

# CorsicanaNOW

M A G A Z I N E

SEPTEMBER 2025



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Kaya Nguyen strives to always do better

In the Kitchen With  
Andrea Commiato

Also inside:

Scavenger Hunt

Crossword

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

See You in September ...

This wasn't just a spoken sendoff at the end of the school year for us Rock and Rollin' Baby Boomers in 1966. It was a favorite song performed by The Happenings that long, hot summer. After serving as a counselor-in-training at Camp Val Verde where I had been a camper since second grade, traveling with my family while my dad was teaching in the Army Reserves for a month that summer and working on the family farm and for family businesses — activities that kept me busy except for hanging out at Waco's Kim's Diner, our teenage spot — I was excited to start school again as a college freshman at Baylor University.

This was going to be a little different start of a new school year. Another level up making studies a little harder and more self-directed, a new campus to navigate and a few familiar fellow high school graduates to greet again led me into the already familiar territory of transition years from elementary to middle school to high school. Yet there were new challenges: mostly new people to meet, many of whom had grown up differently from my youthful days; a real, paying campus job to balance

with an overload of classes; an hour-long daily commute, which required searching for a parking space even at 7:30 a.m.; and much more freedom, especially during weekend activities.

Our kids returning to school will have many of those same experiences this month, especially those in "transition" years. Let's support them wisely as they navigate new waters on their way to becoming lifelong learners and successful adults.

... as we "fall" back into our school routines.

September 2025  
Volume 22, Issue 9

## ON THE COVER



Kaya Nguyen is serving up wins in the classroom and in sports.

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# Focused and Locked In

— By Virginia Riddle

*In predawn darkness, the tennis court lights shine brightly at Corsicana High School as the tennis teams, both JV and varsity, begin practice at 6:00 a.m. Practice is hard and requires dedication and sacrifices since there's tennis practice again after school until 5:00 p.m. Last spring, the after-school practice was followed by school musical practice and*

tutorials, making for a long school day. Kaya Nguyen showed her dedication to the sport as a freshman last year, on both JV and varsity, successfully being named JV District Champ in girls singles and the most outstanding JV tennis girl. Kaya explained, "I enjoy tennis because if I'm having a really bad day, it goes away when I focus and lock in. I know there's always something I can do better."

A sophomore now, Kaya is not only competing in fall tennis in girls' singles on varsity, but she is part of the Calicos, the CHS dance team. Additionally, this well-rounded young lady loves gymnastics and dance; performs vocals and dance in musicals; performs musically with her mom, Raquel Lindemann-Nguyen; and strives to always make A/B Honor Roll. She's inspired by her mom, who is a runner and cyclist, and her dad, Paul Nguyen, who plays tennis and cycles. This busy family of three enjoys outdoor sports during vacations and around Corsicana.

First coached by Cecil Easley, who has brought up so many outstanding tennis players in Corsicana, Kaya said, "I became serious in fifth grade. I love sports, and I start getting anxious if I'm not active. Sports are fulfilling for me, even though it means not having as much time to hang out with friends, and I must leave sleepovers early to make practice. I've never been good at being lazy. I'm glad I have this privilege. Our varsity team made it to the regional semifinals in the fall," Kaya recalled. "Tennis practice and competition can be pretty tiring, but I love it and want to play tennis or dance in college."

Kaya has been in cheer and had the honor of being on the cover of Varsity Cheer's catalog twice. "That was really, really fun," she exclaimed. "My favorite part was when they did my makeup and hair." However, last year's cheer and tennis schedules collided, so she



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dropped cheer, but tried out for Calicos and made the dance team. "All my activities are fun, and my classes are great. The counselors support it all. "I worked out in dance for two-hour sessions before tryouts so often that I had bruises," Kaya remembered. She also credits being on a gymnastics team in Dallas and competing in the sport for four years as a help in making the dance team. "Gymnastics shaped me. I never wanted to leave the gym. It was my passion, and Calicos gives me that same feeling," Kaya stated. Doing stretches in her home's garage gave Kaya "balance" with gymnastics and dance.

Asked if she ever gets a case of nerves during her varied competitions, Kaya replied, "I can get really nervous in dance because of people's expectations, but I never get nervous in tennis unless it's game point." Her best memories made in high school to date include making Calicos and her first varsity tennis match.

