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JANUARY 2024

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In the Kitchen With JoAnna Zalkovsky

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Scavenger Hunt

Crossword

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ON THE COVER



Lisa Edwards-Loftin finds joy helping others overcome addiction.

Photo by  
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Bill

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

*Be ready for anything!*

If you just asked me, I would have said the coldest month of the year in this part of Texas is February, but I would have been wrong. I suppose my guess of February is misplaced because it seems the few days we have had with ice or snow in my recent recollection have occurred in that month. But *January* is the coldest month, followed by December and then February. But you know this is Texas. There will be days in this month when you will not need a sweater. The sun will be beaming down from a clear, blue sky in the middle of the afternoon, and we'll think spring is coming early this year.

King Solomon was considered the wisest man of the age, and he wrote that there is nothing new under the sun. However true Solomon's words may be, there are still experiences to come that are new and exciting for you and me. Just reading of someone else's experience does not make the experience our own.

Join me in anticipation of this new year. Yes, some things will stay the same, but some things will be entirely new to all of us. Every new season brings its joys and sorrows, but, thankfully, we tend to focus our memories on the good times. It is a major election year, and regardless of our political persuasions, there will be some changes.

The theme of Solomon's writing was not just about futility, but to fear God and enjoy life. Those two ideas are not in conflict but are complementary. Look forward to this new year with expectations of prosperity.

*Welcome the new year!*

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# A SAFE PLACE

— By Bill Smith



*Lisa Edwards-Loftin's vision for The Rescue Haven grew from her own life experiences, a tumultuous journey from addiction to recovery. She gratefully acknowledges all of the help she has had in her journey up to this point, and she continues to strive to provide relief to those she serves.*

A friend and supporter Lisa cherishes is one of her mentors and a Rescue Haven board member, Sharon Guillory. "I met Lisa at an event at church in 2020," Sharon recalled. "Lisa was telling her story, and I just felt drawn to her. Lisa spoke with poise and grace, and she was very transparent about her addiction and recovery. I am a business coach, and after the event, I gave Lisa a card that said, 'Call me.' She did call, and she continued to call me every couple of weeks."

Lisa added, "Sharon helped us set up our organization as a faith-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit agency. We had been to an event in Lubbock, and I mentioned starting The Rescue Haven. Sharon's first advice was, 'Just start,' and that God would send the people. I had been in constant prayer that God would give me the wisdom. She also told me, 'You don't have to be great to start, but you have to start to be great.' Sharon's advice was a big part of the answer to my prayers."

A native of Ennis, Lisa grew up here in a Christian home where her father worked hard at his job to provide for his family, and her mother had a servant's heart. Her mother set an example for her children by not only taking care of them, but also serving others in the community by cooking meals and washing clothes for people who needed assistance. On Tuesday evenings, her mother took her children to nursing homes to sing and pray with elderly residents that "we didn't even know," Lisa shared.

"We grew up in a wonderful home," Lisa emphasized. "But after high school my life got off track. I survived 23 years of drug addiction, including failed relationships, domestic violence and homelessness." She published her first book about her life and recovery in 2021, titled *Standing in My Own Way*. In her book, Lisa never casts blame on anyone or anything for the consequences she suffered because of her own choices. Instead, she expresses gratitude for those who stood by her and loved her even while she was on a very dark path.





“In 2011 I finally slowed down long enough to listen to the heart of my children. I realized that they loved me and just wanted their mother back. I spent six months with the Anthem Strong Families organization in Dallas that was founded by Cosette Bowles. It was then that I turned my life over to God to remove the addiction. They provided an apartment for my two youngest children and me. My older daughter had been with my mother for many years until she grew up and married, and my younger daughter was adopted by my Aunt Shirley. I thank God they were raised in positive, Christian environments. My four children, Breona, TaLicia, Gregory and Chloe are my reasons for finding my way home.”

Lisa was also able to study addiction and recovery at Eastfield College and completed a degree in drug and alcohol



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recovery in 2015. The road “home” has come full circle, as Lisa now lives in Ennis in her childhood home. She has tremendous gratitude to her siblings for allowing her to have the home.

