



14th

ORCA AWARDS

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FOREWARD

First and foremost, **THANK YOU!** Your donation to the Trevor Project will help save the lives of LGBTQ+ youth.

This is our 14th ORCAS celebrating excellence in crosswords, but our first year putting together a puzzle pack for charity. This would not have been possible without the generosity of 44 different outlets and the creativity of the constructors who contribute to them. With the exception of two syndicates and two indie creators, every rights holder for ORCA-nominated puzzles agreed to have their puzzle included in this puzzle pack.

A special thanks to...

...all those who made this possible at Andrew McMeels Universal, Wall Street Journal, Apple News +, Defector, Los Angeles Times, The Walrus, Slate, & The New Yorker.

...all the constructors, individuals, and indie outlets mentioned elsewhere in these pages who contributed a puzzle.

...Dave Sullivan, Amy Reynaldo, T. Campbell, Matt Gritzmacher, Simeon Seigel, Kelsey Dixon, Enrique Henestroza Anguiano, Kate Chin-Park, Will Shortz, Amanda Rafkin, Erik Agard, Mike Shank, David Steinberg, Kim Vu, Peter Gordon, Patti Varol, Will Nediger, Emma Lawson, John Lieb, Brian Cimmet, Shannon Rapp, Joon Pahk, Matt Gaffney, Igor Ryzhkov, Ben Tausig, Bob Weisz, Dob Olino, Momes, Nate Cardin, Brooke Husic, Uri Bram, Dan Feyer, Rich Iurilli, Quiara Vasquez, Liz Maynes-Aminzade, & Nam Jin Yoon.

...all those who paved the way with their puzzle packs, and especially those who helped provide mentorship through this process (that started many years ago): Evan Birnholz, Rachel Fabi, & Erik Berlin.

...Talia Antell-Proulx for the cover art.

We always love to have more people involved in the selection process. If you'd like to join us, email theorcaawards@gmail with "help" in the subject line.

Please complete your ballot by Thursday, February 19 at <https://crosswordfiend.com/2026-orcas-introduction> and join us for the 14th ORCA Awards ceremony on Monday, February 22 at 6 pm PT/9 pm ET at <https://www.youtube.com/@orcaawards>.

Happy solving!



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CONSTRUCTOR OF THE YEAR

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- 84 **Keep It Rolling** by Adam Wagner

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS



Homestyle Food

Dylan Schiff

ACROSS

- 1 "Should that be the case . . ."
- 5 Life ___ (tricks that might help with household chores)
- 10 Vlogging device, for short
- 13 Scouts BSA group
- 15 Activist ___ Redhorse Young
- 16 Prez on a \$5 bill
- 17 Restaurant chain that serves the All-Star Special
- 19 Canoodling in the town square, e.g.
- 20 Colony insect
- 21 Speaks from a dais
- 22 Oodles
- 23 Poles for some circus performers
- 25 Magnificent
- 27 Soup made with dashi
- 28 TV spots
- 31 "Pet" frustrations
- 32 Reverberating sound
- 33 Having no slack
- 35 What a bloodhound follows
- 36 Restaurant chain that once served the P'Zone

- 39 Adversarial encounter
- 42 "Westworld" actress ___ Rachel Wood
- 43 Reservoir barriers
- 47 "Quaking" trees
- 49 "Gross!"
- 50 Mile or mole
- 51 Madras, korma, etc.
- 53 Indian prime minister Gandhi
- 55 Chow down
- 56 Fence in
- 59 ___ and cheese burger
- 60 Clump of dirt
- 62 Restaurant chain that serves 'Shroom Burgers
- 64 Choir voice
- 65 Islamic leader
- 66 Word before "role" or after "working"
- 67 Patty melt loaves
- 68 Drink such as Inca Kola
- 69 Certain Monopoly card

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13				14		15					16			
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55					56			57	58			59		
60				61		62					63			
64						65				66				
67						68					69			

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DOWN

- 1 "Yeah, I'm guilty"
- 2 Emotionally out of control
- 3 Somewhat mushy
- 4 "That's gotta hurt"
- 5 "That joke got me!"
- 6 Oodles
- 7 Crossword hints
- 8 Total sycophant
- 9 Go steady with
- 10 ___ audience (actively listening group)
- 11 Body's midsection
- 12 Least good-natured
- 14 Storyline
- 18 Faux
- 22 Name that's an anagram of "lace"
- 24 More zany
- 26 Make the ___ of a bad situation
- 29 Bewilder

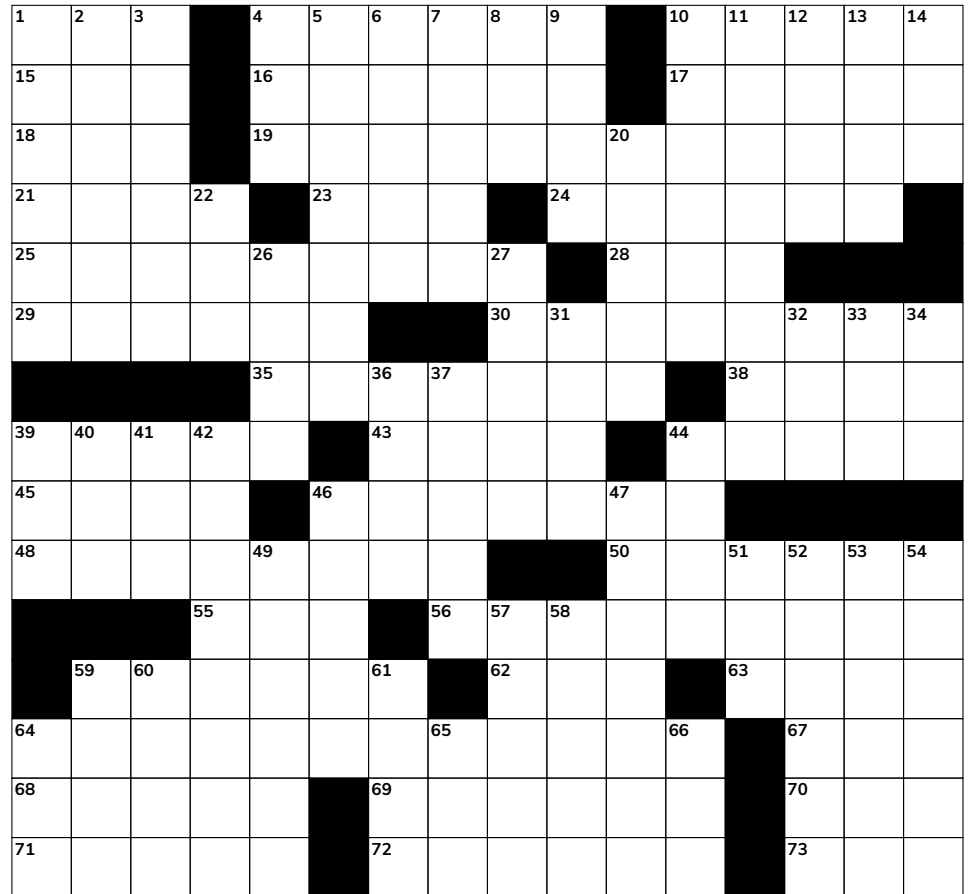
- 30 Debonair
- 34 Defrost, or become more friendly
- 37 Belly button type
- 38 Ill-advised
- 39 Palindromic vehicle
- 40 "Most of the time . . ."
- 41 Iconic bag from a D.C. broadcaster
- 43 Disappointing firework
- 44 Breathe life into
- 45 "It's a ___!" ("What extraordinary luck!")
- 46 Like an all-star team
- 48 Sight, touch, etc.
- 52 Ordinary guy
- 54 Fit together like Russian dolls
- 57 Installed, like carpet
- 58 Veggie in some maque choux
- 61 Uno mas uno
- 63 Avoided the seeker, in a kids' game

ACROSS

- 1 Insta upload
 4 Rod on a cello's base
 10 Mop target
 15 "___ minute now"
 16 "Gran ___": Clint Eastwood film featuring a 1972 Ford
 17 "America's Got Talent" judge Mandel
 18 Special pampering, for short
 19 Bit of sidewalk art
 21 Caramel candy
 23 Actress Thurman
 24 Tranquil
 25 Checking account problem
 28 Apiece
 29 Book that a bookkeeper keeps
 30 Make one's way to a previous location
 35 "Cozy" literary genre
 38 After-sun balm ingredient
 39 Partridges, turtledoves, and French hens
 43 Fat-heavy diet
 44 "Let's Make a Deal" host Wayne
 45 Creative spark
 46 Paloma of fashion
 48 Shower gel
 50 Starbucks size
 55 Pt. of many long weekends
 56 Ballpark buy that may come with a free pencil
 59 Sacred Egyptian beetle
 62 Bitter beer, briefly
 63 Egg cell
 64 High-level get-together, or an apt description of the pairing found in 19-, 25-, 30-, 48-, or 56-Across?
 67 "Is that true about me?"
 68 Urge forward
 69 Get even for
 70 Startle
 71 "Silly" honkers
 72 Turn in for money
 73 Gender-neutral pronoun

DOWN

- 1 Walk a beat
 2 Smitten (with)



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- 3 Rode a Peloton, say
 4 List-ending abbr.
 5 "Take your time!"
 6 Costume ___
 7 Rice side
 8 Tats
 9 Agrees quietly
 10 Communal
 11 Maker of ProteinPlus snacks
 12 Triumphant shout
 13 Queue
 14 Race segment
 20 Make good on a loan
 22 Assn.
 26 Blue state pols
 27 Eighth Greek letter
 31 Greek Cupid
 32 Pie ___ mode
 33 Fish sticks fish
 34 Lock unlocker
 36 Gear for Gus Kenworthy
 37 Help desk pros
 39 Overalls part
 40 Groom's utterance
 41 Like Ronald McDonald's shoes
 42 Frightening visions
 44 Dullard
 46 Old TWA rival
 47 Curious
 49 Digital game with yellow and green hints
 51 Green prefix
 52 Language spoken in Arizona
 53 "In Cold Blood" writer Capote
 54 Think highly of
 57 Quoted
 58 Offer one's view
 59 Not all, but not none
 60 Flowing garment
 61 Grizzly animal
 64 Like Ronald McDonald's shoes
 65 Night before
 66 Beaut



Cross State Lines

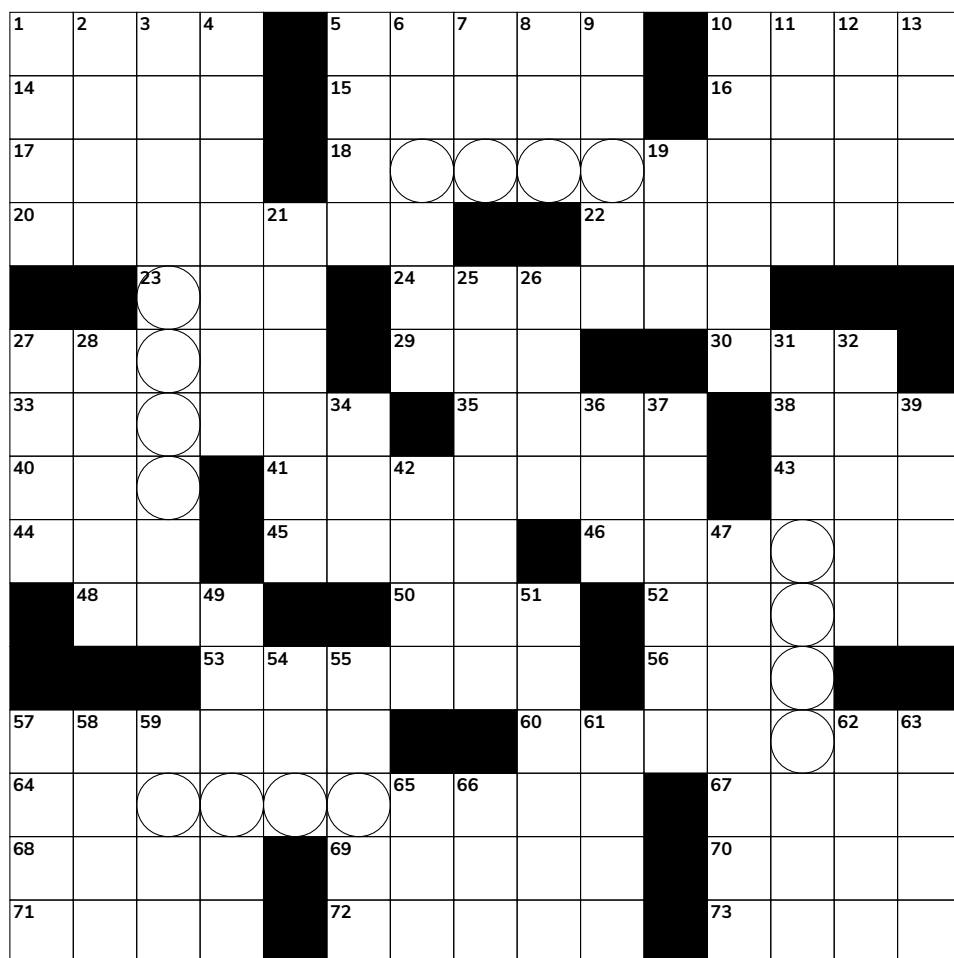
Noelle Griskey

ACROSS

- 1 Fan noise
- 5 "How I Met Your Mother" narrator Bob
- 10 Write in C++ or Perl
- 14 Surrealist Magritte
- 15 Mickey's dog
- 16 Vegas casino with a musical name
- 17 Gives support to
- 18 Pinch pennies, say (In this answer, note letters 2-5)
- 20 A 41-Across is a member of one
- 22 Comfortably warm
- 23 Olive in cartoons
- 24 Had some munchies
- 27 "What in the ___?!"
- 29 Outrage
- 30 Away from the bow
- 33 Onstage hosts
- 35 Pub projectile
- 38 Web address
- 40 Word with "garden" or "party"
- 41 Pittsburgh NFLer
- 43 Long or Peebles
- 44 "___ Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band"
- 45 Brass instrument in an oompah band
- 46 Tricky maneuvers
- 48 Campfire residue
- 50 Vintage
- 52 Up until now
- 53 Nevertheless
- 56 T-shirt or blouse
- 57 Musical Keys
- 60 Temporarily holds up
- 64 Scope out (... letters 3-6)
- 67 Water, in Oaxaca
- 68 Shock
- 69 Specified
- 70 Stint in office
- 71 ___ buco (veal dish)
- 72 Night lights
- 73 Villa d'___

DOWN

- 1 Spa treatment, or a rolled sandwich
- 2 Next in line
- 3 Felines that prefer carpeted trees to real ones (... letters 5-8)
- 4 Make over, as a hairdo
- 5 Pet adoption org.
- 6 Reunion participants
- 7 Probiotic target
- 8 List ender
- 9 Sweet ___ (sugar craving)
- 10 Home to the national parks Banff and Gros Morne
- 11 Valuable rocks
- 12 Juicy gossip
- 13 "Piece of cake"
- 19 Sushi topper
- 21 Firstborn sibling
- 25 Trials and tribulations
- 26 Make airtight
- 27 Dampens
- 28 Luxury watch brand
- 31 Humorous parts of a newspaper (... letters 4-7)



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- 32 Overused
- 34 Name that sounds like a slow-cooked dish
- 36 Whistle blower
- 37 Part of NATO
- 39 Go the distance
- 42 "The Bear" Emmy winner ___ Moss-Bachrach
- 47 Seclude
- 49 "Not a chance!"
- 51 Real bummer
- 54 Traveling through
- 55 Works hard for
- 57 Furthermore
- 58 Heaps
- 59 Financial promises
- 61 Uses the + button on a calculator
- 62 Glamping option
- 63 "Me too!"
- 65 Granola grain
- 66 Thurman of "Pulp Fiction"



Clear Up to Here?

Jess Shulman

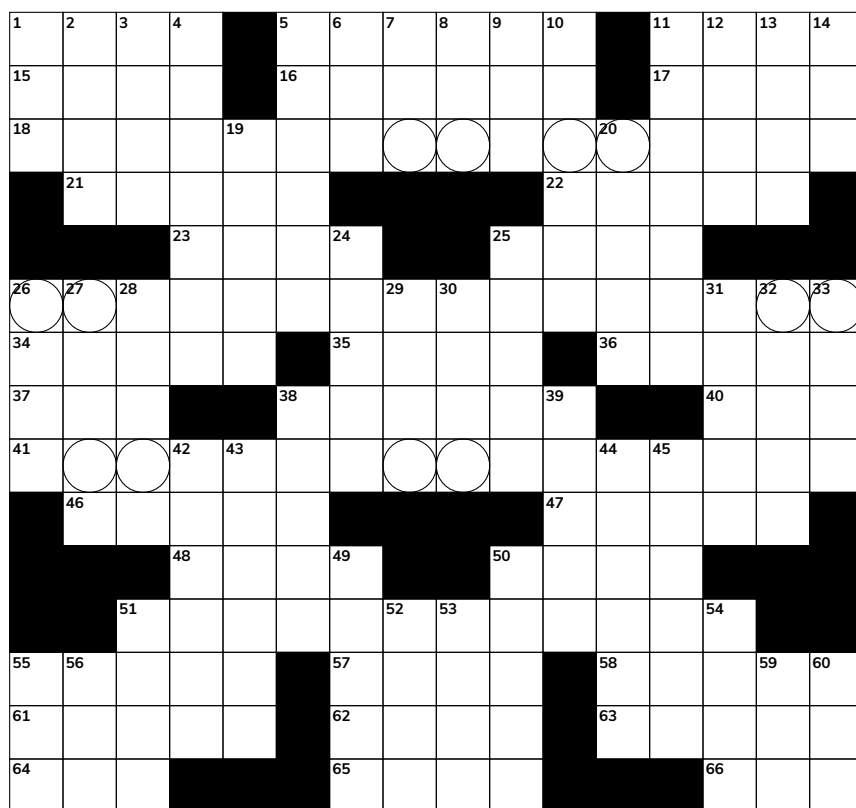
ACROSS

- 1 Ringlest or Slinky
- 5 Procrastinates
- 11 Bowl berry
- 15 Poker player's buy-in
- 16 Clothing brand that styles its name in a stencil font
- 17 Ring
- 18 *Christmas carol percussionist
- 21 Their are tree in this cue
- 22 Acrobat developer
- 23 A ways off
- 25 Applaud
- 26 *What Simba does when he believes he caused his father's death
- 34 Last-place finisher's lament
- 35 Montreal's Schwartz's, e.g.
- 36 Turkey's neighbour
- 37 Hall of Fame slugger Mel
- 38 Most sage
- 40 '90s DJ's stack
- 41 *"Someone Knows Something," for one
- 46 Send in a resume
- 47 Oktoberfest sausage
- 48 Something to "die on" if you really feel strongly
- 50 ___ colada

- 51 "Get it so far?" or what can be found in each of the starred entries, phonetically
- 55 Strips in a puddle of grease?
- 57 Beam
- 58 Separated
- 61 Author's representative
- 62 Princess Fiona, for one
- 63 They can be urban or Greek
- 64 Long-time 60-Down commentator Black
- 65 Tournament ranking
- 66 David Rose, to Moira

DOWN

- 1 Bit of energy, for short
- 2 "I'll do that immediately!"
- 3 Wee
- 4 Get out of the way of
- 5 Teeter-totter
- 6 Psychedelic drug
- 7 Earth Day mo.
- 8 Grand ___ (French wine designation)
- 9 Television family with an eponymous convenience store
- 10 French setting for "All the Light We Cannot See," for short



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- 11 Wither, like a muscle that hasn't been used
- 12 Salad with blue cheese and chicken
- 13 Sunburn soother
- 14 Affectionate letters in a text
- 19 Relative of "lite"
- 20 Dutch cheeses
- 24 Circumference over pi equals two of these
- 25 Chip, to a Brit
- 26 Hilarious time
- 27 Extremely
- 28 Still in bed
- 29 Quaint affirmative
- 30 Get out of Dodge
- 31 Whales with five distinct populations in Canada
- 32 "In the ___ of Winter" (Isabel Allende novel)
- 33 ___ Side Mario's, restaurant chain with the jingle "hey, budda boom, budda bing!"
- 38 With tongue in cheek
- 39 "Namely..."
- 42 Romcom director Nora
- 43 One of a freelancer's many "bosses"
- 44 Lena who once wrote that 42-Down's first film was "the movie that made me want to make movies"
- 45 In need of some Aleve, perhaps
- 49 Apple's apple and Target's target
- 50 Suffered with longing
- 51 Got every question right on
- 52 Strongly encourage
- 53 Hidden microphone, say
- 54 Has a Beaver Tail
- 55 Trivia night venue
- 56 In the past
- 59 Greek letter often used to represent density
- 60 Where to catch a CFL game



Make the Years Count

Willa Angel Chen Miller

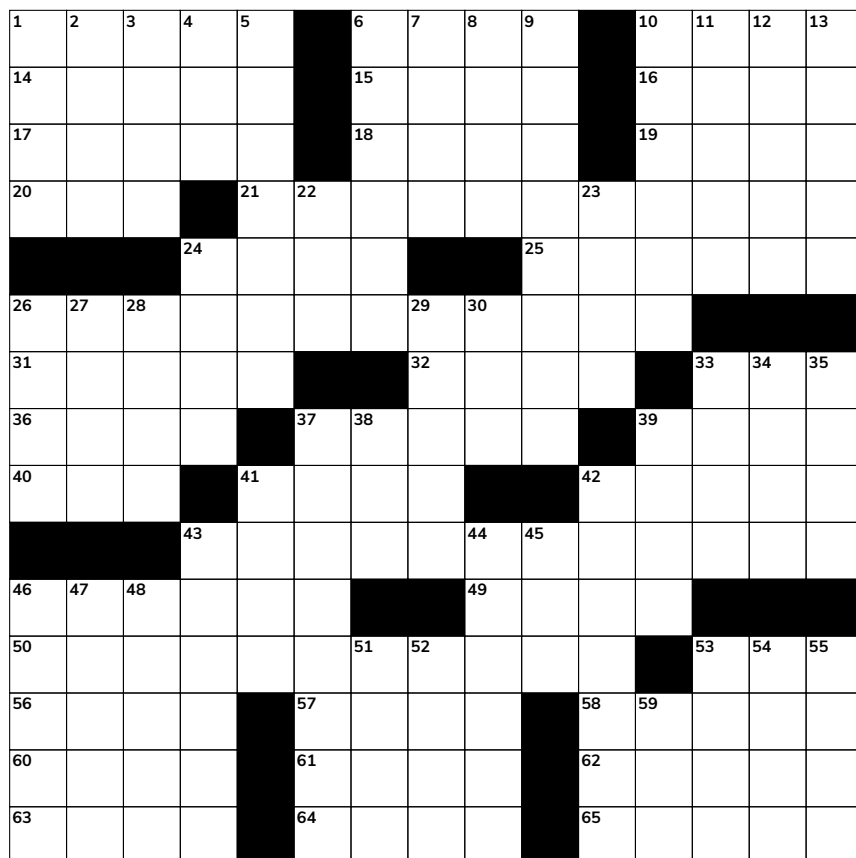
ACROSS

- 1 Brown and Harvard, for example
- 6 Swiss mountains
- 10 "Auld ___ Syne"
- 14 Like iota's place in the Greek alphabet
- 15 Slimy stuff
- 16 Asia's ___ Sea, formerly the world's fourth-largest lake
- 17 Like a nearly tied match
- 18 Complexion condition
- 19 Currency represented by ?
- 20 Female lobster
- 21 Parts of a student's workload
- 24 GPS predictions
- 25 24-Across pushers
- 26 Eco-friendly alternatives to Luvs
- 31 1/16th of a pound
- 32 ___ wolf (extinct species)
- 33 Kitchen pest
- 36 Eyebrow shape
- 37 Strong winds
- 39 ___ mater
- 40 Golf ball holder
- 41 Spanish appetizer
- 42 Like a cloudy winter day

- 43 Difficult stage in a toddler's development, or a hint to the answers found at every number ending in a certain digit
- 46 Loved so so much
- 49 Chinese dynasty from 916 to 1125
- 50 Jian dui coating
- 53 "The Blues Brothers" sketch show
- 56 Jobs creation
- 57 Cosmic eruption
- 58 Likely personality classification for a go-getter
- 60 University home to Krzyzewskiville
- 61 Monarch of Qatar
- 62 Infested, in a way
- 63 Distinct creative periods
- 64 Depend
- 65 Round dwellings

DOWN

- 1 Move like a glacier
- 2 Carmen Sandiego's organization
- 3 Privy to
- 4 Aliens (Abbr.)
- 5 Put away, like a sword
- 6 Tennis great Andre
- 7 Focal points



2025

- 8 Table tennis video game
- 9 Big ___ (people making large purchases)
- 10 Places for some mics
- 11 Venue for a big concert
- 12 "No, my first name ain't baby / It's Janet, Miss Jackson if you're ___"
- 13 Lip cosmetic
- 22 Condition treated with special lamps
- 23 Trifling
- 24 ___ A Sketch
- 26 Anorak, for one
- 27 Tackle box item
- 28 A single time
- 29 Stevenson in 1950s politics
- 30 Dessert in "Sing a Song of Sixpence"
- 33 Traveled by plane
- 34 "omg that's funny!"
- 35 Yammers
- 37 Person who's always in the weeds?
- 38 National Pickleball Month (Abbr.)
- 39 Part of SATB, in music
- 41 Overflow
- 42 Animalistic
- 43 Minuscule amounts
- 44 Like a sleepyhead's eyes
- 45 Tupperware topper
- 46 Onstage comment to the audience
- 47 Voice an objection
- 48 Tennis great Naomi
- 51 "___ Pig" (woven message in Charlotte's Web)
- 52 Dr. in Austin Powers films
- 53 Cowboy boot attachment
- 54 Heron's home
- 55 Places down
- 59 Part of "y'all" or "ily"



FORAGING

Sala Wanetick

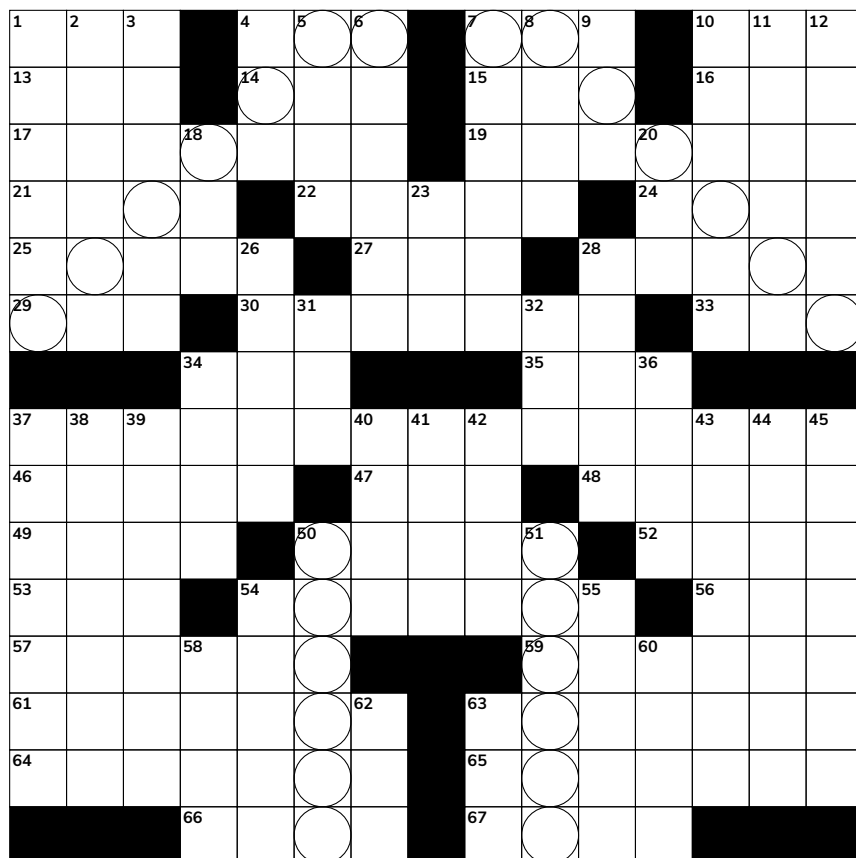
ACROSS

- 1 Host of the 2025 Ryder Cup
- 4 Oscar-winning role for Mikey Madison
- 7 "Give it a whirl!"
- 10 Word meaning "cool" in jive talk
- 13 Some suits, for short
- 14 Actor McKellen
- 15 Informal loan
- 16 "Searching for Spain" host Longoria
- 17 Book review content, for short
- 19 More hygge
- 21 Common day trip from New Delhi
- 22 Air holes?
- 24 Style for Colin Kaepernick
- 25 Drops trou
- 27 Zendaya's role on "Euphoria"
- 28 Take a whiff
- 29 Rehab specialists
- 30 Round the clock, say
- 33 Reuben base
- 34 "___ little, ___ late"
- 35 Family nickname
- 37 Activity that may lead you to Chicken of the woods... as will the circled letters
- 46 Fancy tie
- 47 By way of

- 48 Island group Penei Sewell is from
- 49 Blacken
- 50 Japanese boxed lunch
- 52 The "N" in NBA
- 53 "___ Daddy I Love Him" (Taylor Swift title)
- 54 Bowling achievements
- 56 Guy's partner
- 57 Goes face first
- 59 Many a Persian Muslim
- 61 Connect a boat to a pier, perhaps
- 63 A real show stopper
- 64 Wrangler accessory
- 65 Kathleen of Lucasfilm
- 66 IDs often needed to open a credit card
- 67 Newspaper section

DOWN

- 1 Tool for completing gel manicures
- 2 Hose hookup
- 3 Team often homering into the Crawford Boxes
- 4 Height, in snowboarding
- 5 Hammer target
- 6 Work for free, sometimes
- 7 Citation
- 8 Dunka___ (90s snack)
- 9 "Delish!"
- 10 Young one on a farm
- 11 The ___ Brothers ("All I Have to Do is Dream" artist)
- 12 Early release
- 18 Give the axe
- 20 Peeps
- 23 Reigning Cricket World Cup champs, for short
- 26 Impersonate a pig
- 28 Attends a SoulCycle class, say



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- 31 Away message for one on PTO
- 32 One half of "The Game" (abbr.)
- 34 Nickname for Noah Syndergaard
- 36 Diehard, slangily
- 37 Role played by Denzel Washington and Michael Fassbender
- 38 Departure port for most Antarctica cruises
- 39 Disperse
- 40 One side to bet
- 41 Weasel relative
- 42 "___ Has No Home Here" (common yard sign)
- 43 "Picture this..."
- 44 Transcribed
- 45 Next stop after being framed?
- 50 One used to being pushed?
- 51 Shellfish often served with mignonette sauce
- 54 Window treatments
- 55 Shift (aside)
- 58 Patches up a lawn
- 60 Cozy accommodations
- 62 "Call of Duty: Black ___"
- 63 One-time genre for No Doubt



Terrors of the Deep

K.J. Sarr & Olivia Mitra Framke

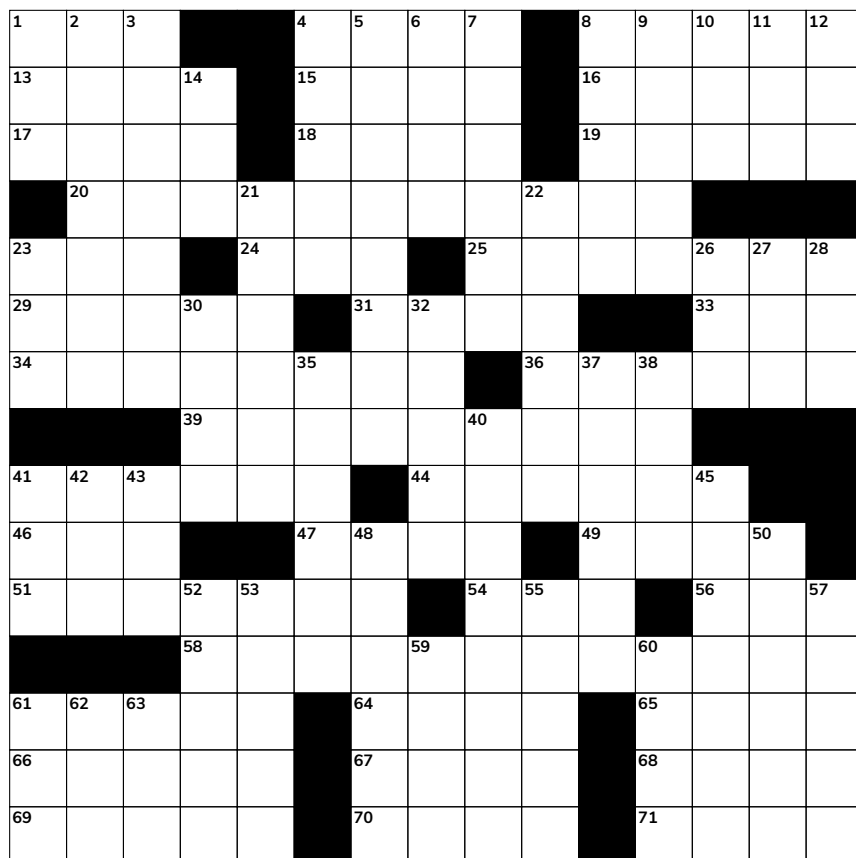
ACROSS

- 1 "Winged" tree
- 4 Lose traction
- 8 Put on ice
- 13 Robert Frost took one less traveled by
- 15 Toe TLC
- 16 Home to the Vietnamese Women's Museum
- 17 Taylor-Joy who voiced Princess Peach
- 18 Assents
- 19 Flight path?
- 20 Predatory fish that isn't actually a folkloric monster
- 23 Block letters?
- 24 Performance artist Yoko
- 25 Brackish habitat
- 29 Support for a pregnant person
- 31 Throw
- 33 Color with cochineal, say
- 34 Flowery term of endearment
- 36 Slips away from
- 39 Pale crustacean that won't actually haunt you
- 41 Dugouts, for example
- 44 More spicy

- 46 What "13" refers to, in "PG-13"
- 47 Waist ribbon
- 49 Common horse gait
- 51 Mario's Super Mushroom, e.g.
- 54 Night before
- 56 Moo goo ___ pan
- 58 Darkly colored cephalopod that doesn't actually consume blood
- 61 Group of witches in "Agatha All Along"
- 64 Nails
- 65 Money drawer
- 66 Word after "energy" or "soft"
- 67 Gave for a while
- 68 "Huh . . . Got it"
- 69 Airplane assignments
- 70 "___ do this thing!"
- 71 Advanced degs.

DOWN

- 1 Time period
- 2 Powerful archery option
- 3 Novelty Heinz sauce that combines two condiments
- 4 Alhambra's country
- 5 Major speeches
- 6 ___ of March



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- 7 Some pottery class creations
- 8 Alignment ___ (player aid for some TTRPGs)
- 9 Poetry form used by Kaga no Chiyo
- 10 Career connections
- 11 "bahahaha"
- 12 Cheat at Truth or Dare, say
- 14 Blot
- 21 Can't stand
- 22 Strongly state
- 23 Skippable parts of some YouTube videos
- 26 Tack on
- 27 "The Catcher in the ___"
- 28 "Um, duh!"
- 30 Minifigure maker
- 32 Solemn pledges
- 35 Marsupial that plays dead
- 37 Cafe orders
- 38 Lyft alternative
- 40 Like a well-constructed argument
- 41 Topper for a head or a pen
- 42 "That was so long ___ now!"
- 43 Novel
- 45 Charmingly rakish, like some love interests
- 48 Deeply dismay
- 50 Shadowed
- 52 Fundraiser or family reunion, e.g.
- 53 Arranges on a tier list
- 55 Waistcoats
- 57 Whiles away the hours
- 59 Frozen beverage brand
- 60 Certain cotton swab
- 61 Items burned in the '90s
- 62 Minecraft block
- 63 By way of



Would You Let Me Finish?

Ada Nicolle

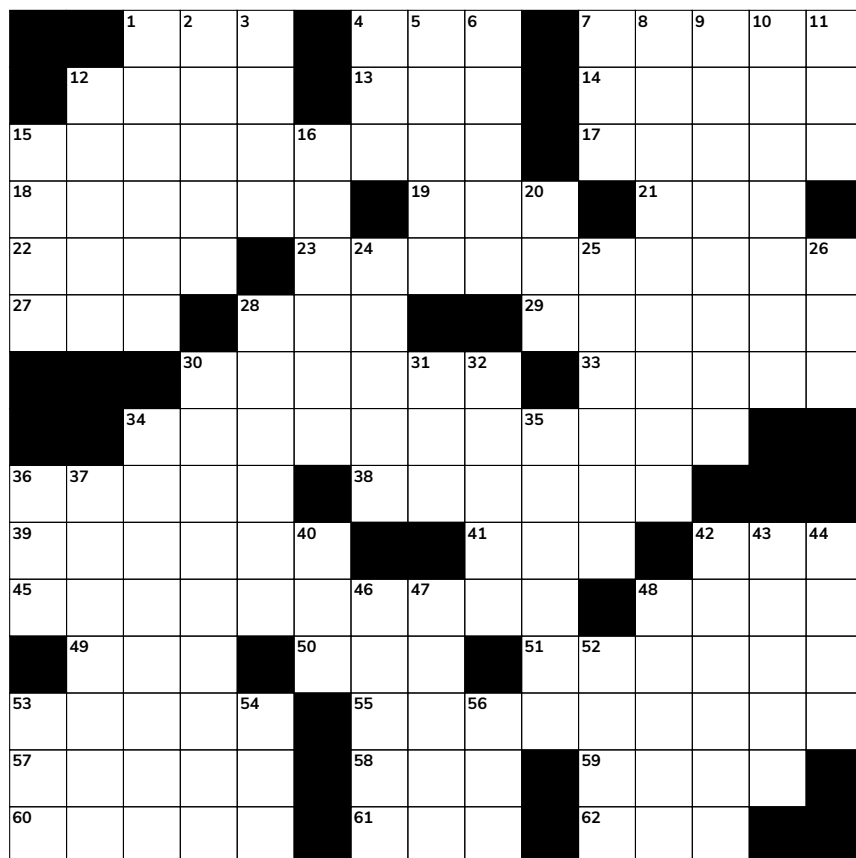
Across

- 1 Guacamole, for example
- 4 "I'd like a ____, hold the mayo" (deli order)
- 7 Some long nails
- 12 Exhale heavily
- 13 Battery size for some mice
- 14 Breakfast item that may have sesame seeds
- 15 **Be there for**
- 17 Like some braces and hair
- 18 Person who really feels for others
- 19 ____ beans (pads that help create 🐾)
- 21 Word after "styling" or "aloe"
- 22 Animal that's a homophone of 48-Down (and is featured in its logo)
- 23 **Wedding addresses**
- 27 🍄 sprout
- 28 Tool that often breaks?
- 29 Environment
- 30 What someone giving a pep talk may improve
- 33 Fork parts
- 34 Constant, or what each word in the answers to the bolded clues should be, in order for the clues to make sense

- 36 Type of skirt
- 38 Gender-neutral demonym
- 39 ____ to (indulges)
- 41 Something poached
- 42 Timberwolves' league
- 45 **Cocktail made with wine and sparkling water**
- 48 "Prepare to meet your ____!" (clichéd villain line)
- 49 Typical *Bluey* watcher
- 50 "... ____ the cows come home"
- 51 Unfazed by
- 53 Euphoric moments
- 55 **Style of architecture**
- 57 "Nice to ____ you!" (Zoom call greeting)
- 58 Figure on a college application
- 59 Structure with a high point
- 60 *Crazy Rich Asians* actor Golding
- 61 2,000-____ note (denomination introduced in 2000)
- 62 "That's neat!"

Down

- 1 Person who was broken up with
- 2 "My worry is ..."
- 3 "That's silly!" sound



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- 4 Open mic setting
- 5 Drink similar to a caffè mocha
- 6 Sierra Nevada lake
- 7 News network with headquarters in Ottawa
- 8 Mark for someone who's often smiling
- 9 Not at odds
- 10 "Time will tell"
- 11 Crafty
- 12 Perfect for settling in
- 15 Give up
- 16 Sarcastic "Right"
- 20 Initials for many nightclub tracks
- 24 Gem (and the meaning of the name Margaret)
- 25 Crediting as a source
- 26 Like an *Among Us* player that should be questioned
- 28 Not publicly acknowledged
- 30 "Same, can't relate"
- 31 Movie star Seydoux
- 32 Cross the threshold
- 34 N as in nonmetals?
- 35 Extract after a snowstorm
- 36 Units in apartment buildings
- 37 How long it takes to go around a track once
- 40 In place
- 42 "Ain't gonna happen!"
- 43 Screw up
- 44 Wild way to run
- 46 Comic strip character who said, "It took me a lifetime to perfect my imperfections!"
- 47 Split like some couples do?
- 48 Farm equipment brand
- 52 Type of carpet
- 53 "That's pretty funny"
- 54 Messy place
- 56 Sandal ____ (summer lines)



It's Top Secret

Prasanna Keshava / Edited by Will Nediger

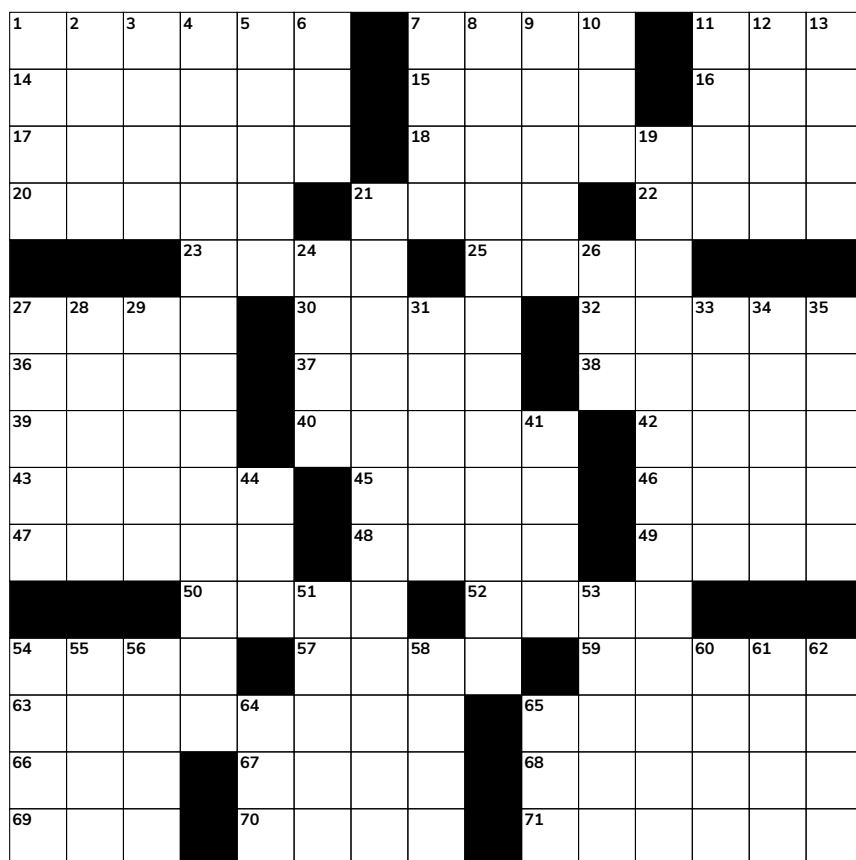
ACROSS

- 1 Pat on the back
- 7 "Right now!"
- 11 Device hooked up to an electric guitar
- 14 Poker variant
- 15 Teacher in Tibetan Buddhism
- 16 Sound from a lamb
- 17 18-Across patrons
- 18 Site for a light bite
- 20 *bzzt*
- 21 Hotel room conveniences
- 22 "The ___'s Bond... James Bond"
- 23 Eye drop?
- 25 Regarding, in a business letter
- 27 Berry with anthocyanins
- 30 Burst of wind
- 32 2012 Beyoncé song
- 36 Horror actor Ingrid who wrote the spy novel "Cuckoo Run"
- 37 Person inputting online credentials
- 38 Went downhill on purpose
- 39 "Gone ___ Baby" (Ben Affleck crime drama)
- 40 Favored in the polls
- 42 Luxury hotel brand

- 43 Very angry
- 45 Toy company acquired by Mattel
- 46 Three of them are in a yard
- 47 Sworn promises
- 48 Trees with acorns
- 49 Professional charges
- 50 Tiny bit
- 52 Problem-free state
- 54 Flavored frozen treat
- 57 Cowboy boot accessory
- 59 Baseball player Sandoval known as "Kung Fu Panda"
- 63 Cheating the IRS
- 65 Deep sadness
- 66 Government watchdog org.
- 67 Frequent Pete Seeger collaborator Guthrie
- 68 Like slurping noodles, in Japan
- 69 May honoree
- 70 "Monday Night Countdown" channel
- 71 NHL team with a winged logo

DOWN

- 1 "That was close!"
- 2 Sound from the stands
- 3 Choir voice



- 4 Cybercriminal, often
- 5 Coat fabric
- 6 Ambulance letters
- 7 "Oh, before you leave..."
- 8 Google website that lets kids follow St. Nick's progress
- 9 Stockpile
- 10 Election fundraising org.
- 11 Swedish group with the hit "Dancing Queen"
- 12 Address that elides a "d"
- 13 Peel the skin off of
- 19 Head home after lunch on Friday, perhaps
- 21 Squash, as tomatoes
- 24 Water, in Spanish
- 26 Quaint contraction
- 27 H.S. science subject
- 28 Singer of "Oh" (featuring Ludacris)
- 29 Slugger's turn
- 31 "Bye for now"
- 33 "Voices Carry" vocalist Mann
- 34 "Fast & Furious Spy Racers" voice actor ___ Elise Goldsberry
- 35 Makes ready for publication
- 41 South Indian crepe
- 44 Spanish "that"
- 51 Winter Palace residents, once
- 53 Yo-yo, basically
- 54 Agenda point
- 55 Guitarist's accessory
- 56 Big test
- 58 Noodles often topped with scallions
- 60 Cheese with an edible rind
- 61 Tolkien series, for short
- 62 Has unpaid bills
- 64 "Awkward Black Girl" star Issa
- 65 Tanning lotion stat



Hour-Long

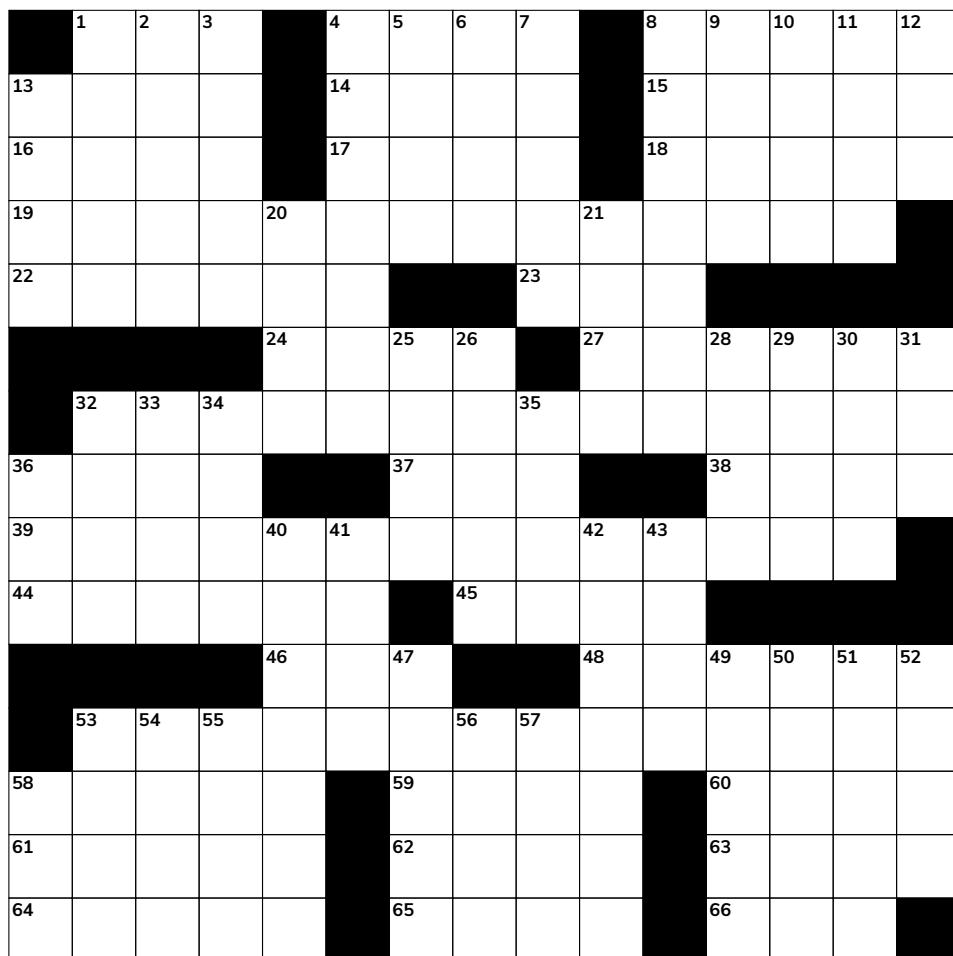
Richard D. Allen

ACROSS

- 1 Bro's sib, maybe
- 4 Unkempt hairdos
- 8 Ceremonies
- 13 Clean with soap and water
- 14 "Well said!"
- 15 Miyazaki's cartoon genre
- 16 The Emerald ____ (Ireland nickname)
- 17 Farm tower
- 18 Palindromic Honda
- 19 Parts specialist?
- 22 Joe's veep
- 23 Green prefix
- 24 "Dang"
- 27 "Let's hear more ..."
- 32 Child care worker?
- 36 Preppy shirt
- 37 Winery wood
- 38 Favoritism
- 39 Policy adviser?
- 44 Puffiness remedy
- 45 Follow stealthily
- 46 Special guest, briefly
- 48 Scorching
- 53 Forty-hour gigs ... or 19-, 32- and 39-Across, based on the lengths of their words?
- 58 Ninja Turtles' home
- 59 Impolite
- 60 Exchange
- 61 Cropped up
- 62 One between 12 and 20
- 63 Sometimes-slippery trees
- 64 Taboos
- 65 Blind piece
- 66 Airport safety agcy.

