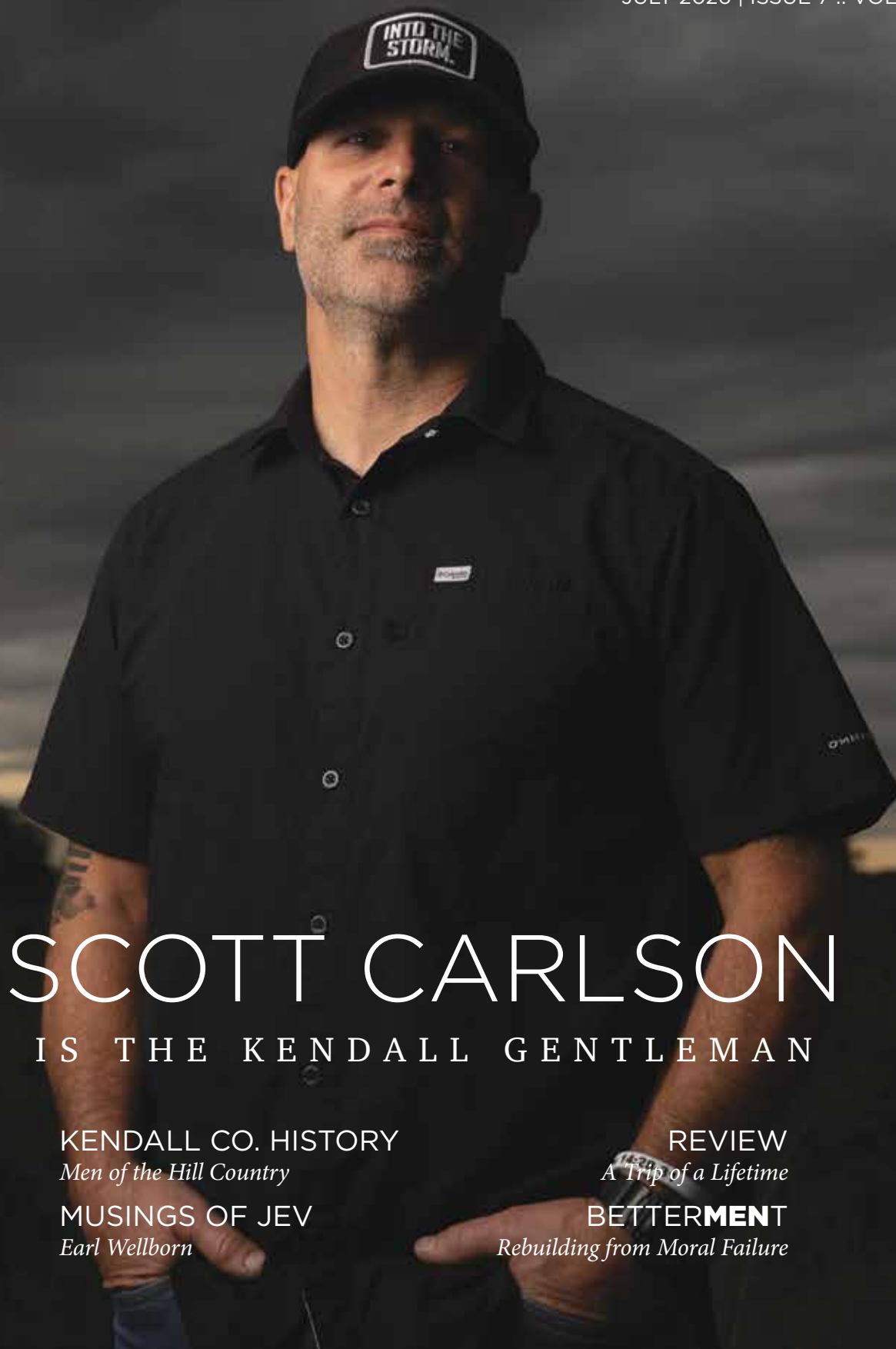




THE KENDALLTM GENTLEMAN

JULY 2026 | ISSUE 7 :: VOLUME 2



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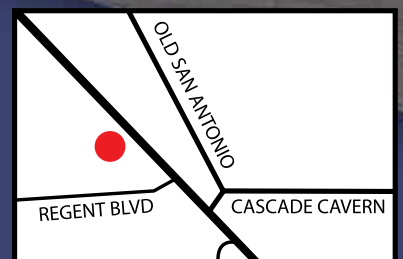
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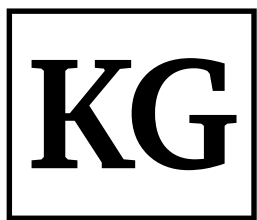


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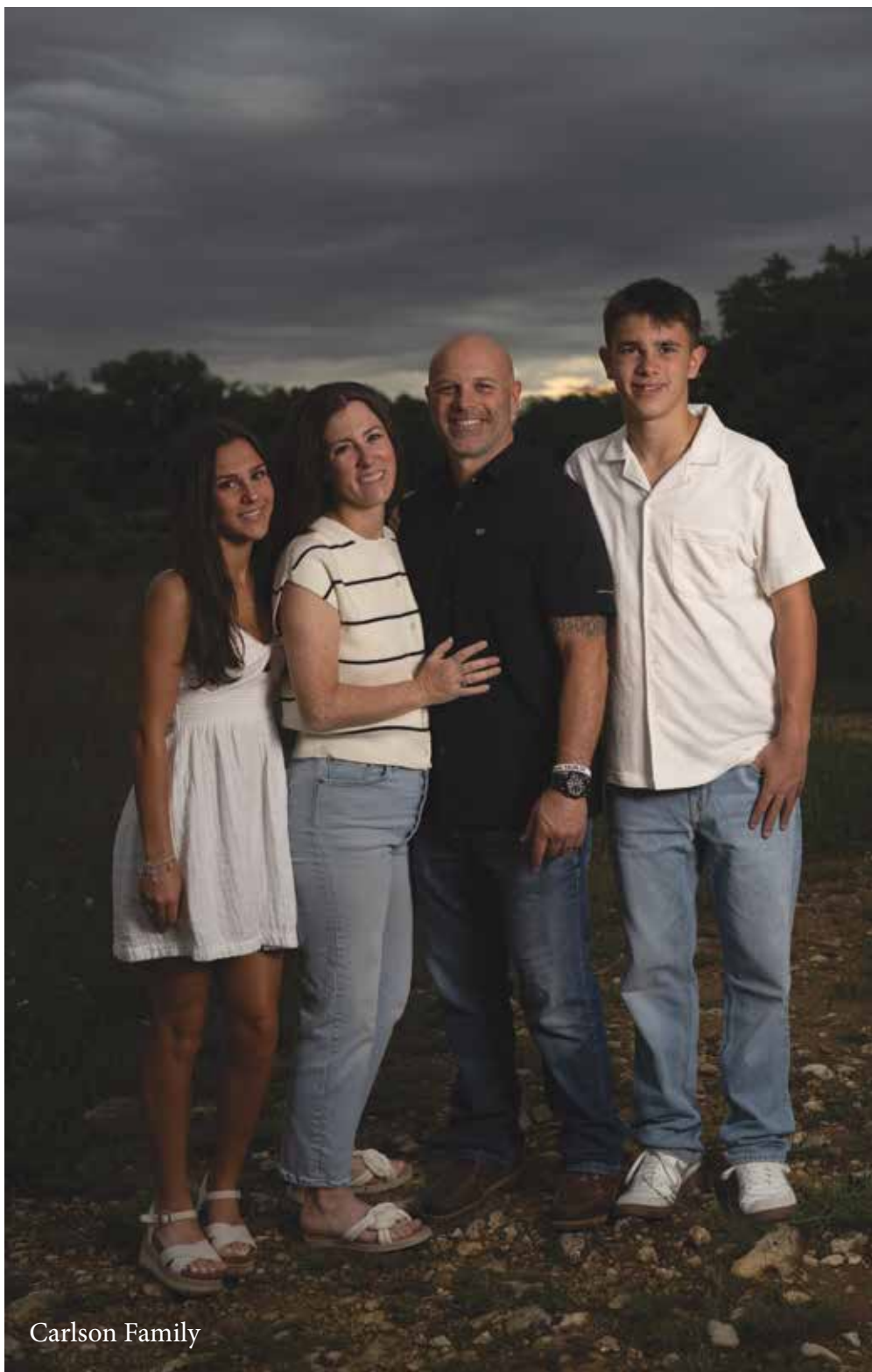
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THE KENDALLTM GENTLEMAN



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Dennis Postiglione

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



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publication of*





The Signature We Leave

By the time this issue reaches your hands, Independence Day will be just around the corner.

