Which word did Merriam-Webster select as Word of the Year for 2020?

The solution to the question is found within the answers in the puzzle. In order to discover this hidden solution, unscramble the letters noted with asterisks within the puzzle.

ACROSS

1. Give up
5. Middle East nation
9. Woman's accessory
10. Anklebone
12. ___ off; fled
13. Shaker contents
16. Jamie ___ Curtis
17. Conjunction
18. In a ___; dazed
20. Wall or Downing: abbr.
21. Street corner traffic sign
23. Picnic spoilers
25. 90 degrees from NNW
26. Luau offering
27. TV maker
28. Words that end the single life (2)
29. Cab alternative
30. Fender ding
32. Yo-Yo, for one
33. Uses Brillo
38. Initials for the director of "Psycho"
39. Play a role
41. Francis or Murray
42. Presidential nickname
43. Pleated garment
45. ___ Field
47. Candy store chain
48. Palm or pine

DOWN

1. Joe Namath & Joe Montana
2. Fancy vase
3. TV's "This ___ Us"
4. SAT, for one
5. "Leave ___ ___ Beaver"
6. Initials for actress Rosanna
7. Everybody
8. Dubious
9. Major leaguers
11. Beautician's offerings
14. Gold's symbol
15. Record album, for short
18. Pieces of asparagus
19. Fast-moving river sections
22. ___ in a while; occasionally
24. Rheumatic joint swelling
29. Thurman & others
31. Those folks
34. Long-running Broadway musical
35. "Put ___ a Happy Face"
36. Prefix for likely or lawful
37. Nap
40. Man's accessory
42. Refreshing drink
44. Prefix for view or kindle
46. Southern state

Solution Pandemic