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JANUARY 2025

Incredible Iditarod

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Mack Boyd wears his heavy parka for the Iditarod in Alaska.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

We are so busy!

I do not like being late for appointments, and to have forgotten an appointment, realizing that someone was waiting for me to show up, really grates on me. I can honestly think of only two appointments that I did not show up for, and I hope the people that I left waiting for me have forgiven me. I know I apologized to them and did what I could to make things right. However, time escapes, and it is hard to make up.

Some people are just good at remembering things like doctor's appointments and their children's school events. Not me. I rely on the electronic calendar on my phone, and I am glad it is backed up on my home computer and somewhere in the clouds. Before cell phones, I carried a paper calendar called a Day-Timer. However, the system was not flawless, as one of the appointments from years ago was missed because I forgot to turn the page!

My electronic calendar has an alarm on it that I can set for the really important events, like remembering to take my morning pills that keep my heart pumping and my blood pressure in line. It helps, but so does the plastic calendar that has the pills arranged in little boxes for each day.

Magazine editors work with a series of deadlines throughout each month. We do not make each deadline, because we also work with our subject's schedules, so there has to be some flexibility.

As we enter the new year, I'm committed to being on time and not missing any appointments. I might try tying a string around my finger!

How do you get it all done?



Bill

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INCREDIBLE IDITAROD

— By Bill Smith

To the native Alaskan, “Iditarod” means distant or distant place. The great state of Alaska is far distant from Texas, but local veterinarian Dr. Mack Boyd has made an annual trip to Anchorage since 2019. “A few years ago, my son and I went up there to hunt and fish,” Mack recalled. “Our guide had formerly participated in sled dog races in Alaska as a musher. He knew I was a veterinarian and asked if I had considered volunteering at the Iditarod. I decided to give it a try.”

Mack has practiced veterinary medicine as a partner in his local clinic since 1987. Married to his wife, Molly, for almost 40 years, they have two children they are very proud of and two “perfect grandchildren.”

Mack’s eyes light up when he speaks of the event — a testimony of how much he enjoyed serving that first year and every subsequent year. “There are over 50 vets who volunteer annually, mostly from the United States, but some from other countries. There are requirements, such as a background of experience with canines and a 17-hour course to learn more about mushing dogs. We serve at the pleasure of the race, and I look forward to getting invited back each year. It’s been a lot of fun!”

The race celebrates the sled dogs, as well as the mushers, as the dog sled was a primary means of traversing long distances over snow covered trails and frozen lakes in years past. Looking back to 1925, the mission to deliver diphtheria serum from Nenana to Nome emphasizes the importance this mode of transportation had before the advent of snowmobiles (called snowmachines in Alaska) and small planes with the capability to fly in the sub-zero temperatures and land on frozen lakes.

“In Alaska, the Iditarod is a much bigger deal than people in the lower 48 states realize,” Mack opined. “It is like NASCAR Racing in Georgia. Everyone in the state would like to attend the ceremonial start of the race that takes place in Anchorage. The governor is usually there, as well as Miss Alaska and numerous other dignitaries and celebrities.

“The winner of the race may finish in 10 days, while the last musher, who is given the title ‘red lantern’ may take 13-14 days,” Mack explained. “I met the winner two years ago, the day after the race, and asked him if he had gone out and celebrated the night after his victory. His story is indicative of how popular the race is in Alaska.

“Ryan Redington is a native Alaskan, and his grandfather is known as the ‘Father of the Iditarod’ for co-founding the event



in 1973. He said all he did to celebrate was attend a basketball game. He was recognized by his trademark lime-green parka, and people in the stands began to clap as soon as he walked into the gymnasium. A standing ovation ensued, and it went on and on. The game stopped, and the players on the court were clapping. Ryan said it was the most amazing moment of his life.”

For Mack and the other volunteer veterinarians, they must be prepared for a variety of accommodations in temperatures as low as minus 40 degrees. The accommodations may include a community center or other nice structure in a small town along the trail, or where Mack stayed last year, in a tent on a frozen lake. “We are required to be prepared for whatever check point we are assigned to. I carry a 40 below sleeping bag, heavy boots, parka, gloves, a change of clothes and some emergency gear. We are limited to just 40 pounds of personal gear.”