Across Kendall County, flags will be flying. Families will gather around backyard smokers and picnic tables. Children will wave sparklers long after sunset, and somewhere over the Hill Country, fireworks

will light up the summer sky. Veterans will stand a little straighter when the National Anthem plays. Church congregations will pray for the country we love. For a few days, Americans will pause to celebrate what it means to live in the freest nation the world has ever known.

This year feels a little different.

Next summer, America will celebrate its 250th birthday. A quarter of a millennium. Two hundred and fifty years since a group of ordinary men gathered in Philadelphia and signed a document that changed the course of human history.

When we think about the Founding Fathers, it's easy to picture them as larger-than-life

figures frozen in paintings and statues. But before they were historical figures, they were men. They were fathers, merchants, farmers, lawyers, business owners, and community leaders. They worried about paying bills. They worried about their families. They disagreed with one another. They argued. They made mistakes.

And yet, when the moment came, they were willing to risk everything for an idea.

The Declaration of Independence wasn't simply a statement of principles. It was a commitment. By signing it, those men placed their names, their livelihoods, and in many cases their very lives on the line. They believed that freedom was worth preserving and that future generations deserved the opportunity to inherit something better than what they themselves had received.

I've been thinking about that a lot lately.

Not because I believe our generation faces the same challenges they did, but because every generation eventually finds itself in possession of something it did not build.

None of us built America. None of us built Kendall County.

The roads we travel, the churches we worship in, the schools that educated our children, the businesses that anchor our community, and the freedoms we enjoy every day were all handed to us by people who came before us. Men and women whose names are often forgotten but whose fingerprints remain on nearly everything around us.

For a little while, we become the caretakers. That's true of a nation. It's true of a community. It's true of a family. And stewardship carries responsibility.

One of the greatest privileges of publishing this magazine has been meeting men who understand that instinctively. Over the past two years, I've sat across from ranchers, veterans, craftsmen, educators, business owners, first responders, pastors, and community leaders. Most of them would never describe themselves as extraordinary.

“They planted trees they knew they would never sit beneath.”

In fact, many seem genuinely surprised that anyone would want to tell their story.

But what stands out about these men isn't what they've accumulated. It's what they're building.

Some are building businesses that create jobs and opportunities for others. Some are raising children and grandchildren who will carry their values long after they're gone. Some are preserving family land that has been stewarded for generations. Others are investing their time in churches, civic organizations, schools, and nonprofits because they understand that strong communities don't happen by accident.

They're all contributing to something larger than themselves.

That's what the best men have always done.

They recognize that life isn't measured solely by what we accomplish during our own lifetime. It's measured by what remains after we're gone. The lessons we pass down. The character we model. The institutions we strengthen. The people we influence. The ground we leave a little better than we found it.

Too often, modern life encourages us to think only about the present moment. The next quarter. The next election. The next promotion. The next weekend.

The men who built this country thought differently. They planted trees they knew they would never sit beneath. They established churches that they would never see fully mature. They built businesses that would outlive them. They signed their names to a future they would never experience. That kind of thinking feels increasingly rare today, but it remains just as important.

As America approaches its 250th birthday, I find myself wondering what future generations will say about us. Not what

they'll think about our politics or our technology or our social media arguments. Those things will fade quickly enough. What will matter is whether we fulfilled our responsibility as stewards:

Did we strengthen our communities or weaken them?

Did we raise children of character?

Did we preserve the freedoms entrusted to us?

Did we leave behind institutions worth inheriting?

Did we invest in something that would outlast us?

The men who signed the Declaration of Independence handed us an extraordinary inheritance. They could never have imagined the nation America would become, but they understood an important truth: every generation eventually passes the torch.

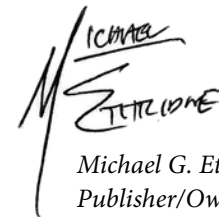
Now it's our turn.

For a brief moment in history, this country, this community, and these opportunities have been entrusted to us. One day, they'll belong to our children and grandchildren.

The question isn't whether we'll leave our mark.

The question is whether we'll leave behind something worthy of being passed on.

Happy Independence Day,



Michael G. Ethridge
Publisher/Owner

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

6/19-21/26

Das Festival

Main Plaza

101 S Main St, Boerne, TX 78006

www.dasfestival.org

Celebrate Father's Day weekend at Das Festival, June 19–21. This annual event honors the rich German heritage of Kendall County with live music, great food, cold beer, and family-friendly fun. Come out and experience one of the Hill Country's most meaningful traditions, all while supporting local nonprofits.

7/2/26

Tiki In Texas Cocktail Workshop

Assemble Cocktail Workshop

322 S Main St Building B, Boerne, TX, 78006

www.assemblecocktail.com

Kick off summer with tropical flair at the Tiki In Texas Cocktail Workshop on Thursday, July 2, 2026 at 7:00 pm at Assemble Cocktail Workshop.

7/4/26

Veterans Coffee

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

7/4/26

America 250 Block Party

Black Rifle Coffee Company

101 S Main St Ste A, Boerne, TX 78006

www.brcboerne.com

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.

7/4/26

Home Depot Kids Workshop

Home Depot

633 W Bandera Rd, Boerne, TX 78006

www.homedepot.com/l/Boerne/TX/Boerne/78006/6556

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trucks, butterfly houses, planters, and more. They'll receive Home Depot aprons and tools. It's fun for everyone!

7/4/26

Fireworks & Laser Show

Fair Oaks Ranch Golf and Country Club

7900 Fair Oaks Pkwy, Boerne, TX 78006

www.fairoaksranchtx.org/569/Fourth-of-July-Celebration

Fireworks & Laser Show brings an evening of celebration and community spirit to Fair Oaks Ranch on Saturday, July 4, beginning at 6 pm at Fair Oaks Ranch Golf & Country Club. The fireworks and laser show is expected to begin around 9 pm, weather permitting.

7/4/26

Independence Day Celebration & Parade

Comfort Area Chamber of Commerce
Comfort Historic District

www.comfortchamber.com/july-4th-celebration

Celebrate Independence Day the Comfort way on Saturday, July 4, 2026, in beautiful Comfort, Texas! The day begins at 9:30 AM with our adorable children's bicycle parade, followed by the beloved small-town Independence Day Parade through Comfort's Historic District."

7/4/26

Independence Day Fireworks

106 City Park Rd, Boerne, TX 78006

The City's annual Fourth of July fireworks show at City Park. This year's show will once again be synchronized to music and will begin approximately 30 minutes after sunset, around 9 p.m. The fireworks display is free and open to the public, with prime viewing available at the Kendall County Fairgrounds and Champion High School."

7/5/26

Boerne Concert Band at Veterans Plaza

801 S Main St, Boerne, TX 78006

www.boerneconcertband.com

The Boerne Concert Band will perform at Veterans Plaza at 7 p.m. on July 5 and will include a special mayoral proclamation honoring America250.

7/11/26

Cars, Coffee, & Cigars

The Oak of Boerne

605 S Main St, Boerne, TX 78006

www.theoakofboerne.com

Classic cars, coffee, and conversation come together during Cars, Coffee, & Cigars at The Oak of Boerne. Held on the second Saturday of each month, this laid-back gathering welcomes automotive enthusiasts to enjoy an eclectic showcase of vehicles ranging from American muscle cars to European imports and custom builds.

