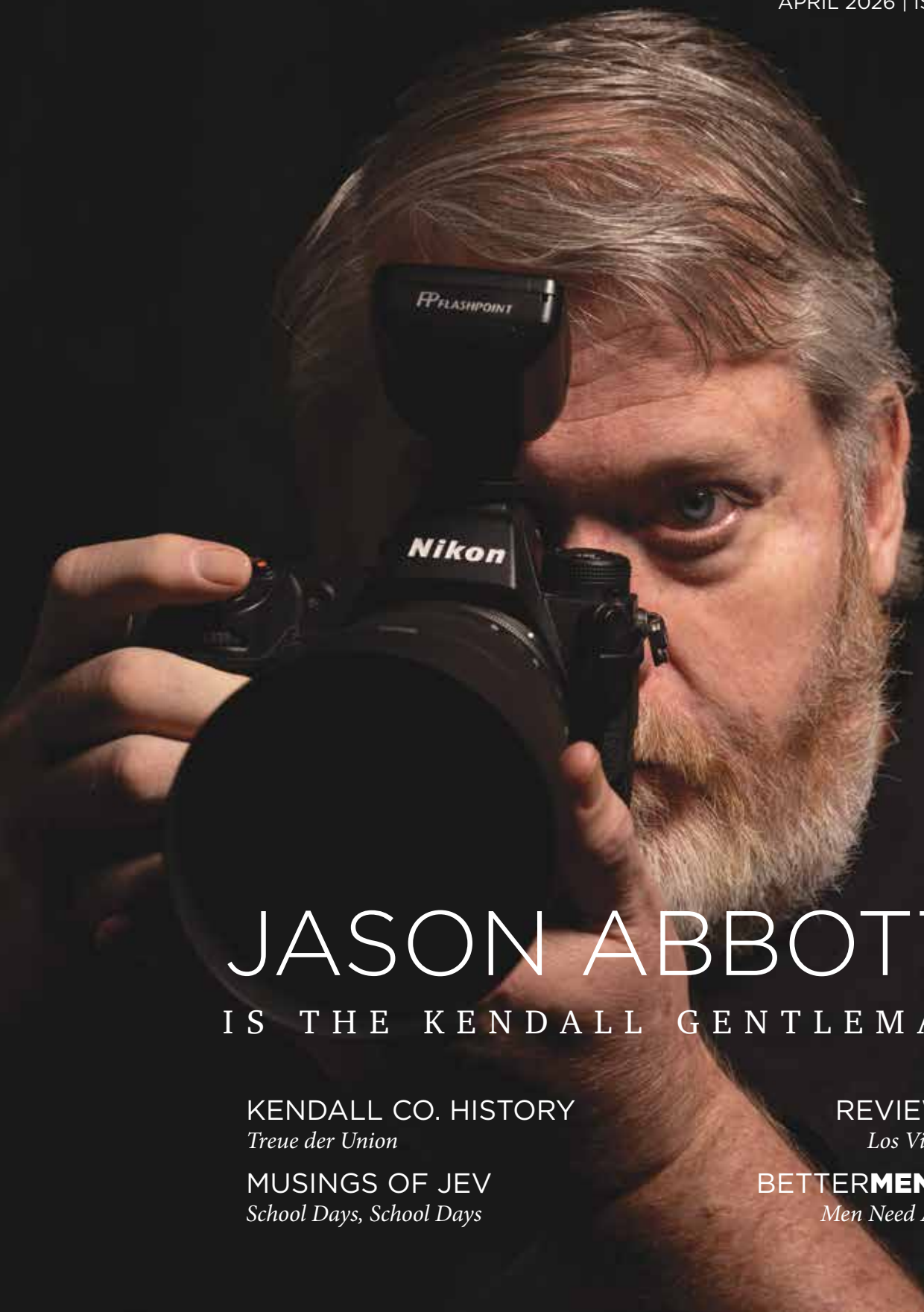




THE KENDALLTM GENTLEMAN

APRIL 2026 | ISSUE 4 :: VOLUME 2



JASON ABBOTT IS THE KENDALL GENTLEMAN

KENDALL CO. HISTORY
Treue der Union

MUSINGS OF JEV
School Days, School Days

REVIEW
Los Vista

BETTERMENT
Men Need Art



Principle INFINITI of Boerne
A **PRINCIPLE** AUTO GROUP DEALERSHIP



Voted Boerne Star's Best of the Best Car Dealership



EXPERIENCE THE SERVICE
YOU DESERVE

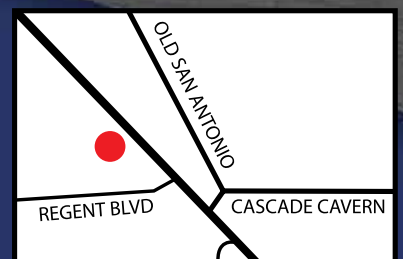
**#1 Customer Retention
in the U.S.**



Bill McKibbin
General Manager

TAKE EXIT 542

32275 IH-10
Boerne, TX 78006
210-477-1775





Pool Days. Scenic Fairways. Pure Hill Country.

The Club at Tapatio Springs offers everything you love—resort-style pools, championship golf, and a warm community rooted in Texas charm.

Upgrade your every day. Join The Club at Tapatio Springs.

www.tapatiosprings.com

For more information or membership inquiries email membership@tapatio.com or call 830-537-6229

347 FM 289 COMFORT
TEXAS BUILDING A



↑ WEBSITE ↑



GUNS • AMMO • OPTICS



**5% OFF
LABOR**

When You Mention
You Saw This Ad
In The Kendall
Gentleman

- Lube And Oil
- Engine/Repair
- Electrical Systems
- Smog/Emissions
- Exhaust/System
- A/C
- Tune-Ups
- Suspension
- Radiator System
- Brakes
- Transmission
- Tire Inspection
- Wheel Alignment
- Diesel Repair
- Timing Belts
- Steering



124 Cascade Cavern, Boerne, TX 78015
830-331-9944 | lonestarautoanddiesel.com

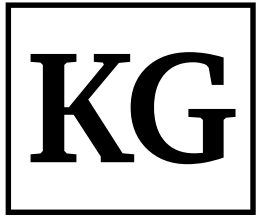
Salvador
DOBBS



COCKTAILS & BAR



512 River Rd., Boerne, TX :: www.salvadordobbs.com



THE KENDALL™

GENTLEMAN

APRIL 2026 | ISSUE 4 :: VOLUME 2

8 FROM THE PUBLISHER

10 CALENDAR of EVENTS

14 BETTERMENT

Men Need Art and Art Needs Men

By Louis Barnes

18 HOPE for HEROES

Greg Smith

By Jonathan R. Mallard

22 OUTDOORS

Las Cuatas

By Jed Mazour

26 REVIEW

Los Vista

By Clay Smoot

30 FAITH & LEADERSHIP

My Church

By Coach Stan Leech

34 JASON ABBOTT

By Michael G. Ethridge

Photography By Jonathan Mallard &

Jason Abbott

42 MUSINGS OF JEV

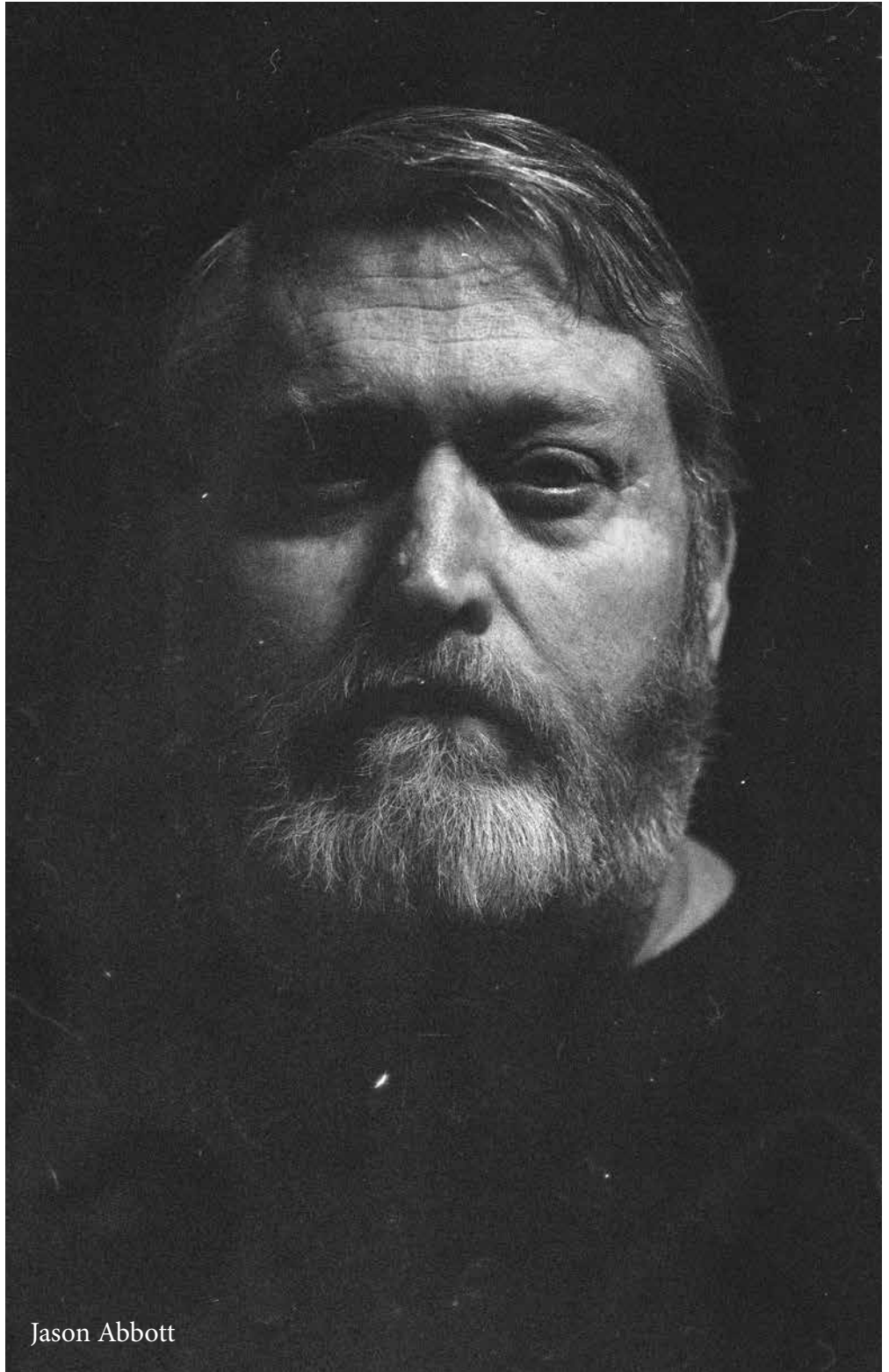
School Days, School Days

By John Eddie Vogt

46 HISTORY

Treue der Union

By Tom Allred, Sr.

