

Nation / World

ANALYSIS Despite nuclear deal with Iran, hostilities remain

Helene Cooper
and David E. Sanger
The New York Times

WASHINGTON — After two recent Iranian ballistic missile tests made clear that Tehran had no intention of obeying a United Nations prohibition on such launches, Obama administration officials on Wednesday handed Congress a draft list of fresh sanctions they are preparing against Tehran — to be imposed even as separate nuclear-related sanctions are lifted in coming weeks.

The new sanctions are designed, administration officials say, to make clear that the United States remains committed to containing Iran's regional ambitions that have so rattled its Arab neighbors. But they are also intended as a carefully calibrated answer to critics, from Capitol Hill to Saudi Arabia, who have argued in recent months that President Barack Obama is willing to overlook almost any Iranian transgression in order to avoid derailing the nuclear deal he pursued for so many years.

There is now almost no doubt that the nuclear accord will go into effect. But the past few days have been full of sobering reminders that the grander objective of that deal — some gradual steps toward an era of wary cooperation, or at least a cessation of hostilities between Washington and Tehran — remains a long way away.

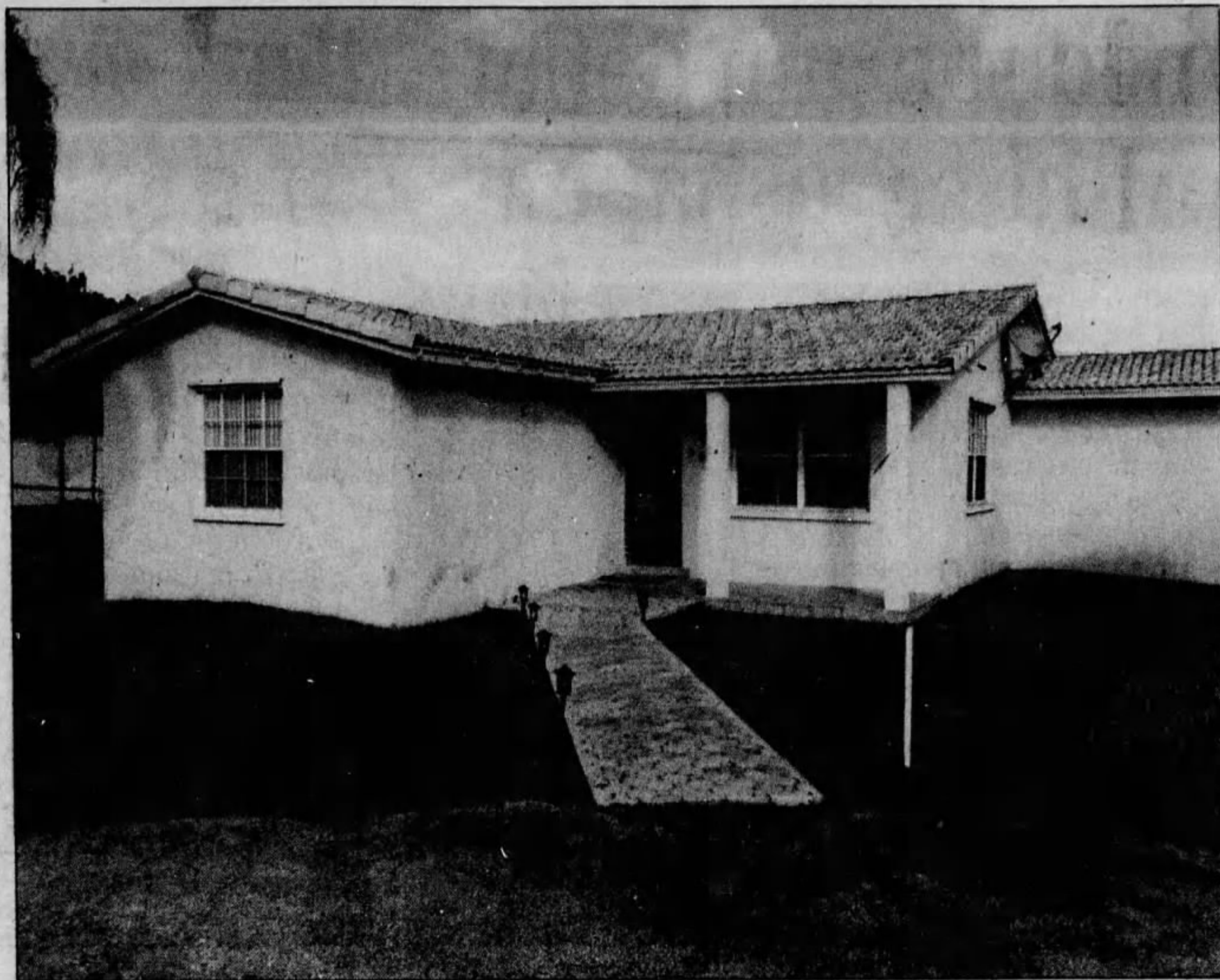
Just last week the Republican-led Congress inserted new rules into the budget signed by Obama that were clearly intended to discourage foreigners from doing business with Tehran. Then on Saturday, the Iranian navy harassed a U.S. aircraft carrier and a French frigate in the Strait of Hormuz, launching rockets that passed within 1,500 yards of the USS Harry S. Truman. It seemed an act somewhere between recklessness and outright aggression.

