

Time and 'Tide

by Ucaoinmhu

Yuletide is here, and it's time for another thematic cryptic. In this puzzle, all Across clues and answers work normally. As for the Downs:

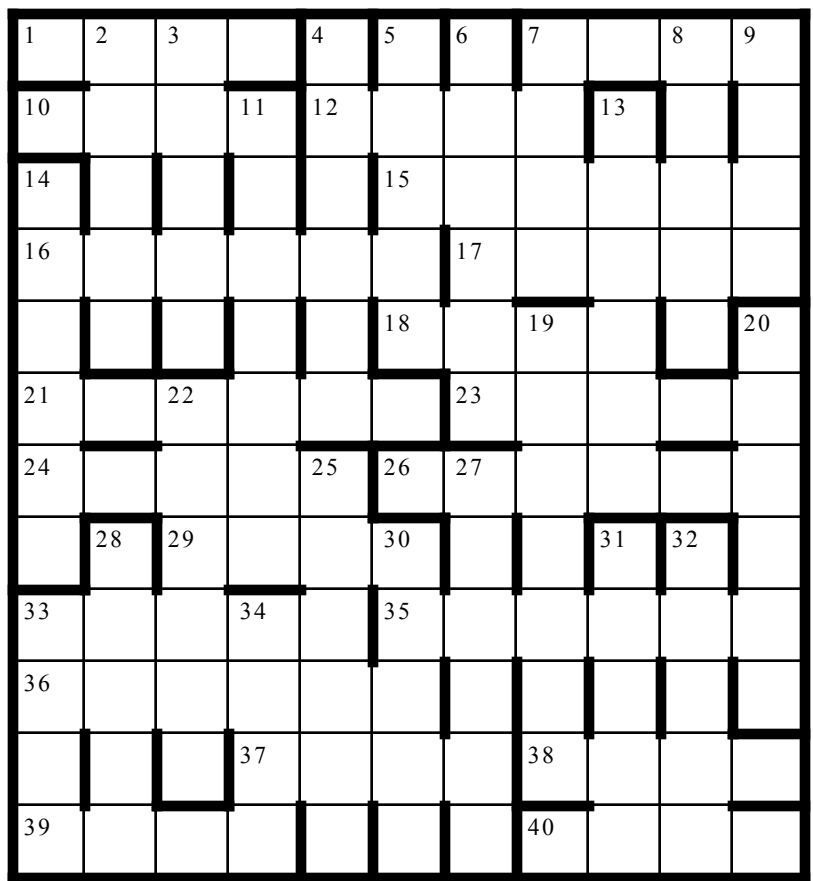
(1) In most Down clues, the wordplay part yields a letter sequence with one incorrect letter. For each of these, translate the incorrect letter into a number by the usual A = 1, B = 2 code, and shade that number of consecutive squares (centered on the central column) in the row where the correct letter appears.

(2) The remaining Down clues work normally. However, for eight of them the answer must be entered with two letters added (one of the resulting entries is hyphenated, and one is a proper name). Specifically, there are two patterns of added letters, and each is used for four of the answers.

(3) For the rest of the Down clues, the answer is entered normally. Read the first two letters and the last two letters of each such clue to see an event that has recently happened; however, telling exactly *when* it happened — at least, around here — will require additional assistance. In each row of the grid, if there is one letter that appears in the majority of the shaded squares in that row, circle all shaded instances of that letter in that row. The result, when read from top to bottom in the grid in either of two ways, will tell you who your helpers are; it will also say what letter sequences you can modify as per (2) and arrange (biggest first) to see when the event happened (and also to see some important facts concerning the grid that you may not have noticed).

ACROSS

1. Person in charge of a cow (4)
7. Alto shot a Swedish pop group (4)
10. Get away with singing nonsense syllables (4)
12. Using acoustic waves, shrink cart (4)
15. Prophets eating 500 Passover meals (6)
16. Power unit bound to the French turkey's neck flap (6)
17. Balderdash from a thousand and two of you (2 3)
18. All misspelled one term that precedes "land" to mean "a dreamlike state" (2-2)
21. Dost fill in one third of sample exam (6)
23. Actress Campbell has real chutzpah (5)
24. That is what you do with an illegally parked car? (2 3)
26. Partner of Ollie and Charlie with excellent posture (6)
29. Word after "Tel" on a map belonging to the First Lady, reportedly (4)
33. Attractive people, when unclad, get nervous (5)
35. Animated film gets the Italian to keep working (4 2)
36. LummoX is apt to see both men and women stare (3 3)
37. Driver in Hollywood called for a short skirt (4)
38. An Aussie greeting cheerful, captivating Penny (1'3)
39. Letters for an Athenian initially penned by Mom's other kid, perhaps (4)
40. Sorters primarily sort fabric (4)



DOWN

2. Perform 20% of algorithms in base eight
3. Caroled with a jolly gift-giver at the North Pole
4. Is claiming lines will result in problems
5. Relax — yours truly will give artistic support
6. Native of Arizona or Massachusetts supporting shamus
7. Cad dancing at club is President Jackson
8. Say, an emerald insect that produces honey-yellow liquid
9. Sonically detected items on tablets in part of a church with curved walls
11. Songbird on limb essentially never presents a chunk of law dealing with student financial aid programs (2 wds.)
13. Can bring up
14. Sits after misspelling suffix used on words for those who follow a given principle
19. Ditching head of Larry King around north Virginia
20. Are inclined to be skinny
22. Uneasiness doesn't end for director Lee's namesakes
25. Apex on top of Indian's conical tent
27. Piece appearing after a halo's been donned?!
28. Meat beginning to stain brides' garments
30. Engines with two non-parallel rows of five cylinders inset incorrectly (*hyph.*)
31. Tinker with valid name for a fourteenth-century Wal-lachian prince (2 wds.)
32. Don't have Victor doing a 180 in speech
33. A 1/2-oz. quantity would be best destroyed (*abbr.*)
34. Perversely, *Ocean's* the word before *Club* in the name of a store