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MAY 2020

## Pandemic Management

County Judge Todd Little  
appreciates Ellis County's  
response

In the Kitchen With  
Sally Manak Wendell

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Scavenger Hunt

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## **ON THE COVER**

*America and the rest of the  
world fight the unseen enemy,  
COVID-19.*

**Photo by**  
Hdconnelly - Dreamstime.com.

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mailed free of charge to homes and businesses in the Ennis ZIP codes.*

*Subscriptions are available at the rate of \$35 per year or \$3.50  
per issue. Subscriptions should be sent to: NOW Magazines, P.O.  
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correspondence, call (972) 875-3299 or visit [www.nowmagazines.com](http://www.nowmagazines.com).*



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Osteoarthritis, also known as degenerative joint disease, is the most common type of arthritis. In Osteoarthritis, the surface layer of cartilage breaks down and wears away. This allows the bones under the cartilage to rub together resulting in pain, swelling and loss of motion of the joint. Although in some people it progresses quickly, in most individuals joint damage develops gradually over years.

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Stem cells (also called mesenchymal cells) have the exceptional ability to take on the behavior and characteristics of their surrounding cells. As such, following a stem cell joint repair procedure, the injected cells may become specialized for the joint and, over time, may help to regenerate the damaged cartilage and other tissue. Results will vary among patients, but many report experiencing pain relief in as little as one week. You have probably recently seen many professional athletes in the news using stem cells to regenerate their bodies following a sports injury (including Super Bowl champion Peyton Manning). Stem Cell Therapy for joint repair is used for acute and chronic injuries and to stop the progression of degenerative arthritis.

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# MANAGING EDITOR'S NOTE



*As we practice social distancing ...*

During this COVID-19 pandemic, things have changed rapidly, necessitating companies make adjustments to how they do business, and we at NOW Magazines are no different. Like many of you, we are now officing from home, and our magazines may look a little different to you this month, due to some of the adjustments we have made as we navigate these challenging times. But we will get through these times together.

If you are like me, the events of the last couple of months have left you wondering what the future holds, but there is comfort in knowing our nation and the world have weathered many storms and come through OK on the other side. As I've pondered over this new reality, my thoughts have repeatedly gone back to one very brave lady named Corrie ten Boom. She and her family were Dutch Christians who lived in Nazi-occupied Holland during WWII. Their faith told them to love their neighbors as they loved themselves. So, they built a secret room in their home where, over time, they hid and saved nearly 800 Jews from the Nazi Holocaust. Eventually, they were betrayed, and the whole family was imprisoned in the concentration camps. Only Corrie survived.

In time, Corrie became an author and speaker with a worldwide ministry. Her message was one of forgiveness and reconciliation. While in college, I had the privilege of meeting Corrie's nurse, who cared for her during her last years. The stories about her life have always been an inspiration to me.

Corrie said, "Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God." Wow. So much faith and trust from someone who had experienced so much hurt, loss and tragedy. She lost her loved ones, her home and her job. But she never lost her faith, and it carried her through the dark times. And on the other side of the dark, was beauty again — full of life and hope and purpose. As we navigate the dark times our world faces now, we, too, can trust our unknown futures to God.

Beautiful stories are being reported of people finding ways to help, even in this time of social distancing. From a high school robotics class making face shields for medical professionals using 3-D printers and people shopping for neighbors in high-risk demographics to ministers holding online church services and entertainers live streaming concerts to add some joy to our lives, good is happening all around us, as people love others as they love themselves. What can you do within the guidelines our leaders have established to keep us safe and healthy? It may be no more than calling a family member or a friend, but hearing your voice might be exactly what that person needs at that very moment.

Is the future uncertain? Yes. But the truth is, the future is always uncertain. We never really know what the future holds. And it is always the best policy to live a loving, giving life.

*We can know peace.*

Becky Walker, Managing Editor · [becky.walker@nowmagazines.com](mailto:becky.walker@nowmagazines.com) · (972) 937-8447

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Melissa & Brian Morse

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Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



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*As Ellis County Judge Todd Little addressed the county commissioners at their special meeting on April 3, he remarked, "The weight on your shoulders and my shoulders has been different this last three weeks than it has been the previous 15 months." Even though one of the budget line items that was created in Judge Little's first year on the bench was for emergency management, he admitted no one could have predicted that the COVID-19 pandemic would be the emergency.*

"We prepared for natural disasters, an enemy we could see like water from a flood or buildings damaged by hail or a tornado. We put \$300,000 in the budget for emergency contingencies. We wanted to be pro-active and do things like draw up a map of all facilities in the county that house hazardous chemicals. I could still remember hearing the blast from the West, Texas, explosion as I shot hoops in my driveway. Having spent a career in insurance and risk-management, I knew emergency management was something that comes with the title of County Judge. We have emergency response companies that have already pre-bid their services if we have to respond to a chemical spill on the highway."