So much for détente. The Republicans in Congress who voted against the nuclear deal — which was all of them — are looking for ways to signal their continuing displeasure. And inside Iran, a similar battle is playing out, as hard-liners fear that President Hassan Rouhani will use the deal, and the imminent lifting of the nuclear-related sanctions, to bolster his party in upcoming parliamentary elections.

"There are those on both sides who won't accept even a transactional approach," said Derek Chollet, who until earlier this year was assistant secretary of defense for international security affairs, and who helped calm the Arab allies who feared the United States was planning a broader grand bargain with Iran.

"On most issues," Chollet said, "we have opposing interests." The missile tests are a classic example. Secretary of State John Kerry delayed the nuclear deal reached in July in Vienna by days as he haggled with his Iranian counterpart, Mohamed Javad Zarif, over the side issue of whether, and how long, a U.N. resolution banning missile development and testing would remain in place.

The Iranians dismissed that part of the accord as soon as it was announced: Nothing, they said, could infringe on their fundamental right to build a "defensive technology," intended to counter Saudi Arabia and Israel.



This house was seized from Marco Rubio's brother-in-law, Orlando Cicilia.

How Marco Rubio helped his ex-con relative get a real estate license

Using statehouse stationery, Rubio sent recommendation to Florida division.

Scott Higham
and Manuel Roig-Franza
The Washington Post

When Marco Rubio was majority whip of the Florida House of Representatives, he used his official position to urge state regulators to grant a real estate license to his brother-in-law, a convicted cocaine trafficker who had been released from prison 20 months earlier, according to records obtained by The Washington Post.

In July 2002, Rubio sent a letter on his official statehouse stationery to the Florida Division of Real Estate, recommending Orlando Cicilia "for licensure without reservation." The letter, obtained by The Washington Post under the Florida Public Records Act, offers a glimpse of Rubio using his growing political power to assist his troubled brother-in-law and provides new insight into how the young lawmaker intertwined his personal and political lives.

Rubio did not disclose in the letter that Cicilia was married to his sister, Barbara, or that the former cocaine dealer was living at the time in the same West Miami home as Rubio's parents. He wrote that he had known Cicilia "for over 25 years," without elaborating.

Rubio has avoided discussing Cicilia's case in detail and has declined to answer questions about his relationship with his brother-in-law. Earlier this month, prior to The Post publishing an article about Cicilia's case, Rubio declined to answer a written question about whether he had helped win the approval of his brother-in-law's real estate license.

Rubio also declined to say whether he or his family received financial assistance from Cicilia, who was convicted in a high-profile 1989 trial of distributing \$15 million worth of cocaine. The federal government seized Cicilia's home; the money has never been found.

Cicilia, 58, could not be reached for comment. He still lives in the same home as Rubio's mother and has appeared at campaign events for his brother-in-law. Rubio-affiliated PACs and campaigns, including his ongoing presidential operation, have paid Cicilia's two sons more than \$130,000 in the past decade.

"Orlando made some very big mistakes almost 30 years

ago, served his time, and has paid his debt to society," Rubio's presidential campaign adviser, Todd Harris, said in an email. "Today he is a private citizen, husband and father, simply trying to make a living. It is appalling and shameful that The Washington Post continues to drag him into the spotlight."

"Marco has recommended scores of Floridians for various professional positions and after Orlando paid his debt to society, Marco was happy to recommend him as well. He believed Orlando should be judged on his own merits and felt it would be highly inappropriate, and could be perceived as exerting undue pressure, if his letter stated that Orlando was a relative."

Danielle Brian, executive director of the Project on Government Oversight, a government watchdog group in Washington, said Rubio's role concerned her.

"Someone who serves their time should be a productive member of society, and it's important for families to help each other, but it's wrong to use your public office for personal or private gain," Brian said.

