

ABILENE MPO INSIDER

The Official Newsletter of the Abilene Metropolitan Planning Organization

Welcome back!!! Thank you for taking the time to enjoy our Newsletter . We tried our best to include something interesting for everyone: Pictures, Posters, Upcoming Events, Facts, Helpful Hints, and a Fun and Games Page.

Transportation is our theme (today and always). Join us as we cruise along. By: Rita L. Ryan, MPO Office Assistant III

A few of the events the Abilene MPO has participated in recently:

Ride of Silence Day 05/17/23

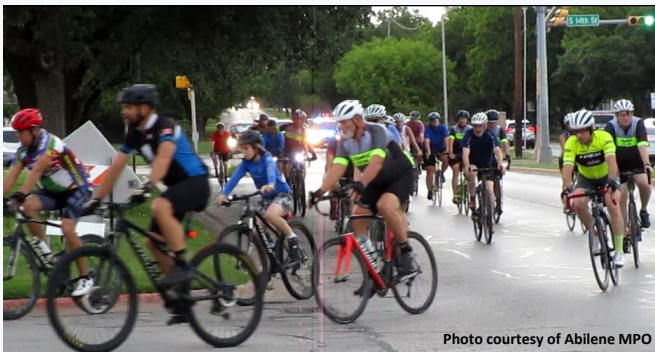


Photo courtesy of Abilene MPO

The Ride of Silence honors cyclists who have lost their lives. Sponsor: Steamboat Cycling Club . Supported by the Abilene MPO, Abilene Police Department, TxDOT D.R.I.V.E. Safe Coalition, Bike Town, McMurry University, and the Abilene Bicycle Club.
"SHARE THE ROAD"

Ride to Work Day 06/23/23



Photo courtesy of TxDOT D.R.I.V.E. Safe Coalition

The Ride to Work to raise awareness that we all "Share the Road". Supported by the Abilene MPO, Abilene Police Department, TxDOT D.R.I.V.E. Safe Coalition, Kent's Harley Davidson, Expo Center of Taylor County, Abilene Safety Instruction, and the City of Abilene.
"LOOK TWICE, SAVE A LIFE"

The Role of the Abilene MPO

The MPO consists of federal, state and local agencies working together to avoid conflicting plans, duplicated projects or funding conflicts between transportation priorities in the metropolitan planning area. The MPO's role is to develop and maintain the necessary transportation plans for the area to ensure that federal funds support locally developed plans and that the projects are part of a credible planning process that meets the local priorities. The MPO works with various agencies in the development of transportation plans, transit plans, travel demand model, thoroughfare plans, bicycle/pedestrian plans, and many other plans.

Abilene Urbanized Area and Metropolitan Planning Area

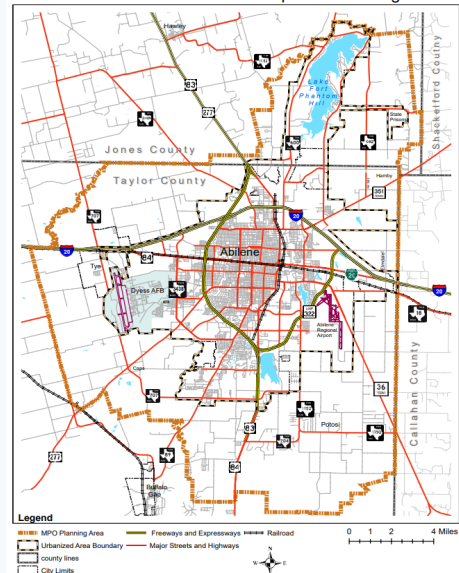


Table of Content:

1. Cover Page: You are here !!!
2. Meet the Mayor
3. We're Hiring!



4. FM 89 (Buffalo Gap Rd) Project Update
5. Transportation Throwback
6. Fun and Games
7. Fun Things Happening in Abilene

8. We want to hear from you
9. Resources and Answer Key

Please join us in welcoming

Mayor Weldon Hurt



Meet Weldon Hurt the newly elected Mayor of Abilene, Texas. Mayor Hurt is a dedicated family man, a rancher and a small business owner.

Mayor Hurt has served our community for many years. You may have recognized him from his time serving on the Abilene City Council but...

Mayor Weldon Hurt is involved with many of our community activities: The Ben Richey Boys Ranch, Big Country Home Builders Association, Abilene Convention and Visitors Bureau, West Texas Rehabilitation Center, Frontier Texas, Big Country Apartment Association and the Expo Center of Taylor County just to name a few...