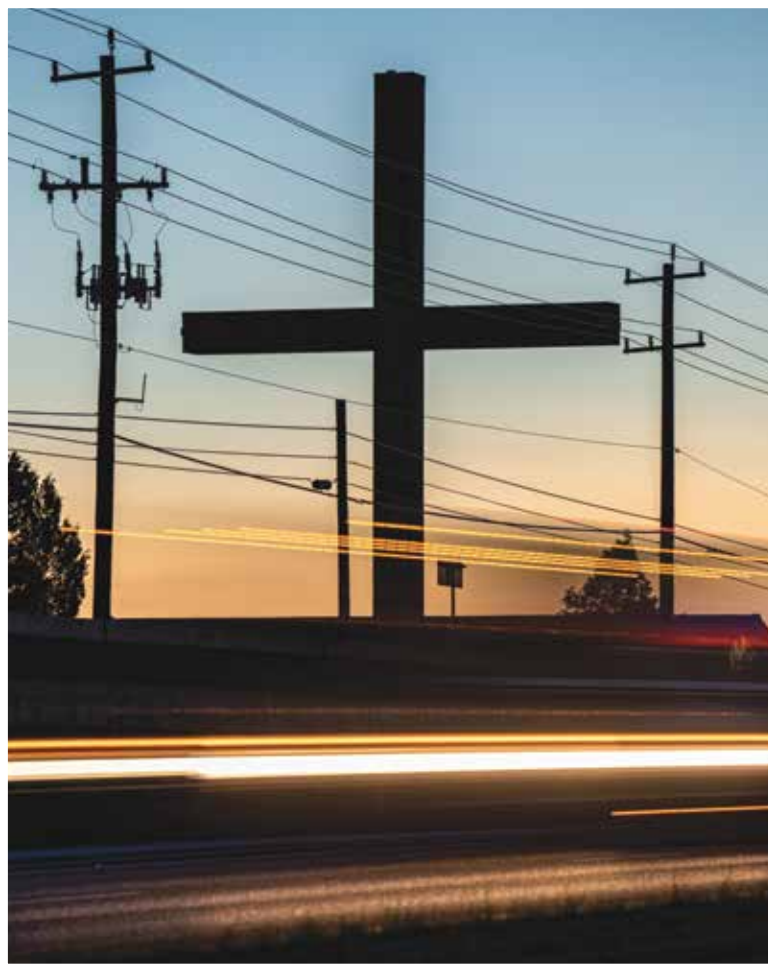


Jason Abbott



THE KENDALL™

GENTLEMAN



Publisher Michael G. Ethridge

Creative Director Ben Weber

Director of Photography Jonathan Mallard

**Photographer &
Social Media** Emily Pfeiffer

Intern Brayden Church

Contributors Tom Allred, Sr.
Clay Smoot
Stan Leech
Jed Mazour
John Eddie Vogt
Louis Barnes

www.thekendallgentleman.com
sales@thekendallgentleman.com
info@thekendallgentleman.com

Are you interested in contributing to The Kendall Gentleman? Do you have an interesting story to tell the men of Kendall County? Could you be considered an expert in your given field? Have something interesting to say? We're always looking for talented writers for The Kendall Gentleman.

Email us at info@thekendallgentleman.com



The Kendall Gentleman is a publication of





The Moment Someone Needs to Speak

There is a moment that shows up in almost every room.

It happens in board meetings, classrooms, family conversations, and small-town committee gatherings. The discussion moves along normally enough until someone says something that makes the air shift just slightly. Nothing outrageous. Nothing that would make headlines. Just something that doesn't quite sit right.

You can usually see it on people's faces before anyone says a word. A few eyebrows lift. Someone leans back in their chair. Someone else glances down at their notes and pretends to be busy.

Everyone heard it. Everyone knows it deserves a response. And yet the conversation keeps moving as if nothing happened.

No one interrupts. No one asks a follow-up question. No one raises a hand and says, "Hold on a minute."

The moment passes.

Most of the time it feels harmless. The meeting ends, people head home, and life goes on without much thought given to that brief silence. But if you spend enough time watching how organizations change over time, those moments begin to stand out.

They have a way of piling up.

Not because people stopped caring, but because speaking up carries a cost.

Nobody likes being the person who slows things down or challenges the direction of the room. It's uncomfortable to be the one voice asking questions when everyone else seems ready to move forward. Even when a concern is legitimate, raising it risks being labeled difficult or overly rigid. People don't like that feeling, and so they often talk themselves out of it.

"It's probably not worth the fight."

"Maybe I misunderstood."

"Someone else will say something if it's really a problem."

Those thoughts are familiar to anyone who has ever sat through one of those moments. And so the room stays quiet.

Over time, that quiet has consequences. Not dramatic ones at first. Nothing breaks overnight. The doors still open, the lights still come on, and the routine continues much as it always has. But something subtle begins to change when people who know better stop speaking aloud.

Standards that once felt obvious begin to blur.

Expectations become flexible in ways they weren't before.

Lines that used to be clear start drifting just enough that people stop noticing where they used to be.

What's interesting is that none of this usually happens through rebellion. Nobody gathers in a room and declares that principles no longer matter. The shift is almost always quieter than that. It happens through small decisions made in ordinary moments when it would be easier to stay silent than to ask an uncomfortable question.

Communities don't change all at once. They change in inches.

The truth is that most places depend heavily on a certain kind of person who prevents that drift from getting too far. They rarely hold formal titles. They're not usually the

loudest voices in the room. In fact, many of them would be surprised to hear themselves described as leaders.

But when something crosses a line that shouldn't be crossed, they say so.

Sometimes it's a teacher who looks a student in the eye and tells him he's capable of more than the work he turned in. Sometimes it's a coach who refuses to lower expectations even when parents complain that practice is too demanding. Sometimes it's a business owner who insists that doing the job right matters more than finishing it quickly.

And sometimes it's just a man sitting quietly at the end of a table who decides that the room shouldn't move on quite yet.

What these people understand, whether they say it out loud or not, is that standards don't maintain themselves. Every institution that works well does so because someone along the way cared enough to protect the expectations that made it work in the first place.

Those expectations were rarely convenient.

They required effort. They required discipline. And they required the willingness to endure a little tension now and then in order to prevent bigger problems later.

Anyone who has ever raised children knows this instinctively. It is far easier in the short term to let something slide than it is to stop the moment, have the conversation, and insist on a better outcome. But parents who consistently choose the easy path quickly discover that what felt like kindness in the moment often produces confusion down the road.

Clear expectations, even when they are uncomfortable, tend to produce confidence.

Children know where the line is. Adults are no different.

The same principle applies to workplaces, schools, churches, and civic organizations. People operate best when the expectations around them are steady and predictable. They know what good work looks like. They know what integrity requires. They know what behavior is expected when they walk through the door.

“No one writes headlines about the countless ordinary decisions where someone quietly insisted on doing things the right way.”

Those expectations create stability.

Remove them slowly enough, and people stop quite knowing what the standard is supposed to be.

The interesting thing about the men who tend to protect those standards is that they rarely frame their actions in grand terms. They aren't trying to preserve civilization. They're simply responding to the situation in front of them.

They care about doing things properly. They care about keeping their word. They care about making sure the next generation inherits something solid instead of something hollow.

Most of the time, their influence goes unnoticed. No one writes headlines about the countless ordinary decisions where someone quietly insisted on doing things the right way. Yet if you look closely at places that remain strong over long stretches of time, those decisions are always somewhere in the background.

They show up in the habits of the people who live there, in the reputation a community develops. They show up in the quiet confidence that certain things simply matter.

Every generation eventually finds itself in that familiar moment where the room grows quiet, and something important hangs in the air waiting to be addressed. It's the moment when everyone senses that the direction of the conversation deserves a second look, even if acknowledging it might make things uncomfortable.

In that moment, someone has to decide whether the silence continues.

Most people hope it will be someone else.

But the health of any community depends on the handful of people willing to lean forward, clear their throat, and say what everyone else was thinking.

Not because they enjoy confrontation, but because they understand what happens when nobody does.

And that leads to a simple challenge.

The next time you find yourself in that room, pay attention to that moment when the air shifts and the conversation tries to move on too quickly. Notice the pause. Notice the quiet. That is usually the moment when a community either stays steady or begins drifting.

Be the man who clears his throat. Be the man who says something.

Holding the line rarely feels dramatic. Most of the time, it looks like a calm voice, a simple question, or a quiet reminder that certain things still matter. But over time, those small moments shape the character of a place.

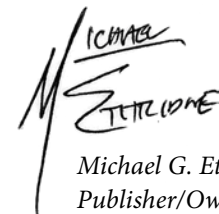
If this magazine has taught me anything over the past year, it's that Kendall County is full of men who already live this way. They protect what matters. They keep their word. They take responsibility for the places and people entrusted to them.

I'd like to hear from you.

Tell me where you've seen that moment. Tell me about the time you spoke up when it would have been easier to stay quiet. Or tell me how you intend to be that man the next time the moment arrives.

Send me a note at michael@thekendallgentleman.com.

Because communities don't stay strong by accident. They stay strong when ordinary men decide that the silence in the room isn't good enough anymore.



Michael G. Ethridge
Publisher/Owner

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

4/4/26

Veterans Coffee

Ford of Boerne
Black Rifle Coffee Company
101 S Main St Ste A
Boerne, TX 78006

Enjoy a cup of coffee and camaraderie with other veterans on the first Saturday of each month at Boerne's Black Rifle Coffee Company. 8:00-10:00am

4/4/26

Antique Tractor Pull

The AgriCultural Museum & Arts Center
102 City Park Rd.
Boerne, TX, 78006

www.theagricultural.org

The AgriCultural Museum & Arts Center in Boerne is hosting a series of antique tractor pulls and a trail ride throughout 2026. These events celebrate farming heritage with powerful antique tractors in action, making for a fun-filled experience for the entire family.

4/13/26

American Legion General Membership Meeting

American Legion Post 313
Kendall County EMS Bldg
1175 North Main Street
Boerne, TX 78006

www.alpost313boernetx.org

We meet every second Monday of the month from 6:30 PM to 7:30 PM (with a social/pot luck hour from 5:30 PM to 6:30 PM)

4/14/26

VFW Business Meeting

VFW Post 688
Kendall Masonic Lodge
897 E Blanco, Boerne, TX 78006
www.vfw688.org

4/18/26

Texas Corvette Association Open Car Show

Texas Corvette Association
The Plaza
100 N Main St, Boerne, TX 78006
www.texas-corvette-association.com
Nearly 500 colorful Corvettes and classic vehicles will line Main Street for the 33rd

Annual Open Car Show, a Fiesta event that brings high-energy fun to the Hill Country Mile. Guests can stroll the Hill Country Mile enjoying vendors, food trucks, a silent auction, awards, and even a pet blessing while admiring an incredible display of cars.

4/20/26

Masonic Lodge Stated Meeting

Kendall Masonic Lodge No. 897
Kendall Masonic Lodge
897 E Blanco, Boerne, TX 78006
www.kendalllodge897.org

Monthly Stated (Business) Meeting at 7:30; Supper at 6:30

4/18/26

Black Rifle Block Party

Black Rifle Coffee Company
101 S Main St Ste A
Boerne, TX 78006

Join the team at Black Rifle Coffee Company and their neighbors for an old-fashioned block party! Enjoy live music, great food and drink, as well as a cool car show.

4/18/26

Open Bowling

Boerne Turn Verein
221 E. Theissen, Boerne, TX 78006
www.boerneturnverein.com

4/25/26

Tour the Old Jail Museum

The Old Jail Museum
208 E. San Antonio Ave
Boerne, TX 78006
www.thejail.org

Built in 1887, the Kendall County Historic Jail served for 100 years as the county jail. It has recently been restored, and is open for tours the second and fourth Saturdays of the month from 10am to 4pm. Adult tickets are \$5, and kids under 10 and Law Enforcement get free entry.

4/27/26

Entrepreneurial Journeys: A Lunch & Learn Series at Das GreenHaus

The Phil & Karen Hunke Foundation
Das GreenHaus

7 Upper Balcones Rd.

Boerne, TX 78006

www.dasgreenhaus.org

Local founders share real-world insight during Entrepreneurial Journeys, a monthly Lunch & Learn series hosted at Das GreenHaus.