Everyone would agree that responding to a worldwide pandemic, which really does potentially affect everyone, required quick thinking and response. The timeline up to this point included just hearing about the virus during the first week in March, then responding quickly with a Disaster Declaration to begin protecting communities on March 17. That was a seven-day order. "I had met with county department heads on March 9, and convened what we call our 'task force' when the order was issued. The task force included the mayors and

superintendents of most of the cities in the county, and we stood together as one when we issued the declaration. On the evening after we issued the first order, we received notice from our County Local Health Authority identifying the first confirmed positive case of COVID-19 in Ellis County."

The school superintendents from around the county were looking to the county government for direction. "The schools were out for spring break, and if we did not act quickly, all of the students would be back in school with the potential of rapidly spreading the virus. The positive response from the schools has been great. The first order gave them authority to extend spring break for another week."

In every city across the county, there are trained emergency coordinators. All of them have training in the National Incident Command System (NICS). The Incident Command System is identified on the FEMA website as, "A management system designed to enable effective and efficient domestic incident management by integrating a combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures and communications operating within a common organizational structure. ICS is normally structured to facilitate activities in five [sic] major functional areas: command, operations, planning, logistics, Intelligence & Investigations, finance and administration. It is a fundamental form of management, with the purpose of enabling incident managers to identify the key concerns associated with the incident — often under urgent conditions — without sacrificing attention to any component of the command system."

Judge Little pointed out that most police and fire chiefs have this training. "Once an emergency happens, a process begins that is called the chain of command. While larger counties have a department of health, smaller counties generally do not have one, and Ellis County has never had one. While we might not have the same resources as a larger county to handle a pandemic, our communities here are strong and resilient, and together we will overcome COVID-19.

"Something Ellis County is blessed

with that most counties our size do not have is a strong medical network. This three-hospital network includes Baylor Scott & White in Waxahachie, Ennis Regional Medical Center and the new Methodist Midlothian Medical Center, which is scheduled to open later this year. That will make three full-service hospital emergency rooms available in our county."

The judge admitted that COVID-19 surprised a lot of us because it arrived so quickly. "Our close proximity to the Metroplex would have to be a contributing factor, particularly in our hardest hit communities, where so many residents commute to the large cities."

The economic effect of the virus will take a toll on the county, but not as severely as on the city budgets. "The cities depend more heavily on sales tax revenue, and closed businesses with the employees on furlough will be a drain. The majority of the county budget is from property taxes, and there is a long-term effect from the economic downturn that will potentially affect property values. In another proactive step, The Ellis County Commissioners' Court voted unanimously 5-0 to approve a resolution to go to the State of Texas for property tax relief, by freezing appraisal values at the 2019 limits.

Communicating accurate information to the citizens is a priority in the county, as rumors tend to spread quickly through social media. Residents are urged to follow the Ellis County TX Government Facebook page, where the information is timely, accurate and direct from the source. Today, the county page has more than 14,000 followers. Before the pandemic began, there were about 5,000.

"There is a lot of information on social media, but I would also direct people to the official county website, <https://co.ellis.tx.us> where residents can access the resources and the most recent COVID-19 information in Ellis County."

P





Photo by Elaine Baca.

# ANDEMIC

M A N A G E M E N T

— By Bill Smith





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Besides the physical health impact and the economic impact of the pandemic, Judge Little also recognizes, and relates to, the psychological impact the virus is having on individuals and families. The judge explained, "Babies are affected because their mothers are affected. Young boys are affected because their fathers are affected. Perhaps this is the first time parents have been unable to go to work and provide the support they need. Grandparents and grandchildren are missing each other."

Of course, we all want to see a return to normalcy, we want things the way they were, but is it possible to see something positive as we stay at home? Judge Little mentioned how families were finding creative ways to relate, perhaps re-living some time before many of us were consumed by social media. "Just last night, my family and I sat around our dinner table, talking until 2:00 a.m. We just had a long conversation. There was no high school or Little League game to go to, so that's what we did instead. We were together as a family, and it was just us. Our church is in our home right now. We are all lifting each other up. We have to look for the hope in things."