There are 24 checkpoints on the



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trail with four to six veterinarians at each one. “We work in shifts with two or three vets during each shift. The

mushers send large bags ahead on the trail containing food and anything else the dogs might need,” Mack said. “We do wellness checks on every dog at every check point and talk to the musher about any issues. The mushers take better care of their dogs than they do themselves. Each musher has a list of things he must have to take care of himself and his dogs on the trail. One of them is a vet book for each dog that confirms the exams and any concerns. If they lose a vet book, they are out of the race.” Mack emphasized how careful he is to get the vet books back into the musher’s hand at the conclusion of their visit.

Mack has seen dogs taken out of the race for health issues, but a musher may choose to send a dog home just because the dog is underperforming. “A sled may start the race with as many as 16 dogs, but only five are required to finish the race,” he said. “The dogs are tremendous athletes, and they love what they do. They get excited as soon as the musher indicates it is time to get back on the trail. However, if a dog does not want to stay in the race,

there is no amount of cajoling that will motivate it.”

Over the course of years and in such harsh conditions with strenuous athletic competition, there are bound to have been some accidents affecting not only dogs, but also the mushers. Mack has seen his share, but in his experience, the volunteers who work with him are competent and well-equipped for whatever comes along. He also mentioned the service of the IAF, Iditarod Air Force, which consists of small helicopters and Cessna planes that transport the participants as needed. “The planes also fly us to our checkpoints, and if I am at a checkpoint that is early in the race as I was last year, when the red lantern passes our stop, I may be ‘leapfrogged’ by plane to another checkpoint nearer the end of the race, if needed.”

Mack recently penned his thoughts about the Iditarod, concluding, “Everyone who mushes or works or volunteers on an Iditarod race has their stories ... It’s always a highlight of my year. I can’t wait for that first Saturday in March of 2025!” **NOW**

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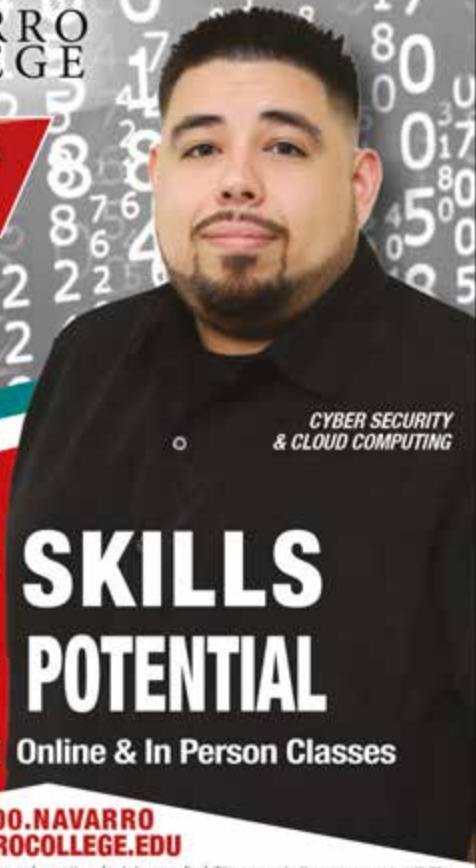
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Zoomed In: Norma Wilson

By Bill Smith

Norma Wilson was born here but lived in Fort Worth for most of her youth before moving back to Ennis and finishing high school in 1967. “I completed my cosmetology training at Neilson Beauty College in Dallas,” she recalled. “I started my career at Dorothy’s Beauty Shop here. My husband, Joe, and I lived in Memphis, Tennessee, and Portsmouth, Virginia, while he served in the Navy, and I worked as a hairdresser on two U.S. naval bases.”

When they returned to Ennis, she chose to work for a while with Mary Crow before operating her own shop with her sister. “I chose to work in Ennis to be close to my children and serve my hometown,” she continued. As she retires from Tisha & Co. here, she looks forward to traveling and spending time with Joe at the farm and with her two children, three grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.



