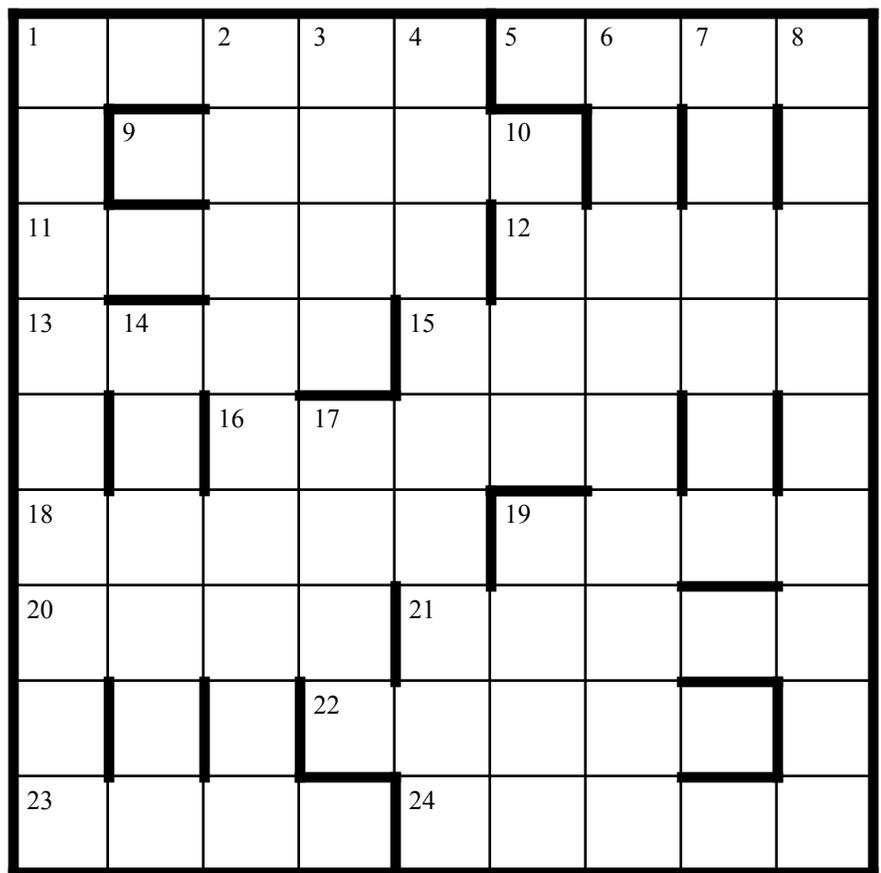


Bachelor Sunday

by Ucaoimhu

Having a woman hide in a cake is a bit clichéd, so instead she's hiding in this grid. Every clue has one incorrect letter that must be corrected before solving; the correct letters, ordered by the incorrect letters, will say how I hollowed out the central column to accommodate her.

In addition, eight Across entries have, in some checked square, a two-letter sequence instead of the one letter from the crossing Down entry. These two-letter sequences are appropriate to this type of party, and (taken together in each row) to 4 Down. Finally, for each incorrect letter (still in alphabetical order), where the error occurs in the nth word of the clue, take the letter that conflicts with a two-letter sequence in the nth grid column; these will spell out the beginning of 4 Down's contribution to Sunday's final event.



ACROSS

1. Groups that have secretly plotted and sired vehicles containing aluminum
5. Company that makes beer history when it accepts aid, initially
9. Painting depicting Mary with pastry and clothing for Tet
11. Person often found maintaining pipes, tossing a vole, and making energy into a kind of vertebra
12. Doesn't keep E secret from black dogs
13. My word for *instance* precedes *corn* in Akkadian
15. Excellent barn-spinning produces cheer
16. Prickly plant right inside item supporting people who did
18. Uncovered house full of English orange cookies
19. Spy character from the Iliad had traveled in a vehicle
20. More than one came from those who cut hair for Bostonian speechifiers?
21. A fowl that makes one American upset is fowlish
22. Regarding Fed endlessly sitting in Bug
23. Humble nickname for sixteenth president to seize Alpo heartlessly
24. Is applying to be groom while concealing inappropriate job (2 wds.)

DOWN

1. Marc's tall, striking aunt originally seduced outside of India or Scotland (9)
2. Some seers may mostly be eaten by northbound gastropod (4 5)
3. Talk of lox had to get salacious (4)
4. [See instructions]
6. In general, hook obstructs molting mallard and German (3-6)
7. Emulated a speaker that is massless or carried (6)
8. Pete, Iraq'd unfortunately gotten narrower (7 2)
10. Adam's soy, reportedly, is in good shape (4)
14. Make altered or distorted clothing on retro Eli less loud (6)
17. Soar wildly with Parks, who sat on a bug (4)
19. Rudolph's chat overshadows each feather-clad runner (4)