American Dialect Society 2007 Words of the Year Nominations

These are the words chosen as candidates for the 2007 words-of-the-year categories. The final votes in all categories will take place from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 4, 2008, in the third-floor Private Dining Room 2 at the Hilton Chicago. A reception will follow immediately after. The Word of the Year is usually nominated from among winners of the categories below, although new, passionate, last-minute nominations have sometimes been accepted from the floor.

—MOST USEFUL—

bacn Impersonal email such as alerts, newsletters, and automated reminders that are nearly as annoying as spam but which one has to choose to receive.

celebutard prefix Indicates celebrity, as in celebutard.

connectile dysfunction Inability to gain or maintain a connection.

green prefix/compounding form Designates environmental concern, as in greenwashing.

wrap rage Anger brought on by the frustration of trying to open a factory-sealed purchase.

—MOST CREATIVE—

boom An instance of a military explosion in the phrases left of boom, which describes the US military’s efforts to root out insurgents before they do harm, and right of boom, which describes efforts to minimize attacks with better equipment, systems, and medical care.

Googlegänger Person with your name who shows up when you google yourself.

lolcat On the Internet, an odd or funny picture of a cat given a humorous and intentionally ungrammatical caption in large block letters.

tapafication The tendency of restaurants to serve food in many small portions.

—MOST UNNECESSARY—

Happy Kwanhanamas! [Kwanza + Hanukka + Christmas] Happy holidays!

truther Someone who espouses a conspiracy theory about the events of 9/11.

vegansexual A person who eats no meat, uses no animal-derived goods, and who prefers not to have sex with non-vegans.

—MOST OUTRAGEOUS—

nappy-headed ho An expression used on the Don Imus radio show, and repeated by the host, about the women’s basketball team at Rutgers University.

make it rain To drop paper money on a crowd of people, especially in strip clubs, nightclubs, or casinos.

toe-tapper A homosexual. Senator Larry Craig was arrested in June for an encounter in a public restroom in which toe-tapping was said to have been used as a sexual come-on.

—MOST EUPHEMISTIC—

human terrain team A group of social scientists employed by the US military to serve as cultural advisers in Iraq or Afghanistan.

shasmortion/smushmortion Abortion.

va-j-j Also va-jay-jay or vajayjay The vagina.

—MOST LIKELY TO SUCCEED—

global weirding An increase in severe or unusual environmental activity often attributed to global warming. This includes freakish weather and new animal migration patterns.

green prefix/compounding form Designates environmental concern, as in greenwashing.

Super-Duper Tuesday Feb. 5th, the day 23 US states will hold primary elections. Also known as Tsunami Tuesday.

wide stance, to have a To be hypocritical or to express two conflicting points of view. When Senator Larry Craig was arrested in a public restroom and accused of making signals with his foot that police said meant he was in search of an anonymous sex, Craig said it was a misunderstanding and that he just had a wide stance when using the toilet.

—LEAST LIKELY TO SUCCEED—

Billary/Hill-Bill Bill and Hillary Clinton.

earmarxist A congressman or senator who adds earmarks—money designated for a particular person or group—to legislation. Coined by the blog Redstate to refer to Democrats.

quadriboobage The appearance of having four breasts caused by wearing a brassiere that is too small.

strand-in Protest duplicating being stranded inside an airplane on a delayed flight.

strike beard facial hair grown by talk show hosts during the duration of the television writers’ strike.

—REAL ESTATE WORDS—

exploding ARM An Adjustable Rate Mortgage whose rates soon rise beyond a borrower’s ability to pay.

liar’s loan/liar loan Money borrowed from a financial institution under false pretenses, especially in the form of a “stated income” or “no-doc” loan which can permit a borrower to exaggerate income.

NINJA No Income, No Job or Assets. A poorly documented loan made to a high-risk borrower.

scratch and dent loan A loan or mortgage that has become a risky debt investment, especially one secured with minimal documentation or made by a borrower who has missed payments.

subprime Used to describe a risky or poorly documented loan or mortgage.