Tuesdays

Trivia Night

Free Roam Brewing Company
325 S Main Street
Boerne, TX 78006
www.freeroambrewing.com
Trivia, Tacos, Tuesdays!

Boerne Farmers Market

Old City Hall
402 E Blanco Rd
www.boernefm.com

The Boerne Farmers Market will provide quality, locally grown and produced agricultural products, prepared food, and artisan specialty goods to be bought, sold for the benefit of both the consumer and producer.

Wednesdays

Mens Bible Study

First Baptist Church of Boerne
631 S School St, Boerne, TX 78006
www.fbcboerne.org/men
Join FBCMen for a Bible study on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 PM in the Family Life Building during the school year.

Thursdays

Karaoke Night

Salvador Dobbs
512 River Rd, Boerne, TX 78006
www.salvadordobbs.com
Karaoke every Thursday night at Salvador Dobbs from 8:00-Midnight, with fabulous drink specials and the friendliest bar in town.

Sundays

Community Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Class

Black Diamond Martial Arts
140 Industrial Dr, Ste 100 Boerne, TX 78006
www.bdmaboerne.com
Whether you're just starting out or you've been practicing the art for years, our BJJ classes are designed to help everyone improve their ground game. **KG**

Job change?

Whether retiring or changing jobs, you'll want to know your retirement account options.

There are four potential options for your 401(k) when leaving an employer:

- Leave it in your former employer's 401(k) plan, if allowed by the plan.
- Move it to your new employer's 401(k) plan, if you've changed employers and your new employer plan allows for it.
- Roll the account over to an individual retirement account (IRA).
- Cash it out, which is subject to potential tax consequences.

We can talk through your financial goals and find the option that works best for you.



Caleb K Clark
CIMA®
Financial Advisor
124 E Bandera Rd
Boerne, TX 78006
830-428-0097

IRT-1948M-A AECSPAD 2/6/2019



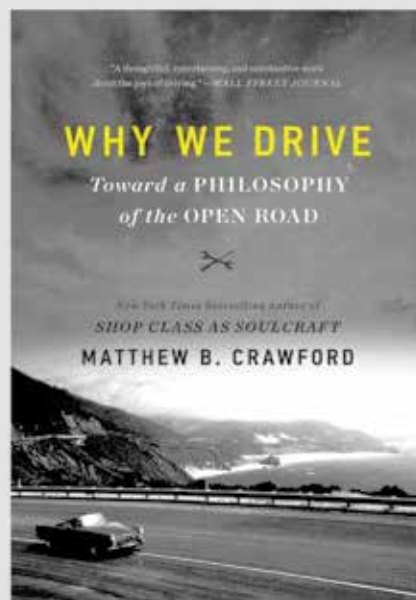
The Whiskey and Wisdom Book Club
is reading **"Why We Drive"**
by Matthew B. Crawford

You Are Invited!

Our next meeting is **April 16th at 6PM**
at The Boerne Bookshop.
Check our social media for what
we will read next.



www.theboernebookshop.com





SCHEDULE TODAY

830-446-5227

Plumbing service repairs, water heaters, and water softeners

At Olde Town Plumbing our commitment to you is to always provide honest evaluations and dependable service repairs. We won't recommend services you don't need. And we won't add hidden fees or over charge for our services.

We live in Boerne and our customers are our friends and neighbors. We strive to provide you with the clear communication and trustworthy plumbing services that we want for our own home.

Give us a call if you're ready for good old fashioned customer service infused with up-to-date plumbing techniques.

28550 I-10 WEST, SUITE 2 | BOERNE, TX 78006
oldetownplumbing.com | info@oldetownplumbing.com

Does your business target men as customers?
The Kendall Gentleman is here to help.



THE KENDALL
G E N T L E M A N

thekendallgentleman.com | info@thekendallgentleman.com

830-308-4406



Built local. For locals.

Switch to GVTC TV® and experience TV like a true local. Catch community moments exclusively on Local Lens.



Watch on Mobile—Watch your favorite shows on your phone or tablet anywhere in the GVTC service area with the GVTC TV® app.



3 Day Rewind*—Missed a show? Go back and watch up to 72 hours of select channels.



Channel 16—Watch live high school sports and community events.



Record & Watch on Multiple Devices—Record your favorite shows, then watch your recordings later on your TV, phone, or tablet.



UPGRADE YOUR FIBER INTERNET

Life's better when everything's connected at MultiGig speed.

2 GIG AND **5 GIG**



844-543-1775
gvtc.com/MoreThanTV

*See terms and conditions at gvtc.com/MoreThanTV for more info.



Men Need Art *and* Art Needs Men

By Louis Barnes

In the Spring of 2019, I found myself in Paris, France, watching as flames began to engulf one of the most renowned buildings to ever exist, the Notre Dame Cathedral. Although I had never felt any particular connection with this building, it was deeply disturbing to witness. Fires happen every day all over the world, but very few have worldwide significance. Something was different about this fire. I was not merely watching a building burn, but history, beauty, and legacy. Intricate stained-glass windows, innovative flying buttresses, symbolic craftsmanship, and immovable artistic brilliance compel people to cross oceans to see this cathedral in person. It is meant to point us to the majesty of God, and it has steadfastly stood there doing just that through centuries of turmoil, revolution, wars, fires, decay, and death. The great men who began construction wouldn't even live to see its completion. After the 2019 fire, it had to be restored. It is a gothic work that transcends generations, too precious to be lost or replaced. That is the power of craftsmanship and art.

Inspiration from Past Men of Greatness:

Many stigmas exist in our modern times that prevent men from pursuing craftsmanship, art, and beauty. We live in a time when setting out to build something so grand and so beautiful would cut against the grain. Things are disposable, short-lived, and measurable on depreciation tables.

Other mediums of art, such as painting, poetry, and some forms of music, are seen as effeminate. We see it as a contradiction to excel on the football field while also having a knack for prose or watercolor. But great men throughout history have been able to touch our generation through these means. King David was a mighty warrior who slew armies and a lion with his bare hands, but was a tender poet and musician. We read his Psalms and remember God. We sing John Newton's, Amazing Grace, and we feel the anguish of his sins melt away in the Lord's mercy. We read great novels, such as Crime and Punishment, and we understand redemption. We hear Bach's concertos and are brought out of the mundane. An aged limestone home brings nostalgia for simpler times past. The painting of George Washington crossing the Delaware inspires boldness and courage. A stained glass window in an old Texas church reminds us of God's creativity. All of these inspirations and messages are bequeathed to us through the artists who came before us, and they were not feminine. Rather, we can learn from their masculine artistry.

If a man neglects his creative power, he misses out on building a legacy, shaping his culture, and the fulfillment that comes with participating in something greater than himself. But he also misses out on the simple joys of getting lost in a project, appreciating a sculpture, reading poetry by the fire, or painting a beautiful landscape. Art gives us high callings and provides us with simple pleasures and rest from consumerism, notifications, and social media. As the fellow said, "art washes from the soul the dust of everyday life." Men need art, and art needs men.

Art Makes You Effective:

The traditional gentleman was expected to develop artistic talents. To be an effective man, he must understand art and be able to wield it. At its essence, art is communication wrapped up in beauty. Paintings communicate the heart and soul of the artist. A building's design communicates

something about its culture. This cuts both ways, as some messages are not inspiring. Sadly, much of art communicates nihilism. But when something is beautiful, it lasts. Not only can we reach our community with beauty, but we can reach into the future. Notre Dame was built nearly a millennium ago, and it is still impacting the people who visit. Songs, poems, novels, plays, buildings, cities, paintings, and statues have built-in messages from our ancestors to encourage, inspire, warn, teach, edify, and entertain us. Art is time travel. We can have a hand in building, preserving, and reforming not only our current culture, but also the future.

Art as Leisure:

It was also understood in former eras that pursuing art was restful and rejuvenating. Winston Churchill took up painting, which I believe helped him develop into the effective man who would go on to help save Western Civilization. I would suspect most consequential figures had a creative pursuit to keep them sane. Art has a way of capturing a man and expanding his mind. It puts things into perspective, makes you realize the world is a beautiful place, and recharges you to get back to your own pursuits. I have a demanding schedule with deadlines, pressure from clients, and responsibilities as a husband and father. After a long day, getting lost in a book helps me unwind. I get completely ensconced in another world. Personally, I prefer old books with witty dialogue. These old stories suck me into another era, often in a foreign land, with unfamiliar circumstances. And yet I feel completely connected to the characters. I live in another world for a short time. Then, I come back to my reality and have a renewed perspective on it. My mind is calm after not letting an algorithm whip me from one topic to another, but rather focusing on a singular narrative, often one full of truth (if you read the right books). So whether you are building a table, reading old poetry, welding, or taking up pottery, enjoying good art or creating art can both be relaxing alternatives to scrolling a feed or passively watching a sitcom.

Call to Action:

Much of the art in our modern day speaks to purposelessness. Shallow messages, lack of virtue, or sterile design all reinforce this. When great men are cast out of the arts, greatness is not communicated and passed down. With young men especially lacking purpose, it is a shame that our culture often discourages them from taking up creative pursuits. But it is creation, broadly speaking, that men are called to. We are meant to build, and this includes art. We have a Creator who is artistic. He created lightning, coffee beans, the human eye, coral reefs, volcanoes, hammerhead sharks, and a few other things. And therefore, we emulate Him when we use our creativity. It is divine, but also such a human activity that makes us more whole. Some men can build beautiful cabinetry, others can write, and some are gifted stone masons. Whatever your creation, go the extra mile. Put some thought into the details that may not even get noticed at first glance. Give it some specificity and personality. Take risks. When putting in new kitchen cabinets, add some texture to the outside. When writing a thank-you note, craft your words artfully so the recipient never wants to throw it away. If everything you touch is artistic, you are sending a message: "Life has purpose. I care." People will start to notice the effort. "Do you see a man skillful in his work? He will stand before kings; he will not stand before obscure men" (Proverbs 22:29, ESV). And perhaps one day, if something you passed down catches fire, your progeny will get right back to work rebuilding. KG



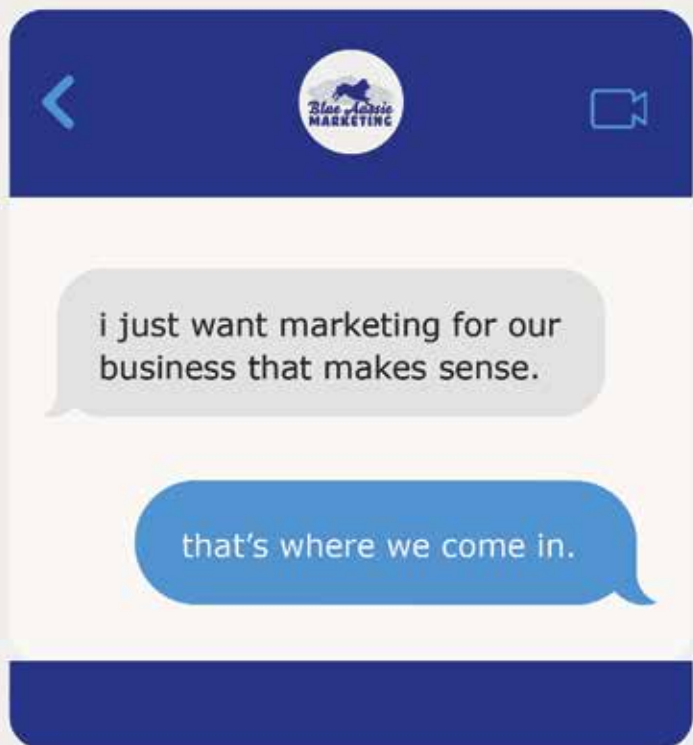
Louis Barnes spent his formative years in Boerne until attending school at Baylor University. After spending several years in Houston, he returned to his home in Boerne with his wife and young son. He has a background in accounting and finance as well as some avocational pursuits in writing and filmmaking. louis@thekendallgentleman.com



Fast, easy, worry-free internet.