"As a former mayor," Judge Little said, "I can tell you that every mayor I have met and talked with during this time has been interested in taking care of their individual communities. We are blessed in Ellis County to have mayors. All are very concerned and very considerate

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Photo by Elaine Baca.

in caring for their populations. This has been a surprise for all of them, and they have been resilient. They have all shown strength, and I believe they understand the importance of taking care of their people. They've done a great job working with their first responders and their city councils to make it easier on their citizens. This has not been easy on anyone, but they work very hard to lift the burden from their citizens. They understand the emotional and financial drain people are feeling. I really believe they have a great sense of empathy for their constituents, and they have always been team players, working and finding solutions to COVID-19."

At times like these, people turn to their faith for strength, wisdom and guidance. Judge Little has been truly appreciative of all of the support, encouragement and prayers he has received from so many. Ellis County citizens have been doing a good job, cancelling events and festivals like the Polka Festival in Ennis and the Scarborough Renaissance Festival in Waxahachie, and it is important to continue following the guidelines established by the governor and the CDC. Quoting II Timothy 1:7, "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind," Judge Little indicated that he does not want citizens to live in fear, but to use wisdom in their daily activities.

"When this is over, things will be different," Judge Little said. "The economy will be different. I think we will see things based less on quantity and more on quality, and more hope, and more community action. And we can build momentum together into the future, and do it even better than before." **NOW**



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3

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# BusinessNOW

## Guild Mortgage Company

— By Bill Smith

### Guild Mortgage Company

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With interest for mortgage loans at a very attractive rate, Vanessa Zmolik said that Guild Mortgage Company is very busy right now. “We have had to change the way we interact with clients today due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but business is good. We have our clients schedule their



appointments when they need to come into the office, and we allow only one client in the office at a time. Our employees are working from home on their notebook computers, and we recognize how fortunate we are that we are an essential business and much of our work can be done electronically. However, I would have to say that the biggest impact on our loan closing today is the buyer continuing to be employed and not furloughed right up to the day of closing. Guild is watching that very closely.”

Vanessa and her team at Guild Mortgage Company can boast of a combined 60 years of experience in the mortgage origination and lending business, and coincidentally, Guild Mortgage Company celebrates its 60th year in business in 2020. From her early years with a small mortgage company, Vanessa quickly moved into management by age 25 with Bank of America. “I processed and closed loans, and lots of hours were required,” she recalled. “The business was about

relationships then, and the business is about relationships today.”

Client relationships are obviously very important to Vanessa, and she and her team put a lot of emphasis on the service they offer to their valued clients. “I still see clients from many years ago. Some of them still have their original loans, but for many, they have sold that first home and bought another, perhaps several times over. We want them to continue to come to us.”

Many loan originators or mortgage lenders sell their loans soon after closing. Guild is an actual mortgage lender, and they service over \$60 billion in loans. At their most recent leadership summit that Vanessa was able to attend in San Diego, it was announced that Guild Mortgage Company retains more than 60 percent of its clients. That percentage leads the rest of the country by a wide margin.

“People do business with people they trust,” Vanessa continued. “There is a lot of information that has to be gathered for closing. We want to make sure the loan closes on time. We have a great team at Guild that loves our customers as much as the loan officers do. Our Ennis loan officers are Staci Fincher and Laura Mitchell.”

In addition to the service to the clients and the great client relationships of which Guild boasts, another thing that Vanessa indicates sets them apart from others is their philosophy of giving back to the communities they serve. The home office website mentions, “Guild is devoted to the communities in which we live and work. We support dozens of local and national charities through direct donations and company-supported volunteer hours.” “The more you give, the more you receive,” Vanessa added. “We support CASA, the Angel Trees at Christmas and veterans, as we were very active in building a home locally for a disabled veteran.

“I can’t put enough emphasis on the benefits to our customers of owning their home versus renting. History speaks for itself in the appreciation of real estate values over time,” Vanessa added. “Now is a great time to begin your relationship with Guild Mortgage Company.” **NOW**





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## Zoomed In: Linda Roberson

By Bill Smith

Linda Roberson has enjoyed being an advertising representative for *EnnisNOW* for 11 years, and a big part of that enjoyment has been the ability to get out in the community to visit with the business owners and their employees. "I have always worked from home, but I miss seeing my customers face-to-face. However, they are responding wonderfully during this crisis!" Linda exclaimed.