The Abilene Metropolitan Planning Organization is pleased to welcome Mayor Hurt to the MPO Policy Board.

The Abilene Metropolitan Transportation Organization is Hiring !!!

TRANSPORTATION Planner I/II/III

NOTE: This is only a partial listing of the Job Description—for a full description /apply see:

[Transportation Planner I/II/III - Career Portal \(dayforcehcm.com\)](https://us231.dayforcehcm.com/CandidatePortal/en-US/cityofabilene/Posting/View/799) www.abilenetx.gov >Departments >Job

<https://us231.dayforcehcm.com/CandidatePortal/en-US/cityofabilene/Posting/View/799>

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Under immediate supervision (Planner I) or general supervision (Planner II/III) to perform a variety of professional transportation planning work including preparing long-range comprehensive/transportation plans, sub-area studies, short-range transportation improvement programs, urban and regional transit planning, annual work programs, and other pertinent transportation documents, policies, and programs.

Experience and Training Guidelines:

Any combination equivalent to experience and training to provide the required knowledge, skills, and abilities may be qualifying. Knowledge, skills, and abilities may be obtained through:

Experience:

Transportation Planner I

One (1) year experience in a related field of transportation planning and/or urban planning and development is preferred.

Transportation Planner II

Two (2) years of related experience in the field of municipal transportation planning, urban/metropolitan planning, and/or regional planning/development are required. Previous experience in transportation planning within an MPO, COG, local governments, state, or federal agencies involved in metropolitan transportation planning preferred.

Transportation Planner III

Four (4) years of related experience in the field of municipal transportation planning, urban/metropolitan planning, and/or regional planning/development are required. Previous experience in transportation planning within an MPO, COG, local governments, state, or federal agencies involved in metropolitan transportation planning required.

Education/Training:

Bachelor or graduate degree in urban/regional/transportation planning or civil engineering is preferred.

License or Certificate:

A valid Texas driver's license; the ability to obtain one within ninety (90) days of employment, or a military waiver is required.

Special Requirements:

Essential duties require the following physical skills and work environment:

- With or without accommodation, ability to lift up to 50 pounds.
- Ability to sit, stand, walk, kneel, crouch, stoop, squat, and twist.
- Exposure to outdoors.
- Ability to travel to different sites.

NOTE: This is only a partial listing of the Job Description—for a full description/apply see:

[Transportation Planner I/II/III - Career Portal \(dayforcehcm.com\)](https://us231.dayforcehcm.com/CandidatePortal/en-US/cityofabilene/Posting/View/799) www.abilenetx.gov >Departments >Job

<https://us231.dayforcehcm.com/CandidatePortal/en-US/cityofabilene/Posting/View/799>

FM 89 (Buffalo Gap Road) Project Update

FM 89 (Buffalo Gap Road) has entered into Phase 3 of the project. On Tuesday June 27, traffic on FM 89 was switched back to the west side of the roadway with the east side now closed to traffic from S Clack Street to Chimney Rock Road. The intersection at FM 89 (Buffalo Gap Road) and Robertson Drive has also been signalized (this intersection was placed in a brief temporary 4-way stop signal on Monday afternoon-Tuesday).

The FM 89 Project began in January 2022 and is projected to be completed in the summer of 2024. The public is welcome to keep up with the progress on the TxDOT social media pages (Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/TxDOTABI> and Twitter <https://twitter.com/TxDOTAbilene>) and you can view the full project as it was presented on TxDOT's website here: <https://www.txdot.gov/projects/projects-studies/abilene/fm89.html>.

Project overview:

In 2015, TxDOT, the Abilene MPO and the City of Abilene identified FM 89 (Buffalo Gap Road) as a top priority transportation project candidate. FM 89 is the main arterial highway between the communities of Abilene and Wylie and has a variable mix of residential and commercial properties along the roadway. As these communities have expanded over the past several years, traffic from US 83/84 to Chimney Rock Road has increased significantly, creating congestion, increased crash rates and several other safety concerns for the traveling public, including pedestrians.

In an effort to enhance the safety for all users of FM 89, a transportation study was conducted to help identify improvements that could be made to the roadway. This study analyzed issues such as:

- Impacts to safety through access management with the use of raised medians.
- Drainage issues and possible solutions.
- Ways to provide improved pedestrian access.
- Right-of-way needs for future roadway expansion.