**LOCAL.
RELIABLE.
TRANSPARENT.**

***THE BEST HIGH SPEED
INTERNET IN THE HILL COUNTRY***



**stop ghosting
your marketing.
it's time to commit.**





Scan me!
GET THE APP

**Book online or in the app and
NEVER DO LAUNDRY AGAIN!**

**FREE
PICK UP &
DELIVERY**



**WASH & FOLD
LAUNDRY SERVICE**

METROWASHTX.COM | 830.249.6832

Family Owned. Serving Boerne Since 1995.
1415 E Blanco Rd #14 | Boerne, TX 78006

NO LEASE & NO DEPOSIT

ONE FLAT FEE | FREE WIFI | UTILITIES INCLUDED



FACILITY MANAGEMENT



PRIVATE OFFICES AVAILABLE



CONFERENCE ROOMS



BOERNE, TX
officebox
CO. WORKING SPACE

Schedule a tour (210) 660-4101 or visit officeboxboerne.com.

Serving In the Moments That Matter

*Kendall County EMS paramedic Greg Smith reflects on service,
community, and the calls that stay with you*

By Jonathan Mallard



**SERVING THOSE
WHO GO FIRST**

For Kendall County EMS paramedic Greg Smith, emergency medicine was not the original plan. Growing up in Castroville, Smith worked as an automotive technician before the economic downturn in the late 2000s pushed him to reconsider his path. A suggestion from a high school classmate led him to try EMT school in 2010, and what began as a practical decision quickly became something more meaningful.

“I did like the idea of helping people specifically in their time of need,” Smith said. “It’s great to just make contact with people. It may be that they’re just lonely and need someone to talk to. You just don’t know what they’re going through at their time of need that maybe I can help.”

More than a decade later, Smith now serves as a paramedic and field training officer with Kendall County EMS. The work requires technical skill, calm decision-making, and the ability to bring reassurance into moments that are often chaotic or frightening.

“Yeah, absolutely it is a passion,” Smith said. “We are not paid the best or the highest by any means, but the schedule works out.”

Many people outside the profession do not realize how advanced emergency medical care has become in the field. Smith says paramedics today operate far beyond the common perception of simply transporting patients to the hospital.

“A lot of people think of us just as a taxi or refer to us as ambulance drivers,” Smith said. “But that is clearly not the case because we are labeled a MICU, which is a mobile intensive care unit, and we can operate just as much as an ER and do everything we need to do to keep you alive to get you to the ER, including whole blood administration.”

That capability can make the difference during traumatic emergencies. Smith recalled one call involving a severe motorcycle crash where advanced treatment in the field helped keep a patient alive.

“We ended up getting on scene with him, putting on a tourniquet,” Smith said. “Our chief dropped the whole blood off, and I gave him the whole blood in route to University Hospital.”

The patient required additional transfusions at the hospital but survived.

“When we got him to University Hospital, he ended up getting another 15 units of whole blood there to keep him alive,” Smith said. “He ended up, unfortunately, losing his leg, but he is still alive today.”

While dramatic rescues stand out, Smith says the most meaningful part of the job often comes from quieter interactions with the people responders meet every day.

“I would say the calls and the people that we encounter,” Smith said. “Them just being like, ‘Thank you for coming. My wife is not feeling well,’ or whatever the case is, and then getting a handshake at the end of the call. I genuinely hope that they get better after treating them.”

Serving in Kendall County adds another layer of meaning to the work. First responders often help the same neighbors they see at the grocery store, at church, or around town.

“I treat everybody like family,” Smith said. “I would want my grandmother to be treated the way that I treat people, and so I just carry that with me on all my calls.”

At the same time, the emotional weight of emergency medicine can be heavy. Responders regularly encounter loss and tragedy, and those experiences often stay with them long after the shift ends.

“You show up to some scenes that unfortunately people pass away, and you see their family members just heartbroken,” Smith said. “It reminds me to just be thankful for my family.”

Support from the community plays an important role in helping first responders carry that weight. Organizations like Hope for Heroes Texas bring responders together through regular gatherings and outreach while also providing resources that support first responders and their families.

“They do wonders here in this county,” Smith said. “The lunches that they put on once a month are great to get everybody together to eat. It’s great that they’re there for us. They are very resourceful in what they have to offer first responders.”

For Smith, the work ultimately comes back to a simple idea: showing up when people need help most.

“If I can help you in your worst time, that’s just even more rewarding for me,” Smith said.

Brad Cornell, founder of Hope for Heroes Texas, says stories like Smith’s represent the quiet commitment of first responders across the Hill Country.

“The men and women who answer these calls carry burdens most people will never fully understand,” Cornell said. “Hope for Heroes Texas exists to make sure they know their community sees them, supports them, and is grateful for the work they do.” **KG**



Jonathan R. Mallard is a retired U.S. Army Sergeant and Combat Medic who served with the 772nd Forward Surgical Team, 101st Airborne Division, providing lifesaving care in Iraq and Afghanistan. After more than a decade with the 36th Infantry Division, he now captures stories of faith and community through photography across the Texas Hill Country while pursuing a Theology degree at Grand Canyon University. jonathan@thekendallgentleman.com

Partnering with you
through life's adventures.



Photo Credit: Michael McGee Sturgeon Moon

CRESTMONT™
PRIVATE WEALTH

Locally owned independent fiduciary

www.crestmontpw.com

Investment advisory services are offered through Crestmont Private Wealth LLC, a Registered Investment Advisor. This material is for informational and educational purposes only and should not be considered individualized investment, legal, or tax advice. Investing involves risk, including the potential loss of principal. No strategy can guarantee success or protect against loss in all market conditions. Services and outcomes described may vary based on each client's circumstances. Investments through Crestmont Private Wealth LLC are: NOT FDIC INSURED, NOT BANK GUARANTEED, MAY LOSE VALUE, INCLUDING LOSS OF PRINCIPAL, NOT INSURED BY ANY STATE OR FEDERAL AGENCY.



★ 40 ★
**MIKE
MIKE**
★ ★ ★
**TEXAS-STYLE
BOCK**
EASY-DRINKING MALTY LAGER





FREE ROAM
BREWING COMPANY



FREE ROAM
BREWING COMPANY
BOERNE, TEXAS

- HOUSEMADE BEER
- WINE SELECTION
- BEER GARDEN
- FOOD TRUCKS
- DOG FRIENDLY
- SPORTS ON TV

**HOURS: 11-MIDNIGHT
7 DAYS A WEEK**

325 S. MAIN STREET, BOERNE
WWW.FREEROAMBREWING.COM
@FREEROAMBREWINGCOMPANY



SHOCKWAVE THERAPY

Shockwave Therapy is used as a part of a whole-patient approach to improving patient health and well-being. Officially called low-intensity extracorporeal shockwave therapy (Li-ESWT), the procedure is more commonly known as shockwave therapy.

CONDITIONS TREATED BY SHOCKWAVE THERAPY

Tennis Elbow • Knee Pain • Shoulder Pain • Sport Injuries
Carpal Tunnel • Sprain / Strain • Chronic Pain / Injury

37131 I-10 Building #400 | Boerne, TX 78006 | (830) 816-4357
genesishhealthchiropractic.com

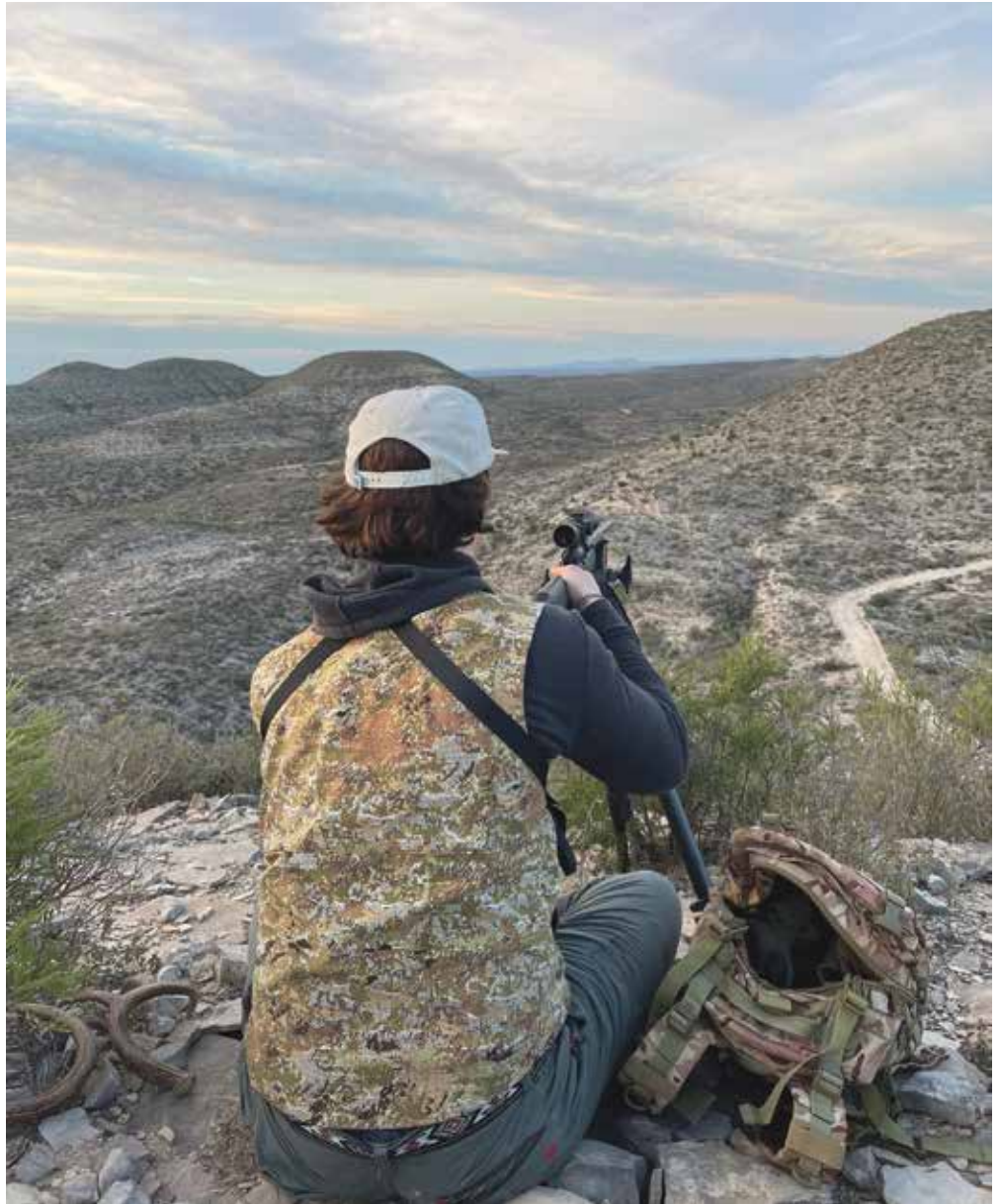




Las Cuatas

By Jed Mazour

Thirty-five miles down from what seems more like an endless desert trail leading to your doom than a weekend away. Random washouts, massive holes, and lots of dust. If we passed another vehicle, we all silently hoped that it wasn't federales, or worse. Rolling hills, desert valleys, a few dirt roads peeking out of the sagebrush, and the occasional rancho casita. Desolation, simply put. Although it's only thirty-five miles, it takes an hour and a half to travel it. Finally, the blue gate! We pull in, shut the gate behind us, and breathe a sigh of relief both physically and figuratively. From here, the road is worse, but no one can approach us quickly or unknowingly. We roll the windows down, crank the music up, and slowly let go of anxiety like deer corn on a dirt road. There are still another eight miles of travel, but we've started washing our worries away, knowing the beauty and fun that awaits us. With a generator as reliable as a coin toss, collecting firewood along the way is essential. The land rolls along with peaks and valleys covered in prickly pear cactus, sagebrush, and Huisache (wee-sash) grass, with an occasional group of dying mesquite trees. Everything has to be hardy to survive the endless drought conditions. We pass a few old settlements, but time and erosion have taken a toll, leaving only your imagination to fill in the blanks. By now, we can see the two hilltop peaks that gave this ranch its name. As we make our way through the second gate, you can see the Rio Grande in the distance getting a little closer with each sighting. Around 2:00 pm, we push around the last bend, hugging the rocky hillside and up towards the peak. We've made it! Standing on the hillside looking down, you can see three small casitas, a large metal building, an exterior patio covered with Saltillo tiles, a ranch hand shack, and a hand-poured concrete staircase leading down to the Rio Grande River. Gazing at this, you might feel as if you were in a