DOWN

- 1 Beyonce's "I Am... ____ Fierce"
- 2 Religion whose pillars include shahada and zakat
- 3 "____ and the Princesses of Power" (Netflix show)
- 4 Lash enhancer



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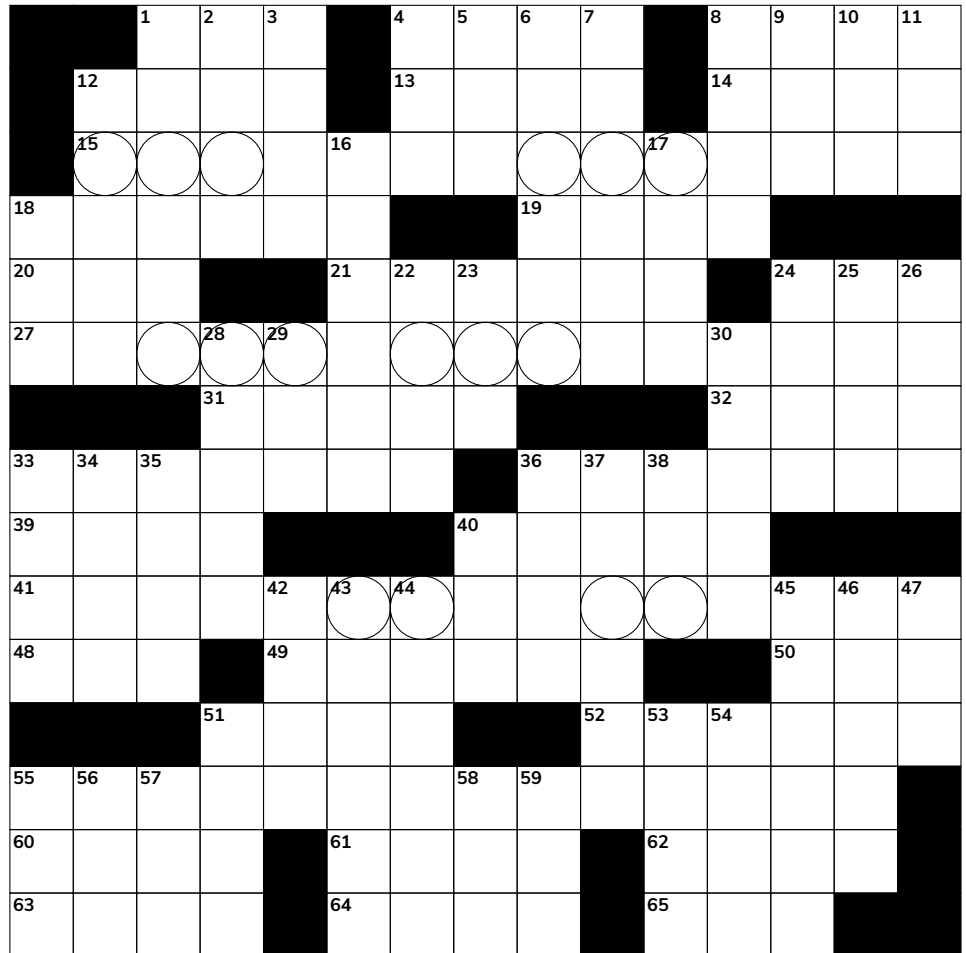
- 5 Neglect to mention
- 6 Soccer great who was Brazil's first minister of sports
- 7 Saw logs, say
- 8 Garbage can bandit
- 9 Still competing
- 10 DVR since 1999
- 11 Middle Eastern title
- 12 Short amount of time?
- 13 It's lit!
- 20 German grocer
- 21 Electrifying rock group?
- 25 Loads and loads
- 26 Plot for development
- 28 London subway, with "the"
- 29 "The Office" receptionist
- 30 Future J.D.'s exam
- 31 "____ Miserables"
- 32 It's a little horse!
- 33 Alternatively
- 34 Nickelodeon kid who kept a journal
- 35 Swedish furniture retailer
- 36 Thanksgiving dessert
- 40 Holds in the highest esteem
- 41 Landed
- 42 HVAC system entry point
- 43 Delight
- 47 Container ship destinations
- 49 EDM festival performance
- 50 Laughs heartily
- 51 Biden was his veep
- 52 Recipe amts.
- 53 Unpopular Roman emperor
- 54 Victory boast
- 55 Aerie, e.g.
- 56 Kerosene or propane
- 57 Brainstorm product
- 58 Feeling blue

ACROSS

- 1 Spanish "more"
 4 Table salt, to a chemist
 8 NBA great O'Neal, to fans
 12 "__ my words ..."
 13 French fashion monthly
 14 __ Xtra: Dr Pepper rival
 15 With some exceptions
 18 Queasiness
 19 High degrees
 20 GP's gp.
 21 Mint-garnished rum cocktail
 24 Will Ferrell holiday film
 27 Place to pick up tickets at a theater, perhaps
 31 Speaker output
 32 Impulse
 33 Tofu base
 36 Ancestry.com service
 39 With 51-Down, soothing plant
 40 Boxing matches
 41 Thin Mint or Trefoil
 48 Fine and dandy
 49 Gretel's brother
 50 Online addresses: Abbr.
 51 Workshop clamp
 52 Pouch spun by a spider
 55 Goal of store loyalty programs, and what can be found in 15-, 27-, and 41-Across
 60 At all
 61 Country road
 62 Son of Hera and Zeus
 63 TV warrior princess played by Lucy Lawless
 64 Southernmost Great Lake
 65 Tied the knot

DOWN

- 1 Car with a clutch
 2 Circle segments
 3 __-Ball: arcade game
 4 Pickleball barrier
 5 Pie __ mode
 6 Medical center
 7 Gave for a while



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- 8 Mani-pedi spots
 9 Casual hellos
 10 Fiver
 11 TD pass throwers, perhaps
 12 Florida metropolitan area with an Art Deco District
 16 Holiday Inn competitor
 17 French pet name that also means "cabbage"
 18 Casual denial
 22 Lena of "Chocolat"
 23 Former "Idol" judge, to fans
 24 Raison d'__
 25 Trio on a stool
 26 Guitar ridge
 28 Tag
 29 Billiards stick
 30 Bananas
 33 Epic story
 34 Mixed bag
 35 Big name in peppermint patties
 36 Pour affection (on)
 37 Cell centers
 38 From __ Z
 40 Help wait tables
 42 Branch of Islam
 43 Stronghold with a keep
 44 Sign of weak cellular service
 45 Smooched
 46 "Skip me"
 47 Keyboard key that exits full-screen mode
 51 See 39-Across
 53 Nibble (at)
 54 "Sommersby" actor Richard
 55 Harrison of "My Fair Lady"
 56 New Year's __
 57 Calligrapher's tool
 58 Aussie's college
 59 "Catch my drift?"



Get Up and Go

Ross Trudeau & Jessie Trudeau

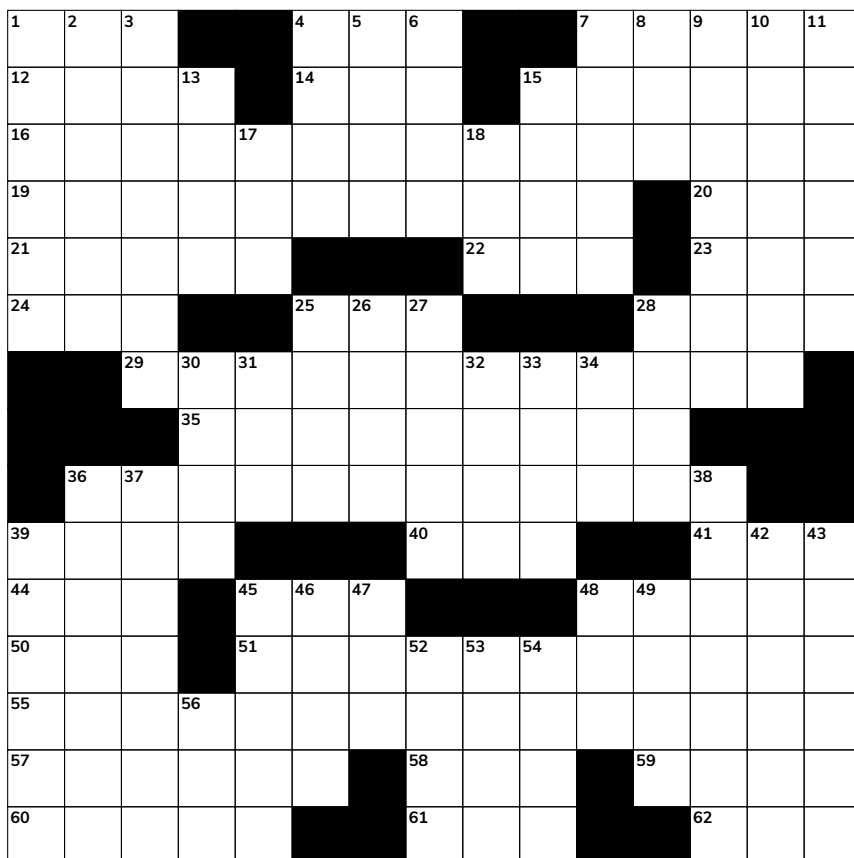
Across

- 1 Social connections
4 *J. Edgar* org.
7 Book character who uses a cane, and dresses like a candy cane
12 Honky-____
14 Hasty getaway
15 Name that's an anagram of "name ID"
16 1988 film about an East L.A. mathematics teacher
19 Get high before getting up
20 Prefix for "cycle"
21 Sign of fire?
22 "LET'S GO!"
23 Human Rights Day mo.
24 Marbled bread
25 It's stranded in pairs?
28 Patronize a 35-Across
29 Hustle influencer's motto
35 Type of informal ristorante
36 Chain whose employees 16-Across?
39 Number that becomes a different number when rotated
40 "Mm-hmm"
41 Farm share program, for short

- 44 Like
45 Two-time Oscar winner Mahershala
48 Sounded satisfied
50 Opposite of norte
51 Chain whose employees 19-Across?
55 Chain whose employees 29-Across?
57 Virgil epic
58 Early * consumer?
59 Take off
60 "We agree!"
61 They produce multiple outs (Abbr.)
62 Some Monopoly properties (Abbr.)

Down

- 1 Them's fightin' words!
2 Public official?
3 More windy
4 Caramel-topped custard
5 Asia or Europe, but not North America
6 Site with a Top Box Office section
7 Wrexham A.F.C.'s country
8 Pal, in Paris



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- 9 How much-worn clothes often appear
10 Diving board area
11 How curry may be served
13 Joint with a cap
15 Triple ____ (hockey feint in *The Mighty Ducks*)
17 Gov. lawyers
18 1/365,000th of a millennium
25 University figure with a "list"
26 Its alphabet includes Romeo and Juliet
27 Like a texter left on read by their crush
28 Cameron of Hollywood
30 "I'm represented by this meme"
31 Hindu honorific
32 "Rad"
33 Rock climber's asset
34 *Rogue One* actor Ahmed
36 Waters down
37 Firing off a string of indignant comments, for example
38 Pine after
39 Capital of the Bahamas
42 Mollusk named after a human facial feature
43 Some venomous snakes
45 NBC sitcom about a high school science teacher
46 Honor with praise
47 Corporation abbreviation
48 Blood-typing letters
49 Doggy day care cacophony
52 ____ out a victory (barely won)
53 Respond to an Apple Invites note
54 Studs in a bullpen?
56 ____ Speedwagon



Listening to our Bodies

Emma Lawson

ACROSS

- 1 Moves like a dog's tail
- 5 Ziti or fusilli
- 10 Browser's code
- 14 "Mind blown!"
- 15 Goodbye, in French
- 16 Opera highlight
- 17 Brain power
- 18 Eminent
- 19 "Barbie" actor Gosling
- 20 "While we're on the subject..."
- 23 Ariana Grande's "God ____ Woman"
- 25 Opposite of post-
- 26 Mythical Himalayan beasts
- 27 Traditional Thanksgiving meals
- 32 Hints
- 33 Bug spray ingredient
- 34 Word before tight or loose
- 35 Nathan Fielder, by the end of season 2 of "The Rehearsal"

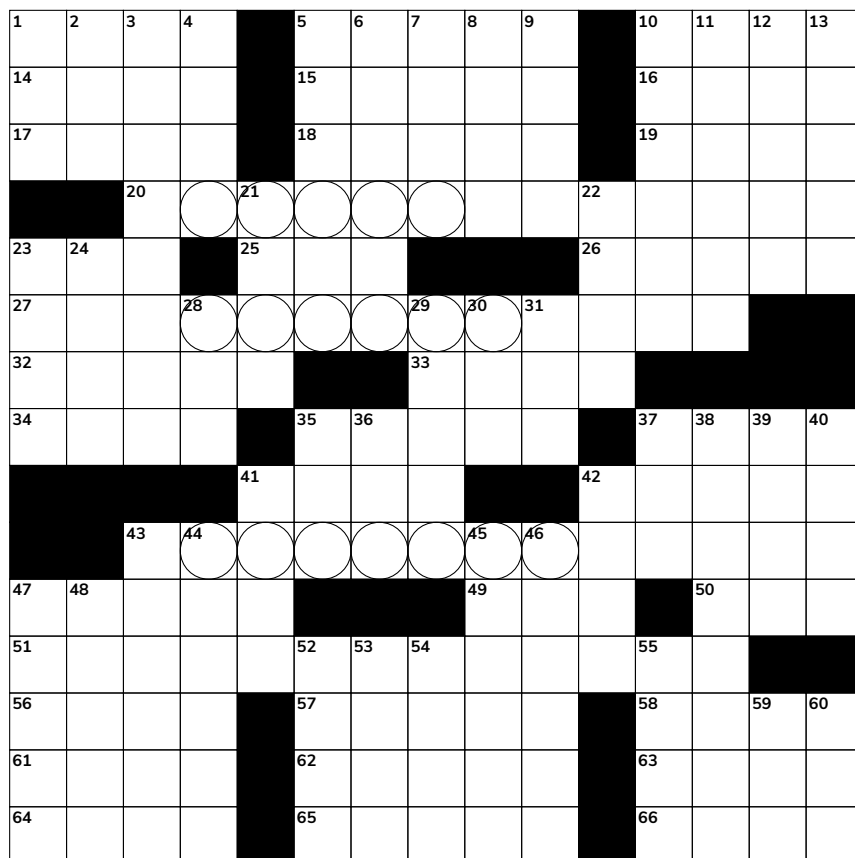
- 37 ____ spumante
- 41 Make less difficult
- 42 Breakfast fruit
- 43 Tan
- 47 Crucial artery

- 49 "The Summer I Turned Pretty" creator Jenny
- 50 Winter hrs. in Victoria
- 51 Confess one's feelings and secrets, or, a hint to what words can be found in disarray within 20-, 27-, and 43-Across
- 56 Org. whose Artemis 2 mission will bring humanity back to the cislunar environment
- 57 Pet collar attachment

- 58 Captain of the Pequod
- 61 Setting for "The Sound of Music"
- 62 Bean type used for refried beans
- 63 Western tie
- 64 Subtle summons
- 65 "What thou ____ when thou dost wake / Do it for thy true love take": "A Midsummer's Night Dream"
- 66 Ballpark figure

DOWN

- 1 Common URL starter
- 2 Sushi tuna
- 3 "I must be off!"



- 4 Miss Canada accessory
- 5 Place to stock soup cans
- 6 Absolutely loved
- 7 Place
- 8 Swarm (with)
- 9 German carmaker
- 10 "____, Better, Faster, Stronger" (Daft Punk song)
- 11 Secret meetings
- 12 U.S. city with a large Cuban population
- 13 Road divisions
- 21 Primatologists' subjects
- 22 No, in Russian

- 23 Bug bite symptom
- 24 Toni Morrison novel
- 28 Big beer order
- 29 Wastes gas, maybe
- 30 Keanu's role in "The Matrix"
- 31 Tennis court divider
- 35 Ms. ____-Man
- 36 Kinda
- 37 ____ Lingus
- 38 Powerful hockey strike
- 39 Many Christmas presents
- 40 The "I" in MIT (abbr.)

- 41 Citation abbr.
- 42 List to order from
- 43 What Brits call chips
- 44 After a long wait
- 45 "Well, darn"
- 46 Housefly larva
- 47 "Easy!"
- 48 Shimmery stones
- 52 Athlete's woe (with "the")
- 53 Garfield's pal
- 54 ____ Reader
- 55 Bar bills
- 59 In the manner of
- 60 Web nuisance



All Together Now by Paul Coulter

edited by Peter Gordon (xwords@optonline.net, www.FireballCrosswords.com)

FIREBALL

Crosswords

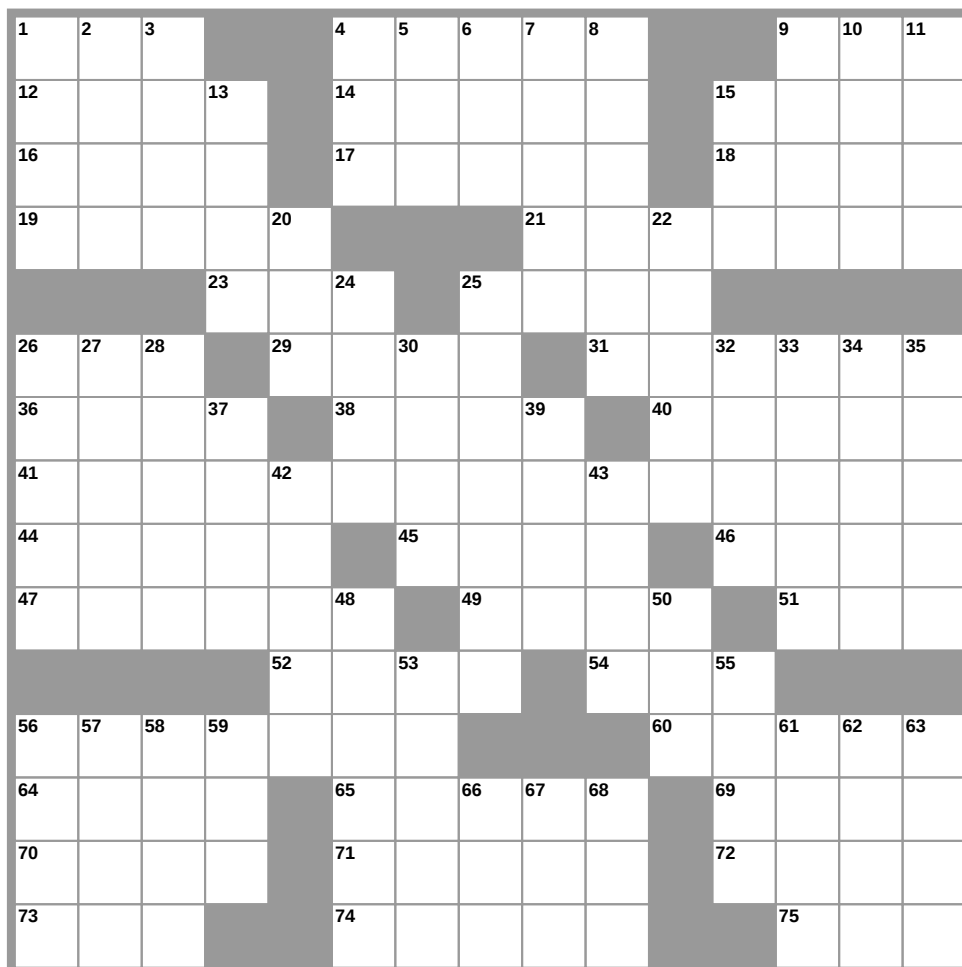
ACROSS

- 1 Title with a tilde
- 4 Villain who lusts after Princess Jasmine
- 9 Lucrative
- 12 Cantab rivals
- 14 Peak performance
- 15 Stucco strip
- 16 Scatty performer's first name?
- 17 Keep confined
- 18 Shield border, in heraldry
- 19 Reacts to a stressful situation
- 21 What a lost soul might seek to do
- 23 Hockey Hall of Famer Robitaille
- 25 Pal of Porky Pine
- 26 Giant stopper, say
- 29 Goggle
- 31 Unreal
- 36 "When that lawn mower cuts off your toes, don't come running to me" humorist Bombeck
- 38 Cape Town cash
- 40 Part of MSM
- 41 Purpose of orthodontics
- 44 Chutzpah
- 45 Barter, in Britain
- 46 Garb for Galba
- 47 Longtime USWNT goalkeeper Naeher
- 49 Blue hue
- 51 Circle
- 52 Control
- 54 Short snort
- 56 When the standings matter most
- 60 Chicago team, informally
- 64 Clearance, e.g.
- 65 Consummate
- 69 Frosted
- 70 TV type
- 71 Small salamanders
- 72 Where most people live
- 73 Fish catcher
- 74 It "clarifies, cuts through, and captures the essence of the evolutionary spirit," according to Gordon Gekko
- 75 Takes in

DOWN

- 1 Look beyond
- 2 Everywhere at once
- 3 Petroleum bought or sold at an agreed price for delivery at a specified later date
- 4 Cutting remark

- 5 Prior
- 6 It's phoned in
- 7 "El mejor ____ del hombre" (perro)
- 8 Go back (on)
- 9 Arctic regions
- 10 If nothing else
- 11 Dixie
- 13 TV attorney Goodman
- 15 Like the winning score in stroke play
- 20 Toy with a distinctive face
- 22 Singer whose film debut was in "Higher and Higher" with Sinatra
- 24 Steal some wheels from
- 25 268-mile national trail in England with a small section in Scotland
- 26 Parent company of Meritain Health
- 27 Angler's basket
- 28 Filing aid often at your fingertips
- 30 Eucharist plates
- 32 En route
- 33 "Later"
- 34 Hint
- 35 Noted name in restaurant reviews
- 37 Off-road rides, for short
- 39 Creator of the spy Bernard Samson
- 42 Literature Nobelism a quarter-century before Neruda
- 43 Left half of a nearly impossible split in bowling
- 48 Sun shade
- 50 Topper
- 53 Snake with a zigzag pattern
- 55 Classroom assistant, for short
- 56 Meets with, as hard times
- 57 Dark brew
- 58 Rill
- 59 Spent the dog days (at)
- 61 Infantile
- 62 Repeated exclamation in the lyrics to "Bohemian Rhapsody"
- 63 Juicy fruits
- 66 Female who sounds just like you?
- 67 Had a spotted dick, say
- 68 Trip-taker's letters





Pulling Some Strings

David Karp

ACROSS

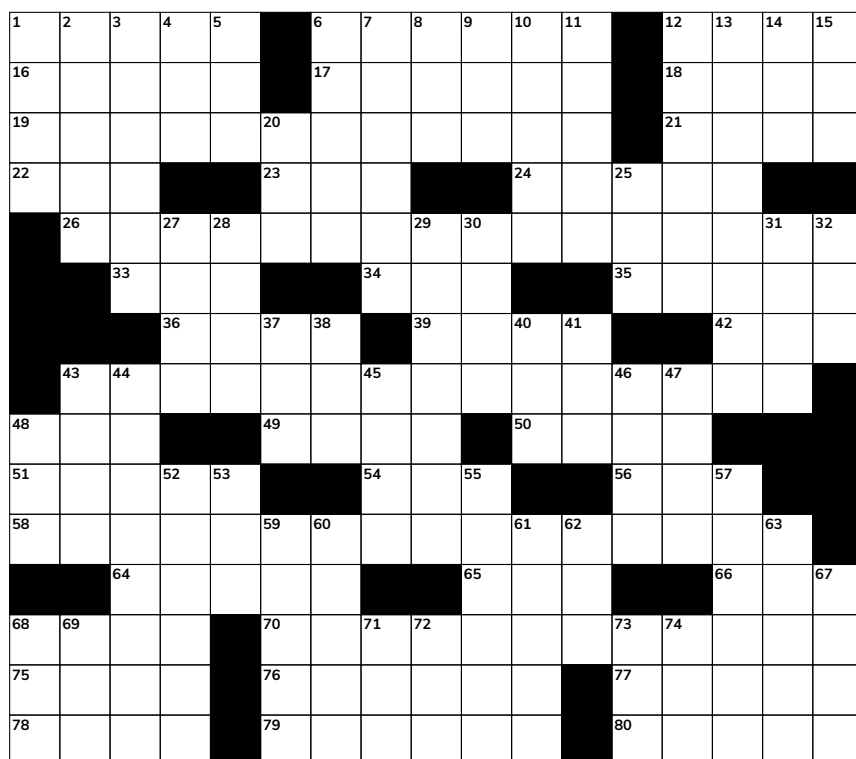
- 1 __ Dinner
 6 "Are you kidding me?"
 12 Vertical wall support
 16 Actor Pascal, whose "The Last of Us" was filmed in Canada
 17 Capital of Cuba
 18 Hawaiian raw fish dish
 19 Rank that's the subject of Gilbert and Sullivan's "I Am the Very Model"
 21 Once more
 22 Day-__ paint
 23 Edmonton CFL player
 24 Publicist, in slang
 26 Baseball's Winnipeg Goldeyes or hockey's Calgary Wranglers
 33 Henri ou Guillaume
 34 Small inlet
 35 Praise enthusiastically
 36 Extremely nitpicky
 39 Pumpernickel and others
 42 Operative
 43 Difference in resale price from a pre-collision car to a post-collision repaired car
 48 Zilch
 49 Instrument that tunes the orchestra at the start of a concert

- 50 Sport that's Japanese for "striking one another"
 51 Places to order Montreal smoked meat
 54 Chem class locale
 56 Alias letters
 58 Pokémon Go technology
 64 Ceremony host
 65 Egg cells
 66 Tee-__
 68 Ballerina's skirt
 70 Really resonate ... or what the starts of 19-, 26-, 43- and 58-Across do?

- 75 O'Toole who was Canada's Leader of the Opposition from 2020 to 2022
 76 Person who tries to track down lost parcels or people
 77 Disney deer
 78 Poker buy-in
 79 Smooth as silk
 80 Break the rules

DOWN

- 1 Deloitte competitor
 2 Sphere of influence
 3 Neighbour
 4 To and __
 5 Blue Jays, on a scoreboard
 6 Petro Canada competitor
 7 Long (for)

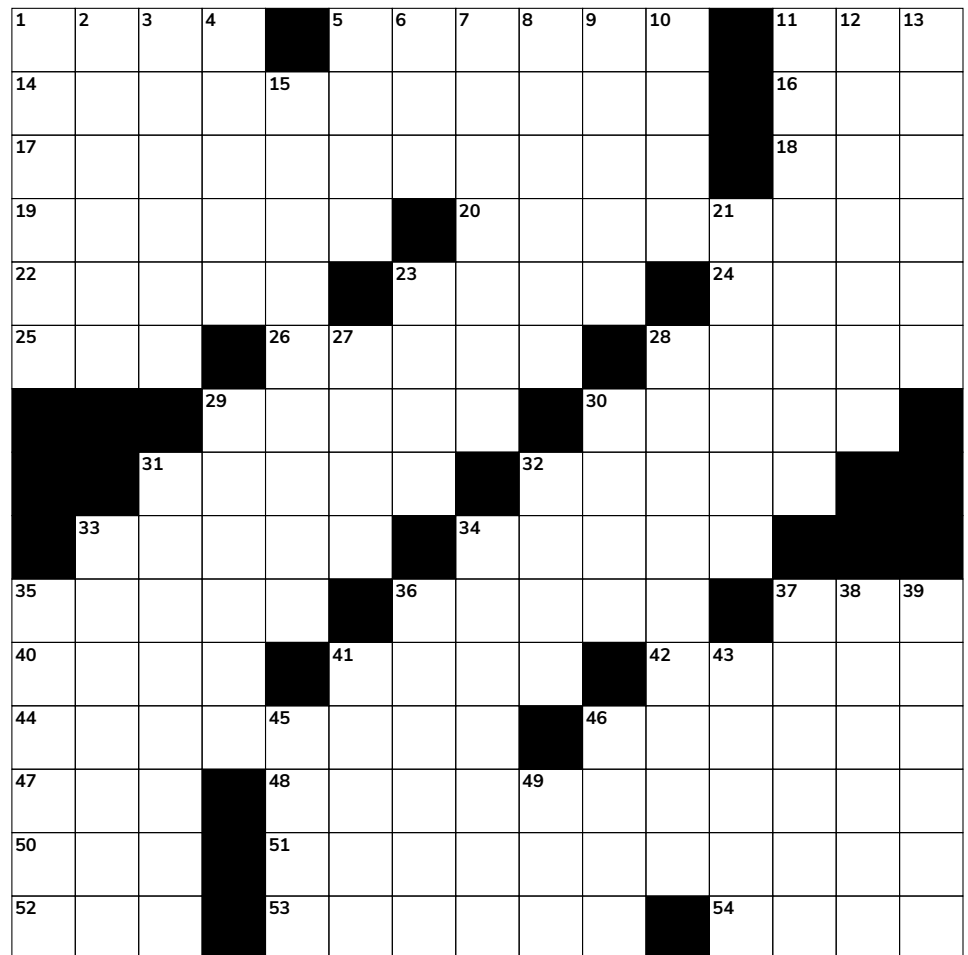


2025

- 8 Night before
 9 Audiologist's focus
 10 Screw-up
 11 "Monster's Ball" actress Berry
 12 Parent company of Starlink, which provides satellite internet to thousands of remote Canadian homes
 13 Japanese deep-fried pork cutlets
 14 Small stringed instrument, for short
 15 Morning moisture
 20 Switz. neighbour
 25 Consumed
 27 Linguist Chomsky
 28 Luxury chain that operates Toronto's King Edward Hotel
 29 Scatterbrain
 30 Marvin of Motown
 31 Have the blues
 32 Foxlike
 37 365 días
 38 Mark Carney's party (abbr.)
 40 Singer Sheeran and actor Asner
 41 "Law & Order" spinoff, familiarly
 43 God, in Gaspé
 44 "This one's my treat"
 45 Bottom of a shoe
 46 Human-rights lawyer Clooney
 47 Norse trickster god
 48 Silence-enforcing doc
 52 Protected, in a way
 53 "Just a __!"
 55 In need of repair
 57 Comfortable
 59 Tree houses?
 60 Colourful aquarium fish
 61 Without exception
 62 Small battery
 63 __ maté (caffeinated drink)
 67 Fix typos
 68 Coffee alternative
 69 Large coffee holder
 71 First sign in the Chinese zodiac
 72 Here, in French
 73 "Schitt's Creek" network
 74 "Fat chance!"

ACROSS

- 1 Activist Lee known as the "Grandmother of Juneteenth"
 5 Fakémon images, e.g.
 11 "What's __ deal?"
 14 Pitcher's start
 16 [raises index finger]
 17 Boundary-breaking home concept
 18 Pithier version of lorem ipsum text
 19 __ and gentler
 20 Sonic, notably
 22 Even a skosh
 23 Canadian conservative
 24 Repetitive email sign-off
 25 "__ queen!"
 26 Send a return over the net
 28 Made less sharp
 29 Signs of safe traffic flow
 30 Oaxacan sauces that can have more than 30 ingredients
 31 Set available at thenounproject.com
 32 Two score
 33 Rep
 34 Mutual aid groups
 35 Gets hot under the collar, say
 36 Ken's job, in "Barbie"
 37 Fun time
 40 Dish (out)
 41 Remove from a 46-Down
 42 Struck down
 44 Deep-fried South Asian street food
 46 Calm
 47 "And you __?"
 48 Ugly duckling anthem of 1975
 50 Unit of illuminance
 51 Fierce competition
 52 Competition with a Golden Buzzer, to fans
 53 Supremely miffed
 54 "i cant w/ u"



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DOWN

- 1 "If you say so"
 2 Seed in some 30-Across
 3 Where to see the stars
 4 1980s US Open three-peater
 5 Word with job or craft
 6 Formicarium dweller
 7 Uhura player
 8 Stick
 9 Like some voices and wetlands
 10 Sharp flavor
 11 Sweet, chili-infused condiment
 12 What highly motivated people may have zero goals for?
 13 One making waves
 15 Zoology class figures
 21 Does a happy dance
 23 Bill-collecting label
 27 Nunito sans, for one
 28 Lyrical story of unrequited love
 29 Act opener
 30 Class offered by MITx, e.g.
 31 Court call
 32 Lacking sparkle
 33 Under-the-table purchase
 34 Overwhelm
 35 Animal also known as a rooibok
 36 Brown bread specialist
 37 "We did good!"
 38 Angela Bassett's "9-1-1" role
 39 Taken care of
 41 Album ender
 43 Rest stop along a highway
 45 Some legal places to make records
 46 Headquarters
 49 Some execs



The Crossword: Tuesday, April 15, 2025

Paolo Pasco

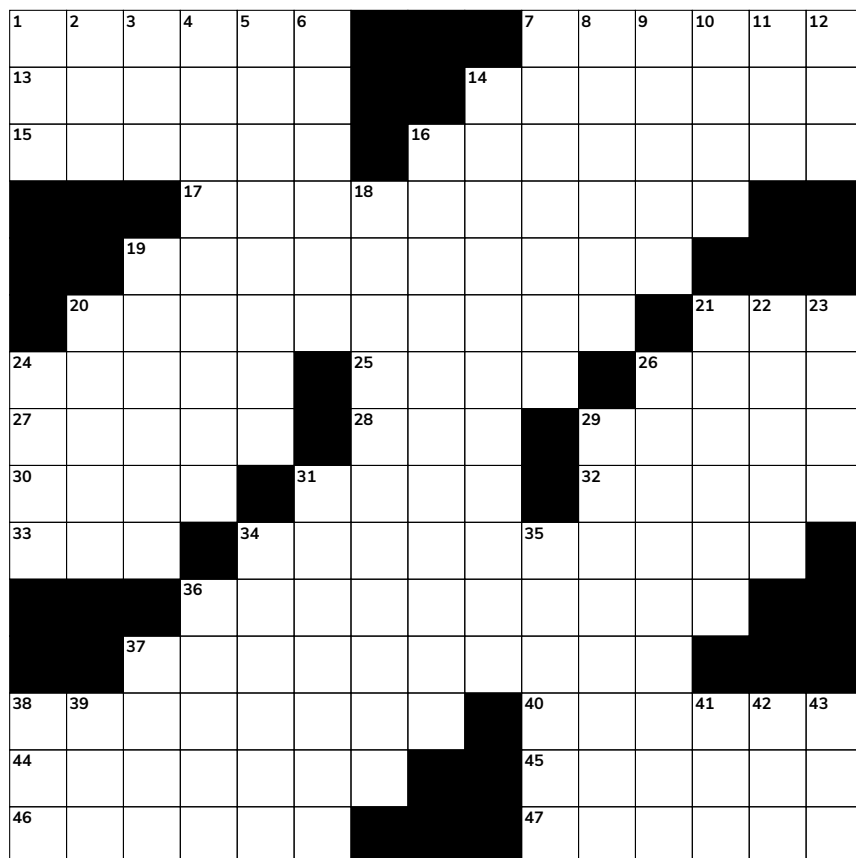
ACROSS

- 1 Blood-bank supply
7 One of the twenty in "Drop and give me twenty!"
13 Word with line or dollar
14 California city that was home to the Auto Club Speedway
15 Knights' rides
16 Sacked, like the Vikings' offensive line?
17 Acts all hoity-toity
19 Finds a spot for someone else?
20 L.A. Sparks player who was the first to dunk in a W.N.B.A. game
21 Stat fretted over during college-app season, maybe
24 Biblical unit of measure
25 Wanes
26 Pupil shape for a cat in a sunbeam
27 Iron ____ (basis of some pigment powders)
28 "In Which Kanga and Baby ____ Come to the Forest, and Piglet Has a Bath" (chapter of "Winnie-the-Pooh")
29 African country featured in Yaa Gyasi's novel "Homegoing"
30 Shape of a party hat

- 31 Small songbirds that may be "crested" or "bearded"
32 Reduced to rubble
33 URL ending for a community-service group
34 Ones driven on a camping trip?
36 Mastermind of the operation
37 Donned one's big-boy pants, say
38 Seiji Ozawa and Leonard Bernstein, for two
40 Make a recorder-like sound, e.g.
44 Invertebrate such as a leech or earthworm
45 Swathe
46 Liquid fuel that burns more slowly than gasoline
47 Extends, as a subscription

DOWN

- 1 Network whose logo is a stylized depiction of three heads in profile
2 Portion of land
3 "The Blob That ____ Everyone" ("Goosebumps" book)
4 "We tried it your way-now let me show you how it's really done"
5 Change from one key to another
6 Dutch river with an eponymous brewery
7 North-pointing member of Ursa Minor
8 Dissimilar to
9 7-Down and others
10 The Weird Sisters in "Macbeth," for example
11 "Je Suis ____ Legende" (French title for "I Am Legend")
12 Soft paw part
14 Ultimate obstacles for gamers
16 Gets the champagne flowing
18 Metal bar in a wheel-turning assembly
19 Just feeling good, slangily
20 Las Vegas hotel with a pyramid and a sphinx
21 Ilana who co-created "Broad City"
22 Yearns (for)
23 Only slightly
24 Tennis champ Gauff
26 Blackmail, e.g.
29 Level after kindergarten, typically
31 Offshoot of a climbing plant
34 Dot on an "i" or a "j"
35 Professional who works with their buds?
36 Bouquet's dozen, perhaps
37 Something small from a parent
38 P.O.'d
39 Nickname for the title character of "Anora"
41 Uno e due
42 What the bill becomes at the end of "I'm Just a Bill," in "Schoolhouse Rock"
43 Installments of a TV series, for short



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Championship -- CHOPPY Clues

Christina Iverson / Edited by Brad Wilber

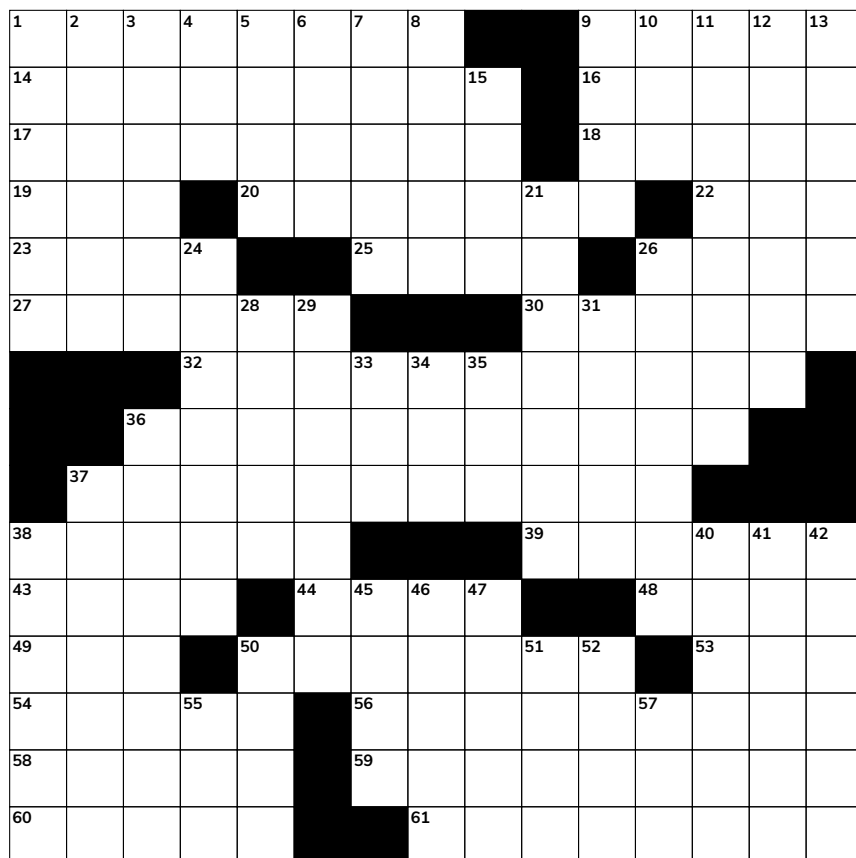
ACROSS

- 1 It often features sliders and taters
- 9 Rock covering
- 14 Someone who needs space?
- 16 What your coach always wants you to bring
- 17 Bidding and bluff-calling pastime since the Inca Empire
- 18 Python pro
- 19 "For example ..."
- 20 Cupcake-filling aid
- 22 "You can't sit here" inits.?
- 23 Shortly, in verse
- 25 Quench
- 26 Burst of sound from church bells
- 27 Wuthering Heights and Northanger Abbey
- 30 PG-13 name for the card game also known as contract whist or Up and Down the River
- 32 More than just challenged
- 36 Power tool with a water supply that reduces dust
- 37 Cuts adjacent to Delmonico steaks
- 38 Larger of Mars's two moons, whose name is Greek for "fear"
- 39 Slung, in slang
- 43 Absorbed

- 44 Duct tape's plethora
- 48 Free ____ (climbing method)
- 49 Collection agcy. with a commissioner
- 50 Elementary school textbook of yesteryear
- 53 Torque symbol from the Greek alphabet
- 54 "Palace," in Hindi
- 56 Butter-melting sites
- 58 Material that becomes what it often constructs, if you switch the second and fourth letters
- 59 Type of medical professional played by Ana de Armas in "Knives Out"
- 60 Looney Tunes character who is typically fuming?
- 61 Rhyming selection method after which the one with the slowest index finger is "It"

DOWN

- 1 Tree resin in Christmas candles
- 2 Korean Air alternative
- 3 Extend a visit
- 4 Go wrong
- 5 Harmony Cobel or Seth Milchick, on "Severance"



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- 6 ____ Serkis, actor in many motion-capture roles
- 7 Hideouts
- 8 Saint ____ (island nation south of Martinique)
- 9 Burn off nervous energy, perhaps
- 10 Adverb like "back"
- 11 Thai noodle dish served with a slight char from the wok
- 12 Word with City or Isle
- 13 Frequent action when playing craps
- 15 Rental for an outdoor wedding
- 21 Branch of earth science that might examine the equatorial bulge
- 24 Gwen Stefani's band
- 26 They've often been coined
- 28 Company in Mr. Microphone infomercials (CONOR anagram)
- 29 Is a sycophant (to)
- 31 Swiftness
- 33 Cold call?
- 34 First name in Russian literature
- 35 "I should get there by ..."
- 36 Where a transmission might go missin'?
- 37 Obvious front
- 38 Like many instincts
- 40 Title "neighbor" in a Miyazaki film
- 41 Slip past on a clock
- 42 Extinguishes
- 45 Casual meeting?
- 46 John with an EGOT
- 47 Effect in an iconic "Chariots of Fire" scene
- 50 Lot
- 51 Anticipatory times
- 52 Thinker Descartes
- 55 Prez on pennies
- 57 Barge puller



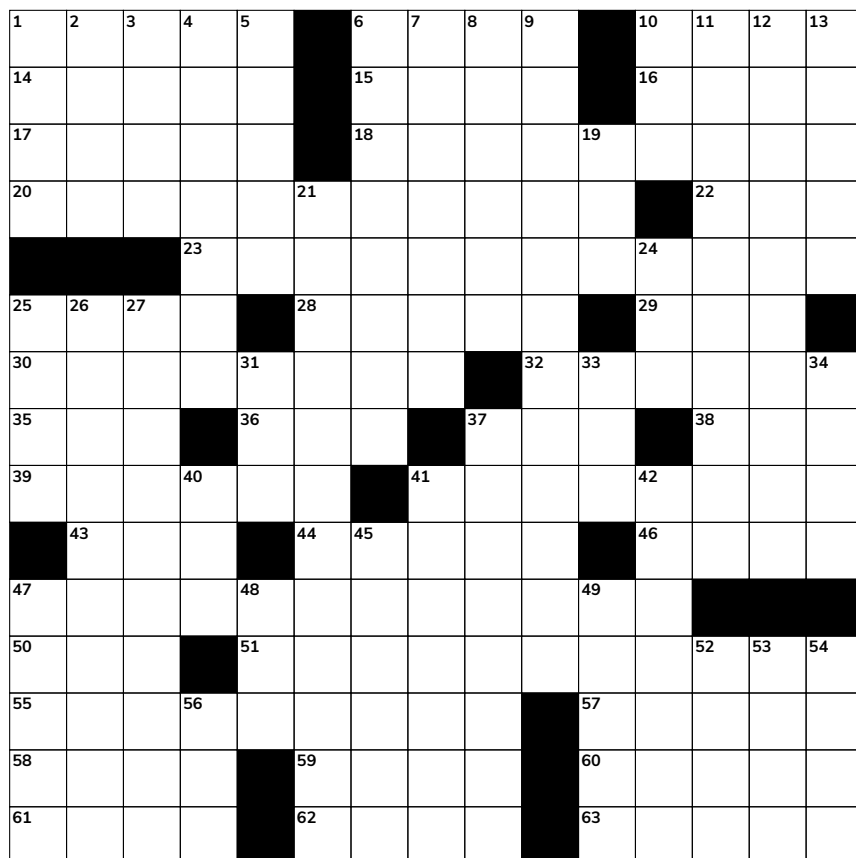
Themeless

Ben Tolkin

ACROSS

- 1 Nation in the Six Nations rugby championship along with England, France, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, apparently
- 6 Gel for growing bacteria
- 10 "Insecure" creator Rae
- 14 Lonesome calf
- 15 Got up
- 16 Speak first, at a comedy set
- 17 Speak even before the person in 16-Across I guess
- 18 Conductor and namesake of Massachusetts's best ice cream shop
- 20 Makes plain?
- 22 Pic on a biceps
- 23 Kick line?
- 25 Band whose best song and video is "This Too Shall Pass"
- 28 Keeps in, as an editor
- 29 Subject of "Guerrillero Heroico"
- 30 One featured in 47-Across
- 32 "Just because, that's why!"
- 35 Many characters on "The Pitt"
- 36 "___ All That" (2021 gender-swapped remake of a 1999 teen comedy)
- 37 Even further away than thither
- 38 Ran into
- 39 "Y'all come back now, ___?"
- 41 Label on a delicious-looking silica packet
- 43 They followed tapes
- 44 Dawn, old-timely
- 46 :
- 47 "Inside the NBA" segment where... Diesel fumes?
- 50 Interjection popularized by 1952's "Blackbeard the Pirate"
- 51 Like many an online ad
- 55 Prime Minister from "New Labour"
- 57 The cruellest month, according to T. S. Eliot
- 58 Within
- 59 Rears at sea?
- 60 Symbols of England or Ethiopia
- 61 Brings home
- 62 Wild side?
- 63 "Dear ___" - 2024 film in which a dyslexic child accidentally writes to 47-Down

DOWN



© 2025

- 5 "Cripes"
- 6 "L.E.S. ___" - song that Santigold had to clarify "it's not a French thing," but about pretentious Manhattanites
- 7 Further off the wall?
- 8 It counts for a point in a hockey player's statistics
- 9 Microgenre of feel-good dance anthems from the late 2000s
- 10 It carries a charge
- 11 Freestyle, maybe
- 12 One of 100 colored dots on a chart
- 13 "Sweet Love" singer Baker
- 19 Executioner's tool in ancient Egypt
- 21 Nicole Richie and Cameron Diaz, e.g.
- 24 Obama-era health legislature, initially
- 25 "Good lord!"
- 26 Film that debuted in 1935?
- 27 "Phooey!"
- 31 Pop song "___ La La" or rock group ___ Na Na
- 33 Word before Cat or Caps
- 34 Any of the first three Holy Roman Emperors
- 37 Response to "Want to try this Icelandic fermented shark?"
- 40 Letters of the law??
- 41 Genetic testing tools
- 42 Food fish originally native to the Nile
- 45 Hairy, slangily
- 47 Entity accidentally summoned at Christmas in the film mentioned at 63-Down
- 48 Place to get washed
- 49 Iridescent gems
- 52 "King James," for short
- 53 It gets caught in a trap
- 54 Ubiquitous Halloween costume of 2014
- 56 RB's gains



The Crossword: Monday, August 18, 2025

Erik Agard

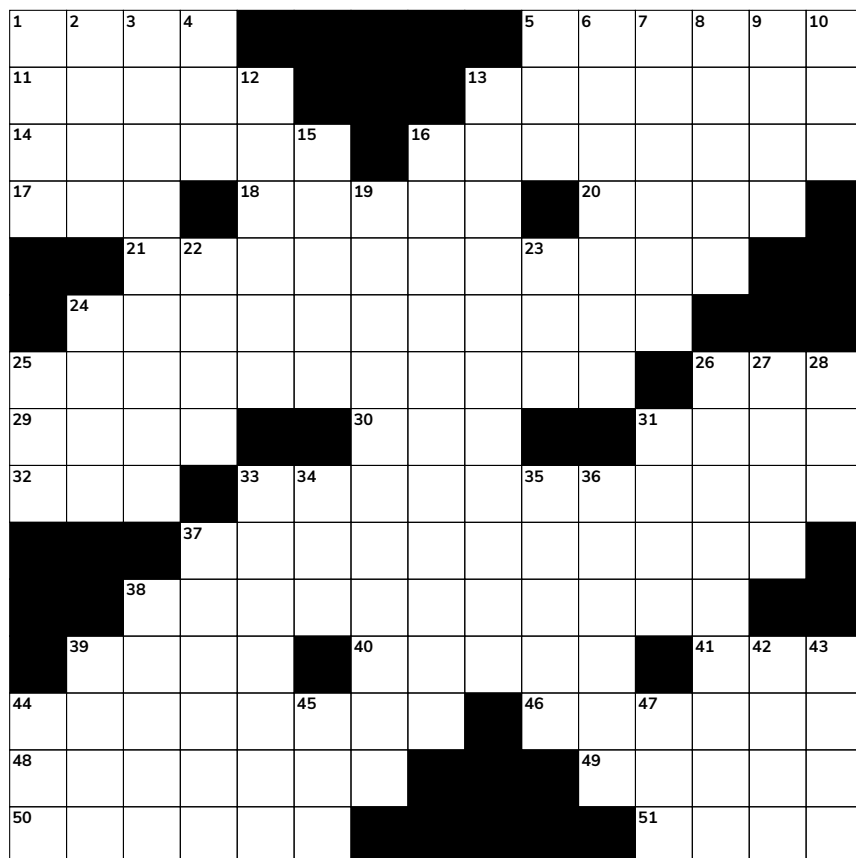
ACROSS

- 1 Yellow ingredient in a cake, perhaps
5 What Cordyceps is a genus of
11 Tuning leaders for orchestras
13 "Pure ____" (2013 Lorde album)
14 Polymer in some Ping-Pong paddles
16 Try to reproduce
17 Opening for a thread
18 Stelliform parts of some moles
20 N.F.L. quarterback Smith
21 Trail of information left by an internet user, so to speak
24 Moving targets?
25 Ad infinitum
26 Exec concerned with budget allocation
29 Hot-tub features
30 Actor Wallach
31 Become less frigid
32 Texting abbreviation
33 Native people also known as the Nakota

- 37 Birds of prey seen in old-growth forests in the Pacific Northwest
38 Second most densely populated U.S. state
39 Places with exhibits
40 Put back to the default
41 ____ au vin
44 Laughs with delight
46 Feeling of familiarity
48 Tap alternative
49 Mettle-detecting question
50 Northern New Jersey county named for a southern English county
51 Demographic of most pro-sports draft picks in 2025, briefly

DOWN

- 1 Farm fitting
2 Follow
3 They're deployed during some snail courtship rituals
4 "Good Burger" star Mitchell
5 Lead-in to slash, in fan fiction



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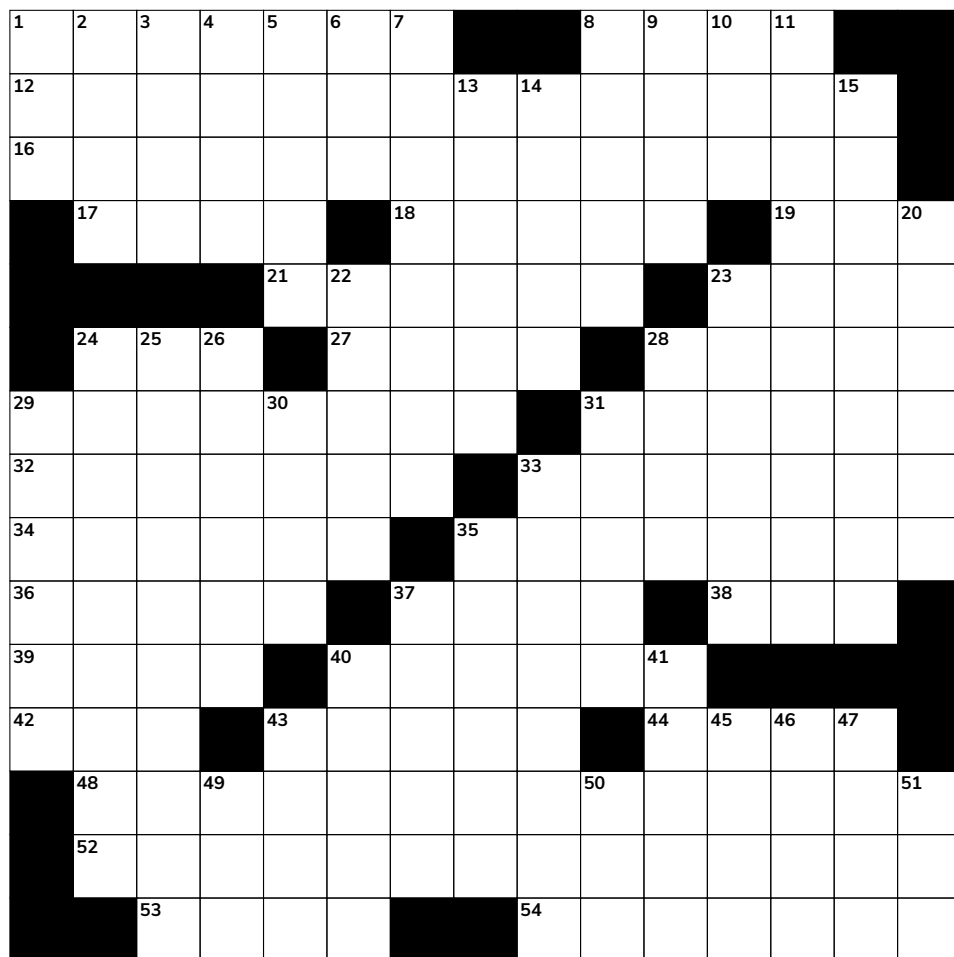
- 6 Host and winner of the first FIFA World Cup
7 At that
8 Tall tale figure?
9 A thing ____ itself
10 Notice
12 South Carolina river
13 Term of address for some religious leaders
15 Word after pot or dark
16 Pan and others
19 Kept in isolation
22 French ____ (region hosting the 2030 Winter Olympics)
23 Spelman's city, for short
24 Look
25 Attire for a king or queen, briefly?
26 Minor responsibility?
27 Things with blades
28 "What do I ____ you?"
31 End of many city nicknames
33 Philip or Thomas, but not Michael
34 Landscaping material
35 Did nothing
36 Went sailing, say
37 Bets against, in a way
38 Targets of salon touch-ups
39 Dynasty that followed the Shang
42 Cobbler's place
43 Ask a lot of?
44 Member of TV's "big three" that airs Big3 games
45 Clark's comic-book nemesis
47 British luxury car, casually

ACROSS

- 1 Low growth
 8 Green party?
 12 Shared loads?
 16 Game that's over in the blink of an eye
 17 Bit of sign language?
 18 Moves quickly?
 19 Made a lap
 21 Small plates of fish
 23 Argentine "other"
 24 "Watch this space" letters
 27 Oscar nominee Gladstone
 28 Penchant
 29 Go badly?
 31 Fume
 32 Fried fish at the Minnesota State Fair
 33 Long-haired cat breed
 34 Minor keys?
 35 Curry and others
 36 Bob Marley's "___ Little Birds"
 37 Macro type
 38 Medical discipline with a five-year residency, for short
 39 Round in a poker tournament
 40 Tandoori flatbread
 42 Lady bird
 43 Classic rock singer
 44 Literature Nobelst Tokarczuk
 48 Not too dirty
 52 Paperwork to let someone go
 53 Hungrily rummage through
 54 Class with a mean teacher?

