

## WHITE CHRISTMAS

Your task is to pack boxes for Christmas. 12 Across answers are too short for their allotted spaces; leave one square empty. That square will also be left empty by the intersecting Down entry which is likewise one letter short. Every column thus will contain one empty box. Pack each box with a letter to form a new entry both Across and Down. Those letters, read left to right, spell out something white. The new entries include two first names, a name from literature and a 2-word phrase.

*Constructed in 2020. I consider this an easy puzzle -- Christmas should be a lark, not a chore.*

**Across**

- 1 Damaged pipe in the middle of road split open
- 6 Paperwork with respect to opening of mall
- 11 Ensconced in elegant surrounds, enjoy a fine meal
- 12 De Niro's heading a Cub Scout group
- 13 9 in the morning: returned very long skirt
- 15 Observed an embarrassing display of anger at hearing
- 16 Retro pieces for a band
- 17 News from Wobegon's first or fifth segment of broadcast
- 18 Nickel steel protects Chicago's trains
- 20 Warhol is 1-Down? Yes
- 22 Army aviation branch once bombed Cairo, the capital of Romania and the outskirts of Paris (2 wds.)
- 25 You gotta be kidding! Empty stomach? Have a snack
- 26 Gambling mecca loses last star
- 28 Stooped and awkwardly edged in
- 30 Throw is long and out of bounds
- 33 Stepped in time with rocker Stewart
- 36 Participate in a sport, a college football event
- 37 Elevate the back
- 39 Suggested resolution for Next Gen actor Wheaton
- 40 Free meal is unsatisfying
- 41 Fantastic Hopi breakfasts are their specialty
- 42 Portly finishers in auto club race dismiss exercise
- 43 Herb Alpert's behind host of *America's Funniest Home Videos*
- 44 Assuming victory, Senator Cruz meandered

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**Down**

- 1 Burst erased a geographic feature associated with Moses (2 wds.)
- 2 Each gym rat's left
- 3 Disciplinary panel reorganized
- 4 FedEx competitor clothes 1,000 men in black
- 5 Richard Child called out surveyor Mason's collaborator
- 6 A base, unfinished, for Christmas trees
- 7 Ruminants coming back for tall grass
- 8 Pence finishes and awaits decision
- 9 Mork's roommate is brainy?
- 10 Favorite point about Western Europe
- 14 Cognizant of first-rate pottery
- 15 Flag-draped member of Navy competed on *The Voice*
- 19 Therefore, Shrek is one up
- 21 John's right, Yoko: it's forbidden (hyph.)
- 23 Mexico vacation destination's taxi circle
- 24 Like a magician, conceal a large tree
- 27 Cast a viler Mistress of the Dark
- 29 Deluded, a couple of people invested in a flop
- 30 Slaw prepared with specialized tools
- 31 Little bird nests inside hotel work counter
- 32 Don't eat quickly
- 33 Trevino ain't got no fancy fountain
- 34 For the auditor, check rule
- 35 Hydroponics uses a small amount of water
- 36 50 tenants swamp site devoted to personal reflections
- 38 American hit by a Norwegian rock band