scene from a Coen Brothers western movie. Almost immediately, you wonder how in the hell this is possible in such a remote area. We unpack feverishly as the feeling of absolute and almost childish excitement sets in. From here, we can see miles both up and down the famous Rio Grande. Behind us is the endless

desert of Coahuila, Mexico, and across the river, the outskirts of Del Rio, Texas. In the distance, you can see Lake Amistad, and in the other direction, stand the mountains of Maderas Del Carmen. This place would give a child a feeling similar to having a theme park all to themselves. All the food, the rides,



and games, just for you! In this case, all the unexplored, the fishing, hunting, and starry night skies, JUST for us!

Las Cuatas (The Twins). Named after the area's two largest hilltops that sit as a sort of barrier between Mexico and the Rio Grande. How did we get to this point? How do you even find a place like this? Who do you trust? All good questions. Denise and I were headed to Del Rio for a fishing trip one weekend, and before leaving Boerne, we got a call from Ethan Budnick. "Hey, Jed, how spontaneous are ya?" I said, "Pretty damn spontaneous, shoot!" Ethan described the opportunity in Mexico and the amenities it provided. Sounded pretty good to Denise and me. But the only catch was that no one had actually seen it yet. So after a bass tournament on Lake Amistad, Denise and I met an acquaintance and made our way over the border and into Mexico to check the place out. The Budnicks – Ethan, Kendall, Boone, Crockett, and Britt – no matter what adventure you could possibly come up with, they will do it. No matter what challenges may come up along the way, they will help you overcome them. Resourceful, kind, trustworthy, loving human beings. The shoe fit, so we committed to this adventure together. On our first trip together, we had made an arrangement to meet the Mexican Army and a broker at the border to legally enter with our rifles and ammunition, get Mexican hunting licenses, and learn the ropes of crossing and dealing with firearms and ammo. Short story, we met and made the deal. There is a much longer and scarier story in between for another time. On one trip, about halfway down Windmill Road, the rough road conditions had broken both of my front brake lines. Fluid was everywhere. With my foot to the floor, the truck wasn't stopping... We had no brakes. Ethan and I clamped the front lines closed with vise grips, used baling wire to tie the broken lines out of the way, and refilled the brake fluid. This was enough to limp us through the finish line. Although we would wind up getting into an accident together in

downtown Acuña as we headed to cross the border two days later.

Bringing new guests was always challenging but exciting. It takes a pretty adventurous and apparently spontaneous type of person to make this trek, so our guest list was pretty short. Some would really embrace it, and some would end up with an early departure. Didn't matter to us; we were living in the moment, as my wife would say. One guest harvested an almost 200-class free-range white tail. Another ate the heart right out of a fresh kill. Both of those were a first for me to witness. We met some ranch hands who drank only lake water and survived completely by themselves for months at a time. I am not sure what they ate to survive, but it's probably better we never knew the answer to that. "Willie" and his wife, on the other hand, were more civilized. They came from Ciudad Acuña, just on the other side of the bridge that separates the two nations. He treated my family with an unforgettable amount of love and respect, and I did my best to return the favor. I can't remember his wife's name, but she was nothing short of surprising and heartwarming. Sometimes she would have a homemade breakfast waiting in the mornings with coffee, and often we would return from the field with everything cleaned up and organized. Although they spoke almost no English, they would stay up at night and join us by the fire for hours. We did our best to communicate, but it was more about just enjoying the moment together. We trusted them, and they did the same. We made a friendship, and it was respected and appreciated evenly, both ways. I learned a lot about perspective from being on the other side of the border's edge. The kind you cannot get when you visit a tourist city deep in Mexico. The border is a very unique and special place, and you would only paint yourself as a fool if you spoke heavily opinionated without having spent significant time on both sides.

Our days together were spent like Spaniards exploring the new land. We dropped into caves with ropes and ratchet straps, hiked



from hilltop to hilltop, and gazed across the border with a different perspective. We hunted on foot, hiding only behind the distance between them and us. We cooked our meals and warmed our bones over a fire together. Days filled with adventure and nights filled with fellowship, with random excursions into the unknown and telling stories till the early hours, and a lot of heart-filled laughter. I remember the feeling I had when we last left. It reminded me of how I felt as a child leaving the farm in Nebraska in late summer. I was ready to go. But I knew I needed to return, it just might be a while... And when we do, we will be welcomed. I don't think it's the place that makes you

yearn to return. It's the state of mind you can achieve while being there. It's who you share it with. A desolate desert ranch in Mexico or a secluded beach in Costa Rica, it doesn't matter. I think about that place often, and I think about that lonely Ocotillo... **KG**



Jed Mazour has lived in Boerne for over 30 years with his wife, Denise, and their two kids. An avid outdoorsman, he leads the faith-based Boerne Bass Club, helping youth anglers in grades 6-12 compete in bass fishing while sharing his passion for the area's natural beauty and opportunities. jed@thekendallgentleman.com



Los Vista

By Clay Smoot



So, this review is going to be a bit different, because it isn't much of a review at all, but the story about how I got into the industry and created my own personal cigar brand. It is also a reminder to keep fighting and moving forward toward your dreams. So, grab a cigar, a glass of your favorite whiskey, and follow me on this long and bumpy adventure. Then again what else would you expect from a guy that took eleven years to graduate college?

I had my first cigar on August 3, 1998. Yes, I'm fully aware that it's odd that I remember the date, but it just happened to be my grandfather's birthday. In my early twenties, I knew I wanted to get involved with cigars. I knew I wanted to explore different cigars, and then maybe, one day, I would get into the cigar industry. It took me one month shy of 23 years to get there, but I did it.

I grew up with a grandfather that smoked a couple of packs of cigarettes a day, I wasn't around cigars very much. Yet something always endured me to them. I don't know if it was the old spaghetti westerns with Clint Eastwood and his dangling cigarillo off the corner of his lips, the tough guy action heroes of the 80's always smoking or chewing on a cigar or pictures of JFK or Steve McQueen, "The King of Cool" smoking a cigar. They always seemed classic and to me, a throwback to yesteryear. Come to think of it, this could be why I have such an old soul when it comes to music, movies and entertainment. To really drive home the point of having an old soul, when people ask me who my favorite new country artist is, I

usually reply with Dwight Yoakum. I listen to Dean Martin, Sinatra, Elvis, and Marty Robbins. Listening to Otis Redding is a daily requirement for me. There is something about that nostalgic feeling that helps calm me. Is it the feeling of the music or the memories? Yes.

My grandparents (my dad's parent's and the same grandfather who smoked) had an old plantation home on the outskirts of the Southside of San Antonio, located off Farm to Market Rd. 1937, about halfway between the two communities of Buena Vista, Texas and Losoya, Texas and about a mile and a half from the Medina River. I don't know much about the history of the house or property other than the home was built in 1864. Over the years we found historical artifacts, likely from the Battle of the Medina, on the property. Fun fact, my mom has a coin that she found on the property. We later found out that the Alamo has that same coin on display, but ours is two years older. The house and property didn't have a "proper" name like old plantations or estates do. To us, it was Nana and Papa's, the country or the big house. To me, I called it and the area Los Vista. Why? Because the house was almost evenly located between the two communities of Losoya and Buena Vista, thus Los Vista. I always thought it was clever and didn't need much explanation until I started to say it to family and friends from the area.

We lived on the property until I was ten, then we moved to China Grove, yes that China Grove from the famous Doobie Brothers song. My parents still live there today. After

my grandfather's death, my grandmother lived in the big house for few more years before the family sold it. Thankfully, sometime in the mid 1980's someone took a polaroid photo of the big house, somehow my mom ended up with it. Several of my mom's sisters are very talented painters. So my Mom gave the Polaroid to my Aunt Nancy (her sister) and asked her to paint a picture of the house. Aunt Nancy painted it and the finished piece turned out wonderful. I am blessed to say that when the family sold the big house, I ended up with the painting. It now hangs in the entrance to my home. I never dreamed that Polaroid would someday serve as an inspiration. Thanks, Aunt Nancy for painting a beautiful picture.

On March 31, 2021, COVID was still going full blast and, I was working in hospice, dealing with death on a weekly basis. I didn't realize it at the time, but I had become callous to death and in-turn to other people's reactions and their grieving process. It was a defense mechanism to protect myself from getting too involved and becoming an emotional mess as I tried to help families navigate through their most difficult times. That very same day, my mom called me to share some sad news with me. Unfortunately, I gave her the "yeah, yeah Mom. Ok. Yep. I'll call you back." As soon as I hung up, I realized, "dang, that was my mom. I need to call her back." Upon realizing that I knew instantly I needed a quick reset. I went to my office and asked for the next two days off to reset. We didn't see eye-to-eye on how to do this, and I left there thinking, "I have to find something that isn't going to make me so callous." That evening, my girlfriend, now wife, and I went into to San Antonio. On the way home we talked about how and what I was going to do to reset. I told her, "I wished I had more capitol or partners to open a cigar shop." Mind you, this is 9 p.m. on a Wednesday night. The next day I went to Haupstrasse Barbershop (now Good to Go Barbershop) for my 3 p.m. haircut. When the barber finished cutting my hair he asked me to come to the backroom which was an open wasted space. He said, "I don't know why, but my wife and I want to open a cigar shop in this space. Are you interested?" Eighteen hours after I put it into the universe, I was a partner in a cigar shop. We had a great run at Haupstrasse Cigar Club and the lessons I learned there helped me so much on my current path. Two months after Haupstrasse Cigar Club closed, I received a call from Jeremy Affeldt's team over at Free Roam Brewing asking if I would be interested in setting up as a vendor for their one year

anniversary party. I immediately said yes. I had the cigar inventory, the accessories, but the Haupstrasse license had expired. It was during this time that The Cigar Society was born. (Another fun fact The Cigar Society has the same initials as the grandfather I mentioned earlier). In regards to The Cigar Society, we owe much of our success to Jeremy and the Free Roam team. They have promoted us relentlessly and for that, we are blessed beyond measure.

Fast forward to March 2024, we were unpacking after moving into our new home. When I was hanging the painting of the big house, my mind screamed at me, “LOS VISTA!!!!” The memories came flooding back so crisp and clear, a strong sense of nostalgia. For some reason, I couldn’t get Los Vista out of my head. It kept coming back, I’d try to file it away to the back of my mind, but it kept coming to the forefront. I finished hanging stuff and went to find a notebook that I’ve been writing ideas in since 2017. I started flipping pages and there it was...LOS VISTA CIGAR CO. Four years before I got into the industry, seven years before I found the idea again and nine years before the idea was executed.