By not disclosing his relationship, Rubio withheld a key piece of information from the real estate board, Brian added. "The general rule of thumb I apply to conflicts of interest is, if you can't eliminate them, you need to manage them by disclosing the conflict," she said. "I'm uncomfortable that he didn't acknowledge the conflict."

Rubio, a Republican who represents Florida in the U.S. Senate, was a 16-year-old high school junior in 1987 when Cicilia was arrested in one of the largest drug cases in Florida history. There has never been any evidence that Rubio or his family knew that Cicilia was dealing cocaine, although Drug Enforcement Administration surveillance records show Cicilia stored cocaine from the drug ring at his home, a few miles away from where Rubio and his parents lived.

By 2002 — when Cicilia applied for his real estate license — Rubio was accumulating significant power in Tallahassee. He had been tapped as

majority whip, and he added to his growing portfolio when he was named chairman of the prominent Task Force on Florida's Tax Structure. Later that year, he was selected as House majority leader, a position that put him on the fast track to become speaker of the House.

While Rubio was making his mark in Florida politics, Cicilia was reintegrating into the Rubio family and acclimating to life as a free man after 11½ years in federal prison. Cicilia lived with his wife and Rubio's parents in the future GOP candidate's childhood home, according to Cicilia's real-estate license application. Shortly after his release, Cicilia took a job on the sales staff of a Miami food company and worked his way up to be head of the sales team, according to his application.

Cicilia's cocaine conviction presented a complication for his application. Unlike some states, Florida does not prohibit felons from holding real estate licenses. Their applications are considered on a "case-by-case basis" by seven members of the Florida Real Estate Commission, who are appointed by the governor. The governor, at that time, was Rubio's political mentor, Jeb Bush — who is now running against the Florida senator for the Republican presidential nomination. The budget of the agency is controlled by the Florida legislature, where Rubio wielded considerable influence.

Cicilia had one technical issue in his favor. In general, the board frowns upon applicants who have been convicted of fraud and related charges — he had been convicted in a drug trafficking case. Regardless of the charge, felons can plead their cases before the board members and can ask character witnesses to submit letters or testify on their behalf.

"If someone has been found guilty of fraud, that's going to go against them," said Chelsea Eagle, a spokeswoman for the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, which oversees licensing in the state. "It all depends on the circumstances of the case."

Preschool without walls gaining popularity

Students encouraged to choose their own adventures in an outdoor setting.

Lillian Mongeau
The New York Times

SEATTLE — Three-year-old Desi Sorrelgreen's favorite thing about his preschool is "running up hills." His classmate Stelyn Carter, 5, likes to "be quiet and listen to birds — crows, owls and chickadees," as she put it. And for Joshua Doctorow, 4, the best part of preschool just may be the hat he loves to wear to class (black and fuzzy, with flaps that come down over his ears).

All three children are students at Fiddleheads Forest School here, where they spend four hours a day, rain or shine, in adjacent cedar grove "classrooms" nestled among the towering trees of the University of Washington Botanic Gardens.

The program, in its third year, is less than 7 miles from Microsoft, which means some parents sit in front of computers all day inventing the digital future, while Fiddleheads children make letters out of sticks or cart rocks around in wheelbarrows.

Founded in 2012 by Kit Harrington, a certified preschool teacher, and Sarah Heller, a naturalist and science educator, Fiddleheads is part of a larger national trend that goes beyond Waldorf education, which has long emphasized outdoor play, even in inclement weather.

There's the Chippewa Nature Center in Midland, Michigan, founded in 2007, where children wear hats and mittens during daily outdoor sessions in the frigid winter months. At the All Friends Nature School in San Diego, which became a nature preschool in 2006, children often spend mornings making sand castles at the beach. And at the Drumlin Farm Community Preschool in Lincoln, Massachusetts, founded in 2008, children learn to feed farm animals, grow vegetables and explore the farm's many acres of wildlife habitat.

Whether the schools are emerging in reaction to concerns that early education has become increasingly academic or simply because parents think traipsing around in the woods sounds like more fun than sitting at a desk, they are increasingly popular.

The Natural Start Alliance, founded in 2013 in response to demand from a growing number of nature preschool providers, counts 92 schools that deliberately put nature at the heart of their programs and where children spend a significant portion of each day outside, according to director Christy Merrick. That's up from 20 schools in 2008, when Patti Bailie, a professor at the University of Maine at Farmington, counted them as part of her doctoral research.

A typical day at Fiddleheads starts at 9 a.m., with Desi, Stelyn, Joshua and fellow students zipping up waterproof suits so they can climb on, and sometimes slip off, sopping-wet logs; create secret forts under dripping

boughs of bright green and examine squirming earthworms in grubby hands.