The changes we make today are helping, and "flattening the curve" is so important. "I think some of the precautions we are now taking will, on occasion, come back and be our new normal. Other things like the convenience of doing more business online with doctors, retailers and restaurants will become more the norm than it is now, which I think is great."



*Claire and Jane Simmons enjoy the spring-like weather.*



*Jerod Brown handles the frying as his son, Tommy, batters the venison.*



*Diego Garcia and his children, Noah and Avery, go fishing after homeschool.*



*Chamber President Jeanette Patak works from home, along with her faithful companion, Max.*



*Lisa Lowe enjoys a run while camping in her RV at Lake of the Pines.*





Sophia, Jason and Isabela Contreras take over their mom, Esmeralda Contreras', work-from-home space.



Brian Lasky introduces his new puppy, Brownie, to the neighborhood.



Pastor Glenn Hejny records video for his Sunday sermon from home.



Caroline Brown shows off her crappie.

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A photograph of Sally Manak Wendell, a woman with blonde hair, smiling and holding a plate of food. She is standing in a kitchen with wooden cabinets and a stone backsplash. The text "CookingNOW" is overlaid on the top right of the image.

CookingNOW

*In the Kitchen With*  
**SALLY MANAK WENDELL**

— By Lindsay L. Allen

Sally Manak Wendell grew up in a Czechoslovakian family that knows a thing or two about preparing delicious food. With a family business making Czech sausage and an aunt who owns a Czech catering company, it is only natural for Sally to know her way around the kitchen, and she especially loves to grill!

"I grew up watching my mom and grandmother cook and enjoy preparing dinner every night for my family," Sally said. A lot of the recipes she makes come from a cookbook filled with her mother's recipes that family members compiled after she passed a couple years ago. "My mom always made a Rice Krispies birthday cake for us each year, and I loved that tradition growing up." **NOW**

## Pumpkin Flan

**2 cups sugar (divided use)**  
**1 1/2 cups skim milk**  
**3 large eggs**  
**3 egg whites**  
**1 cup canned pumpkin**  
**1 tsp. cinnamon**  
**1 tsp. vanilla extract**  
**1/4 cup coconut, flaked**

1. Preheat oven to 350 F
2. Sprinkle 1/2 cup of sugar into a 9-inch round cake pan; cook over medium-high heat, shaking the pan occasionally using oven mitts, until the sugar melts and turns a light golden-brown color. Set aside when done.
3. Heat milk and remaining sugar in a saucepan, stirring constantly, until hot and frothy.
4. Beat eggs, egg whites, pumpkin,

cinnamon and vanilla at medium speed with an electric mixer until blended well; add hot milk mixture, beating on low speed.

**5.** Pour mixture over caramelized sugar; place the cakepan in a roasting pan. Pour hot water into the roasting pan to a depth of 1 inch.

**6.** Bake for 1 hour or until a knife is inserted and comes out clean.

**7.** Remove pan from water; cool on a wire rack. Cover and chill.

**8.** Bake the coconut in a shallow pan at 350 F, stirring occasionally for 5-6 minutes, or until toasted. Cool when done.

**9.** Loosen edges of the flan with a spatula; invert onto a serving plate. Sprinkle with coconut.

## Apple Crisp

**1 cup brown sugar**  
**1 tsp. cinnamon**  
**1/2 cup butter**  
**3/4 cup flour**  
**4 cups apples, pared and sliced**



1. Preheat oven to 350 F
2. Mix everything but the apples together.
3. Press mixture into a pie pan; top with the apples.
4. Bake for 1 hour and 15 minutes.

## Sauerkraut (Kyselé Zeli)

**32 oz. Libby's Sauerkraut**  
**3 slices bacon, cooked**  
**1 Tbsp. caraway seed**  
**1 Tbsp. sugar**  
**1 medium onion, sliced**  
**3 Tbsp. bacon grease**  
**Flour, to taste**

1. Drain the sauerkraut; pour it into a pot.
2. Fill the empty sauerkraut jar with water; pour the water into the pot with the sauerkraut.
3. Add bacon, caraway seed, sugar and onion. Heat the ingredients, stirring occasionally.
4. In a skillet, heat bacon grease; add enough flour to thicken the mixture.
5. Pour the flour mixture over the sauerkraut and serve.

