

# DICTIONARY News

## *Random House Webster's College Dictionary:* **A new start**

K Dictionaries is proud to announce it has acquired the electronic rights for the latest edition of the world-famous *Random House Webster's College Dictionary* (RHWCD).

First published to critical acclaim in 1947 as the *American College Dictionary*, RHWCD has maintained its status over the years as a favorite among American university students and the general public. Revised and updated annually, the dictionary was considered a leader in recording the important changes in the English language throughout the second half of the twentieth century and into the new millennium. The last edition appeared in 2005, and was the final version of RHWCD to be revised since Random House closed its dictionary department. This is the version that K Dictionaries has purchased, and which it began to revive.

The dictionary covers all levels of vocabulary, from formal English to slang, presenting common meanings first, arranged according to frequency rather than in historical order. It consists of 130,000 words and expressions, covering close to 200,000 senses. The entries include word usage guidance with clear explanations, sample sentences, pronunciations and etymological information, as well as sections with biographical and geographical entries.

K Dictionaries has undertaken to revise and update the dictionary and add new words. It will offer the full dictionary and its abridged versions for all types of digital media, and use it as a base for developing bilingual—and, eventually,

multilingual—versions.

We have started by upgrading the dictionary data into state-of-the-art XML format, and proceeded to convert the phonetic transcription into standard IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet). First versions of our new electronic applications for desktop and online are already available, to be followed by versions for e-books and smart phones.

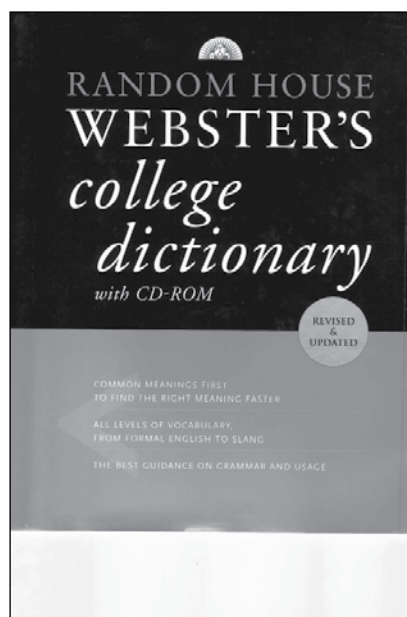
The editorial revision is also underway, led by RHWCD's former Senior Editor, Enid Pearsons. It mainly concerns introducing new entries and updating existing entries with new meanings. This year we aim to complete a good part of the vocabulary that has been added to the English language over the last decade, and we intend to keep the dictionary up-to-date with new words and phrases on a regular basis.

The main purpose of K Dictionaries is to use RHWCD as a base for developing major-size bilingual versions for the digital world. The first language translation that

is currently in preparation is Brazilian Portuguese, a preliminary sample of which appears on p.5.

This issue contains also a recent discussion between Enid Pearsons and the former Publisher of Random House dictionaries, Charles M. Levine, reminiscing about Random House dictionaries, and a reprint of a brief comment that was made by Sidney Landau following the closure of Random House's dictionary department.

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