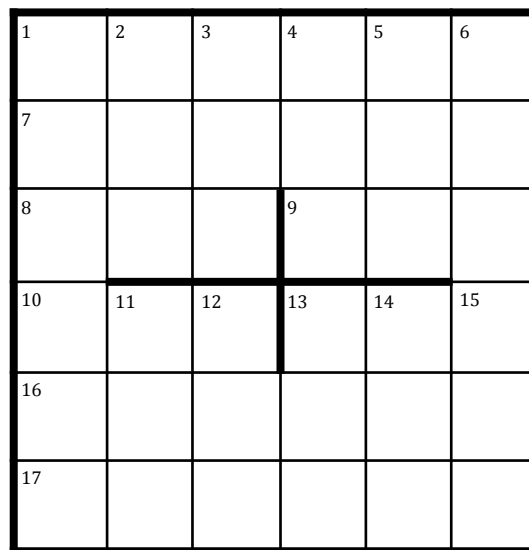


Idle Moments

by Binder

I made this crossword during a quiet period, and I *know* exactly when you'll be solving it - both can be seen once you're finished.

The order of the theme entries depends not on when, but where you solve the puzzle. For each non-theme entry that doesn't span the grid, if it intersects the *n*th theme entry (for some order), take the first letter of the *n*th word in its clue. In clue order, those letters will describe either my quiet period, or (depending on where you add a space) what I've used to pinpoint when you're solving this.



Across

1. They're used to grow holes with assorted red wines
7. "Braid a Rey outfit piece, go ahead, do it!" (3 wds)
8. That original SNES character brought back!
9. It's ... okay ... huh ... a province in Burkina Faso
10. Every third date was at the museum in London
13. Electrical unit opening, initially, master switch on the clock (2 wds)
16. Send out rays of sunshine to the east - nice! - breaking a tie
17. Nudge from someone acting as warden again?

Down

1. Peripheral region's sea crossing I read about (2 wds)
2. Moments for folks romancing old-school assistants (abbr)
3. Riders free of ego's counterpart in Parisian rails (abbr)
4. "Chemical Suffixes" - Spanish Agnes (in Spain)
5. "Hunger's Elevated Over Love" artist whose best song is "So Sick" (hyph)
6. Set up in climbing mesh or grand column of nickel and platinum (2 wds)
11. Internal testamur displays a Lone Star institution (abbr)
12. Change in current standing
13. Some minority peoples of Japanese regions like Honshu, some remain unconvinced
14. M&M's eschewing its Nestlé origin, m'lady (abbr, var)