Students go on "listening walks" with their teachers during which they stand in a circle with their eyes closed and name the things they can hear, like wind and rain, when they don't talk. The children also eat lunch, sing songs and occasionally squabble under the open sky and towering trees.

Desi's mother, Judy Lackey, 34, is pleased. "It's just a magical place," she said. "In indoor spaces, teachers have planned everything. Here, you never know what you're going to see." While the children are carefully supervised by trained teachers, the school has a choose-your-own-adventure attitude toward learning. So when students first placed one of those closely examined earthworms in an empty toy watering can during a recent visit, it prompted a conversation with a volunteer teacher, Marnie O'Sullivan, about what kind of homes earthworms might most enjoy. (Hint: not a plastic watering can.)

"We kind of just think and find what we want to do in our head, and we just do it," Stelyn said.

There are rules, and Stelyn, one of the oldest in the class, is quick to explain them: "If we see a bug, we are careful not to step on it. If we see a pretty leaf, we pick it up and put it in our magic spot." Walking alone onto the park road (despite its ban on car traffic) and pretending sticks are swords are also forbidden. But such rules and a few others leave room for plenty of adventures.

Children can cart around rocks in wheelbarrows, play at being (sword-less) pirates, examine trees split by lightning, dig in wood-chip piles to make child-size "nests," find an unknown seed and dub it a "nothing berry" and run up and down hills. The most popular word at Fiddleheads is "notice," as in, "What do you notice about this fallen log?" and "I notice mushrooms." "Some days we're setting up and we hear eagles calling to each other, and we run out and look up," Harrington said. "Kids are the best at sharing in joy and wonder." Or as Adele Miroite, 3, said, her little hands wrist-deep in a wood-chip pile, "I love school." Fiddleheads is one of at least 18 similar preschools founded in the Seattle area since 2005, according to a recent story in ParentMap, a local parenting magazine. And 18 apparently are not enough.

There are 51 children on Fiddleheads' waiting list and 143 on a list for next year's spots, Harrington said. That's after the school more than doubled its enrollment to 50 students in two classrooms this year from about 20 in one classroom last year. And students' parents, to judge from a small collection picking up their children on a recent afternoon, aren't off-the-grid types. They include lawyers, chief financial officers and television producers.

"I don't know if we're hitting a tipping point yet, but maybe," said Bailie, who got her start as a teacher at an outdoor preschool program at the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes in Cleveland.

DONATE YOUR CAR

Wheels For Wishes Benefiting

Make-A-Wish®
Alaska and Washington

*100% Tax Deductible
*Free Vehicle Pickup ANYWHERE
*We Accept Most Vehicles. Running or Not

WheelsForWishes.org 1.855.357.9474 (WISH)
*Wheels For Wishes is a DBA of Car Donation Foundation.

TURN YOUR RV INTO CASH
PARK N SELL - NO MONEY UP FRONT

2016 OUTDOOR RV'S
FOUR SEASON MOUNTAIN EXTREME INSULATION
CAMPER VALLEY 3151 PALMER WASILLA HWY
376-8100
CAMPVALLEYRV.COM

SAD LIGHTS LARGEST SELECTION OF SAD LIGHTS IN ALASKA

Reduced natural light can cause depression in many people.

Seasonal Affective Disorder.

SAD LIGHTS, specially designed, high intensity lights, provide relief for many.

Come in for a demonstration from experienced personnel.

4201 Lake Otis Pkwy.
563-7801
(One block north of Tudor, with the wheelchair on sign)

TOWER JOINT REPLACEMENT CLINIC

Our name is Tower Joint Replacement, but we're much more than that!

Dr. Tower is an authority on safe hip, knee, and shoulder replacement (visit TJRClinic.com) for active patients that wish to return to sport activities.

Dr. Tower and Richard Miller, PA-C, love to see a wide range of orthopedic problems. And not every problem will require surgery. Our approach is to be conservative and give you the best chance to heal non-surgically first, if it is in the best interests of your health. We strive to help patients heal with a combination of time, physical therapy, and guidance from our experienced practitioners.

Call today to schedule your appointment with Dr. Stephen Tower or Richard Miller, PA-C. And remember, Mr. Miller is open specifically for senior care every Friday.

To make an appointment, call **907.222.2924**

Stephen Tower, MD **Richard Miller, PA-C**

4100 LAKE OTIS PARKWAY,
SUITE 300, ANCHORAGE, AK 99508
TJRClinic.com P: 907.222.2924 F: 907.222.2934