Since inception, The Rescue Haven has held two graduation ceremonies for participants in the program who completed the work toward overcoming their own addictions. The graduates have met with their facilitators for 12 weeks at The Rescue Havens’ temporary home in the fellowship hall of Eastside Church of Christ in Ennis. Some of the classes include Spiritual Development, Biblical Financial Planning, New Life Strategies and Keys to Successful Recovery. The speaker at the most recent graduation

was Quincy Carter, former quarterback with the Dallas Cowboys. Lisa was also proud to mention that two of their recent graduates were baptized and are faithful members of Eastside Church of Christ.

The motto for The Rescue Haven tells part of the story: “Based on Experience, Driven by Purpose.” The experience means Lisa and others who lead classes and speak at graduation can relate to the participants in an especially personal and meaningful way. The mission statement adds, “The Rescue Haven exists to empower men and women to experience spiritual, personal and professional success. Success can appear in many forms: Earning a living wage, becoming restored spiritually, healing broken relationships, creating healthy generational traditions and/or giving back in one’s community. A distinctive component of The Rescue Haven is offering an environment welcoming veterans where long-lasting relationships are formed within a Christian context.”

Lisa is quick to acknowledge all of the help they have received to get The Rescue Haven started, but she knows that it would be difficult to name all of

the people. She remembered meeting with Jim Stanford, owner of Tacos 4 Life, and asking him if he would teach classes. Now he is a member of the advisory council. Pastor Donnie Miller and his wife, Carolyn, arranged for them to use the church fellowship hall for classes and graduations. The board has responded whenever they have been called upon. Lisa calls them her “team.” The organization just recently opened a thrift shop at the church to support their work, and they hope to locate a more permanent location for it soon.

Lisa and Sharon agree that a “haven” is somewhere safe. It is a safe place for those in need to get their lives back on track, just as Lisa has done. The Recue Haven celebrated its first anniversary on September 17, 2023, also marking the 12th year of sobriety for Lisa. The supporters gathered last November for their first annual brunch to acknowledge their ongoing commitment to their mission. **NOW**

*Editor’s Note: For more information about The Rescue Haven, visit <https://therescuehaven.com>.*

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Lion Greg Vineyard takes pecan orders for the club fundraiser.

Zoomed In:  
Russell Ellison

By Bill Smith

Santa Claus, or one of his helpers, visited the Ennis Welcome Center in December. His alter ego, Russell Ellison, pointed out that this is his third year helping Santa. A lifetime resident of Ennis, Russell graduated from Ennis High School in 1991 and now works for Ellis County Precinct 2.

“I have been married for 28 years and have 3 children,” Russell shared. “I love Ennis, and I love seeing all of the changes in our community that come with the growth we are experiencing.”

Santa was joined in the photo by two of the Ennis Welcome Center employees, Haley Brown and Clarissa Wagner Smith. Everyone was enjoying the downtown festivities during the holiday season.



Joe Kyle speaks to the Lions Club about Children's Camp.



Members of the Taylor family celebrate planting a tree at Lions Park in memory of Bob Taylor.



Henrietta Novotny greets customers at Felcman's on Small Business Saturday.





Rae Trevino and Dominick Johnson work on crafts at the Welcome Center.



Araceli Huerta and Elija Ojeda are excited to be at the Lights of Ennis.



Officers John Munoz and Jovan Thompson patrol downtown on bicycles during Christmas festivities.



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BusinessNOW

# Tonja Barnebee CPA, PC

— By Bill Smith

**Tonja Barnebee CPA, PC**  
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(972) 875-9900  
tonjamb@sbcglobal.net

**Hours:** Monday-Thursday: 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

With over 30 years practicing accounting, Tonja Barnebee and her employees have the experience to be of significant assistance to any small business or individual with their bookkeeping and tax filings. “We encourage people to come to us before they make their next investment, make an asset



sale or decide to retire, to discuss what the tax consequences might be,” Tonja advised. “It is important that your investment adviser and CPA work together.”