DOWN

- 1 "Verily!"
 2 Atop
 3 Name-dropping abbr.
 4 Bite on a rope or cluster
 5 First sign of spring



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- 6 Holiday ___
 7 Pilates movement
 8 Some models with click wheels
 9 AED experts
 10 Rhyme of "Romeo" in the last couplet of "Romeo and Juliet"
 11 Peter Pan's destination
 13 Immune system components
 14 Matt who lived in a van down by the river on "SNL"
 15 Picture with a lot of space
 20 Arcade handful
 22 They're fired before being sent home
 23 Pajama Day attire
 24 What a load of junk!
 25 Salvation Army volunteer
 26 Out
 28 Australian model Miranda
 29 Justin.tv successor
 30 "Mayor ___": national politics moniker
 31 Balkan natives
 33 "Beau Is Afraid" theme
 35 Has second thoughts
 37 Moans and groans
 40 Oily compound
 41 Animal butters?
 43 Indigenous people known for reindeer herding
 45 Bullet train?
 46 Blowout
 47 Grinding along
 49 New ___: cap brand
 50 Start to show
 51 Short records, for short



Making It Work

by Lisa Senzel & Will Nediger/Edited by Mike Shenk

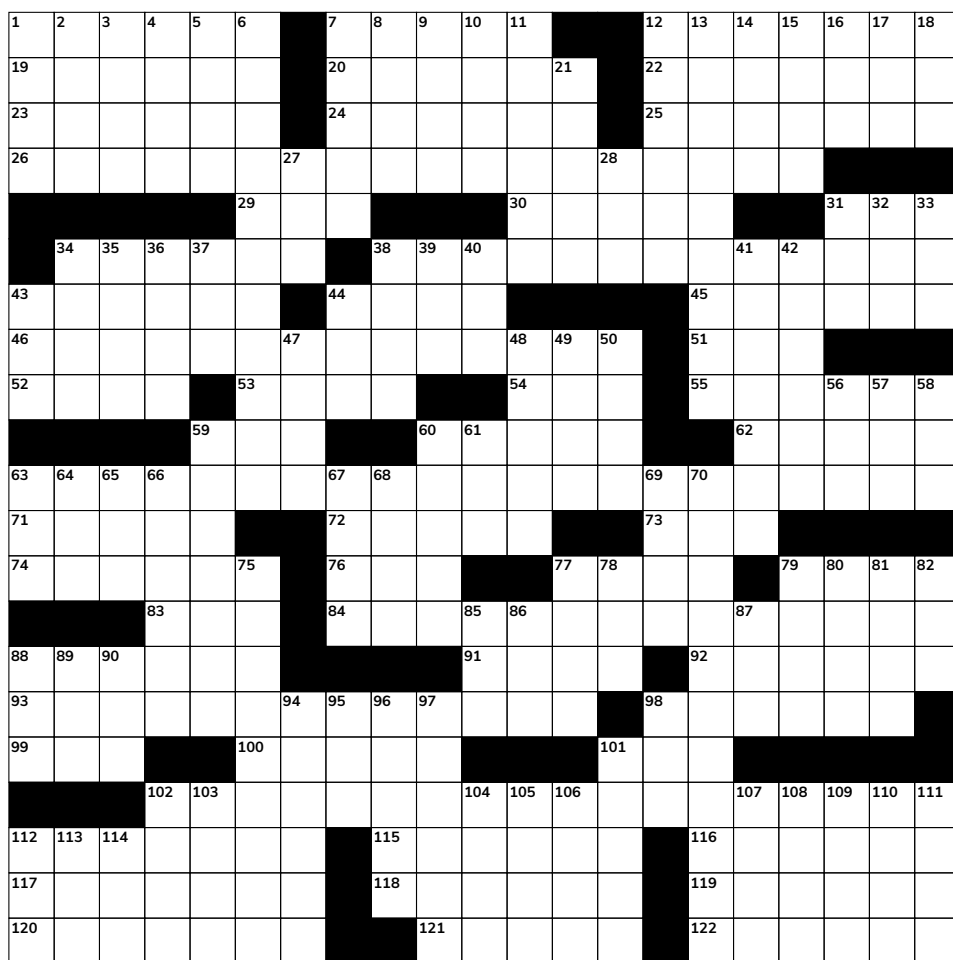
ACROSS

- 1 Use Drano on
- 7 Year's record
- 12 In disarray
- 19 2005 Matthew McConaughey movie
- 20 Shower sponge
- 22 Upscale
- 23 Vampire killer
- 24 Dojo mat
- 25 1960s cartoon hero with antennae
- 26 I dated a Communist, but he ____
- 29 Mini albums, for short
- 30 Unauthorized streams?
- 31 Opening day pitcher
- 34 Split level?
- 38 I dated a baseball player, but ultimately he was ____
- 43 Donning commencement attire
- 44 Una que ____ vez (once in a while)
- 45 Wind off of a spool
- 46 I dated an electrician, but we ____

- 83 Japan's longest-serving prime minister
- 84 I dated a firefighter, but ____
- 88 Cared for a friend's loyal friend, say
- 91 Earns, after expenses
- 92 Canine cover
- 93 I dated an author, but we weren't ____
- 98 Like Hera, according to Homer
- 99 Corporate VIP
- 100 Still in the game
- 101 Shout of insight
- 102 Now I've started dating a watchmaker, and ____
- 112 Drawing rooms?
- 115 Origami creations
- 116 Tranquil
- 117 Bygone self-serve eatery
- 118 Switch type
- 119 With nobody to turn to
- 120 Small sneakers?
- 121 Passed out
- 122 "The Communist Manifesto" co-author

DOWN

- 1 Cold War initials
- 2 "The Lion King" lioness
- 3 Spiced brew
- 4 Chip brand
- 5 Willie who was the first Black player in the NHL
- 6 Figure traditionally sporting a pointy hat and a beard
- 7 Choir section
- 8 Linguist Chomsky
- 9 Thing you might use to score?
- 10 Miles away
- 11 2021 NBA Rookie of the Year Ball
- 12 Like the taste of liquid barium
- 13 Go dateless for a while, maybe
- 14 Extremely eager
- 15 Resistance units



2025 The Wall Street Journal

- 16 Crumpet's go-with
- 17 Stop for a wayfarer
- 18 Summer hrs. in Chicago
- 21 Sharp, on a TV
- 27 Self-care site
- 28 Relatives, slangily
- 31 Number on a card, maybe
- 32 Stick for breaking
- 33 Sinuous swimmer
- 34 Windfall
- 35 Neighbor
- 36 River past Memphis
- 37 "Furthermore..."
- 38 Texter's "Then again..."
- 39 Caterer's container
- 40 Bygone M&M's color
- 41 Establishes
- 42 Conductor Toscanini
- 43 Letters once on 30 Rock
- 44 Halloween mo.
- 47 Spanish snack
- 48 Shapes the narrative?
- 49 Wallet fill
- 50 Like the baht
- 56 Cheering syllable
- 57 Peyton Manning's brother
- 58 Prestigious mil. award
- 59 Single-celled creatures
- 60 Sherlock's sleuthing sister in books and movies
- 61 Part of UCLA
- 63 Escape
- 64 World Cup cheer
- 65 Furniture hauler
- 66 Hyphen's longer kin
- 67 WWF and CARE, e.g.
- 68 Fall head over heels?
- 69 Classic soft drink
- 70 What a role model serves as
- 75 Stops being aimless
- 77 Eldest Haim sister
- 78 S&L offerings
- 79 Deferment
- 80 "You're not the boss ____!"
- 81 Iditarod need
- 82 Olive in the funnies
- 85 Vaccine basis
- 86 College party staple
- 87 Miami-to-NYC heading
- 88 Med school grad
- 89 Single
- 90 Classic Pontiac
- 94 VIP rosters
- 95 1004, in Roman numerals
- 96 Kick out
- 97 Booth Tarkington book
- 98 Shout of surprise
- 101 Practical skill
- 102 Couple at the altar?
- 103 Invisible box captive
- 104 British general Thomas at Bunker Hill
- 105 Swenson of "Benson"
- 106 Spill the beans
- 107 North Carolina university
- 108 Zesty flavor
- 109 Slurpee alternative
- 110 Rumor generator?
- 111 Ben & Jerry's rival
- 112 Dated
- 113 Wed. preceder
- 114 Hagen of Broadway

Just One Clue 2! (ft. 138 Cluers!)

Frisco17 (grid) + Gizmo Thwomp (organization) + 136 other amazing people

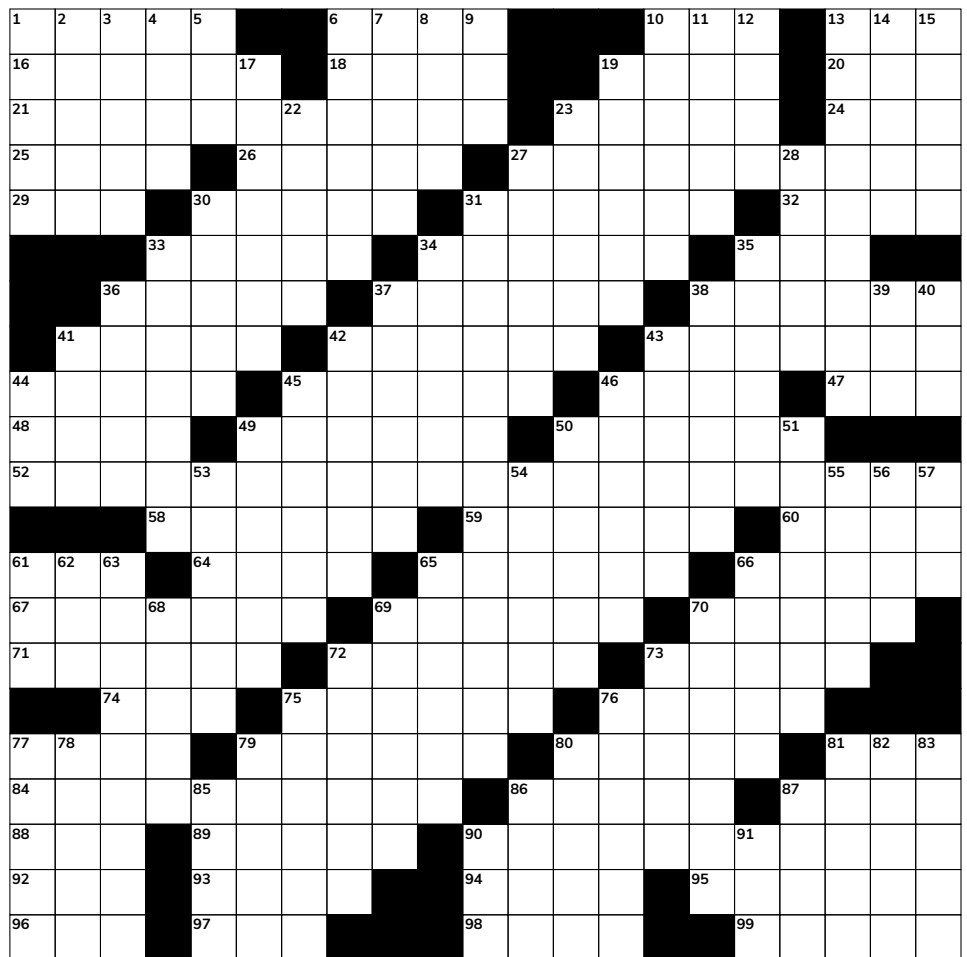
ACROSS

- 1 Got mad as hell and wasn't gonna take this anymore, perhaps [seasonal] (Maxx Birch)
- 6 big butte [Cameron Baba]
- 10 Pointless writer? [Howard Barkin]
- 13 <https://drive.google.com/file/d/10X DQ7MyruwYdeiVt25AKpMFzHjFe9K/view?usp=sharing> [ruiner_ii]
- 16 Like rain on your wedding day, if you're a wedding planner marrying a meteorologist [Joan Pak]
- 18 Polar line [Josh Solves]
- 19 *Macbeth* and *The Matrix* motif [Zach Sherwin]
- 20 It's countered with a jab [Andrew Lim]
- 21 What stops someone from using the incorrect fork at a formal meal (as opposed to the obviously much more correct slightly smaller fork) [commonrose]
- 23 Caesar's frenemy addressed animal (5) [Neville Fogarty]
- 24 "So do the proud men die, crucified, not on a cross of gold, but on a stake of humble..." (Narrator, on the death of the Green Goblin) [T. Campbell]
- 25 "no rapping tonight" why? you rap about patrick swayze everytime, it's embarrassing' ok [after one beer] uh oh y'all it's getting kinda... (legendary tweet by murrman5) [WordNerdBird]
- 26 Render usable after a snowstorm, maybe [Elise Corbin]
- 27 Lynch-penned film with a pencil factory [Trent H. Evans]
- 29 TO GET THE ANSWER TO THIS ENTRY, SOLVE THIS 7x7, ROTATIONALLY SYMMETRICAL, DIAGRAMLESS CROSSWORD: 1A. Actress Thompson / 4A. Of a cow, or a cow's output in German / 6A. Nebraska metropolis / 7A. Neither's partner / 9A. Program that reads out dones / 10A. "for Bart is... for anarchy!" / 12A. Mexican coins / 13A. Workout unit / 1D. Letters seen above x** / 2D. Makes overjoyed / 3D. Drei + funf / 4D. Depressed; glum / 5D. Possesses / 7D. Short snooze / 8D. With "the" and 11D, like this whole diagramless meta-clue thing... or where you'll find its answer (which is abbreviated, btw) / 11D. Inception prop [sus1d1p]
- 30 Laces up? [Ricky Billingsgate]
- 31 Elderly crossword streamer and Republican coked with awful urine (6) [Roy Johnson]
- 32 Poor soul hides, kinda (2,2) [RofisALot]
- 33 Party game whose purported record height is 40+ levels [Matt Gritzmacher]
- 34 Percussive instrument that often comes in pairs [LlamaFarmers]
- 35 *x, for 1 + x + x^2/2! + x^3/3! + * [Lila Goldenberg]
- 36 Name you could give to pretty much any mysterious colored liquid in a party bowl, regardless of how much shit is in it [Ryan Judge]
- 37 "A hundred men..." (unit of humanity in Toto's "Africa" that is unable to drag the protagonist away from... Africa? Who knows) [Ben Zimmer]
- 38 Make one's thoughts *very* well known to, say [Sid Sivakumar]
- 41 *Ivan Meets...* (The Clash song satirizing the tensions of the Cold War) [carter]
- 42 Success at basketball leads to hoots and hollers? (6) / ALT: Either side of Caliope after sacrificing self in exchange for start of saga (6) [akatokey]
- 43 Material for artworks collected in a gypsotheque [Matthew Luter]
- 44 Like the data in big data, backwards? [Taran Krishnamurthy]
- 45 Function that turns 0 into 1 [Zachary Gallardo]
- 46 Act like me with respect to words (especially given the self-imposed 5-minute time constraint I set for myself to give a clue for this (owing to the fact that I took a long time to write my clue for the previous collab (but this information will not help you solve the clue))), with "into this clue" (or maybe that's not quite the correct grammatical use of *with* in crossword clues but it's close enough) (have fun!) [Jacob *Conflux* Cohen, Puzzler Emeritus]

- 47 Pleasantly surprising 2013 Oscar winner about what artificial intelligence might REALLY be like (not at all what "AI" is now which isn't intelligent at all AMIRITE) [evieshmeeps]
- 48 *Good Will Hunting* screenwriting Oscar co-winner who never dated or married Jennifer, to our knowledge, even once [Ben Bass]
- 49 Mob in the Like A Dragon video game series [Max Kurzman]
- 50 You can make them from borax and glue (yuck!) or oatmeal, applesauce, vanilla pudding, and green food coloring (yum!) [Jamie Ding]
- 52 This puzzle, I would say [Frisco17]
- 58 *__ gamers* the joker if we lived in a backwards society [Wally]
- 59 Parts of banana splits (6) [Liari]
- 60 Woodwind instrument that can be found nonconsecutively in the name of a brass instrument [Mack Meller]
- 61 2005 PSP game featuring Drunken Mayor, Happy Bullet, and Caddy's Quest that I saw at the retro game store after having to drop a college class and go home early because nobody told me it was in French [Dorkslove]
- 64 Species that first appeared onscreen in 1983 [Kiran Pandey]
- 65 What some belts do [Sara Cantor]
- 66 Your favorite cookie's favorite cookies [Kaye Brown]
- 67 Respect, as a judicial decision [Micah Sommersmith]
- 69 Nintendo villain/Nintendo CEO Doug (no relation) [Will Eisenberg]
- 70 Always wearing a scarf, for example [Chris Piuma]
- 71 Fast-casual restaurant in the phone number (909-___-0) for The Distraction, the Defector podcast [Tyler Hinman]
- 72 Diggs portrayed in the Miku Binder Thomas Jefferson meme [Ada Nicolle]
- 73 They change the color of brass [John Hawkley]
- 74 "Wild Thing" to go in rap encyclopedia (3) [Bob Weisz]
- 75 Cards often removed from a deck [malika]
- 76 People destined to succeed? [Rachel Fabi]
- 77 Runoff at the mouth [John Kugelman]
- 79 Brings LA donuts, having lost one - not (6) [Gennady Gorin]
- 80 Square meal that's kosher [Dan Schwartz]
- 81 Sound from an electric flyswatter [Jasper Davidoff]
- 84 Essex-based garage rock band, or my reaction upon realizing that the best angle for this entry is the Essex-based garage rock band [Gizmo Thwomp]
- 86 Plane crashed into mountainous country (5) [Mike D]
- 87 "Nothing can stop us now. ___ on a roll!" [Sally Hoelscher]
- 88 Fish stick? [Kieran J. Boyd]
- 89 "Listen, lad..." [Brian Callahan]
- 90 Trippy music genre that's likely to run into copyright trouble [Adam Aaronson]
- 92 Coding tool controversially restricted by Reddit in 2023: Abbr. [Dan Feyer]
- 93 It looks like a st. criminal coin (4) [Riley E. Smith]
- 94 Defend oneself against, in a (possibly crime-inducing) way [Quiara Vasquez]
- 95 Box opener? [Jenna LaFleur]
- 96 How a sign might describe the paint on the bench you just sat on [Aaron Riccio]
- 97 🐞🐜🐝🐞🐜🐝🐞 [Gwen Goldenberg]
- 98 What's made with a twist [Chandi Deitmer]
- 99 shitty cubicle [carly they/themsen]

DOWN

- 1 Says hellos and trips (5) [Loplop]
- 2 What one might use to paddle a canoe (if you are one of the, like, 23 people who uses the Metaverse™ for some reason?) [Jordan Tangle]
- 3 Helluva thing [Owen Bergstein]



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4 Meta answer for the feeder answers RATTIER, VINER, ADDED, and BOY [Ricky Cruz]

5 Name for endless time (3) [Brohan]

6 Armani label captures heart of Philippines (6) [Samet Demircan]

7 Ace finally going down on the turn, holding clubs and aces in suits (5) [Pxlata]

8 Father's anger (4) [jmsr525]

9 Donkey tail (3) [Norah]

10 Ugh, this makes me sick! [Matt Forest]

11 Complete and total [Kate Chin Park]

12 One who is? [Jake Eakle]

13 post doing numbers [arctan]

14 Sail away, initially to the north perhaps [skaldskaparmal]

15 Benjamin's nickname [Wyna Liu]

17 Rhythm from California to end disastrous Christian era (7) [Rich I]

19 Home of the "Mr. Crunchy" [Layna]

22 Sound whose equivalent is "gnägg" in Swedish, "***" (hi-ing) in Korean, and "runnik" in Afrikaans (well, at least according to Wikipedia) [Dragonengineer97]

23 Regularly going by rail across dense vegetation (6) [Jack H. Keynes]

27 "___ is scooters. ___ is five young people on one bench sharing a chocolate bar." - Mike Myers [Emma Lawson]

28 https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JlIT9DZPGv6EK_KethZ7LkxVhYVT-vi ew7uSpw-sharing [Paolo Pasco]

30 After spending practically everything on VFX, movie's coming up short for Marvel movie (5) [Joeadultman]

31 "When we talk about actors who were perfect for their roles I don't think we talk about Mary Elizabeth Winstead enough. Like seriously, how did she change her color on command like that? * Man who's never talked to a woman in his life. [KikiStreams]

32 One-l version of a word that can have anywhere from zero to two 's [Will Nediger]

34 Musical alias for French director Quentin Dupieux, whose 2008 album *Lambert* has a cover based on the film *Un Chien Andalou* [Max Blechman]

35 The "hands" in "all hands on deck!" [Andrew Kingsley]

36 Bad first guess for Horse ([snagawarg]

37 "Love to!" [meatdaddy69420]

38 takes to task for "allegedly" committing neopets stock market securities fraud, for example [kelsey dixon]

39 Fun run freebie [Brendan Emmett Quigley]

40 Ferry between the banks to go the wrong way (3) [Andy Yingsit]

41 New Age's neutral on cars (4) [dobbolino]

42 PC charged to 100%? [Dave Ritterskamp]

43 Like Thanksgiving groceries: stuffing, soup, rice, yams (6) [totocho]

44 Second part of a hip-hop group's name that "would" mean 1,600 if Roman numerals didn't have rules about letter sequence 🙄 [jackofallspades98]

45 It may be filled with silver [Andrew Esten]

46 Like a clever, self-referential clue [Joah]

49 West African people welcome spice blend with pinch of ajwain (6) [dagdumith]

50 Like ice with a haircut? [Irisamelia]

51 A newspaper has many of them; a house only has a few [AncientCosmographer]

53 He's consumed by major retail therapy, mainly - it's a ball (6) [Deanne Cliburn]

54 What a grammar teacher does when a student gets the "present" and "future" versions of these mixed up [Janani K. Jha]

55 Takes a helicopter, perhaps [Andy Kravis]

56 North European corvid [catherinewheel8]

57 Contents of an Excel cell with green conditional formatting, perhaps [Clev Cong]

61 Forward: 2020 song with a music video featuring tigers and leopards / Backward: Part of a tiger or a leopard [erik agard]

62 Non-existent cause that the Bluth family raised money for, on "Arrested Development" [Alex Boisvert]

63 Last minute changes, perhaps [St.JtB]

65 Desires fellow soldiers? (6) [Spencer Leach]

66 Back on track?? [Ryan McCarty]

68 How profound! [Steve Mossberg]

69 supermarket section that might stock tiny plastic balloons [Kate Hawkins]

70 A teeny weeny baby sized test, or an app to help you study for one [TehSaxophonist]

72 Please continue to follow lackey leader of gang wants eliminating (2,2,2) [Chris Evans]

73 Copper, for one, caught a criminal (finally!) (5) [Nate Cardin]

75 Rodent that's approximately 30% legs [Hoyt Arcane]

76 Come with Solo to smuggle medical supplies (6) [Probably Apocryphal]

77 Son raised corn for fodder (5) [brknFixie]

78 With any luck, phoenix is reborn (just one of the last three made it) (1,4) [Gandapestile]

79 ___ Dallas Howard who directed 3 episodes of *The Mandalorian* [Matt Quintanilla]

80 User who writes text that's very impactful? [Ro Ramin]

81 Half-heartedly dazzle dancing princess of gamers (5) [JM]

82 Disney princess whose movie, played backwards and removing the ending scenes, has her get her sea legs [___ Haymarket]

83 Film between "X" and "MaxXXine" in a recent horror trilogy [Ryan Patrick Smith]

85 How to get eau with those from teahouse? [Ben Tolkien]

86 Granny held back in San Antonio (4) [Evan Birnholz]

87 *Clang, clang, clang ___ the trolley* (Judy Garland lyric) [Philip Chow]

90 UK TV provider's debut of Sonic & Knuckles? Yes! (3) [Glentopher]

91 Put down compact disc (3) [longyfan]

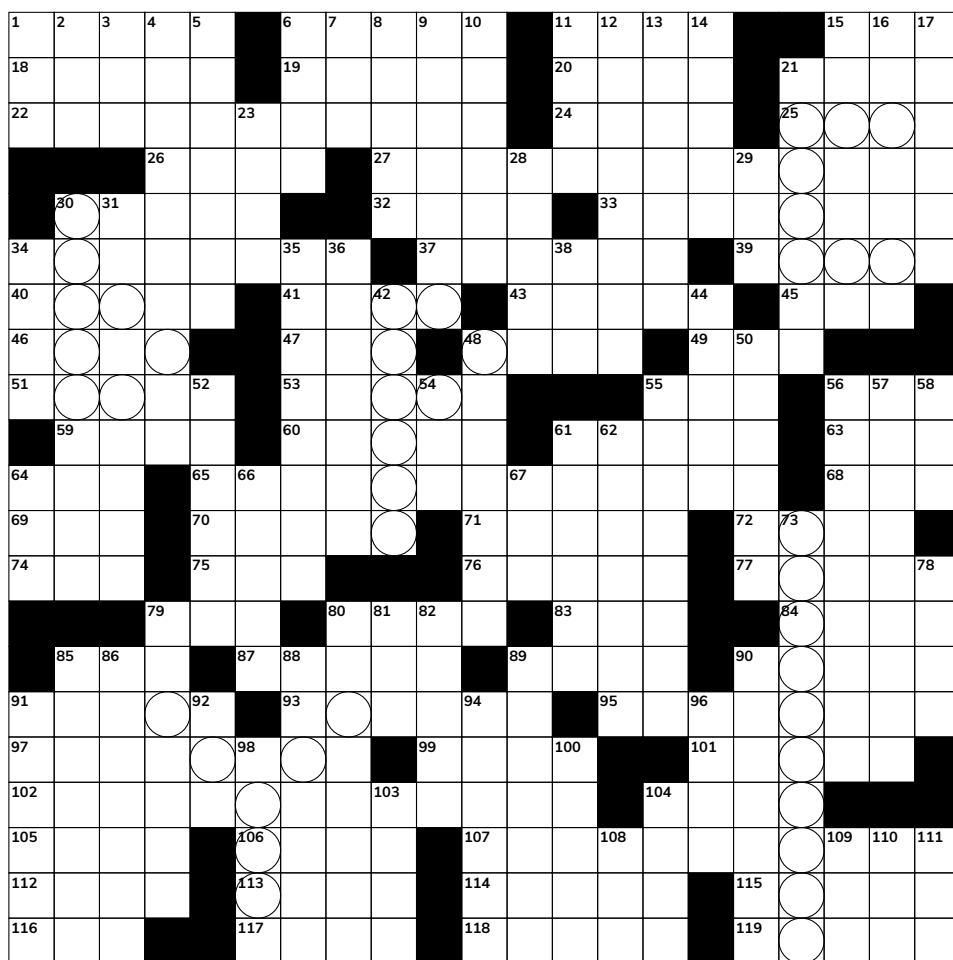


Self-Starters

Jonathan Raksin and Jeff Chen

ACROSS

- 1 "Am not!" comeback
- 6 Research money
- 11 Actress Fisher
- 15 Name hidden in "took aim"
- 18 Pacific island nation
- 19 "Dune" actor Jason
- 20 Whirl
- 21 Pirates' cries
- 22 Have no information, or a phonetic hint to the circled word below this answer
- 24 Pens such as Clic Stics
- 25 Retwisted hairstyle
- 26 Slender
- 27 Spot IRL, or a phonetic hint to the circled word crossing this answer
- 30 "The ___ Witch Project"
- 32 Narrow cut
- 33 Vegas resort home to the world's largest glass sculpture
- 34 Settings for some chase scenes
- 37 Certain X-ray
- 39 Insurance worker
- 40 Dancer de Mille
- 41 Certain towed car
- 43 Boglike habitat
- 45 "Before" of yore
- 46 Company that bought Angry Birds
- 47 Kitchenware brand
- 48 Cincinnati team
- 49 @@@
- 51 Songs like "Amazing Grace"
- 53 R.E.M. singer Michael
- 55 Three-sport race, for short
- 56 One of 366 in 2024
- 59 Burkina ___
- 60 Bucatini or ziti
- 61 Pentagon, e.g.
- 63 Hesitant sounds
- 64 Drop the ball
- 65 Nearly identical duo, or a phonetic hint to the circled word crossing this answer
- 68 "You've got mail" co.
- 69 ___ room (social space)
- 70 Rabbits' relatives
- 71 Foul smells
- 72 Greasy
- 74 So-so
- 75 Sinus doc
- 76 Tennis star Osaka
- 77 Social standards
- 79 Chess piece worth three points (Abbr.)
- 80 Loch ___ Monster
- 83 Red table wine, for short
- 84 Comic Trevor
- 85 Label for H.E.R.
- 87 Flummox
- 89 Departed
- 90 Very, in Italian
- 91 Bobbing things in lakes
- 93 One-eighth part
- 95 Deteriorate
- 97 Betrothal
- 99 Caramel candy brand
- 101 "My mistake!"
- 102 "For what reason ...," or a phonetic hint to the circled word crossing this answer
- 104 A pop
- 105 Possible score after deuce
- 106 "That hits the spot!"
- 107 Spy satellite, e.g., or a phonetic hint to the circled word crossing this answer
- 112 Boxing venue
- 113 "Nick at ___"
- 114 Some entertainment on the web
- 115 Orange Muppet
- 116 Brain test, briefly
- 117 Took a card
- 118 Analyze, like silver



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- 119 River ___ (landform)

DOWN

- 1 _ll_oints _ulletin
- 2 "Barbie" actress Issa
- 3 NFL great Manning
- 4 Denizens of New Mexico's capital
- 5 Bests at the Home Run Derby, say
- 6 FBI guys
- 7 Fishing pole
- 8 Build up over time
- 9 Philips ___ (shaver brand)
- 10 "Here, this is for you"
- 11 Library ID
- 12 Rap skillfully
- 13 Mosslike growths
- 14 Photographer Adams
- 15 Nickelback front man Chad

- 16 Inverse trig function
- 17 Has gone kaput
- 21 Family-friendly rating words
- 23 "Big Hero 6" protagonist
- 28 Response at the front door
- 29 Tampa's state (Abbr.)
- 30 Like a golf round without any scores over par
- 31 1930s Red Army retreat
- 34 Impulsive
- 35 Major League Baseball, e.g.
- 36 Raunchy recording
- 38 Scoundrel
- 42 Balances
- 44 Silent Marx brother
- 48 Thinks logically
- 50 Attached with rope
- 52 "Subsequently ..."
- 54 School grp.
- 55 Capitalizes on
- 56 Acting assignments in "Adaptation" and "Hamilton"
- 57 Greeting on International Talk Like a Pirate Day
- 58 Fashion monogram
- 61 Total bore
- 62 Injuring
- 64 Hesitant sound
- 66 Desires
- 67 Activist ___ B. Wells
- 73 Layer above us that reflects radio waves
- 78 Wearing boots, say
- 79 Toppling, in boxing
- 80 Cluster into a central point
- 81 CPR expert
- 82 Former VP Agnew
- 85 Novelist Salman
- 86 Mimicking
- 88 Exactly
- 89 "Actually, that's correct"
- 90 Was a freeloader
- 91 "Watch out!"
- 92 Day light?
- 94 LPGA great Ochoa
- 96 Precisely
- 98 Get up
- 100 Surname that's an anagram of "dotes"
- 103 "That was a close call!"
- 104 Covetous feeling
- 108 "Isn't ___ pity?"
- 109 Show with a Five-Timers Club, for short
- 110 Baby fox
- 111 Assent in the House



themeless no. 36

crosstina aquafina & erik agard

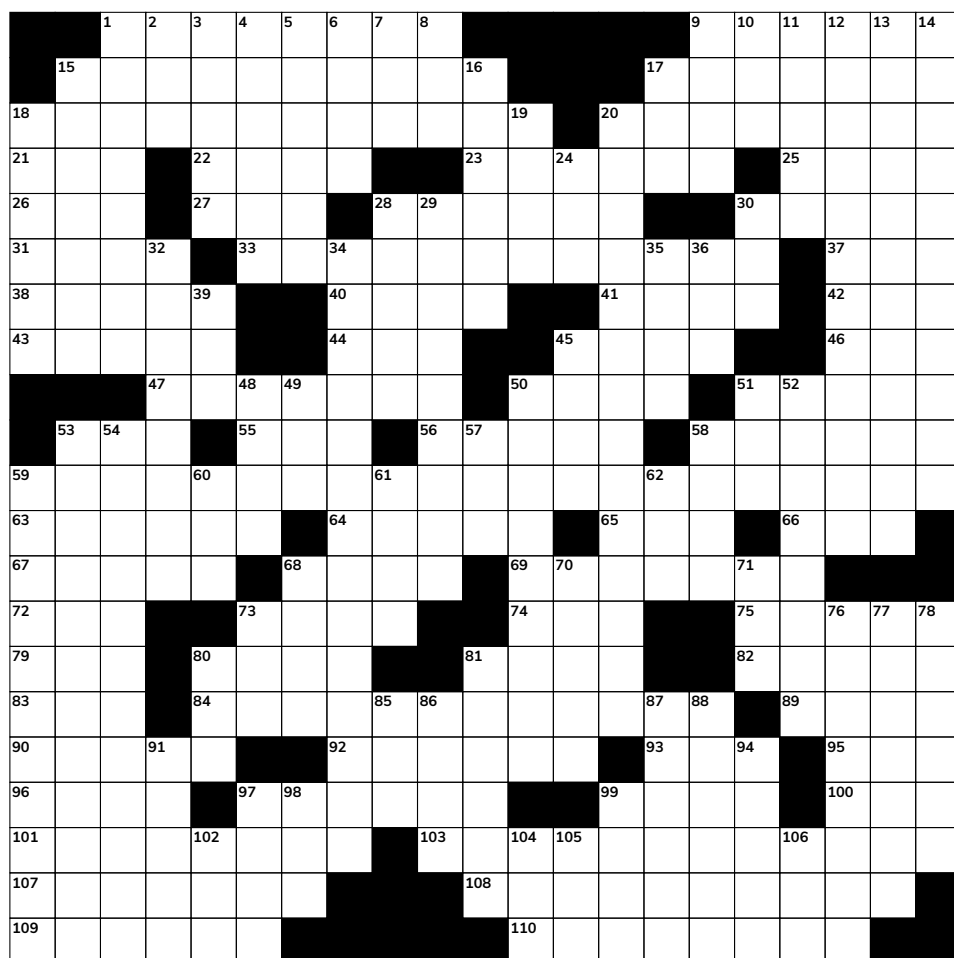
Across

- 1 STOP! hammer type
9 yuletide revelers
15 high-end travel?
17 "i come in peace!"
18 prince fandom?
20 "am i up?"
21 reddit q&a
22 athapaskan-speaking Indigenous group
23 where u at?
25 "lupin" protagonist assane ____
26 weeklong celebration in vietnam
27 course after which one might need a palette cleanser?
28 popper of note
30 *spongebob* character believed to be the biological offspring of a crab and a whale
31 [🐼🐼🐼🐼]
33 "i ask soooooo little of you!"
37 ____ culpa
38 does something by doing nothing
40 ancient fiddlehead?
41 puts on TV
42 "i'm about to ____ this man's whole career"
43 sugar-free gum brand
44 #very____ #verybrave (nicole byer book)
45 "where the party at" group jagged ____
46 starter tool in *animal crossing*
47 formal cap
50 ingredient sometimes substituted for breadcrumbs in meatballs
51 deceptiveness
53 mornings, for short
55 ad ____
56 come into contact
58 foil holder
59 equally bad
63 like the dial of a princess phone
64 desires
65 fandom creation that might have a "felonious gru/minions", "bisexual mary magdalene", or "reichenbach falls coffeeshop au" tag
66 some characters on *the pitt*
67 removes wrinkles
68 "if the penalty for a crime is a ____, then that law only exists for the lower class"
69 equipment for a zine workshop

- 72 *the black jacobins* author ____ james
73 many arena theme night giveaways
74 someone who's unmatched on bumble?
75 ____ bering, of bering strait fame
79 prose pros (abbr.)
80 gateway ____ (eero saarinen tourist trap on the mississippi)
81 last-night-of-summer-camp performance
82 make a last-minute, winning ebay bid on a vintage 90s nike charles barkley 1993 mvp single-stitch t-shirt, for example
83 son of mariah carey, twin of 49-down
84 eclipse a star
89 standardized test for an mba program
90 run ____ of (come into conflict with)
92 like buffalo and bison
93 reply that used to trigger an '80s-style thumbs-up animation on facebook
95 system discussed on r/foodstamps
96 designer browne, who dressed angel reese for the 2025 met gala
97 "we have tomorrow / bright before us / like ____" (langston hughes)
99 voice-activated assistant that has a favorite color but not a favorite movie
100 miami ____ (defunct wnba team)
101 defeat on points?
103 like big bags bussin' out the bentley bentayga
107 foremost
108 organization that includes nupes and ques
109 de-briefs?
110 msg headache?

Down

- 1 early development step
2 santa ____, california
3 the ____s (pop-punk girl group who opened for the rolling stones)
4 surname, or what *ou'd have to do to fix this clue's formatting
5 "now, please!"
6 raison d' ____
7 some settings on *the pitt*
8 government agency whose original name was "the hygienic laboratory"
9 roscoe hamilton and rocco thompson, e.g.
10 ooh and ____
11 class judgement?
12 like ariana grande's iconic 2015 donut shop treatise
13 exactly
14 stand-up props?
15 mlm, for example
16 papel ____ (traditional mexican craft)
17 school in tallahassee
18 *nathan for you* genre
19 word after "que" or "el"
20 "invoking my constitutional right to shut the fuck up"
24 antagonists in many reductress headlines
28 "hog butcher for the world / tool maker, stacker of ____" ("chicago", carl sandburg)



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- 29 shade found in a forest
30 channel that will air *twelfth night* (starring lupita nyong'o and also junior nyong'o) in november
32 inhabitant of ancient italy
34 self-assured word paired with 'unfazed' and 'unbothered' by JT on "alter ego"
35 dances in some sinners-inspired tiktoks
36 valuable deposit
39 the s in s.pellegrino
45 per person
48 *when ____ see us* (netflix miniseries)
49 daughter of mariah carey, twin of 83-across
50 that's saying a lot
51 many an item expropriated by the british crown
52 always on point
53 bad thing to be in for
54 vehicle often spotted during the studbudz all-star stream
57 old-timey adverb hidden in things of the past
58 "matter of ____ ..."
59 certain species in the *land before time* gang
60 -min. periods
61 comic ____ (font feted annually in the netherlands)
62 lust or gluttony or wrath or celtics fandom
68 image in some optical illusions
70 increase secured by a union
71 cars at charging stations, for short
73 ____ anniversary (milestone sometimes called a rebirthday)
76 playing candy crush or watching vine compilations
77 on the roof or in the sky
78 come to terms
80 language spoken by carter bryant in some of his nba draft day interviews
81 vikings defense?
85 hawaiian for "long," as seen in the name of a major volcano
86 rating for *love island usa*
87 point in a certain direction
88 see 94-down
91 part of ketchup's flavor profile
94 with 88-down, musician on a 16-nomination-0-win streak at the oscars
97 experiences a side effect of not using adequate sun protection
98 material found in a shed?
99 pixy ____
102 "____ me" ("it's never been more over")
104 abridged books?
105 "... or so ____ heard"
106 it might be exacerbated by stress



Puzzle #5 — FLIP-TOPS by Sid Sivakumar

Careful ... the answers to the starred clues won't be entered normally.

ACROSS

- 1 Sharp outfit
6 Bit of butter
9 Building site sight
14 Daughter of Disney's King Triton and Queen Athena
15 Ruined city in Jordan
17 On again
18 Dame's introduction
19 Where ID is shown
20 1986 rock memoir with a comma in its title
21 Spicy addition to salsa verde
23 Pools
25 In poor condition
26 Toll collector?
27 View from Cannes
28 Stand before a swing
29 Portia ___, "Ally McBeal" co-star
31 Had a bit of
34 They hang together
35 Buy-in for a deal
38 Gloss applicator
39 Selling point
40 Division of a division
43 What you might do to wind up in a cast
44 Spring alternative
46 Up to
47 Some comic strips
49 ___ the line (conformed)
50 Lugs
51 Pencil-and-paper game named for its starting configuration
52 Ash, for one
53 How some sandwiches are made
54 "Behave!"
57 Tubes
58 Half of a fault line?
60 Mix that might be measured by the pound
61 His/her alternative
63 Seawater evaporation sites
65 Beverage container at a picnic
67 Chose
68 "Of all the noises known to man, ___ is the most expensive": Molière
70 "Grrr!"

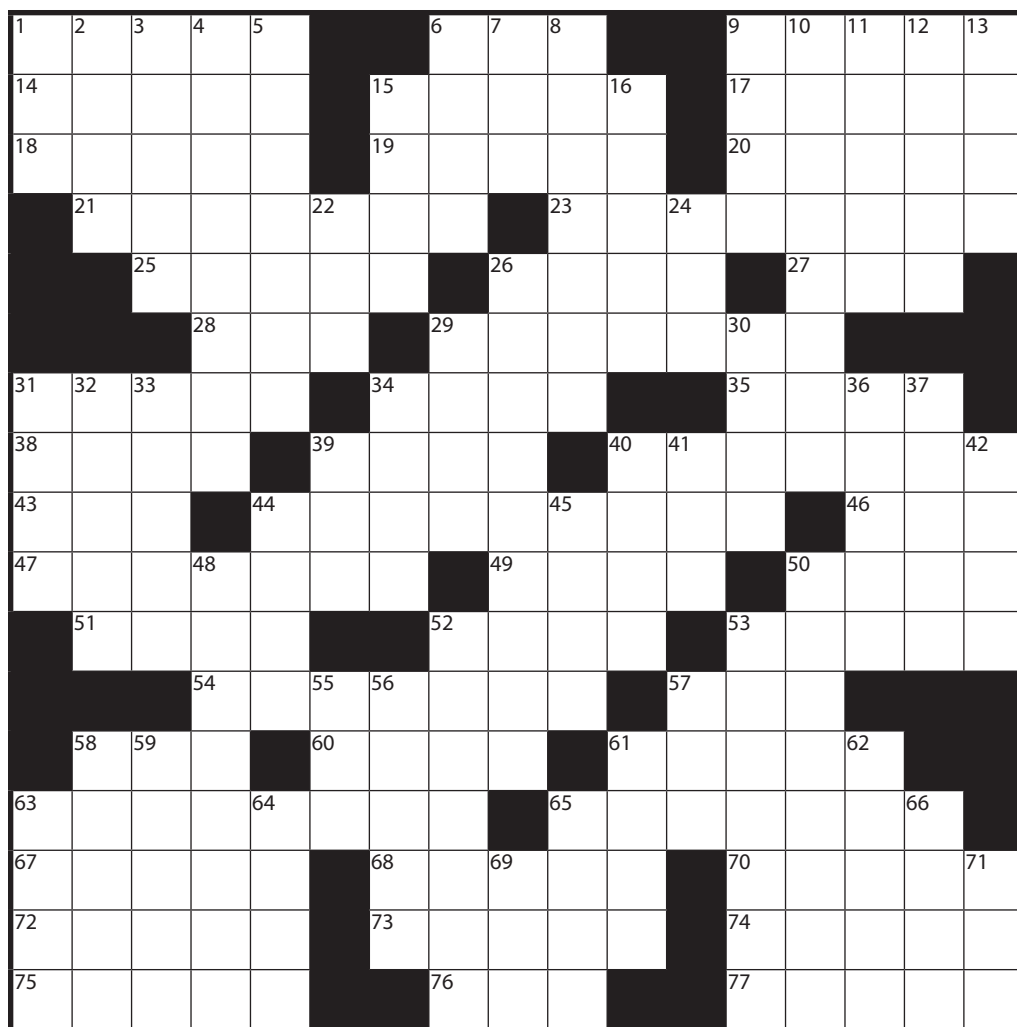
- 72 Literature Nobelist Mario Vargas ___
73 Director Christopher
74 Shut down
75 Makes an impression on
76 Gravy at a diner, so to speak
77 Surrealist Max

DOWN

- 1 "Holy cow!"
2 Archer in Hellenistic art
3 *Bury
4 *Put a halt to
5 *Akin (to)
6 \$1 coin
7 Bill container
8 *1970s White House family
9 Mobile home?
10 *Fitting together in a joint

- 11 *Jazz singer Cleo
12 *___ tube
13 GPS figs.
15 Small and weak
16 *Italian painter Veronese
22 Had a date, perhaps
24 Org. for San Diego FC and Real Salt Lake
26 *Fight night highlight
29 Move furtively
30 Spoken
31 Poetic contraction
32 *Curved
33 *Fuel for a funny car
34 "No bid"
36 *Aromatherapy product
37 *Make a god of
39 Big cash prize, for short
40 Ran
41 "Stop" sign
42 Alternatively
44 Hightail it

- 45 Put on repeat
48 *Gastronomically unmatched
50 *Lead pencil or tinfoil, e.g.
52 *Big cooking vessel
53 *Echo
55 "___ dreaming?"
56 *Author Sinclair
57 Not just "a"
58 *Enough
59 *Divulge
61 Follower of more or less
62 *Financial expert Suze
63 Convinced
64 PalmPilots, e.g., for short
65 Pie hole
66 Freshness
69 Student in the middle of prelims?
71 The Pistons, on scoreboards



30 MINUTES / 96 WORDS

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Westwords 2025 Puzzle 4: Go Dubs!

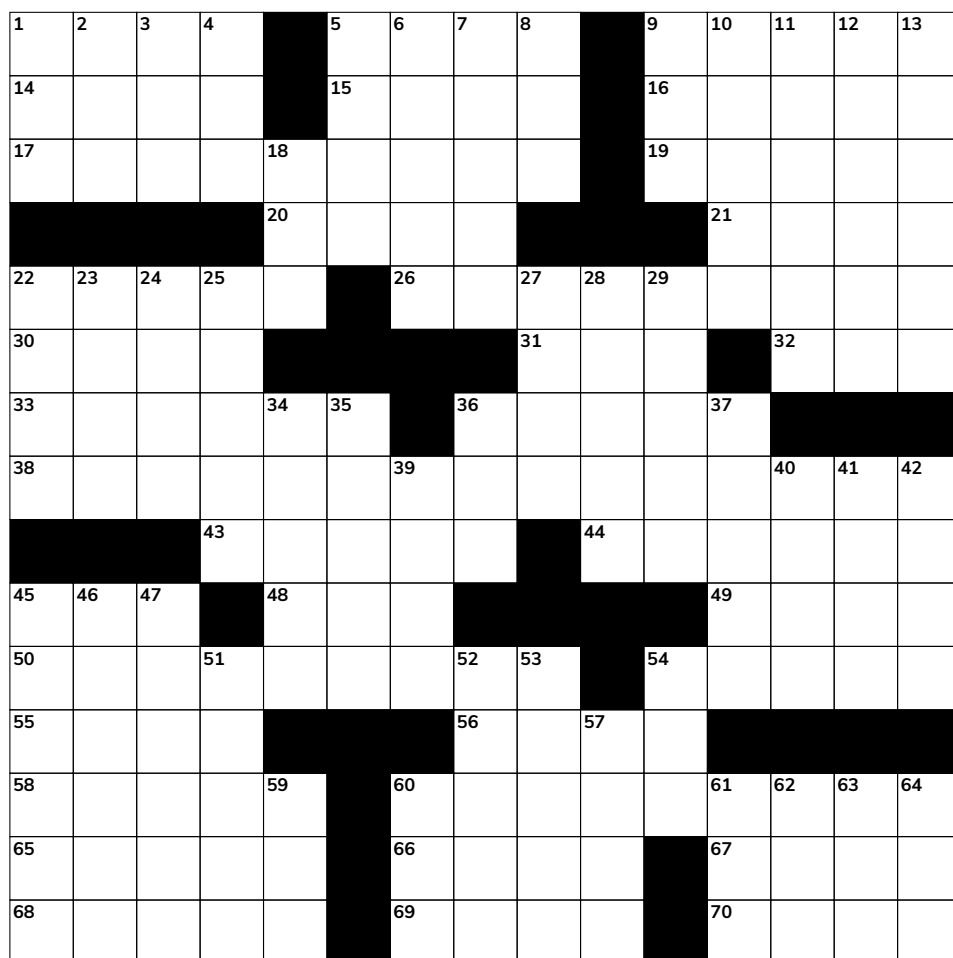
David Steinberg

ACROSS

- 1 Thermometer feature
- 5 Insect that becomes a plant part when its first letter is moved to the end
- 9 Edibles in Ibiza, e.g.
- 14 BART part
- 15 Plays
- 16 Pick
- 17 Witch
- 19 Wrest
- 20 Looks both ways?
- 21 Dal accompaniment
- 22 Stopped lying
- 26 Waxed
- 30 Wailing
- 31 Cover in the kitchen
- 32 It might be dry or thin
- 33 Drawn without emotion
- 36 They might be in the studio for long stretches
- 38 Waddled
- 43 Admit
- 44 Small shape-shifter
- 45 Performance at 100-120 BPM
- 48 Touchdown stat
- 49 Women
- 50 Wedge
- 54 Cat walk accessory
- 55 "The last great crossover wrestling star," per the New York Times
- 56 Laptop brand
- 58 Whoops
- 60 Occasion where clues and answers follow directions ... as happens in this puzzle, in two senses?
- 65 Take the L
- 66 Stud fee
- 67 The third one is dangerous
- 68 Thwacks
- 69 Brain extension
- 70 Daytime ____

DOWN

- 1 Earn
- 2 Java server
- 3 Sweet-smelling chain
- 4 Tender spot?



- 5 Like some flowers or friends
- 6 Ruled
- 7 Make off of, maybe
- 8 Shade of gray
- 9 Start of a rhyming cuisine's name
- 10 Nobody wants to hear it!
- 11 Speaker debut of the aughts
- 12 ____ acid
- 13 Big step
- 18 Controversial skill
- 22 Go sideways
- 23 Concealer target
- 24 The earth is on one
- 25 Standard
- 27 Annoying roommate, perhaps
- 28 "Odyssey" character
- 29 Square one, for one
- 34 Babies get more of it than their parents
- 35 Start of a rhyming ice cream flavor's name
- 36 Thataway
- 37 Tea treat
- 39 Male guinea pig
- 40 Owner of Angry Birds
- 41 Spoonbill relative
- 42 -
- 45 Rinse and dry
- 46 Focus that's not an actual major
- 47 Prenatal middle name?
- 51 An old one is hard to break
- 52 Happening
- 53 Computer command that can't be used first
- 54 Hushed
- 57 One thing, or two people
- 59 V's pop group
- 60 Common sight in history books
- 61 It might hold something precious
- 62 PC spec that's important to gamers
- 63 Turn down
- 64 On the ____



Westwords 2025 Puzzle 2: Suspension of Disbelief

Willa Angel Chen Miller

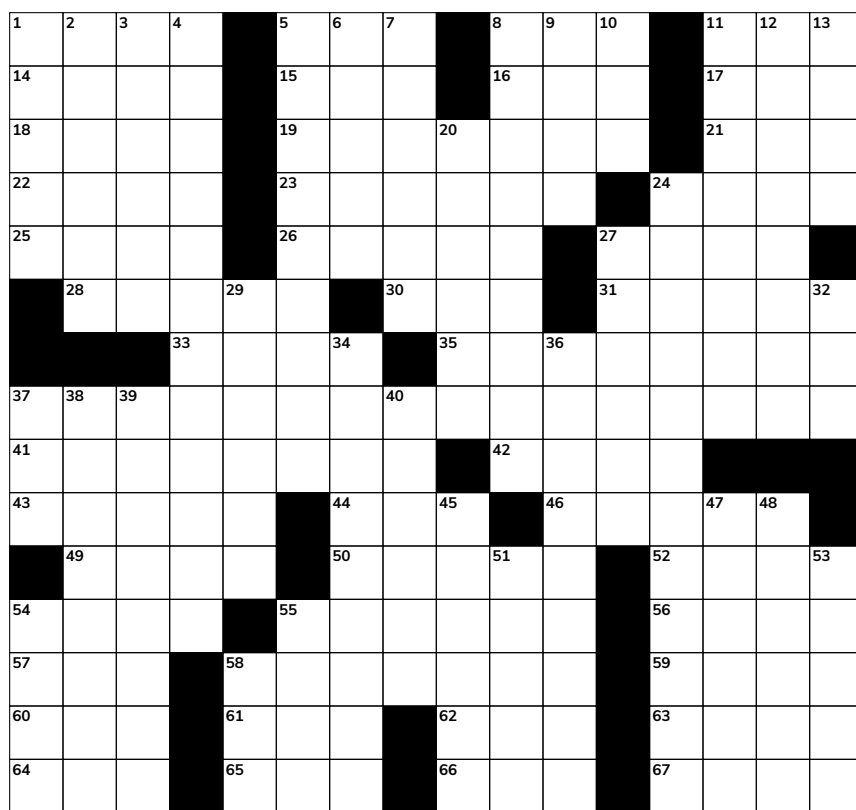
ACROSS

- 1 Swelled
- 5 Sea-Tac projection
- 8 Big thing in Montana
- 11 Pun producer, stereotypically
- 14 Fine-tune
- 15 Req. for some Caltech programs
- 16 Burj Khalifa's location: Abbr.
- 17 Ambient music pioneer Brian
- 18 Joint custody term
- 19 Certain chess plays
- 21 Device that can affect its user's balance
- 22 Home of five national parks and forty-seven Swig dirty soda shops
- 23 Perspiring
- 24 Rind-covered cheese
- 25 Big name in construction
- 26 Bleu, ___, et rouge (colors of the French flag)
- 27 Rummy action
- 28 Potential for a donation bin item
- 30 Contractual shutter-upper, briefly
- 31 Festoon
- 33 Something to wait in
- 35 "Do the rumors check out?"