7/13/26

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)

7/14/26

VFW Business Meeting

VFW Post 688

Kendall Masonic Lodge

897 E Blanco, Boerne, TX 78006

www.vfw688.org

7/18/26

Open Bowling

Boerne Turn Verein

221 E. Theissen, Boerne, TX 78006

www.boereturnverein.com

7/20/26

Masonic Lodge Stated Meeting

Kendall Masonic Lodge No. 897

897 E Blanco, Boerne, TX 78006

www.kendalllodge897.org

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

KG

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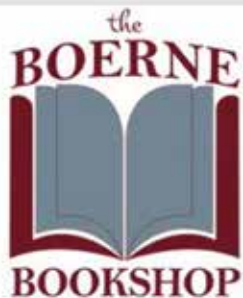
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July 25	The Texas Eagles: An Eagles Tribute	Sept 12	Vic Vaga, That Rod Guy: A Rod Stewart Tribute
		Oct 3	Dreams: A Fleetwood Mac Tribute
		Oct 17	Greggie and the Jets: An Elton John Tribute
		Oct 24	Lost Shaker of Salt Band: A Jimmy Buffett Tribute
		Oct 31	Flower Power Costume Party: The Fab5 (Halloween)
		Nov 27	Band of Confusion: A Genesis Tribute (Thanksgiving Fri.)



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Rebuilding *from the* Rubble of Moral Failure

by Dennis Postiglione

A person's life can instantly fracture due to betrayal, addiction, dishonesty, rage, cowardice, or self-destruction. We all make mistakes and accumulate regrets over time. That is part of being human. Some decisions, however, are life-altering and well beyond the scope of a simple mistake. Few people throw a hand grenade into their own lives, but the ones who do face significant obstacles between themselves and redemption. While no person is immune to failure on this scale, most people's failures occur within socially acceptable boundaries. When those boundary lines are completely shattered, rebuilding a life within the chaos that follows can be extremely difficult.

People lose marriages, friendships, reputation, trust, and their sense of identity. When a person betrays those close to him in addition to himself, putting those pieces back together is especially challenging. Friends are lost, family becomes distant, and judgment is quick, harsh, and deafening. Eventually, the loudest criticism comes from a voice echoing inside a hurt and confused brain. What matters next is whether a person chooses to turn that collapse into avoidance and self-pity or into true accountability and reconstruction. Rebuilding integrity after violating one's own deeply held values starts with accepting that integrity is neither proven nor solidified by never failing. It is proven by what a person does after failure becomes undeniable. It is proven by true acceptance of fault and the consequences of that failure.

Franz Kafka once said, "The meaning of life is that it stops." As Christians, we are taught that life is the soul's temporary layover in an imperfect vessel called the body. Depending on how that temporary vessel is utilized, the final destination of that soul is either a soft place to land or a hot place to burn...

forever. The inevitability of either one of those outcomes can weigh heavily upon a person faced with confronting a massive personal failure or collapse. Fortunately, the best thing about hitting rock bottom is that rock bottom serves as a firm foundation upon which to rebuild. Unfortunately, it is a lot easier for a person to rescue someone else than it is to rescue himself.

Regaining integrity does not begin with self-forgiveness. It is earned with brutal honesty. In a world that provides constant distractions in the form of 260-character text messages, 30-second, dopamine-inducing clips, and reality television, it is more possible than at any time in human history to ignore deeply held values and, ultimately, refuse to own a violation of them or heal after significant moral failures. Guilt and shame are very uncomfortable emotions. Scrolling on Instagram or binge-watching YouTube are, unfortunately, very effective ways of avoiding them.

To truly heal, a person must work to separate the guilt and shame of his failure from his true identity. Even the most egregious failure must be addressed with brutal honesty and deliberate self-examination rather than justification and denial. Doing this will lead to the realization that a violation of a person's deeply held values does not somehow reduce him to nothing but that violation. Guilt and shame should not be ignored, repressed, or dismissed. The presence of those emotions is direct evidence of a conscience and needs to be experienced in order to be processed into true growth. Indifference is the enemy of growth, not guilt or shame. Learning to recognize and embrace the discomfort created by poor choices is the first brick on the path to emerging from the rubble created by those choices.



Conversely, if a person marries himself to the worst thing he has done, he will fail to progress because he will come to believe that redemption is undeserved. He will come to accept that somehow internal and external hatred and isolation should continue into perpetuity. However, true accountability is much different than permanent self-condemnation and flagellation. Eventually, the hairshirt needs to be consciously removed. Endless self-hatred keeps a constant focus on what went wrong and suffocates any hope of repair. The judgment from others is an inevitable consequence of a moral failure. Many people revel in the failures of others because it validates and distracts from their own failings. It is easy to judge another person. What is most difficult is for a person to pass an honest judgment on himself and to act intentionally to fix what went wrong.

Viktor Frankl wrote, "[w]hat is to give light must endure burning." The past may not be repairable. In fact, it usually isn't. Some people may never return. They often don't. A marriage may end. Friends



“Integrity is neither proven nor solidified by never failing. It is proven by what a person does after failure becomes undeniable.”

may remain gone. Forgiveness may never be given. However, integrity after failure means accepting consequences without demanding redemption or validation. True accountability is realizing that choosing a behavior means also choosing its consequences. Those consequences must be accepted without being watered down. As humans, we are not meant to exist in isolation. When a person's life collapses through his poor choices, wanting forgiveness before trust is rebuilt, reconciliation before consistency is demonstrated, or relief before restitution is natural. Wanting the world to simply stop long enough to get grounded is as well. Unfortunately, reality does not operate on this schedule. The lawn must still get mowed, laundry washed, bills paid, and work obligations met. A person must humbly

accept that the world does not revolve around his wants. Moving forward is a choice. So is stagnation.

To heal, a person must acknowledge that trust is rebuilt slowly. It is telling the truth when lying would undoubtedly be more convenient, keeping promises no one checks, accepting the anger of the people who have been wronged without defensiveness, becoming accountable without needing recognition, and living differently long before anyone realizes it.

One of the great ironies of betraying the trust of those close to a person is that he may never be believed again, no matter how truthful he is. Trust in oneself begins with brutal honesty with oneself, not by trying to convince others of one's veracity. The

truth does not change just because someone refuses to believe it. Peace comes with unadulterated self-honesty first.

It is important to realize that a person simply does not miraculously “find himself again”. Rather, consciously engaging in repeated, honorable behavior will slowly reconstruct self-respect. Adhering, rigidly at first, to structure will rebuild and reaffirm identity. Self-discipline will rebuild trustworthiness, and consistency will repair internal separation. Aligning conscience with values must occur internally before healing externally with others.

With this self-reflective framework, only then can a person make amends where it is possible to do so, stop hating himself for his failure, tolerate guilt and shame to the point of their eventual elimination, truly own his behavior, and regain his identity.

Perhaps the most difficult truth to accept is that rebuilding one's life after a catastrophic failure means not getting the old life back. That ship has, in a word, sailed. Healing requires true self-awareness. Moving forward means becoming someone who would never create that destruction again, even in the face of permanent loss.

A person who stops lying to himself can finally begin rebuilding his life after a significant moral failure. The goal is not to become the man he was before the failure. The goal is to become a man who tells the truth about who he was, accepts the hurt he caused, and chooses to move forward by being true once again to the very values he violated. That is integrity.

