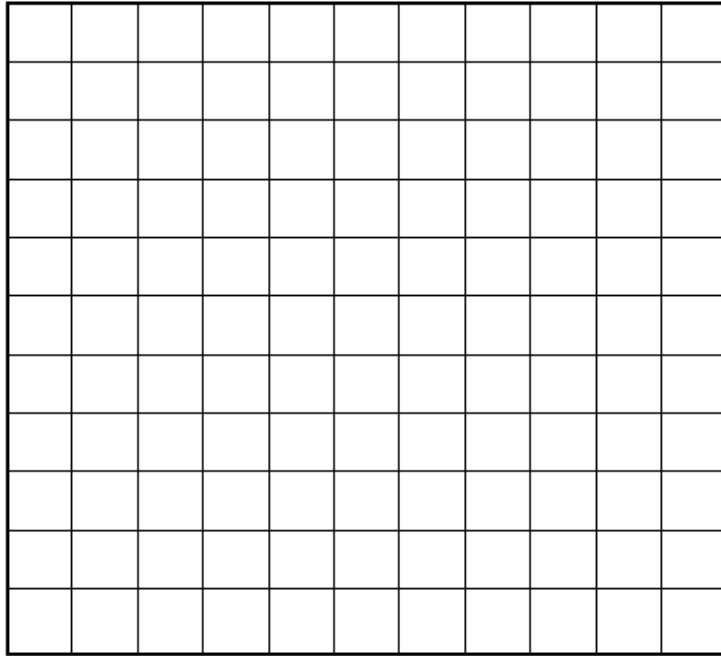


Special Puzzle #3 -- March 2003 "Off the Wall"

Instructions: This puzzle contains an unusual feature explained below. First, as usual, guess the words defined by the cryptic clues (words vary in length from four 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. Seven across words and six down words won't fit in the grid unless one of their letters is removed. Those thirteen letters, taken in order, spell a four-word phrase related to another phrase spelled out by twelve letters that don't mesh. That's right: twelve letters that don't mesh. Six of them belong in the down words they're part of but not in any across words and will either interrupt an across word or lie between two of them, while another six belong in the across words they're part of but not in any down words and will either interrupt a down word or lie between two of them. Those twelve unmeshed letters--the six in down words taken in order from left to right and the six in across words taken in order from top to bottom--spell a two-word phrase that should be familiar to all native speakers of English. Answers include two proper names. As ever, I am grateful to Kevin Wald for help with the clues.



Across

1. Dismiss report about head of state
2. Deft adjustment of radio time
3. Goal of sailor: having progeny
4. Go into the middle leaderless
5. Tie up an ailing plant
6. Revised chart about a red inflammation
7. Stiff man in rutted road
8. In sum, errant poet gets taken in
9. Driven around end of yard and pulverized
10. Basket case before a dance
11. Ring friend for a gem
12. Leading man keeps one
13. Peer has right touch, but just barely
14. Heroic narrative in Japanese pictures
15. River fish
16. Swaggers . . . loses one . . . lists
17. Hang physician and primate
18. Comes before pederast is aroused
19. Wish of French father
20. Was in ancient Rome time after time
21. Rowdy girl left out of holy room

Down

1. Race had replaced game
2. Strange matters involving one abuse
3. Create staff in color
4. State in free dissolution and decay
5. Examined calcium sediment
6. Gaiety returned in fifth trimester
7. Hint about right move
8. Seldom encountered in Riviera resort
9. Youngest of new regenerates are left out
10. Breaking down near a theater
11. Mock down and ersatz eider
12. Comedian Jacques worked at it
13. Flat program has a run
14. Cut from fresh earth
15. Flow of liquor after cap is removed
16. Refresh and/or enhance
17. Quail wins heart of apt poet
18. Ball crossing plate with nothing . . .
19. strikes out eldest in play with error
20. Start entering totals in a journal about what you eat
21. Dad beginning to like wearing woven fabric