A member of CHS's Varsity Choir and church choir, Kaya can't recall a time when she didn't sing. Last year in UIL competition, she earned a 1 in solo and ensemble competition and was named a Texas Music Scholar. She is a soprano and plays the guitar, mostly country and pop genres.

"I'm very proud of Kaya," her mom said. "In the studio, she knows how to advocate for herself and acts professionally."

Kaya also loves musicals. She has performed in area community theater productions and school productions in the following roles/musicals: Veruca Salt in *Willie Wonka*, as Anna in *Frozen*, as Cady in *Mean Girls* and as Marty in *Grease*.

Having been homeschooled in her earlier years by her mom and being an

only child are two factors that Kaya says help her. "Having a tutor helps, too, and I try to get all my schoolwork done in school," she explained. She credits her participation in CHS' DEFY program for "helping her learn about finances and entrepreneurship." Her long-term goal is to major in business in college and own a business.

The family has traveled to several states on vacations and to be with extended family during holidays and special occasions. While in junior high, Kaya traveled to Atlanta, Georgia, and competed with the Amazing Shake team. She likes to work out at the Corsicana YMCA, hang out with friends and enjoys babysitting. She volunteers in the theater productions and works with younger kids during school field days. "I like living and going to school in Corsicana because everyone knows each other," she said. "However, that can be both a blessing and a curse!"

It's a full and varied life that Kaya has chosen, and she wouldn't have it any other way. She reflected, "All my gifts have been given to me by God. Without Him, everything in my life falls apart." **NOW**



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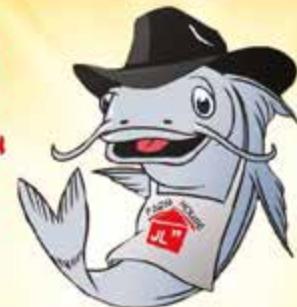
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## Zoomed In: Jenny Getchel

By Virginia Riddle

Five years ago, Jenny Getchel moved to Corsicana from California, "looking for the Texas lifestyle." A member of Corsicana Newcomers, Jenny stated, "I like lake living, Texas hospitality, and the people are easy to talk to." She enjoys sports, traveling, working out in the gym, meeting people and lake activities.

Jenny was in real estate but felt a call to ministry. She attended Western Seminary and served as a sheriff's department chaplain in California. After coming to Texas, Jenny served as a chaplain to 24 Navarro County fire departments. "I retired, but I do ministry — especially grief counseling — almost daily," she said. "Everyone needs the love of Jesus. I tell people to grow your faith, be adventurous and follow God's plan for your life."



CHS mascots, Kiara Sullivan and Jose Hernandez, are named All-American nominees and receive awards for Mascot Leadership at NCA Leadership Camp.



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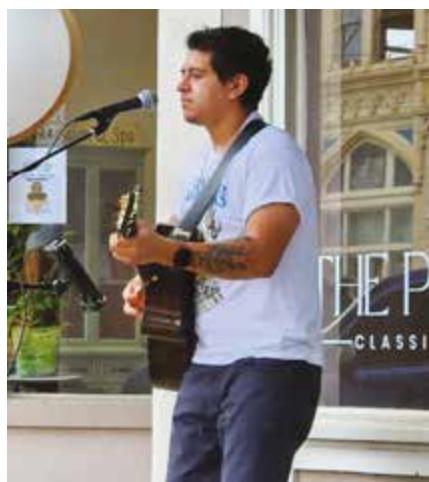
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BusinessNOW

# Griffin-Roughton Funeral Home

— By Virginia Riddle

## Griffin-Roughton Funeral Home

1530 N. 45th St.  
Corsicana, TX 75110

450 E. Main St.  
Fairfield, TX 75840

Corsicana Office: (903) 874-4774  
Fairfield Office: (903) 389-9217  
Fax: (903) 872-5889  
[info@grieffin-roughton.com](mailto:info@grieffin-roughton.com)  
[www.grieffin-roughton.com](http://www.grieffin-roughton.com)  
Facebook: Griffin-Roughton Funeral Home

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



Family-owned and -operated since 1946 in Corsicana, Griffin-Roughton Funeral Home has been helping area families by walking them through the steps of making arrangements and helping them honor their loved ones' lives. "My father passed away in 1997, and I understand the stress and emotion that is felt when trying to make decisions in these times," Tina Roughton, funeral director and co-owner, shared. "I just want to make it as easy as I can for each of my families."