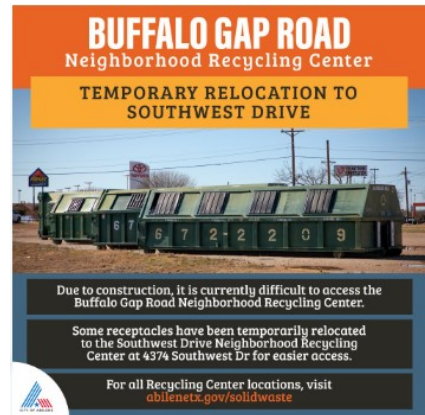
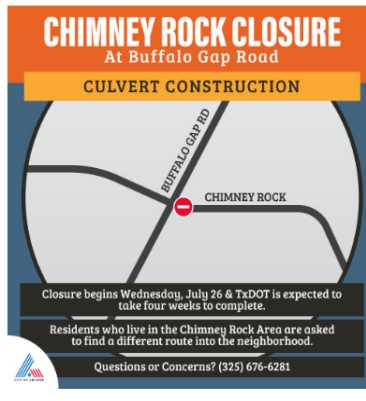
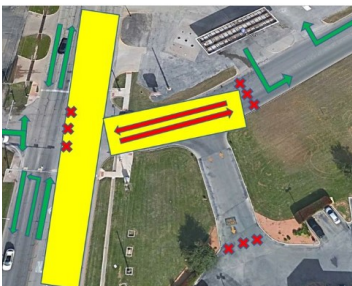
Update courtesy of TxDOT Public Information Officer



Pictures courtesy of Abilene MPO

Texas Department of Transportation (Abilene)
1d - 6

Beginning on Wed. (7/26) at 9 AM, there will be a four-week closure of the east side of FM 89 & Chimney Rock intersection to progress drainage & concrete paving in the area. Alternate routes will include Button Willow Ave., Greenslope Drive, & Chimney Circle. Additionally, expect the north Walgreens driveway to be closed during this time. Reduce speed, use caution & follow traffic signs in the area.



Transportation of Yore

First self-propelled vehicle

French Army captain Cugnot was one of the first to successfully employ a device for converting the reciprocating motion of a steam piston into a rotary motion by means of a ratchet arrangement. A small version of his three-wheeled fardier à vapeur ("steam dray") was made and used in 1769 (a fardier was a massively built two-wheeled horse-drawn cart for transporting very heavy equipment, such as cannon barrels).

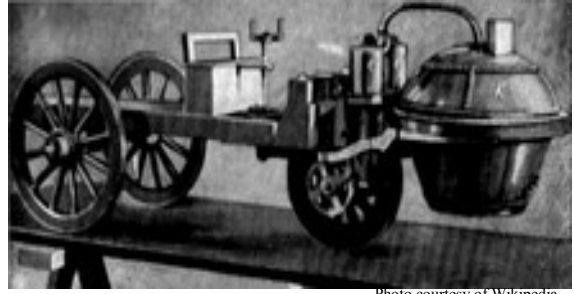


Photo courtesy of Wikipedia



Photo courtesy of Wikipedia

A French engineer designed an apparatus called a Cynosphere. It was a tricycle with a small steering wheel in front and two large and curious wheels behind. Each of the rear wheels was shaped like a circular cage and contained a large dog. These "power-plants" rolled the carriage ahead by running squirrel-fashion on narrow tracks. The operator sat in a sulky seat between the wheels and could throw the motors into "high" by exhibiting food or even a cat on special occasions. Whenever the dogs became tired, the engineer pointed out, the operator could change engines by replacing them with other animals.

After the Society for the Protection of Animals deemed the invention cruel, further development of the vehicle was abandoned forever.

Electric model cars

Designs of electric motors by individuals such as Benjamin Franklin led to ideas for electric vehicles. The invention of the first model electric vehicle is attributed to various people. In 1828, the Hungarian priest and physicist Ányos Jedlik invented an early type of electric motor, and created a small model car powered by his new motor. Between 1832 and 1839, Scottish inventor Robert Anderson also invented a crude electric carriage. In 1835, Professor Sibrandus Stratingh of Groningen, the Netherlands and his assistant Christopher Becker from Germany also created a small-scale electric car, powered by non-rechargeable primary cells.



Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

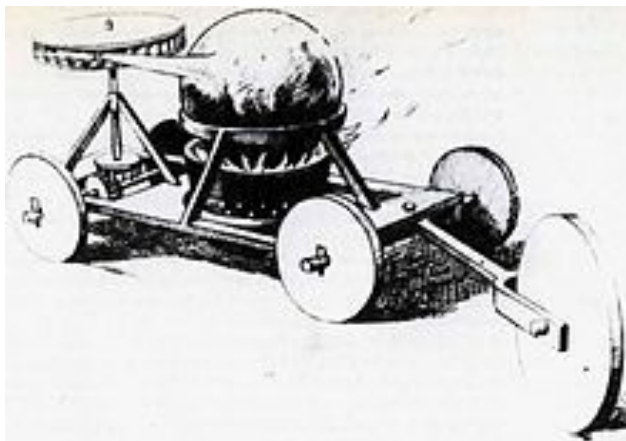


Photo courtesy of Wikipedia

The steam 'car' designed by Ferdinand Verbiest in 1672 – from an 18th-century print

Beside his work in astronomy, Verbiest also experimented with steam. Around 1672 he designed – as a toy for the [Kangxi Emperor](#) – a steam-propelled trolley which was, quite possibly, the first working steam-powered vehicle ('auto-mobile'). Verbiest describes it in his manuscript *Astronomia Europea*.

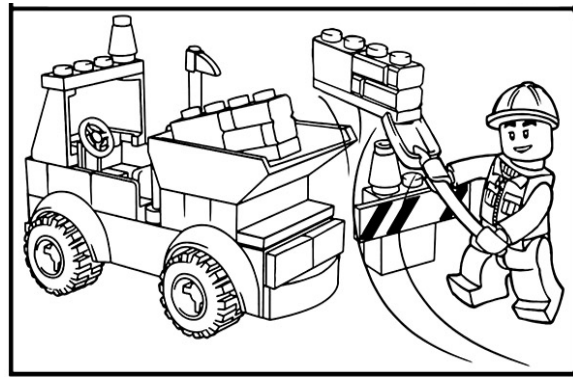
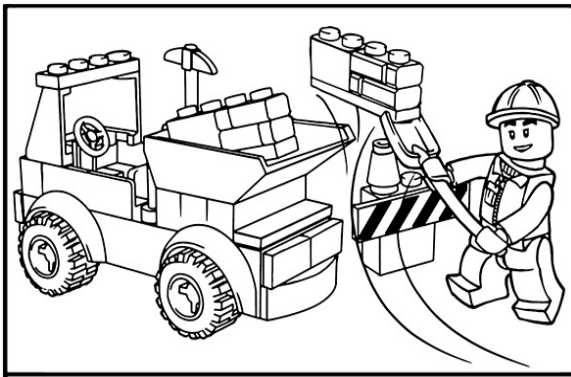


Velocipedes from an 1887 German encyclopedia. Among the examples shown are a penny farthing and a boneshaker.

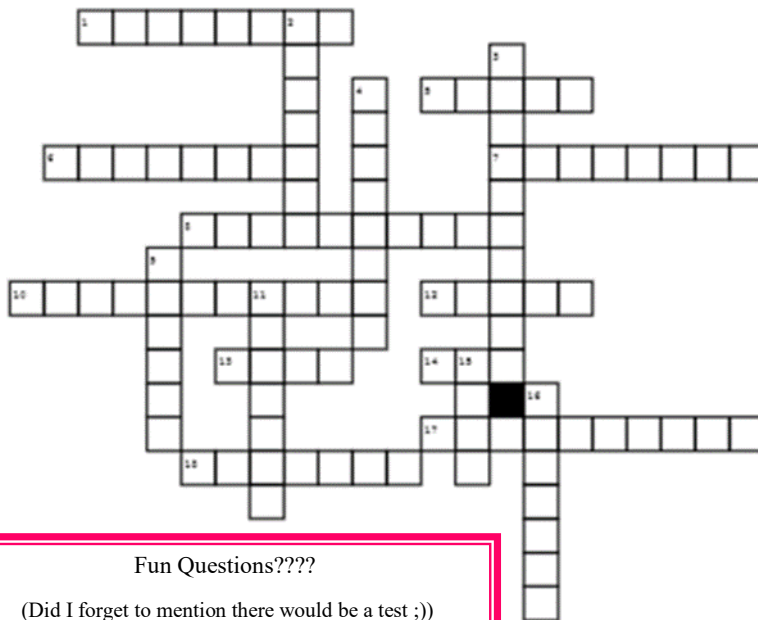
Photo courtesy of Wikipedia

FUN & GAMES

Find the (7) Differences and Color if you want ;)



Transportation Crossword Puzzle



Across:

1. Keeps you safely in vehicle
5. How to get off the Highway
6. Stop place on roadway
7. Gasoline alternative
8. Maximum allowed travel rate
10. We're here
12. Enable a call for help
13. Hard to fold road finder
14. Satellite navigation
17. Assisted directions
18. Built over water, ditches or other roads

Down:

2. overpacked cases
3. Up,Down, Right, Left
4. Petrol
9. Heavy petroleum fraction used as fuel
11. A travel annoyance
15. Makes travel easier
16. Plane resting place

Fun Questions????