Jack and Cindy Poff take a sleigh ride with their daughter and grandchildren.



Haley Burnett, Ashley Colunga and daughter, Lowe, welcome visitors to Ennis.



Habitat for Humanity President John Reynold, homeowner Olivia Partin and board members and supporters celebrate progress on the new home.



Librarian Jessica Diaz brings a program about the library remodel.



Julie Felcman displays her clothing on Black Friday.



Scott and Melinda Shaw gather with their grandchildren for the holidays.



Krystyna Domyshlinets enjoys a coffee from Brittany Romero.

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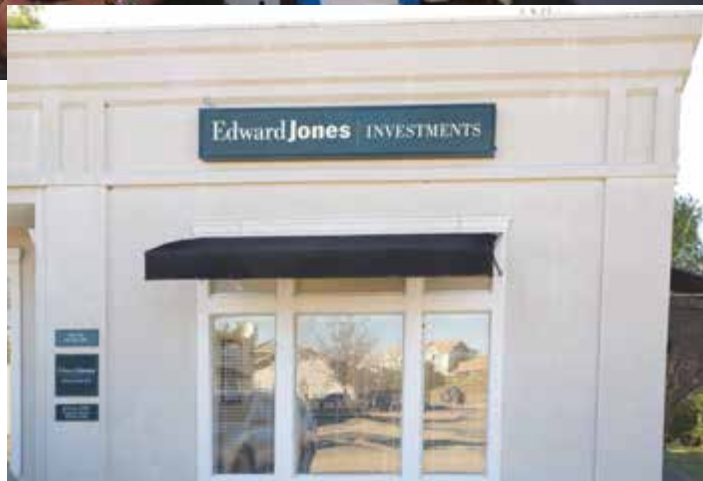
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— By Bill Smith



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Jeff Irish was 6 years old when his father, Bob Irish, brought the family to Ennis and established the first Edward Jones office here. Jeff is obviously proud to follow in his father's footsteps in the financial services industry. After completing his studies at Ennis High School in 1997 and his degree in marketing and finance at TCU, Jeff worked for other employers before joining Bob at Edward Jones in 2006.

"Beth Dodd had joined Jo Rogers and Dad in 2005, so when I joined, Beth and I were the 'juniors' in the office. She has been great as an administrator over the years. She is just like a partner to me," Jeff offered. "When Dad passed in 2013, Jo continued with us for many years, and it was amazing how our customers accepted me and gave me a chance to continue as their financial advisor with Edward Jones.

"We are here to offer our clients solutions. We want to help you establish your financial goals and reach them, whether it is for education expenses, retirement, building wealth or creating emergency funds. When a new customer joins us, the first thing I

ask is that they tell me about themselves. We want to establish what their risk tolerance is and perform a needs analysis to find out what is really important to them, so we can have their best interests in mind as we work to meet their financial goals.”

The Edward Jones office concept may be somewhat unique compared to other financial service firms. “We like the idea of a local, two-person office, compared to large offices with rows of cubicles in big cities. We have over 15,000 offices across the United States and Canada. We are your friends and neighbors. Our kids may be going to school with your kids, and you will see us at the grocery store, in local service clubs and at community events,” Jeff added.

The parent company was established in St. Louis in 1922 by Edward D. Jones Sr. According to the company website, Mr. Jones “determined his company will treat associates as partners and treat clients fairly by offering appropriate, quality investments.” The branch office concept was conceived by Ted Jones, Edward Jones Sr.’s son. The first branch office was opened in Mexico, Missouri, in 1957, and the firm continues to grow through branch offices.

“We like the personal relationships we have with our customers,” Jeff continued. “We find that customers who appear to be aggressive investors when we first meet may actually be conservative, and vice-versa. Edward Jones has over 100 years’ experience finding the right connection between client and advisor.”

Edward Jones financial advisors and staff are held to high standards of continuing education. Jeff’s AAMS™ designation stands for Accredited Asset Management Specialist™ and reflects his commitment to his career.

