

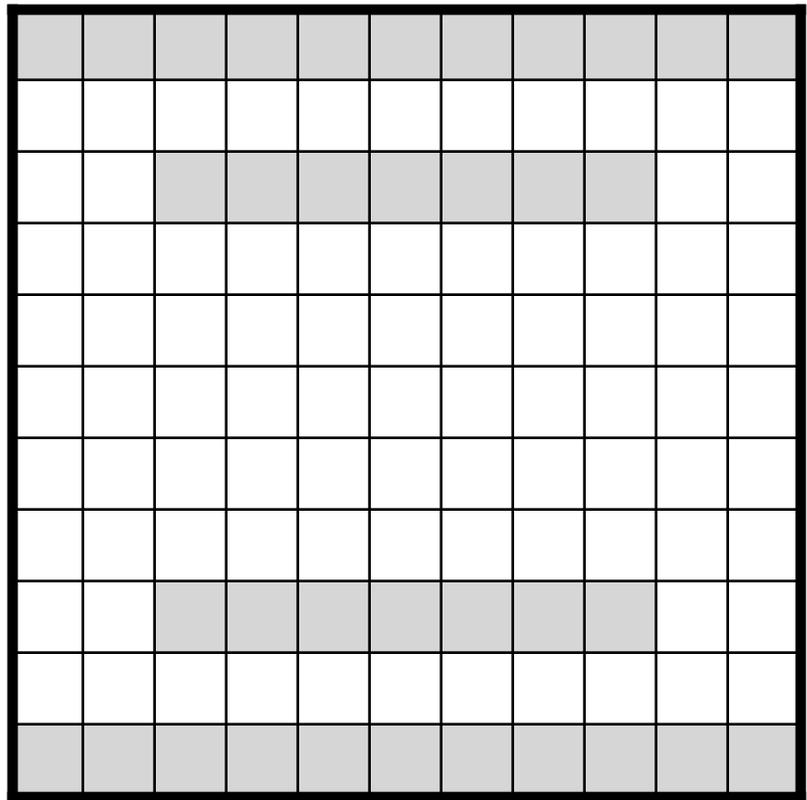
3. The Capital

by Ucaoimhu

(Recommendation: Do this puzzle only after solving Puzzles 1 and 2.)

My second convention, in 1997, was in Washington DC, where pols from opposite sides get together to hash things out. Correspondingly, in this puzzle each “clue” A through Q actually consists of two cryptic clues, side by side, and their answers must go into the grid symmetrically opposite each other (under the usual 180° crossword symmetry), and heading in opposite directions; that is, if one goes down, the other will go up, and if one goes right, the other will go left. It is up to you to deduce where to place these entries, and the black bars that separate them. To help you with this, the grid also contains three more entries, not clued in A–Q: the words clued by the cryptic clues in part (2) of puzzle 1 and part (3) of puzzle 2, which are entered horizontally starting at the southeast and northwest corners respectively, and a central entry, which is appropriately symmetric.

2 (3)
→



1 (2)
←

When the grid has been filled, the lower two gray areas will say what to do in Puzzle 1 to obtain two things, and the upper two gray areas will hint at (in a manner befitting Puzzle 2) a single word. Combining the latter with the former will tell you where to look (in something you can find in the hotel) to see an item that appears prominently there; this item is your prize for finishing this miniextravaganza. As confirmation, take the “clues” indicated by the letters of this item in order, and look at the *first* cryptic clue in each; taking one word from each of these cryptic clues in turn, in a particular way, will form a phrase that proverbially refers to the item.

After that, take the lengths of the words in this phrase as a sequence of numbers, and repeat this sequence as many times as needed to get seventeen numbers to match with “clues” A through Q; for each such “clue,” take the *n*th letter of the *second* cryptic clue that makes it up, where *n* is the number matched with it. This will yield a cryptic clue (with enumeration but no definition) for a word relevant to this puzzle.

Finally, if you are at the convention when you finish this, fill out the coupon at the bottom of the page, detach it, and submit it to me to receive the prize.

- A. Abandoning horse, clever Mr. Griffith upended beer with no enthusiasm (4)
- B. Artisan who makes pots heal again brought back capon-like bird with only one egg roll (6)
- C. A songbird fighting Diana takes ecstasy with short bandleader Arnaz (4, 3 wds. total)
- D. Behold — after taking in *Grease*, Virginia told jokes and tales of adventure (5)
- E. Deepest point made by free article about historic spans of time we ultimately expunge (5)
- F. Fabulist and wacky Serb hide teaspoon from an Asian land, no doubt (4, 3 wds. total)
- G. Future lawyer’s examination shows salt turned number aboard a ship Columbus used (4, includes abbr.)
- H. Like some beer drunk by Earl and others, after the appointed time rolls around (4, 3 wds. total, includes abbr.)
- I. Muses a sandwich seller scolds smashed wobbling, completely spherical sports equipment (11, 3 wds. total)
- J. Notice about the fallen satellite’s path does not mention real, twisted, tender love (4)
- K. “Radical inventor Whitney courts widows and Italian seafarer and Parisian,” I upsettingly repeat (7)
- L. Red wine opener in committee meeting later trashed a rye-like substance said to be “one-dimensional” (6)
- M. Slipknot Che designed in part is “cut” (yes, that’s what it says) within mostly-coral island where Napoleon was born (7)
- N. Songstress Gwen’s wild feats in aft of sub with a spear would exhibit equipoise (7)
- O. Thespian Anderson, who was on *WKRP* as Chaney, with one longing like George Bush? (4)
- P. Use your eyes, General, and long before 1 AD view over-excited cranes (6)
- Q. Vagrants hulled instrument-player Clapton’s wild rice (4)

The prize is a _____. The extra word is _____. My nom is _____.