Services offered include cremations, pre-plan funeral arrangements, monument sales and funerals. Billy Roughton, Tina's husband, is a fourth-generation funeral director and owner and one of the facility's embalmers. Griffin-Roughton's seven full-time and two part-time employees are trained and experienced in meeting families' every needs. The business is regulated by the Texas Funeral Service Commission and the Texas Department of Banking.

The original facility was opened by Billy's great-grandparents, W.E. and Reppie Griffin, in downtown Corsicana at the corner of West 5th Street and North

14th Street behind the First Baptist Church. "Billy's father took the family business over after his grandfather was in his elderly years, built our current building and changed the name to Griffin-Roughton," Tina explained. "In June 2015, Billy and I purchased the business from his parents, Bill and Linda, to carry on the family tradition. It's our family name and our family reputation." The Fairfield location was opened in 2000.

The business has received Best of the Best for the past several years in Corsicana and is a member of the Corsicana & Navarro County Chamber of Commerce, the Fairfield Chamber of Commerce and the Texas Funeral Directors Association. A Corsicana native, Billy has served as the Navarro County Youth Expo superintendent, ag superintendent and executive chair. "We enjoy helping the youth in Navarro and Freestone counties by sponsoring activities centered around youth," Tina stated.

Raised in Streetman and the Cedar Creek Lake area, Tina married into the business in 1995 and officially joined Billy in 2000. Both Billy and Tina attended Navarro College and graduated from the Dallas Institute of Funeral Service. "I was raised in this business," Billy said. "I enjoy knowing the people in the Corsicana and Fairfield areas which are still small enough that people will come and help each other in their time of need."

Billy and Tina are active members at Westhill Church of Christ where Billy serves as a deacon. When not at work, they enjoy spending time with their family. "I also love working in my yard," Tina said. "It's my stress release."

As with all businesses, there are challenging changes. "During the past several decades, this industry has gone from the standard traditional service to more of a celebration of life service," Billy explained. "Meeting the wants of families while keeping the financial burden manageable is also challenging. However, I enjoy helping families through the most difficult time they will face."

Tina agreed, "Knowing I helped a family get through one of the most stressful, emotional days and making it as easy as I can for them is a personal joy." **NOW**

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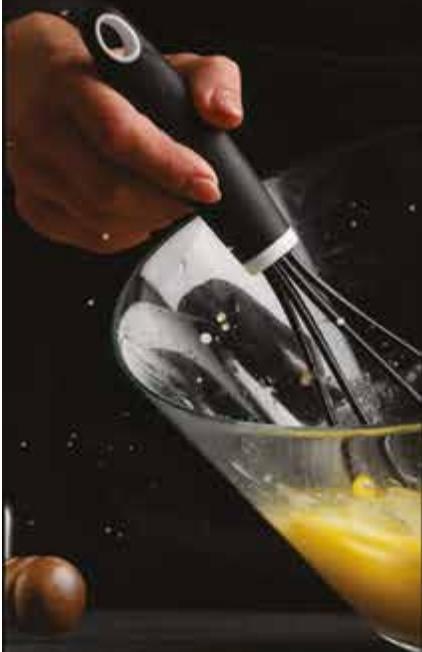
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# CookingNOW IN THE KITCHEN WITH ANDREA COMMIATO

— By Virginia Riddle



A Powell, Texas native, Andrea Commiato is the professional cook/owner of The Gipsy Joint and BBQ. "Cooking is my love language," Andrea reflected. "I get inspired by flavors, a spice, a memory or a craving." Mostly self-taught, Andrea's favorite ingredient is garlic, and smoking is her favorite technique. She enjoys inventing and experimenting with recipes. "I start with one item and just keep adding ingredients until my Cherokee and Italian ancestors say, 'Whoa child, that's enough,'" she explained. Andrea gets cooking tips and her favorite recipe from her grandmother.