(Did I forget to mention there would be a test ;))

- 1) Do we Share the Road , Be Safe: Drive Smart or do we Look Twice and Save a Life? _____
- 2) Is Mayor Hurt a small business owner, family man or rancher? _____
- 3) Is the MPO on Twitter, Facebook or www.abilenempo.org? _____



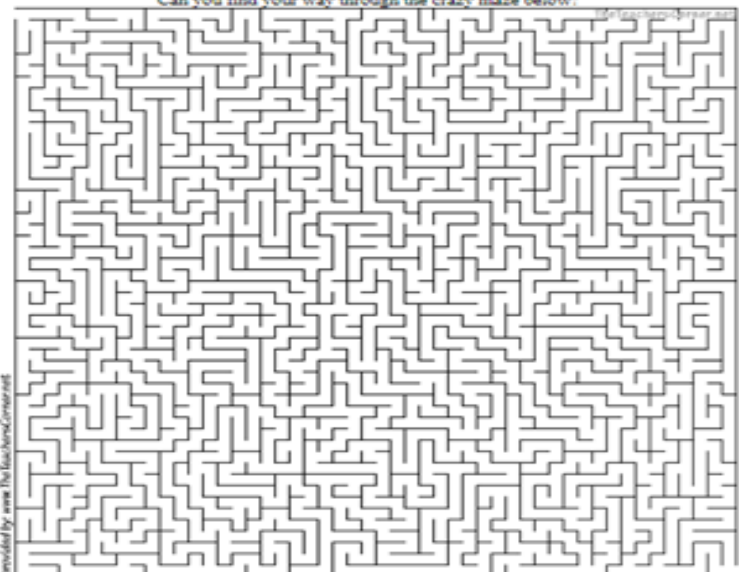
YES...

First, spread cookie dough out on a baking sheet lined

with parchment paper. Then, set the baking sheet on your car dashboard, and shut all of the doors. Finally, check on the cookies every 15-30 minutes until the edges of the cookies are firm and you're able to slide them off the parchment paper.

MAZE CRAZE

Can you find your way through the crazy maze below?



FUN THINGS HAPPENING IN ABILENE

Abilene State Park Upcoming Events

- Aug 1 8:30p **Sturgeon Moon Hike**
Abilene State Park
Hike under the light of the full moon!
- Aug 5 9:00a **Lake Hike**
Abilene State Park
Let's go hiking with Texas Master Naturalists!
- Aug 12 9:00p **Star Party**
Abilene State Park
A night of stargazing!

<https://tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/abilene>



HIKING WITH HOMELESS DOGS

FESTIVALS AND EVENTS

Abilene State Park
150 Park Road 32
Tuscola, TX 79508
(325) 572-3204



BIRDWATCHING

Texas Parks & Wildlife recommends these places to spot different avian species. Grab binoculars and visit:

- Fort Phantom Hill
- Seabee Park at Fort Phantom Lake
- Lake Kirby Nature Park
- Will Hair Park
- Grover Nelson Park
- Abilene State Park

Exciting News from Dyess Air Force Base

The City of Abilene and Dyess Air Force are having discussions about possible future Hike and Bike Collaborations.

Stay tuned for future updates...



THE ABILENE ZOO

Discover more than 1,000 animals of 140 species among the walkable zoological gardens. Hand feed a giraffe or book a VIP tour and peek behind the scenes!

- Open daily, 9 am to 5 pm.
- Buy a ticket online to reserve a spot.
- Download a digital map and preview the park.

City of Abilene Parks & Recreation

- Take a walk with your leashed animal, fish or feed prairie dogs.
- Basketball, tennis, disc golf, and fishing are open to the public.
- All five Splash Pads are free and open at these parks: Grover Nelson Park, Redbud Park, Scarborough Park, Arthur Sears Park, Stevenson Park
- Adventure Cove is now open Saturdays, 11 am to 7 pm, Sundays from 1 to 7 pm. It will be open Labor Day, Sept 6, 11 am to 7 pm, and Doggie Splash Day will close the season on Sept. 11, 10 am to noon.
- Spot wildflowers or birdwatch at Lake Kirby Nature Park, Will Hair Park, or Grover Nelson Park.
- Experience Adventure Lab, a series of virtual, location-based geocaches. Download the app and try it out! The adventure starts at the first interpretive sign near the pavilion and then proceeds along the Boardwalk.