Tonja and her firm formerly performed a significant amount of audit work that involved travel and a lot of time. Having made the decision recently to focus on small businesses, nonprofit organizations and individuals, the office has a more relaxed atmosphere. “I love accounting. Since we stopped our audit work, I am actually able to be home on Saturdays now, and tax season is not as stressful,” she continued. “We are able to build great relationships with our clients, and I am very happy that some of them have been with me for 30 years.

“My employees are so important to the firm, and we are like family. When we first opened in Ennis, we had two telephone lines. Phyllis Hammond Stewart, who retired a few years ago just after tax season, used to joke that she had to call one line from the other one just to make sure the phones



were working!” Today, the staff has grown with the practice, and includes Office Manager Troy Bullard, Allison Slovak, Kimberly Spence and Angela Webb. Tonja related that Allison “speaks millennial” and that is a great help.

Small businesses use Tonja Barnebee and her staff as their bookkeeping department. It helps many of them avoid the extra expense of hiring an in-house bookkeeper. “Businesses come to us with questions, and we will have a brief interview with them at no cost. We will consider what they need done and may then quote a monthly fee. The monthly fee includes completing their tax returns. Many small businesses like our approach, as it helps them budget their bookkeeping and tax filings more consistently. They do not have to be concerned that there will be a large bill once a year at tax time for forms preparation.”

Tonja continues to give back to her community in various ways. She is a member of the Lions Club, the Chamber of Commerce and her church choir. She also likes to speak to high school students about the need for good bookkeeping and accounting, including pursuing accounting as a career. “I tell them that if they really want to go to college, they can. Much of my education was completed with Pell Grants and other assistance. The opportunity is out there if they want to pursue it.”

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# Fashion Faves

## OF 2024

— By Emma McKay

*For many people, personal fashion can be challenging. It's hard to find clothes that make you look and feel good. The fear of your style choices making you stand out in an unpleasant way can be a beast of its own. Due to fashion's cyclical nature, you might already have this winter's trends in your wardrobe.*

Burgundy is "in" again this season, which is good news for Aggies fans, whose closets are filled with burgundy's sister shade. This rich, warm color is perfect for the brutal Texas winter. There is no wrong way to wear solid-colored clothing. You could rock an entire outfit of burgundy pieces or add a splash of it here and there to tie the whole look together. To save a bit of money and closet space, try accessorizing with burgundy. Find a good, solid-colored burgundy coat, and you can make any outfit in season.

In a move that harkens back to the retro-futurism art style, metallic silver is having its moment in the wardrobes of fashion icons. Whether it be a shining polyester dress or

reflective chunky shoes, this trend is reminiscent of decades-old depictions of what the 2020s *might* look like. While silver is a solid color like burgundy, silver works best as the focal point of an outfit. If you are going to wear silver pants, don't pair them with a silver top, otherwise you might come across as a droid from *Star Wars*. Instead, pair it with a black, dusty rose or soft cream blouse. Silver shoes can be a fun way to make any casual or swanky outfit a bit more out of this world.

Classic prints such as polka-dot and plaid are back. Like with silver clothes, a general rule of thumb for printed fabric is to make it the centerpiece of the outfit. Pairing a polka dot blouse with a plaid skirt could unintentionally turn a casual outfit into a loud eye sore. Instead, the other elements of the ensemble should be solid colors that complement the printed fabric. That way, the eye will naturally gravitate toward the patterned piece, instead of getting lost in the noise. You could even pair your polka dot blouse with your silver heels or pull the burgundy look in with a plaid skirt to double your fashion points.

It's common knowledge in the fashion world that former style trends tend to cycle back into the mainstream eventually. This fashion season pulls items from several different decades back into people's closets.



Strolling in from the 1950s are the classic A-line and swing dresses. With their fitted bodices and flared skirts, these dresses are perfect for those who want to show off their form while still having fun twirling on the dance floor. Accessorize this look with a timeless strand of pearls or a peacoat for warmth.

Dust off the shoulder pads because exaggerated shoulders from the 1980s are officially back. Whether paired with a nice top and slacks or a T-shirt and jeans, a padded blazer makes nearly any outfit board meeting ready.