She enjoys cooking for family and friends and spending time with her children and granddaughter. "Growing up, dinner was when we disconnected from the world and focused on each other," Andrea said. "I love making meals that bring people together." **NOW**

## Greens

**3 bushels mustard greens**  
**3 bushels collard greens**  
**2 lbs. bacon, cut into 1/4-inch sections**  
**5 garlic cloves, diced**  
**1 onion, diced**  
**8 cups chicken broth**  
**1/4 cup white vinegar**  
**1 whole turkey leg or hambone with meat**  
**Salt, to taste**  
**Black pepper, to taste**  
**Garlic powder, to taste**  
**Crushed red pepper, to taste**

## Cajun concentrate seafood boil, to taste (optional)

**1.** Wash the greens; remove the stems. Roll the leaves of both greens up; slice into about 1/4-inch sections.  
**2.** In a deep pot, sauté the bacon until it's almost done. Add the garlic and onions; continue to sauté until all ingredients are done.  
**3.** Remove as much bacon as possible; set aside for later use. Add the chicken broth and vinegar to the pot you cooked the bacon in. *Note: If you use the powder form to make the broth, you can add a little more powder than the directions say.* Bring the

broth to boil; add the turkey leg or hambone.

- Lower the heat to simmer. While simmering, add the rest of the ingredients. Simmer for about 30 minutes.
- Add in the greens and bacon pieces; continue to simmer until the greens are tender.

## Whole Turkey

*Brine:*

**1 whole turkey**  
**Pickle juice**  
**1 cup salt**

*Butter Infusion:*

**3 Tbsp. dried oregano**  
**3 Tbsp. dried rosemary**  
**3 Tbsp. dried sage**  
**3 Tbsp. dried thyme**  
**1 cup real salted butter**  
**Cheese cloth**

*Seasoning:*

**Dried butter**  
**Garlic, to taste**  
**Sage, to taste**  
**Kosher sea salt, to taste**  
**Coarse black pepper, to taste**

**1.** For the brine: Place the turkey in a large pot. Fill the pot almost halfway with water, and then fill it the rest of the way with pickle juice. Add the salt; mix well. Brine for 24 hours.

**2.** For the butter infusion: Remove the turkey from the brine; pat dry.

**3.** Using a butter infusion machine, add all the ingredients according to the directions of the machine's manufacturer.

**4.** Once the butter is infused, strain the infusion through the cheese cloth. Making sure the butter is still in liquid form, inject the infusion into each part of the turkey.

**5.** Use the remaining infusion butter to rub the turkey's skin. In a small bowl, combine the seasoning ingredients; rub the seasonings into the turkey.

**6.** For smoking: Put the turkey on the smoker heated to 275 F; smoke until it reaches an internal temperature of 165 F.



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When purchasing or adopting a dog, it's best for the new owner to know exactly what expectations he or she has for their new canine. Such decisions begin with breed choice, followed by choices in training/preparation. General breed classification characteristics are:

- 1. Herding dogs:* Highly intelligent, energetic and bred to control livestock. Breeds include Shepherds, Sheepdogs and Collies.
- 2. Hunting, competitive eventing and sporting dogs:* Bred for speed, stamina, super scent and vision. Breeds include Hounds, Retrievers, Setters and Spaniels.
- 3. Terriers:* Bred to dig up and chase pests burrowed in the soil. Breeds include all types of Terriers and Schnauzers.
- 4. Protection dogs:* Bred to work with police, military or home and personal protection. Breeds include Boxers, Rottweilers,

Pit Bulls and German Shepherds.

*5. Handicap-friendly dogs:* This breed category depends mostly on how the dog is going to aid the person. And any dog breed can help in this category if they have had the proper training. All of the above traits are considered when selecting a handicap-friendly dog.

*6. Toy Breeds:* Bred to be companion or emotional support dogs. Breeds include the Pekingese, Chihuahua and Pomeranian.

*7. Mixed breeds:* Often found in animal shelters, these dogs will commonly exhibit some of the traits of their ancestors and less of their ancestors' common health problems. A dog-of-several-breeds can be very trainable, even-tempered and loyal.

All dogs need basic command training, crate training and socialization with humans when at home or in public. Puppies, starting at about 10 weeks old with house training, are easiest to train, but don't discount the older or senior dogs who can learn "new tricks" with a little more repetition and positive reinforcements, such as treats. Most dogs are eager to please their owner/handler and yearn for a purpose.