I immediately knew what the logo was going to be, I needed to pick complementary colors (green of course). You may have guessed that the painting of the big house that I mentioned earlier is now the logo for Los Vista Cigars. After that was decided, the most important thing, the actual cigars. For the cigar selection process, I wanted something different than the cigars I usually smoke. I wanted cigars with a bold flavor and with a story of success and determination to tell. I love Nicaraguan cigars, but I usually roll and smoke Dominican, because they tend to be a little lighter smoke. I decided to go with Nicaraguan tobacco to mix it up, and I even added a wrapper from Ecuador for one of my four creations.



The first cigar, The Medina, is a box press Maduro Robusto (5 x 50). It is all Nicaraguan tobacco. This one packs a punch and you’ll feel it when you’re smoking it. I picked the box press, because my two favorite cigars to smoke are box pressed. It’s short and stout, like me.

Los Vista Cigar – The Medina

Box Press Robusto 5 x50

Wrapper – Nicaraguan Connecticut Broadleaf

Binder – Nicaraguan

Filler – Nicaraguan

Pairs well with; Guinness, Blanton’s, Middleton Barry Crockett, Dark Rum, Free Roam Low Fence and Dirty Duck Coffee First Flight.

The second cigar, is a Habano Toro (6 x 52). It is fully Nicaraguan also. It is medium smoke, not harsh and maybe a little on the lighter side. It is modeled after my favorite cigar.

Los Vista Cigar – The Valley

Toro – 6 x 52

Wrapper – Habano Nicaraguan

Binder – Nicaraguan

Filler – Nicaraguan

Pairs well with; White coconut rum, Glenfiddich 14, Dirty Duck Coffee Morning Wood and. Weller Antique 107.

The third cigar, 64, is a Dominican Robusto (5 x50) with an Ecuadorian wrapper. It is the lightest cigar of our lineup. It is very similar to cigars I’ve done for my events and shows. I just switched up the wrapper.

Los Vista Cigar – 64

Robusto 5 x50

Wrapper – Sumatran (Ecuador)

Binder – Nicaraguan

Filler – Nicaraguan

Pairs well with; tequila, Tanager Cigar Blend by Still Austin, and a great pilsner that you can grab at Free Roam Brewing on Main St.

The fourth and final cigar in this release is Legacy. It is a Sungrown Habano Toro (6x52). This one is my personal favorite of this group. The Sungrown wrapper packs a hit that most seasoned cigar smokers will enjoy. If this cigar was a person, it would be the one you have to warn your friends about. It’s brash, bold and doesn’t have a filter. Just like me. I’m really proud of this one.

Los Vista Cigar – Legacy

Toro – 6 x 52

Wrapper - Sungrown Habano Nicaraguan

Binder – Nicaraguan

Filler - Nicaraguan

Pairs well with; White coconut rum, The Balvenie 14 Year Caribbean Cask, Dirty Duck Coffee Morning Wood and Old Forrester King Ranch 2025. **KG**



Clay Smoot is the owner of The Cigar Society, a local business dedicated to offering premium cigars for aficionados. His carefully curated selection, including the featured cigar in this issue, is available at popular Kendall County spots like Free Roam Brewing Company and Roc-N-Ritas, providing a perfect pairing for great company. clay@thekendallgentleman.com



Libations – Coffee – Cigars – Camaraderie



A Social Club for Men and Women
Open 7 days a week from 11 am till late
Come in as our guest and
experience what The Oak has to offer.



THE OAK

605 S. Main Street Boerne

AUTHENTIC ITALIAN-

**PIZZA
SALADS**

PANUOZZO SANDWICHES

GELATO

TIRAMISU

CINZANO

Pizza Volterra

605 S Main St, Boerne, TX 78006, United States

5.0 ★★★★★ 96 reviews

CINZANO

gelato 10

crust 6

chef 5

Sort by

DINE IN

Highest rating

TAKE AWAY

DELIVERY



11AM-9PM DAILY

830-929-2402

605 S. MAIN STREET BOERNE IN FRONT OF THE OAK



My Church

By Coach Stan Leech

“There but for the grace of God go I”

– John Bradford

This well-known phrase is often attributed to John Bradford, a 16th century English reformer. As the story goes, Bradford witnessed a group of prisoners being led to execution and humbly remarked, “There but for the grace of God, goes John Bradford,” He recognized that it was only God’s mercy and grace that kept him from a similar fate. His words serve as a timeless reminder of humility, gratitude, and the awareness that we are all dependent on God’s grace.

This phrase has resonated deeply with me over the years, especially when I think about the role my church has played in my life. Carla and I have been blessed to be part of the same Sunday School class for 32 years. That class has been a constant source of encouragement, accountability, and companionship. They’ve stood by us through battles, sickness, and celebrations. They’ve prayed with us, laughed with us, and provided a listening ear when we needed it most.

The title of this article, “My Church,” partly inspired those experiences. But I also couldn’t help but think of the song “My Church” by Maren Morris. In it, she sings about the freeing, soulful experience of driving down the highway with the windows down and country legends like Johnny Cash and Hank Williams on the radio. She describes it as a spiritual release, a moment where she feels her sins are washed away. While Morris’s church may be found on an open road with the hum of an engine and a good song, her words speak to a universal

truth- that we all seek moments of peace, renewal, and connection.

She sings:

“Can I get a hallelujah? Can I get an amen?
Feels like the Holy Ghost runnin’ through ya,
When I play the Highway FM.”

I get it. Music has a powerful way of touching our souls, stirring up memories, and giving us comfort. And while I believe in the joy of those moments - those sacred spaces where the world falls away and God feels near - I also know that we need something deeper. We need people. We need community.

A Lesson in Grace

To illustrate this, I share a story from a different season of Carla’s and my life.

In our first year of marriage, we lived in Stephenville and attended a small church. Our Sunday School class was led by Duane Bruener and his wife. Under their leadership, that class became a lifeline for us. They welcomed us into their lives and taught us what it meant to live in genuine community.

One Sunday, something happened that I’ll never forget. During our class, one of the members stood up and made an announcement. She said that she and her husband would not be returning. Her reason? She claimed the church was not “feeding” them and that they had found a new church that better met their needs.

What made her announcement particularly painful was that only a few months prior, Mrs. Bruener had hosted a beautiful baby shower for the couple. The class had celebrated their joy and invested deeply in their lives. Her words stung, and the discomfort in the room was palpable.

But then, Duane Bruener did something remarkable. Without a trace of bitterness, he

spoke with the utmost kindness. He said the couple’s name, looked them in the eye, and said, “I’m happy for you and sad for us. I pray that your new church will continue to feed you for years to come.”

It was a powerful moment of grace. There were no arguments or defenses. Just a genuine blessing. Then, in what I can only believe was a prompting of the Holy Spirit, Duane shifted the lesson to talk about the importance of living a life of service. He reminded us that sometimes, loving people means letting them go and trusting that God has a plan for them – and for us.

I don’t remember the specific scripture Duane used that day, but I often think of Romans 12:10: “Be devoted to one another in love, Honor one another above yourselves.”

That’s exactly what he did. He honored them by releasing them with love, and in doing so, he taught the rest of us how to respond with grace.

The Role of the Church

There will be moments in our spiritual lives when we’ll want to walk away. Maybe the church won’t feel like it’s “feeding” us. Maybe we’ll be hurt or disappointed. But the truth is, the church is not a place designed solely to meet our needs – it’s a place where we meet the needs of others. It’s a family.

Just like Maren Morris finds solace in the rhythm of a familiar song on the radio, we often find peace in the comforting rhythm of a church community – even when it’s not perfect. There will be misunderstandings and people will disappoint us, but there’s beauty in working through those moments, in offering grace just as we’ve received it.

Paul reminds us in Colossians 3:13:

“Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone, Forgive as the Lord forgave you.”



And that's the thing—the church isn't meant to be flawless it's meant to be a place where flawed people come together to grow in faith, serve one another, and point each other toward Christ.

Extending Grace to Your Church

Just as we rely on God's grace in our personal lives, we are called to extend that same grace to other's—including our church. There will come a time when your church will disappoint you, overlook you, or hurt your feelings. It's not a matter of if – it's when and how bad.

But that's where grace comes in.

Grace doesn't mean ignoring the hurt. It means acknowledging it, seeking understanding, and choosing reconciliation when possible. It means remembering that

the church isn't just a place to receive – it's a place to give, serve, and grow.

"My Church" might not always be a joyride down the highway, but it's where I've found lifelong friendships, unwavering support, and countless lessons in patience, forgiveness, and love.

So, my encouragement to you is this – find your church, get involved, serve, listen, and grow. And when the hard days come – because they will – give your church the same grace that God has given you.

Because in the end, it's not the perfection of the church that makes it beautiful. It's the grace that holds it together.

And for that, I say, "Can I get a hallelujah, can I get an amen" **KG**



Coach Leech, now in his 40th year with Boerne ISD and 27th as Athletic Director, is a legendary high school basketball coach and a respected leader in the community. Beyond the basketball court, he has devoted over 30 years to teaching Sunday School at First Baptist Church, exemplifying his commitment to faith and mentorship. stan@thekendallgentleman.com



Onsite Pro Can
Portable Sanitation Rentals

**Purple & Green,
Always Clean!**



We are a local and woman owned and operated business, based in Boerne & Kerrville since 2017

Serving Kendall, Bexar, Kerr, Comal, Blanco,
Bandera, Gillespie, Medina and parts of
Kimble & Hays counties

CONSTRUCTION
EVENTS & EMERGENCIES • PORTABLE TOILETS
FRESH/BLACK WATER HOLDING TANKS
HAND WASH STATIONS RV PUMPING

Call or Text
830.521.CANS (2267)



**HILL COUNTRY
OVERHEAD DOOR**

830.249.3649 | www.sanantoniodoor.com



Boerne's VFW Post 688 is a nonprofit Veterans service organization comprised of eligible military service members from the Active, Guard, and Reserve Forces. Post 688 is dedicated to Veterans service, legislative advocacy, and military and community service programs in the Boerne and Kendall County area.

www.vfw688.org | Follow us on Facebook. Contact us at QM@vfw688.org

VFW
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.

Post 688

PRIVATE BRUNO PHILLIP
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Post 688



Scan to donate to VFW Post 688

The CIGAR Society

Passionate Texan cigar enthusiast crafting hand-rolled perfection for your events or for a relaxed evening at home. Available for pop-up events.

Cigars available at
Free Roam Brewing, Spotted Deer Coffee in Fair Oaks, Spotted Deer Coffee in Comfort, Tusculum Brewing, and Männer Salon

Premiering Los Vista Cigars by The Cigar Society

IG: [_thecigarsociety_](https://www.instagram.com/_thecigarsociety_) | thecigarsociety1@gmail.com
210-364-7915



Jason Abbott and the **QUIET WORK OF PROTECTING A GENERATION**

By Michael G. Ethridge

Photography by Jonathan R. Mallard & Jason Abbott

For years, the hallways of Boerne Middle School North carried the familiar rhythm of adolescence. Students moved between classes with backpacks slung over their shoulders, laughing with friends, worrying about tests, and navigating the confusing stretch of life that sits somewhere between childhood and adulthood. Standing quietly in the middle of that daily movement was a man whose presence brought steadiness to the campus, one hand resting near his radio while he watched the hallway with the calm patience of someone who had spent years learning how to read a room.