KG



Dennis Postiglione is the owner and managing member of Postiglione Law, PLLC in Boerne. A civil litigation attorney with more than 23 years of experience, he earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Texas and graduated near the top of his class from South Texas College of Law. He enjoys exploring the Texas Hill Country with his wife and three children.
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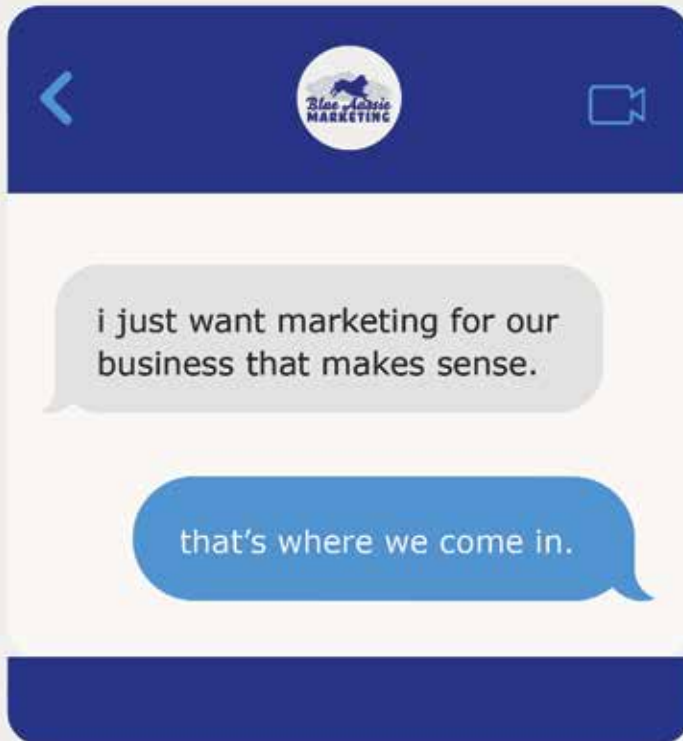


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**SERVING THOSE
WHO GO FIRST**

The American Dream in Uniform

By Jonathan R. Mallard

For Deputy Jose Javier Escalante, service has been a defining theme throughout his life. Long before he joined the Kendall County Sheriff's Office, he was learning lessons about discipline, faith, and perseverance growing up in the mountains of Venezuela.

Escalante spent his childhood near the Colombian border, where life revolved around school, family, and hard work. He attended an agricultural boarding school before continuing his education at a military academy, experiences he says helped shape the person he would become.

"It taught me who I am," Escalante said. "You have to be organized, keep your room clean, keep your stuff clean, keep everything in order."

Like many Venezuelans of his generation, Escalante witnessed dramatic changes in his home country. What had once been one of South America's most prosperous nations gradually became marked by corruption and economic instability.

During a church outreach program connected to Harding University, Escalante met Lora Beth Jubela of Boerne. What began as a friendship grew into a relationship that eventually spanned multiple countries and continents. After becoming engaged in Europe and marrying in Venezuela in 2000, the couple decided to begin their life together in the United States.

The transition was not easy.

"I was shocked," Escalante said. "Culture shock."

After moving to the United States, Escalante immersed himself in learning English and adapting to American life. A chance meeting with a Colorado deputy introduced him to law enforcement and eventually led to work supporting the U.S. Marshals Service. As he built a new life in America, he also pursued a goal that once seemed impossible: becoming a police officer in the country he had chosen to call home.

When he received his citizenship, the moment carried deep meaning.

"I cried," Escalante said.

More than two decades later, he still speaks passionately about the opportunities he found in America.

"This is the greatest country," he said.

In 2006, Escalante and his wife relocated to the Texas Hill Country so she could continue her education and be closer to family. After completing the police academy through San Antonio College, he joined the Kendall County Sheriff's Office in 2010. He spent nine months working in the jail before moving into patrol, where he has now served for more than 16 years.

Throughout his career, Escalante has learned that law enforcement requires both strength and resilience.

"We see things that stay with you," he said. Whether responding to fatal crashes, serious accidents, or family tragedies, deputies are often present during the worst moments of people's lives. Escalante believes the key to enduring those experiences is maintaining strong relationships with family, faith, and fellow deputies.

"You have to have a good foundation at home," he said. "Your wife, your kids, your church."

He also emphasizes the importance of friendship within the profession.

"I think what we do is keep a friendship, a good solid friendship among us," he said. That perspective has shaped how he approaches leadership and service.

"Some people are not going to like you," Escalante said. "But if you're fair with people and honest, they may not like you, but they'll respect you."

Escalante's introduction to Hope for Heroes Texas came with some skepticism.

The first time he attended an event, he wasn't sure what to think.

"I thought you were a scam," he recalled telling founder Brad Cornell with a laugh.

Over time, however, he saw the organization's commitment firsthand through ride-alongs, outreach events, retreats, and support programs for first responders and their families.

"I see what he does," Escalante said. "Brad's a good dude. He's got a good heart."

For Escalante, one of the most important aspects of Hope for Heroes Texas is its ability to remind first responders that their work matters.

"The idea that somebody stops and says, 'Thank you so much for what you do,' that goes a long way," he said. "Just touching your shoulder and saying thank you makes a difference."

He believes that kind of encouragement is often more powerful than people realize. "I wish there could be more Hope for Heroes Texas in different cities," Escalante said. Brad Cornell, founder of Hope for Heroes Texas, says Escalante's story reflects the opportunities available in America and the impact that service can have on a community.

"Javier's journey from Venezuela to Kendall County is a reminder that service comes in many forms," Cornell said. "He chose to embrace the opportunities this country offered, became a citizen, and then dedicated his life to protecting others. At Hope for Heroes Texas, we want first responders like Javier to know that their sacrifices are seen, appreciated, and supported. Men and women like him help make our communities stronger every day."

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

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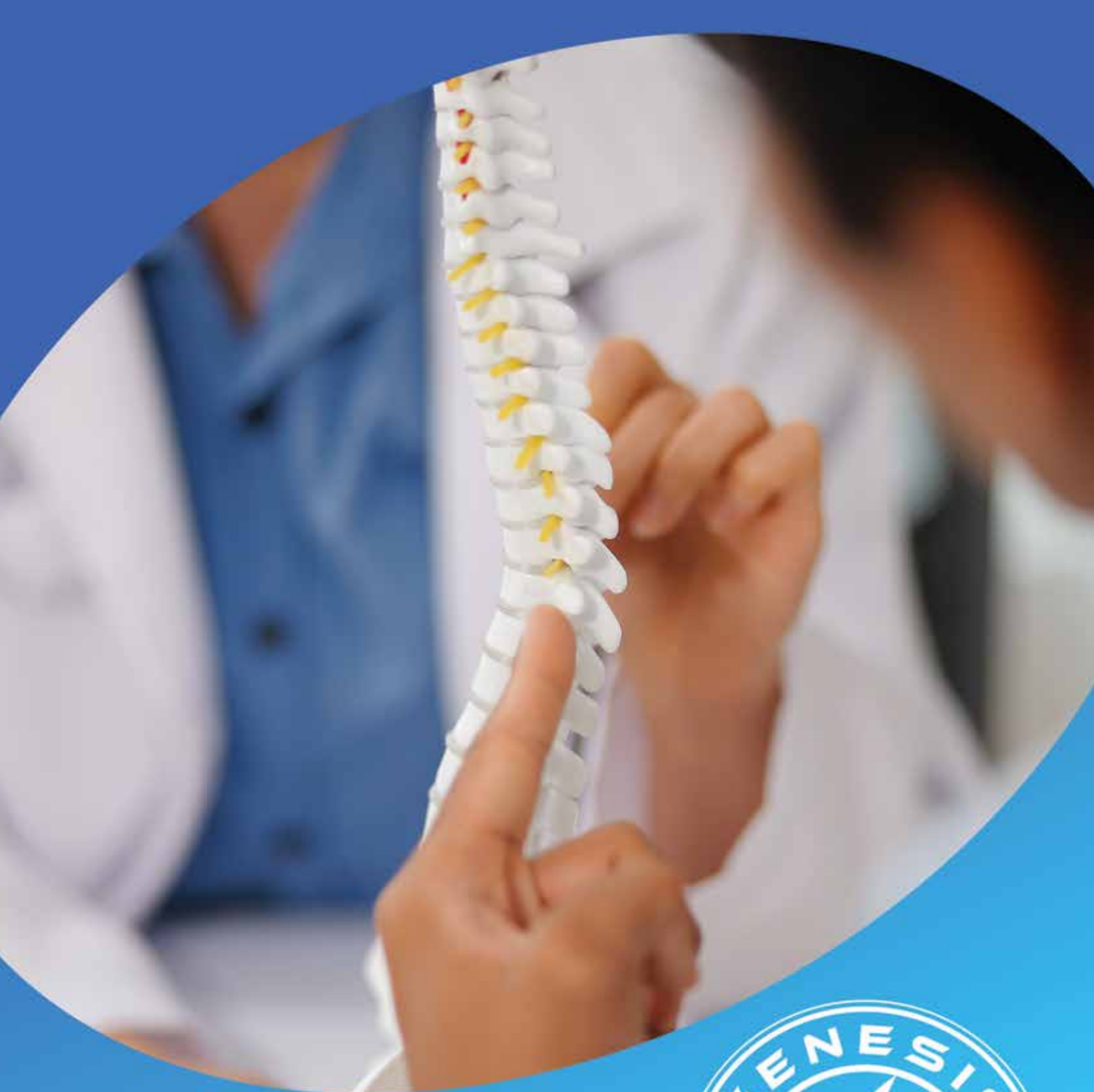


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Passion and Christ

By Jed Mazour

Each time, just before I turn the lights off, I stop and stare. Her uniform is clean and ready for inspection. Belly full of fuel, weapons stowed, and hatches battened down for the haul. She's ready for battle.

