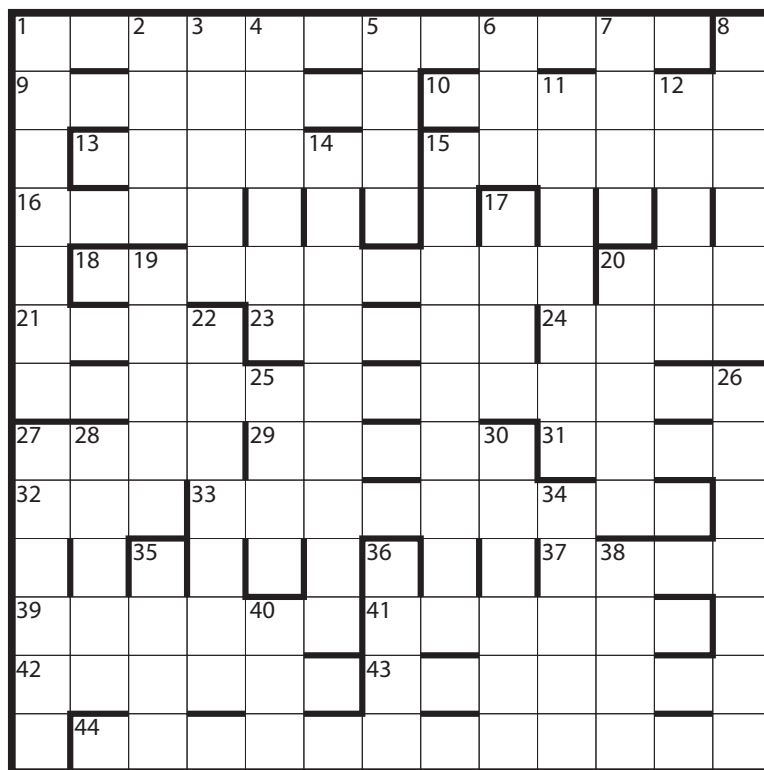


ROLLING ALONG

by Mark Halpin

Like the characters in *Merrily We Roll Along*, half a dozen figures in this puzzle are seen at increasingly early points in their lives. Each of these figures appears in the answer to both an Across and Down clue, and the two appearances intersect in the grid. When entered Across, a figure moves backward in time; when entered Down, it moves even further back.

The unclued row spanning the grid features a bit of advice which is repeated throughout the *Merrily* score, but which solvers of this puzzle would be wise to ignore.



ACROSS

- 1 Having again catalogued egrets, I erred foolishly
- 9 One small, washed-out African dam
- 10 Noted dramatist close to Ezra Pound and Cummings
- 13 Stallone showing maturity as a "wise guy"
- 15 One rising with more discomfort in the audience
- 16 Xena's making a comeback ... topless! Crazy? Not in the least
- 18 Load overwhelming poor Ken ... time to get to bed early, maybe
- 20 Ape mashed up a veggie
- 21 Extreme torpor can overtake many athletes initially
- 23 Absolutely good inside? Swell!
- 24 Tip over and roll
- 27 Appraisal, in hindsight, covers a lot of ground
- 29 Ineptly raise someone born in the spring
- 31 Ma to vacillate dramatically (*hyph*)
- 32 Dolphins, etc. from north Florida (*abbr*)
- 33 18th century engraver depicting predatory fish in tropical habitat, primarily
- 37 OK spot for western grub
- 39 Serpent-like spirits *Dragons of Eden* author recalled
- 41 Ask superficially about novelist Ephron's jacket
- 42 *Number 49* in the style of Jamaican music
- 43 Distant boundary in "H" or "I" region almost complete
- 44 Disguising *The Frogs* chorus (switching right to left)?

DOWN

- 1 Car sank in mire; scour thoroughly
- 2 O'Neal raced around club
- 3 Bad news about A&E's Jolson showcase
- 4 Pleasant-sounding rock
- 5 Underground river is filthy spot at times
- 6 Cheer up some British musicians (*abbr*)
- 7 Heartless rogue adulterated currency
- 8 Root for triumph at the top of your lungs
- 11 *Pirates of the Caribbean* actress left after suspicious thing in coral island
- 12 More than one little dog looks noisy
- 14 Measure of brainpower suffusing our soul in a muddle, as if intoxicated (*obsolete*)
- 15 Warrior's rifle ejecting bullet at last
- 17 For Deep Southern relative, it's cold all around East
- 19 Retro, I suffer from modern correspondence (*hyph*)
- 20 Spin returning to big wheel
- 22 Sheba, as "Lunatic", is embarrassing
- 25 Inmate called for Mayor Cora Hoover Hooper once
- 26 Getting drowzy, at last shun strange gin mixture
- 27 Creature's thin scale standing erect
- 28 Performers' union allowing no sudden difficulty
- 30 Thus, a thousand is steep
- 34 Again string up wire, right in the middle
- 35 First off, fable's lesson is given aloud
- 36 Brutally lash Mort
- 38 Coming up, Liza nailed feature role in *Cabaret*
- 40 Hackman alternating in *Alias* (*abbr*)

If you're new to cryptic crosswords and would like tips for solving clues, please contact the constructor at markhalpin3@gmail.com.