- 37 Spanner here?
- 41 Exclamation while pointing to a baby photo, maybe
- 42 Negligible
- 43 One of 10,924, for Willie Mays
- 44 AOL alternative, once
- 46 Turns up?
- 49 Guadalajara greeting
- 50 Star-studded roster
- 52 ___ flats (Death Valley feature)
- 54 "Alouette" bird
- 55 Early wearable?
- 56 Aspen, e.g.
- 57 Latest thing?
- 58 So, so good
- 59 Setting for a roast
- 60 Letters between Mark Twain and Samuel Clemens
- 61 Period
- 62 Ninja Turtle nickname
- 63 Party where one might wear LED gloves
- 64 Artist with the first YouTube video to reach a billion views
- 65 Exit key
- 66 University domain
- 67 Hurl hella far

DOWN

- 1 Gruesome being
- 2 Gear for a surfer?



- 3 Make apoplectic
- 4 "Let's discuss"
- 5 Cutesy name for a brunch dish
- 6 Fish with a net
- 7 Harm the dignity of
- 8 Carousel riders
- 9 "California Gurls" singer Perry
- 10 Simple agreement
- 11 "Jesus, Mary, and Joseph"
- 12 Like some laws criticized by "care, not punishment" advocates
- 13 Cinerama ___ (iconic--and endangered--structure in Los Angeles)
- 20 Road robber
- 24 Ritual reading
- 27 Simulated reality, to the Wachowskis
- 29 The rest of the day?
- 32 "Doc McStuffins" creator Chris
- 34 One who's always first in their own head
- 36 Finger-pointing remark
- 37 Video game franchise with fictional cities based on L.A., S.F., and others
- 38 Diffident response to a compliment
- 39 Time to switch to darker shades, traditionally
- 40 Who wrote that "The person, be it gentleman or lady, who has not pleasure in a good novel, must be intolerably stupid"
- 45 Snuggle
- 47 Early-development bugs
- 48 Something a tank lacks
- 51 Troubled
- 53 Core belief
- 54 Big jump
- 55 Two objects in a row?
- 58 "Didn't I tell you?"

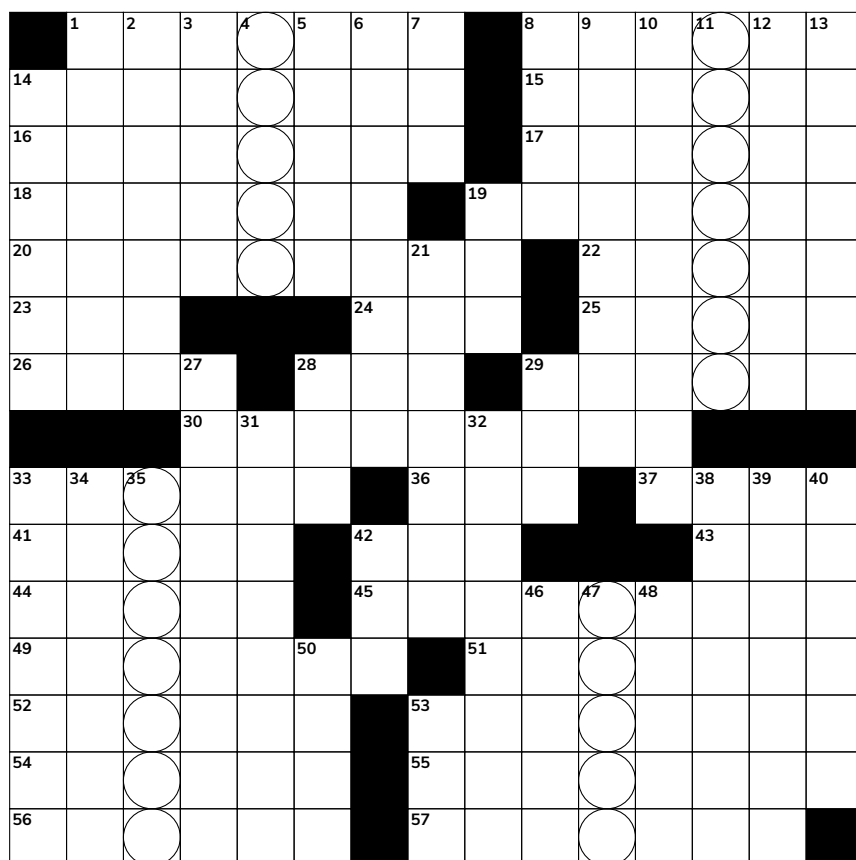


Puzzle #4 -- Let's Go Together

Chandi Deitmer / Edited by Brad Wilber

ACROSS

- 1 Unleashes (on) / Businesses with reflexology sessions
- 8 Improbable, as chances / Heist setting in "Ocean's 8," with "The"
- 14 Rail in a dance studio / Take home
- 15 Gifts for some Muslim holidays / Wrath
- 16 For the whole room to hear / Settler of old?
- 17 Make headway / Prefix with apology
- 18 Name meaning "pretty" in Spanish / Chicken ___ king
- 19 Language for the 2014 vampire western "A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night" / Bowler-topped TV cousin
- 20 Finger bowl scent / Chip in an app?
- 22 Wee spot in England? / Guest ushered beyond the velvet rope, for short
- 23 The "E" of B.C.E.
- 24 Alley-___
- 25 Wimbledon champ Swiatek / Untouchable delivery by Swiatek
- 26 "___ Off" (Beyoncé song about leaving an unhappy marriage)
- 28 Malaria-control agent banned in the '70s
- 29 Knitter's ball / Source of unwelcome reminders
- 30 Transport option like Lyft or Uber, made literal by four Down entries
- 33 Dec. clock setting in Baton Rouge / Male turkeys
- 36 Little jump
- 37 This, in Oaxaca
- 41 "Damage" singer with an acronymic stage name / Cause a blister, say
- 42 Sun. follower
- 43 Acorn feature
- 44 Lagunitas beverage, in brief / Therapist's org.
- 45 Not easily moved, in a way / Jones for
- 49 Steak often encrusted in sesame seeds / Collar attachment
- 51 Wee spot in England? / ___ planets (Jupiter et al.)
- 52 Capitol insider, informally / Tabletop light source
- 53 Corps de ballet garment / Uber-
- 54 Poet's preposition / H's on Fraternity Row
- 55 Quickly join hands? / Hammer ends
- 56 Substance in pits / Home makeover, informally
- 57 Contemplate / Goes wrong



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DOWN

- 1 Demonized composer who taught Liszt and Schubert
- 2 "Anything is possible" athletic challenge
- 3 Raw fish dish
- 4 Malibu, e.g.
- 5 Pell or Poundstone of comedy
- 6 Opening numbers?
- 7 Show with a Five-Timers Club, for short
- 8 Genesis creator
- 9 "I don't believe you!"
- 10 "Au contraire!"
- 11 Odyssey, e.g.
- 12 Genre in which Anne Rice wrote as A.N. Roquelaure
- 13 Spike in coverage?
- 14 Envious court figure
- 19 Gent who dresses to impress
- 21 Phenom with an ego
- 27 Social outing whose attendees may or may not pair off
- 28 Keepers of keys on nights out, in brief
- 29 Go on and on
- 31 Declaration by Michael Keaton for Tim Burton
- 32 Iolani Palace city
- 33 Purchase allowing you to grow a "shell" for Leonardo or Michelangelo, e.g.
- 34 Ulta competitor
- 35 Winnebago, e.g.
- 38 Become a diaspora
- 39 Alehouses
- 40 Works often understood through supertitles
- 42 Additive heightening umami, in brief
- 46 Smidges
- 47 Cougar, e.g.
- 48 One said to need an heir and a spare
- 50 Lhasa ___
- 53 Channel celebrating old Hollywood

LOLLAPUZZOOLA 18: WE PUT THE ZOO IN LOLLAPUZZOOLA

PUZZLE 5 • Wild Discoveries

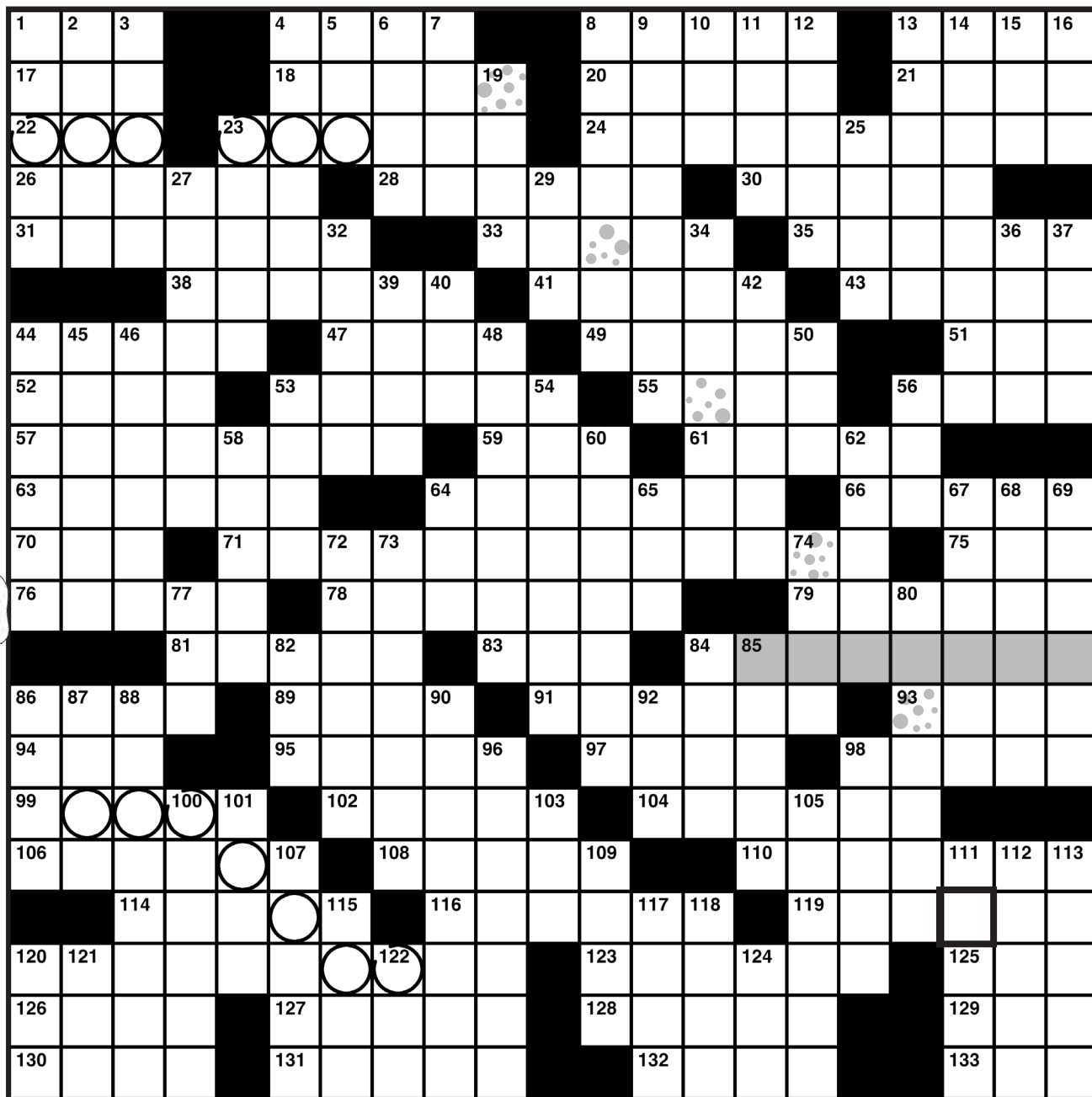
by Kareem Ayas

Can you find all the animals hidden in this puzzle?

WORD COUNT: 152

BOX COUNT: 397

TIME LIMIT: 40 minutes



Animal #1 is "spotted" roaming down the grid

Animal #2 is futilely chasing a certain bird

Animal #3 is so slow it didn't even make it into the grid

Animal #4 is creating "disorder" in the dark

Animal #5 is heading for an apt thoroughfare

Animal #6 appears as its "box" species

PUZZLE 5 • Wild Discoveries

by Kareem Ayas

Can you find all the animals hidden in this puzzle?

WORD COUNT: 152

BOX COUNT: 397

TIME LIMIT: 40 minutes

ACROSS

- 1 Train ticket info
- 4 Panethnic identity celebrated in May, for short
- 8 Features of some hammers ... and Animal #6's means of defense
- 13 State with the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame
- 17 Commotion
- 18 Talk smack about ... and, with 128-Across, a nickname for Animal #4
- 20 Peachy keen
- 21 Choose from the menu
- 22 Opposite of forward
- 23 Verdi opera adapted from a Shakespeare play
- 24 Speedy ground cuckoo
- 26 Asteroids setting?
- 28 They're fed streetside
- 30 Fathered
- 31 Unified identity
- 33 Eye sores?
- 35 U.S. state with the highest percentage of Indigenous residents
- 38 Scary stories, perhaps?
- 41 ____ Island, Brooklyn home to an annual July 4 eating contest
- 43 Unflappable
- 44 Soothes
- 47 Film director Mira (and mother of 82-Down mayoral candidate Zohran Mamdani)
- 49 "Ain't gonna happen!"
- 51 Throwing power
- 52 Cooking initialism popularized by Rachael Ray
- 53 Convention
- 55 Member of the Pakistani diaspora, for example
- 56 Basilica section
- 57 Lethargic ... and how Animal #3 may feel when not at "home"?
- 59 Percussive dance style
- 61 Sea ____ (type of minor deity in Greek myth)
- 63 House of Lourdes?
- 64 Tex-Mex dish that can be "wet"
- 66 Moving about
- 70 Quick chats, online
- 71 Game with a list of things to find ... that you're playing while solving this puzzle

- 75 Palindromic coding language named for an early programmer
- 76 Extremely slow speed
- 78 Tennis star Andy known for his powerful serve
- 79 Like supermarkets and passenger planes
- 81 Constance's "Crazy Rich Asians" costar
- 83 "Knives Out" actor de Armas
- 84 Rabat resident
- 86 "Not to mention ..."
- 89 "For sure!"
- 91 Like some nasty, icy weather
- 93 Start to correct?
- 94 Cab alternative?
- 95 Places to practice your swing
- 97 Expense
- 98 Glue bottle bull whose mate is Elsie
- 99 It hangs in the back of the mouth
- 102 Injury recovery process that might be assisted by a physical therapist
- 104 Olde-fashioned store?
- 106 Opposite of staccato
- 108 Archaeological find
- 110 Attaches with heat and pressure
- 114 Full spectrum
- 116 One may spin on a wheel
- 119 Abhorrent
- 120 Way through Manhattan's Financial District
- 123 Office assistant who's a little loopy?
- 125 Company that makes the M2, Z4, and X7
- 126 Two-dimensional calculation
- 127 Donation to the church
- 128 See 18-Across
- 129 Was on top
- 130 Civil rights leader Parks
- 131 Half-____ (inadequate)
- 132 Obedience school command
- 133 Earth-friendly prefix

DOWN

- 1 Chocolate tree
- 2 Bedazzle
- 3 Name that rolls with Rolls
- 4 Verify

- 5 Is for the rest of us?
- 6 Date spot?
- 7 Mykonos or Maui
- 8 Unchecked bag ... and a homophone of Animal #5's prey
- 9 Made easier to remove, like a pickle jar's lid
- 10 Letters before an alias
- 11 Gum balls?
- 12 Country whose iOS flag emoji was updated in March 2025 to its revolution flag (green, white, and black, with three red stars)
- 13 "Huh ... cool"
- 14 Pump next to the sink
- 15 "____ seen worse!"
- 16 "Love, Reign ____ Me" (The Who hit)
- 19 The ____ (attraction)
- 23 "Golden Boy" playwright Clifford
- 25 Address bar inputs
- 27 Counterparts
- 29 Series finale, for short?
- 32 Congestion site
- 34 ____ heaven (state of extreme joy)
- 36 White wine cocktails
- 37 High point ... and a company frequently patronized by Animal #2
- 39 Crinkly or jangly money
- 40 Obedience school command
- 42 "Who else would I be talking about?"
- 44 "I Dreamed a Dream" Broadway show, familiarly
- 45 Light fixture used for disinfection
- 46 "Little Women" author ____ May Alcott
- 48 Domed chamber in Rome's Pantheon or the U.S. Capitol Building
- 50 Edge of a canyon
- 53 POTUS's military title
- 54 Note-able parts of a book?
- 56 Apt rhyme for "spas"
- 58 "Check it out for yourself!"
- 60 Math class with a lot of trig
- 62 Option for dining al fresco
- 64 Popular place to retire?
- 65 Irritate
- 67 Powder that absorbs moisture
- 68 Think creatively
- 69 "How I Met Your Mother" star Josh
- 72 Unpaid debt
- 73 1970s NASA program whose probes are still transmitting from interstellar space
- 74 ____ a soul
- 77 Comedian Margaret
- 80 Like a triangle with unequal sides
- 82 Where Lollapuzzoola is held, for short
- 84 Swimsuit lining material
- 85 First of four Holy Roman Emperors with his name
- 86 Color del océano
- 87 Final segment of "SNL"?
- 88 Imitates nested spoons with a partner or pet
- 90 Uncontrollable giggle ... or is Animal #1 nearby?
- 92 Goddess who brings morning light
- 96 Made a general acknowledgement?
- 98 Adhesive resin
- 100 Yellow companion of Tinky Winky, Dipsy, and Po
- 101 Green dispensaries?
- 103 Accessory for a baby or a marathoner
- 105 Put down money up front
- 107 "Get ____ town!"
- 109 Cyrillic letters on Olympic jerseys in the 1980s
- 111 Game in which K has a point value of 5
- 112 Ancient Mesoamerican civilization known for colossal stone heads
- 113 Fresh cut
- 115 Swim-bike-run competitions, for short
- 117 "Woe is me!"
- 118 Mint chocolate chip purchase, perhaps
- 120 Card game that's 100% luck
- 121 Queer identity sometimes paired with ace
- 122 UFO pilots, one presumes
- 124 "Get a room!" elicitor



LOLLAPUZZOOLA 18: WE PUT THE ZOO IN LOLLAPUZZOOLA

PUZZLE 4 • Shady Characters

by Brooke Husic

We think you'll go mad for this puzzle.

WORD COUNT: 76

BOX COUNT: 186

TIME LIMIT: 40 minutes

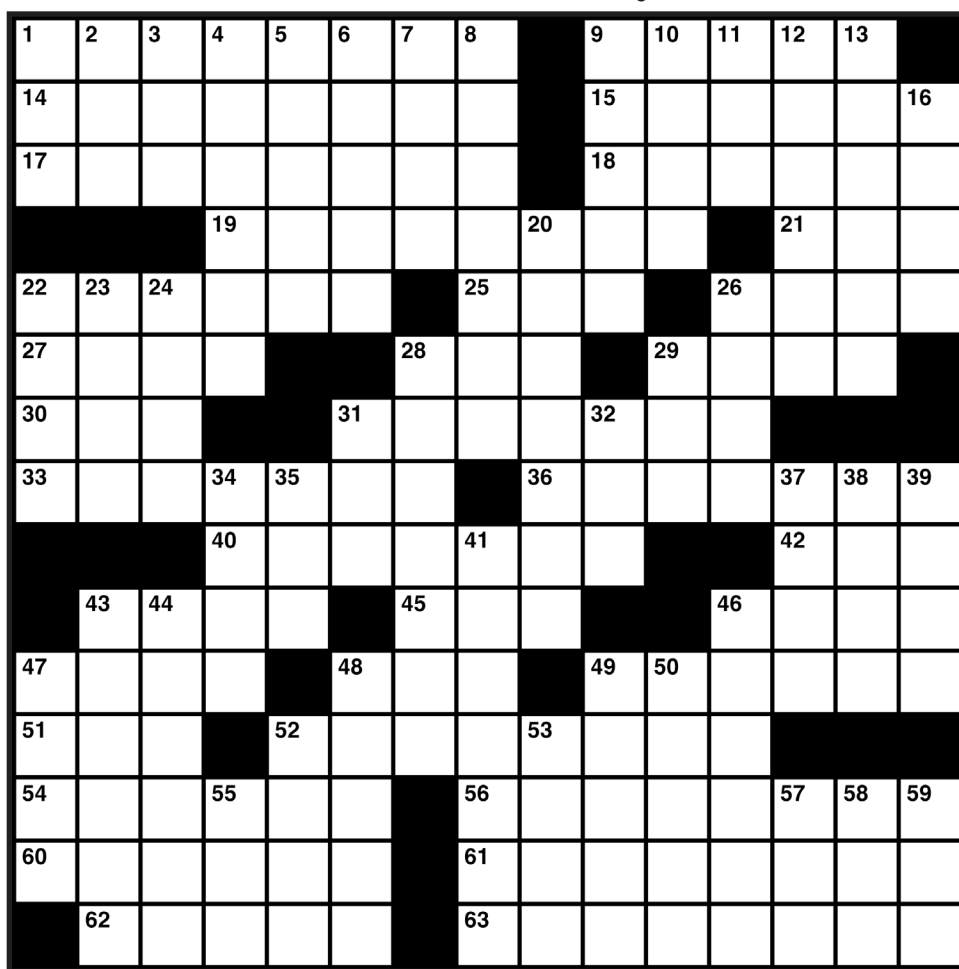
ACROSS

- 1 Hatred
- 9 Ruffles the feathers of
- 14 Gush
- 15 Steady succession
- 17 Daddy Yankee hit that also uses turbinas and motores as metaphors
- 18 Irredeemable, as a plan
- 19 Providers of creature comforts
- 21 Topping that bursts
- 22 Some provocative writing
- 25 Contraception method visible in X-rays
- 26 Wheeze ____ (hippo's call)
- 27 Measured desire
- 28 Curbed appeal?
- 29 Play places
- 30 Law requiring ramps, automatic doors, tactile paving, etc.
- 31 Animal
- 33 Spotted Serengeti predator
- 36 Corded headphone predecessors
- 40 Their work is probably over your head
- 42 Goose egg
- 43 Bright-colored
- 45 24-hour hospital depts.
- 46 Source of some sour notes
- 47 Instagram post with a view count
- 48 '90s TV hookup
- 49 Surrendered to fatigue
- 51 Not as expected
- 52 UV rays help produce it
- 54 Reservoir under a car's engine
- 56 Alternatives to heel brakes
- 60 Wired
- 61 Available from local farms, say
- 62 Go beyond suspending
- 63 Challenge as untrue ... and what you should, appropriately, do when you see red

DOWN

- 1 Confused state
- 2 Tube travelers?
- 3 "Battletoads" console, briefly
- 4 Request to switch topics
- 5 Cardinal, e.g.
- 6 Disempowered group

- 7 Huey, Dewey, and Louie, to Della Duck
- 8 Predominant U.S. language
- 9 Made a host's job easier
- 10 Big name in lifting?
- 11 401(k) alternative
- 12 Retired Laker great, to fans
- 13 Gatherings of intellectuals
- 16 Like a daredevil
- 20 Power moves?
- 22 Steelmaking ingredient
- 23 Volkswagen Group luxury brand
- 24 Bygone monarch
- 26 Rub component
- 28 Boarding school student with leadership duties
- 29 /
- 31 Head of cabbage?
- 32 Many first-year grad students
- 34 Sea that became the world's youngest desert
- 35 Access-granting gizmo
- 37 Mole or slug
- 38 Hundredth of a dollar
- 39 Hilltop discovery at the end of "The Giver"
- 41 Predictable
- 43 Make sacred
- 44 Considered response
- 46 Useful paper for a trip
- 47 Short jumpers
- 48 Matter of record?
- 49 Eldest von Trapp child
- 50 First name associated with Yosemite
- 52 Pod holder
- 53 "____ Lisa"
- 55 Bounce
- 57 Columbus inst.
- 58 Party VIP
- 59 Show on which Bowen Yang portrayed Moo Deng, for short





I Need Space ... a stately theme

Kyle Dolan

ACROSS

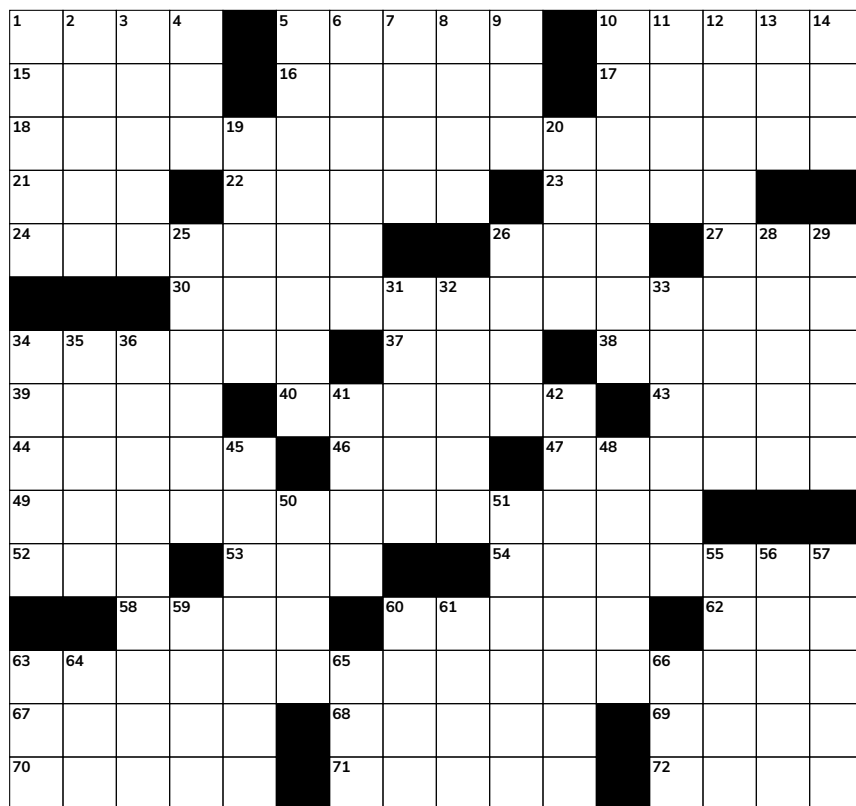
- 1 Included, as on a thread
5 Sheath that prevents fraying
10 Stray on the range
15 Symbol of virtue
16 Like the number of Great Lakes
17 Unofficial national dish of the Philippines
18 *Poetry slams organized by Hoosiers?
21 I-94, e.g.: Abbr.
22 Frozen drinks invented in Kansas in 1958
23 Advance
24 Aspiring research prof
26 LinkedIn posting
27 One with a backstage pass
30 *Publication for cheeseheads looking to pair a Malbec or merlot with their Colby?
34 Galaxy alternative
37 Curtain support
38 Graduation garments
39 Green gamer
40 Toy in a sandbox
43 ___ baby
44 Up and about
46 Reuters rival
47 High-profile groups
49 *English rock star's stint touring Lincoln and Omaha?

- 52 The Paleozoic, for one
53 Election Day, e.g.: Abbr.
54 Faucets
58 In ___ of
60 Statuette featuring a knight
62 "The Notorious ___" (2000 rap album)
63 *How Detroiters dealt with their vampire problem?
67 ___ bomb (intense savory bite)
68 Fill me in!
69 Birthstone before topaz
70 Gave a shot in the arm, say

- 71 Things formed between friends
72 Volition

DOWN

- 1 Cardinal's call
2 Segment in Dante's "Inferno"
3 Pole workers?
4 Female in a song from "The Sound of Music"
5 Incoming college freshmen may submit them, for short
6 Marathon's land
7 "___ moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it": Ferris Bueller
8 Outback mob



© 2025 The Midwest Crossword Tournament

- 9 Big number in the Midwest?
10 Chewy baked treat that's naturally sweet
11 Norse god who traded an eye for wisdom
12 What a chill atmosphere has
13 Part of many Arabic names
14 Big name in lip balm
19 Chamillionaire hit that went 4x platinum in ringtone sales
20 Snake's target
25 Rinky-dink
26 Gemstone prized in Mayan culture
28 Bumbling
29 Currency in Cuernavaca
31 Releases, as a record
32 "Fargo," for one
33 Developing concern
34 Harebrained
35 One putting up a facade
36 Array at a taco bar
41 Hardly insignificant
42 California team in purple and gold, familiarly
45 Longtime rival of Walgreens
48 France's longest river
50 Greenland's capital city
51 Take the elevator, say
55 Animal also known as a forest giraffe
56 Like the ocean, but not the Great Lakes
57 Something in the air, perhaps
59 "I feel seen," online
60 Home of the Nobel Peace Center
61 A female one is called a pen
63 Something to sling
64 Texter's "If you ask me"
65 Recede
66 Take a blade to, as blades



CODE CROSSWORD 2

by Ryan "Redhead64" Faley: redhead64puzzles.blogspot.com

In this crossword puzzle, the numbers in the grid's squares (from 1 to 26) stand for letters of the alphabet. You must crack the code to reveal the words. For each letter that matches a certain number, place that letter in each square containing the number as well as the answer key next to the grid, with all 26 letters appearing at least once in the completed grid. As a little help, one of the letters has already been decoded and placed in the grid.

Once everything is filled out, look through the grid for a clue that will lead you to the FINAL ANSWER: the name of a company that's over 100 years old (HINT: Try reading through either a few consecutive rows or columns)

1	C	14
2		15
3		16
4		17
5		18
6		19
7		20
8		21
9		22
10		23
11		24
12		25
13		26

20	18	25	8	12	24		24	11	11	24	1	C	15
2		6		25		11		4		5			9
19	24	24	13	18	24	7		17	21	10	3		24
10		10		6		4		9		22			7
2	10	26		17	12	22	20	4		25	26		10
		24						7					13
14	24	7	18	21	2			18	6	16	12	7	2
4				24						6			
1	C	12	20		15	18	23	10	21		14	4	19
4		7		15		24		4		24			9
23	7	10	13	24		25	15	2	21	18	3		24
24		6		7		26		10		21			10
7	10	23	18	25	9		1	C	21	4	25	24	15

A	N
B	O
C	P
D	Q
E	R
F	S
G	T
H	U
I	V
J	W
K	X
L	Y
M	Z



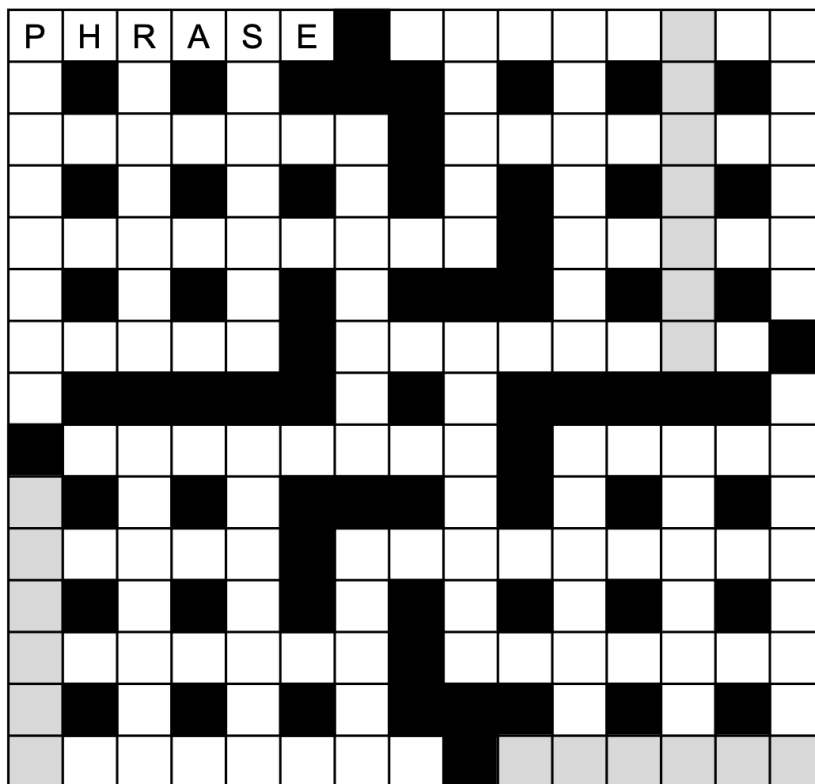
Outside the Box Year 10 Variety Puzzle #15: Two Outta Three Ain't Bad (Contest Puzzle, 7 Apr 2025)

by Joon Pahk

Each answer in this puzzle is a lowercase dictionary word. Clues come in three types: anagrams, rhymes, and synonyms of the answer word. However, for each answer, only two of the three types of clues are given. It is up to you to determine which clue is which type.

For example, the clue pair BLAZE / EXPRESSION clues the answer PHRASE, which rhymes with BLAZE and is a synonym of EXPRESSION. In this instance, there is no anagram clue.

The answer words all fit into the crossword grid at right. Across and Down clues are given in separate lists, but within each list, the clues are not given in order. One answer has been placed for you.



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When you are finished, look for a **six-letter meta answer word**. Put this answer in the subject line of an email to twoouttathree@joonpahk.com by **noon EDT on Sunday, April 13**. One correct entrant chosen at random will receive a free Premium subscription to Outside the Box Puzzles Year 11.

Across

ALLY / CAROMED
ASSENTS / GREASE
ASSUAGES / LINKS
BIKED / MEDDLED
~~BLAZE / EXPRESSION~~
BORNE / COATED
BOTTOM / DRAIN
CHAGRINED / DISCERN
COLLAPSED / GALLOPED
ENCRYPTED / PREDICTS
ENDURING / FASTENING
GENERALS / RECHARGES
KIN / VERSATILE
LOUTS / NOTICE
MIXED / WORD
REEDS / TRAITOR

Down

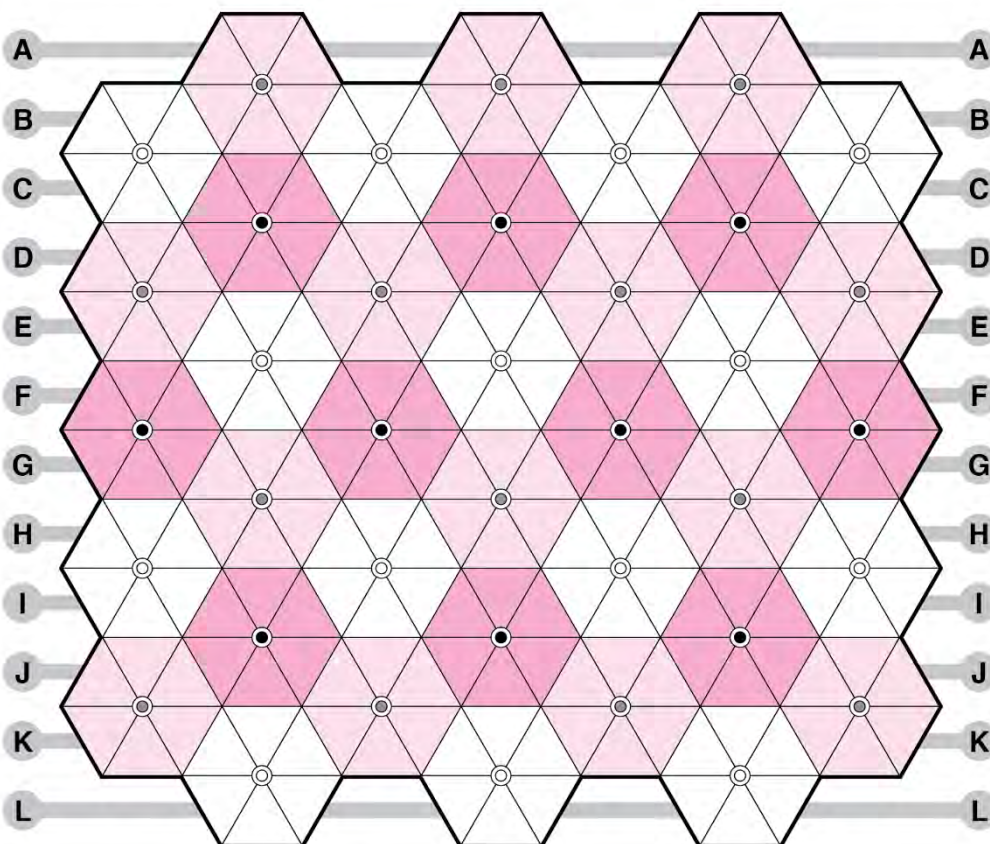
ADEPT / BUILD
ASPIRATE / LEECH
BABIES / SCOLDED
CEDAR / PARKED
CLOSET / TOPSIDE
COERCE / REVISED
CONFIDES / DISPERSE
CREST / MIDGE
DANGLED / SADDEN
DESCARTES / REBOOT
DIALECT / FORTRESS
ISOLATED / URINALS
LOCATION / WEDDING
MARINES / SYMPOSIUM
PASS / PERHAPS
RASHES / SCISSORS



Each Bloom entry has two clues, and the two answers are anagrams of one another. Enter in the grid the one that fits!
(Blooms are 2 wds. long—one for each anagram—unless otherwise noted.)

Rows

- A** Compostable fruit discard (2 wds.)
- B** Not likely to support a cause
- C** Astronomer host of *Cosmos* (2 wds.)
- D** Lack of reticence
- E** Overworking (2 wds.)
- D** Secluded, as some friars
- F** Adequately prepared (2 wds.)
- E** Resume, as a former practice (2 wds.)
- I** Great places for K-12 educations, it is believed (2 wds.)
- F** Defraud (hyph.)
- K** Talk a blue streak (3 wds.)
- G** Additional phone, once Vespa, for one (2 wds.)
- H** Conforming to accepted standards
- I** Elaborate French silk fabric in a Big Bopper song title (2 wds.)
- J** Military might on the waves (2 wds.)
- J** Selling at a reduced price, as books
- K** Annual Christmastime buy for some (2 wds.)
- K** 6 on a baseball scorecard
- L** Cider producers' machines (2 wds.)
- L** Clears in a single bound



Light Blooms

- Kolkata locale; Bracelet
- What's weighed on a ship; Styx boatman
- Elite group, with "the"; Songwriter Leonard's family
- In a malign way; Vivacious
- Appeared, as a molar; Actress Debra (3 wds.)
- Teamed (up on); Badgered
- 8 fluid oz.; Leap like a leopard (3 wds.)
- Giving a darn; Like a fast pulse
- Drinking dog, say; Descend, in mountaineering
- Continues a subscription; Stitched again
- Raga instruments; Passageways with flights
- Thinly distributed; Some tires
- Tried mightily; Electorate
- Stereo knob; Full-throated singer

Medium Blooms

- Hook-and-loop fastener; Shamrock, e.g.
- Area served by the A Train; Composer Gustav
- Wild concertgoer; Hits a four-bagger
- Blair and Ronstadt; Dot on a map
- Tribal symbols; Choral pieces
- "Whether 'tis ____"; James of the Lakers
- Machine in a wood mill; Violet
- Striped trashbin robber (Var.); Old Toyota model
- Grass named for its color; Exile
- Observes anew; Hershey brand
- Clicker; Shower component
- Grave robbers; Cast (off)
- Some Impressionist oils; Flower part
- Remained; Unflinching

Dark Blooms

- Work-boot strengthener; *In Cold Blood* author (3 wds.)
- Bill collector; Evasive maneuver (3 wds.)
- Red+yellow; Fantasy novel by Christopher Paolini
- "Search me"; Flatware brand (3 wds.)
- Pied-____; Rip anew (2 wds., hyph.)
- Givers; Sonata movements
- Climbed; Rear-window adornments
- Remitted by mail; _____, anyone? (3 wds.)
- Launch point for 1945 A-bombers; How Altoids are sold (4 wds.)
- Formal wear; Crossed through (3 wds.)



Rose Garden #1 (thorny version)

ROWS

A Stroke of a lepidopterist?

B1 French Connection or Godfather component?

B2 Palm or tarot reader (2 wds)

C1 Marine habitats affected by climate change (2 wds)

C2 Phenobarbital, for one

D1 What Edward VIII did in 1936

D2 One who takes some risks in business, perhaps

E1 1999 Michael Mann film about a tobacco industry whistleblower (2 wds)

E2 Warp plus weft (2 wds)

F1 Zingers (2 wds)

F2 Place to enjoy some oysters (2 wds)

G1 He famously described corn being "as high as an elephant's eye"

G2 The 1978 Broadway musical "Ain't Misbehavin'" showcased his tunes

H1 Curie or Nobel, e.g.

H2 Cookware retailer (2 wds)

I1 They push for change

I2 Their highest point is Mount Mitchell, in North Carolina

J1 Publisher of The New Yorker and Vogue (2 wds)

J2 Elizabeth and Philip vis-a-vis William and Harry

K1 Benchwarmers (2 wds)

K2 Byron's mathematically inclined daughter (2 wds)

L They're engaged in love/hate relationships

LIGHT

- "Absence makes the heart grow ____"
- Ancestry shared by Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson and Tulsi Gabbard
- Award-winning TV drama whose 7 seasons were set in the period that covered March 1960 to November 1970 (2 wds)
- Big name in WW I weaponry

- Country on the north coast of Borneo
- Empathize
- Imposes, as a tax
- Memorable features of "The Sixth Sense" and "The Usual Suspects"
- Muscle car
- Peace, in Arabic
- Playwright Noel
- Prestige
- Short-tempered
- Skor bar filling

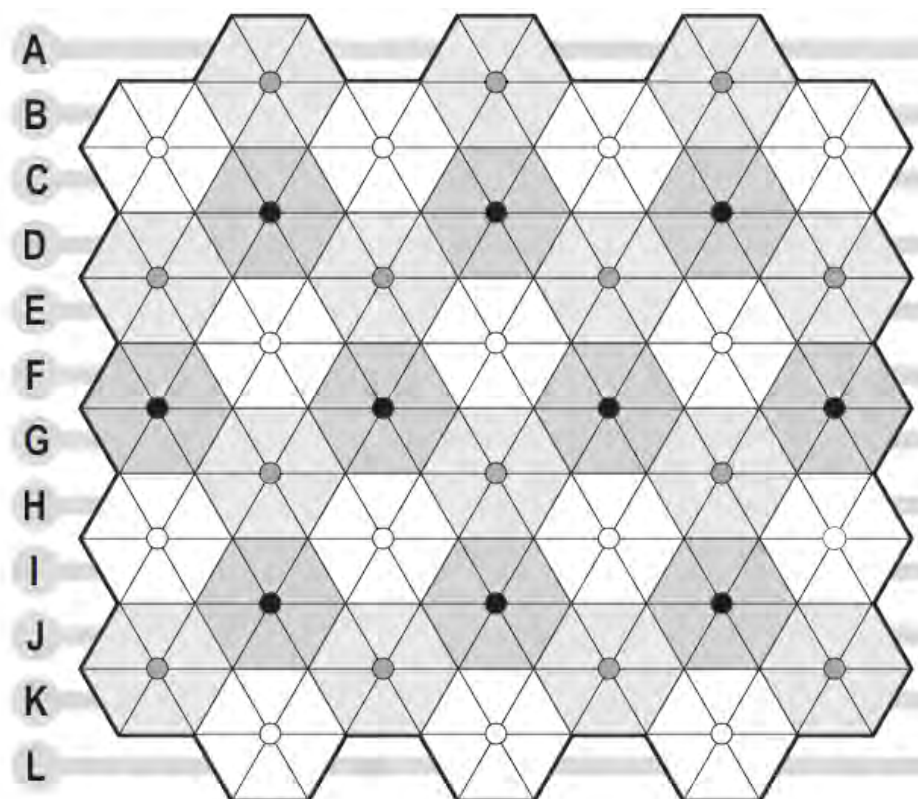
MEDIUM

- Birthplace of Frederic Chopin
- British food writer Nigella
- Comeback
- Complete a form (2 wds)
- Direction in many soup and stew recipes
- Grim persona?
- Keeper of the flame in some settings?
- Key ingredient in shortbread

- Lash out (2 wds)
- Like disinformation
- Patronizes a restaurant (2 wds)
- Reciprocal of cosine
- Spent time in the tub
- Trimmed down

DARK

- AWOL's "A"
- Cooper's creation
- Drag queen who was a frequent collaborator of film maker John Waters
- Hurting more
- Italian brandy
- Like some census data
- Painter who appears on the £20 note in England
- Spirited healer?
- Streakers of a sort
- They might consist of pancakes or poker chips



NONPLUSSED 4

by Ryan "Redhead64" Faley: redhead64puzzles.blogspot.com

The answers in this puzzle are entered in two ways: the fifteen numbered rows have one or two answers that read left to right (even the two rows that only have one letter in it), and the plusses have five-letter answers that read left to right beginning in the top row (exactly like how they're entered in Pent Words). The clues for the plusses are split up into two groups: white plusses and gray plusses. Answers to those clues should be placed in their respectively-colored plus, though you have to use the Rows' answers to find out where each plus answer is located.

There are two unclued rows in this puzzle; combine them to get the FINAL ANSWER: a two-word military phrase

ROWS

- 1) Vowel that acts as the pseudonym for *Pretty Little Liars'* blackmailing villain
- 2) No ____, no fuss
- 3) Win back one's losses
- 4) THE FIRST HALF OF THE FINAL ANSWER
- 5) *The View* co-host Joy who voiced Sid the Sloth's mom in *Ice Age: Continental Drift*
Rule Rhode Island, maybe
- 6) Raised fingerprint part
Not chemically inert
- 7) Poplar part that falls in the fall
Animated series set in the 31st century that spawned the phrase "Shut up and take my money!"
- 8) Add to, as a robotic build
It is I (on the periodic table, at least)
- 9) Bruce Springsteen album with "Hungry Heart": 2 wds.
NBC's peacock, CBS's eye, or ABC's lowercase "abc" in a ball, e.g.
- 10) Semester-ending test
Pillar carved by many tribes of the Pacific Northwest: 2 wds.
- 11) Word that can usually be pluralized
Party board game "for your Whole Brain" with art by cartoonist Gary Baseman
- 12) THE SECOND HALF OF THE FINAL ANSWER
- 13) A quart has 32 of these fluid units
- 14) Word preceding "five", "flying", and "fidelity"
- 15) *To a ____* (quirky video game where you play a teen stuck in the shape of the 20th letter)

WHITE PLUSSES

- Get a smile out of
- ____ of *Frankenstein* (Universal monster movie where Elsa Lanchester plays the title role)
- Networking company founded in San Fran (or what's missing from "San Fran")
- "Ouchless" bandage brand
- Number of bits used in an original Apple II computer
- Rock type Pokémon named after a clay creature from Jewish folklore
- *Taz*-____ ('90s Warner Bros. cartoon that's a pun on an Australian island)
- Be deserving of
- German cosmetics company
- Chicago airport not named "Midway"
- Penguin from *The Backyardigans* (or cubist Picasso)
- Member of an NFL team that plays home games in Houston's NRG Stadium
- Make knots not be knots anymore

GRAY PLUSSES

- Tennis Hall of Famer Chris who won the US Open four times in a row
- Social faux pas
- ____ white shark (fish such as Jabberjaw)
- Gut feeling
- "Live, ____, Love" (slogan commonly found on home decor from the 2010s)
- Sal who got a Best Supporting Actor Oscar nomination for *Rebel Without a Cause*
- Pitcher's hill
- Deck in the *Obra Dinn* ship from *Return of the Obra Dinn* (answer hidden in DOCTOR LOPEZ)
- Swiss/French river with a circumflex (^) in its name
- Scrub with a Brillo pad
- Hard-to-control impulses
- Person picking a politician to elect

Marching Bands #10

by Brendan Emmett Quigley

August 25, 2025

ROWS

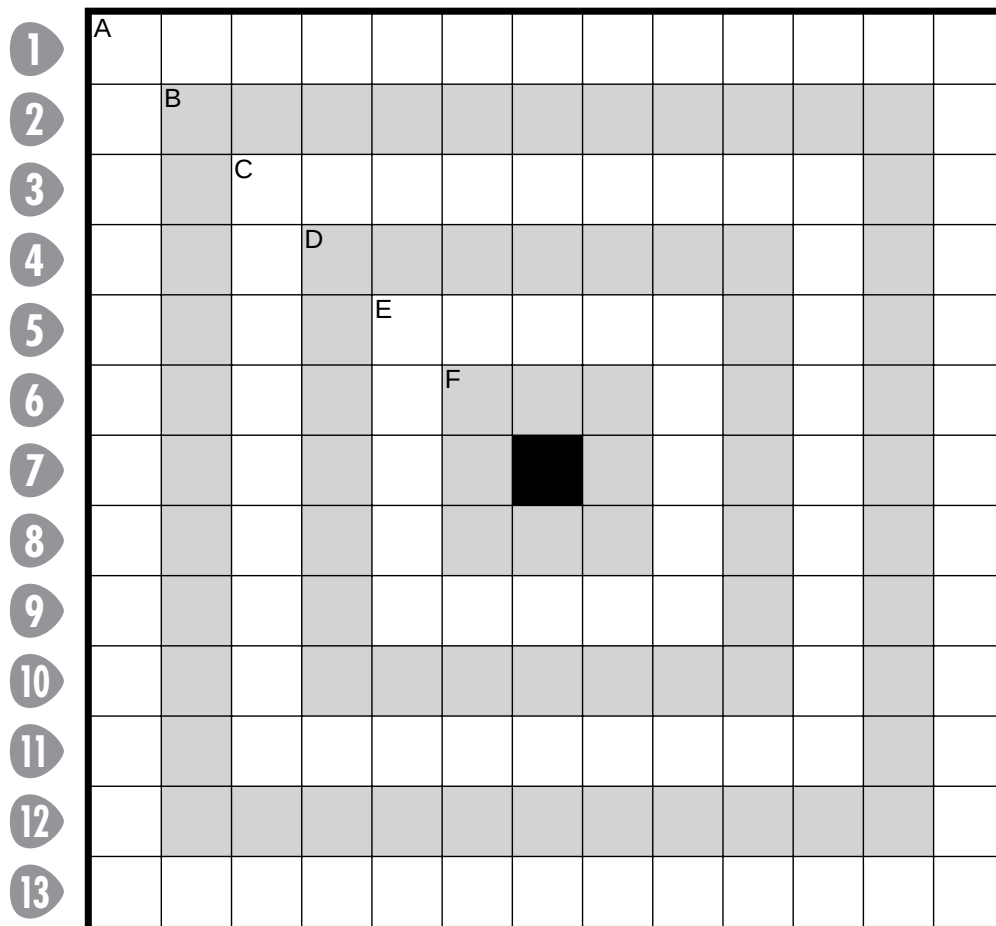
- 1 a Pitcher Hideo in the Japanese Baseball Hall of Fame
b Strikes a chord (with)
- 2 a Spreading (out)
b She rapped alongside Megan on "WAP"
- 3 a Prime minister during the Bay of Pigs invasion
b NFL all-star game: 2 wds.
- 4 a ___ corridor (Boston-D.C. megalopolis named after a high-speed train)
b "Good wishes!": 2 wds.
- 5 a Panoramic view
b Tchaikovsky ballet: 2 wds.
- 6 a Carlie ___-Gordon (co-owner of the Indianapolis Colts)
b Medieval fighter with a long weapon
- 7 a Got closer to
b Handel's first opera
- 8 a Doug Burgum's department
b Still life containers

- 9 a One hired for housecleaning
b Adds onion domes to the architecture, say
- 10 a Linked together, as besties walking down the street: Hyph.
b Dustin's "Midnight Cowboy" role
- 11 a Scheduled delivery time?: 2 wds.
b More off-the-wall
- 12 a Ukrainian port city
b "I wanna start!": 2 wds.
- 13 a Stare wonderingly
b Big name in handbags: 2 wds.