Community involvement is important to Jeff and his family. He currently serves as president of the Ennis Lionbackers, has been a member of the EISD Education Foundation, the Lions Club and the Greater Ennis Chamber of Commerce. His No. 1 charity is the Walk to End Alzheimer’s, and he and Beth chaired the annual walk in 2018.

For several years, Jeff and his wife, Tess, have been visible at the Lionbacker booth at EHS sporting events. Stop by and say hello, then make an appointment to visit Jeff at his office on Ennis Avenue. Jeff and Beth will welcome you. **NOW**

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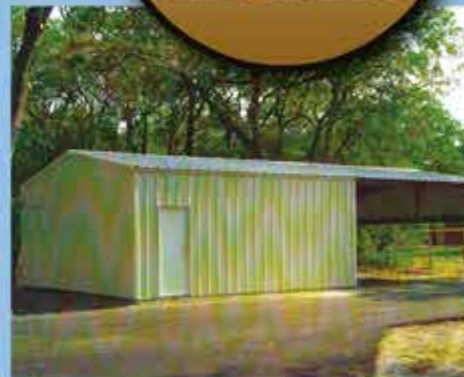
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Cheesy Chicken Enchilada Soup

CookingNOW

IN THE KITCHEN WITH COURTNEY HADLEY

— By Bill Smith



Courtney Hadley recalls the early years of her marriage when a lot of what she cooked came out of a box. “My poor husband, Josh! I’m happy to say that after 13 years, I rarely cook Hamburger Helper or serve frozen meals,” she offered with a smile. “I remember growing up and enjoying family homemade Sunday lunches with my great-grandparents. They are in heaven now, but we carry on this tradition with my Meme and Papaw.”

Family recipes have been passed down to Courtney, and she is mostly self-taught. “I add the recipes to the family binder that I get from social media. I try them out on my family first. If they like it, I add it to the binder. If they don’t like it, it doesn’t make the cut!” **NOW**

\$10 Italian Sausage

- 1 lb. ground Italian sausage
- 1 22-oz. jar alfredo sauce
- 1 6-oz. pkg. fresh spinach
- 1 16-oz. box penne pasta

1. Brown the Italian sausage; drain the grease.
2. Add the alfredo sauce and spinach; stir. (Add the spinach to taste. It does not have to be the whole bag).
3. Boil the pasta; drain.
4. Stir the sausage, spinach and alfredo mixture into the pasta; serve.

Bean Dip

- 2 16-oz. cans refried beans
- 8 oz. sour cream
- Taco Bell mild sauce, to taste
- Fiesta blend shredded cheese, to taste
- Tortilla chips, to taste

1. Preheat the oven to 400 F.
2. Combine the beans, sour cream and sauce; mix well.
3. Pour the mixture into a 9x9-inch pan. Bake for 10 minutes. Remove from the oven, stirring well.
4. Top with the cheese; return to the oven and bake for another 5 minutes, or until the cheese is melted.
5. Serve with tortilla chips.

Biscuits and Gravy Casserole

- Nonstick cooking spray
- 1 8-oz. can biscuits
- 1 lb. breakfast sausage
- 1 cup cheese, shredded
- 6 eggs
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1.5 oz. breakfast gravy mix

1. Preheat the oven to 350 F. Spray a 9x13-inch pan with nonstick spray.
2. Cut the uncooked biscuits into bite-size pieces; layer them in the bottom of the pan.
3. Brown the breakfast sausage; drain the grease. Layer the browned sausage on top of the biscuits.
4. Sprinkle the shredded cheese over the sausage layer.
5. Whisk together the eggs and milk; pour the mixture over the cheese.
6. Make the breakfast gravy per the package instructions; pour it over the eggs and milk mixture. Bake for 30–45 minutes.

