

Attendance Numbers

by Ucaoimhu

Since this is a multi-purpose party, a few of the Across clues serve multiple purposes as well. Specifically:

(1) For a few Across clues (all of which also fit into category 2 or 3 below), one consonant of the answer must be entered on a thin line instead of in a square. In each case, if you thicken that line, a large number is formed.

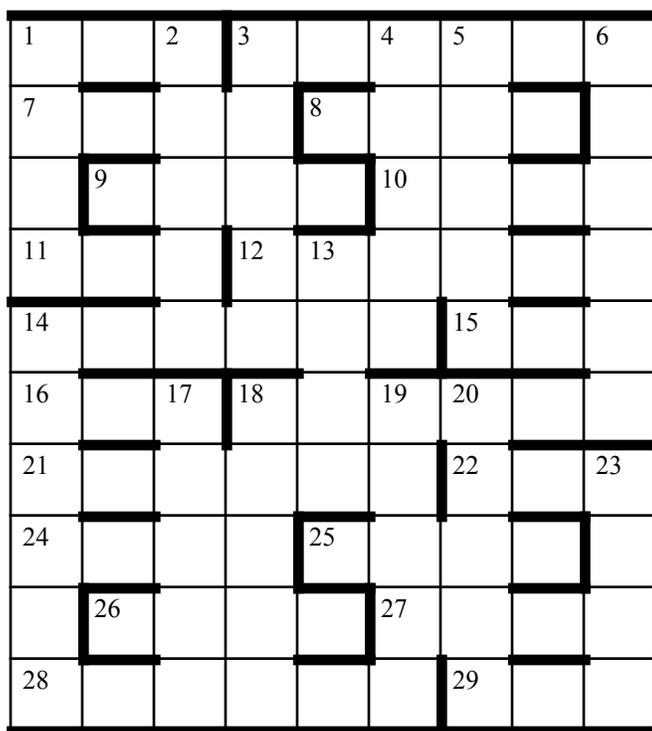
(2) The answers to some Across clues (including one or more in category 1) fit entirely within the boundaries of the grid. If you cycle repeatedly through *all* of the large numbers in the grid (not just the ones produced in 1), left to right and top to bottom, the letters in the corresponding positions in the clues (in clue order) will spell out one reason for this party.

(3) The answers to some Across clues (including one or more in category 1) extend beyond the boundaries of the grid. The letters on the outside will spell out the modes of travel for two people (specified in two grid columns) who have come by this party; the numbers produced in 1 will (left to right and top to bottom) spell out a figure relevant to the earlier of these. Also, if you find each consonant from 1 outside the grid, and shift it ahead in the alphabet as many places as the corresponding large number, you will get the other reason for this party.

All Downs are normal.

ACROSS

1. Lived around the east end of many roads
3. About 2/5 of a hectare in South Dakota is holy
7. Stirred up anew, OK?!
8. A pig is carried in one's ear
9. String instruments defaced by southwesterners
10. Writer Ambrose made Dotty be Eric
11. Quartet of really random stars in the shape of a harp
12. Changes the first three from 7:00 to 9:00?
14. After losing head, warns Earl and Kay about bird
15. Eris destroyed a biblical mountain
16. In Greek myth, a cowgirl thanks the leader of Ilion
18. Go west to ensnare Mr. Begley



21. Shiploads of sailors reportedly sail
22. Corporate bigwig has left an Egyptian queen
24. Herb left in, say, 4- or 5-letter prefix meaning "of the nerves"
25. A land mass in the Pacific Ocean that feels nice and posh
26. A large serving utensil baffled Della
27. Galley equipment started with real loud sound
28. Say, going around Belgian river's natural hot spots
29. Ms. Winfrey eschews red fish

DOWN

1. Um . . . bread comes out of your mouth at an angle (4)
2. Attack without delay, seizing England's capital (3 2)
3. Poles, in verse, eternally express disdain (5)
4. First of bugs in neato programming language (5)
5. Items on ties must be birds (5)
6. Jan's predecessor initially expected it to be a ruse (6)
13. Eve's wild flocks of geese in flight, for example (4)
14. At first, Ethan Coen shot *The End Of The Geological Epoch* (6)
17. One American claiming radium glows (5)
18. Outspoken, colorful agent had to pay for a semiconductor device (5)
19. Sonically removes the peels from fruit (5)
20. Yahoo blasting nose after catching cold produces this! (5)
23. Are going up and hugging Zulu prophet (4)