Double denim is the epitome of recycled fashions. Double denim has had a resurgence in popularity every decade since the 1970s. If you wish to pull this bold look off, you must be willing to commit. Your look should consist of either the same shade of denim or completely contrasting shades — think navy and white.

Oftentimes, it's the accessories that make the outfit shine. This winter, professional neckties and bold neckerchiefs can add the final touches to your outfit. While nothing beats the traditional black tie or a neckerchief in the same shade as your blouse, if you want your outfit to pop, try playing with opposing colors. You can even pull in patterned materials if you want your accessory to be your outfit's centerpiece.

Fashion works as a way of expressing oneself. It can be used to make one fit in or stand out in the crowd. Sometimes, it can be tricky figuring out how to make it work for you, but through constant study and willingness to experiment, you can master the art of fashion. **NOW**

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# CookingNOW In the Kitchen With JOANNA ZALKOVSKY

— By Bill Smith

JoAnna Zalkovsky shared that many things have influenced her cooking over the years. “I grew up in the sand hills of Red Rock, Texas. We had fresh vegetables from the garden. We had fresh meat from the farms. That keeps me grounded in my cooking toward a country, down-home style.”

She credits her nana and mom for passing down recipes like meatloaf, buttermilk pie, corn bread salad and poor boy casserole. “My family is a mix of German, Irish and Black Dutch. My husband’s family is Czech. I think all of those European styles influence many of my taste preferences. Cooking is an adventure for me, and it is downtime. It helps me relax.” **NOW**

## Sister Bowden’s Soft Tacos

**1 lb. ground beef**  
**1/2 cup onion, chopped**  
**1 large jalapeño, diced**  
**Water, as needed (divided use)**  
**4 Tbsp. flour**  
**Salt, to taste**  
**Pepper, to taste**  
**Corn tortillas, to taste**  
**Drizzle of oil**  
**Cheese, grated, to taste**

1. In a skillet, brown the meat; drain.
2. Add the onions and jalapeño peppers; sauté until the onions are clear.

3. Add enough water to cover the meat mixture; simmer for 5 minutes.
4. Mix the flour in enough water to make a paste. Slowly add the flour mixture to the meat mixture.
5. Add salt and pepper to taste; cook until thick.
6. Heat the corn tortillas in the oil until warm.
7. Place the meat mixture and cheese in the tortillas; serve.

## Midnight Not-So-Skinny Dip

**1 lb. breakfast sausage**  
**2 10-oz. cans Ro-Tel tomatoes,**  
**1/2 drained**

**2 8-oz. bricks cream cheese**  
**8 oz. Gouda**  
**1 jalapeño, chopped**

1. Cook the sausage; drain off the grease.
2. Add all the remaining ingredients; stir until the cheese is melted.
3. Serve with tortilla chips.

## Cabbage Casserole

**1 small head cabbage, cored and cubed**  
**Salt, to taste**  
**1 10.5-oz. can cream of chicken soup**  
**1/2 cup Velveeta cheese, grated**  
**1 cup potato chips or crackers, crushed**

1. Preheat the oven to 350 F.
2. Cook the cabbage in salted water until al dente; drain. Place in a greased baking dish.
3. Combine the soup and cheese; pour over the top of the cabbage.
4. Top with the crushed chips or crackers. Bake for 30 minutes.

## Golden Glazed Carrots

**1/4 cup onion, chopped**



- 1/2 cup bell pepper, chopped
- 2 Tbsp. butter
- 1 Tbsp. sugar
- 1 10.5-oz. can cream of mushroom soup
- 1/2 cup Velveeta cheese, grated or cubed
- 1 lb. fresh carrots, sliced and cooked

1. In a medium saucepan, sauté the onions and bell peppers in the butter.
2. Add the sugar, soup and cheese; heat until the cheese is melted.
3. Pour the mixture over the heated carrots.