BANDS

- A a Up to that level, maybe, but that's the max: 3 wds.
b FiveThirtyEight founder: 2 wds.
c Miscellaneous
d Church alcove
e Snatch
f Tower at a Buddhist temple
g Little suckers?
- B a King or queen: 2 wds.
b Aware of social issues

- c ___ Pieces
d Prevalent to excess
e Pool hall technique
f Boxer Roberto
g ___ Kane (role for which Susan Lucci won an Emmy, eventually)
- C a Leather for sharpening
b Their passengers ride alone
c Page-turner about (and by) a Turner: 2 wds.
d Sixth letter of the Greek alphabet
e Cup for espresso
- D a Technique used in childbirth
b Petting zoo that might also sell wool: 2 wds.
c Indian princess
d Rid of a certain vermin infestation
- E a Egyptian city with a noteworthy dam
b "Radio, Radio" singer Costello
c County southwest of Greater London (or a kind of carriage)
- F a Photo you might shake after taking





Fresh-Cut Rowses, Puzzle 5

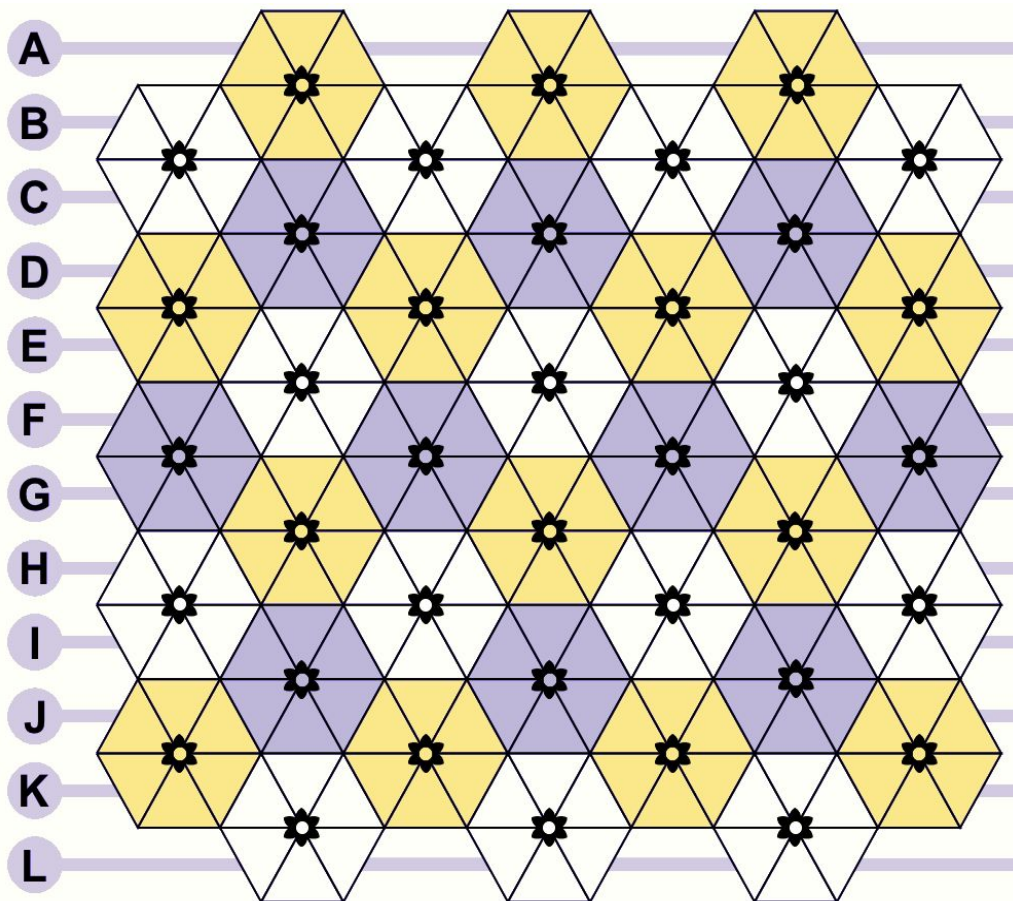
Juliana Tringali Golden

ROWS

- A.** Making small adjustments
- B.** Numeric slang that may mean "so-so" (though no one knows for sure): hyph. Ovoid salad morsels: 2 wds.
- C.** Patriotic song originally sung by British troops to mock Americans: 2 wds. "Please, do anything else!": 3 wds.
- D.** Gender diversity discipline: 2 wds. Animals in a parade
- E.** "Beg your pardon" Important accessory in Russian folk dance
- F.** Diner staple with peppers and salsa: 2 wds. Black ____ (anglerfish species with very large fangs)
- G.** Butt in The Toros and the Clovers in "Bring It On"
- H.** Opportune Clock-watcher's daydream: 2 wds.
- I.** Numeric slang meaning "totally honest": 2 wds. It can be a bit pointed: 2 wds.
- J.** Frizz fastener Tortola and St. Croix: 2 wds.
- K.** Pattern that Vogue declares to be a neutral: 2 wds. Weather warning: 2 wds.
- L.** Marginalized

LIGHT BLOOMS

Like a rainbow
 ____ Bonham Carter
 University board member
 Like a character in "Ghost"?
 Ceases, in Pig Latin
 Mets Hall of Famer "Doc"
 Left the scene
 Chevy SUVs, littorally



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" ____ like the present!": 2 wds.
 Silver-screen heavyweight Karl
 More precious
 Enters a password: 2 wds.
 Devoid of joy
 907.185 kilograms: 2 wds.

MEDIUM BLOOMS

Gets hot on TikTok, perhaps
 Not at all clear
 Posey of "White Lotus"
 Without constraint
 Deceptive boxing moves
 "Wild" author Strayed
 Fell (over)
 Helical pasta
 Buying a round, perhaps: 3 wds.

Import taxes
 "The ____ of the Shrew"
 Instructional file name: 2 wds.
 Purchase CDs, responsibly
 Shrub with poisonous berries

DARK BLOOMS

Journalist Holt
 Student's reason to review
 Takes over for someone: 2 wds.
 Gas station option
 One who might say "Ready or not, here I come!"
 Tiny piece of the pie
 Dressage skill
 Word after "fox" or "fortune"
 Stylish Monopoly piece: 2 wds.
 Find a new family for, as a pet



Meta-morphosis

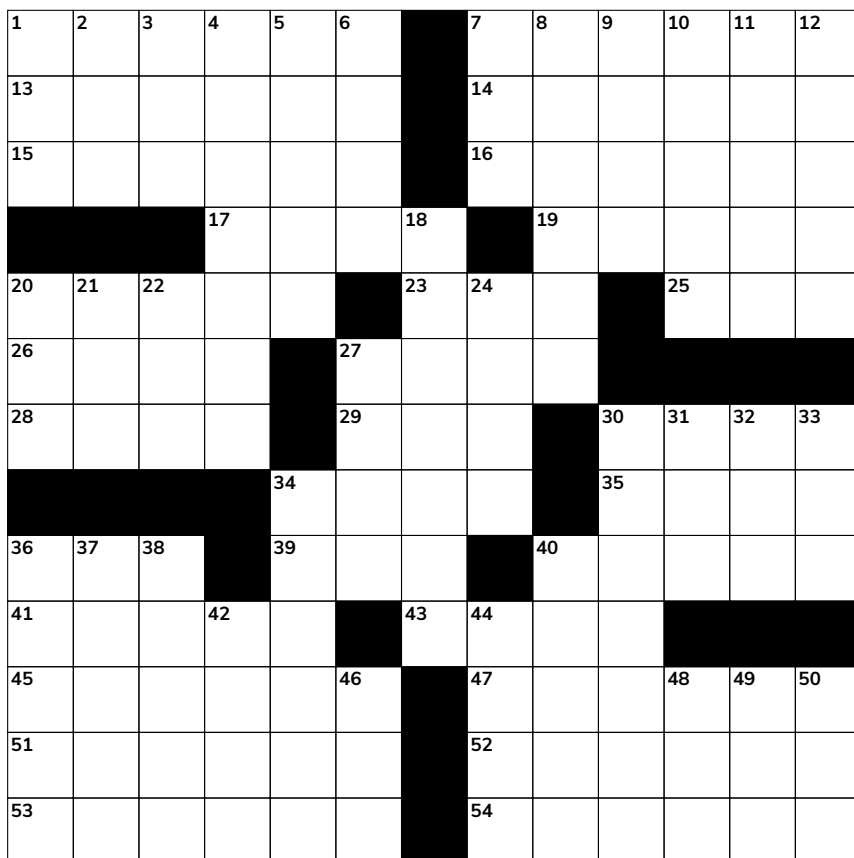
Bird Lives

ACROSS

- 1 Put words in a way that's hard to understand (earlier)
 7 One in the exam room (earlier)
 13 Craved what someone else has
 14 Location for Cornell knowledge
 15 Kitchen appliance brand. Also, with Zee, a NY bridge.
 16 Cat that's spotted in South America
 17 October birthstone
 19 First name in Ethiopian history
 20 ___ over, loses one's balance (later)
 23 Chin or legal add-on
 25 Fresh ___ on NPR
 26 What a meta begins with
 27 "Call Me By ___ Name" (this one's the same)
 28 Norse god often angry (as lispers might say)
 29 Tay-tay's main squeeze Travis is a tight one
 30 Like Z, coming later than all other letters in the alphabet
- 34 New Mexico artist colony
 35 NATO alphabet letter that comes earlier than all others
 36 Male in the family (later)
 39 "It's freezing cold"
 40 City near London featured in a Monty Python plane-hijack sketch
 41 Novelst Calvino
 43 Wee bit
 45 Nine-days prayer
 47 Molecules that are always so negative
- 51 Motorless aircraft
 52 British medical journal, with "The"
 53 Like Aaron Rodgers among NFL quarterbacks
 54 Hanukkah candle sets for the last night (later)

DOWN

- 1 New York team player (later)
 2 "___ voce poca fa" (Barber of Seville)
 3 Judge in MLB last year



Meta is a tale of personal transformation Copyright Bird Lives, all rights reserved

- 4 Manic depressive
 5 Bounds companion
 6 Aussie dame
 7 ___ Pepe sherry
 8 Durer, notably
 9 Where the team in 1 Down used to play
 10 Francis Ford Coppola's sister
 11 Bacteria for a gut reaction
 12 Michelin inspector at times (later)
 18 Soprano in "Il Trovatore"
 20 It has the makings of a successful product (earlier)
 21 Old English letter
 22 Job listing letters
 24 Beer, slangily
 27 Leap or light follower (this one's the same)
 30 Heaping praise on
 31 Prefix with rock or right
 32 49ers touchdowns happen there
 33 Goal of many beachgoers
 34 Pricey steaks
 36 In "Oz," "bikkie" or "barbie" for a scavenger (earlier)
 37 Lagoon location
 38 Michelangelo masterpiece
 40 Maui veranda
 42 Journalist's first sentence
 44 Part of a two-word phrase for a fish story (earlier)
 46 Matisse metier
 48 Dundee "Oh dear!"
 49 Nothing but revenue minus costs
 50 Manhattan ave. crossers



March 7, 2025

MGWCC #875 -- "High Marks" by Peter Abide

Matt Gaffney's Weekly Crossword Contest

<https://xwordcontest.com>

ACROSS

- 1 Basket weaving and beer making
7 Seoul-based airline
13 Portuguese year
16 As a precaution
17 Guy with the football, often
18 Chuck Grassley, for over 44 yrs.
19 Name evoking "Respect"
20 Tapping into a container, as a cigarette
21 Abbr. on office mail
22 *Ted, in baseball
24 Inits. for Langley or Keesler
26 Award for Best Actress
29 Bone in the arm
30 *Let's hope
31 ____-Boy recliner
32 "rly appreciate it!"
34 Leaving, slangily
36 *Buck's mate
37 Stax records genre
39 ____-majeste (high treason)
40 PC program file extension
41 Something extra in an env.
43 "Wheel of Fortune" contestants, collectively
45 Sound accompanied by pearl clutching
47 The soda, not the sock
48 Was the opener, in the Major Leagues
50 Aquarium muck
54 Town basically destroyed in the Battle of Normandy
56 Financial services co.

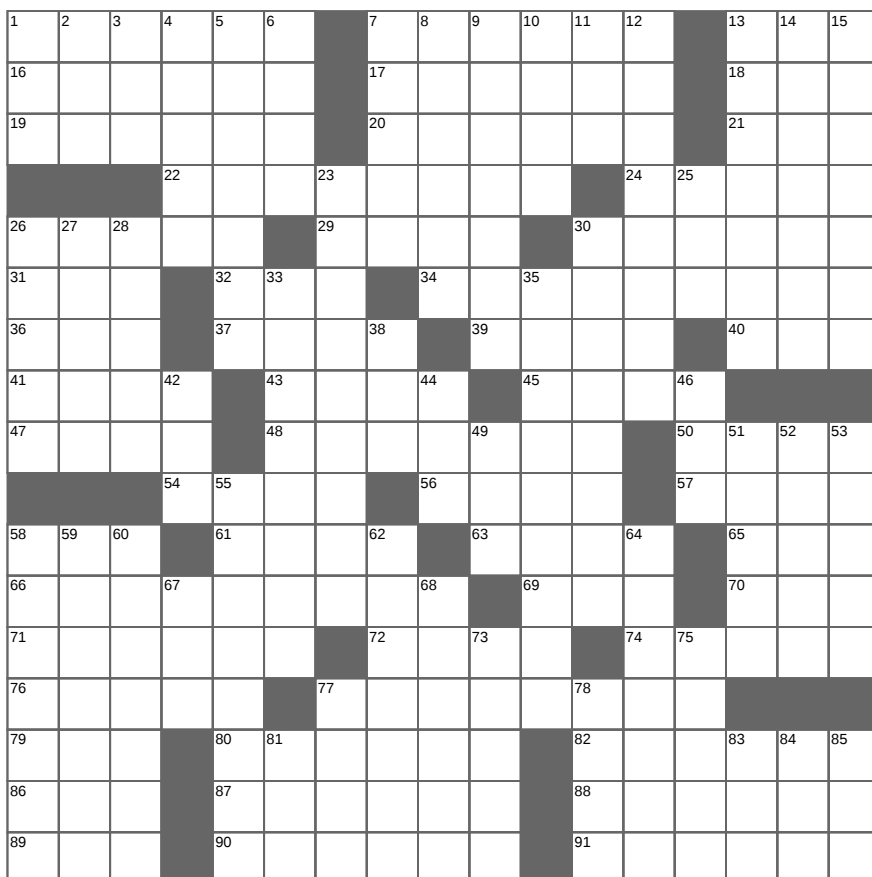
- 57 Tiger found in the cereal aisle
58 Rib-joint letters
61 Fidel's brother and successor
63 Explosives, informally
65 *Z competitor
66 Totally befuddled
69 LSU's conf.
70 "Don't ____ stranger"
71 *Chamber feature
72 Suffer, in Scotland (anagram of "reed")
74 In need of practice
76 "A Confederacy of Dunces" author John Kennedy ____
77 *Fish
79 U.S. Dept. overseeing farm subsidies
80 "Psycho" scene setting
82 Teahouse hostess
86 U-turn from SSW
87 University that sounds like a road
88 The end of time?
89 Aides for profs.
90 Enthusiastic consent
91 They're found on beaches

DOWN

- 1 Its HQ houses the still-not-fully-solved coded sculpture Kryptos
2 GI's furlough
3 Whiz
4 Decree proclaimed against Salman Rushdie
5 Concert merch
6 Lick and stick
7 Skinny as ____
8 She followed Dwight on U.S. dollar coins
9 "Moby-Dick" narrator
10 Large Hawaiian tunas
11 Former hurler Robb with a palindromic surname
12 Expresses different opinions, angrily
13 Julian of WikiLeaks
14 Big name in video streaming
15 8 bits, data-wise
23 Swanky [Boomer clue] / Bougie [Gen-Z clue]
25 X, to Elon
26 Of bygone times
27 It joins the Rhone at Lyon
28 Native of Prague
30 "I'll see you then!"
33 Dorm room "stove"

- 35 Greece/Turkey separator
38 Still burning
42 Sue Grafton's "____ for Lawless"
44 Mo. for leaf-peeping
46 Calif. is on it
49 Blackjack request
51 Salads with bacon and eggs
52 Like some goals, sadly
53 Sinatra standard covered by Elvis
55 Great injustice
58 Not subtle at all
59 Its "first name" may be 26-A-c-r-o-s-s
60 Measurements of familiarity, as of celebrities and brand names
62 Took out in cuffs, say

- 64 Type of owl or its howl
67 "My mama done ____ me, . . ." (song lyric from "Blues in the Night")
68 Gentleman thief Lupin of fiction
73 ____ humaines (people, in France)
75 Useful Scrabble piece when you have a Q
77 Mustard and Sanders: Abbr.
78 Doctors Without Borders and the like
81 Cherry or lemon
83 Ans. to a puzzle
84 Corrosive acid, chemically
85 Soviet rifles, for short



This puzzle's contest answer is a six-letter word.

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March 29, 2025

Matt Gaffney's Weekly Crossword Contest

MGWCC #878 -- "Little Morsels" by Lydia Roth & Christina Bodensiek <https://xwordcontest.com>

ACROSS

- 1 Dr. Sagan who co-founded the non-profit The Planetary Society
5 R.S.V.P. response
10 One whose email address once included .edu
14 india.____, Grammy-nominated artist for "Testimony: Vol. 1"
15 Crosswise, to a sailor
16 Move for one's co., say
17 "I need to test this out ... ____"
19 That, in Spanish
20 Inventor Thomas A. who worked with x-rays
21 Antagonist of He-man and She-ra
23 J.M. Barrie's right-hand man for Hook
25 French state
26 ____ Paulo
28 Clump of dirt
30 Breakfast, lunch, dinner, etc.
34 Dr.'s co-workers, e.g.
35 Fly sky-high and attract upward-looking stares, perhaps
36 Margaery's blood-thirsty mother-in-law, in "Game of Thrones"
37 No. 1, hunky-dory, etc.
38 Author J.R.R.
40 "Mr. Holmes" actor McKellen

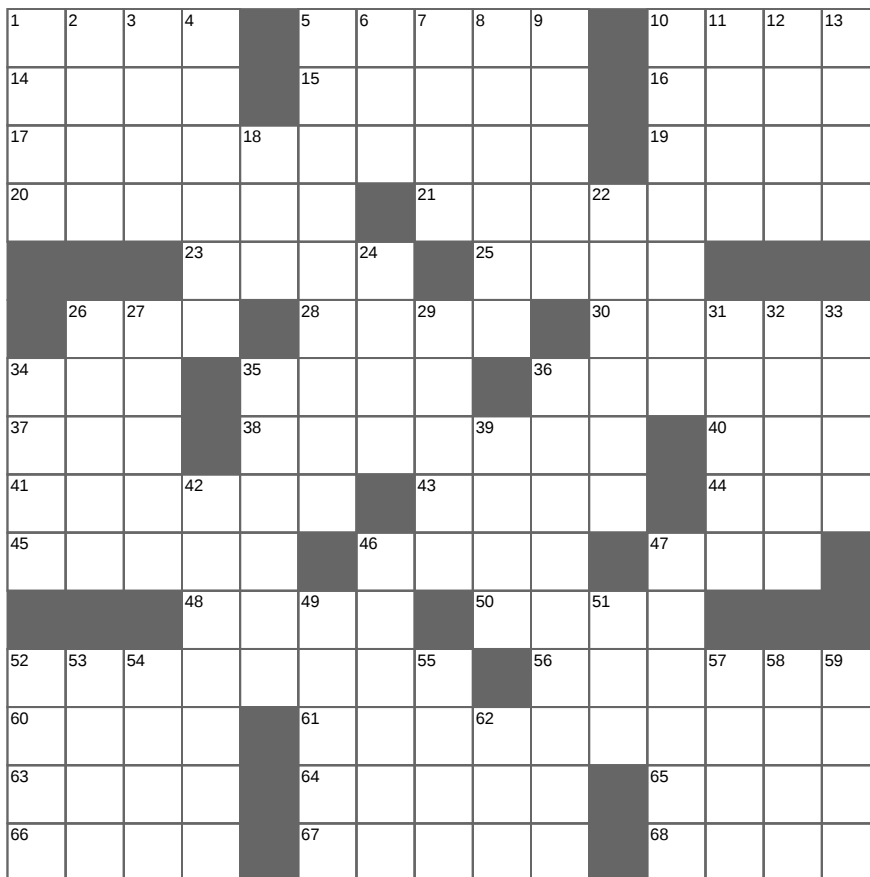
- 41 Child-like back-talk to a cruel-hearted comment
43 Negative contraction
44 ____ Johnson Sr., dad on "Black-ish," husband to Dr. Rainbow
45 Irked
46 Rose-Hulman, e.g.
47 Dr. Jeong
48 What our cats will eventually do to all of our window blinds
50 Verdi opera
52 Regional forms of a language
56 C. maxima, large grapefruit-like fruit (largest weighs 12lb 2.9oz!)
60 "I ____ over it"
61 Oprah's giveaway catchphrase
63 Car manufacturer most likely to tell you a "sad" story...
64 Performed without lines
65 T.S. Eliot's highly-regarded work, "The ____ Song of J. Alfred Prufrock"
66 Feeling leading up to a once-in-a-lifetime event
67 Self-announcing lyric from award-winning mezzo-soprano Adele
68 Sorrow-filled expression often used by Wm. Shakespeare et al.

DOWN

- 1 Place to "pour over" the menu?

- 2 Yank by a handle?
3 "Pon de Replay" singer
4 Not as much
5 Large, fluffy cat breed named after an East Coast state
6 Honest prez who shares a birthday with Charles Darwin
7 Pines
8 Fronted the cost for
9 Make one's acquaintance on Omegle, say
10 Member of a welcoming committee
11 Silence in a bar?
12 Vocal range above tenor
13 It may be unhinged
18 Rom follower
22 Bemoan
24 Israeli airline
26 Boop target
27 "All you had to do was ____!"
29 Pest control company
31 Actor's remark to the audience
32 Glean information
33 "I'm waiting for the right time to finish my math homework!" "Well, here's your ____!"
34 Tabula ____
35 Ozymandias, for one
36 Arthropod with up to 30 legs
39 Rae of "Barbie"

- 42 It might have a little ring to it
46 Really digging
47 Harris who said "We are not going back"
49 "Not sure if u saw this article or not"
51 Polka ____
52 "The Incredibles" speedy super
53 Cagey response to an invitation
54 "When do you need me to harvest that maple syrup? " ____!"
55 Tidy quantities
57 Earth science, for short
58 Outflow from Mount Doom
59 Metallic sources
62 Glam rock?



This puzzle's contest answer consists of four grid entries.



Go Fourth and Prosper

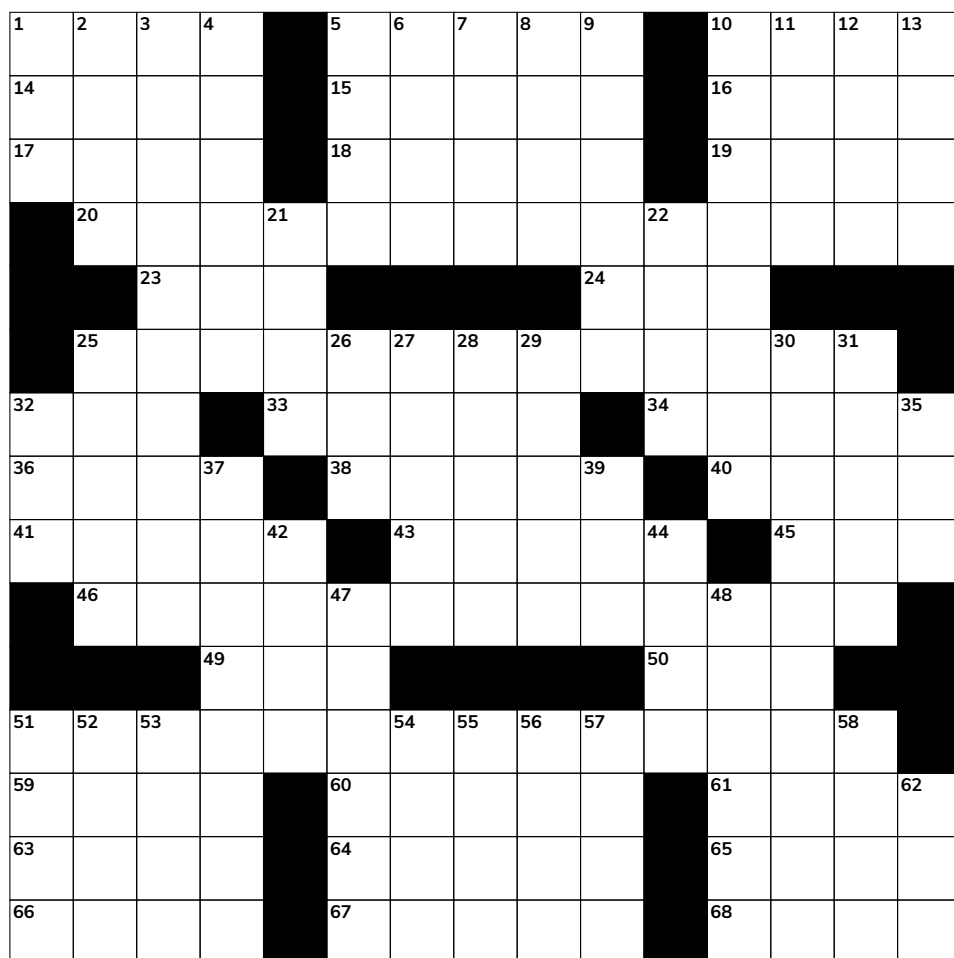
By Matt Gaffney/Edited by Mike Shenk

ACROSS

- 1 Ski resort near Snowbird
- 5 The Doha Diamond League's country
- 10 Emulates Eminem
- 14 Round part on a hammer
- 15 Grammar topic
- 16 "Definitely!"
- 17 Amigos
- 18 First words of a well-known "Walrus" song
- 19 Michael of "The Phoenician Scheme"
- 20 Caught the audio of a NASA miscue?
- 23 Org. that lobbies for gun rights
- 24 Powerful acid, to chemists
- 25 Get in on the winnings after "I-24" and "G-55" are called?
- 32 LBJ was one for 11 seasons
- 33 Latin for "pain"
- 34 Fork parts
- 36 Passed and then some
- 38 Student getting extra help
- 40 The Baths of Caracalla's city
- 41 Magnet ends
- 43 Church official
- 45 ENT, e.g.
- 46 Harshly criticize part of a wooden car?
- 49 "2 Broke Girls" co-star Dennings
- 50 Word on Iowa maps
- 51 Find out how industrious the teens are these days?
- 59 Rounds for Tony Soprano
- 60 Surname on Scotch bottles
- 61 Asian territory in Risk
- 63 "My turn!"
- 64 Where both queens begin a chess game
- 65 Katz's on the Lower East Side, e.g.
- 66 Falls behind
- 67 Britannia invader
- 68 ___ spumante

DOWN

- 1 Free download, often
- 2 First wife of 25-Down



Meta is a 4-letter word

2025 The Wall Street Journal

- 3 Univision genre
- 4 Amusing Aziz
- 5 Pound sterling, informally
- 6 Gray and Candler
- 7 Pack down
- 8 Ottoman bigwig
- 9 Amplify
- 10 Wrestling icon of the 1970s-90s
- 11 Tasman for whom Tasmania is named
- 12 Land on the Pacific
- 13 Guesstimate
- 21 Cape Town coin
- 22 Genuine: Ger.
- 25 See 2-Down
- 26 Web-crawling software
- 27 Cutesy sentiment on a teddy bear, maybe
- 28 Tag shout
- 29 Pianist-singer Buddy
- 30 Well-known Spanish count
- 31 Jell-O flavor
- 32 Put a limit on
- 35 Part of a min.
- 37 Hard-to-transport computers
- 39 Gobble up
- 42 Two-wheeled carriage
- 44 Fresh look
- 47 In conflict
- 48 Poet whose surname anagrams to "unread"
- 51 Kite part
- 52 Jane Austen classic
- 53 Annoyingly self-satisfied
- 54 Org. for Cristiano Ronaldo and George Bello
- 55 Two-piece candy
- 56 Shining ring
- 57 Small flyer
- 58 Sentry's command
- 62 Number of cards in a Caesars Palace deck?



Position Statement

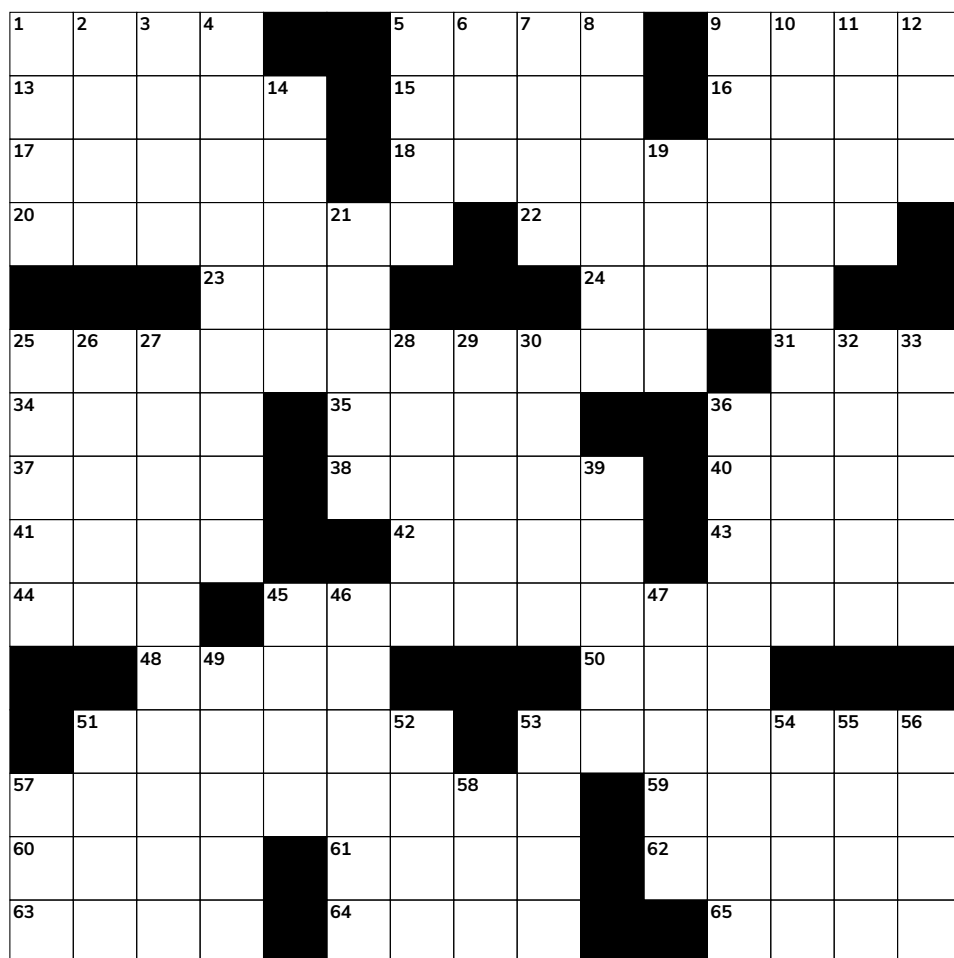
By Mike Shenk/Edited by Mike Shenk

ACROSS

- 1 Ambassador's asset
- 5 Sir counterpart
- 9 Place in the overhead bin
- 13 Luau greeting
- 15 Just
- 16 "That's a good point"
- 17 "Daphnis et Chloe" composer
- 18 When yachting, what's right
- 20 Quarter of a third
- 22 Boat backs
- 23 D-backs, on sports tickers
- 24 Wine barrel sediment
- 25 Namesake of a Manhattan center
- 31 Mouse catcher
- 34 Slender wind
- 35 Make a getaway
- 36 River through Florence
- 37 Seat filler
- 38 Muffler, e.g.
- 40 Flirty signal
- 41 PC keys
- 42 Not worth ____
- 43 Sporting blade
- 44 Unimpressed response
- 45 Parent whose children have all left
- 48 Symbol on Angels' uniforms
- 50 Gangster's gun
- 51 Misgivings
- 53 Consequence of cabin pressure?
- 57 Cut short
- 59 Prank
- 60 Cuban coin
- 61 Whitey in Cooperstown
- 62 Chew out
- 63 Bitter brews
- 64 Mariners' spots
- 65 Teases

DOWN

- 1 Pucker-inducing



Meta is an appropriate place

2025 The Wall Street Journal

- 2 "There oughta be ____!"
- 3 Sheltered bay
- 4 Winners of 17 NBA championships
- 5 Dance in a pit
- 6 Crumb carrier
- 7 "Sad to report..."
- 8 Aromatic evergreen
- 9 Part of a chain, maybe
- 10 School record
- 11 Belonging to both of us
- 12 Leave the single life
- 14 Emmy winner Woodard
- 19 Contents of a tavern pitcher
- 21 Petty squabbles
- 25 Pulitzer-winning composer Ned
- 26 Past paunchy
- 27 Brougham mover
- 28 Yosemite peak, familiarly
- 29 Minimal amount
- 30 Satchel Paige's real first name
- 32 Year, in Paris
- 33 Pot puffer
- 36 Blown away
- 39 Yeast and mold, e.g.
- 45 Idris of "Pacific Rim"
- 46 Decorative designs
- 47 Tombstone's Virgil, Wyatt and Morgan
- 49 Lot fillers
- 51 Activity requiring a second
- 52 Wild plum of Europe
- 53 Says further
- 54 Yours, in Tours
- 55 Medal for first
- 56 Outcomes
- 57 Pro filer
- 58 Historic time



Sending Letters

By Patrick Berry/Edited by Mike Shenk

ACROSS

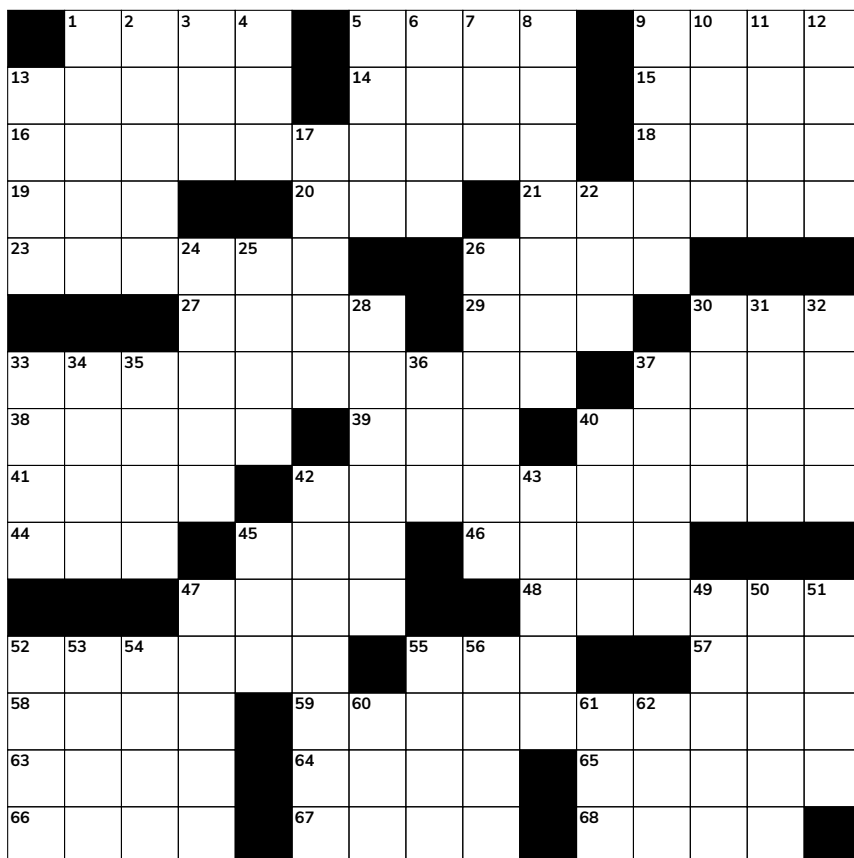
- 1 Bay of Pigs location
- 5 "Queen of QVC" Greiner
- 9 Morse code symbol
- 13 Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum site
- 14 Computer since 1998
- 15 Gran Canaria, por ejemplo
- 16 College grade that comes with a deadline
- 18 Jazz trumpeter Baker
- 19 D.C. dealmaker
- 20 "Anthem" author Rand
- 21 Chargers
- 23 Board with two seats
- 26 Connecticut's state fish
- 27 Typical souk shopper
- 29 Bound
- 30 Light touch
- 33 Thriller author whose novels are set in Kindle County
- 37 Saintry ring
- 38 Reef predator
- 39 Wide loafer spec
- 40 Shredded stuff in glitter polish
- 41 Mideast sultanate

- 42 Targaryen family practice on "House of the Dragon"
- 44 Miss at a hoedown
- 45 Genetic stuff
- 46 Sail support
- 47 Beat keepers
- 48 River that the Oregon Trail follows for over 600 miles
- 52 Literally, "empty hand"
- 55 "___ was saying..."
- 57 Response to an epiphany
- 58 School whose yard features a statue of Henry VI

- 59 Mob sorts
- 63 Provoke
- 64 Annual May event, informally
- 65 Perth ___, New Jersey
- 66 Light on one's feet
- 67 Full of holes, possibly
- 68 Greenhorn in gaming

DOWN

- 1 Riverside rental
- 2 "I give up!"
- 3 Enemy ghost in Mario games
- 4 Use a sight
- 5 Easter flower



Meta is an 11-letter two-word phrase

2025 The Wall Street Journal

- 6 Harbinger
- 7 First animal of the Chinese zodiac
- 8 Skating exhibition
- 9 Cut into cubes
- 10 "Days of Grace" writer Arthur
- 11 Malamutes' burden
- 12 Bowlers, e.g.
- 13 Femoral joints
- 17 Manhandle
- 22 Listening device
- 24 He prompted God to test Job
- 25 Like many student films
- 26 Blacksmiths, at times
- 28 "___ noches!"
- 30 Surreal Spaniard
- 31 Jackson of music
- 32 Recurring "Star Trek" villains, with "the"
- 33 Hazardous haze
- 34 Possible result of trauma
- 35 Unwritten
- 36 Soldier in gray
- 37 Beast slain by Hercules
- 40 Coarse flour
- 42 Needing a rescue
- 43 Silas Marner's ward
- 45 Morse code symbol
- 47 Halloween handouts
- 49 Fitness craze of the '90s
- 50 Painful pulsation
- 51 "Let's stay calm here..."
- 52 Stainless steel containers
- 53 Resting on
- 54 Crowd sound
- 55 "Hells Bells" band
- 56 Liquor brand in cobalt blue bottles
- 60 De Armas of "Knives Out"
- 61 Retired M&M color
- 62 Mopey music



Blind Stitch

Hanh Huynh

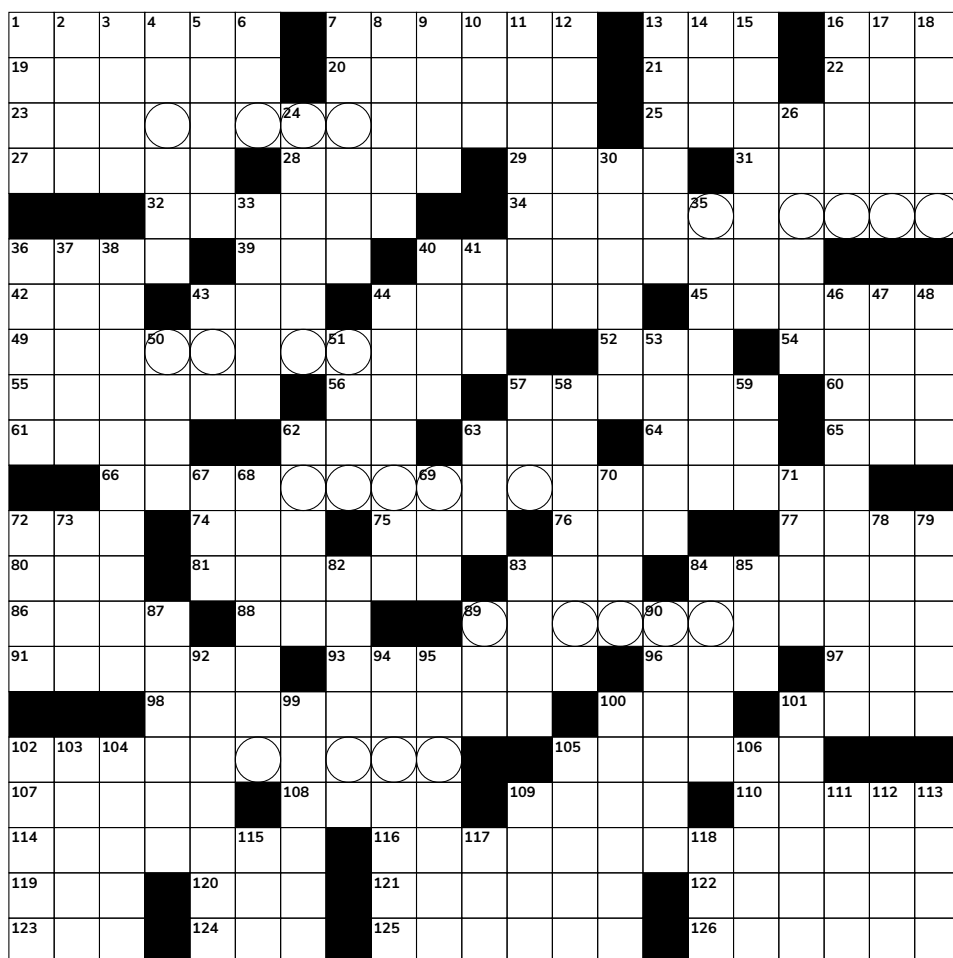
ACROSS

- 1 Moment to take action
- 7 Type of cracker in a s'more
- 13 Educator/activist Castro
- 16 Brief moment
- 19 Nice smells
- 20 Historically nomadic group
- 21 Poem of praise
- 22 Hatchet, e.g.
- 23 *They love their mummies?
- 25 "You just got flamed!"
- 27 Something in the plus column
- 28 ___ the kicker (disrupted a field goal)
- 29 Coup d'___
- 31 Focus on an autostereogram
- 32 News anchor Holt
- 34 *Total bootlickers
- 36 "Chef's ___!"
- 39 Pay-___-view
- 40 Leaves speechless
- 42 Museum pieces
- 43 "Neither snow ___ rain ..."
- 44 Flooring option
- 45 "War of the Currents" inventor
- 49 *Oregon's nickname
- 52 Body part with a drum
- 54 "Don't leave this spot, Spot"
- 55 Agitated state
- 56 Great Basin people
- 57 Was almost depleted
- 60 GPS suggestion
- 61 For fear that
- 62 Subj. for some aspiring bilinguals
- 63 ___ the children to bed
- 64 A centenarian's is at least 100
- 65 "Scientia potentia ___"
- 66 *Tiny British dogs
- 72 Includes on an email
- 74 "Affirmative"

- 75 Korean automaker
- 76 Not well-lit
- 77 "NBA Countdown" channel
- 80 Go bad
- 81 Walking on sunshine
- 83 Quibble
- 84 Not competent
- 86 Article with a stance
- 88 Corrosive chemical
- 89 *Largest city in Tanzania
- 91 Recovered after fainting
- 93 Like the stinkiest durian on a tree
- 96 Cardinal's baseball rival
- 97 Untruth
- 98 Certain woman with a younger lover
- 100 Tea, in Chinese
- 101 "M*A*S*H" actor Alan
- 102 *"I'm descending this ladder!"
- 105 Used a hammer
- 107 Chateau de Chambord's valley
- 108 ___ of habeas corpus
- 109 Particles with + or - charges
- 110 Rich cake
- 114 Memory loss
- 116 2017 film about an obsessive tailor, or a hint to finding the word that's "sewn" into this puzzle
- 119 _niversal _roduct _ode
- 120 Texter's "Isn't that the truth?"
- 121 Donkey who said, "Don't blame me if it rains"
- 122 "As you wish, Captain!"
- 123 ___/her
- 124 Born as
- 125 Talked monotonously
- 126 Guys who may be grizzled

DOWN

- 1 Greek Earth goddess



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- 2 ACLU, UNICEF, etc.
- 3 Many Yuletide gifts
- 4 Drives to take action
- 5 Victorian pal
- 6 That, in Mexicali
- 7 Produce seller
- 8 "Understood," on a radio
- 9 Surrounded by
- 10 "She ___ her hands full"
- 11 Pays for hole cards
- 12 Make a keyboard error
- 13 "To an extent"
- 14 Hullabaloo
- 15 Rented
- 16 Horned underworld figure
- 17 Apply, like pressure
- 18 Relinquishes
- 24 Metric units of gasoline

- 26 Equilibrium
- 30 Powerful blackjack hand
- 33 Leopard feature
- 35 Polish dumplings
- 36 Capital of Afghanistan
- 37 Name hidden in "dire need"
- 38 Alpha Centauri, e.g.
- 40 Totally fill
- 41 Three, in Italian
- 43 Classic 8-bit console
- 44 ___ reflexes
- 46 Squishy therapeutic item
- 47 Cereal grains
- 48 Kremlin "no"
- 50 White House "no"
- 51 Heinie
- 53 Rousing device
- 57 Groove
- 58 Was humiliated
- 59 Li'l

- 62 Writing assignment
- 63 Certain parent
- 67 Whiskey type
- 68 Big name in corn flakes
- 69 Clear (of)
- 70 Bris or bar mitzvah
- 71 Word before "deal" or "ID"
- 72 Foam shoe sometimes worn in "sport mode"
- 73 Club where "Tony always tended bar," in a song
- 78 Burberry's check pattern, e.g.
- 79 Where Hercules fought a lion
- 82 Troublesome child
- 83 Org. with spies
- 84 Expected
- 85 Capture
- 87 Want badly
- 89 Rep who isn't a Rep.
- 90 Rift

- 92 Catches a radio broadcast
- 94 "What an exhausting day!"
- 95 NFL feline
- 99 In the know
- 100 Paddled in a camp boat
- 101 Absolutely loved
- 102 Christmas figure's surname
- 103 Pizzazz
- 104 Finely chop
- 105 "The Bells of ___ Dame"
- 106 ___ alcohol (biofuel)
- 109 Privy to
- 111 Printer paper unit
- 112 Actor Diggs
- 113 Garden with a serpent
- 115 Eisenhower's nickname
- 117 "Opus" actress Edebiri
- 118 Lao-tzu's "way"



You Should See the Other Guy! Pete Muller, Mack Meller, and Andrew White

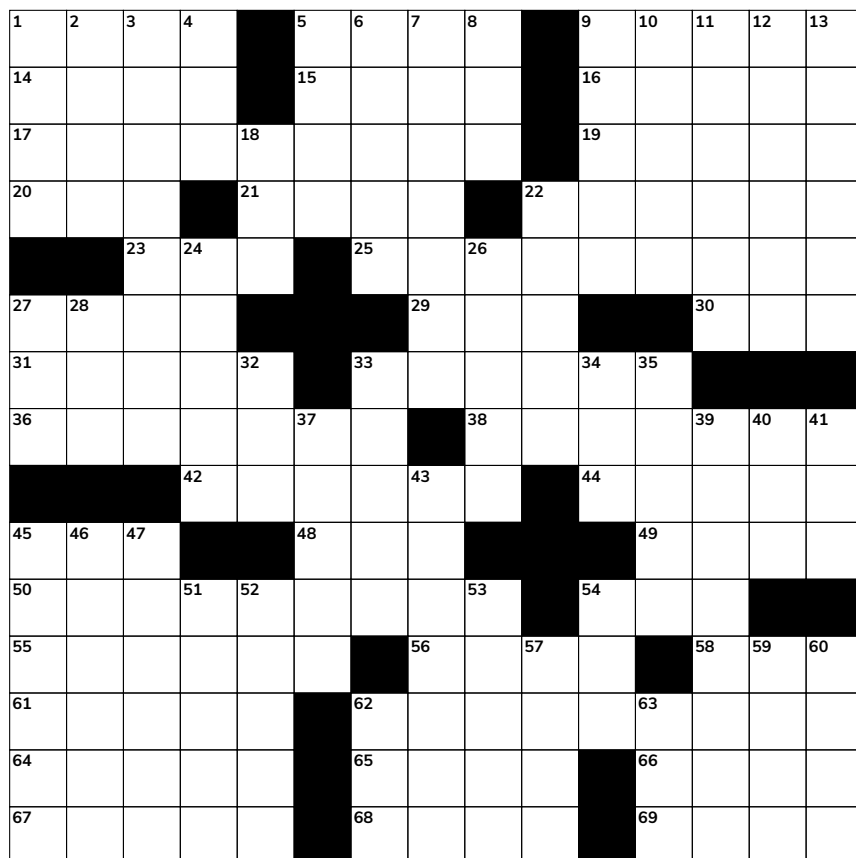
ACROSS

- 1 Black or White
5 Bone on a ristorante menu
9 "Glengarry Glen Ross" playwright David
14 Brand that launched a horchata-inspired cookie flavor with 33-Across in June 2025
15 Teddy's cousin?
16 ___ Heep (British rock band named after a Dickens character)
17 Australian actor in Marvel movies
19 Timor-___ (Asia's newest country)
20 Half of a 2010s dance name
21 "___ Up and Dance" (5x platinum hit for Walk the Moon)
22 Pukalani porches
23 Laid eyes on, to Tweety
25 Like an empire with a capital at Constantinople
27 "In Your ___" (Peter Gabriel hit on which Tony Levin played bass)
29 Benatar who won four consecutive Best Female Rock Vocal Performance Grammys
30 Booker T.'s backers
31 Like "k" as a response
33 Gomez with the #1 hit "Lose You to Love Me"
36 Site for a yearly auto race
38 Radiating, as warmth

- 42 Prominent aardvark features
44 Talking and opening crinkly wrappers at the opera, e.g.
45 "Arrival" arrivals, in brief
48 Move the needle?
49 Birthplace of Toblerone
50 Descriptor for William in 1066
54 Guitar great Paul
55 Word appearing twice in the title of a 2007 #1 Justin Timberlake hit
56 Reduce the intensity of, as breath
58 One making a lot of returns, for short?
61 Tool used to make hash browns
62 Works by a notable Impressionist
64 Give a sneak peek of, as a new song
65 Apt name for a mechanic?
66 "Hollow" singer Kelly
67 Bar, at the bar
68 They run free, in brief
69 Roquefort milk sources

DOWN

- 1 Legend of music
2 51 preceder
3 "They said she died easy of a broken heart disease as I listened through the ___ trees" ("One Headlight" lyric)
4 Rocky Graziano had 52
5 Alternative text?



©2025 | The meta for this puzzle is a famous country song.

- 6 Boxwood, for one
7 Emulate Gutenberg, maybe
8 Backup singer's syllable
9 Disney title heroine who sings "Reflection"
10 "___ you the guy who tried to hurt me with the word 'goodbye'?" (Dua Lipa lyric)
11 Point the wrong way, say
12 Joey Chestnut's forte
13 Defense mechanisms?
18 Dir. from the Grand Ole Opry House to Graceland
22 Thing on hand at a hospital?
24 Helping hands: Abbr.
26 Chain with chains
27 DFW datum
28 Slangy lead-in to big or high
32 Proterozoic or Phanerozoic, e.g.
33 Lead-in to kraut or braten
34 "Dominique" singer Soeur Sourire, e.g.
35 Purveyor of the recording software Audition
37 Barely beat, with "out"
39 How deposits might be held
40 Home of the band A-ha: Abbr.
41 "Family Feud" airtel
43 A quarter, informally
45 French trick-taking game with a pair of accented vowels in its name
46 Labour opponents
47 Antarctic expedition transport
51 Option on a Chipotle menu
52 Diplomat in NYC, maybe
53 Many a Bob Marley fan
54 Singer and actress Michele with the album "Louder"
57 Possessive on a Pei Wei menu
59 Scrutinize, with "over"
60 "Buyer beware"
62 Iggy dubbed the "Godfather of Punk"
63 Waze way: Abbr.

