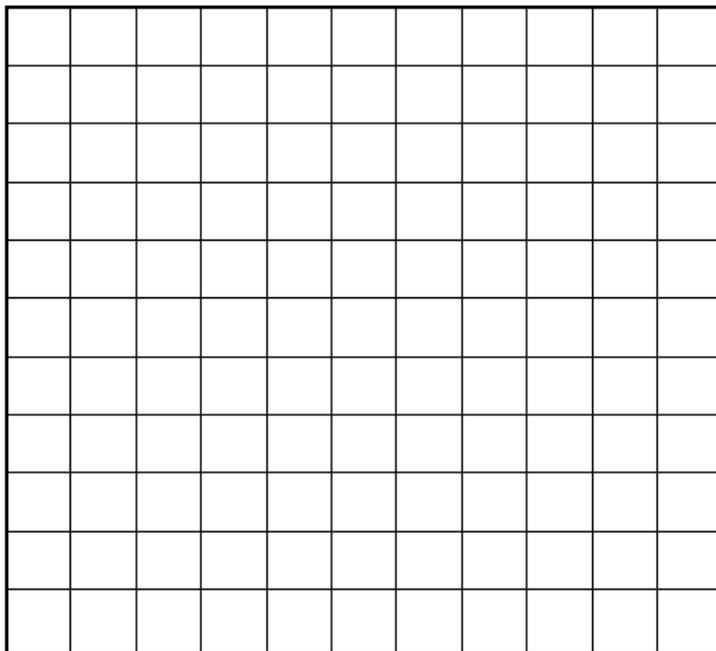


Puzzle #23 – April 2003 "Minnie's Boys"

Instructions: Guess the words defined by the cryptic clues (words vary in length from three to eight letters), then enter them in the grid one after another in the same order as their clues, starting in the upper left corner. Across words that don't end at the right margin continue on the next line below. Down words that don't end at the bottom margin continue in the next column to the right. Six across words and six down words won't fit in the grid unless one of their letters is removed. Those twelve letters, taken in order, spell a two-word phrase related to the five unclued mystery words. Answers, aside from mystery words, include three proper names. As ever, I am grateful to Kevin Wald for help with the clues.



Across

1. *Mystery word*
2. Threatening zero in sum improperly divided by zero
3. Beginning year at missile plant
4. One in dream upset after initially meeting sea creature
5. One who leaves with it gets inflammation
6. Hesitate in speech as music begins in discordant stream
7. Gets teary bishops to hug king
8. Drug quietly injected into deer
9. Declare everything, for instance, excellent
10. Structure houses debut of popular instrumentalist
11. *Mystery word*
12. Crazy crab holds steer in freight vehicle
13. Equipment stored in large armory
14. Dice thrown cold
15. Indians hidden by screen
16. Plant of regret
17. Fish swallows eel's tail completely
18. Meat for every basket
19. Swell cloth reported
20. Animals that run from naughty child, unfortunately
21. Pellet containing rare food
22. Copper trips, randomly nabbing fifty offenders
23. *Mystery word*

Down

1. *Mystery word*
2. Father hit our lover
3. His imperfectly masking smile
4. Damaged maypole without a use
5. Wash greeted in confusion
6. Dad bearing up in New guinea territory
7. Brush last of crumbling wreck
8. What's left of rare lichen
9. Dress covers top of large oak
10. Distinctive quality of gold and radium
11. Stir up most of the brook
12. Urgency before Sunday school started
13. True, excellent comfort
14. Mixed pie preserve for food lover
15. Inventor Elias caught in shower
16. A game in the past
17. Essence of carbon mineral
18. Plans bringing sloth to Mississippi
19. Insurgent's dance captivates bachelor
20. Strange, fractured gemstones
21. Initially pink, get peculiar in color when poked
22. Occasional unsettling cop raids
23. *Mystery word*