### Nana’s Meatloaf

- 1 1/2 lbs. ground turkey or beef
- 3 bread slices, torn
- 3/4 cup onion, chopped
- 5 Tbsp. ketchup, plus a little for topping
- 1 small can tomato sauce
- 1/2 sleeve saltine crackers, crushed
- 1 egg
- Salt, to taste
- Pepper, to taste

1. Preheat the oven to 350 F.
2. In a large bowl, combine all the ingredients.
3. Place the mixture in a loaf pan. Spread a little ketchup on top.
4. Bake for about 45 minutes, or until done.

### Poor-Boy Casserole

- 1 lb. ground turkey or beef
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 cups rice, cooked
- 1 16-oz. can Ranch-Style Beans
- 1 10.5-oz. can tomato soup
- 4 Tbsp. ketchup
- 1 cup cheese, shredded (I prefer Velveeta.)
- 1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce

1. Preheat the oven to 375 F.
2. In a skillet, cook the meat; drain. Add the onions.
3. Cook the rice as directed on the package.
4. Combine all the ingredients in a greased 9x13-inch pan.
5. Bake for 30 minutes, or until heated through.

To search for more great recipes from any of the 9 NOW Magazines publications, visit [www.nowmagazines.com](http://www.nowmagazines.com).

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# New Year's Financial Resolutions

Now that we've reached 2024, you might be thinking about your goals and hopes for the new year. But in addition to whatever personal resolutions you might make — volunteering, going to the gym more, learning a new language and others — why not make some financial resolutions, too?

Here are a few to consider:

- **Boost your retirement savings.** If you can afford it, try to increase your contributions to your IRA and 401(k) or similar employer-sponsored retirement plan. The more you put away in these accounts, the greater your chances of reaching your retirement goals. At a minimum, contribute enough to your 401(k) to earn your employer's match, if one is offered. And whenever your salary goes up, consider raising the amount you put in to your 401(k).
- **Reduce your debts.** It's not always easy to reduce your debts — but it's worth the effort. The lower your debt load, the greater your monthly cash flow. So, look for ways to consolidate debts or find other, possibly more productive, ways of using credit. And if you truly can't afford something that's nonessential, don't go into debt for it. "Live within your means" is an old piece of advice, but it's just as valid now as ever.
- **Build an emergency fund.** If you suddenly needed a major home or car repair, or received a large medical bill not fully covered by insurance, would you have the

funds available? If not, you might be forced to dip into your retirement accounts or other long-term investments. To avoid this possibility, try to build an emergency fund containing several months' worth of living expenses, with the money kept in a liquid, low-risk account that's separate from the ones you use to meet your daily expenses. It can take a while to build such a fund, but if you make it a priority and contribute regular amounts each month, you can make good progress.

- **Avoid emotional decisions.** Too many people overreact to events in the financial markets because they let their emotions get the better of them. If the market is temporarily down, it doesn't mean you need to sell investments to "cut your losses" — especially if these investments still have good fundamentals and are still appropriate for your portfolio. It can be hard to ignore market volatility, but you'll be better off if you focus on the long term and continue following an investment strategy that's designed to meet your needs.
  - **Review your goals.** Over time, your goals may have changed. For example, while you once might have wanted to retire early, and planned for it, you may now find that you'd like to work a few more years. If that's the case, you may also need to adjust your financial and investment strategies.
  - **Revisit your estate plans.** If you've married, divorced, remarried or added children to your family within the past few years, you may need to review the account titling and beneficiary designations on your 401(k) and other retirement assets, along with your estate-planning documents, such as your will or living trust. You might also need to revise these documents in other ways.
- Of course, you may not be able to tackle all these resolutions at one time. But if you can work at them throughout the year, you can potentially brighten your financial outlook in 2024 — and beyond.

*This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Edward Jones, Member SIPC. Jeff Irish is an Edward Jones representative based in Ennis.*

Edward Jones

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To New Beginnings!

As the calendar turns the page, we wish you the very best in the year ahead.