Working dogs need to be daily trained and worked physically and mentally at their chosen tasks or they can become bored and destructive. The training enhances their drive and breeding. Focusing on their owner/handler while training and doing the job is critical. Confidence and building trust are other key training elements. Working dogs will always be on the job. Typically, they don't have an off-duty switch. However, working dogs can be wonderful companion dogs when at home. They are usually very bonded to their human partner and are sensitive to voice commands and inflections.

# COMPANION VS. WORKING DOG TRAINING

— By Virginia Riddle



With a companion dog, training must involve building socialization skills since the dog will likely be taken to strange places and be expected to behave with new situations, new people and meet other dogs appropriately. Barking inappropriately and for prolonged periods, pulling on a leash or showing aggression when none is needed, for instance, are behaviors which must be addressed. A family pet must behave well with children, which may require repetitive training of how children should act around the dog, as well. Preschool children, with their quick movements, can seem large and threatening to small dogs and shouldn't be left unsupervised with a dog. Treats, positive reinforcement and petting, daily attention and exercise are all necessary elements. The goal is to have a calm, loving, companion with whom many joyful moments can be shared. Companion dogs are usually very intuitive to their human's body language, facial expressions, feelings and voice inflections.

With all dogs, the owner/handler must take training slowly,

be patient and stay calm. A hand held up, a foot stomp and/or a firmly voiced command will help maintain or regain the dog's focus. A slightly hungry dog will appreciate food rewards, and if things aren't going well, giving the dog a break and then returning to training may work well. Always use the same command words and signals, such as a clicker. Don't confuse the dog with changes. Stay consistent and in control. With training, love, trust building, patience and bonding, a dog can become a working partner, fellow athlete and treasured family member. **NOW**

## Sources:

1. [www.keendogtraining.com](http://www.keendogtraining.com).
2. McMillan, Brandon. *Lucky Dog Lessons*, HarperCollins Publishers, New York, N.Y., 2016.
3. Linden, Scott. *Training and Hunting Bird Dogs*, Skyhorse Publishing, New York, N.Y., 2022.
4. <https://www.ada.gov/resources/service-animals-faqs/>.

# IT'S GAME TIME!

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.



## SEPTEMBER

**9/3, 9/10, 9/17**

### Kinsloe House Luncheons and Programs:

Reservations required.  
\$20. Noon, Kinsloe House,  
618 W. 3rd Ave.  
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**9/9**

### Game Night:

5:00 p.m., No purchase necessary. Olive Branch Eatery,  
409 N. Beaton St.  
For more details, call  
(903) 602-5000.

**9/10**

### Corsicana & Navarro County Chamber of Commerce Business Summit:

Registration: 8:30 a.m.;  
Sessions/lunch: 9:00 a.m.-  
4:00 p.m., Cook Center, 3100  
W. Collin St. (903) 874-4731.

**9/13**

### Puzzle Swap:

Bring a puzzle, take a puzzle,  
do a puzzle. 10:00 a.m.,  
Corsicana Public Library, 100 N.  
12th St. Facebook: Corsicana  
Public Library.

### Queen Legacy:

### Queen Tribute:

7:30 p.m. The Palace Theatre,  
112 W. 6th Ave.  
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**9/19-9/21 and  
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### Proof:

Times vary. Fator Studio at  
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**9/21**

### Farm Heritage Day:

2:00-5:00 p.m., Ellis County  
Rural Heritage Farm,  
130 Cunningham Meadows  
Road, Waxahachie.  
[www.ruralheritagefarm.org](http://www.ruralheritagefarm.org).

**9/26**

### Corsicana Lions Club's Col. Paul Bennett/Eddie Hambrick Memorial Golf

**Tournament: Registration:**  
7:30 a.m., The Oaks Golf Club,  
2509 N. Business 45.  
(903) 875-5462.

**Mondays**

### Caregiver Support Group:

4:00 p.m., Corsicana Senior  
Center, 919 W. Park Ave.  
(828) 228-3579.

**Tuesdays**

### Yoga at the Library:

Bring your own supplies. 6:00  
p.m., Corsicana Public Library,  
100 N. 12th St. Facebook:  
Corsicana Public Library.