## Divinity

**1 cup pecans**  
**2 1/3 cups sugar**  
**1/2 cup water**  
**1/2 tsp. salt**  
**1 1/2 tsp. vanilla**  
**2/3 cup Karo syrup**  
**2 egg whites**

1. Chop the pecans into fine pieces.
2. Add all ingredients to a pot; bring to a boil.
3. Once the mixture reaches 265 F, remove from heat.
4. Spoon the mixture in 1-inch-size balls onto a waxed paper-lined baking sheet; let set.

## Mexican Corn Dip

**4 jalapeños**  
**4 green onions**  
**2 8-oz. cans Mexican corn**  
 (Can also use frozen.)  
**3/4 cup sour cream**  
**1/2 cup mayonnaise**  
**2 cups sharp cheddar cheese**  
**Fritos, for serving**

1. Rinse the jalapeños and green onions; chop them into fine pieces.
2. Drain the Mexican corn.
3. Mix all ingredients, except Fritos, in a bowl; refrigerate overnight.
4. Serve with Frito chips.



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Sauerkraut  
(Kyselé Zeli)

## Mother's Fudge

- 1 12-oz. can evaporated milk
- 2 squares unsweetened chocolate
- 4 1/2 cups sugar
- 3/4 cup chocolate chips
- 2 sticks butter (divided use)
- 1 lb. marshmallows
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 2 cups pecans
- Pam cooking spray

1. Place milk, unsweetened chocolate and sugar in a pot; bring to a boil. Let boil for 15 minutes; remove from heat.
2. Add chocolate chips and one stick of butter. Stir until well blended; remove from heat.

3. Add remaining stick of butter; stir until blended.
4. Mix in marshmallows, vanilla and pecans; stir well.
5. Spray a baking pan with Pam; pour mixture into the pan.
6. Let set overnight before cutting into squares and serving.

## Randy's Peanut Butter Rice Krispies Birthday Cake

- 1 cup peanut butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup Karo syrup
- 6 cups Rice Krispies cereal

1. Heat the peanut butter, sugar and syrup until the sugar is well melted.
2. Mix in cereal; press the mixture into a greased baking pan.
3. Cut into squares and serve.

## Spicy Pecans

- 1 Tbsp. butter
- 1/2 to 1 tsp. Lawry's Seasoned Salt
- 1/2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 4 cups pecans

1. Preheat oven to 325 F.
2. Mix all ingredients together; spread on a baking sheet.
3. Bake for 45 minutes.

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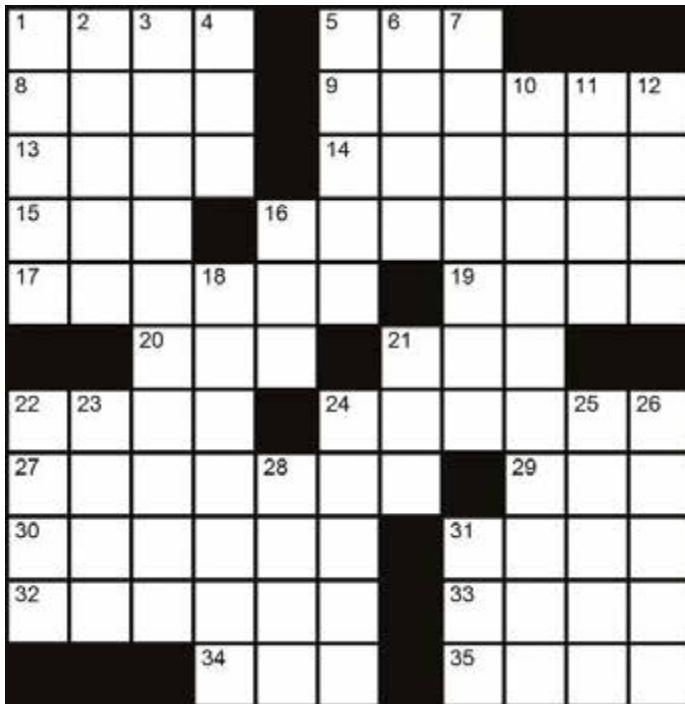