The time I spend in my shop prepping the boat for the next round of kids is something I take very seriously, but I enjoy even more. Each lake is different. Each kid is different. Novice or experienced. Left or right-handed. 6th or 12th grade. Big or small. Boy or girl, shy or outgoing, and on and on. I take all of this into consideration when building our game plan and preparing each rod individually. Most of the time, I have four rods ready for each angler on the deck of the boat. They will have a setup ready for first light, mid-morning, afternoon, and a "utility" rod. Inside the boat, we will have an ice chest with cold water, electrolyte drinks, and some snacks. No need for phones. These kids will be too busy and focused to even think about digging in their pockets to check their "snap". When this ship pulls out of the shop, it's fully prepared to compete with anyone on the water. The rest is up to the kids.

This year, we have the luxury of a very special team boat, but it's NOT an ordinary boat. It's a brand new Caymas CX21-Pro designed specifically for the Boerne Bass Club. Everything from the tires and wheels to the paint job and electronics was all personally designed for this team. I am happy to share that this was all made possible because of the good folks at Ron Hoover RV & Marine. Thomas, Rick, Corey, Johnny, and the entire staff have helped make a huge impact. There has never been a day that Denise and I have felt anything less than blessed by their generosity. **But behind the purple glitter paint job and flashy fishing gear is the truth about this vessel. A mission it embarks on each time. A story that gets a new chapter month after month.** It's not a simple mission statement or fun phrase you can slap on your boat with a sticker. It's something I have yet to fully grasp, let alone articulate into my own words. What I can say is that kids go through so much in their young lives. Sometimes life has great rewards, and I get to be a witness to that. Other times, I get to feel some of the pains, struggles, and challenges these young CHILDREN are dealing with. My mission and the trusty purple steed I ride on is to bring the presence of God into the picture. It's not

simple. In fact, it's something that I continue to learn as time goes. Each situation is different. What I do know is that God placed our paths to cross each other's for a reason, and Denise and I are going to lean on our faith and provide whatever we think the Lord is asking of us. Over the years, we have been blessed to see what this can mean to kids and how this club has changed lives.

It was around late 2017 when this club was born. Thinking back on all those years can take me to some emotional moments. I remember the first meeting we ever held and the faces of each child whose passion created this club. The sleepless nights and anxiety of pulling up to the line of boats trying to launch at 5:30 in the morning. Equally as nerve-racking was the simple fact that we didn't know a damn thing about what we were getting into! But man oh man, was it fun! Being on a boat in the early hours of the morning is a special feeling that you have to experience to know. The sun barely peeking up from the eastern horizon, and the reflection of the shoreline like a mirror on the water. Breathing in the coolest and freshest air the day will have to offer. **Blazing your own trail across the water like cowboys chasing Indians in the vastness of the Llano Estacado. Freedom, simply put.** I may have told Denise I wouldn't drive too fast with kids on board, but that certainly isn't the truth. There is no way to stop a man from squeezing every single bit of horsepower he can out of his boat in moments like this. Then, just like that, you are looking for your first bite like it's a bad habit you can't put down. The tug is the drug, I like to say. The anticipation of the first fish is comparable to NOTHING! There is nothing like it! Every single time I have ever been fishing in my life, I get the same feeling over and over, and that passion is the same thing your kids have when they are out on the water. It is a love that they will have for the rest of their life and it's a healthy one. Nurture it. Over the years, I have been fortunate enough to see kids go through our program from 6th grade all the way to high



school graduation. Some have even moved on to fish for their college teams, winning scholarships along the way. Yep, you heard me right. Scholarships for bass fishing. It is not for everyone; some kids only fish one season, and that's okay. But if it helps ONE child in a season, we are doing our job.

There is someone special I want to tell you about. Just typing that, I can't stop the tears from running down my face. I have been trying to talk about him, but I can't keep my composure to do so. Maybe I will be more successful writing my feelings out. Koby Hunter and Hunter Mazour were in the 4th grade when they met. **They didn't know at the time they would become as close as brothers and share the most important parts of their lives with each other. The highest of highs and the bottom of the lows. Their bond could only be separated by death, and even that is temporary.** Although Koby was not our son, we chose to treat him as if he were because that is how much we love him. God, this is so hard. Over the next ten years, Denise and I would include Koby in almost every single part of our lives. Koby was special, and we knew it. The boys explored their intense passion for



Saturday was designated for pre-fishing and to allow teams to get acquainted with the lake. As I pulled up to the boat ramp, waves were rolling over with white caps, and the wind was around a sustained 30 mph. Something I was not expecting, and it caused me to pause momentarily. Just as I was about to call things off for the day due to the weather conditions, I noticed the disappointment on a young man's face. He was wearing a look I couldn't help but recognize. Then I realized, as long as I am safe, why do I care about wind and rain? These kids are not scared; they are fearless and ready to fish. So, fishing is what we are going to do! "Let's do this," I said. Right away, the morale changed like sinking a three-point shot at the buzzer. The next morning, after the National Anthem and morning prayer, we were off! With a fast boat and the luck of drawing number three in the release, we had the advantage of selecting any place

we wanted to start. From 6:45 until 2 p.m., there were around seventy boats swarming the lake like a hive of bees. When all the dust settles, there is only one first place. Boerne Bass Club's own Beau Glauser and Lane Meyer delivered a crushing victory, leaving second place fading in the rearview mirror. Glauser and Meyer turned in five bass with a total weight just over twenty pounds! Second place was a distant thirteen pounds.

Our official season might be over, but we are going to continue keeping the team engaged as we move forward. Saturday, June 6th, we will be volunteering at the "Boerne Family Fishing Tournament" helping kids bait hooks, measure fish, teach basic fishing techniques, cook some food, and maybe even take a few kids out on the team boat. This is a wonderful time for us to give back to the community that supports us, and at the same time, gain exposure for the opportunity

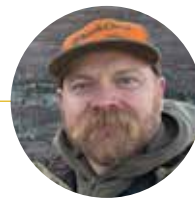
our club provides area youth. Saturday, August 1st we will be hosting our annual "Boerne Bass Club Summer Shootout" tournament at Inks Lake State Park. This is a unique event that is only open to Boerne Bass Club members. The winner takes home the custom-made championship team belt buckles as well as bragging rights. There is a surprise for whoever wins big bass, and I am keeping my lips shut!! I suggest you all get ready to battle this one out.

From there, we keep trucking. Onward to the next season, the next mission, the next child's life we can help change. This is bigger than Denise or me. This is bigger than a fishing tournament. This is what the good Lord wants us to do for him. ***It's such a distinct feeling you get when you know things are for all the right reasons. Pieces coming together like a puzzle. But it's when you stray from that that consequences will follow.***

I want to close with this. If your child or someone you know is looking for somewhere to belong, has a passion for fishing, or wants to dip their toes in and learn more about our organization, please reach out to me. Help me share this message and opportunity. We will host a membership meeting in early August for the upcoming season. Stay tuned for more details.

Cheers!

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

anything outdoors together, and eventually, they would both be founding members of the Boerne Bass Club. We lost Koby Hunter a little over a year ago in a snowboarding accident. One of those things you never see coming and can never prepare for. May God bless the Hunter family.

Denise and I want to help keep his memory alive and, at the same time, help other kids his age. With that goal, we started the Koby Layne Hunter Scholarship program. This year, we were able to award two of our graduating seniors with a \$1,500.00 scholarship. All of our funds are donations from the community, and it warms our hearts to see the graciousness. This will be a tradition we will carry on for as long as the program remains.

