

It's a party! Each balloon occupies a square where Across and Down answers conflict. Only one of the letters produces a valid entry both directions. For example, if GRUB and SEAR cross at their first letters, SEAR can be changed to GEAR but GRUB cannot be changed to SRUB. Pop each balloon, leaving in the grid whichever letter works both directions (in this example, G); the other letter (S) falls to the blanks below the grid. Those letters denote the type of party and explain the letters left in the grid. *The Wall Street Journal* deemed this theme "too controversial."

1	2		3	4	5	6	7	8	9		10
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Across

- 1 Princely sum high-powered attorneys might charge per hour? (5)
- 6 Supply a piece of fruit for dinner (6)
- 11 Car taken from a deadbeat, reportedly 60% off (4)
- 12 Repulsive-sounding liquid container (4)
- 14 Turbulent times for Brangelina and Bennifer, e.g. (5)
- 15 American beer bottles starting to become practical (6)
- 16 Reddish brown root named for a place in Lebanon (6)
- 17 A synonym for "hmmm" is extremely elusive (1,3)
- 18 Woods shouts to other golfers at tee (6)
- 19 Fries prepared with a flourish (5)
- 20 Nonsensical expression such as "kick the bucket," not quite a quirk of speech (7)
- 21 Chooses the all-time worst basketball score? (4)

- 23 Green dispensers in and outside of McDonald's (4)
- 26 Sex overtakes combat as a cybercrime tool (7)
- 29 Foreign currency regulation broken by Bitcoin's introduction (5)
- 31 Bitterly complained "Real ID is ridiculous" (6)
- 33 Central American iron is abundant (4)
- 35 Maintain farm if mobile (6)
- 37 Brooks covered by slick that's malodorous (6)
- 38 Material extracted from the ground the wrong way (5)
- 39 Suspend a tariff (4)
- 40 Compete to grab the tail of brown creeper (4)
- 41 Situations involving hot pursuits (6)
- 42 Rockhounding equipment photos discussed (5)

Down

- 1 Composer Edvard's interest in golfer Norman (5)
- 2 Again put the foot down with retired staff (6)
- 3 Bump and grind? Done! (4)
- 4 Cease to oppose replacing Republican with Democrat (6)
- 5 Utterly exhaust public with rage (8)
- 7 Holiday diner catching a glimpse of Santa (6)
- 8 Sartorial fashionista exhibiting retro panache (5)
- 9 Rob's juggled balls (4)
- 10 Geeks we introduced to young ladies entering society (6)
- 13 Gripper on a shoe lace shredded with time (5)
- 16 Upbringing exposes sci-fi master David (4)
- 19 "Turned Off" appears in Weird Al's CD "A Platform for the Working Man" (8)
- 22 Whitish part of a picket fence (4)
- 23 Something in the lung somewhat impairs acoustics (3,3)
- 24 British politicians dismissing second of loyalty tests (5)
- 25 Small convertible taking first in off-road race (6)
- 27 Paul incorrectly assumes I'd intentionally played short of the green (4,2)
- 28 Note a weak tennis shot causing losses (3,3)
- 30 Wagers involving long shots (5)
- 32 Pineapple supplier's handouts (5)
- 34 Government bureau engaged in wildlife management (4)
- 36 Fire off a recommendation when mortgage rates drop (4)