Against the Odds

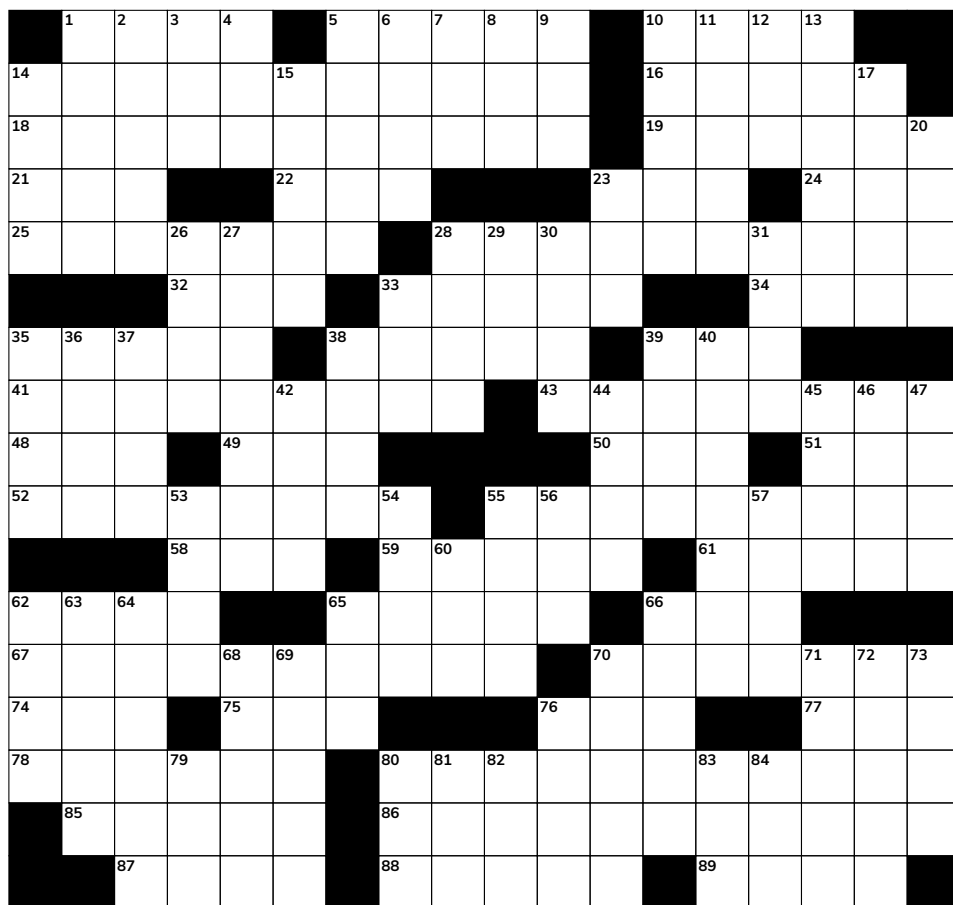
Philip Chow and Mike Graczyk

ACROSS

- 1 What you want to do to someone with a Backpfeifengesicht (hopefully not either of us!)
- 5 Animal life
- 10 Actor Guinness whose full name anagrams to "genuine class" (thanks, "The Simpsons"!)
- 14 Phil's response when Mikey G asked, "When are we going to work on the collab?" (He fell asleep instead, folks)
- 16 "You have all this money to buy buckwheat porridge?" "It's my ___-llowance"
- 18 They might be pans (about pans, perhaps!)
- 19 Queue after Q
- 21 Split ___ soup
- 22 Ballot marks
- 23 Canon camera brand that's also a tower in the MMORPG "MapleStory"
- 24 Mai ___ (cocktail)
- 25 Data converter
- 28 The more of this you have, the likelier you will model a paper towel brand (that rules out both of us)
- 32 Dad ___ (father figure)
- 33 Physicists keep their ergs in a ___ box
- 34 Cádiz to Málaga dirección
- 35 Fabric in Julie Andrews' "My Favorite Things"
- 38 London's self-congratulatory catchphrase in "The Suite Life of Zack & Cody"
- 39 Only major U.S. "sportsball" org. without an "L" in its acronym
- 41 "Orange Is the New Black" extras
- 43 Mushroom often added to miso soup that Mikey's students (and Phil) like using as a euphemism
- 48 "Need an ___?" I Noah guy!"
- 49 By way of
- 50 Australian boot that sounds exasperated
- 51 Cariou who plays Henry Reagan on "Blue Bloods"
- 52 Hot sauce with a rooster logo
- 55 Celebrated with a 1-Across
- 58 A, in Arles
- 59 Unique personality of a cruciverbalist
- 61 Opaque gemstones
- 62 "Planet of the ___"
- 65 Like Fido after playing in the mud
- 66 "___-hoo! Here's a chocolately drink for you!"
- 67 Art Deco textile designer for Radio Music City Hall
- 70 Phil's dad, for one (not Mikey G, though!)
- 74 Fighting Tigers sch.
- 75 Mikey G, on the dance floor
- 76 Last title screen of my French documentary about sharks
- 77 Silly-geese connection
- 78 "This isn't good!"
- 80 They're not all singles
- 85 Long (for)
- 86 French composer Charles-Valentin Alkan piano piece whose title translates to "like the wind"
- 87 Puzzle (out)
- 88 Hauled off
- 89 Put the kibosh on

DOWN

- 1 Radiance
- 2 Dooryard flower in a Whitman poem
- 3 I thought I saw one, but I'm the Nile about it
- 4 "As ___ my last e-mail..."
- 5 Indiana's WNBA team
- 6 Spanish liqueurs
- 7 Consonant-less traffic maneuver
- 8 SSE's opposite
- 9 DOJ heads
- 10 Where the RubberDucks play baseball in Ohio
- 11 Mango ___ (yogurt-flavored beverage often served in a kulhar)
- 12 "Guinness World Records" suffix
- 13 Ladders' partners, in a classic board game
- 14 "You love Times New Roman? You're just my ___!"
- 15 Annoyed
- 17 "___ ye mateys!"
- 20 Perspicacious
- 23 "Baa-ram-___" (sheep's secret password in "Babe")
- 26 Wan Kenobi and others
- 27 Soccer Hall-of-Famer Landon
- 28 "The ___ of Summer" (Roger Kahn baseball book)
- 29 Liquor ignited in Bananas Foster
- 30 India Pale ___ (hoppy beers)
- 31 "Cool beans!"
- 33 Cookie ___ (or pickle ___ but we prefer cookies)
- 35 Places to treat yourself
- 36 "I'm the best pirate ever!"
- 37 Enchanted ___ Room (Disneyland attraction)
- 38 "Sweet!"
- 39 Near, poetically
- 40 What Peter Mayhew (playing Chewbacca) did not want to be mistaken as during filming (so his crew wore hi-viz vests)
- 42 "Sweet!"
- 44 Massively massive
- 45 Edison's middle name
- 46 Topple (over)
- 47 Loose things to tie up
- 53 "Wise men say / only fools ___ in..."
- 54 Spring, in Hebrew (and, when reversed, first word in an Elvis film title)
- 55 Billboard material?
- 56 ___ stare (what the North Pole explorer gave me)
- 57 NASDAQ debuts
- 60 Get a lode of this!
- 62 "Alice's Restaurant" singer Guthrie
- 63 Pulley's opposite?
- 64 Pieces you can play to Chopin your skills
- 65 "Be Kind Rewind" co-star Mos ___
- 66 Barbra Streisand movie in which she sings "Papa, Can You Hear Me?"
- 68 Emulates a cat that's lion about
- 69 Merits
- 70 Played charades
- 71 Examining diamonds is ___-nating!
- 72 "___ questions, and you'll be told no lies" ("Great Expectations" quote)
- 73 Condé ___ (magazine publisher)
- 76 Turn livid
- 79 Consonant-less French beverage
- 80 "That's a tough ___ to follow!"
- 81 Where to go in London?
- 82 Mercedes competitor
- 83 Race, as an engine
- 84 "___ Maria"



Meta is a famous country song

2025



Put Your Heads Together by Alex Eaton-Salners

edited by Peter Gordon (xwords@optonline.net, www.FireballCrosswords.com)

FIREBALL Crosswords

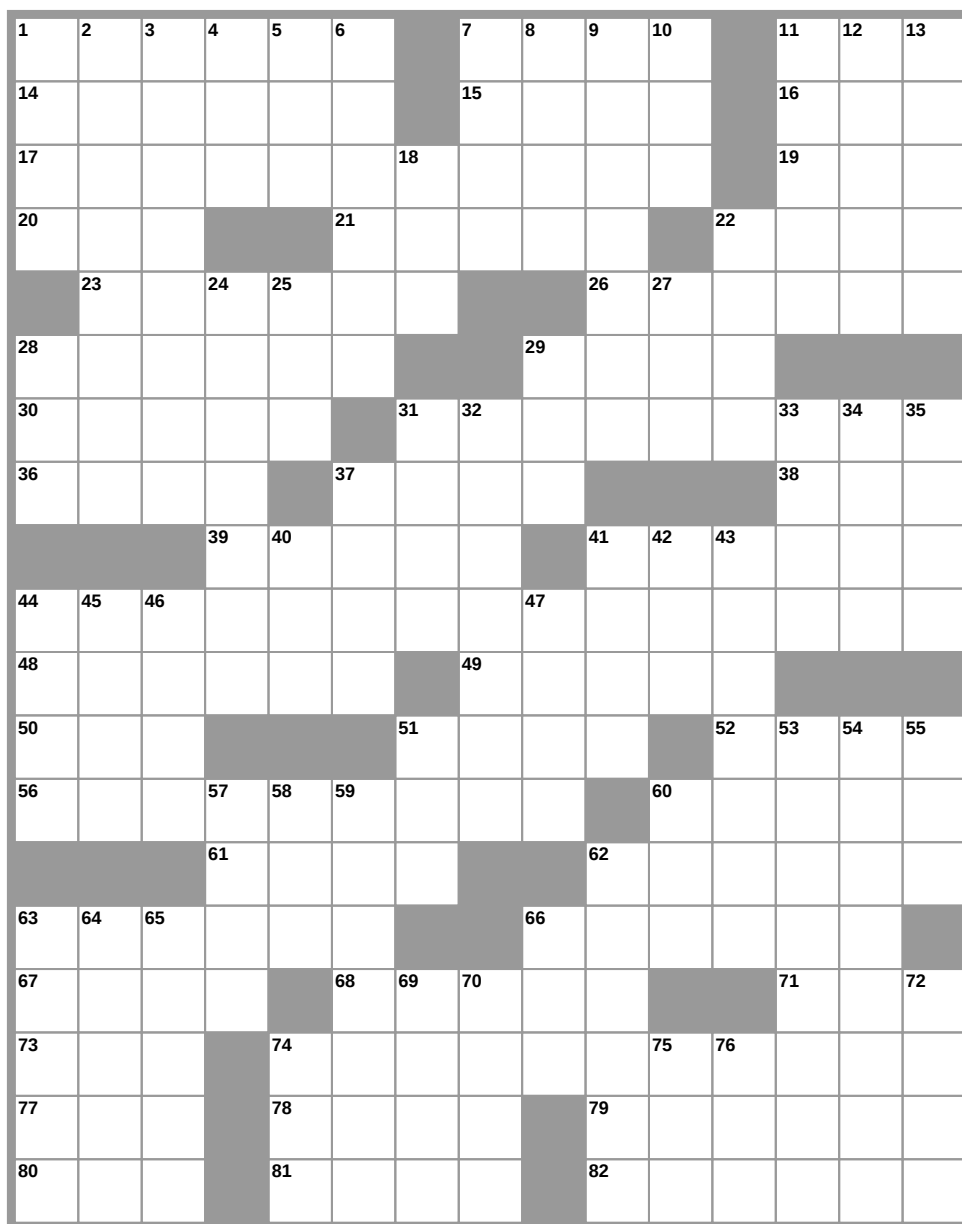
ACROSS

- 1 Flake factories
- 7 Programming construct
- 11 Sounds made by the depressed?
- 14 "Wowzers!"
- 15 Biographical prefix
- 16 What's left when leaves leave
- 17 "Don't let go!"
- 19 Short can
- 20 Shout to a banderillero
- 21 Red Fort's city
- 22 Grass consumer
- 23 Hogwash
- 26 Doesn't take a brake?
- 28 Wrapped around
- 29 Finger painter's target
- 30 Dolt
- 31 Moon mission that had a Pete and a Gordon
- 36 Branch
- 37 Big name in bags
- 38 CPR performer
- 39 Malibu, e.g.
- 41 Café royale ingredient
- 44 Nearby
- 48 Wing it?
- 49 Gold standard?
- 50 In need of toweling
- 51 Friend in deed
- 52 Gets
- 56 Account opening?
- 60 Rakes
- 61 Plans for the future, briefly
- 62 Impulsive sort
- 63 Mug
- 66 Spot for a Betty Crocker coupon
- 67 "Hard pass!"
- 68 German who created a dish of cultural significance
- 71 Broadway inits.
- 73 High-profile judge of the mid-1990s
- 74 They're equally spaced on a logarithmic scale
- 77 Removed
- 78 Meter minder
- 79 With all of a court's judges participating
- 80 What most words end in?
- 81 Programming construct
- 82 Swanky shindig

DOWN

- 1 Manhattan area
- 2 Cat, of sorts
- 3 Like some people, vis-à-vis cats
- 4 Tyke
- 5 Gp. of the Mideast
- 6 Made smooth
- 7 Missile's end
- 8 Leonardo's role in "The Revenant"
- 9 On the straight and narrow
- 10 "In your dreams!"
- 11 Cartographic reference
- 12 Soul mate?
- 13 Relief group?
- 18 Classified ad abbr.
- 22 Nimbus
- 24 "Roger that!"
- 25 Pro who might fix a lot of toys
- 27 Olive product

- 28 Towel marking
- 29 Brief acknowledgment
- 31 Nobel Peace Prize winner Myrdal
- 32 Almost all companies make it
- 33 Lawless TV character
- 34 1998 tech debut
- 35 Back problem, for some
- 37 Trait carrier
- 40 Number in a countdown
- 41 "Teach Your Children" folk-rock quartet, initially
- 42 Middle-earth creature
- 43 Discuss a topic in great technical detail
- 44 Thirsty tot's request
- 45 Currier's partner
- 46 Peruvian primate
- 47 Ponder
- 51 Wiimote pair
- 53 London-Paris connector
- 54 Material for rain boots
- 55 Tripartite fig.
- 57 Step measure
- 58 Preposition in King Théoden's "Return of the King" battle speech
- 59 Group of commuters
- 60 King of the Romans
- 62 Hiccups, for example
- 63 Sharpener target
- 64 "Iliad" duo
- 65 Curling, for one
- 66 Chill expression
- 69 Pecorino providers
- 70 Block of Brie?
- 72 Word heard at an auction
- 74 N95 masks and the like
- 75 Musician who tweeted "All the songs I wrote in F# are my favorite"
- 76 Deep Throat's employer



What five-letter word is hinted at by this puzzle? © 2025 Peter Gordon



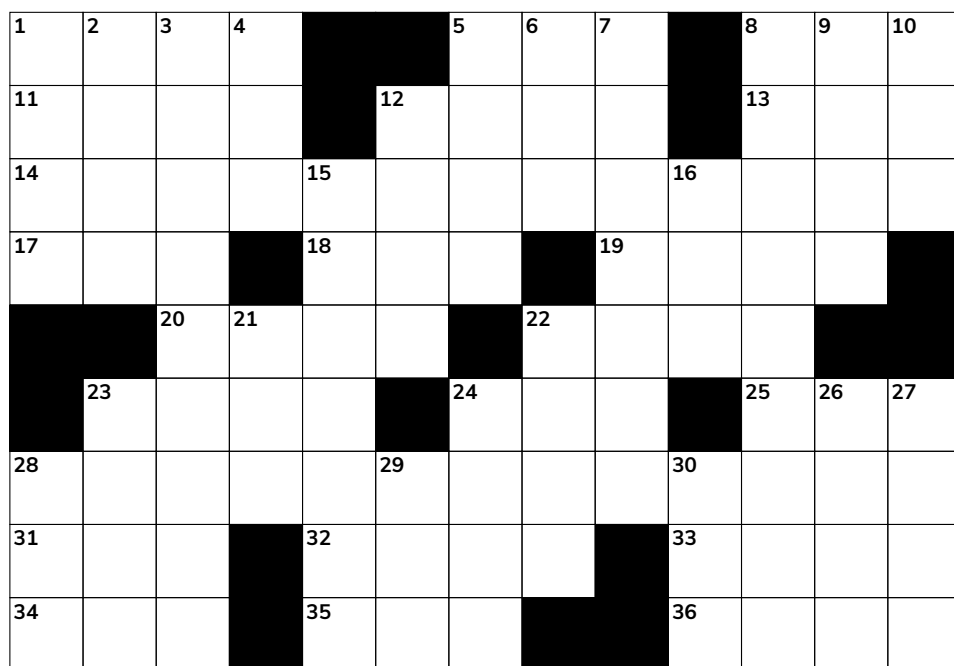
Puzzmo, March 11, 2025 - "Day In, Day Out"

Doug Peterson / ed. Ori Brian

ACROSS

- 1 Award shaped like a winged woman holding an atom
- 5 "Just a ___!"
- 8 Symbol in the Gotham City sky
- 11 ___-back (chill)
- 12 Fancy-schmancy
- 13 Letter after pi
- 14 Series of yoga poses performed to wake up the body
- 17 What humanitarian organizations provide

- 18 "u crack me up!"
- 19 Uncluttered
- 20 ___Box (streaming service with "EastEnders" and the original "The Office")
- 22 Competent
- 23 Personal website that might have a comments section
- 24 Environmentalist's prefix
- 25 Matinee time, perhaps
- 28 Children's story that takes place in a "great green room"
- 31 Otter's foot
- 32 Boldly unconventional
- 33 Woodwind that's usually not played in marching bands
- 34 Big vase
- 35 Cube root of ocho



© Doug Peterson & Puzzmo

- 36 Pharmacy pickups, for short
- 10 Immense weight

- 12 Section of a film's Wikipedia page
- 15 Straightened
- 16 ___ Tuesday (1980s new wave band)
- 21 Towel holder
- 22 Stiff and sore
- 23 Wild animal on a Gordon's Gin label
- 24 Fragile juggling props
- 26 What Lincoln Logs are made of
- 27 Possible change for a \$5 bill
- 28 Chip in many gaming PCs
- 29 Oath taker's words
- 30 Lisa Bonet, to Zoë Kravitz

DOWN

- 1 "Anna Loves ___" (book based on "Frozen")
- 2 Island east of Lanai
- 3 "My head is exploding right now"
- 4 Halves of fathoms: Abbr.
- 5 2020 Pixar film about a jazz musician
- 6 Informal suffix for best or worst
- 7 Customer support option that might have a fake "Agent is typing..." message
- 8 One might make an account on theknot.com
- 9 "Hey, sailor!"



March 31, 2025 - "By the Numbers" - Kaye Brown, edited by Brian Callahan

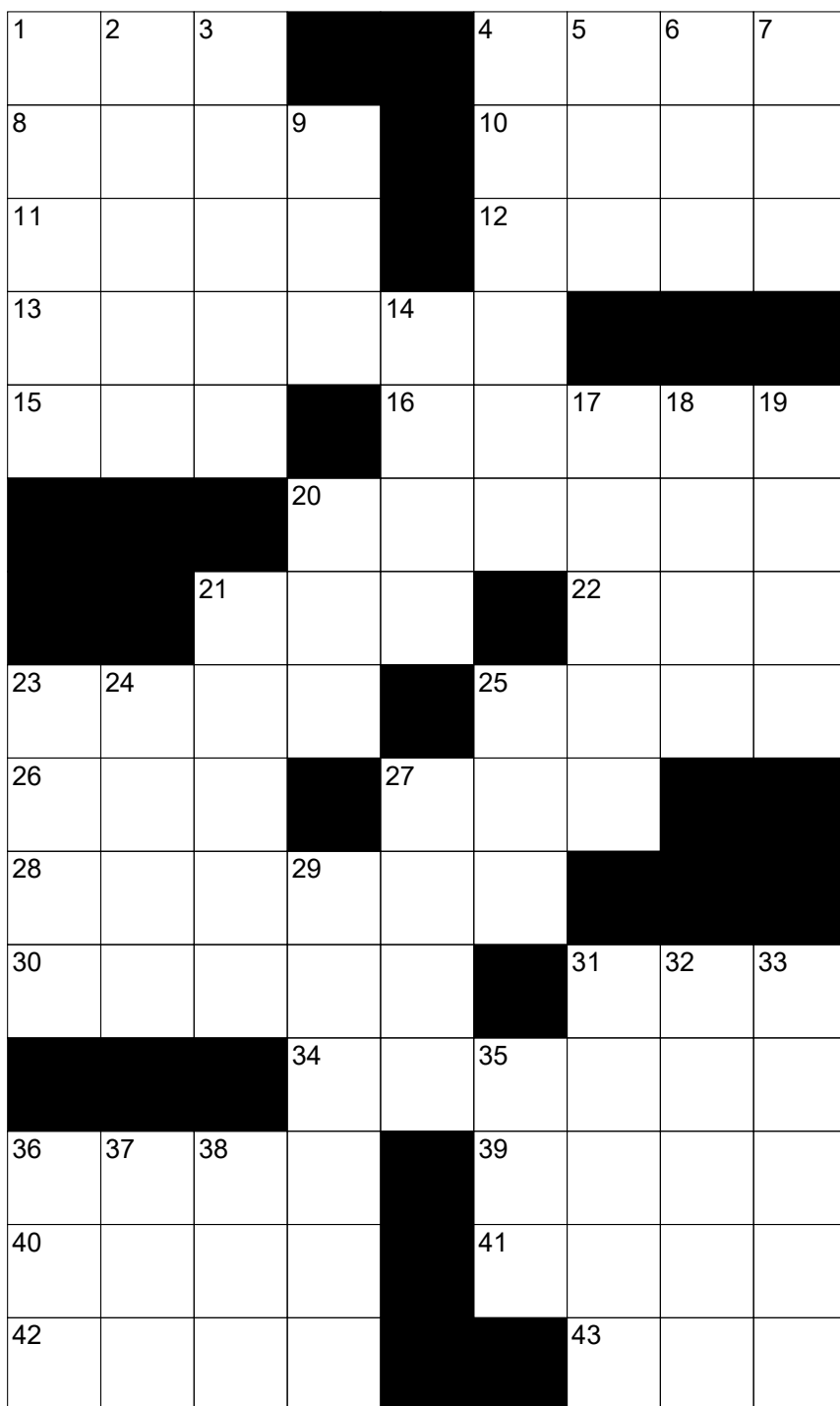
ACROSS

- 1 Lotion spec. that does not, I'm told, stand for "Solar Prevention Fluidity"
4 Fashion's Moss or Spade
8 Animator Disney (who is *supposedly* not cryogenically frozen)
10 "American ____"
11 It's "vera" good for your skin!
12 Word after book or breakfast
13 Demonstrated boredom, perhaps
15 Star that appears white but emits most strongly in the blue-green part of the visible light spectrum
16 Pay for your thoughts?
20 Diatribe
21 [not my mistake]
22 Martin of stand-up comedy
23 Tool that really carries its weight
25 It can be given or taken, but not borrowed
26 Card game with a follow-up called "Dos"
27 Adjective that can have a good connotation when -ass is added
28 "____, get some help" (memed line from a Michael Jordan anti-drug PSA)
30 Flashy fish
31 Dessert that is vastly superior to cake (this isn't up for debate)
34 Oahu, for one ... or an important location for 4-, 8-, 15-, 16-, and 23-Across on TV's "42-Across"

- 36 It's black on a bay and white or flaxen on a palomino
39 Not pro
40 "I'm interested" emoji
41 "Rubber Duckie" singer's roommate
42 ____ and found
43 Cry for help that might be written with rocks on the sand

DOWN

- 1 Influences, as an opinion
2 Smallest country that starts with "P" (in area AND population)
3 "Once the flight had ____" (Taylor Swift lyric)
4 More like Mister Rogers, say
5 There might be much of it about nothing
6 "____ Many Cooks" (Adult Swim comedy horror short)
7 The deer family's second largest species
9 Digital number?
14 Saga, or how you might describe one
17 Dubbed
18 Docs I might make my friends sign before spilling the tea
19 Throw forcefully, or what's said while throwing
20 ____ Tok (social media app in many early 2025 headlines)
21 "Go on, git!"
23 That's fair!
24 Chip in?
25 Bit of ink
27 Unconscious ____
29 Andrew Scott's "hot" character on "Fleabag"
31 Framed glasses?





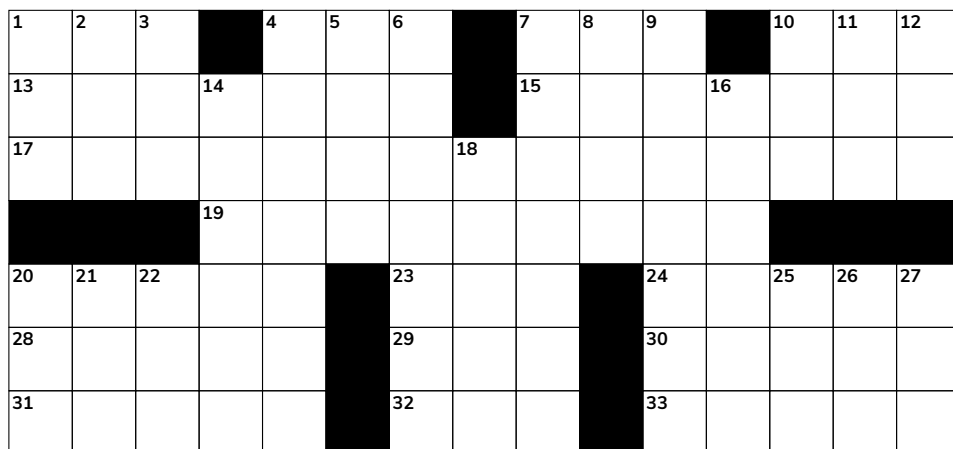
Puzzmo, May 8, 2025 - "Capisce?"

Owen Bergstein / ed. Brooke Husic

ACROSS

- 1 Rollaway bed
- 4 Destination for wellness and relaxation
- 7 Taro-based Polynesian dish
- 10 Lead-in to fix or mix
- 13 Bigger
- 15 Soccer oopsie resulting in a point for the other team
- 17 "If you don't want honesty, don't ask me!"

- 19 Site to visit when in Rome
- 20 Swampy area in the Southern U.S.
- 23 Candy aisle duo Mike and ___
- 24 Late ___ (person like me who chooses to sleep in as long as possible)
- 28 ___ Fountain (site you might also visit when in Rome)
- 29 High-___ image
- 30 Holmes portrayed by Millie Bobby Brown
- 31 Grape beverages that can be \$\$\$



© Owen Bergstein & Puzzmo

32 Manuscript recipients: Abbr.

33 Like smooth skin

DOWN

- 1 Tech used for some SFX
- 2 Monster descended from corrupted elves
- 3 Much-better-tasting coffee alternative
- 4 Missouri city with a sculpture commemorating freedom suits
- 5 Orange's outer layer
- 6 Cabinet-wardrobe hybrid
- 7 Take control of, like a demon does
- 8 Scratch or scrape, to a kid
- 9 Provides a policy for

10 "Star Wars" pilot Dameron

11 "Call Me Maybe" singer Carly ___ Jepsen

12 Tree whose fruits look like little leaves

14 Nook

16 My star sign, whose symbol leads to my theory that I have a secret twin (no evidence yet but I'll keep you updated)

18 Posed a question

20 "oh, as it happens..."

21 Nickname for ___ana Grande

22 Japanese currency

25 It rises en el este

26 Majestic antlered animal

27 Sunbeam, e.g.



Shapewear

Shannon Rapp and Will Eisenberg

ACROSS

- 1 City known for its casinos, familiarly
- 6 Part of a detoxifying system
- 11 Courtroom excuse
- 12 2025 Best Picture winner
- 13 Vintage-inspired dress bottom
- 15 Major airport code in Georgia
- 16 Tolkien's talking tree
- 17 Spot to sleep at camp
- 18 Improv principle encouraging collaboration
- 20 Oh so
- 21 Natural material in kitchen counters
- 23 Googly craft store item
- 26 Rewrite a character's backstory, in television lingo
- 30 Marching band instrument, briefly
- 31 General on many Chinese menus
- 32 "Scuse me!" in the Midwest
- 33 SpongeBob's last name, and what he wears most days
- 36 Sound, on a broadcast
- 37 Call things off
- 38 Chemistry lab calculation
- 39 Animated characters

DOWN

- 1 Trip you might take to 1-Across, casually
- 2 Top-tier
- 3 They run the world, per Beyoncé
- 4 "Abbott Elementary" network
- 5 Like the outskirts of Knoxville?
- 6 Endure
- 7 Squid's defense mechanism
- 8 ___ actor (part of a video game's cast)
- 9 Boo-boo
- 10 In tattered shape
- 14 Sign
- 19 Word after "smart" or "dumb"
- 20 Duck doc, say

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© 2025 Crossword Flow

- 22 Virtual creature like a Chia or JubJub
- 23 Part of a college application, perhaps
- 24 Indigenous people and language of Mexico
- 25 Give off, as charm
- 27 Resident-owned housing unit
- 28 Say "I'd love to get news and updates from you!"
- 29 Prepares for delivery?
- 31 Walked heavily
- 34 Be sick
- 35 Year, in Portugal



June 17, 2025 - "Well, It's Ablaut Time" - Alex Rossell Hayes, edited by Brian Callahan

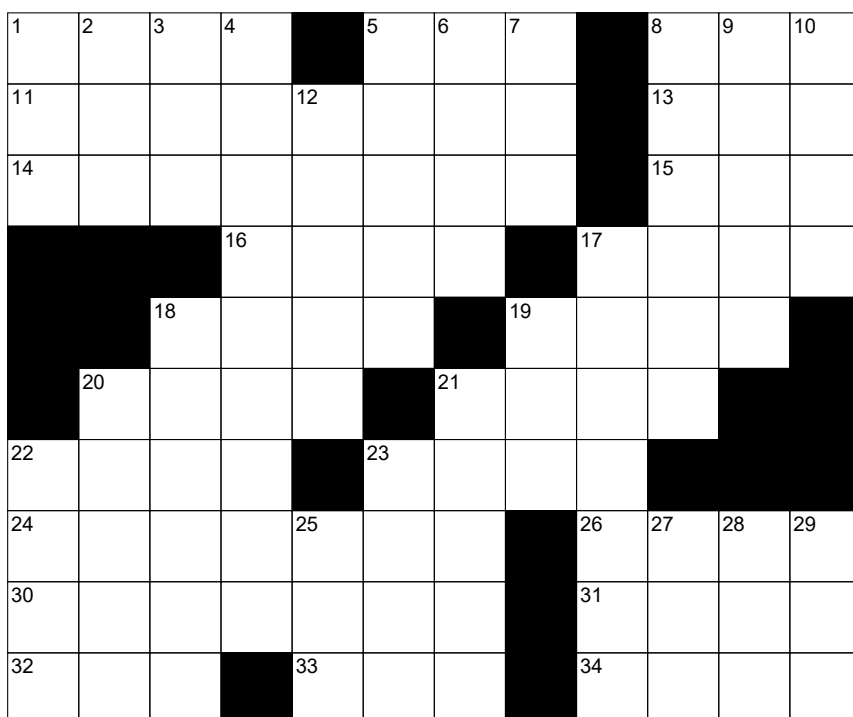
ACROSS

- 1 It can be heard around the water cooler
- 5 Club for LGBTQ+ students and allies
- 8 Interjection seen in many "Batman" fight scenes
- 11 Dish made with dashi and fermented soy
- 13 Subculture that peaked between goth and scene
- 14 Milk flavoring that originally contained eggs, helping explain its name
- 15 Bath bathroom
- 16 Diminutive dent
- 17 Vietnamese currency (...is that the doorbell?)
- 18 Site that could theoretically be someone's preferred search engine
- 19 Item dorm dwellers should probably hide when the RA comes around (...am I imagining that "Inside Out" character?)
- 20 Online notification

- 21 Early video game (...what's with the rapid back-and-forth?)
- 22 Bad card in lowball poker
- 23 Rubber pet toy (...who's that on the Empire State Building?!)
- 24 Tiered towers
- 26 Like a bright paisley shirt
- 30 Ex-
- 31 What some crosswords are solved with
- 32 Register, in retail lingo (or an initialism to describe it if it goes on the fritz)
- 33 It can no longer be used by new cars in Ethiopia and Norway
- 34 Bias

DOWN

- 1 Vegetable from the CRISPR?
- 2 Tyler who aptly has 54 lines in the Lord of the Rings films (at least according to my count!)
- 3 Where Cyrus partied and Springsteen was born



© 2025

- 4 "Minecraft" item that can be crafted into a clock or bartered with Piglins
- 5 Common word in auction chant
- 6 Performed vocally, like Caroline Polachek's "guitar solo" in "So Hot You're Hurting My Feelings"
- 7 Gibbon or human, taxonomically
- 8 Fit in
- 9 Surrounded by
- 10 First commercial synthesizer (it's actually pronounced with an "oh" sound despite its spelling)
- 12 Abrupt musical punctuation
- 17 Laptop hangers-on
- 18 Watches the seasons go by, in a way
- 19 You might say it before a voyage?
- 20 Instrument that at one point had "forte" in its name due to its dynamic range
- 21 Vogues
- 22 Genre occasionally blared across the DMZ
- 23 Sanskrit for "desire" (as seen in a noted sutra)
- 25 Enjoy
- 27 Pokémon professor who provides an appropriately strong foundation for new players
- 28 It's a better choice than "utilize," per some style guides
- 29 It might wet the bed (the flowerbed, that is)



Puzzmo, July 4, 2025 - "Bangers"

Amie Walker / ed. Will Eisenberg

ACROSS

- 1 "no waaaay!!!"
- 4 Person whose message you might reserve a whole page of your yearbook for
- 7 According to
- 8 "Yes," at Disneyland Paris
- 9 "Please, anything but that!"
- 13 Tony nod, informally
- 14 "Push one of ____" (call for adrenaline, on "Grey's Anatomy")
- 15 Morning-after pill brand
- 17 What two brides may do
- 18 ____ clowns (cowboy hat-wearing dancers in Chappell Roan's 2025 Grammys performance)
- 19 Surgery spaces, for short
- 20 "I ____ you one!"
- 21 Bhindi masala pod
- 23 "Things aren't too bad for me"
- 24 Small amounts of paint
- 25 Doc who does breast exams
- 26 Number of acts in "Heathers: The Musical"
- 29 Boatload
- 30 Alternative to "none of the above"
- 32 GPS calculation
- 33 Cheese lover, in many a cartoon
- 34 Place to take out cash: Abbr.
- 35 "Getting things done" hairstyle, for some
- 36 Like a Sears catalog purchase
- 40 The 2 in ily2
- 41 Taking Back Sunday genre
- 42 National Mall tree
- 43 Same old dull routine

DOWN

- 1 Make a choice
- 2 Noncommittal remark
- 3 "Explosive" Bruno Mars single
- 4 "Resounding" Vengaboys hit ... and a description for 3-, 6-, 24-, and 26-Down, in sequence
- 5 "Boots with the ____" (16-Down lyric that makes me wonder how could she simultaneously be wearing the "Reeboks with the straps"?)
- 6 "Sparkling" Katy Perry song
- 10 Sharpen
- 11 "The Phantom of the ____"
- 12 Frees (of)
- 15 WNBA player, e.g.
- 16 Flo Rida anthem that repeats its title 65 times
- 22 Results of boxing matches: Abbr.
- 23 McKellen who played Gandalf in the Lord of the Rings trilogy
- 24 "Blast" of a Taio Cruz tune
- 25 "I ____ hand it to you..."
- 26 "Crashing" Imagine Dragons track
- 27 "Scream" director Craven
- 28 "Minecraft" material
- 29 Mercury or Liberty, e.g.
- 31 Lil Nas X's Long Live Montero ____
- 37 "literally crying rn"

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© Amie Walker & Puzzmo

38 Big Australian bird

39 What avocados seem to do if you miss a certain one-hour window



croctober #4: animal

it's snoopy's birthday!! happy birthday snoopy!

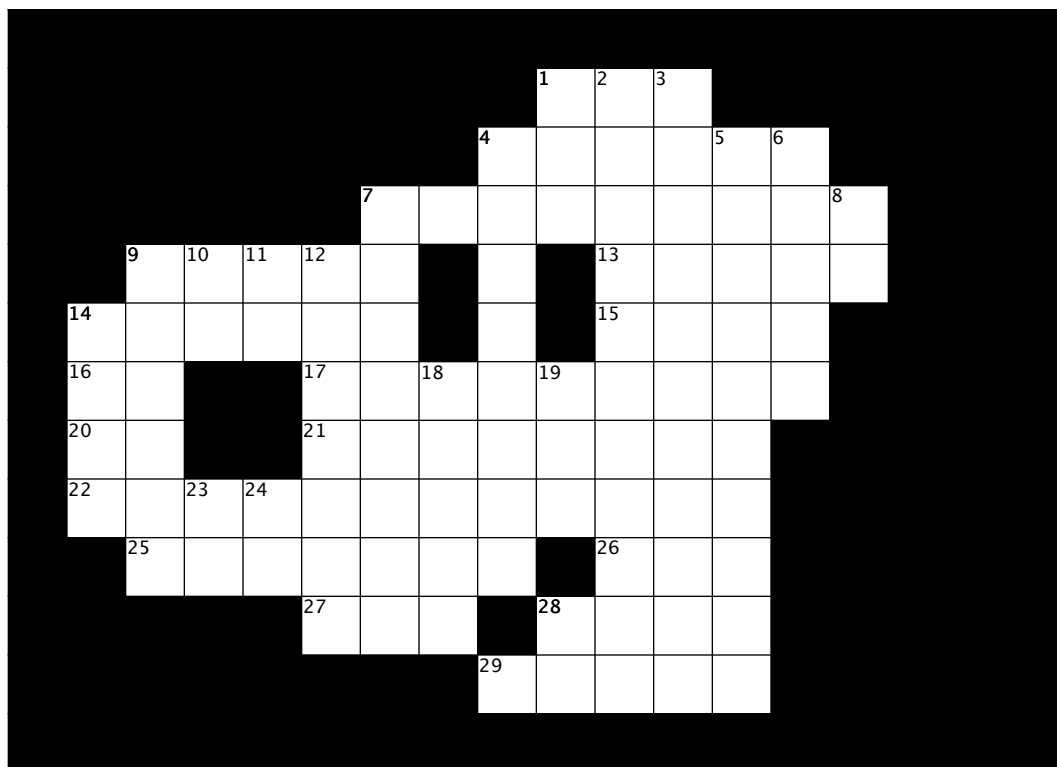
franci dimitrovska

ACROSS

1. Chucklehead
4. How Snoopy would probably prefer his steak
7. Entered en mass
9. "Ma'am? What ____ test are we having today? Multiple choice? Good! I choose not to take it!" – Peppermint Patty
13. Maher of American rugby and Dancing with the Stars
14. Overhaul
15. "Other kids' baseball heroes hit home runs. ____ gets sent down to the minors!" – Charlie Brown
16. Yiddish utterance
17. Protections for American inventors, briefly
20. Crying emoticon
21. Shapeless chairs
22. Move whipped out by Alfonso Ribeiro during his Dancing with the Stars debut
25. Tries again with the e-mail
26. Election Day abbr.
27. Mens ____ ("guilty mind" in law)
28. Name on a New York ballpark
29. The planets, since Pluto's unfortunate reclassification

DOWN

1. Hug, hug, hug
2. "Did I stutter?"
3. Liking what you see in the mirror
4. "Turning Red"'s 4*Town, "That's so Raven"'s Boyz 'n Motion, and "The Simpsons"' Party Posse
5. "Hmm, just can't agree with your take on this"
6. Near-perfect scores on Dancing with the Stars



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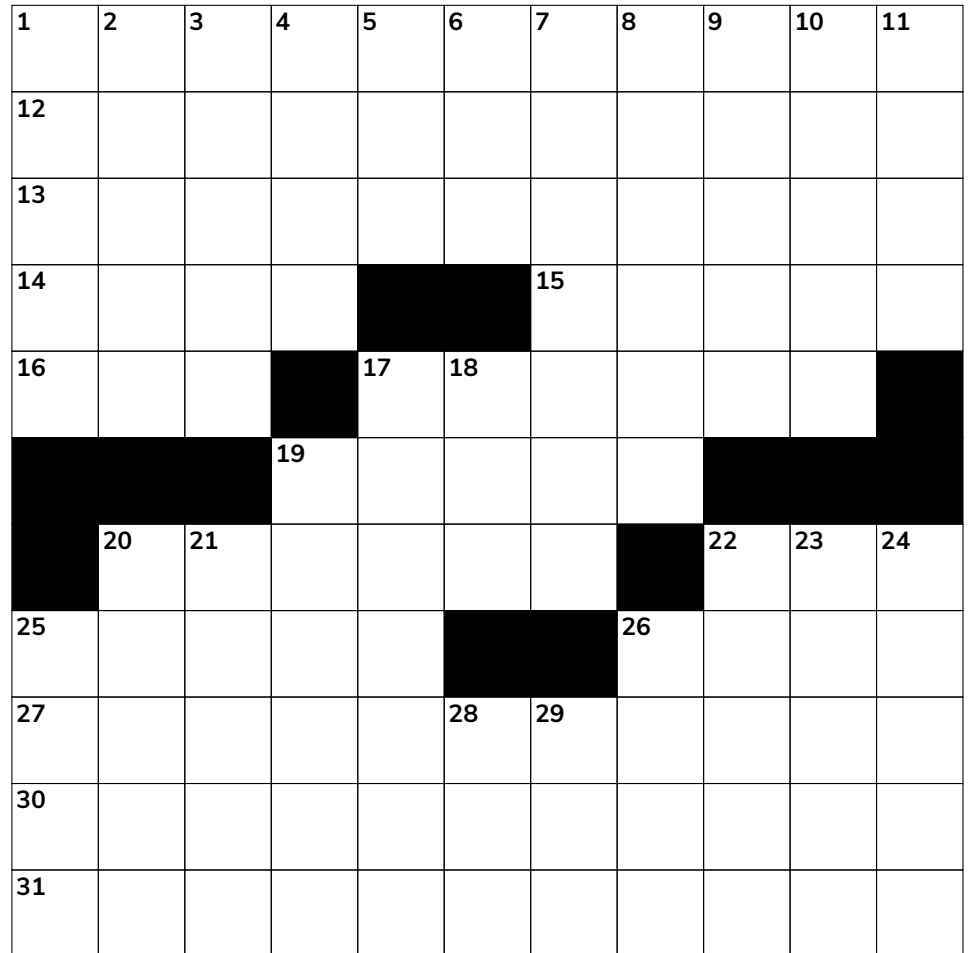
7. Pompey the Great's nickname in a Jacobean stage play about his death
8. Repeated syllable in Kylie Minogue's "Can't Get You Out of My Head"
9. Prince's Purpleaxe, for one
10. "Wouldn't __ be something if that Little Red-Haired Girl came over here and gave me a kiss? I'd say, "Thank you! What was that for?", and wouldn't __ be something if she said, "Because I've always loved you!" Then I'd give her a big hug, and she'd kiss me again! Wouldn't that be something? (Starts eating) Wouldn't __ be something if it turned out that french fries were good for you?" – Charlie Brown
11. "Hello? Information? Yes, I'd like to talk to a certain Little Red-Haired Girl... __, I already have her number... I was hoping you could tell me something else... What do I do when she answers the phone?" – Charlie Brown
12. Skeptic
14. Campus marching org.
18. The red creature in "Turning Red"
19. Placeholder letters
23. Second note in the solfege
24. Failures, in slang
28. Include one in an email, conspicuously

ACROSS

- 1 "Wow, you finished already!"
- 12 Term for fear of palindromes that would upset someone with that fear
- 13 Yarn manufacturer?
- 14 Promote to customers
- 15 Swimsuit supermodel Cheryl
- 16 Tolkien tree hidden in "Tolkien tree"
- 17 City with a famous Punjabi population
- 19 Mothers in stable homes?
- 20 Buckwheat and Alfalfa's pal
- 22 Stat that makes "Stayin' Alive" good for performing CPR
- 25 Acid in bio class
- 26 Letters to ___ ('90s alt-rock band)
- 27 Design for Apple devices featuring "morphing transparent blobs," per WIRED
- 30 Tarantino-penned black comedy in which Val Kilmer plays Elvis
- 31 Opener of many doors

DOWN

- 1 "There's no accounting for ___"
- 2 Chat up, at a bar
- 3 Common website heading



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- 4 Law school subject that sounds like a dessert
- 5 Word from an inquisitive kid
- 6 Hit song by Rosé and Bruno Mars based on a Korean drinking game
- 7 Nonbinary pronoun pair
- 8 Manuscript pages
- 9 More up to the task
- 10 Relentless attack
- 11 Sullies, as a reputation
- 17 Video game with a hard-boiled detective protagonist
- 18 Indiana Jones sought a lost one
- 19 "Encanto" songwriter Lin-___ Miranda
- 20 Self-satisfied look
- 21 Fit of ___ (state of annoyance)
- 22 Like some stares or checks
- 23 Fish, in Florence
- 24 Move casually
- 25 Secondary accounts on the socials
- 26 Wu-Tang, for one
- 28 Character before "com"
- 29 Non-___ (organic food label)



LIL AVCX

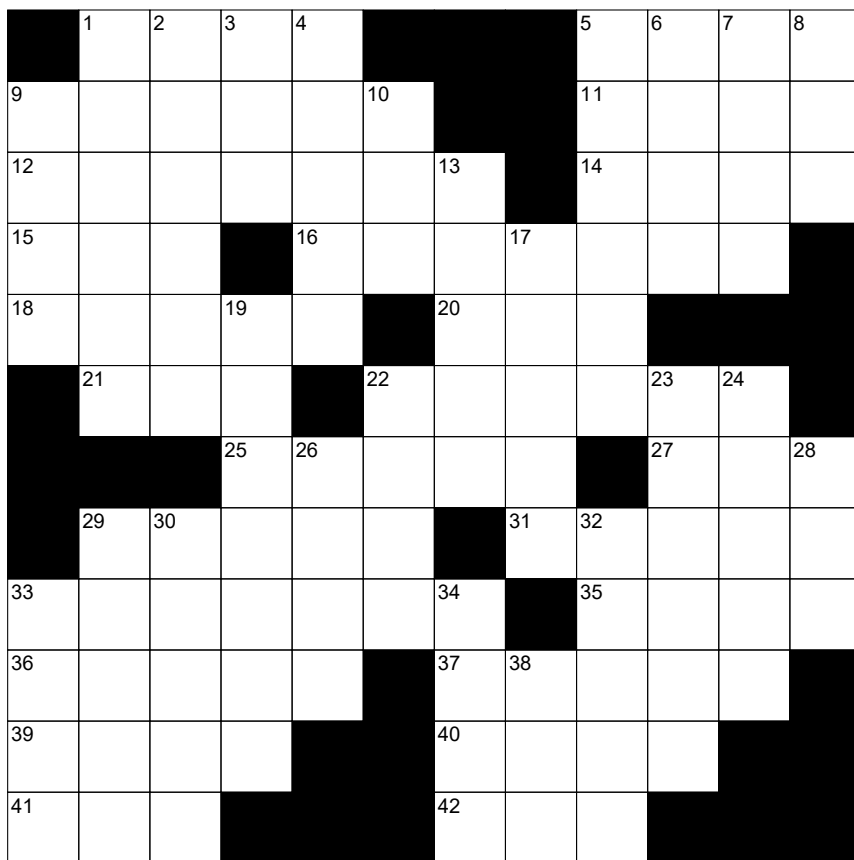
October 28, 2025 - "What'll It Be?" - Katie Hoody, edited by Matthew Luter

ACROSS

- 1 With 5-Across, a 25-Across seen in some football games
- 5 See 1-Across
- 9 Watertight fly-fishing gear that may be hip-, waist-, or chest-high
- 11 Way out there
- 12 Turn a dormitory into a dirty room, say
- 14 Like bright cheeks or a bright outlook
- 15 Touching moment in a baseball game
- 16 Break from screen time to reduce visual strain
- 18 Chord depicted as a snowman in some music theory books
- 20 Actor Aykroyd (or as I clued this in a puzzle I made as a second grader, "Name of 4 year old boy in our family")
- 21 Massive amount
- 22 Three-bean chili morsels
- 25 Choice on Halloween
- 27 Old-school weed whacker
- 29 Business with permanent prices and blowout sales
- 31 Mishap that a sippy cup might prevent
- 33 "Anyone could do that!"
- 35 "Yeah, like that's gonna happen!"
- 36 Often foldable game component
- 37 Put on a performance
- 39 They provide real-world evidence that opposites attract
- 40 Tradition that may be religious (such as baptism) or secular (such as the annual return of the Pumpkin Spice Latte to Starbucks)
- 41 With 42-Across, an "ahh"-inducing 25-Across
- 42 See 41-Across

DOWN

- 1 Derivative works that, broadly speaking, include my childhood drawings of Smurfs and Strawberry Shortcake
- 2 Tempo of the second movement of Beethoven's "Tempest" Sonata (it's the calm in the middle of the storm)
- 3 Brewery container
- 4 Put two and two together and came up with five
- 5 Many a youth sports coach
- 6 Lofty things that are hard to explain



© 2025

- 7 Cartoonist Thomas or publisher Condé
- 8 Taste, as a new-to-you food
- 9 "What's ___?" ("Jeopardy!" response for "Unit equal to one joule per second")
- 10 Utter
- 13 Who may come to a sporting event prepared to tape players
- 17 Writes a blog post entitled "From Bad to Worst: Top Ten Restaurants I'll Never Visit Again"
- 19 Headwear for one going stag on Halloween?
- 22 Holds in place, in a way
- 23 "Well, that makes sense"
- 24 Like all pool balls (even the stripes), scientifically speaking
- 26 Word before trip or hazard
- 28 Costumed character seen at many malls a month or so after Halloween
- 29 Lower oneself, physically or ethically
- 30 Yoga posture (corpse pose is a good choice for Halloween yoga!)
- 32 Shape of some peppermint candies
- 33 Bird with long legs and a long, curved bill
- 34 Area around the house often decorated for Halloween
- 38 "Party in the ___" (Weird Al parody with the lyric "We've got snazzy suits and ties / And a better dental plan than the FBI's")



LIL AVCX

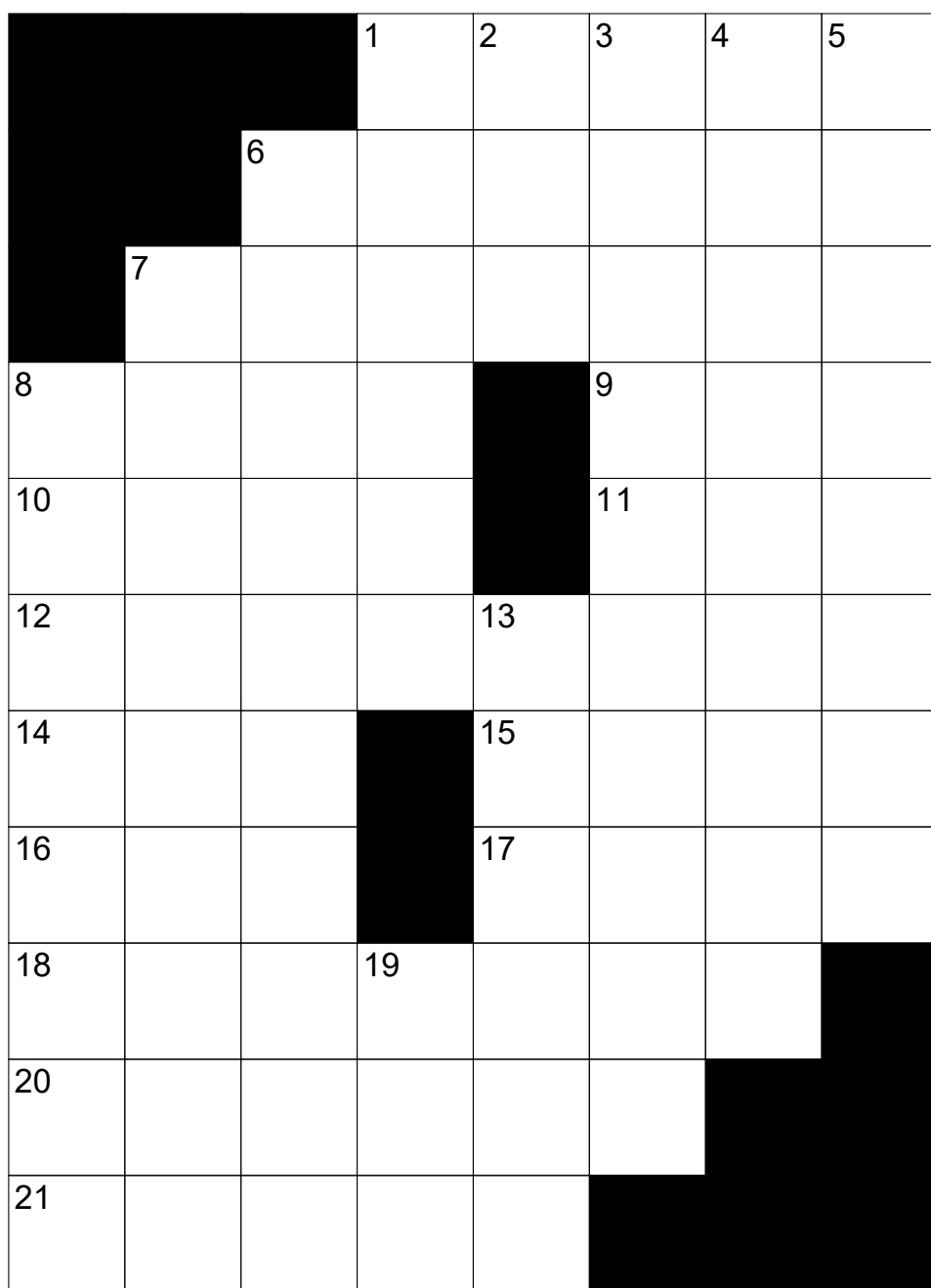
November 11, 2025 - "Messy" - Kameron Austin Collins, edited by Will Eisenberg

ACROSS

- 1 Opinion of Islamic authority
6 Sends out, like an email blast
7 Expression rooted in communities and cultures rather than institutions
8 Climb for a cyclist
9 Manti ____ (footballer in the 2022 documentary "Untold: The Girlfriend Who Didn't Exist")
10 India of music
11 "Rugrats" dad
12 Quadrilateral
14 "The Righteous Gemstones" patriarch with a biblical name
15 Common variety of nail
16 "A Yank in the ____" (1941 wartime romance)
17 Big cheese
18 "Comprehend" or "understand," in metrical terms (unstressed-unstressed-stressed)
20 Tricky fakes
21 ____ Park (Colorado town whose Stanley Hotel inspired "The Shining")

DOWN

- 1 Textile worker who thickens wool
2 "Let me ____ you something"
3 "Ew!"
4 "Well, nice knowing all of you ... gulp!"
5 Shakes, in a way
6 Site that once hosted the "Obameter" and the "Biden Promise Tracker"
7 Parking places with easy access to a real hot spot?
8 Excessive negativity, in slang
13 Ecclesiastical properties
19 Baltimore's ____ House and Museum