Cheesy Chicken Enchilada Soup

- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 cup white onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup flour
- 3 cups chicken stock
- 2 cups chicken, cooked and shredded
- 1 10-oz. can red enchilada sauce

- 1 14-oz. can black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 14-oz. can diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1 tsp. salt, plus additional to taste
- 1/2 tsp. ground cumin
- 8 oz. sharp cheddar cheese, shredded

Optional Toppings:

- Tortilla chips
- Cilantro
- Sliced avocado
- Pico de gallo
- Sour cream
- Black olives

1. Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium-high heat.
2. Add the onions; sauté for 5 minutes, or until cooked and translucent. Add the garlic; sauté for an additional minute.
3. Whisk in the flour; cook for an additional minute.
4. Pour in half of the chicken stock; stir until completely combined with no lumps. Add the remaining chicken stock; stir.
5. Add the chicken, enchilada sauce, black beans, tomatoes, salt and cumin, stirring until combined; bring to a simmer.
6. Reduce the heat to medium-low; simmer for about 5 minutes, stirring, occasionally, so the soup does not stick to the pot.
7. Sprinkle in the cheese; stir.
8. Season with additional salt to taste. Add your desired toppings.

Crockpot Lasagna

- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1 lb. ground sausage
- 2 jars spaghetti sauce
- Italian seasoning, to taste
- Garlic powder, to taste
- Onion powder, to taste
- 1 box lasagna noodles
- Mozzarella cheese, to taste, shredded

1. Add the first 3 ingredients to a Crock-Pot.
2. Fill each spaghetti jar 1/3 of the way with water; shake them up, and pour into the Crock-Pot.
3. Add the seasonings; mix everything together well. Cook on low for 5 hours.
4. Break the lasagna noodles into your desired size; add them to the Crock-Pot.
5. Cook on low for an additional 1.5 hours.
6. Add the mozzarella cheese; serve when the cheese has melted.

To search for more great recipes from any of the 9 NOW Magazines publications, visit www.nowmagazines.com.



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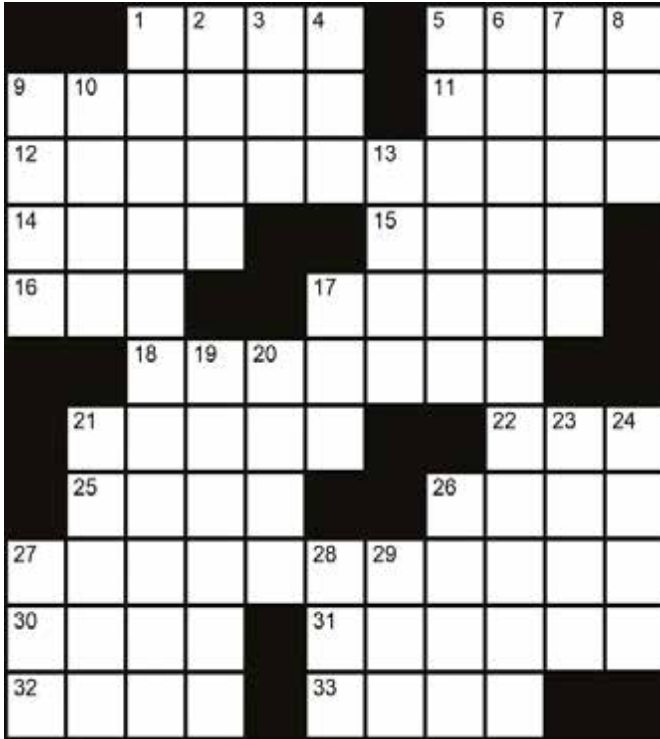
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Crossword Puzzle



CrosswordSite.com Ltd

Across

- 1 Took a dip
- 5 "Trust ---" (Janet Jackson song)
- 9 They raise the pitch
- 11 Bok ---, Chinese cabbage
- 12 Hill product
- 14 Condo, for example
- 15 "The Cannonball Run" star Reynolds
- 16 Ft. Collins setting
- 17 Track prelims
- 18 Without being stated
- 21 Title for a lady

