

# Pivot Point by Ucaimhu

Just as this party involving a palindrome (44) has a palindromic date (10-01), this puzzle is palindromic in a few different ways:

(1) In seven Down clues the wordplay yields a letter string with one wrong letter; 19 Down is ambiguous, with two possible answers (two clues intersecting it are thus also ambiguous), and which letter is wrong depends on which answer you get. Either way, the seven wrong letters, left to right in the grid, will say what caused this party to be rescheduled. Also, if a wrong letter is the *n*th letter, take all the direction letters (N, S, E, W) in that clue's *n*th word, and draw a path as per these directions linking centers of squares, starting in the answer's *n*th square; use *both* of 19D's possible wrong letters. (Paths may overlap themselves and each other.) All eight paths together, **held up to a mirror**, will show a palindromic name employing a nonstandard letter.

(2) "Palindrome" is also the name of a Mystery Hunt team, so the nonstandard letter (formed by 19D's two paths) must be assigned encodings in a couple of standard Hunt codes:

**Numbers.** Each 19D path is a standard lowercase letter *before* mirror-reflection; sum their numeric (a = 1, b = 2) codes to get a new numeric code for the nonstandard letter.

**Maritime.** The nonstandard letter will get a new maritime flag code that is the "average" of the codes for those two standard letters. To remind you of their codes, choosing either answer for 19D allows you to color each 44-square segment of the grid the same color as one answer in it, so the whole grid forms the flag code for the corresponding standard letter. Also, 20 clues each have one incorrect character you must alter before solving; in clue order, the incorrect characters will describe the "average" code more specifically. (The correct characters will spell out an **appropriate message**, employing the nonstandard letter.)

(3) Six Across and six Down clues remain that are not alluded to above; each one's answer must be altered before entry:

**Maritime numbers.** In each such Down answer, change a body of water to "number." (All bodies of water are of the same type; in alphabetical order, they are in eastern Europe, the southwest US, Siberia, central Europe, southern Europe, and West Africa.)

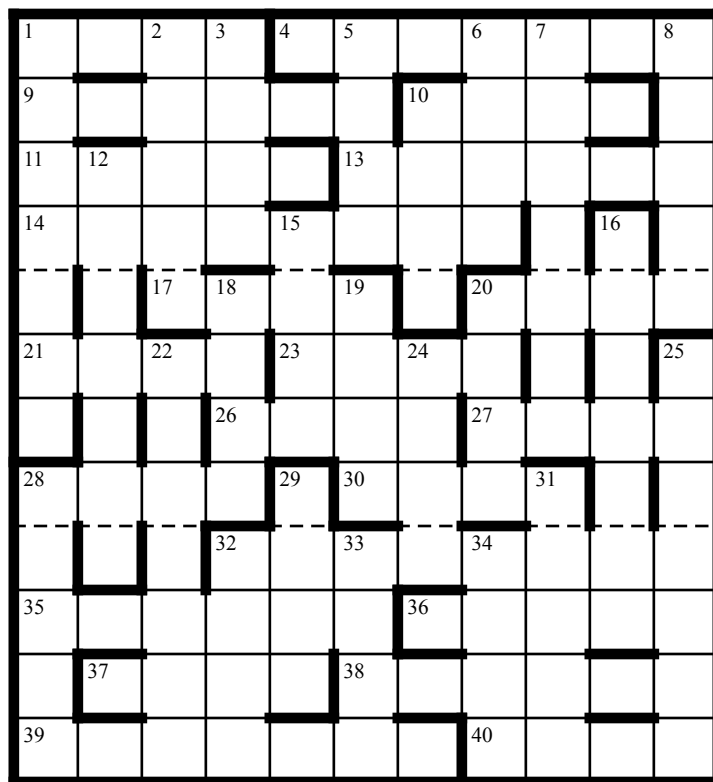
**Held up to a mirror.** In each such Across answer, move the letter in second-from-last position to the second position, and where it is the *x*th-from-last letter in *our new alphabet with the nonstandard letter appended*, change it to the *x*th letter.

(Altered entries will include an abbreviation and a demonym. Also, each such clue contains a straight clue to the altered entry.)

Finally, to get the name of the nonstandard letter, take the name from the message in (2), and apply both changes to it in order.

## ACROSS

1. Saucy part of a person's "goof"
4. Small, slight, almost tastable addition to a dish
9. Make Bermans — ignoring north wind — fish
10. Soft drinks getting 2.718+ informal endorsements
11. I see the wrist of pet Spot out front
13. Kind of sauce or hard stuff behind your lies
14. Stone fool beginning to peruse charter
17. The letter V is part of that group
20. What might be standing in a forest and be yearnfully hoeing
21. The wan Spaniards say zilch about a son of Jacob



23. Number aboard E-14 over two decreased by seven
26. One sea-girt area in NY west of ex-tennis player Năstase
27. Spot excellent U-bend or P-trap
28. Heard shopping center will offer cruise, perhaps
30. Norse from Catherine Wing, an album-seller on TV (*hyph.*)
32. Damage Igor detailed disheartened Leopold Bloom
35. Low score is eight in western India only (*hyph.*)
36. Wheelless vehicle that's driven out west of leather plant
37. Intimidates company leaders in Wales and Scotland
38. What Eve was to *Sea Traveling* reruns
39. One half of Zulu ceremonial rock
40. Employs Mnemosyne's broom after the start

## DOWN

1. Barely gabs with a couple from *signore*'s state bordering Maine, which is humiliating
2. Charlie's & lit on "agent" that initially progressed slowly
3. Jalopy is a good Bug, after the top is removed
5. Put stone inro inside of fair wine-growing region
6. Name for a fraudulent music festival of yore lacks E's
7. Turn one poet from Rotterdam in after another day in court
8. Never damaged guns
10. Red bellowed like a lion after losing five hundred and a half
12. Circulating, via Ghana, the Cuban hora music (2 wds.)
15. Bonham Carter et al. raise sane fowl in back, y'know
16. Record stuff, ignoring Victor ingesting 40% of fifty-pence diamond heart?
18. Something Uhura answers hit everybody
19. Bossytown showiness sells Mike's internally nonvegan item
20. Papa chiefly entwists Parmesan of Monsieur Le Pew
22. Do circle Nantes resident's cerulean letter (*hyph.*)
24. Holst quartet in site near nose-cleaning kind of pot
25. Weirder, nerdier Sam gives you leftover items
28. Singer Zedong eating the ultimate in food Ann raised
29. Bars on guitarists' axes ought to be protected by lids
31. Nincompoop seizes old English soil
32. Dock Iago's boas, for example
33. Rebel due to let body art fan proceed northward (2 wds.)
34. Sage glop a marsupial put in your gar