AVCX CRYPTIC

January 23, 2025

Difficulty: Yes, the world is terrible but let yourself enjoy fun things anyway

by Jamie Ding
edited by Francis Heaney

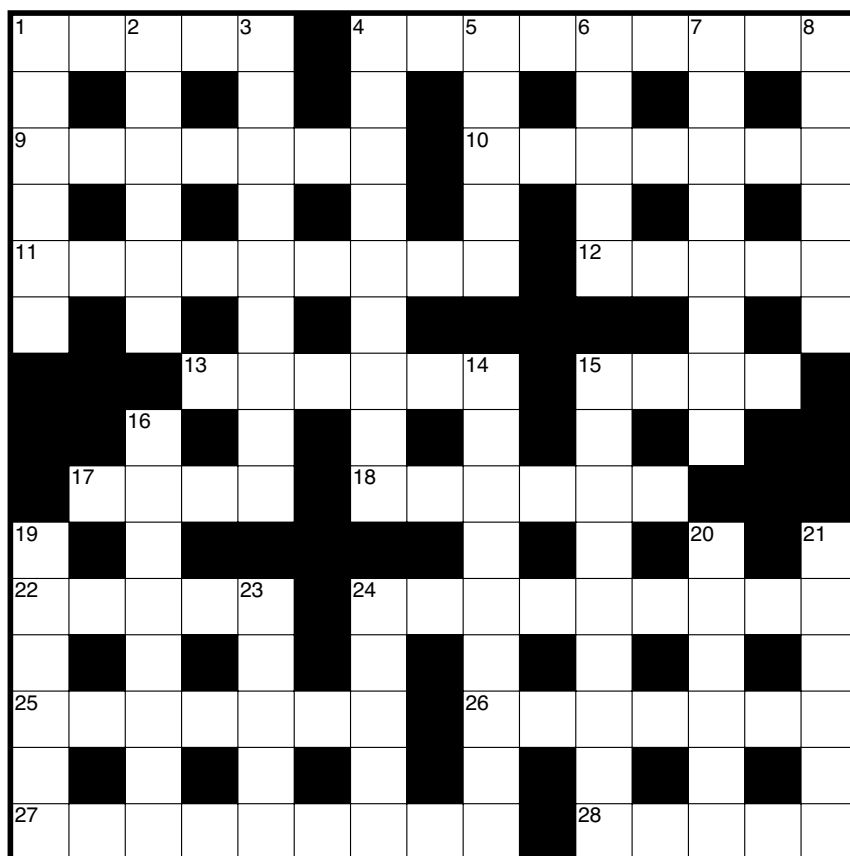
ACROSS

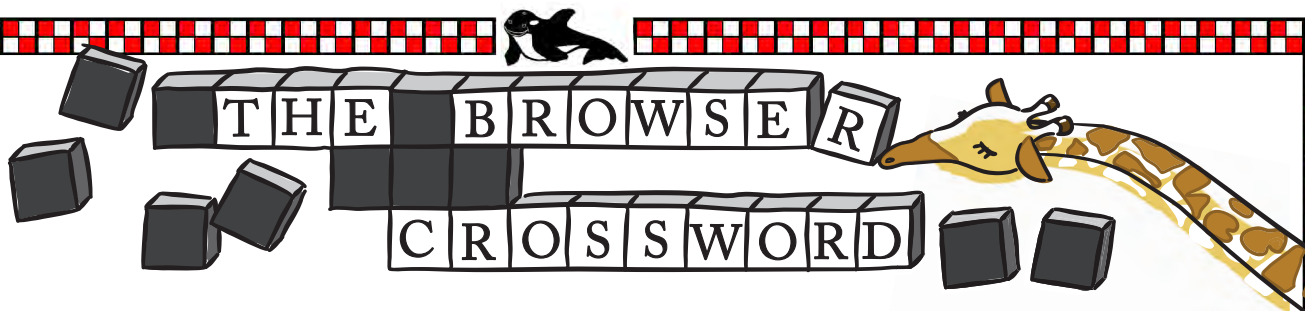
- 1 Get ready in a fit of pique (5)
- 4 Winter occurrence, and not a holiday celebrated by Christians (9)
- 9 Band member I loop in, wearing collared shirt (7)
- 10 Incredibly slow, partly retrograde, formulaic algorithm (7)
- 11 Area killer clown gripped by intense fear, ironically, at the end (9)
- 12 Carbon-free, nitrogen-free poultry produces gains (5)
- 13 Star of "Dog Days" is vocally intense (6)
- 15 Army base at the intersection of Fourth and Forest? (4)
- 17 Unclear results from fully exfoliating that enzyme (4)
- 18 Mother, business school grads—they're venomous snakes (6)
- 22 Carrying Jack, wade across seaside inlet (5)

- 24 At last, Melville going after sexxy and (mostly) thirsty author (9)
- 25 Adapted, turned around after ousting Republican (7)
- 26 Alice torn up about, for example, expressing sadness (7)
- 27 Audible signal mashed up swan, dove, and, finally, emu (5,4)
- 28 Distant satellite is essentially unstable, encased in soft metal (5)

DOWN

- 1 They feel me up on the way (6)
- 2 Pop open popped corn in Charles's realm (6)
- 3 Edging, interrupted by hug and kiss and surrounded by compassion, creates closeness (9)
- 4 Some lingo, rizzed up, it's giving, say, enshittification (9)
- 5 Sport hairpiece with business in the front, party in the back (5)
- 6 Damn, Pikachu's trainer is dripping (5)
- 7 Attempt to hold in expressions of disgust and uncertainty, leading to shenanigans (8)
- 8 It might be made from pickles—about 50, give or take? (6)
- 14 Significant other and yours truly were outside hotel at a place unknown (9)
- 15 Most ostentatious ballet slipper inspires shrinks (9)
- 16 Get from Mom a pot of unbelievably delicious Sichuan food (4,4)
- 19 Assassins' proposals (6)
- 20 Creative person's unusual traits (6)
- 21 Sting led by narcs gets church official (6)
- 23 Enthralled by Dungeons & Dragons, I have rapidly declined (5)
- 24 Have a drink without tight end, creating many-headed problem (5)





CRYPTIC #216 by Bob Weisz

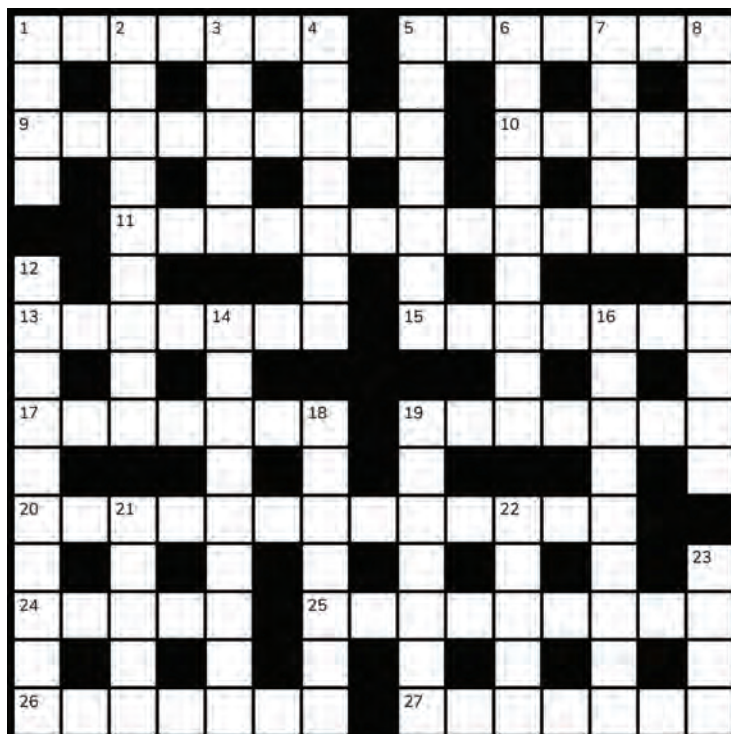
March 30, 2025 · edited by Dan Feyer

ACROSS

DOWN

1. Barcode scanner in California less likely to speak (7)
5. Masculine Alfa Romeo comes with a Sephora item (7)
9. Part enshrined in pawprint in Tinseltown! (3,3,3)
10. Chilling with Oscar (not, like, the Grouch) (2,3)
11. Cooking halal mainstay with Asian seasoning (9,4)
13. Costner wildly changes character's backstory (7)
15. Fan's merch from a New Wave band? (7)
17. Staff accepts heartless, cruel, monstrous spokesperson with a spotless image? (2,5)
19. Friend and I about to flee into tiny country (7)
20. Alt-rock pioneer's vocals for "Needin' Another Drink"? (8,5)
24. Lea Michele occasionally becomes showrunner (5)
25. Constituents of Ocasio-Cortez criticize Rat Czar's tactics, organizing boycott (9)
26. Feel the heat in Wrestlemania? (7)
27. They loot Subway patrons, pocketing last slice of bologna (7)

1. College dork scaring off principal with party popper (4)
2. Fake references about earning Yale's top math degree (9)
3. I'm assuming Roman god opened Pandora's box, for one (5)
4. Startles, almost panics! (7)
5. Luna half-heartedly checked out Rich (7)
6. Fall for small romance novelist, right after series is canceled (5,4)
7. Foremost figures in auteurdom: Kiarostami, Iñárritu, Renoir, Almodóvar, and Kurosawa (5)
8. Number one home he put on Twitch (10)
12. For me, America is a giant thief known for starting fires (10)



14. Nothing prevents exercising like an exhausted budget (9)
16. Can holding in rage and ecstasy make you kind of orange? (9)
18. Superbright orange-red encapsulates independent film genre (3-4)
19. Trembles nervously when taking Larson's original lie detector (2,5)
21. Trimmed a couple bits from fuzzy part of the family tree (5)
22. Saudi neighbor coming up in a sec (5)
23. Discuss artistic inspiration for "Pet Sounds" (4)



pi guy cryptic 22

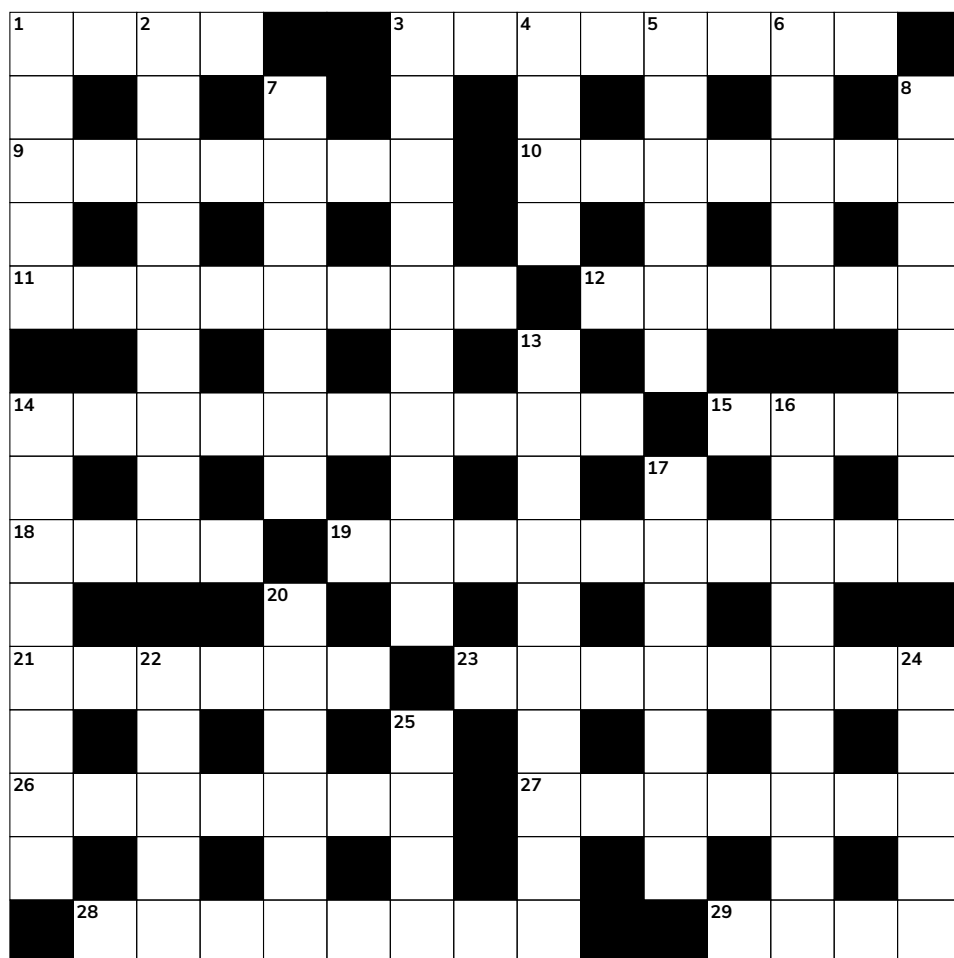
PiGuyN

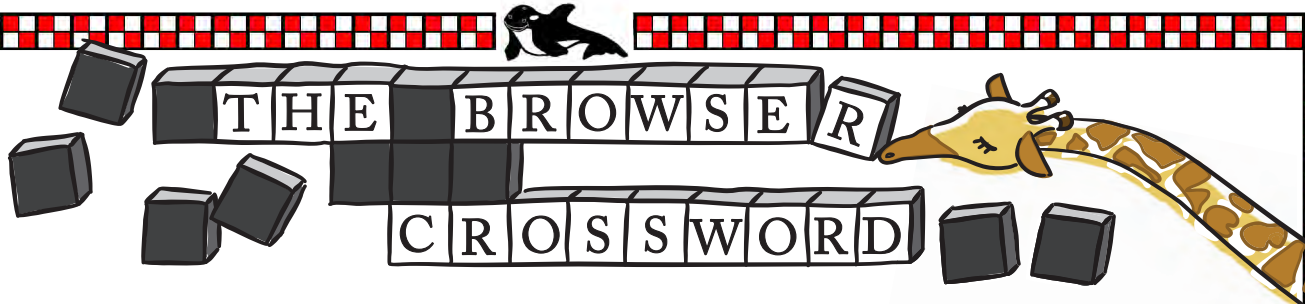
ACROSS

- 1 Flipped mattress, time for sin (4)
- 3 What a tyrant tells leaders after periodically going mad with power? (8)
- 9 Log out without ending? Learn losing latest update hurts. Just start at the beginning... (7)
- 10 No leaving reruns playing in New York preschool (7)
- 11 Sounds sketchy? Becoming nervous... (8)
- 12 Fired up or upped the fire? (6)
- 14 Gets pot from bar? (10)
- 15 Part of the chorus that repeats? (4)
- 18 Giant causing some devastation (4)
- 19 Temple put off having crane repaired (10)
- 21 Tense after concerning impulse (6)
- 23 Crept awkwardly wearing whole rainbow (8)
- 26 "I'm intact!" *frown* (7)
- 27 Cork's place, roughly near lid (7)
- 28 I heard setter even teaches? Looking into it. (8)
- 29 Nuthatch has word after all? (4)

DOWN

- 1 Schools provided orange juice during parties (5)
- 13 Upset noble pulls broadcast of award (5, 5)
- 2 I quote, "sub-building shops" (9)
- 3 Current capital of Germany reversed flu with master doctor (4, 6)
- 4 Finished unique eggnog mixture (4)
- 5 Throw arm through stuffing for heat (6)
- 6 Edit sloppy take to introduce direction (5)
- 7 Admit to nearby university? (7)
- 8 Maybe impostor shot my drones? (8)
- 14 First car too old for insurance (8)
- 16 Bug Spooner's music teacher? (9)
- 17 Sicken poor Romeo with singular candy bar? (7)
- 20 Vampire ditches one design for remodel (6)
- 22 Just sharing space with ethereal sprite (5)
- 24 Center of dim back street (5)
- 25 Bit of ceremony coming up is simple (4)





CRYPTIC #220 by Ryan Patrick Smith

April 27, 2025 · edited by Dan Feyer

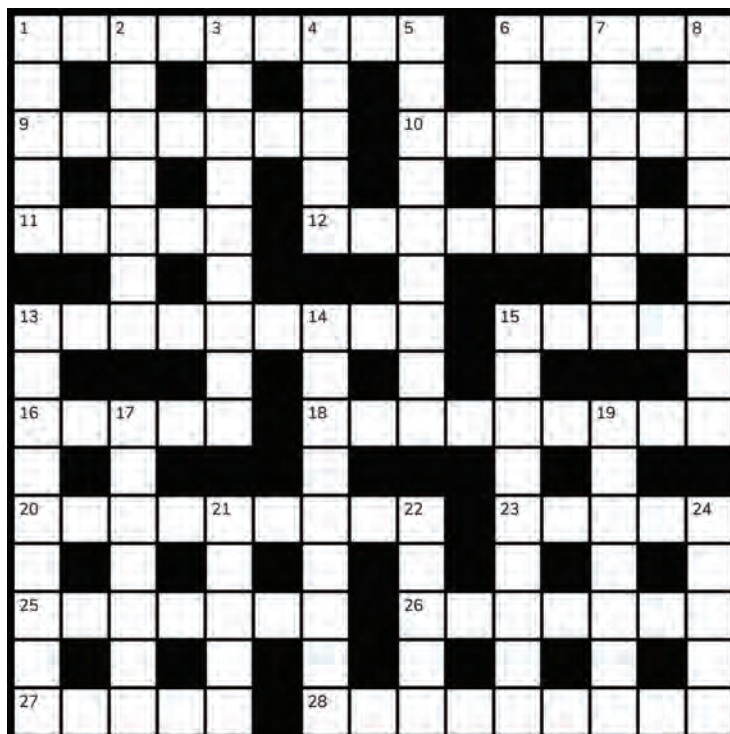
A C R O S S

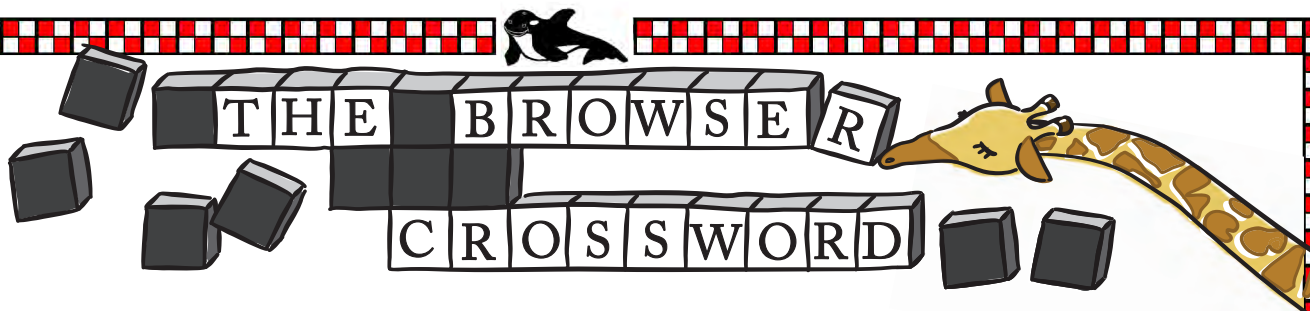
D O W N

1. Person on foot takes in holy construction to Egyptian deity in pyramids, perhaps (9)
6. Medium draws on ancient goddesses (5)
9. Perfectly logical reason for purchasing abacus? (7)
10. Break silence to obtain freedom (7)
11. Descriptor for professor in New York running across university time and time again (5)
12. Inferior carrying report back to tech support curses (9)
13. Everyone agrees noted show needs a remake (3,6)
15. Old executive's eighty-six and working (5)
16. Bug a doctor about onset of illness (5)
18. Retro WWII-era Luger rifle stocks defective (9)
20. Strategy after switching sides to dominate close game (3-3-3)
23. Hat's a hit, I hear (5)
25. Flatter a romantic partner, embracing what's outwardly uncool (7)
26. Inspect pair of weapons laid end to end (7)
27. Where to find "b" in "bowties"? (5)
28. Yay, he's drunk -- having drunk beforehand, apparently (2,4,3)

1. Produce downturn? (3,2)
2. Bird nesting among bricks decided to move on (3,2,2)
3. Buddy with club in L.A. neighborhood (9)
4. Bland bit of marketing for oaky spirit (5)
5. Reptile snarling at gorilla (9)
6. Came cycling around center of chicest city in the Middle East (5)
7. Spooner's prohibited footwear in play area (7)
8. Equal for one small, small number (essentially zero) (9)
13. Dysentery ultimately found in dubious tap water -- a killer on the American frontier (5,4)
14. Lazy and unable to capitalize? (9)

15. Riding horse, joust combatant decapitated in horrific scenario (9)
17. Condition arising from multiple servings of fruit drink? (7)
19. Pounds provided in incomplete manifest for petroleum, glycerin, etc. (7)
21. Pose as an agency's leader (5)
22. Recording throughout Spielberg project is hard (5)
24. Compel, e.g., Yeats to pen poem (5)





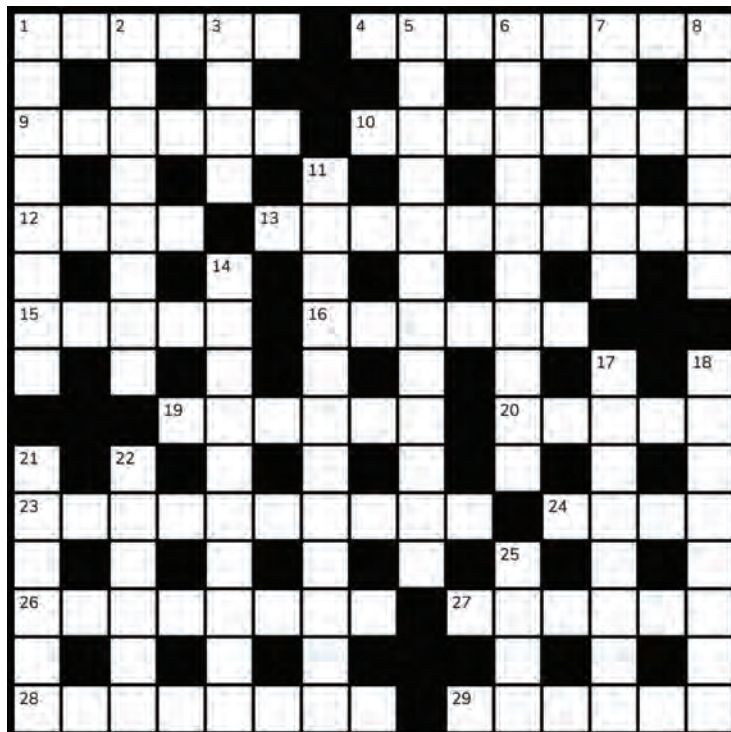
CRYPTIC #226 by Will Nediger

June 15, 2025 · edited by Dan Feyer

A C R O S S

D O W N

1. Make weak soup for poet (6)
4. Drinking establishments give the boot to people who can't legally drink (8)
9. First off, please confirm (6)
10. Two opposition leaders sabotaged Senate position with no incumbent (4,4)
12. Arena tour spans multiple countries (4)
13. Playing dual role, RN is someone who's skilled in many areas (3-7)
15. Start "All About Eve" late to get even (5)
16. Controversial cleverness metric pronounced Will Nediger most clever (2,4)
19. Type of fruit, large and round! (6)
20. Super Bowl LVIII star cut off ball carrier at the start (5)
23. Latin American Spanish for "Assembly of Guyana" (10)
24. Piece of cake from food stamp program (4)
26. Spooner's assignment: fix dinner at a luau (5,3)
27. Head south to drink tea (6)
28. Actor Gloria Grahame's debut and final performance (4,4)
29. \$1000 at Los Angeles airport activated alarm (6)
1. Sprain ankle, dropping two articles in rain (8)
2. Assumed position near Madonna character doing handstand (8)
3. Pick up extremely hirsute feet (4)
5. Not actually existing, like a number that's transcendental and rational (12)
6. Host and visitor stripped nude for piercing (6,4)
7. Corrects pair of dashes, dashes with nothing inside (6)
8. Burlesque show initially a bore (6)
11. Cantaloupe's core: calorie-conscious cap on consumption! (12)
14. Water-controlling technology leads to fog dispersing (10)
17. Intimate conversation is measure of chemistry with your ex? (5,3)
18. Prevent the closing of pro-Leo XIV organization, ultimately (4,4)
21. Wears polo and the like (6)
22. Both ends of ear canal are missing -- mysterious stuff (6)
25. Rank birds out loud (4)





Themeless Cryptic #5!

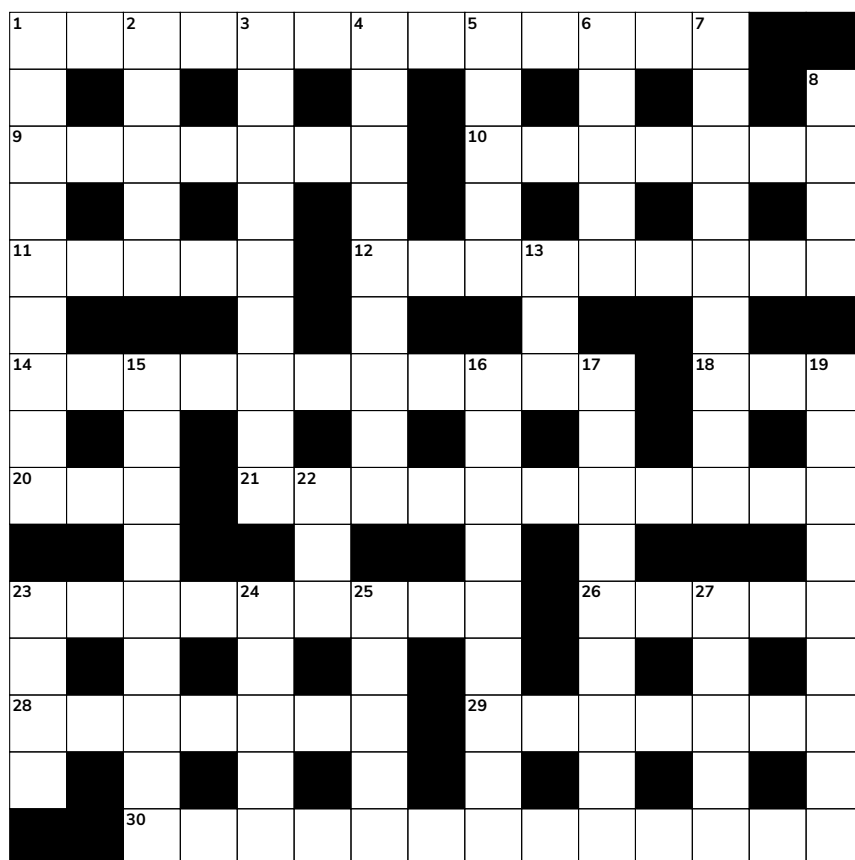
Frisco17

ACROSS

- 1 Western Indian state? Such rubbish! Not a western state, an eastern state (13)
- 9 Hastily-written corpus* page emerges (5,2)
- 10 Region formed by riotous crime amidst multiple instances of anarchy (7)
- 11 Frisco, breaking up, held back tear in restaurant (5)
- 12 Test of loyalty, mostly true/false, getting 100% with half of test entered in (5,4)
- 14 Native to state "Hello" into microphone, look (11)
- 21 Anaconda with no head or tail encircles trunk, slithering towards the top in practically no time at all (11)
- 23 Claims other event-goers claimed a claim claimed by certain event-goers (2,2,5)
- 26 Will possibly getting the fuck out of fight to grant Mike first place (5)
- 28 P, perhaps: pressure, perfect, puzzle*s origin? (7)
- 29 *Ass or tits?* sides being taken in groups (7)
- 30 Finishes awards closet, excitedly putting Oscar inside (5,2,1,5)

DOWN

- 1 Goodness me! In Italy, converting a couple thousand to Canadian dollars? That's nutty (9)
- 2 Ladle pepper in * just a bit (5)
- 3 Claim senator is drunk (9)
- 4 Series of bits from *The Case of Happy Cats and Dogs*? (4,5)
- 5 Big goof buffs up at university (5)
- 6 Perhaps Milk-Bone*s milk provider incorporates trace of riboflavin (5)
- 7 You can*t go with runner who worked with Vanna on Wheel of Fortune right now, you must go inside (4,1,4)
- 8 Party's bouncer (4)
- 13 Maybe they partner with division of Boar*s Head (3)
- 15 This elevated sorcerer getting sliced in half with sword? (9)
- 16 Dare to go head over heels, overcome by half-despondent bandit (9)
- 17 Maybe a Stone, most of Muse, and one leading member of Cream could make this together! (4,5)
- 19 Ultimately, the Atlanta Braves play without two infielders. Are we clear? (4,2,3)
- 22 A quiet kind of Wednesday? (3)
- 23 Activity on a road trip in northern US city, to a 14 (1,3)
- 24 Letter from the teaching assistant (5)
- 25 Top to bottom, 7 levels (5)
- 27 One star for *Anna Karenina*: *Trash* (5)



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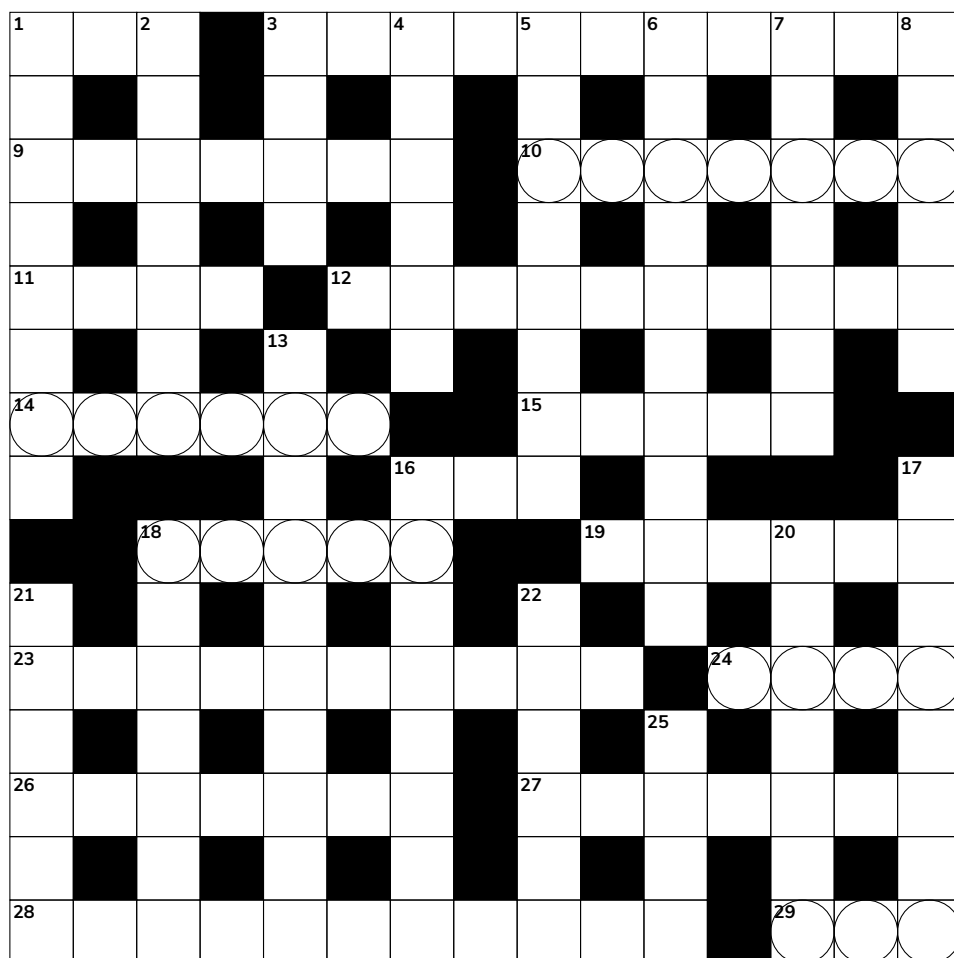


So Long, and Thanks for All the Cryptics

Steve Mossberg

ACROSS

- 1 Crossword's conclusion leaves spirit low (3)
- 3 Wilding out on Instacart sale (11)
- 9 Must if you visit Paris: the sewers (7)
- 10 Cryptic dude's taking on with hesitation (7)
- 11 Duty to initially get consent (4)
- 12 Had kids cut sandwiches full-time (10)
- 14 NES button worse after sorting out Mario villain (6)
- 15 Skipping commencement, troubles relatives (5)
- 16 10 editor Feyer starts to demolish an NYT (3)



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- 18 Victorian hat repelling large garden retreat (5)
- 19 US troops, in an oddly perfect world (6)
- 23 Canal Italy rerouted using logic (10)
- 24 Be punched by oof... heavyweight Riddick (4)
- 26 Falls over returning research assistant (7)
- 27 Update game official on limits of squash (7)
- 28 Showtime eyes acquiring a thousand marketers (11)
- 29 What remains is for 16a to take a ___ (3)

DOWN

- 1 Spa job for grad somewhere provincial? (8)
- 2 Ran from lover's awkwardness (7)
- 3 Reporter's behind story (4)
- 4 Four ways to disrupt a Republican comeback (6)
- 5 Husky soprano from southern Europe (8)
- 6 Fashion I do not care to match (10)
- 7 Small creatures in branches (7)
- 8 Dork around university - area poet? (6)

- 13 Stadium frank we pay to order (6,4)
- 16 What stops mold over wet period! (8)
- 17 GMA, whose cast broadcast on TV (4,4)
- 18 Showing off undergarment versus hoo-ha (7)
- 20 Saw dog commonly getting into peanut butter (7)
- 21 Announced trash resort in France (6)
- 22 Scary film vehicle - Aster's latest, that is (6)
- 25 Out for frozen sweets, primarily ices (4)



Naked Massage

Nate Fricker // Ed. by Momes, Dob Olino, & Bob Weisz

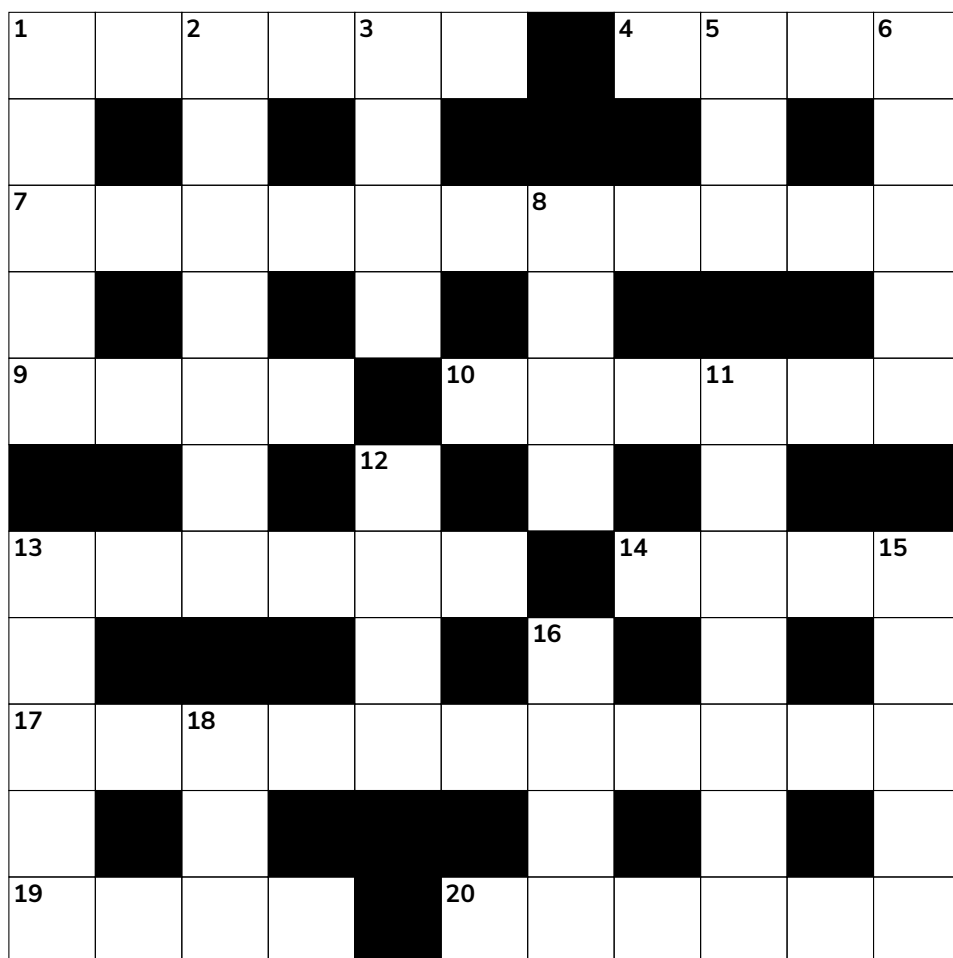
ACROSS

- 1 Overtakes, no longer in second (6)
- 4 Stone Cold enters first in Rumble, doing alright (4)
- 7 Appeared excited to host free event in June (5,6)
- 9 Bars leader from returning while seizing power (4)
- 10 Rendition of duet is appropriate (6)
- 13 Occasionally tried a blintz morsel (6)
- 14 Recruiter casting you for Macbeth, maybe (4)
- 17 Brown bears in Nome rattled Teamster, for one (5,6)
- 19 Piece of rhubarb a keeper for cook (4)
- 20 Half-decent model stripped, revealing crack (6)

DOWN

- 1 What's needed to start printing with copier! (5)
- 2 Posted in gym, wearing sponsored clothing (7)
- 3 First place finishers in race trounced the competition (4)
- 5 Sounds like Gordon Ramsay's done making eggs? (3)
- 6 Massage... naked massage (5)
- 8 Go up against a second-rate university team's starter (4)
- 11 Perhaps Musk largely botched maneuvers to control Republican (4,3)

- 12 Majority shareholder reportedly committin' perjury? (4)
- 13 Microsoft's latest drone initially boasts "like button" feature (5)
- 15 Maybe elder welcomes advent of Holy Trinity? (5)
- 16 Extremely humble about present (4)
- 18 Couple beginning flick ignored turn-off (3)



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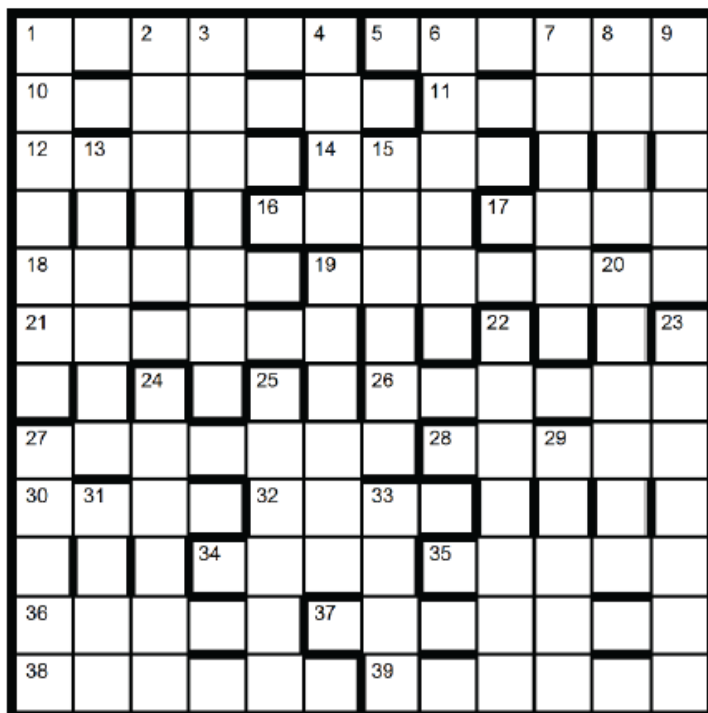
S Q U A R E

78

— chase

March 15, 2025 **Watch Party**
by Steve Mossberg

Netflix and chill? Au contraire! We're binging the season in one go. This makes the 10 same-line pairs of Across entries kind of bleed together. A line with MASH and HOUSE could either be entered MAS / HOUSE or MASH / OUSE. Letters doing double duty spell our viewing material, from top to bottom. Five Down entries are interrupted by extra letters, never making real words. From left to right, they spell an apt advertisement for our viewing material. Enumerations have been withheld. Now start the stream!



©2025 Steve Mossberg

ACROSS

- 1 Endless talk about what makes you hurl?
- 5 Kid tackles Messi, but not at first meeting
- 10 This guy's in Egyptian pictures, primarily!
- 11 Gym fixed with last of Nonna's old money
- 12 Cooked less, nastier outside
- 14 It shows bogies coming from both directions
- 16 Out Dem investing in A.I.
- 17 Essentially kick weed, drink
- 18 Easy score – it revolved around ATM code (hyph.)
- 19 They identify corrupt magnates (2 wds.)
- 21 Slacker heads to UK, employer gutted
- 26 NFLer incorporating overtime moisturizer
- 27 Capital gain turned over in stake
- 28 Good doctor beginning to stockpile fellows
- 30 Conservatives glowing after inauguration
- 32 Sort of shell company led by college hire
- 34 Serve, like a bad grade?
- 35 Tooth broken gobbling petite entrée (2 wds.)
- 36 Earth: Jean Luc's stop on the return trip
- 37 Decent spot to see match
- 38 Whoa! We say no dancing (2 wds.)
- 39 Regularly spent weeks at giant hotel

DOWN

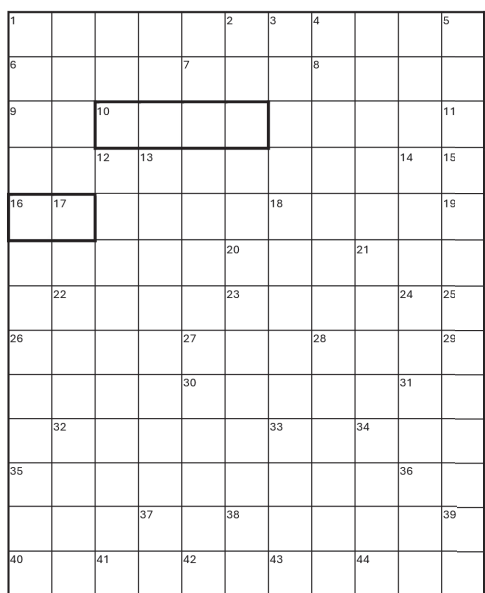
- 1 Openly skips court in the worst way
- 2 Want to make out and craft?
- 3 Live together, oddly stoic about ex
- 4 Carnivore swimming close
- 6 Germ-covered labs stripping wet floor
- 7 Historically Peruvian, like much corn?
- 8 Periodically host some Midwesterners
- 9 Church parts ways following bit of naughtiness
- 13 Melodies used to make Mario sing
- 15 Vague appeal, almost something on the face
- 19 Live with Dad's corny fare?
- 20 Annoyed interns run recess
- 22 Drawing on people in sketchy Facebook posting
- 23 Hidden ruins she meant to excavate at intervals
- 24 Makes mad good songs after leader quits
- 25 Giant taking second to Tintoretto?!
- 27 Record win leads to ceremony
- 29 Bite tips of nails if panicked, also toes (2 wds.)
- 31 Thought aide crooked
- 33 Muse fell below top of chart



The Gnomon
Preview #2, Puzzle #2

by Roger Wolff
edited by Andy Yingst

Owed to Pixar



As of April 2025, Pixar has produced 19 non-sequel feature films, which are listed above the clues. Most of these titles have been each omitted from a clue in this puzzle.

Answers should be entered beginning in the numbered square and proceeding in one of the eight orthogonal or diagonal directions.

Once all answers have been entered, some squares will remain blank. Each such square should be filled so that the name of one of the unused Pixar movies can be found passing through it. Shade these entries in the grid to reveal my ode to Pixar, the title of which can be found in the boxed cells.

Toy Story, A Bug's Life, Monsters, Inc., Finding Nemo, The Incredibles, Cars, Ratatouille, WALL-E, Up, Brave, Inside Out, The Good Dinosaur, Coco, Onward, Soul, Luca, Turning Red, Lightyear, Elemental

Clues

- 1 Back to the beginning for Disney lion (4)
- 1 Shed lots of tears (about a pound) for one living in a pigpen (4)
- 1 Small, small creature with me (4)
- 2 Is concerned about part of a glacier (5)
- 3 *The Good Dinosaur* from *Toy Story* (who isn't *Brave*) smashes *Up Cars*, we hear* (3)
- 4 Henry Ford's son coming back through sales department (5)
- 5 Athletes coming down the mountain face (6)
- 6 Hide from sick Tar Heel (7)
- 7 That girl, the one with the sheep (6)
- 8 Pull out a tie (4)
- 9 Nice things from football star Jackson, running back with an NFL team (6)
- 10 Pyramid in Nevada found in piece of land up by Oregon (5)
- 11 Drunk just less than half of three (3)
- 12 One hot drink (5)
- 13 Bottom of the page, where two prepositions are written right to left (4)
- 13 Florida Gator's beginning to fade (4)
- 14 Carefree adventure in large old boat (4)
- 15 Some gallivanting is forbidden (7)
- 16 Juliet's cap lit on fire and cast aside (4)
- 17 Green alien coming after Europe's essential compiler of classified data? (5)
- 18 "Hock" is part of an animal's leg near the back of gaskin (4)
- 19 Blue green, black or white drink with a splash of liquor (4)
- 20 Musical composition from Snoopy on the radio? (6)
- 21 Give birth with assistance (5)
- 22 Georgia grabs the middle of defender (6)
- 23 Einstein Telescope may offer useful observations (5)
- 24 Fry after battering (7)
- 25 Leigh's capital in a nasty, nasty Psycho trailer (7)
- 26 One of seven's over one of four? (6)
- 27 Canoe torpedoed in the deep (5)
- 28 Injury is a concern for a cattle breeder? (6)
- 29 Vehicle one could expect to be in USA until reassembled (8)
- 30 Fish in your ear (4)
- 31 Nitrogen-infused retro Beer of Kings (6)
- 31 Rob with a firearm (5)
- 32 Very entertaining heartless nickname, perhaps (5)
- 33 Motivate an architect with the last letter written in caps? (5)
- 34 A good doctor has lots of this, but a successful doctor has lots of these, it's said (8)
- 35 At the premiere, ticket sales tanked, leaving feature hanging (6)
- 36 Side of fries, no corn? (8)
- 37 Receive musician's gift before conclusion of ovation (4)
- 38 Bit of tennis after kid's service (3,3)
- 39 Trivial insult (6)
- 40 Guard past second door (5)
- 41 Old donkey carries piece of equipment to find water in the desert (5)
- 42 Chaotic soccer great Lionel is being broadcast (5)
- 43 Call cooking not edible (8)
- 43 Some cop busted cast (7)
- 44 In progress (5)

* No, none of these count. They haven't been omitted from the clue. Now, *Onward* with the rest of the puzzle.

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High Definition

JonMichael Rasmus and Sean Weitner, The Rackenfracker

Instructions: [redacted].

Across

1 Tangy fruit pie (4)

4 **M** (41)
A

10 Refrain of second verse of children's song at start of third bar (5)

13 Pennsylvania town giving me the creeps for my podcast (4)

14 Copyright blocks last installment of saga (1)

15 Nepal free of prisons (5)

16 Run wrong wheels (4)

17 Shoot game animals in retreat (4)

18 Concern with where your hand is hiding note (5)

19 Oft-flooded river basin not empty (0)

23 Start to prepare stuffing in short order dish (5)

25 Be certain about Japanese dance theatre reported to be taboo (2-2)

27 Flimflam artist pushed back with thing the crowd uses to run someone out of town (4)

29 Disconcerted Dale Cooper is one eating pie, as related in the Red Room? (5)

30 Returning in dugout canoe? (69)

31 Sixth letter and seventh letter in Greek cheese (4)

32 Latin love captivates Romeo with mail (5)

33 Be back during one portion of game! (7)

34 One that holds all the cards in, say, 'Get Out' (4)

Down

1 Haphazardly reship jammed printer component (6)

2 Combine element 47 with 17? No argument here (6)

1	2		3	4	5		6		7	8
		9		10		11		12		
13							14			
15					16					
17						18				
				19			20	21	22	
23		24					25			
	26	27	28			29				
30							31			
		32								
33							34			

2025 The Rackenfracker

3 Things that are groovy could be duds when not high (6)

4 Silent about one climbing hotel wing (1000)

5 Regiment I enroll into (10^12)

6 Yellow brick road traveler that goes up and up when each character takes a step back (4)

7 Repeatedly stuck in hell until lunatics showed up

8 [1,200.0 - 2,000.0]: timestamp to reconcile (11)

9 Restaurant's money runs out early (5)

11 In favor of being fitted in large, tailored cup size (38)

12 Imperial craft falling back ... sayonara! (2-2)

20 Blowhards propped up America's mistakes? (6)

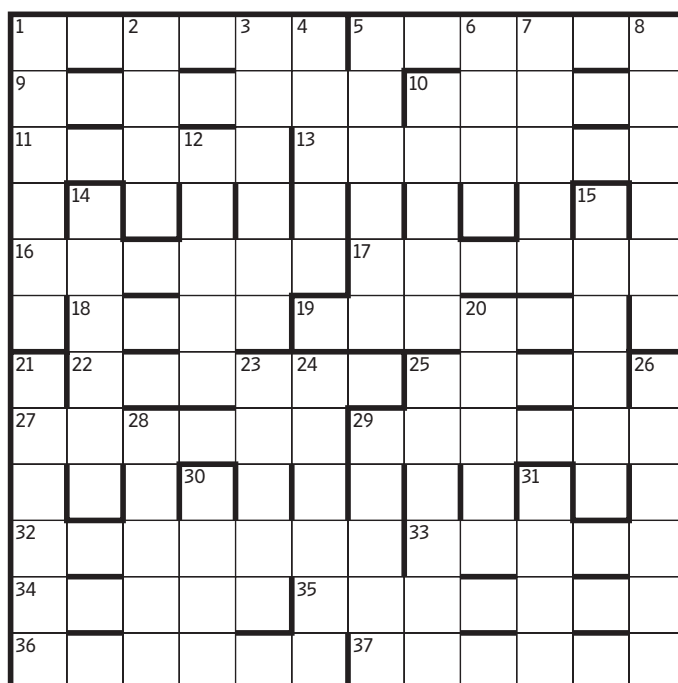
21 Sleep Number (12)

22 Consecutive strikes took the day as well -- that's what I heard (3-3)

24 Debut from old-fashioned TV maker: one that's black-and-white (4)

26 Car with lower operating costs provided returns (5)

28 A cipher: Remove the last letter to get a candy bar from the U.K. (4)



The Purloined Key | a cryptic puzzle by Dean Felch

A valuable key has been stolen, and your help is needed to determine the thief. Seven squares in the grid should be left empty, with their Across and Down answers both skipping the empty square when being entered. Put a circle in these empty squares. When the grid is complete, insert a letter into each of those seven circles so that a new word is formed either Across or Down (but not both). The circled letters, reading top to bottom, identify the culprit. The same letters, reading left to right, identify to whom the recovered key should be returned.

Across

- 1 Data transmission error interrupts retail venues in recession
- 5 Animosity around small expedition
- 9 Procedure: flip trail mix with butter?
- 10 Lower boat that gets left behind
- 11 Great deal to gambling game
- 13 Back trouble consumed racehorse of the 1970s
- 16 Run inside job for a fraudster and split
- 17 Col. Lawrence ends up with convictions

- 18 Our gang accepts extremely strange applications
- 19 Avenge ruined European city
- 22 Canine affliction ultimately spreading inside thick hair
- 25 Repelled angry god
- 27 Unearthly energy in lake
- 29 Governmental group goes after a California tree
- 32 Craven lieutenant turned into suspect
- 33 Touch heavy brass counter
- 34 Musical's premier solo performance!
- 35 Petroleum buried in stratum generated vapor
- 36 Walk within confines of authority with indifference
- 37 Rather insignificant lies about Republican

Down

- 1 Rock guitarist straddling piano makes vivid impression
- 2 Routine composed for audition
- 3 Smells like clothing capital of Italia
- 4 Married first man and lady
- 5 Dull stuff abruptly ends

- 6 Hurt a Marxist revolutionary
- 7 Work out second love after a breakup
- 8 Pass within three laps, expertly
- 10 Visualized part of a movie broadcast
- 12 Adolescent golfer's support network for starters
- 14 Savvy pair of Cubans getting in last word
- 15 Assist stranger with balance
- 20 Times sports section stats
- 21 Foremost of six magi adapted letter from the Corinthians
- 23 Aide developed concept
- 24 Undergoing change of character, fictional millionaire copes (2 wds.)
- 25 Alice tossed the last piece of her dessert
- 26 Unhealthy-looking former Yankee
- 28 Partner of old retro gallery works for bonus
- 29 Ask a contrary fabulist
- 30 Cut Saturday English class
- 31 Illegally support a wager

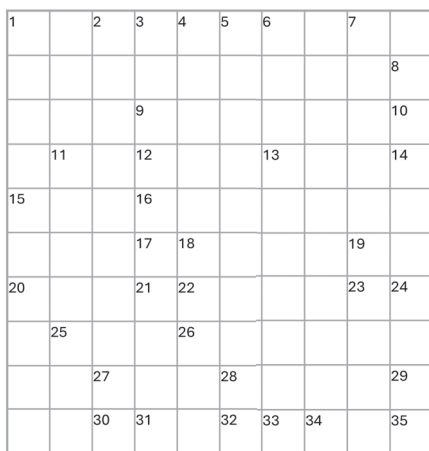
► **Get the solutions** to this week's Journal Weekend Puzzles in next Saturday's Wall Street Journal. Solve crosswords and acrostics online, get pointers on solving cryptic puzzles and discuss all of the puzzles online at WSJ.com/Puzzles.