On May 16th, we headed to Lake Waco for our Faith Angler Network Championship.



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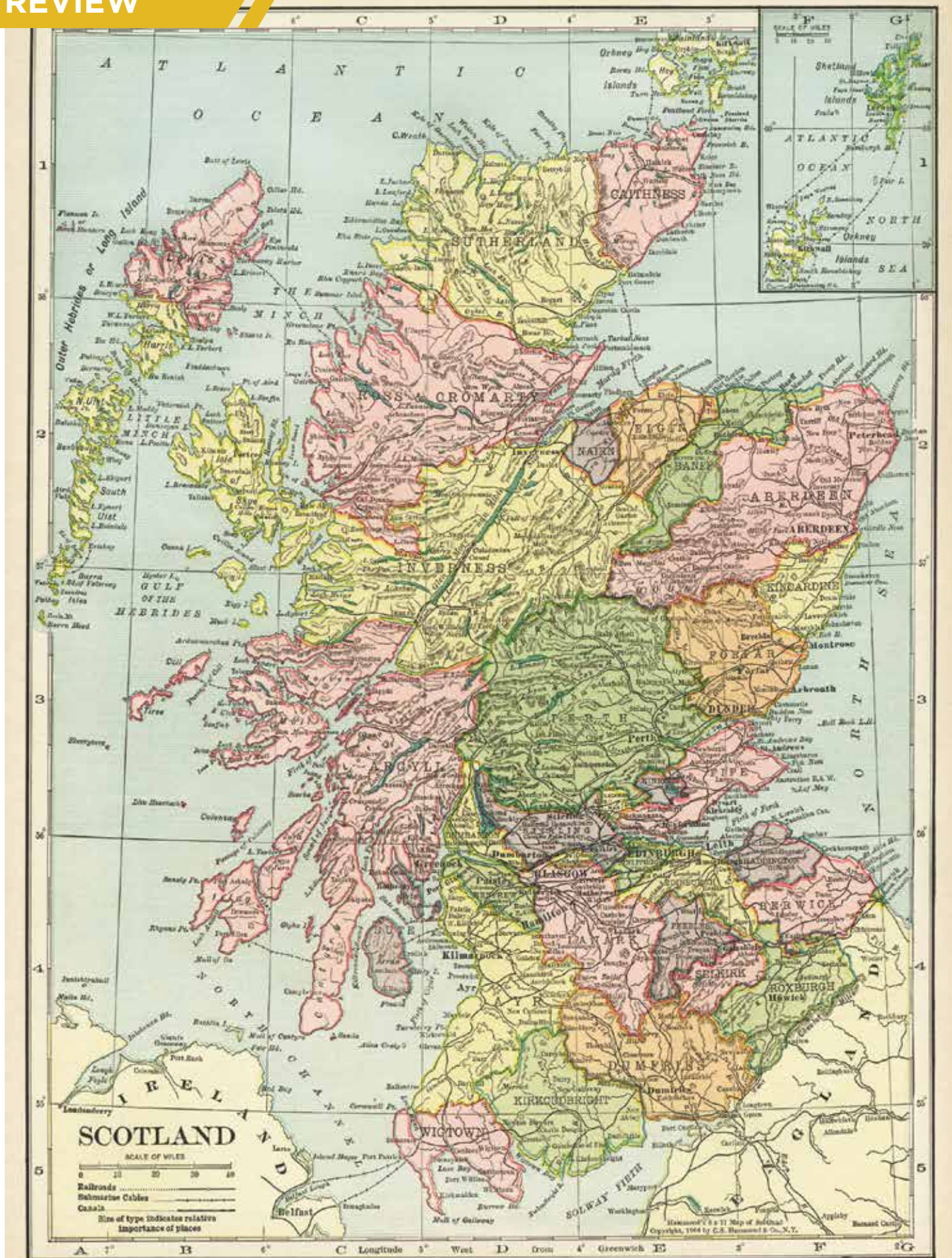
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A Trip of a Lifetime – Edinburgh, Scotland

By Renita Reavis

Ever have a trip you dreamed about? One you just knew you would take someday, when you had the time. I completed my Whiskey Sommelier Level 3 certification a week before my family's 10-day trip to Edinburgh, Scotland, in late May. Every person in our group had bucket-list places to see and experience. It was no surprise that mine revolved around whiskey, given that Edinburgh is one of the top whiskey experiences in the world.

Planning this trip required mapping out how much whiskey I could realistically bring back home. My newly acquired 12-bottle Vingarde aluminum luggage was going to be put to the test. My handy trick of baby socks was ready to go, stuffed with 2-ounce Boston amber round bottles labeled with the bourbon I planned to share at my stops. Two bottles of Ironroot Distillery Harbinger bourbon were loaded, because if you are going to take bourbon to share, it should be from one of the best and, of course, from Texas! Google Maps was pinned with places to shop, distilleries and experiences to visit, along with a wide variety of pubs and restaurants to find delectable sips and bites, all planned out according to recommendations from whiskey colleagues I had been collecting over the year. I was beyond the moon excited and thought I was ready... so I thought!

Turns out that planning and excitement change as soon as you land and get more recommendations from locals in the area involved in the whiskey industry. I took all of their recommendations and did my absolute best to modify my arrangements around my family's historic and golfing plans. My experience was only enhanced by these ever-evolving changes, as I had ten days to absorb as much as I could. Being part of the whiskey industry had a significant impact on my experiences, but that does not mean it lessened my family's plans or any plans you may have to visit Edinburgh as well.

Every place I visited had me passing out my bourbon handshake bottles. Sharing exclusive bourbons they could not obtain there was such a gift! Being in the whiskey industry has its benefits, but sharing whiskey with others is the best feeling. Seeing their expressions of excitement for a bourbon beyond their Jack, Jim, Buffalo Trace, and possibly one or two

“Being in the whiskey industry has its benefits, but sharing whiskey with others is the best feeling.”

other options was no different from seeing a unique bottle myself while I am out in our local shops or restaurants.

Leave plenty of space in your luggage for special treasures! Whiskey merchandise and bottles are a must. Many distilleries and shops offer small tasting sets and limited offerings that you will never see outside the distilleries. Spend time in the tasting rooms or take advantage of any free tastings you are offered before purchasing. Try the unknown. Lesser-known distilleries, experimental barrels, higher proofs, and offerings that add or remove peat keep things interesting and make you want to try more and more. Do not forget to visit the duty-free shops on your way home for travel-exclusive items! I am not talking about the great deals on things you can purchase at home. I mean those that you will not find anywhere else. They offer tasting opportunities as well. My carry-on luggage had two bottles secured that I could not find anywhere else!

Planning restaurants and pubs usually meant reviewing menus ahead of time to account for everyone's dietary preferences. Scotland was great at listing food allergens on their menus and was also extremely specific about asking before serving anyone. Having your entire order ready at the beginning was necessary everywhere we went. Food would come out in stages, but they preferred to have everything put in at once for planning purposes. Reservations were also the best way to guarantee a place anywhere we went. Busy times and small spaces fill quickly, even outside the high-tourism times of the year. Study the whiskey menus. Many offered the same whiskey options we are used to seeing. Their cocktail menus were where their expertise shone! There were so many more delicious combinations in their cocktails than I would have ever dreamed of creating. One cocktail introduced me to the local flowering shrub, gorse (like horse), with its delicate coconut fragrance and taste. I tried a new cocktail with every meal and studied

its ingredients as a whole new world was opening up.

Lastly, the whiskey experiences were the highlight. The Scotch Whisky Experience was first on my list. I took the Gold tour because it offered more tasting samples. The experience was great for someone learning about the distillation process and what makes whiskey special. I had my family tour the Port of Leith Distillery. An upcoming distillery that has not yet released its own offerings was an educational experience that explained the decisions behind the distillery and the history of the Port of Leith. My unexpected trip to Inverness led me to Glen Ord – The Singleton Distillery, one of three, and the one that caters to Asian flavor preferences. I wanted to see and do more, but time was limited, and family experiences were the priority.

