

Vict-arr-y! (as muttered out of earshot of Ucaoimhu)

Arr! A bunch of the puzzlers lazing at this picnic bested me at BAPHL 13, out in the harbor. But now that they are defenseless on the mainland, I shall be avenged, once I open my chest of spells! Specifically, all Across clues here are normal, but:

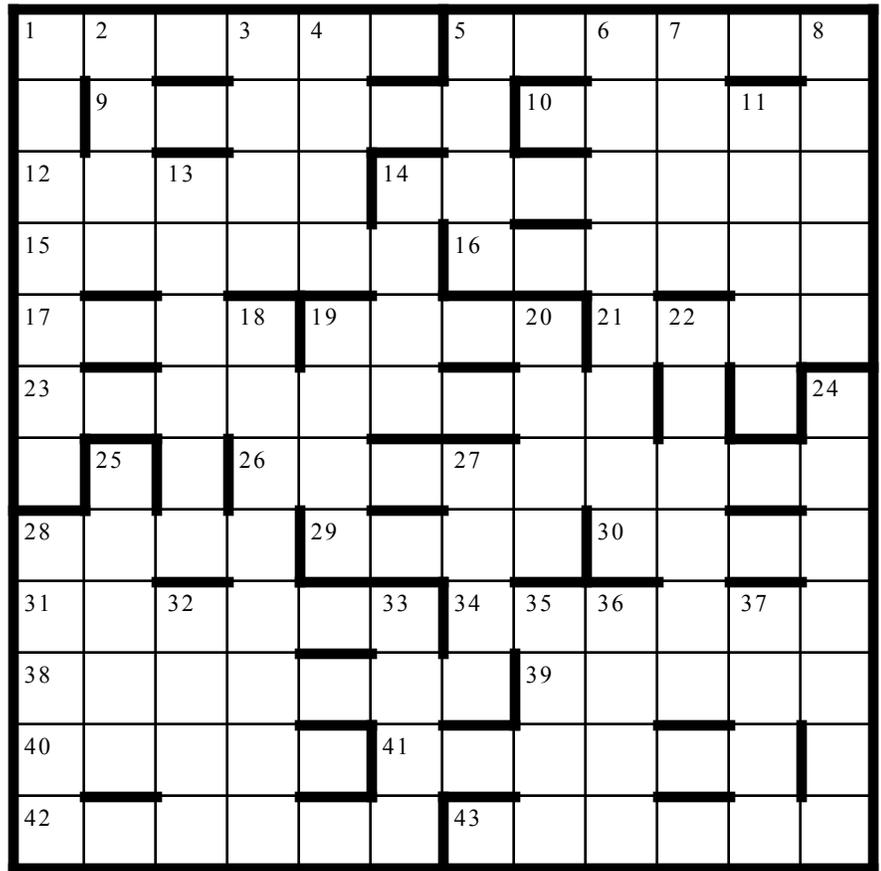
(1) Most Down answers contain a “magic” letter (the same one each time) that must be entered on a grid line. If this is not the first letter of the answer, circle the preceding letter; left to right, those letters will name the site of our first battle.

(2) If ever a magic letter is below the nth letter from the start of an Across entry, circle the nth letter from the start of that Across clue.

(3) Repeat (2) with “below” changed to “above” and “start” to “end.” When this is complete, all the letters from (2), followed by all the letters from (3), will give the setting for *this* battle.

(4) Oops. In each Down clue not used in (1), circle the letter before the magic letter. These will spell out a problem I’m having with the chest . . .

(5) Copy each circled letter in the grid, and each magic letter that *is* the first letter of its entry, to the left of the grid; also, for each such magic letter, copy the circled letter from its column below the grid. You’ll now see why I am foiled again!



ACROSS

1. Outspoken jerk will amuse (6)
5. The Bavarian bears box with less brilliance (6)
9. Misunderstood a seer & a shellfish (3 3) [NI3]
10. Dance with Spanish gal endlessly (5)
12. The dedicatee of a work by Ludwig the Castilian is, essentially, Greta (5)
14. Eddie’s latest sirens disrupted awards for comics (7)
15. Bray, “Intelligence had blown smoke around!” (6)
16. Relax each September after getting back from IU (4 2)
17. Latin for “Other people I put after a boxing pro” (4)
19. Lawman Wyatt’s audience left in puzzlement (4)
21. Unfortunately, “M” is a pet food brand (4)
23. Make a masted ship move a bucket full of uranium weights (3 2 4)
26. Haven’t behaved like a bungler on the podium with an acrylic coating, say (9)
28. Point of normal poet’s work (4)
29. Beheaded Romulus’s brother’s birds (4)
30. Indian queen smuggled iodine (4)
31. Spurious tale of or relating to organisms that gestate in the UK (6)
34. Pictures current people with supernatural powers (6)
38. Ogles phony, tailless dogs outside of Lorraine (5 2)
39. Enrage *Nebraska* actress Dunne (5)
40. REM poorly covers the French Bobbettes song (2. 3)
41. Louisianan music rocking cozy houses starts to demoralize earthling (6)
42. To talk about drinking yard at one sweet bar (6)
43. Rolls chewed by Lisa (6)

DOWN

1. Short-lived superhero show bothered each pet (2 wds.)
2. Setting for the TV series *Lost Trains I Sent Northward*
3. Leaders of Ken’s village all sip some alcoholic beverage
4. Reception held after getting out of bed with Eugene, who does comedy on the radio
5. Impel Romeo to enter a seedy bar
6. Name for a dog that bites Poles and the Italian actor in *Reversal of Fortune* (2 wds.)
7. Joint originally located south of Kingsville’s west end
8. Irritates snakes under solver’s foot
11. Curmudgeon character played by Hanks covers range
13. Venti I’d improperly requested
14. Dave’s translated sacred Hindu texts
18. Three couples-to-be in Paris, clad in former Crayola color (*hyph.*) [NI2]
19. Five out of seven aesthetic vessels full of blood
20. VIP rising to get up at sect’s top! (2 wds.)
22. Say, to mature as usual
24. People counseled diva that’s mangled notes
25. Clergyman that’s awesome is about to be president
27. Belgian who might finally get a reason to update a CV?
28. Gridiron hero from Florida blocking Minnesota running back #2 (2 wds., *abbr.*)
32. Earl kvells internally at a fork resembling a moray
33. Sign of inequality among cattle branders upset vacuous yutz in bisected valley (2 wds.)
35. One stupid reversible skirt
36. Are adjacent to aardvark’s head region
37. Diplomat coveting round ring