**Tuesdays and  
Saturdays**

### Navarro County Farmers Market:

7:00 a.m.-noon, 408 E. 6th  
Ave. Facebook: Navarro County  
Farmers Market.

**Third  
Wednesdays**

### Senior Fun Day:

Lunch, crafts, bingo, dominoes  
for age 60-plus seniors.  
11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., MLK  
Center, 1114 E. 6th Ave.  
(903) 874-7259.

**Wednesdays**

### Corsicana Rotary Club:

Noon, Corsicana Country Club,  
4100 Country Club Dr.  
[www.corsicanarotary.com](http://www.corsicanarotary.com).

**Second  
Thursdays**

### Savvy Seniors:

Lunch, games. 11:30 a.m.,  
Corsicana Senior Center, 919 W.  
Park Ave. (903) 654-4980.

**Fourth  
Thursdays**

### Corsicana Newcomers

#### Club Meeting:

Reservations required. 11:00  
a.m., Kinsloe House, 618 W.

Third Ave. Annie Avery,  
(714) 345-6707

**Second Fridays**

### Navarro County Retired Teachers Association

#### Meeting:

9:45 a.m., Northwest  
Apartments Community Center.  
[glynphillips1982@gmail.com](mailto:glynphillips1982@gmail.com).

**First Saturdays**

### Rainbow Girls & Pledges Masonic Youth Meeting:

New members welcome.  
10:00 a.m., Corsicana Masonic  
Lodge, 201 N. 15th St.  
[ddean45@hotmail.com](mailto:ddean45@hotmail.com).

**Second  
Saturdays**

### Free Fitness Class:

9:00 a.m., Campbell Arts Plaza,  
109 E. 5th Ave.  
(903) 654-4852.

### Mimosas at the Market:

9:00 a.m., Downtown  
Corsicana. (903) 654-4850.

**Coyote Squadron  
Meeting:**

10:30 a.m., Hardgrave  
Memorial Hangar,  
9000 N. Navarro Rd.  
[www.coyotesquadron.org](http://www.coyotesquadron.org).

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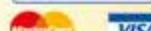
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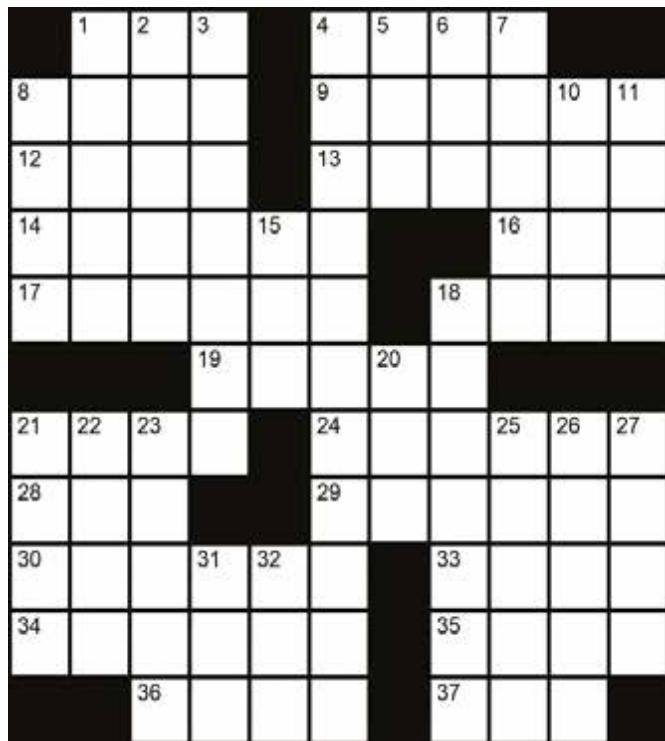
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## Across