I am already planning my next trip to explore the other regions of Scotland. I would love to return to the Port of Leith to see its growth and taste its whiskey, which has finally aged enough to be scotch. Public transportation made it easy to get to my destinations. All I need are cooler-weather clothes, space for new bottles, and my Vingarde luggage to take me to the farther regions. I might also need to consider more stretchy clothes...the food was absolutely delicious!

KG



Renita Reavis, a 15-year Boerne resident and Army veteran, is a whiskey enthusiast passionate about craft distilleries. She holds an Executive Bourbon Steward certification and Whiskey Sommelier Level 1, blending her love for unique flavors with rich experiences, friendships, and mentorships in the whiskey world. renita@thekendallgentleman.com



Herbie's Cabin

By Coach Stan Leech

Every generation has that place. The one you return to---not just on the map, but in your heart. For me and a group of high school brothers from Brownfield, Texas, that place was Herbie's Cabin in Ruidoso, New Mexico.

Since 1980, we gathered there---year after year---thanks to the kindness and open-hearted generosity of BG and Herbie Boswell, Kirk's parents. Herbie's Cabin wasn't just a house in the pines. It was retreat, a refuge, and a reunion rolled into

one. Our last trip was in 2020, but the memories still breathe.

Our crew? Kirk Boswell, Bobby Joe Hungerford, Danny McCrummen, Mickey Travis, Todd Brasher, and many years--our glue---Randy Barr, know simply as "The Bear." Randy had the kind of presence that filled a room and settled it at the same time. Big in stature and soft in spirit, he was our teddy bear. But back in the day, just to remind everyone what he could do, he ate

glass a time or two. That was Randy---equal parts strength and humor. We lost him in November 2022, and none of us has been quite the same since. We always parked at his house before heading to Ruidoso. He was our base, our quiet center. And yes---Kirk was the big toe. A lot of planning, organizing, and instigating came through him. The funny thing is, we had just as much fun planning our trips as we did living them. We called it three days of golf---though sometimes it turned into two. Our golf game? Let's just say

we were the kind of players who only take our clubs out a few times a year, but we made every shot count---mostly in laughter.

My friendship with the Boswells went back even further. During our eighth-grade spring break, I went to Possum Kingdom Lake with their family. BG took us fishing and trolling, and he taught me how to shuffle cards. Herbie cooked, laughed, and kept us honest with her playful grief. When small-town friends get together, the stories tend to circle back to those early years---and they're just as likely to remember me accidentally hitting Mickey with a rock in the fifth grade as they are our senior trip.

Herbie's presence wasn't just felt at the cabin---it started long before we hit the New Mexico state line. She lived in Brownfield, and many trips started once we accompanied Kirk to see Herbie and ---oh yes---get the key. We'd stop by her home, say hi, and never get out of there quickly. Herbie had important information to pass along about the cabin---reminders, expectations, maybe a quick weather update---and of course, she gave us a hard time while doing it. She'd smile and say, "You boys have fun but remember, I have to live with my neighbors when I get a chance to go back up there." That was her way---Blending hospitality with a little accountability. A little bit of teasing, a lot of love, and a look that said, "Don't let me down, boys." We never wanted to.

It was in the cabin that I watched The Catch---Dwight Clark's impossible, unforgettable grab---cheering for our Cowboys with Kirk and Mickey, even as our hearts sank. We laughed, we argued, we stayed up too late. I still remember Danny coming in late one night after watching Logan out of state. Logan had been playing baseball far away, but after his game, he wasn't going to miss our reunion weekend. That's how important it was---to all of us. When Danny finally made it to the cabin, he knocked and knocked on the door until I got up to let him in. Joe, half-asleep and never missing a beat, mumbled from the couch, "Why are you answering the door for that woodpecker? He's been knocking all weekend." To Joe's surprise, it wasn't a woodpecker---it was Danny.

Those walls heard everything---our laughter, our stories, our snores. But the

best thing Herbie's Cabin gave us wasn't just shelter. It gave us connection. Year after year, no matter where life took us, it was the place that drew us back together. Early mornings with coffee on the deck. Late nights filled with jokes and a few serious talks. The quiet moments in between.

And always---always---with Herbie's presence felt, even though she never once joined us at the cabin. She stayed in Brownfield, but somehow, she was with us every time we were there. Her spirit lingered in every detail---the coasters, and the chairs on the deck, the framed pictures, and the quiet reminders of her care. Herbie had rules, and we respected them. Sign the guest book. Use a coaster. Leave the deck chairs just right. Wash the towels and sheets. Most importantly---leave it better than you found it. That wasn't just about tidiness. It was about gratitude. Reverence, even. Herbie had that rare gift: the ability to give you grief and grace at the same time. When we'd stop by her house to say hi before a trip, she'd offer the perfect blend of teasing and tenderness. She was, in many ways, the soul of the place---without ever needing to set foot there.

Carla got the band back together in 2000 for my 40th birthday, and for the next twenty years it became a priority. Those trips weren't optional---they were sacred. Today, we group text more than we pack bags, and our gatherings are usually for funerals and weddings. In Ecclesiastes, we're reminded that there is a season for everything, and we've lived enough of them now to understand the truth. Through it all, Herbie's love language never changed---it was hospitality and humor, the kind that disarmed us enough to be real and honest.

The older I get, the more I see Herbie's Cabin for what it truly was: a spiritual gift. A sacred space wrapped in wood and stone. A holy ground of lifelong friendship and unwavering welcome. The kind of place that reminds you that geography doesn't get the final word---love does.

As Mary Schmich wisely said in her Sunscreen column:

"Friends come and go, but with a precious few, you must hold on tight. Because the older you get, the more you need the people who knew you when."

Herbie's Cabin was just that for us. A place where we could relax, reconnect, and rejoice in our roots. A place where we laughed harder than we had all year. Where we were boys again, if only for a long weekend. And always---always---where we left feeling fuller than when we arrived.

Herbie herself was more than a host. She was a mother-friend. A steward of something sacred. A quiet spiritual force who made sure we knew that the little things---manners, coasters, clean towels---were really about something much bigger: respect, responsibility, and love.

That kind of love is a legacy. It's spiritual. It's steady, watchful, unconditional, and rare.

We all need a Herbie's Cabin in our lives---that place where joy returns easily, where old friends feel like home, and where the world slows down just enough for your heart to catch up.

If you don't have lifelong friends---get them. If you don't have a Herbie's Cabin---find one.

Here's to the sacred spaces.

To the porch chairs.

To the woodpeckers.

To the coasters.

To The Bear and the big toe.

To the grace of lifelong friendship.

To the people who give us more than they'll ever know.

Here's to the Herbie's Cabin in each of our lives.

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



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STILL STANDING

The Scott Carlson Story

By Michael G. Ethridge
Photography by Jonathan R. Mallard

The first thing you notice about Scott Carlson is that he still carries himself like a firefighter.

Even sitting in a chair on the back porch of his Boerne home on a warm May afternoon, there's a certain alertness about him. Broad shoulders. Thick hands. The posture of a man who spent years waiting for radios to crackle and tones to drop. It's the kind of posture that doesn't disappear just because the uniform does.

We sat outside for hours talking while cigar smoke drifted lazily through the Hill Country air. The late afternoon sun filtered between the neighboring houses, and every now and then Carlson would lean back, pause for a moment, and stare across the yard before continuing wherever the conversation had taken him next.

Some men tell stories in a straight line. Scott Carlson doesn't.

His life has too many sharp turns for that.

Football. Austria. A near-death experience. Emergency medicine. Firefighting. Public controversy. Lawsuits. Career loss. Twelve moves in four years. Texas. Reinvention.

And somewhere underneath all of it sits the question that seemed to follow nearly every part of our conversation: Who is a man when the thing that defined him disappears?

For most of his life, Carlson answered that question through action.

As a young man, athletics became the first stable thing he could anchor himself to. Carlson describes his upbringing as difficult and, at times, chaotic. Structure wasn't always guaranteed, but football was. Football rewarded discipline. It rewarded pain tolerance. It rewarded accountability. If you worked harder than the next man, there was usually a result waiting on the other side of it.



Like a lot of young men searching for identity, Carlson found purpose in physical challenge long before he found peace anywhere else. Football became the language through which he understood himself. It carried him farther than most kids ever imagine, eventually leading him overseas to play professionally in Austria for the Tyrolean Raiders.