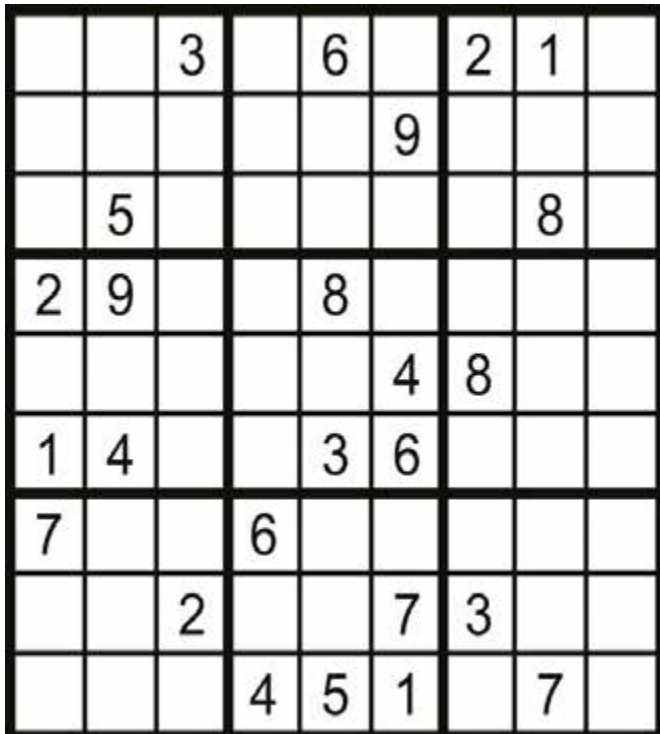
Down

- 22 Popeye's verb of being
- 25 "... --- - Cold --- - is master of them all." (Kipling)
- 26 Composer --- Bartók
- 27 Drives immediately behind another racecar
- 30 Oversupply
- 31 Whoopee!
- 32 "... of the D'Urbervilles"
- 33 10 Down output
- 1 Mad guitarist played as one of twelve on high
- 2 Formal legal document
- 3 Brown delivery firm
- 4 Ocean-height standard
- 5 Real
- 6 17th century European war
- 7 Cheers
- 8 Feminine half, in Chinese thinking
- 9 Urban renewal target
- 10 Cackleberry makers
- 13 Assist
- 17 "She Done --- Wrong" (Mae West movie)
- 19 Gets a little one a little later in life
- 20 Metal containers
- 21 Toulouse thousand
- 23 Mrs. Alfred Hitchcock
- 24 Hot Lips worked at one
- 26 North Atlantic hazard
- 27 U S M C noncom
- 28 French alternative to "café"
- 29 Bald patch patch?

Online versions and solutions available at 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.

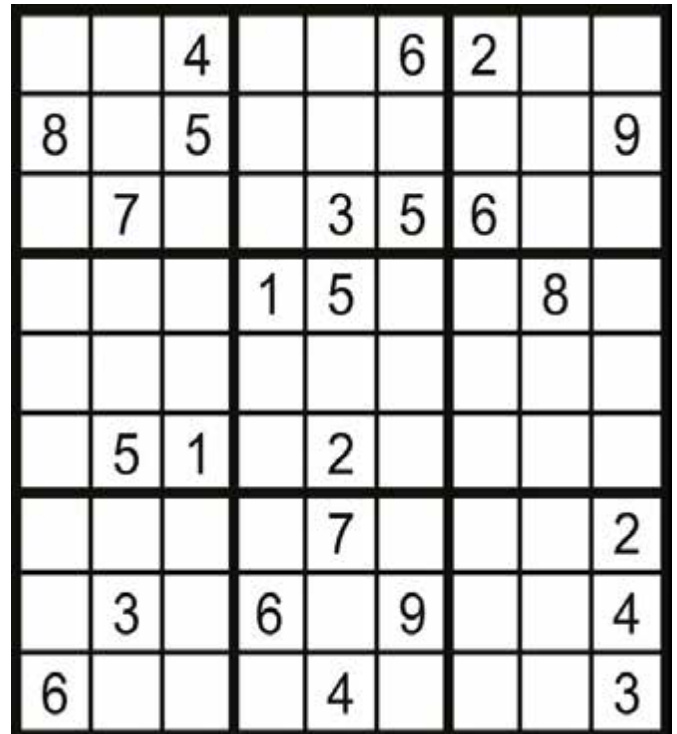
Sudoku Puzzle

Easy



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Medium



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One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well.
- Virginia Woolf

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JANUARY

Some events may have been cancelled or rescheduled while we were at press. Check with individual organizations or your city or Chamber websites to verify dates and times.