Check the City of Abilene's Parks and Recreation webpage for the latest information—<https://abilenetx.gov/157/Parks-Recreation>

We want to hear from you!

How can I get involved?

Don't forget: **MPO Policy Board meetings are open to the public!** Members of the public are encouraged to join meetings and voice your concerns and opinions on transportation.

Can't come in person? No problem. **All MPO Policy Board meetings are streamed live on the Abilene Television Network**, or you can watch a meeting by visiting the City of Abilene's website at

www.abilenetx.gov/561/Live-Archived-Video

Come visit us!

209 S. Danville Dr.
Suite B-212
Abilene, TX 79605

(325) 437-9999



@AbileneMPO



Abilene MPO



abilenempopo.org



Resources & Answer Key

Notable News (Resources)

Front Page : abilenempo.org, TxDOT.gov, Steamboat Cycling Club, Kent's Harley Davidson,

Meet the Mayor: <https://www.abilenetx.gov/542/Weldon-W-Hurt>

MPO is Hiring: <https://abilenetx.gov> [Transportation Planner I/II/III - Career Portal \(dayforcehcm.com\)](https://www.dayforcehcm.com)

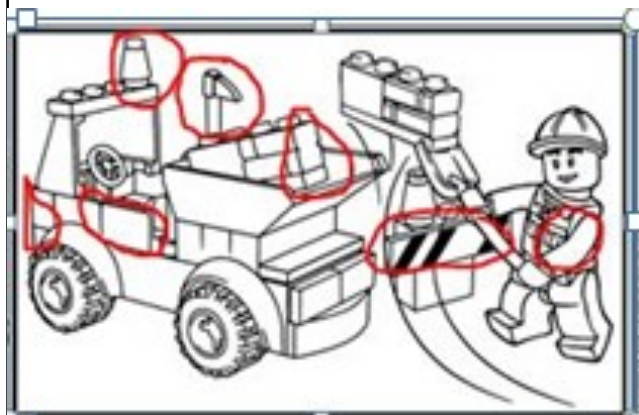
Construction Updates: TxDOT Public Information Officer Abilene District, Abilene MPO, Abilenetx.gov
<https://www.facebook.com/TxDOTABL>, <https://twitter.com/TxDOTAbilene>

Transportation of Yore: Wikipedia, Google, The Department of Energy,

Fun & Games: TheTeachersCorner.Net, topcoloringpages.net, <https://www.abilenevisitors.com/things-to-do/outdoors/> abilenetx.gov

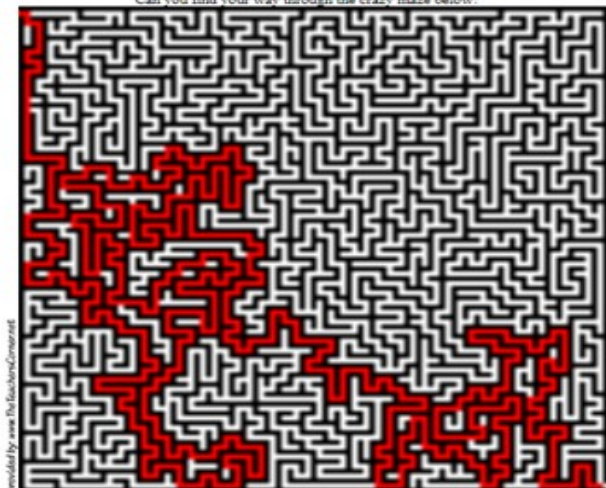
News, Events & Crossword Puzzle: Google Search, Facebook Events, www.abilenevisitors.com/events/
<https://allevents.in/abilene/texas>, <https://stepoutside.org/event/lake-hike-2023-08-05-tuscola-tx.html>, <https://www.abilenevisitors.com/things-to-do/outdoors/>, TheTeachersCorner.Net

We Want to Hear from You: abilenempo.org, Twitter, Facebook



MAZE CRAZE

Can you find your way through the crazy maze below?



Fun Question Answers

- 1) Yes to all three
- 2) Yes to all three
- 3) Yes to all three

Transportation