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# Crossword Puzzle



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## Across

- 1 Greatest part
- 5 Pull laboriously
- 8 Fuzzy red monster
- 9 It's on top of the world
- 13 — Turing, of "The Imitation Game"
- 14 Dark
- 15 Abner's intro
- 16 Ladies' man
- 17 Scold
- 19 Basic unit of heredity
- 20 Average
- 21 Fondle
- 22 Supercilious manner
- 24 Discontinued Chrysler marque
- 27 Bewitched
- 29 One circuit
- 30 Deliver to a judge
- 31 Opportune
- 32 Not destroyed or lost
- 33 Way out yonder
- 34 Defiant exclamation
- 35 View from Los Alamos

## Down

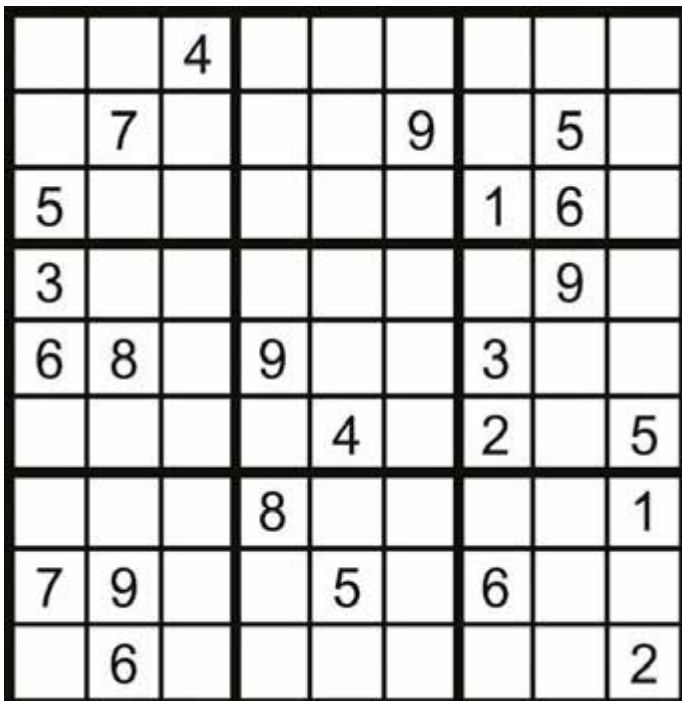
- 1 Soft, dry and friable
- 2 Skateboard maneuver
- 3 Contract details
- 4 Weight unit; may be long or short
- 5 Illumination
- 6 "Daily Bruin" publisher
- 7 Composer — Bizet
- 10 Perk up
- 11 So be it
- 12 Funerary bonfire
- 16 Amtrak unit
- 18 Urgent sale words
- 21 Write
- 22 His name is on a stadium in Queens
- 23 Large-screen format
- 24 Pool dimension
- 25 Spanish appetizers
- 26 Musical drama
- 28 Sushi option
- 31 Run into

Solutions on page 28

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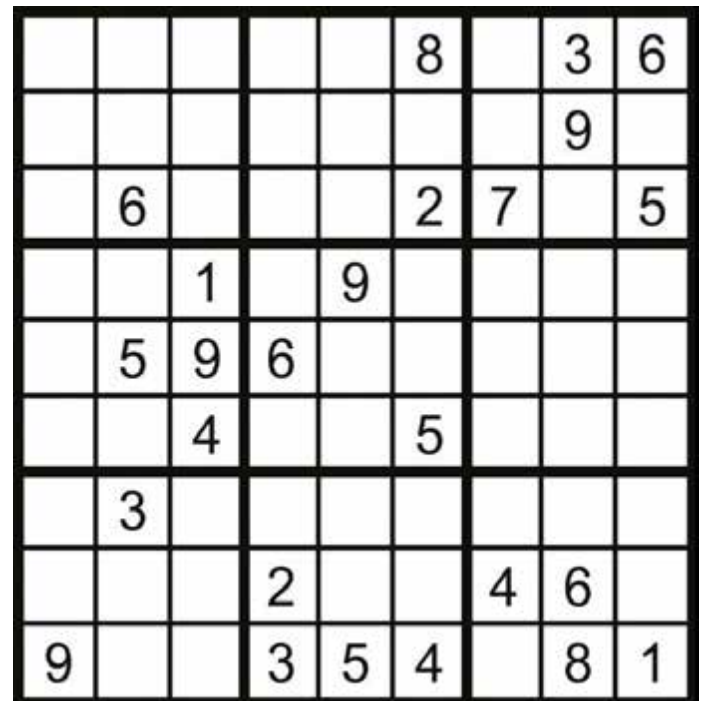
# Sudoku Puzzle

