

The -9th Day of Christmas

by Ucaoimhu

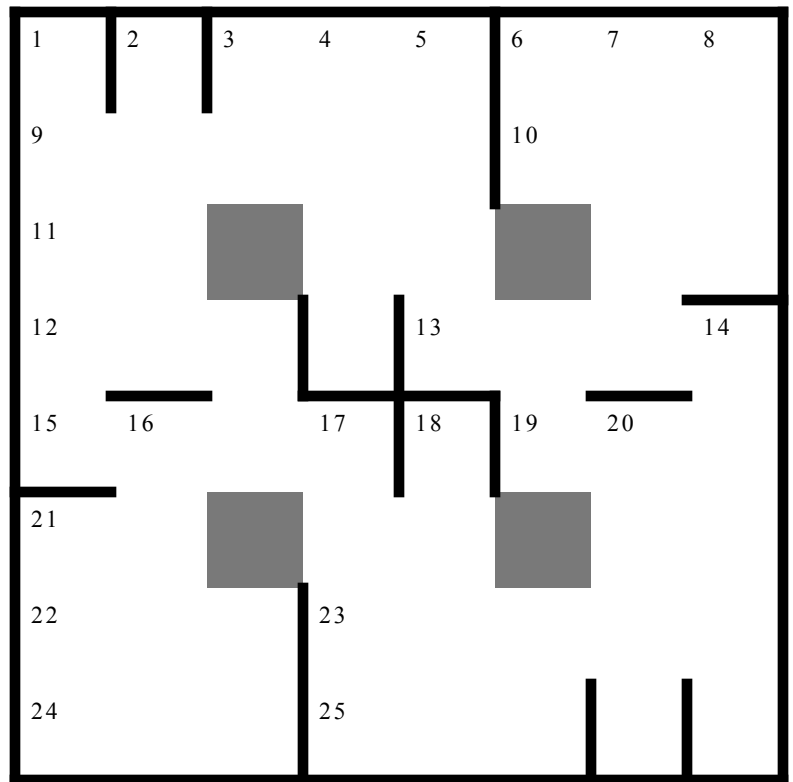
This grid needs to be decked out for the holiday season. Currently, all it has are four dull grey squares. These are indeed grey areas, in which the letter from the Across entry does not match the letter from the Down entry. The “Grey Area” clue for each such square will give you the two contradictory letters.

To liven up the grid, you must add three more squares of color. Each entry that intersects such a square will do so with an item or items of the appropriate color; the colored square will stand in for the item(s). As further assistance, the colors of these squares are referred to in three clues.

Finally, to see what holiday this puzzle was written for, look at the unclued entries at 11A and 21A, or alternatively at the unclued entries at 3D and 6D.

ACROSS

3. Bless nimble person using powder that's the color of the south square
6. Recited salutations go quickly
9. Alas, cog dissolved in flammable vapor (2 wds.)
10. Result of burning tree
12. Good cinnabar, say, would turn the color of the west square (2 wds.)
13. Places left saint happy
15. Returned to fill in Greek letters
19. The third letter in 6D doesn't indicate a metric unit of speed (*abbr.*)
22. Trouble spot near ocean
23. Falsehood about honey wine drink made from fruit of the color of the north square
24. Note loud umpire
25. The US unfortunately taketh legal action?



DOWN

1. Astronomical phenomenon in pics Lee edited
2. Blue rings coated with other stuff
4. Mafia boss captures bad actor named Matt
5. Answer an invitation from resistance's second in command
7. It claims tin does not exist
8. Heading north, that woman gives talk in Canada?
14. More timid and quiet in front of the old rabbi
16. An effect of lunar gravitation even gets mentioned
17. Creek or river cloaked in vapor
18. Chert I smashed on one occasion, and then again, and then again
20. Dad's swallowing deuterium tablets
21. One who recites poetry endlessly in a pub

GREY AREA

- NW. Altitude of empty hayloft (*abbr.*)
NE. Born in this area
SW. One avoids upsetting Mr. Charles for twelve months (*abbr.*)
SE. Five hundred thousand and ten times, as a metric prefix (*abbr.*)