The Ants Go Marching - Solution

Puzzle by Ranen Mirot

       To solve this puzzle, the first step is in recognizing what each piece is. There is one large "notebook page" consisting of a 11x11 grid filled with letters and punctuation. There are also 4 smaller numerical grids with varying sizes: 5x5, 6x6, and two 5x6 grids.

       What must be recognized is two things: these grids can be placed within the larger notebook page as an overlay in various possible configurations, and that the grids are Mosaic puzzles, a variant on Minesweeper where a number represents the amount of squares in the surrounding 8 plus itself which contain an "ant".

       By correctly arranging the pictures over the notebook page and solving the Mosaic puzzle, the covered letters reveal the phrase "SEARCHWITHINTHE.ULAMSPIRALOFANTS." This is the joke of the puzzle, comparing the real life phenomenon of a spiral of ants to that of the mathematical Ulam's Spiral.

       By finding all letters of the Ulam Spiral of the notebook, the final phrase "THEANSWERTOTHEPUZZLEISPHAROAH" can be retrieved.