Jason Abbott was hard to miss. Tall and broad-shouldered, he carried the posture of someone who had spent years in uniform. Yet the presence he brought to the school was defined less by authority than by calm confidence. Students quickly learned that the officer standing in the hallway paid attention. He noticed when they were having a bad day and listened when life felt overwhelming.

Abbott served for years as a police officer with the Boerne Police Department before taking on the role of School Resource Officer at Boerne Middle School North. The assignment placed him in the center of one of the most important environments in any community: a school filled with young people still figuring out who they are becoming. The work required vigilance and discipline, but it also required patience, empathy, and the ability to connect with students who were often struggling to find their footing.

“I tried to be someone the kids could come talk to,” Abbott said when reflecting on those years. “They knew I was the police officer on campus, but they also knew I wasn’t just there to get them in trouble. I was there for them.”

Middle school is an age filled with uncertainty. Confidence comes and goes quickly, friendships shift, and the pressures of the outside world begin to creep into daily life. Abbott saw those struggles play out every day and approached them with a perspective shaped by both his experience in law enforcement and his role as a father.

“They were still kids,” he said. “A lot of them just needed somebody to listen. Sometimes they just needed someone to tell them they were going to be alright.”

Trust like that does not appear overnight. Abbott believed that young people could sense authenticity quickly and that respect had to be earned through consistency and honesty.



“You can’t just walk in and expect kids to respect you,” he said. “You earn that by showing up the same way every day and by being honest with them.”

Over time, that steady presence built something important inside the school. Students began to see Abbott as more than the officer responsible for enforcing rules. He became someone who believed they could succeed even when they made mistakes along the way.

The role of a school resource officer carries another responsibility that never fades. Abbott understood that beyond mentorship and guidance, he was also the first line of protection should danger ever appear on campus.

“My job was to make sure those kids were safe,” he said. “That was always in the back of my mind.”

Yet Abbott believed safety often began long before any crisis occurred. When students trusted the adults around them, they were more likely to speak up when something seemed wrong or when a situation was beginning to escalate.

“The more connected you are with the students and staff,” he said, “the better you can protect them.”

Despite his imposing frame, Abbott developed a reputation among teachers and students as someone who was calm, patient, and approachable. The officer who looked capable of handling the most difficult situations was also someone who spent much of his day encouraging young people and helping them navigate the challenges of adolescence.

Abbott viewed that approach simply as common sense.

“I just tried to treat people the way I’d want someone to treat my own kids,” he said.

That mindset shaped the way he approached discipline. When students made mistakes, Abbott tried to focus on the lesson behind the moment rather than the mistake itself.

“When a kid messed up, that didn’t mean they were a bad kid,”

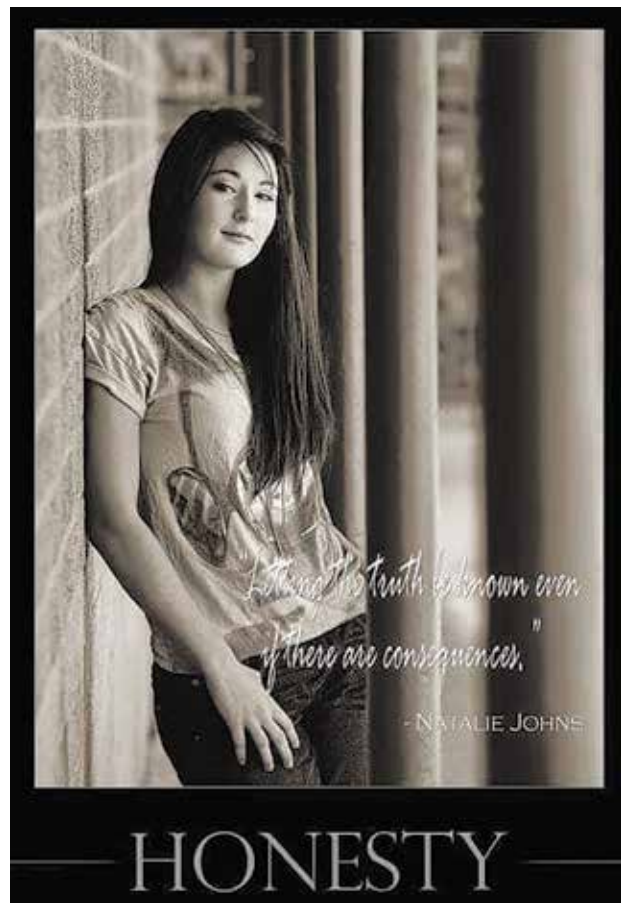


Photo by Jason Abbott



Jason Abbott Photography

Photo by Jason Abbott

he said. “It meant they needed someone to help them see a better way.”

Moments like that turned ordinary encounters into moments of mentorship. Over time, those conversations added up. Students who might otherwise have been labeled as troublemakers instead encountered someone who believed they could choose a better path.

Abbott never expected perfection, only progress.

“If you can help a kid make a better decision the next time,” he said, “that’s a win.” The perspective he carried into that role was shaped long before he ever wore a Boerne police badge. Abbott served in the United States Army as a Military Police officer and K-9 handler, a role that required discipline, constant training, and the ability to make critical decisions under pressure. Working alongside a trained service dog demanded trust, patience, and constant focus.

Military service reinforced values that would follow Abbott throughout the rest of his career. The work required calm leadership, careful observation, and an understanding that protecting others often means standing quietly in the background while remaining ready for anything.

Those lessons carried naturally into his law enforcement career when he returned to civilian life. Abbott eventually joined the Boerne Police Department, where he continued the work of protecting his community before moving into the school environment that would define some of the most meaningful years of his career.

Like many men who spend their lives serving others, Abbott has also faced personal battles along the way. Over the years, he has endured serious health challenges, including cancer and dramatic physical changes that tested both his resilience and his faith. Those seasons were deeply difficult, yet Abbott rarely speaks about them in dramatic terms. “Everybody goes through things,” he said.

Through those hardships, he continued to show up for the people who mattered most. His family remained the center of his life, and the steady perspective he carried into his work never disappeared. Hard seasons have a way of clarifying what matters most, and for Abbott, they deepened his gratitude for everyday moments.

“If I can go home at the end of the day doing 51 percent more good than bad, I am doing okay.”

“You learn to appreciate the good days,” he said.

Outside of law enforcement, Abbott developed another passion that allowed him to see the world from a completely different perspective. Photography became both a creative outlet and a way to capture moments that might otherwise pass unnoticed. The discipline and patience he learned through years in uniform translated naturally to the art of framing a scene and waiting for the right moment to press the shutter.

The camera gave him another way to tell stories about people and places, this time through images rather than words. It also reinforced something Abbott had long believed: that the small moments in life often carry the most meaning when someone takes the time to notice them.

Faith also plays an important role in Abbott’s life, though he describes it in deeply personal terms.

“I have never considered myself a religious person,” he said. “I would say I’m spiritual. I have a relationship with God.”

For Abbott, that relationship is not distant or ceremonial. It shows up in the everyday moments of life, including the difficult ones.

“I argue a lot with God,” he said with a laugh. “I have deep conversations with God.”

He approaches faith with humility rather than perfection.

“I am not perfect, nor do I try to be,” he said. Instead, he follows a simple philosophy that has guided him through both his work and the challenges he has faced.

“I believe if I can go home at the end of the day doing 51 percent more good than bad, I am doing okay.”

Family remains the anchor of Abbott’s life. He speaks about his children with unmistakable pride, and the experience of working with young people every day reinforced his understanding of the responsibility adults carry in shaping the next generation.

“My kids mean everything to me,” he said. Watching students grow into adults has become one of the most rewarding parts of Abbott’s career. Years after leaving the school campus, he still encounters many of the young people he once knew as students.

“They still call you officer,” Abbott said with a smile. “And they’ll say, ‘Remember when we did that?’”

Some of those former students have gone on to serve their communities themselves, becoming firefighters, police officers, and leaders in their own professions.

“You get to see kids that you were worried about when they were younger,” he said. “And then you see them later and realize how well they’ve done.”

Communities like Kendall County are built by people who quietly invest in the next generation without seeking recognition. Their impact is measured not in headlines but in the lives they influence along the way.

For years, Jason Abbott stood in the hallways of Boerne Middle School North as both



Photo by Jason Abbott

protector and mentor. Students who passed through those doors saw a steady presence watching over them, someone who believed they were capable of more than their mistakes and who never forgot that they were still kids trying to figure out the world.

His life reflects something deeper than a job title. Military service taught him discipline and readiness. Law enforcement called him to protect his community. The school hallways gave him the chance to guide the next generation through some of the most uncertain years of their lives. Along the way, he faced hardships that tested his strength, leaned on faith that is deeply personal, and built a life centered on family and service.

Abbott's philosophy has always been simple: do more good than harm, help people when you can, and leave the day better than you found it. It is not a grand or complicated standard, but it reveals the character of the man who lives by it.

Strength without arrogance. Authority without intimidation. Faith that is honest and personal. A husband and father who puts his family first. A servant who chose to spend years standing watch over other people's children.

Even now, years later, the impact of that quiet work still echoes in the lives of the students who once passed him in those hallways. That kind of life rarely seeks attention, yet it leaves a lasting mark on a community. And that is exactly why Jason Abbott is The Kendall Gentleman. **KG**

Publisher's Note: You'll notice that several of the photographs in this feature were taken by Jason Abbott himself. In addition to his years of service protecting this community, Jason is also an accomplished photographer with a gifted eye for capturing meaningful moments. We're proud to share some of his work in this issue.



Photo by Jason Abbott



FAIR OAKS EMERGENCY ROOM

Exceptional, 24-Hour
Emergency Care When Every
Minute Counts

Our mission is to improve the health of the people and
communities we serve.

We are committed to providing safe, compassionate and
exceptional care.

OPEN 24/7/365 • NO WAIT TIMES
NO APPOINTMENT NEEDED
LOCALLY OWNED AND OPERATED
ADULT & PEDIATRIC SERVICES
ONSITE LAB, X-RAY, CT & ULTRASOUND

(210) 903-2424

27638 IH-10 West, Boerne, TX
www.fairoaksemergency.com



ROYAL
METAL BUILDING
COMPONENTS INC.

**Your Land.
Your Vision.
Our Steel.**

Serving Texas Since 1995



BUILDINGS



ROOFING



STEEL



830.249.3331



39312 I-10, Boerne, TX 78006

Scan For A
Fast Quote!



WeatherXL



RoyalMBC.com



PEOPLE & PARTNERSHIPS

POWERED BY PEOPLE. PROVEN BY PERFORMANCE.

At Knighten Industries, our success starts with the people behind the work. Our experienced team brings deep industry knowledge, technical expertise, and a commitment to doing the job right—every time.

We believe strong partnerships are built on trust, communication, and long-term collaboration. By working closely with our customers and manufacturing partners, we deliver solutions that support reliable performance and lasting results.

For more than five decades, our people-first approach has driven measurable success across industries, earning Knighten a reputation as a partner customers can depend on.

When you work with Knighten, you're not just choosing a supplier—you're gaining a team invested in your success.

CONTACT US

830.816.5200

Scan the QR code to fill out our contact form or find your nearest location.



WWW.KNIGHTEN.COM



School Days, School Days

Dear Old Golden Rule Days, Part 1

By John Eddie Vogt

*Published in 2011, the late John Eddie Vogt's book, **Witches, Bitches, and Other Small Town Folks**, brings to life the quirky, unforgettable, and entertaining tales of growing up and living in Kendall County from the 1930s through the 1960s. Thanks to the gracious permission of his family, **The Kendall Gentleman** is honored to share excerpts from his book for your enjoyment.*

And rule days they were. Some used a wooden ruler on you and some only a leather strap. In some cases it made you better, but in some cases it made you more defiant.