Jeff Irish, AAMS™

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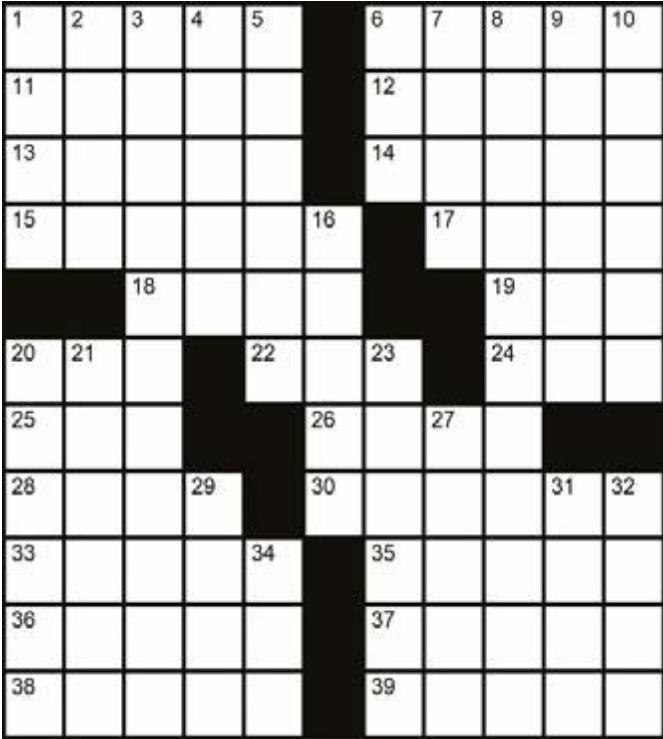
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# Crossword Puzzle



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### Across

- 1 Territory marker
- 6 Indisputable data
- 11 General meaning
- 12 Alert
- 13 These choristers can be male or female
- 14 Annapurna locale
- 15 "The Lion King" baddies
- 17 Plunge head-first
- 18 Lab product in "Breaking Bad"
- 19 Involuntary muscular contraction

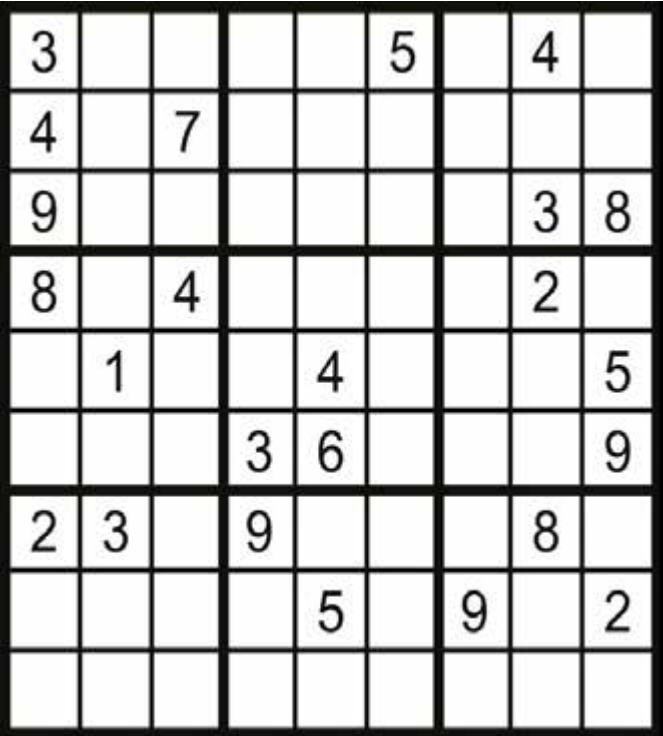
### Down

- 1 Six-sided state
- 2 Depend
- 3 Meet painter, surreally prone to excess
- 4 Nary a soul
- 5 Not genuine and usually inferior
- 6 Geisha's prop
- 7 Impressed
- 8 Governmental seat, usually
- 9 Alamo commander
- 10 Choose
- 16 Acute
- 20 Train stations
- 21 Humorously sarcastic
- 23 Samuel Goldwyn's homeland
- 27 It happens every birthday
- 29 Ceramicist's furnace
- 31 Image of a deity
- 32 Repudiate
- 34 Soak in liquid

Online versions and solutions available at [www.nowmagazines.com](http://www.nowmagazines.com). From our Homepage, click on the Crossword-Sudoku tab. Click on a puzzle. Click on the See All button to view solutions.

