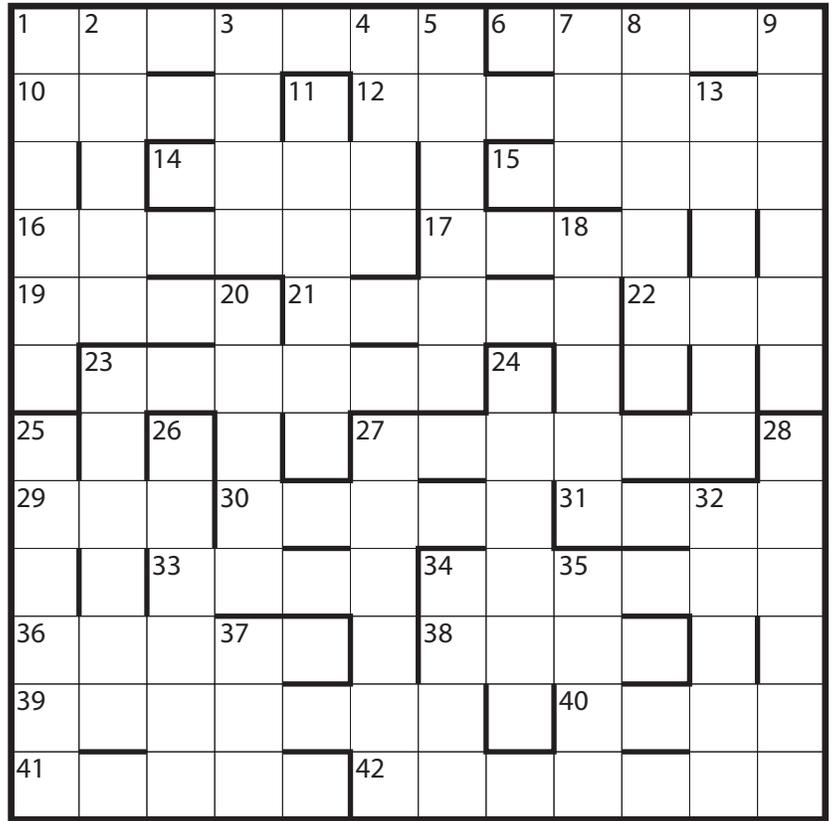


BREK-KEK-KEK-KEK!

by Mark Halpin

The chorus of warm-hearted, cold-blooded amphibians from the musical adaptation of Aristophanes' *The Frogs* may attempt to dissuade you from traversing their muddy marsh (seen at right). However, some squares in the grid are swamped with extra letters; interpreting these correctly will reveal a route through the bog. Following this route will allow you to understand the Frogs' song, which explains why they prefer their indolent batrachian lifestyle to the troublesome world of Dionysos and Xanthias.



ACROSS

- 1 Fanfare preceding a less-than-cheerful Elvis feature
- 6 Badger seen around German mountain range
- 10 Sewing case is, without question, quite disarranged
- 12 Buddies trashed dorm space
- 14 Contrary, like the White Rabbit and others (*abbr*; 2 wds)
- 15 Oddly nasty, knock a group of singers
- 16 Extravagantly praise source of fine rugs
- 17 Returned charts showing unwanted letters
- 19 Many a North African held back by Mubarak
- 21 Doctor and poet getting tablet
- 22 Cheer for designer Cassini endlessly
- 23 Customs surrounding large, edible fungi
- 27 Twice counterfeit coin worth \$6,000,000 perhaps?
- 29 Free lunch including pickled delicacy
- 30 Dense novel's most essential elements
- 31 Nana went quickly after last of eggnog
- 33 Reserve spot for a speaker or calculator component
- 34 "The most important performer," Miss Piggy initially maintained, "is one with many lines." (2 wds)
- 36 Like bitterns, essentially!
- 38 Heartless rogue converted cash abroad
- 39 Making the most of intelligence received by civil rights leader
- 40 More than one Freud subject goes crazy
- 41 Eccentric dictator's final notes (pure drivel) recalled (2 wds)
- 42 E.g. *Poseidon* having turned over, passengers at first make confused attempt to stay above water (*hyph*)

DOWN

- 1 Distant friend's ring worn by notary public (2 wds)
- 2 Squirrel Nutkin's creator forgetting her earliest cute critter
- 3 Mention being made of 88 small islands
- 4 Group from Calcutta erected a celebrated school (*abbr*)
- 5 Assort rotten cuts of meat
- 7 Names from "Star Wars" characters on the rise
- 8 Clumsily drop my duster (2 wds)
- 9 Bit of mischief shattered peace ... sad
- 11 Ravine getting rocky and more empty-seeming
- 13 Noble organization convening primarily as a group (2 wds)
- 18 Showing nervousness after first doing well on a test
- 20 Criminal ran dope for crime boss, perhaps
- 23 Mule is thrown some grain for breakfast
- 24 Pretentious fellow rose up flamboyantly
- 25 Road worker flipped finding a thou in change
- 26 Talk a little, covering basic material
- 27 Show flexibility about greeting bum
- 28 Steep fine unfortunately overwhelms you and me
- 32 Go all out for a certain star
- 34 "Brick" counted among durable goods
- 35 Brady kid finally heeding rule, briefly
- 37 Truculent koala bears end in a fight sometimes (*abbr*)