The school year never started until after Labor Day. This was a hard and fast rule. The first holiday was Armistice Day, always on November 11. Then would be Thanksgiving, we would get off Thursday and Friday. Next in line would be Christmas and New Year. Maybe we would get off the day of Christmas Eve, sometimes only a half day, and still

other times not at all until the 25th. We went back the day after New Year's Day unless there would only be a day or two left in the week and then we wouldn't go back until that next Monday. Once in a while we would be given Washington's Birthday on February 22nd, but never Lincoln's. On March 2nd we would be off for Texas Independence Day, which was a day of reenactments for us kids that I've written about elsewhere in this book. For Easter, if you were Catholic or Episcopalian, you could get off at noon on Good Friday providing you were going to go to church. Naturally most kids became Catholic that day and attended high noon services, or at least said that they had. Back to school that Monday.

At the end of the school year the senior class would get to take a day off from school called "Senior Day". In 1946 a very defiant junior class declared that they were as important as the seniors. On a planned day, 26 of the

29 juniors all failed to report to school. A popular Baptist minister that was also teaching school was sent out to where we all were and attempted to persuade the bunch to return to school for the remainder of the day. It seems like one or two went with him, but the rest continued their "Junior Day" with no more interruptions. Somehow we got away with it.

I remember one day while we were having study period and it seemed like most of the class was making noise of some kind. Our teacher reached the end of her rope. In a voice way too high and loud for a teacher, she boldly declared, "If you all can't sit down and be quiet I wish you would get up and get out of here!" It hit everyone the same way and at the same time we all got up and went outside. The superintendent came and asked us to go back inside, and we did. Honestly, we weren't a bad bunch of kids, but we stuck together like cockleburs in a horse's tail. **KG**



305 South Main Street
Boerne, Texas 78006

Bechants
Men's

830-249-9879
BechantsMens.com  

Boerne, Texas
TRUSCULUM
BREWING CO.

830-428-0596, 236 S. MAIN STREET, BOERNE, TEXAS 78006



ENGINEERING SOLUTIONS

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Since 1996, **Westward Environmental** has been a trusted partner and dedicated advocate for our clients, building sustainable relationships with both our clients and the regulatory community. Our deep roots in Kendall County, and our extensive experience across diverse projects, allow us to provide expert commercial development solutions that are both innovative and environmentally responsible. We understand the unique challenges of commercial projects and are committed to helping you navigate the complexities of floodplain management, drainage, and environmental compliance. Our team expertly handles civil site design, stormwater management, and public water system design, ensuring your project meets all regulatory requirements and exceeds expectations.

Protect your investment and partner with Westward Environmental:

- Minimize risk of flood damage
- Comply with all environmental regulations
- Streamline permitting processes
- Reduce long-term maintenance costs
- Maximize property value

For almost three decades, we've been helping businesses thrive while protecting our shared environment. Let us leverage our extensive experience to help you achieve your commercial development goals efficiently, sustainably, and with confidence. We invite you to connect with us to learn how we can support your Environmental, Engineering, and Natural Resources goals.

ENGINEERING

Civil Site Design
Public Water Systems
Floodplain Permitting
Stormwater Management

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

Air/Water/Waste Permitting
Environmental Due Diligence
EH&S Training

GEOLOGICAL SERVICES

Geologic Assessments
Groundwater Studies

NATURAL RESOURCES

Wetlands
Endangered Species

830.249.8284
westwardenv.com



EST.  1996
WESTWARD
Environmental • Geology • Engineering

Treue der Union:

The Hill Country's Monument to Conscience

By Tom Allred, Sr.

Comfort's Enduring Tribute to the German-Texan Unionists of 1862

In the heart of Comfort, Texas, shaded by ancient live oaks and surrounded by the quiet hum of Hill Country life, stands a monument unlike any other in the American South. Modest in size but immense in meaning, the Treue der Union Monument has watched over the community for more than 150 years. Its limestone shaft rises from the earth not as a symbol of victory or conquest, but as a testament to loyalty, sacrifice, and the courage to follow one's conscience in a time of national turmoil.

For residents of Kendall County and the surrounding Hill Country, the monument is more than a historical marker. It is a reminder of the region's unique heritage — a heritage shaped by German immigrants who brought with them a fierce devotion to liberty, education, and democratic ideals. The story of the Treue der Union Monument is, in many ways, the story of the Hill Country itself.

A Monument Born of Tragedy

The monument commemorates the 36 German-Texan Unionists who died in 1862 during and after the Battle of the Nueces, a violent clash between Confederate forces and a group of Hill Country Germans attempting to flee to Mexico. These men — many of them young, many of them recent immigrants — refused to swear allegiance to the Confederacy. Their decision was rooted in deeply held beliefs about freedom, human rights, and the role of government.

When Confederate authorities imposed conscription, these German settlers faced an impossible choice: fight for a cause they opposed, or risk their lives by resisting. A group of roughly sixty men chose the latter, setting out for Mexico in hopes of eventually joining Union forces. They never made it. Confederate troops attacked their camp along the Nueces River on August 10, 1862. The battle was brief and brutal. Many Germans were killed outright; others were executed after surrendering.

The tragedy sent shockwaves through the Hill Country's German communities. Families mourned sons, brothers, and husbands. The loss deepened the cultural and political divide between the German settlers and the Confederate authorities. Yet even in grief, the community found a way to honor the fallen.

A Monument Unlike Any Other

In 1866, just one year after the Civil War ended, the people of Comfort erected a monument to the men who had died at the Nueces. They named it Treue der Union, a German phrase meaning "Loyalty to the Union." The monument stands today as one of the only Union memorials located on former Confederate soil, and it remains a powerful symbol of the German-Texan commitment to principle over pressure.

Constructed of native limestone, the monument is simple and unadorned — a reflection of the community that built it. Its clean lines and modest height belie the depth of emotion and meaning it carries.

At its base lies a communal grave containing the remains of many of the men who died at the Nueces. Their names are inscribed on the monument's face, including:

Ernst Beseler

Hermann Lange

Friedrich Schubert

Wilhelm

Luckenbach

August Hoffman

Hugo and Hilmar Degener

And many others whose stories echo through Hill Country history

The monument was dedicated on August 10, 1866 — exactly four years after the battle — in a ceremony attended by grieving families, community leaders, and fellow Unionists. It has stood ever since as a quiet but resolute reminder of the cost of conscience.

Why the Monument Matters

The Treue der Union Monument is significant for several reasons, each of which speaks to the character of the Hill Country's early settlers.





1. It Honors Moral Courage

The men commemorated here did not die in pursuit of power or territory. They died because they refused to compromise their beliefs. Their story challenges the simplistic narratives often told about Texas during the Civil War and highlights the diversity of thought among its people.

2. It Reflects the German-Texan Legacy

The Hill Country's German settlers brought with them a strong tradition of intellectual independence, secular governance, and democratic ideals. The monument stands as a physical embodiment of those values.

3. It Preserves a Unique Chapter of Texas History

Few places in the South openly memorialized Union loyalty after the Civil War. Comfort's decision to do so — and to do so in German

— speaks volumes about the community's identity and resilience.

4. It Serves as a Place of Reflection

Visitors often remark on the monument's quiet dignity. It invites contemplation, not celebration. It asks us to consider the cost of standing by one's principles and the importance of remembering those who did.

The Monument Through the Years

Over the decades, the Treue der Union Monument has become a cherished landmark. It has survived storms, political shifts, and the passage of time. Local organizations, including historical societies and descendants' groups, have worked to preserve it and educate the public about its significance.

Annual commemorations continue to honor the men who died at the Nueces. These gatherings are not political events; they are

acts of remembrance. They celebrate the courage of individuals who chose integrity over safety and who paid the ultimate price for their convictions.

The monument has also drawn the attention of historians, scholars, and visitors from around the world. Its presence challenges assumptions about Texas history and highlights the complexity of the Civil War era in the American West.

A Hill Country Story of Conscience

The Treue der Union Monument is more than a stone obelisk. It is a story — a story of young men who believed in freedom, of families who refused to let their sacrifice be forgotten, and of a community that chose to honor principle even when it was unpopular.

For Kendall County residents, the monument is a reminder that the Hill Country's history is rich, layered, and deeply human. It tells us that our ancestors were not monolithic in their beliefs. They were thinkers, dreamers, and idealists. They were people who valued education, debate, and moral clarity. And they were willing to stand up for those values, even when doing so put them in harm's way.

A Legacy That Lives On

Today, the Treue der Union Monument remains one of the most meaningful historical sites in the Hill Country. It stands as a testament to the German-Texan spirit — independent, principled, and unafraid to chart its own course.

For those who pause to read the names etched into its limestone surface, the monument offers a moment of connection across time. It invites us to remember not only the men who died at the Nueces, but also the ideals they carried with them: liberty, conscience, and the belief that doing what is right is worth the risk.

In honoring them, we honor the very foundations of the Hill Country's identity.

KG



Tom Allred, born in 1949, has lived in Kendall County since 1993 and is a dedicated contributor to The Kendall Gentleman. Inspired by his great-uncle, James V. Allred, the 33rd Governor of Texas, Tom explores local history and the legacies of men who shaped their communities. tom@thekendallgentleman.com

What if insurance was easy?

Get a quote today



Luna Insurance Agency Inc
Jaime Luna, Agent

300 W Bitters Rd., Ste 155
San Antonio, TX 78216

210-490-4475
jaimeluna@lunanation.com
www.lunanation.com





**LOCKED.
LOADED.
LOCAL.**

101 S MAIN ST SUITE A, BOERNE, TX



NOW OPEN!
101 S MAIN ST STE C,
BOERNE, TEXAS



WINGSHOOTING LODGE



LUXURY SPORTING RESORT

“Joshua Creek Delivers Excellence Every Visit!”

Joshua Creek Ranch
Texas Hill Country



“Every stay at Joshua Creek Ranch is excellent from start to finish. The lodging is always top notch—comfortable, spotless, and designed with a perfect blend of Texas charm and modern convenience. The food is consistently fantastic, with every meal tasting fresh, generous, and clearly prepared with care. The hunting is outstanding every time. The guides are true experts who know the land well, and the dogs are incredibly skilled, making each outing both fun and highly productive. Joshua Creek Ranch remains one of my favorite destinations, and I always look forward to returning. I strongly recommend it to anyone wanting great lodging, great food, and world-class hunting. It’s a place that delivers unforgettable experiences every single visit.”

★★★★★ C.R. | Orvis.com Review

- 
- ★ WORLD-CLASS UPLAND HUNTING AND EUROPEAN-STYLE DRIVEN SHOOTING
 - ★ SPORTING CLAYS, SIMULATED DRIVEN CLAYS, AND HELICE SHOOTING
 - ★ LUXURY LODGING, FINE DINING, RESORT AMENITIES, AND EVENT FACILITIES
 - ★ EASILY ACCESSIBLE DESTINATION, IDEAL CLIMATE FOR WINGSHOOTING

132 Cravey Road, Boerne, TX 78006 • (830) 537-5090 • JoshuaCreek.com

Help PAVE the way!

Kendall County Women's Shelter is in need of new asphalt at the donation drop off area, and a new storage shed. Let's come together and help those who help so many!



Scan the QR code to donate!



ETHRIDGE

FOR BOERNE ISD

**My two fundamental promises
to you: I will never vote to
raise your taxes and I will limit
myself to no more than 2 terms**

**Early voting April 20–28
Election day May 2**

www.michael4bisd.com

CINCH 

Paid Pol. Ad. by Michael G Ethridge for Boerne ISD. Garrett Ethridge, Treasurer