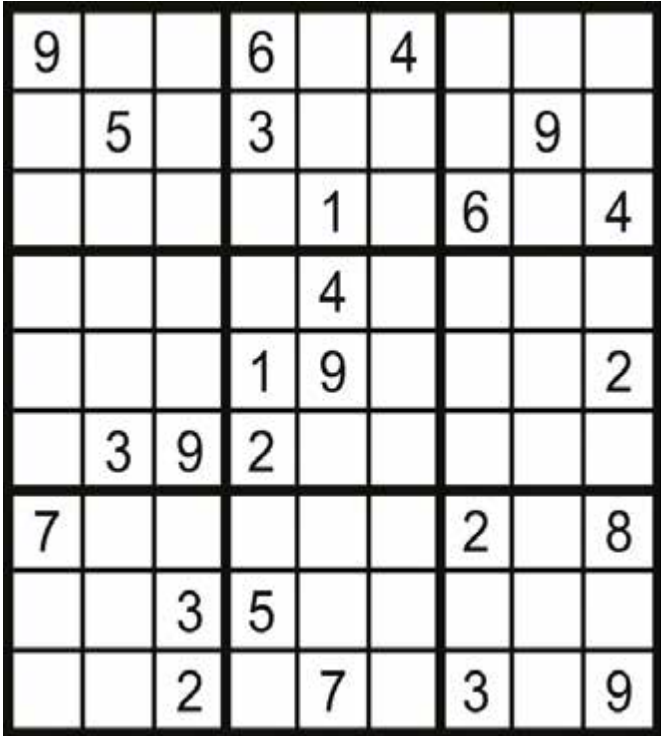
# Sudoku Puzzle

Easy



Crosswordsite.com Ltd

Medium



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# JANUARY

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1/2

### Varsity Basketball:

Ennis High School vs. Forney. 6:30 p.m., EHS Main Gym on Ensign Road. Tickets for all home athletic events will need to be purchased at [gofan.co/ennislions](http://gofan.co/ennislions).

1/8

### Bookend Painting:

The Ennis Public Library hosts a craft event for teens in grades six-12. 3:00 p.m., Ennis Welcome Center, 201 NW Main St. Call (972) 875-5360 if interested!

1/16

### Girls Varsity Soccer:

Ennis at Waxahachie. 7:00 p.m., Lumpkins Field, 200 Indian Dr., Waxahachie. Contact the athletic department for ticket information. (972) 872-7000.

1/18

### Mayor's Update and Town Hall Meeting:

Join Mayor Juenemann as she provides an update on the "State of the City." We will also hear from other city and Ellis County officials as they help kick off the new year with a lively discussion on other important issues that impact Ennis area businesses, residents and the community-at-large. 5:30-7:00 p.m., Ennis Welcome Center, Bluebonnet Room, 201 NW Main St.

For more information, call (972) 0878-2625 or sign up at [www.ennis-chamber.com](http://www.ennis-chamber.com).

1/27

### Ennis Education Foundation Dinner and Auction:

This will be the 10th Annual Dinner and Auction benefiting the foundation. The event will feature a delicious meal by Ruston Cattle Company, as well as a potato and salad bar, desserts and a cash bar. Raffles will be held, along with silent and live auctions. 6:00-10:00 p.m., SPIST Lodge, 1901 E. Ennis Avenue.

Tickets are by advance purchase only. Contact [ennisisdoundation@gmail.com](mailto:ennisisdoundation@gmail.com).

## Mondays and Wednesdays

### Chess Classes:

Free for all ages. 3:00-5:30 p.m., Ennis Public Library, 115 W. Brown St. For more information, call the library at (972) 875-5360 or [www.ennis.tx.gov/library](http://www.ennis.tx.gov/library).

*Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your current event details to [bill.smith@nowmagazines.com](mailto:bill.smith@nowmagazines.com).*

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