The Gnomon
June 2025, Puzzle #3

by Andy Yingst
edited by Skaldskaparmal

It's in the Bag!



Answers are entered in any of the eight orthogonal or diagonal directions. When multiple entries begin at the same numbered square, their clues are given in alphabetical order by answer. When only a single entry begins at a numbered square, either the enumeration or direction of the entry is given, but not both.

In four clues, the wordplay indicates only some of the letters of the entry suggested by the definition. When this occurs, the wordplay letters should be entered in the grid and the rest of the entry should be blank. The unclued entry at 30 suggests another way this grid could be filled.

- 1 Marvel hero had been seen prior to *Spider-Man: Part 2*
- 1 Oeonophile to nab last of Friulano
- 1 Holding property belonging to comedian Henry
- 2 Exam with both English and math questions posed (S)
- 3 Jam band dropping a little hot nonsense
- 3 Pot wrapped in blunt (2 wds.)
- 4 Post-doc, top in describing marine biology (6)
- 5 Find expert to offer pointer (SE)
- 6 Fish being sought? Not any to catch, mid-November (4)
- 7 Character originally seen in the sequel to *Street Fighter Alpha*
- 7 Yet to be converted, and thus damned (hyph.)
- 8 Representatives with time to meet Charlie in New York (6)
- 9 Someone who's smart leaves
- 9 Rock star doing a cover of the first single from *Tapestry*
- 10 Turn sharply when vexing person cuts by (SW)
- 11 Last episode of the season, apart from the middle bits, is smooth (4)
- 12 Hendrix track in which he introduces wild joy and ecstasy (E, two wds.)
- 13 Planner removing park from jetport's redesign (6)
- 14 Large avocado falls, becoming slightly less than round
- 14 Box lid Liz and me never opened shows rust
- 15 Small pony possibly misses Twilight Sparkle?
- 15 Angry when businesswoman finally entered and saw logs
- 16 Note wrapped around gold key
- 16 More episodes are non-plot-related than initially intended
- 17 Error following network path
- 17 Broadcast chill Disney show
- 18 Pitched Alton's cooking (SE)
- 19 Habitual fisher, possibly retired (5)
- 20 Estimate *Man of La Mancha* had nine characters edited out (E)
- 21 *Rent* cast producing version of *The Seagull* (4)
- 22 Starting line-up from Edmonton will exclude relief pitcher (S)
- 23 Curl part of the ear (4)
- 24 Music producer cutting first part of refrain and increasing echo in Dre/Jay-Z short (NW)
- 25 Fungus evolved with potassium instead of sulfur, as a defense system (4,2)
- 26 Rewrote tweet that's a downer (N, two words)
- 27 *Time*'s last editor coming in from being on the outside (7)
- 28 I heard he's gonna get better (E)
- 29 Masked criminal emptied register in circus (5)
- 30 [See Instructions]
- 31 Wagon trail mostly goes to the south (N)
- 32 Car is wrecked, with barely any function (6, abbr.)
- 33 Turn bold when facing death (N)
- 34 Believe line if there's no dishonesty in angle (5)
- 35 Avoid overturning after-school schedule (NW)

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Fantastic Fours

JonMichael Rasmus and Sean Weitner, The Rackenfracker

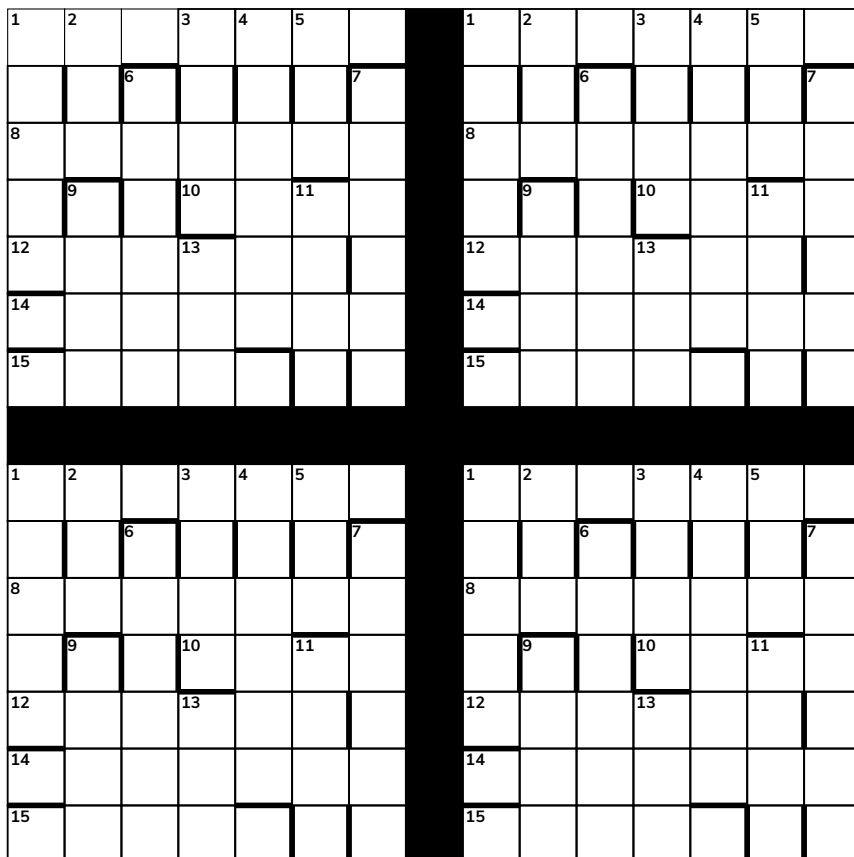
Despite appearances, each grid is rotated differently: Their 'tops' face up, right, down, and left, but solvers must determine which grid has which orientation. In the grid whose top faces right, for example, 8-across would start at the square numbered 8 but be written down, and 7-down would be written across, ending in its numbered square. (See diagram in lower right.) For each position (e.g. 1-across), clues are given together in left-to-right, top-to-bottom order. However, each grid also contains four unclued words, one member apiece from four different sets. Thus not every position has four clues -- for instance, 1-across only has two. (Thanks to Richard Maltby, Jr., for originating this form.)

Across

- 1 Star of 'Wings of Desire' remake in Germany thrown out (3,4) | They came up with Beanie Babies carpeted in gnarly pubes -- it's a pretty small niche (7)
- 8 Pierce operating in digestive tract (7) | Sprite I prepared is drunk more? (7) | Former bandmate plucking out bass in recording Elvis' label backed (7) | 'Friday,' when on some chronic bud (7)
- 10 Best-case scenario for independent theater: some boobies (4) | What's abbreviated by 'I'll' (4)
- 12 Shape-shifting Proteus: 'O begone and heal thyself' (4,2) | Incorporated competitive trainer's preferred way to buy drugs (2,4) | Strange probes? Fox once suspected as much (4,2) | Get mad about pages with crease (6)
- 14 Call dad to give you sweet piece of jewelry? (7) | Kaiser rolls with a mountain of hot dogs? (3,4) | Though no Romeo, Italian darling connects with online lover (they each have a cell) (7)
- 15 Lady that spins, centered on Amazon's heel! (5) | Grating rap's unintelligible at club (5)

Down

- 1 Huge amount of terrible farts (5)
- 2 It's so pretty how acetic acid ends up (3) | What is taking the lead from a king, queen or jack! (3) | Mostly take it easy and enjoy oneself online without holding it in (3, init.) | Cry uncle, grappling video game brawler (3)
- 3 Seafarer found in red sunrise, possibly capsized (4) | It's not applicable when applied to speaker known only by pronoun! (4)
- 4 No diner could possibly be more tidy (6) | Detective breaking criminal crew wide open (6) | Company approaching rock bottom made heartless action movie (3,3)
- 5 Much-ballyhooed kind of baby that has no pee -- it's the start of something new? (3) | Manning three positions along pipeline (3) | It's just inside, schmuck -- don't be a stranger (3, init.) | Return of Pi Day is a low point (3)
- 6 Increase in alternating output current (6) | Prompted at least one big ol' prayer (6) | Adjust your dial but listen very carefully -- 2 for Spanish-speaking operator, 9 for German (4,2)



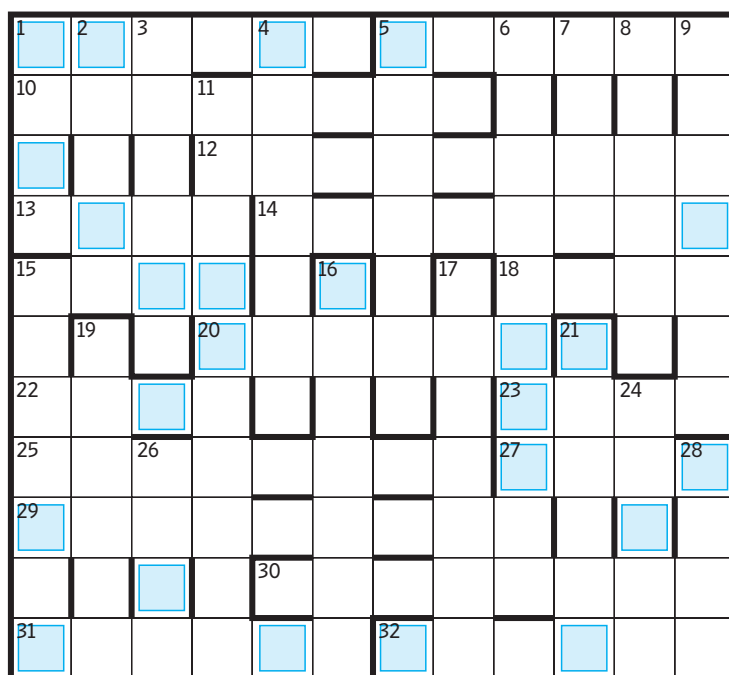
2025 The Rackenfracker

- 7 Budget-busting Gestapo types to snoop around the borders (6) | Not at all fair and mostly rotten when changing sides (6) | Far-flung altars of the heavens (6)
- 9 Traveling show with tenor sounding like it's down by 80%? (4) | Started when seeing signs of ailment from sexting? (4) | For me to be one-dimensional within (4)

- 11 Like whipped cream, butter or yogurt when unopened (4) | Tall order to repeatedly suppress right wing leaning (4) | Colbert doesn't do chicken dance (4) | Certain Glaswegian is one that's long-winded when speaking (4)

- 13 Pioneers utter mild oath (3, init.) | One of Cinderella's see-through elements put up for bid by auctioneer (3) | Plug in keyboard controls that let you move forward, left and right (but not back) (3) | You get this when gym is supported by pom-poms up front! (3)





Boxes | *a cryptic puzzle by Jess Shulman & Andy Yingst*

In this puzzle, the 24 shaded boxes each contain [20-Across]. Another box in this grid, which can be identified by its contents, belongs to [20-Across]. Enumerations have been withheld.

Across

- 1 Hot oatmeal eater has medical screening around stomach muscle after dropping two sizes (2 wds.)
- 5 Electricity keeps down dust
- 10 Artist, rapper and singer who performed with Sonny Bono covering Yes, but skipping the intro (3 wds.)
- 12 Waistless garment redesign sets trend (2 wds.)
- 13 Deal with sequence of notes that skips C
- 14 Followed KonMari suggestion about expired tofu, in the end (2 wds.)
- 15 Staffer's first rest break
- 18 Flag is something that's on the back of a Jeep
- 20 SEE INSTRUCTIONS
- 22 Comparable hip-hop number making a comeback (2 wds.)
- 23 Sassy gym rat skipping core

- 25 Without personal packaging, Taylor Swift era is exhausted (2 wds.)
- 27 Kitchen station role vacated in the middle of supper
- 29 Perhaps you cringe when losing ring, say?
- 30 "Musculoskeletal Treatment Rehabilitated Ostrich"—entertaining newspaper essay
- 31 Reach a Republican guy taking Spanish (2 wds.)
- 32 "Flat" fare can peak unexpectedly

Down

- 1 Plains (not in Quebec) hosting a Canadian politician
- 2 Retro Namco app with no end in sight! (Hyph.)
- 3 Plot escape in chaos
- 4 First part of a play includes excellent stripper
- 5 Boxer's opening to do maneuvers in period's first half (2 wds.)
- 6 Installed a phone device and piped water when getting a remodel

- 7 Debated canceling baseball club title
- 8 Make certain result involves head of research
- 9 Admire movie with James Bond cycling
- 11 Two members of the Brady Bunch recast, past and present
- 15 Now cutting short piece of asparagus (a vegetable) (2 wds.)
- 16 Bill overturned orange juice container to end meeting
- 17 Tennis tournament rejected squishy ball and cut 25% of entrants (2 wds.)
- 19 Share Ron Swanson's returning segment: he's sawing logs
- 21 Complicated praise for invading nation in "300"
- 24 Agent removing top from bag to get ready to leave hotel
- 26 First glimpses of rockhoppers observed at medium range
- 28 Practice in yoga center falling from grace

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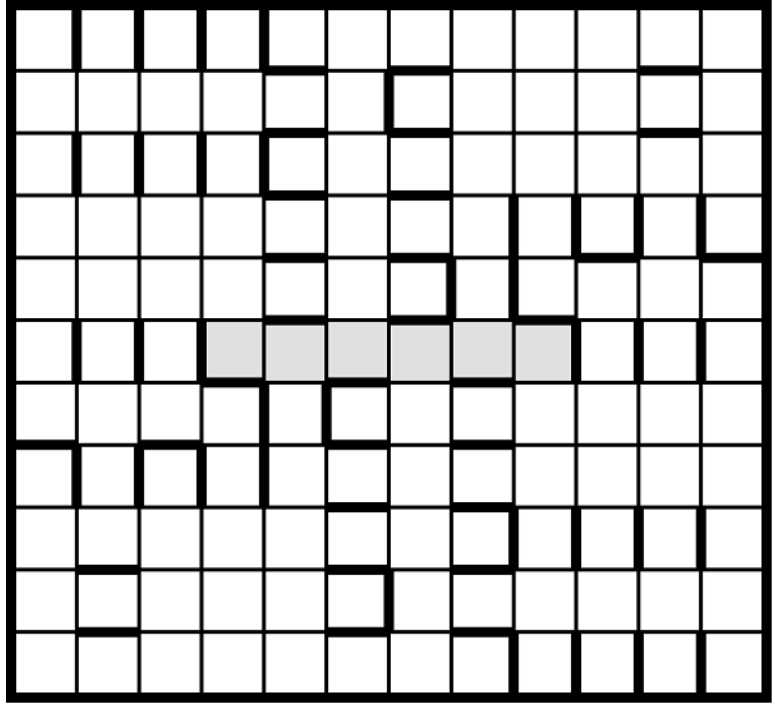
S Q U A R E

90

September 15, 2025
by Steve Mossberg

**Soup
Puzzle!**

Of the alphabet variety! Clues are listed by first letter of their answer, A-Z. Each letter of the alphabet begins at least one entry. You must figure out how to place them yourself. There are two secret ingredients, one, which you can add into the title, is unclued at the puzzle's center. The other is spelled in order by seven extra letters produced, one each, by the wordplay of their clues. Let's get cooking!



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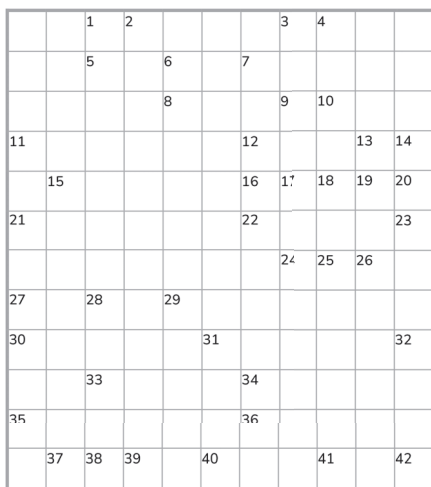
CLUES (A-Z)

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| - Announce answer at volume that's painful (4) | - Native staple alternately taken for rye, barley, and tea (8) | - Fake leather bag with any-hued buckles (9) | - Island capital hit Indonesian stocks (6) |
| - Servant squashing small commotion (6) | - Playing on gig, or taking piano off to bigger places? (5,3) | - Agreed retro TV room embraces "quirky" (6) | - Peacekeepers put on Earth not finished yet (6) |
| - Old senator getting you into blackcurrant liqueur (7) | - Dread zeros in HR bringing in Republicans (6) | - Boomer talk contains secret code (6) | - Constructor wearing mostly Versace modeled guts (7) |
| - Song in French essentially wrecked <i>MMMBop</i> band (7) | - Forget that Instagram and negative, heartless Reddit (6,2) | - Larger LP issue reworked to cover Zeppelin's first (4-4) | - Tool with joints pursued by law (7) |
| - Company beating foremost of industry titans (7) | - Actress Dench opens jaunty Universal drama doing improv (4) | - Game people dig around here (6) | - Struggling CW proud to carry large sports event (5,3) |
| - Salon jobs – fades, we're told (4) | - Family skipping last Boston hotel stop (6) | - Dorm heads with fraternity T like Bob Marley (5) | - Zip about chasing unknown element (5) |
| - Lake Ireland must return (4) | - Cat connects via the tongue (4) | - Annoy half of Lima, Peru in travels (4,2) | - Off axis, in flight! (6) |
| - Right box drink to split with others (7) | - Excellent uni infuses pure butter sauce (8) | - Puffed up flossing targets receded (4) | - Menagerie birds around us flipping flashy raiments (4,5) |



The Gnomon

October 2025, Puzzle #3



In this puzzle, clues begin at the numbered square and proceed in the direction indicated. ('n' is for "north", etc.) Among these, 13 clues are experiencing malfunctions, requiring them to be modified before entry. The nature of these malfunctions is indicated cryptically by the otherwise unclued entry at 17e.

Additionally, 13 clues (including some malfunctioning clues) have an extra one or two consecutive words that must be ignored for the clue to parse. In each case, these one or two words provide a definition for one of the altered grid entries.

When the extra words in clue x are a definition for the modified grid entry at y, shade the cells numbered x, y, as well as the (horizontal, vertical, or diagonal) path connecting them. The resulting image will show the source of the malfunctions, and the unclued entry at 19w provides a description of it.

Enumerations are given for grid entries. In all but one case, a malfunctioning grid entry will have a different length than the clue's solution.

Malfunctions

by Andy Yingst

edited by JonMichael Rasmus

- 1e Roots production from Dr. Dre on the radio [5]
1se Pastry put in oven almost finished ... it just needs hot chocolate sauce? [7]
2w Live broadcasts follow events from their origins [4]
3e Launcher knocking off last potato in bowl [4]
4s Underwear that's made of burlap, oddly [3]
5e Hot director Lee's *Happening* is giving chills [5]
6sw No aptitude for music, but getting by [4]
7e Cyprus strangely rejecting copyright for "Mrs. Butterworth's", possibly [5]
8w Stenographer to consider occupying a space between king and rook [5]
9se Meemaw is out exploring, gathering sage [4]
10w I don't understand how Harold fits in? [4]
11n Weeks going around record website to find sunken watercraft [4]
12se How encyclopedias are sold: without the article for "Mole" [5]
12w Toy requiring 66.7 cents? [6, hyph]
13n Libertine, no-good scoundrel [4]
14s Darling ... of course you suck [3]
15n Some breads react to yeast, reportedly [4]
16s Will working in comedy start to affect Trent being funny? [6]
17e [See instructions] [3]
18nw Custom of 249 years when this came out? [5]
19w [See instructions] [3]
20n Referee is getting by on the sidelines, but it's rough [5]
20nw Boris's outside, soaking up a little sun? Sounds like an ass ... [5]
21e 31 gallons of booze can be found here—real, but not top-shelf [6]
21se Traveller is icebound, shivering and avoiding the cold [7]
22nw "Ten" missing from watch's 24-hour part [4]
23s Sci-fi movie torn to pieces [6]
24w Zero rebounds for former Knick Jeremy [5]
25s One university ultimately absorbed expense it needed to produce book review? [5]
26nw Paper insert in last pair of shoes, perhaps? [5]
27ne Fried liver and Cubano, for sure [6]
28e Sack of crap got even via comeback [6]
29s Presumably around (in part) to be entertaining [5]
30ne Bird enthusiast having a bit of pilsner before whiskey chaser [8]
31ne Traditional island garb of crotchless jeans [4]
32w Cincinnati slugger Oscar Mulligan [4]
33n Muse is embarrassed at present being returned [8]
34e Bizarre journey ending in sore stomach [5]
35n Sweetheart in Great Britain, leading to hug and kiss somewhere in a car [8]
35ne Friendly, but also spiritual? [6]
36e Loyal leader of cavalry doesn't participate in cease-fire [5]
37n Table displays Helvetica in its interior [6]
37ne Look depressed because of misappropriated plums [5]
38n Pair of pliers beneath sack [7]
38ne On most Beatles songs, the bass is painful, lacking in force [4]
39ne Refuse, at the start, to exaggerate sudden upswing [7]
39w Peas flung in recess [4]
40ne String of police officers from company working to guard road [6]
41nw Bum left fireproof dish away from home [6]
42nw After losing a member, quartet in choir try turning things around? [4]
42w Utterly destroy counter-revolutionary [7]

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fluid motion

adrian johnson

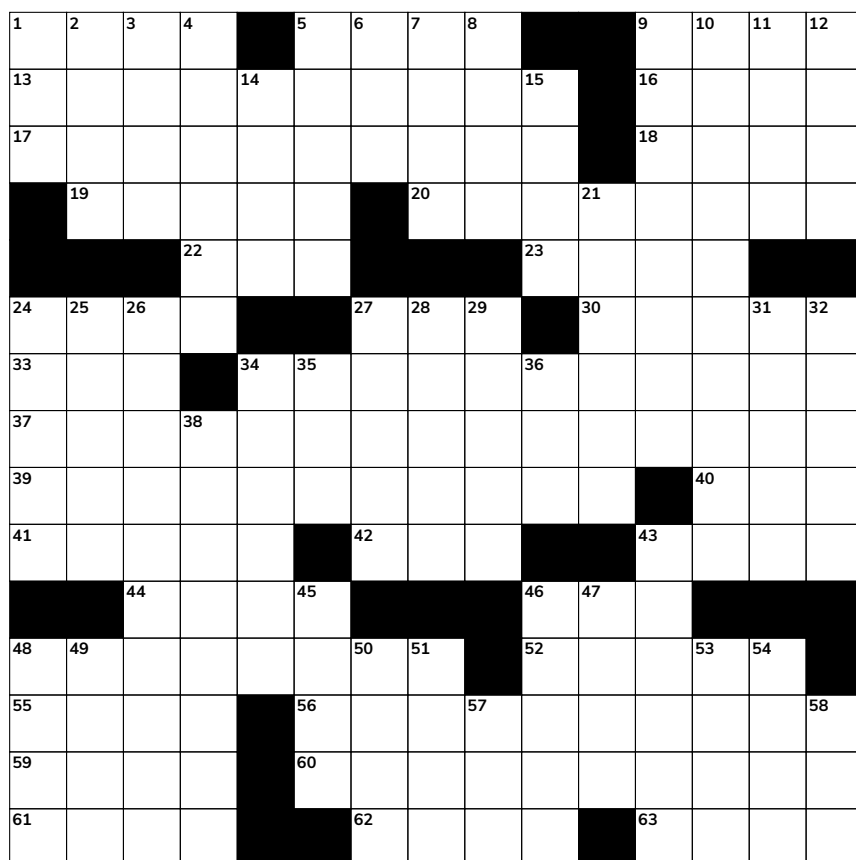
ACROSS

- 1 "___, Brute!"
5 Bottom of a running shoe
9 Experiences the passage of time
13 Sentiment celebrated with pink, blue, and white face paint
16 One of 15 on a pentadecagon
17 Runner who became the first non-binary winner of San Francisco's Bay to Breakers in 2022
18 Metal BDSM enclosure
19 Initial gambit
20 Reached, as one's goals
22 Iguana or pot-bellied pig, to some
23 Skirt feature that shows more leg
24 Crops with altered DNA
27 "That hits the spot"
30 Easy hockey shot
33 Tool often wielded facing backward
34 "Slow down, what's the hurry?"
37 Runner's companion
39 Records kept by runners to track their workouts
40 Absolute flop
41 Brings in
42 NWA rapper MC ___
43 Drains of energy
44 Anticipatory nights
46 [mental gears churning]

- 48 Wannabes
52 Mascot of Northern Kentucky University (despite its founders' lack of connection to Scandinavia)
55 "How do you do, fellow swashbucklers?"
56 Non-binary runner who placed 7th in the Women's 1500m final at the Paris 2024 Olympics
59 Catalan surrealist Joan ___
60 Like odds that almost certainly can't be overcome
61 Annual speech with a designated survivor: Abbr.
62 Custom craft site
63 "Gadzooks!"

DOWN

- 1 "You get the idea"
2 "It's a ___!"
3 Like Zhang Ziyu, a 7ft 4in WNBA basketball prospect
4 Opens, as a plastic bottle
5 Sound of a withering tomato making contact with dry pavement
6 Kosovan-born singer Rita ___
7 Bean that can cure an "odd case of stripes," in a children's novel
8 Get a crossword draft ready for publication, say
9 What the "waves" symbolized by _._~ _._~ _._~ _._~ are
10 Animal that inspired the 2022 Winter Olympic mascot Bing Dwen Dwen
11 Competitive advantage
12 #1, for Purdue, when they lost to Fairleigh Dickinson during the opening weekend of March Madness 2023
14 Aladdin ___ (David Bowie alter ego)
15 Breaks a Ramadan fast, say
21 Platforms for many unions?
24 "You know ... that's a great question"



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- 25 Education pioneer ___ Montessori
26 Spoken-word piece?
27 Ed who played Santa in "Elf"
28 Perspective
29 Invitation to join a pedal pub
31 Chill out, perhaps?
32 Candies sometimes stuck to a licorice rope
34 "I'll be there shortly"
35 Comedienne Notaro
36 Thrift store attachment
38 Statement of internal jealousy
43 Where a hopeful person might be brought to their knees
45 Without
46 Wedding day feeling
47 Cream-filled cake since 1967
48 Virtual date needs, for short
49 Script ___ (marching band formation that's ceremonially "dotted" by a sousaphone player)
50 Mahjong piece
51 Work developed bit-by-bit?
53 Laborious walk
54 Highest volcano on the Mediterranean's largest island
57 The "K" in 10K, for short
58 One of New Zealand's two capitals?



What a Treat!

John Kugelman

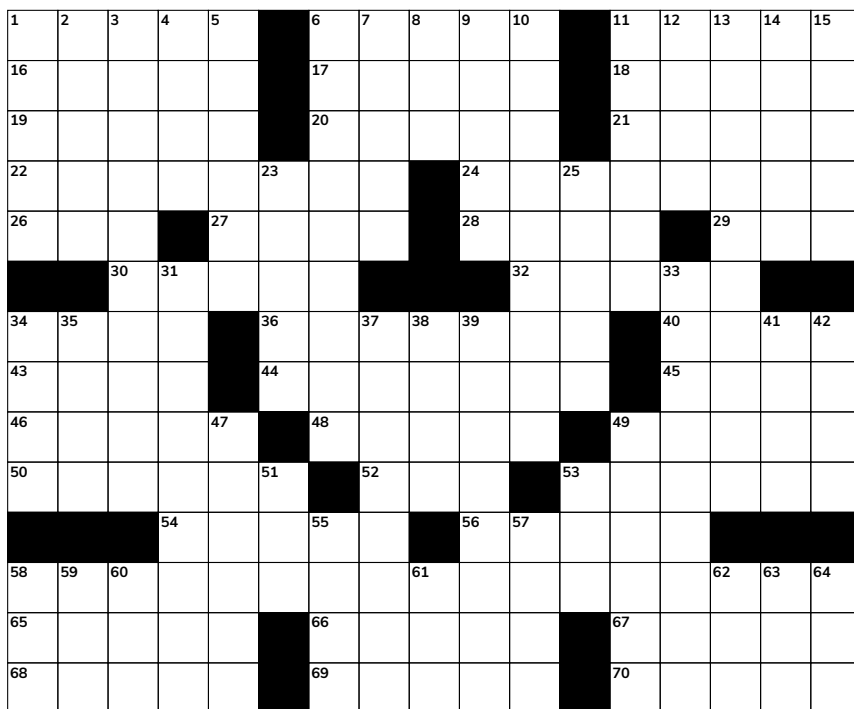
ACROSS

- 1 Scott Joplin's "___ Leaf Rag"
6 Designer Head who inspired the fictional Edna Mode
11 H. pylori symptom
16 10/10
17 Ncuti ___, the Fifteenth Doctor
18 What's black and white and red all over, if you buy a red one
19 Drama ___
20 Preen
21 "Amazing" magician who spent his life debunking fraudsters
22 Timid
24 Provided
26 Blow it
27 Coward on the stage
28 Natalie's opposite in "Black Swan"
29 Mos. and mos.
30 Fast train to Stamford for the ACPT
32 Kinda
34 2025 Pixar pic
36 Super Bowl buys
40 British bank
43 They're deafening
44 Fixes potholes in, maybe
45 Genesis figure
46 A cousin
48 Prepped, as onions

- 49 Corporate slogan "Nothing Runs Like a ___"
50 Extremist of sorts
52 14-Down's publisher, whose logo is a craggy mountain
53 IQ-lowering, in a way
54 Sora makes it, with quotes around the last word
56 East Asian people
58 Warning to a 3-, 6-, 10-, 13-Down person about the dangers out there?
65 Palindromic Pokémon
66 All bangers no ___
67 Prada wearer, supposedly
68 Orca, for one
69 Nolan movie some claim actually had audible dialogue, but I don't buy it
70 Bold black tea

DOWN

- 1 Barrie contemporary
2 Holmes's foil
3 Foolish
4 ___ of God, band with the killer Guitar Hero II track "Laid to Rest"



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- 5 J. Peterman's fictional underling
6 Cerebral
7 Hall of fame
8 Suffix for band or fin
9 My bed time after I start winding down at eleven
10 Clumsy
11 L
L
E
Y
12 Tribal islander in many a Martin Gardner logic puzzle
13 Cowardly
14 "___'s Game"
15 Juice you probably don't want to drink (you do you though)
23 Type of foodless farm
25 Pull some string
31 Geeky poser
33 Band The Dude says he hates, getting him thrown out of a cab
34 Cheese that's made backwards (a very original clue shut up)
35 Sequel to "Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance" that shook my 16-year-old self
37 Watershed moment in comedy
38 Spanish nickname for Francisco
39 Talk up way too much
41 Right to ___ arms (freedom exercised when showing off your "guns")
42 Lined (up)
47 Summoned
49 "Gracias" reply
51 Indian lentils
53 Rocker Reed
55 Surfeit
57 More than more
58 Garden variety
59 Fell
60 Mendes in "The Other Guys"
61 Sn
62 Blood lines
63 ___ ferrata (scary climbing route for Alpine tourists)
64 Freddy's street



Double Faults

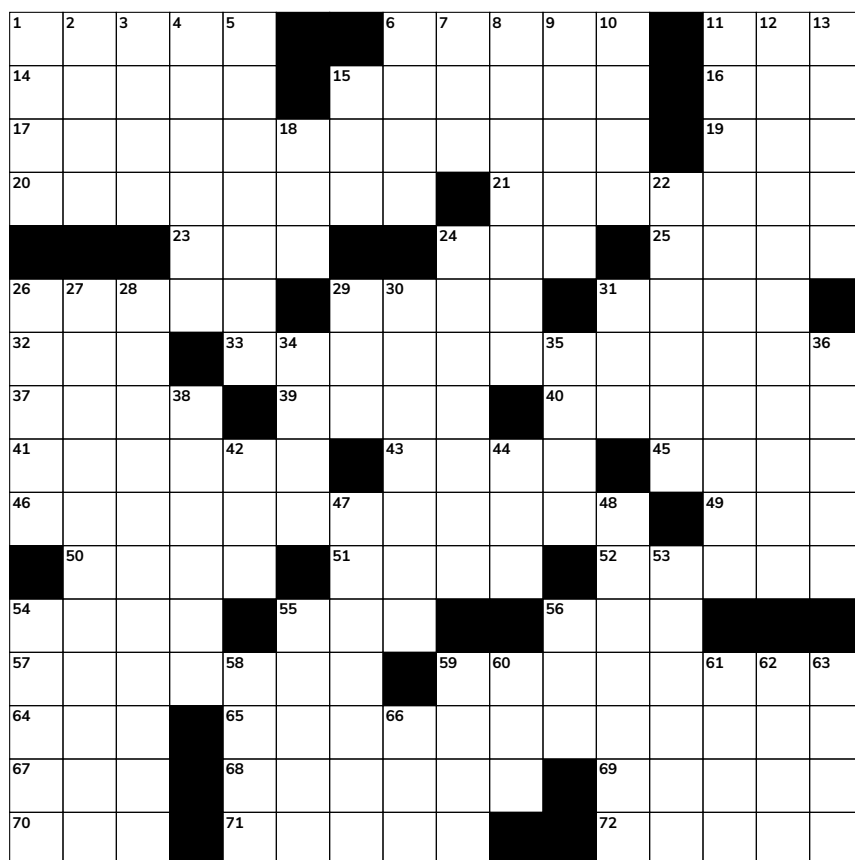
Michael Lieberman

ACROSS

- 1 Entertain
- 6 Palindromic, acronymic tracking tool
- 11 Federal agcy. that administers Medicare
- 14 With 26-Down, when some people take cheap shots?
- 15 Croatia's continent
- 16 "Talk real fast when I get nervous / ____ real fast, but that's on purpose" (Dessa lyric)
- 17 *Term for the group of schools in the Ivy League
- 19 Acronym before an alias
- 20 Dearest friends
- 21 Next step up from a crib
- 23 Burial receptacle
- 24 Free (of)
- 25 Paul's "The Great British Baking Show" co-host
- 26 One of a "hungry" foursome
- 29 Dedicative poems
- 31 Get high?
- 32 Number that's its own square root
- 33 *1985 teen fantasy comedy starring Anthony Michael Hall
- 37 Cold War initials
- 39 Common succulent
- 40 Civil rights activist Evers
- 41 Grade-school playtime
- 43 Prefix with -mania
- 45 Shout before doing something that's probably unwise
- 46 *Marxian term referring to the essence of humanity
- 49 Former
- 50 Just a little bit
- 51 La ____ Nostra
- 52 Shampooing step
- 54 Humorist Lebowitz
- 55 American Jewish staple food
- 56 Auction action
- 57 Made of clay
- 59 With 65-Across, two-part grammar rule whose parts are both violated by 17-, 33-, and 46-Across
- 64 "____ Baseball" (classic video game series)
- 65 See 59-Across
- 67 In the style of
- 68 Eggs, as in ____ rancheros
- 69 Like some chemical bonds or classical columns
- 70 "Steal My Sunshine" group
- 71 Useful Scrabble tiles
- 72 "____ knows what it means, but it's provocative" ("Blades of Glory" line)

DOWN

- 1 "Moby Dick" captain
- 2 Lion's ____ (mushroom species also called bearded hedgehog)
- 3 You might use them to check yourself out
- 4 New baby's output, more frequently than one would like



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- 5 "The People's ____" (The Rock's signature gimmick)
- 6 Feels regret about
- 7 Nickname found in "Maria"
- 8 Wet greeting when returning home
- 9 Crop-destroying insect
- 10 Not working anymore: Abbr.
- 11 Fried American Chinese appetizer
- 12 How umpires even things out after mistakes
- 13 Plot device?
- 15 Takeoff approx.
- 18 "Blood Sister: One Tough ____" (movie described in endnote 24 of "Infinite Jest")
- 22 Fast
- 24 Overnight flights
- 26 See 14-Across
- 27 Like two peas in a pod (idiomatically, not literally)
- 28 Person who eats eel but not veal
- 29 Standard ____ (infamous monopolist)
- 30 Cloud storage website
- 31 Distortion
- 34 Simplicity
- 35 "Let's go!"
- 36 Eat away at
- 38 Take back, as testimony
- 42 "Ice Age" sloth
- 44 Nickname found in "Maria"
- 47 Mounted lighting fixtures
- 48 Mythical creature that's half lion and half eagle
- 53 "Same here!"
- 54 Not domesticated
- 55 Car brand that rhymes with a U.S. state
- 56 Co-star of Betty, Rue, and Estelle
- 58 Little snicker
- 59 Stock market debuts: Abbr.
- 60 K-pop band behind "Dynamite" and "Butter"
- 61 Lake Tahoe neighbor
- 62 Lexicographer McKean
- 63 "____ homo" ("Behold the man")
- 66 Garden party?



Untitled

Rafael Musa

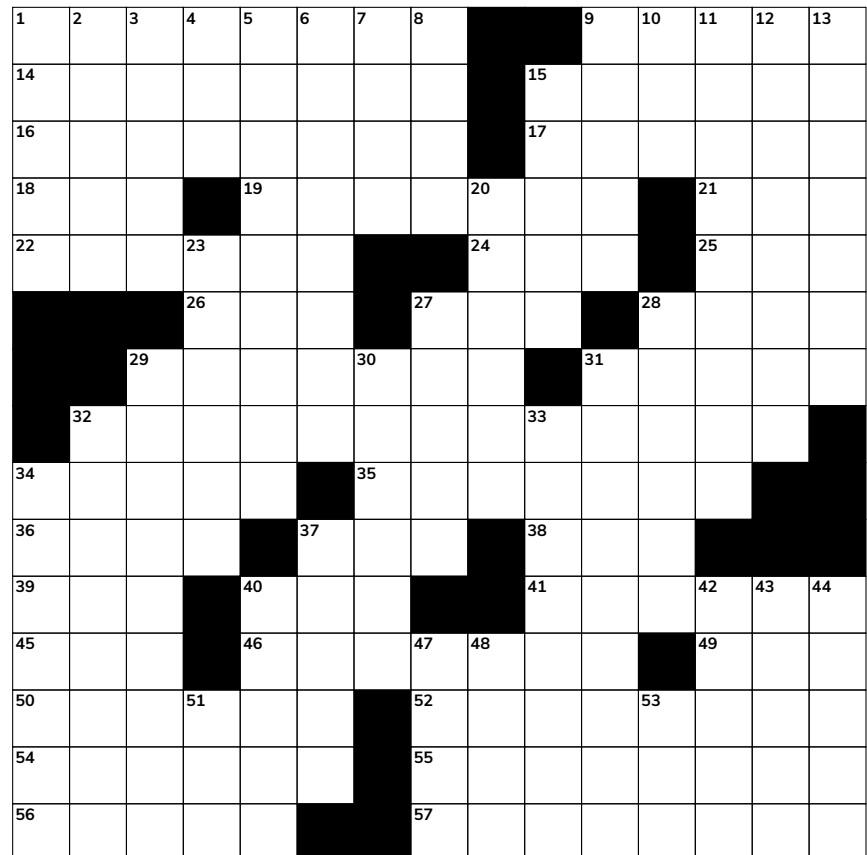
ACROSS

- 1 Proverbially problematic person
- 9 "It ____ me to say ..."
- 14 Good source of polyphenols and monounsaturated fats
- 15 Obtained
- 16 Units of mass or explosive power
- 17 Has as a goal
- 18 College, to brits
- 19 Groups hired to manage a corporate scandal, for short
- 21 r/____ (subreddit with cute photos)
- 22 Felt
- 24 Begin to do?
- 25 Subreddit admin
- 26 ____ pad (disc golf starting area)
- 27 Currency introduced in 1792, for short
- 28 "Brave" singer Bareilles
- 29 Danish cheese
- 31 Structure similar to a pier
- 32 Making a crossword to encourage turnout for your Constructor of the Year campaign, e.g.
- 34 "____ Andronicus" (Shakespearean tragedy)

- 35 ____-first search (algorithm that finds the shortest path solution in unweighted graphs)
- 36 Decides
- 37 It surpassed "set" as the word with the most definitions in the OED
- 38 Athlete Michelle ____ West in the women's version of 39-Across
- 39 ____ Tour
- 40 Once menos nueve
- 41 Acknowledges, in a way
- 45 Belly, to a toddler
- 46 Allegedly core-strengthening belt
- 49 Spot for a cuddly cat
- 50 "Capeesh?"
- 52 "I could not agree more"
- 54 Crete or Socotra
- 55 Know someone who knows someone, say
- 56 Apple Watch data
- 57 It's unlikely to react

DOWN

- 1 Spurious
- 2 Flared skirt style
- 3 "Let's eat!"
- 4 "Selma" director DuVernay
- 5 Hypercorrections like "They invited Adam and I," to some grammar prescriptivists



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- 6 "Ah, I'm so sorry for you"
- 7 Dryer detritus
- 8 Please vote for me for Constructor of the Year or ____ I will be sad
- 9 Grace
- 10 Currently, in a text
- 11 "This person also swiped right on you!"
- 12 Financial stat tracked by Copilot or Monarch
- 13 Reason to miss school that I never experienced because I grew up in Brazil
- 15 Manipulated, as the system
- 20 Destination for some pop-ups
- 23 Standing
- 27 Tough move to pull off on a busy highway
- 28 Like air travelers during takeoff
- 29 Spicy dish wrapped in corn husk
- 30 Like software that handles errors and unexpected inputs gracefully
- 31 Force-ful individuals?
- 32 For whom a red carpet might be extended
- 33 Thing to avoid touching in a conversation
- 34 Provocation before a stunt
- 37 Like many monks and judges
- 40 Condemns to eternal suffering in hell
- 42 Ohio, to Gen Alpha
- 43 "So Into You" singer
- 44 Bids one club in bridge, say
- 47 "Fancy seeing you here!"
- 48 Scooper for dal makhani
- 51 Genre for GloRilla
- 53 Went unused



Keep It Rolling

Adam Wagner

When you finish the puzzle, go to this link -- <https://nimble.li/p9lyyo4d> -- and enter the apt phrase spelled out by this puzzle's circled letters from top to bottom (all caps, no spaces) to reveal a special post-solve animation!

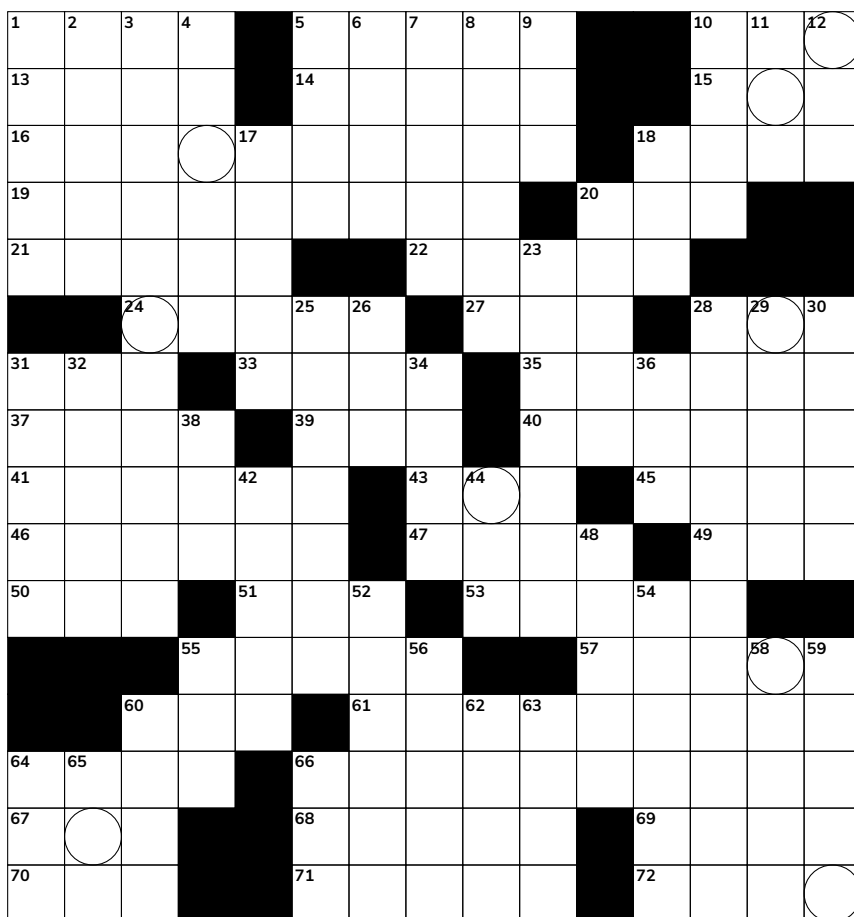
ACROSS

- 1 Hanging back?
- 5 Software that was replaced by Messages and FaceTime
- 10 Only even prime numero
- 13 Driver of "Ferrari"
- 14 Too many to count
- 15 Major liquidity event
- 16 Cooking device used in heavy rotation?
- 18 Porridge base... Washington sluggers... Food, slangily... Porridge base...
- 19 Like the money on a gift card
- 20 Show with a host of hosts... Bistro seasoning... Day, on Mars... Show with a host of hosts...
- 21 Feature of embellished writing?
- 22 "Tidying Up" author Kondo... Mushroom Kingdom hero... Bay Area county... "Tidying Up" author Kondo...
- 24 Early neologism for the world of streaming
- 27 "___ who!?"
- 28 ___ mode: power-saving option, often
- 31 Seepy stuff
- 33 Mother Earth, to the Greeks... Simmons of "Top Chef"... Mother Earth, to the Greeks... Acquire... Mother Earth, to the Greeks...
- 35 "Imagine" singer John
- 37 Nation dissolved by the Belovezha Accords
- 39 Unit of loudness... Arthur of comedy... Partner of Jerry... Arthur of comedy... Unit of loudness...
- 40 "Done!"
- 41 Jewish community of yore
- 43 Admiral's affirmative... Bill focused on science education... Admiral's affirmative... Pretzel-making need... Admiral's affirmative...

- 45 Chicken ___ Diavola
- 46 Campfire shape
- 47 Church area... Black dialect, to linguists... Take a bath... Black dialect, to linguists... Church area...
- 49 Something special one might have in mind?
- 50 Something found in a lock or a loch
- 51 SoCal sluggers, on scoreboards
- 53 Requisite resources
- 55 University donors, often... Neglected neighborhoods... Stone fruit used in pudding... University donors, often...
- 57 Portuguese explorer ___ da Gama
- 60 Total jerkwad... H.S. exams taken for college credit... Small energy sources... Total jerkwad...
- 61 Avant-garde 90s band named for the research wing of its record label
- 64 Infield shield... Figure skating champion Lipinski... Deck hands... Infield shield...
- 66 Bit of infomercial patter
- 67 In the style of
- 68 What a "+1" emoji might mean
- 69 They have their pluses and minuses
- 70 "I like the cut of your ___"
- 71 "Well damn!"
- 72 Blade with a V-shaped cross section

DOWN

- 1 Grumbles
- 2 Love, love, love
- 3 Elevator with continuously-cycling open compartments
- 4 "Lost" actress de Ravin
- 5 Rae who founded the production company Hoorae
- 6 Threaded in



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- 7 Baggy pants variety
- 8 Stripes worn by stars?
- 9 "Prufrock" poet inits.
- 10 Tactile volume adjuster
- 11 Choose
- 12 Giant letters written in the sand on a desert island, perhaps
- 17 Feature of ginger, but not garlic
- 18 Gender neutral pronoun... "The Matrix" role for Keanu Reeves... A long, long time... Gender neutral pronoun...
- 20 Word with "life" or "bite"
- 23 End another's shift
- 25 Theatrical technique where the actors stay frozen in place
- 26 Compete
- 28 Continuous cycle depicted three times in this puzzle
- 29 Winds up
- 30 Primed at the pump?
- 31 Joie de vivre
- 32 ___ Jackson aka Ice Cube
- 34 Codebreaker Turing... Singer Del Rey... Inclined to nitpick... "The Lion King" character voiced by Beyoncé... Codebreaker Turing
- 36 Director DaCosta
- 38 Embody, informally
- 42 Casino giveaways
- 44 Orange tuber
- 48 Overhangs
- 52 Lower-frequency talk radio broadcast
- 54 Harris who played Moneypenny in the Craig "Bond" films
- 55 Biblical serpent... Soothing place... Hollywood helpers, for short... Biblical serpent...
- 56 Prepare, as soup dumplings
- 58 Beef, in Barcelona
- 59 What sumo wrestlers are, technically, by BMI values alone
- 60 Many an Omani
- 62 Humorist Bombeck
- 63 Jockey strap
- 64 ___ Mahal
- 65 "Sportsman of the Century," according to Sports Illustrated in 1999
- 66 Org. that hires X-ray operators without med school degrees



ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

KATJA BRINCK (she/her) is originally from New Hampshire, but now lives in Healdsburg, CA with her husband Matt. She is a freelance constructor, a lightly competitive speed solver, and her NYT crossword streak will be closing in on 2500 by the end of January 2026. She was a member of the LilAVCX roster in 2024, which is when she also joined the ORCAS nominating committee. Her most recent puzzles can be found at LilAVCX, USA Today, Crossword Flow, Universal, and People, as well as her own blog site at Placeholder Puzzles. She is currently training for a trail half-marathon in New Zealand in March.

JARED GOUDSMIT is a Puzzle Editor at Andrews McMeel Universal, where he serves as Lead Editor for the Universal Sunday crossword, assists with editing for Apple News+ and USA Today, and creates puzzles for Apple's Emoji Game. As a freelancer, his work has been published by The New York Times, LA Times, Wall Street Journal, Sunday Club, and Crosswords With Friends. When he's not building grids, you can find him in rehearsal, acting and directing for No Dogs in the Kitchen Theatre Company, an ensemble he cofounded in Chicago.

ADRIAN JOHNSON founded Puzzles for Palestine and lives with a partner and two black cats.

TARUN KRISHNAMURTHY is currently a psychology/neuroscience honors student at San Diego State University on the pre-med path. Other than crosswords, he loves mathematics, dubstep music, Twitch streaming, and badminton. Hit him up on Instagram @thetarunkrish or by email tarunlive@live.com for collabs!

JOHN KUGELMAN is a software engineer and musician from Gainesville, VA. In between writing 20-minute prog rock suites with titles that end in "Reprise" and "Part IV" he makes Sunday-sized crosswords, which are basically the same thing: way too long for reasonable people to enjoy. He'd love to make crowd-pleasing themelesses but it'd have to be in an alternate spiderverse where Rafael Musa doesn't already have the job.

MICHAEL LIEBERMAN lives in Washington DC with two kids, one wife, and zero representation in congress. That one Progressive commercial—where Dr. Rick tells the guy watching baseball "You're watching TV, not supervising it. Sit down and relax"—hits a little too close to home.

JACK MARTIN has been solving cryptics voraciously since the early days of *Games* and *The Four-Star Puzzler*. When he's not playing in traffic as a Transportation Engineer in the Boston area (how's *that* for a cryptic puzzle?), he's active in its community theater, where during rehearsal he caught his wife's eye by solving the *Harper's* puzzle in pen. For a delightful weekly challenge, he solves Fraser Simpson's Saturday *Globe and Mail* cryptics as diagramless puzzles, using just the clues stripped of enumeration.

RAFAEL MUSA lives in San Francisco with his cat Georgia.

RICH PROULX lives in Berkeley, CA and works for America's anti-hunger programs issuing final rulings for SNAP. He maintains a YouTube channel for people who have experienced employment discrimination. He is constantly obsessing over some kind of audacious, hairbrained plan.

SHANNON RAPP is a crossword constructor and aficionado from St. Louis, MO. She is a research administrator at a large private medical school. Since 2022, Shannon has published over 200 crosswords for major media outlets, indie services, apps, tournaments, and charity packs. She believes in spreading good news and opportunity throughout the crossword community. She is a co-organizer of the Midwest Crossword Tournament (<https://midwestgridfest.com>), held on the first Saturday in October in Chicago. In addition to crosswords, Shannon is a fan of burritos, cats, traveling, and coffee.

AARON RICCIO is a cryptic crossword setter, solver, and streamer out of New York. His recent work has been published in *Cryptic Crossweird*, the *AVCX*, *The Browser*, and *The Gnomon*, and his archives are on Crossshare at <https://crossshare.org/illogicaljoker>. Cryptic crosswords have fast become his passion, surpassing even his beloved sub-genre of rule discovery video games, and you can find him analyzing, discussing, and solving cryptics once or twice a week over at twitch.tv/thatacrypticguy.

ADAM WAGNER originally of Long Island, New York, is a creative lead at Patreon where he helps creators get paid for their work. He's also an independent puzzle creator, whose daily word game Anigrams is now The New Yorker's Shuffalo. In previous lives, Adam has been a writer for Jimmy Kimmel Live!, a viral YouTuber, a game show champion, and an applied math major at Brown University. Adam currently lives in Oakland, CA, with his wife, two kids, and a few thousand honeybees.