Library Commission, films of great significance to the State of West Virginia and especially films by West Virginia filmmakers.

“At one time the film and video collection of the West Virginia Library Commission had about 5,000 titles; it was one of the best collections in the country. You can verify that with Bill Sloan, Curator of film at the Museum of Modern Art. For whatever reason, film librarian Steve Fessenmaier was reassigned to doing statistics and as a result there has been absolutely no knowledgeable oversight of the collection nor an informed acquisitions policy that we are aware of. The loss of utilization of Mr. Fessenmaier's talents in this field is a tragedy.

“In my recent inquiry about 27 titles nine were no longer available. Missing were the works of five West Virginia filmmakers: Pare Lorenz, Bill Hogan, Jacob Young, David Claypool and myself. There may be others missing as well. That two copies of *The River* are missing is just amazing. This film by West Virginia native son Pare Lorenz is considered one of the most significant documentaries of the first half of this century. Pare Lorenz personally made a copy of this film for us (West Virginia) after receiving a tribute at one of the West Virginia International Film Festivals. Two of my well-noted films, *Building a Cello with Harold* and *Communication from Weber*, are gone. In the case of the *Cello* film they disposed of the 16mm print worth \$2,000 and kept a VHS video copy. It should have been the other way around. For technical reasons Weber cannot be converted to a video. Both of these films were funded in part by the West Virginia Commission on the Arts and have won many awards.

"The collection of 16mm films is a valuable asset as they can be shown to audiences with a high quality presentation. For example, this past weekend I was asked to present *Morris Family Old Time Music Festival* as part of the Vandalia Gathering. It was great to see the sharp image of the black and white 16mm print, and the showing was met by a standing room only crowd. Film is also an archival medium; nobody knows about video and the formats change with the decades. I shot the Ivydale film 29 years ago.

"The fact that the West Virginia Library Commission has acquired a copy of all of my films has always been very important to me. A marketing manager would never ruin his best market by selling a single copy of a film. However, as an artist I have wanted to have every West Virginian be able to go to their local public library and have access to my work. Also, since the Department of Culture and History does not collect such works I have always viewed the Library Commission's collection as a legacy of my work, even though it is a circulating collection. That two of my films have been trashed is a true disappointment, and the fact that it occurred shows that nobody knowledgeable is running the store.

"We also understand that a sizable collection of film posters has been disposed of. Morgantown videomaker John Nakashima said his wife is knowledgeable about such items and that it was probably worth in excess of \$10,000. Does this suggest competent and respectful librarianship? I am afraid that there is a growing attitude that if information is not on a computer that it is not of value. Thus we replace newspapers with microfilm, films with video, and movie posters with the choice of a computer image or the trash can.

"We call on you to find out what has happened to the film and video collection, its oversight, and its lack of competent acquisitions policy. The West Virginia Library Commission in conjunction with the Department of Culture and History should develop a comprehensive permanent collection of film and video works devoted to West Virginia subjects and West Virginia media artists. A trip to Surplus Property should be made to see if some of the films can still be saved. This issue is not trivial, it is important for the preservation of our intellectual and cultural heritage, and it is an

affront to West Virginia media artists."

Sanford Berman, U*L Contributing Editor, 4400 Morningside, Edina, MN 55416.

It Was the Best Sort of Miracle...

"It was the best sort of miracle, the kind that happens when the heat outside is blistering or when a storm is brewing; when everything in your life is out of your control. It happens when you are eight, or ten, or twelve, at the moment when you discover that when you walk into the library you have complete freedom. You can leave your world behind and enter into any book you select. Here, where there is quiet, there are, at last, choices to be made. No one will tell you what you can and cannot imagine. I think now that I would not have survived my childhood if not for those walks to the library."

Alice Hoffman, in the essay, "Nothing Is as Healing as a Book," from *33 Things Every Girl Should Know: Stories, Songs, Poems, and Smart Talk by 33 Extraordinary Women*, edited by Tonya Bolden, (New York, Crown, 1998.) Found in *Whirlpools, Newsletter of Winding Rivers Library System (WRLS)*, 800 Main Street, La Crosse, WI 54601-4122. Volume 23, number 2, p. 6.

Solution to Crossword: Library of Congress

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| W | D | R | E | M | | N | E | R | I | S | O | L | A | S | S | O | | | |
| E | N | E | T | I | U | N | E | R | A | T | E | Y | E | M | P | T | Y | | |
| K | C | L | O | C | A | L | C | I | G | I | C | A | L | O | G | I | C | | |
| S | P | A | S | | | | | | S | O | L | I | S | O | L | I | P | A | S |
| | | | | | | | | | C | U | T | E | | | | | | | |
| S | E | N | E | S | | | | | A | P | S | E | | | | | | | |
| S | A | R | I | L | S | | | | O | I | L | S | | | | | | | |
| Y | C | O | D | Y | | | | | F | A | L | O | B | I | L | C | O | D | Y |
| B | A | R | E | A | S | | | | P | A | P | A | S | C | A | B | | | |
| C | A | R | R | I | E | | | | C | A | R | D | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | L | O | R | E | | | | | | | |
| R | E | O | | | | | | | O | K | R | A | | | | | | | |
| A | I | A | | | | | | | L | O | R | N | I | A | | | | | |
| S | K | S | | | | | | | E | V | I | L | | | | | | | |
| T | O | T | | | | | | | H | O | L | A | | | | | | | |