1/2

Ladies' Varsity Basketball:
EHS vs. Midlothian Heritage.
6:30 p.m., EHS Main Gym. Tickets for all home athletic events will need to be purchased at gofan.co/ennislions.

1/9

Family Skate Night:
We are thrilled to announce our brand-new Family Night from 5:00-9:00 p.m. Enjoy discounted admission rate and meal deals for the family. Generations Skate, 1301 S. Kaufman St. For more information, please visit: www.generations skate.com/events-1.

1/10

National Active & Retired Federal Employees Chapter 1191 Meeting:
Representing Ellis and Navarro counties. The scheduled speaker is Courtney Rayburn concerning diabetes. Asian King Restaurant, 507 N. Hwy. 77, Ste. 950, Waxahachie, TX 75165. For more information, contact nnsteveppa99@aol.com.

Men's Varsity Soccer:
EHS vs. Kaufman in the 1st Annual Chris Cooper Memorial Tournament. 8:00 a.m., Lion Memorial Stadium. Tickets for all home athletic events will need to be purchased at gofan.co/ennislions.

1/17

Karaoke Night at The Gameroom:
Come enjoy food, drinks, music and games. \$10 entry fee. 8:00-11:59 p.m., 807 W. Lake Bardwell Dr. For more information, visit www.ennisgameroom.com or call (469) 881-1022.

1/21

KJT Shuffleboard Tournament:
The competition is fierce! All levels of players welcome. Double elimination. Team play. Blind draw. \$10 entry per person. 1216 S. Paris St. For more information, call (972) 875-7975 or visit www.kjt35.com.

1/27

The Mentor Community Connection Event:
Discover how you can make a difference in the lives of struggling youth. This free event will feature Dr. Clayborne, Ennis' very own expert in mentoring and youth development. Attendees will gain valuable insights into "Understanding and Serving Struggling Teens." Plus, all participants will receive a copy of our newly published Mentor Guide. First Baptist Church Midlothian Student Center, 1680 S. Midlothian Pkwy., Midlothian, TX 76065. Register

online at [www.https://www.mentors.care/2025-mentor-community-connection](https://www.mentors.care/2025-mentor-community-connection). For questions contact susan.baker@mentors.care.

2/1

Ennis Education Foundation Dinner and Auction:
Save the date! For more information, visit www.ennisisdfoundation.org.

Fourth Mondays

Creative Quilters Guild of Ellis County:
Program by Robyn Gotch from Kits to Custom followed by group member show and tell. 6:00-8:30 p.m., Waxahachie Bible Church, 621 N. Grand Ave., Waxahachie.

Mondays and Wednesdays

Chess classes:
3:00-5:30 p.m., Ennis Public Library, 501 W. Ennis Ave. For more information, call the library at (972) 875-5360.

Tuesdays

Rotary Club of Ennis Meeting:
Lunch, club business and program. Noon, The First United Methodist Church, 300 N. Sherman St.

Second Tuesdays

Ennis Masonic Lodge #369 Meeting:
7:00 p.m., 209 N. Dallas St.

Wednesdays

Ennis Host Lions Club Meeting:
Noon, Tabernacle Baptist Church, 1200 Country Club Road.

First Thursdays, Every Other Month

Ennis Retired School Personnel (ERSPA) Meeting:
Meets on even numbered months at the new EISD Transportation Building, 3105 Ensign Rd. For more information, contact [BettyAnn Blazek at blazek2@sbcglobal.net](mailto:blazek2@sbcglobal.net).

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your current event details to bill.smith@nowmagazines.com.

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