Easy



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Medium



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Solutions on page 28



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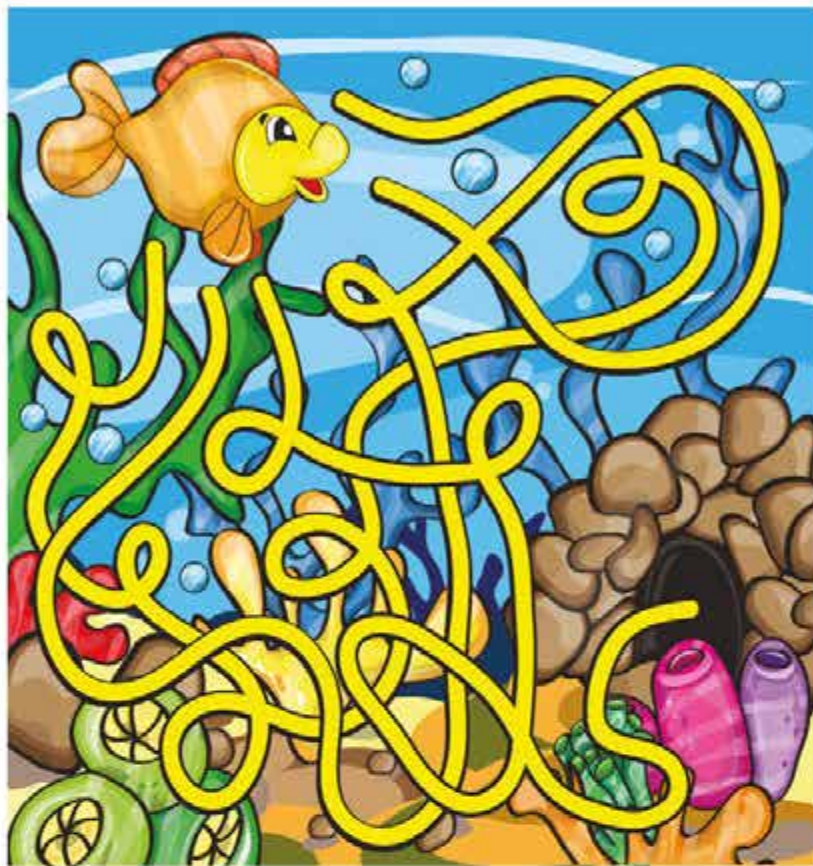


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G	S	S	E	G	A	E	R	R	U
G	I	T	P	E	E	A	I	N	E
P	L	O	P	B	P	C	C	O	B
L	P	R	E	L	E	H	O	L	E
A	E	R	R	U	M	R	T	E	R
N	A	A	P	P	L	E	R	M	R
T	R	C	C	H	E	R	R	Y	Y
N	O	L	E	M	R	E	T	A	W



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1	2	3	4	U		5	6	7	S	
8	U	S	S	R		9	S	H	A	P
12	R	E	P	L	A	C	E	M	E	N
14	K	E	Y		15	T	A	P		A
					17	S	T	R	U	C
19	S	T	A	T		22	B	A	S	T
23	W	I	N	D	M	I	L	L		
25	I	M	A		26	P	S	I		F
30	P	O	L	I	T	I	C	I	A	N
33	E	R	O	D	E	S		34	M	Y
					35	G	O	D		
									36	P

Easy

2	7	9	6	8	3	4	5	1
3	8	4	5	2	1	6	7	9
6	1	5	4	7	9	8	2	3
1	3	8	7	9	6	5	4	2
5	2	7	1	4	8	3	9	6
4	9	6	3	5	2	7	1	8
8	4	3	2	1	7	9	6	5
7	6	2	9	3	5	1	8	4
9	5	1	8	6	4	2	3	7

Medium

2	6	1	5	3	9	7	4	8
5	7	8	4	6	2	1	3	9
3	4	9	8	1	7	2	6	5
7	9	2	3	8	6	5	1	4
1	5	3	7	9	4	6	8	2
6	8	4	1	2	5	3	9	7
4	1	5	9	7	3	8	2	6
8	2	7	6	4	1	9	5	3
9	3	6	2	5	8	4	7	1

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