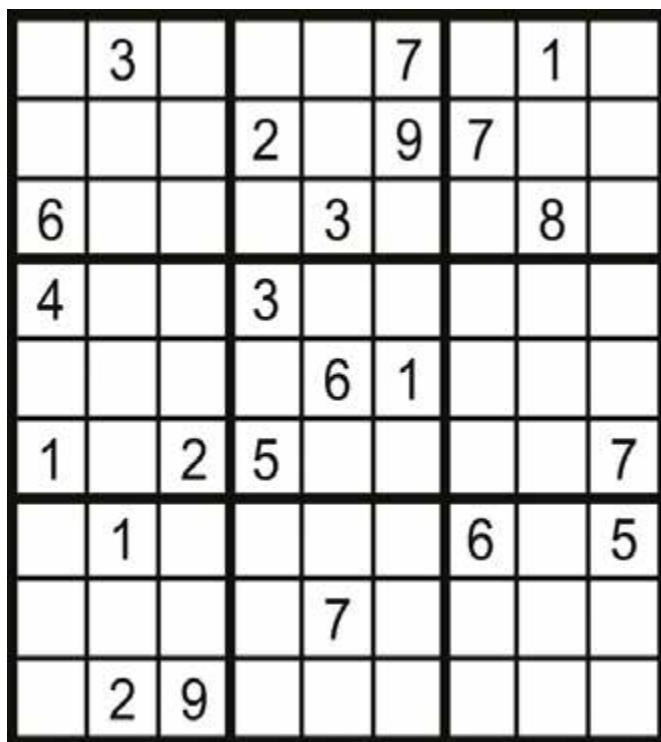
- 1 Part of formerly Portuguese India
- 4 "Boy, it's hot!"
- 8 Ireland's — Fein
- 9 Funeral speech
- 12 "— calling!"
- 13 Texas border town
- 14 Bucks back
- 16 Teetotal
- 17 Adventurous expedition
- 18 In Norway, it used to be Christiania
- 19 Pressure-washer maker
- 21 Omey guy
- 24 NYC
- 28 Exclamation of disgust
- 29 End of existence
- 30 It's in the blood
- 33 Omar — of "House"
- 34 Sweet
- 35 Imitates
- 36 Cormy or pony, maybe
- 37 Old horror actor — Chaney

## Down

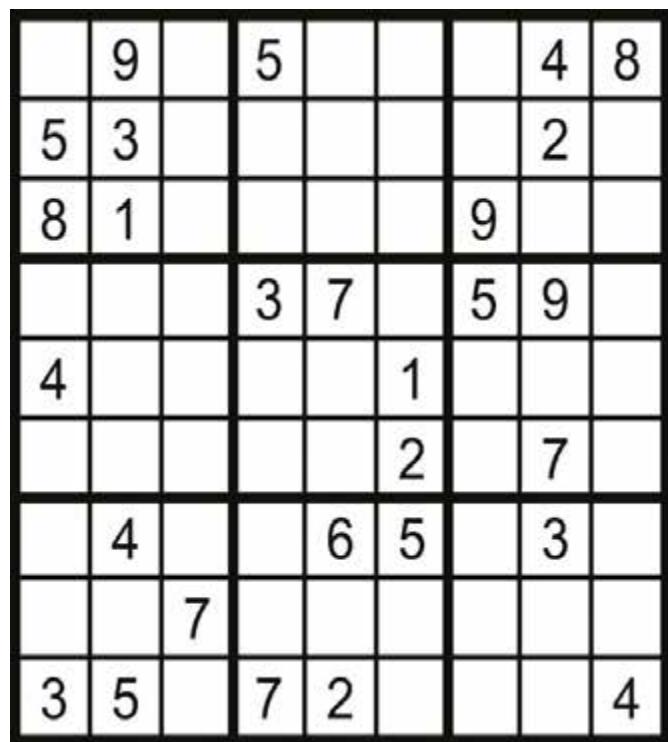
- 1 "— man a fish and you feed him for a day ..."
- 2 Kind of switch
- 3 Certain flowers
- 4 When single lives come to an end
- 5 Tint
- 6 90° bend
- 7 Bent sword leads to argument
- 8 COVID-19 predecessor
- 10 Peripatetic Ipanema resident?
- 11 Spool-like toy
- 15 F D R's short-lived Blue Eagle agency
- 18 Breakfast mush
- 20 She may be fawning
- 21 Stanley and Ryder
- 22 Ominous
- 23 Expert swindler
- 25 River horse
- 26 Trembling poplar
- 27 Military refectory
- 31 Not a good boy's name, according to Johnny Cash
- 32 Car economy statistic

# Sudoku Puzzle

Easy



Medium



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