At first glance, it sounds like the kind of chapter every young athlete dreams about. Europe. Competition. Adventure. A chance to build a life around the game you love.

But Austria also became the place where Carlson first came face-to-face with his own mortality.

“Who is a man when the thing that defined him disappears?”

According to Carlson, a catastrophic medical emergency during his time overseas left him in a coma and nearly took his life entirely. Sitting across from him now, it's obvious that experience still lingers somewhere close to the surface. Men who have stared directly at death tend to carry themselves differently afterward. There's often less pretending and less illusion of invincibility.

Young men spend a lot of their lives believing they're indestructible. Carlson was no different. But near-death experiences have a way of stripping the arrogance out of a man whether he's ready or not.

When he eventually returned to the United States, the next chapter of his life began pulling him toward emergency medicine and firefighting. In many ways, it fit naturally. Carlson had always gravitated toward intensity, structure, and high-performance environments. He worked as an EMT with American Medical Response in Vancouver,

Washington, before eventually joining the Redmond Fire Department.

For more than a decade, the fire service became Carlson's world. If you've ever spent time around firefighters, you know the culture is difficult to explain to outsiders. There's a rhythm to it. Long shifts. Gallows humor. Constant training. Shared exhaustion. Meals around the station table. The strange emotional balancing act of seeing traumatic things while still figuring out how to laugh five minutes later.

Carlson thrived in that environment. Over the years, he worked his way into leadership roles, eventually serving as a Fire Lieutenant, Safety Officer, and HAZMAT specialist with the City of Redmond. Those roles carried enormous responsibility, but they also carried something Carlson valued deeply: trust. In emergency service, trust is earned under pressure. Your crew either believes you can perform when things go sideways or they don't.

In 2019, Carlson was recognized as Redmond Fire Department's Firefighter of the Year, an honor that reflected both his work ethic and his standing within the department. The recognition mattered because firefighting wasn't simply a job to him. It had become part of his identity.

The uniform gave shape to his life. The station became brotherhood. The work provided mission and structure. Like many first responders, Carlson built his understanding of manhood around service, competence, sacrifice, and being the person others depended on when things went bad.

Then COVID arrived, and the ground underneath everything started shifting.

Public conversations about the pandemic have become so political over the last several years that it's easy to forget how emotionally disorienting that period felt for many people, especially first responders. Carlson speaks less about politics than he does about fracture. Isolation. Distrust. The feeling that institutions and relationships alike were straining under enormous pressure.





The hardest part, according to Carlson, was losing his father during that period. He believes the restrictions surrounding the pandemic changed the way families experienced death and grief, and in his case, that experience deeply affected how he viewed authority and institutional decision-making afterward. Whether people agree with Carlson's conclusions or not, it's clear that the emotional impact of that season fundamentally changed him.

Eventually, those tensions collided directly with vaccine mandates implemented within his department.

Carlson sought exemptions and ultimately challenged the mandate rather than comply. What followed became a public and deeply personal unraveling. Legal battles emerged. Public scrutiny intensified. His firefighting career ended. According to Carlson, the fallout also jeopardized portions of the pension and future he had spent years building toward.

But careers are rarely just careers for men like Scott Carlson.

When firefighters lose the job, they often lose much more than a paycheck. They lose the rhythm that organized their lives. They lose the camaraderie. They lose the purpose that shaped their days and the identity attached to serving something larger than themselves.

Carlson described portions of that season almost like an emotional free fall. Financial pressure mounted. His family relocated repeatedly while trying to regain stability. At one point, he says they moved twelve times in four years. Sitting on the porch that afternoon, one thing became increasingly obvious: beneath the public controversy is a man still trying to sort through the wreckage of losing the life he thought he'd built permanently.

And he doesn't always talk about it cleanly.

At times, there's visible frustration in him. At other moments, there's humility. Sometimes confidence. Sometimes exhaustion. The contradictions sit side by side. That's part of what makes the story compelling. Carlson doesn't come across like a polished political symbol or a rehearsed culture-war figure. He comes across like a man who absorbed a tremendous amount of pressure and is still trying to determine what parts of himself survived it.

Like a lot of people who arrive in the Hill Country carrying bruises from somewhere else, Carlson seems to have found something restorative in the slower pace and grounded culture of Boerne. These days, he works in the wellness and health space, helping others pursue physical recovery and better health. In some ways, it feels like a natural extension of the life he's always lived. Physical resilience, discipline, and endurance have shaped nearly every chapter of his story.

Age and hardship, however, have also added reflection.

As the conversation drifted into fatherhood, marriage, and faith, Carlson's tone softened noticeably. There's a different kind of

wisdom that arrives when a man has lost enough to stop pretending he has everything figured out.

Modern culture spends a tremendous amount of time talking about masculinity, usually in extremes. Men are either portrayed as cartoonishly aggressive or endlessly passive. Real life is rarely that simple.

Most real men are mixtures of strength and damage, conviction and stubbornness, competence and insecurity. Sitting there listening to Carlson talk about his life, what stood out most wasn't ideology. It was endurance. The willingness to keep rebuilding after public loss. The willingness to keep showing up for your family after your identity collapses. The willingness to continue searching for purpose after the uniform comes off.

That kind of rebuilding rarely looks dramatic in real life. More often, it looks quiet. Daily workouts. Long conversations with your children. Trying to strengthen your marriage. Learning how to exist without the adrenaline and structure that once shaped every hour of your day.

Toward the end of the interview, the afternoon heat finally began to ease. The cigar smoke had long since faded into the evening air, and the shadows across the backyard had started stretching toward sunset.

At one point, Carlson paused for a while before saying something that lingered with me long after I drove home.

"Everything changed," he said quietly. "Everything."

There wasn't bitterness in his voice when he said it. Not really. Just the honesty of a man who's lived through enough upheaval to stop romanticizing certainty.

Before we wrapped up, I asked Carlson the two questions I ask every cover subject. What advice would he offer the men of Kendall County? His answer came immediately. "Forgiveness."

Throughout our conversation, Carlson returned repeatedly to the idea that unresolved wounds shape the way men move through the world. Childhood scars. Family conflict. Betrayal. Career loss. Grief. Left unattended, they have a way of quietly influencing every decision that follows.

As Carlson put it, "Strong men are the ones who know how to forgive, not just know how to fight."

When I asked what advice he would offer young men, his answer was equally direct. "Make a value list."

Carlson believes goals naturally change as life changes. The ambitions of an eighteen-year-old athlete eventually give way to the responsibilities of a husband, father, business owner, or grandfather. Values, however, should remain steady.

Sitting on that back porch as the afternoon faded into evening, it struck me that those two answers explain much of Scott Carlson's story.

Forgive what needs forgiving. Know what you stand for. Everything else is just the road between them.

For years, Scott Carlson understood himself through titles. Athlete. EMT. Firefighter. Lieutenant. Now, like many men eventually must, he's learning who he is without them.

Maybe that's the part of the story that matters most.

Not the politics. Not the headlines. Not the lawsuits.

Just a man sitting on a back porch in Texas, trying to build something meaningful from whatever remains after the fire. And perhaps that's what makes Scott Carlson The Kendall Gentleman. Not that he has all the answers, or that his journey has been without hardship, but that he continues to pursue purpose, character, and grace in the face of it.

KG

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Earl Wellborn

By John Eddie Vogt

In July of 1948, the government offered a one-year term of enlistment to any 18-year-old who would enlist in the U.S. Army. At that time there was no draft, and very few people were going into the service. Most of the men and women who had served during WWII were getting out, and it left quite a void in our military personnel. Russia was threatening the Berlin Blockade, and times really didn't look too good.

This is when I decided it was a good time to get my military service over with. Who should show up at the enlistment center but a guy from Center Point who enlisted at the same time as me. There was only one number difference between his serial number and mine. I cannot remember if his was first or whether mine was. Our serial

numbers began with the letters "US." Mine was US57420016. The US designated that we were enlistees.

The next morning they sent Earl and I, along with four or five others from the San Antonio area, to Camp Hood, Texas by bus. They gave me meal ticket vouchers for the bunch, and off we went. When we got to Belton to transfer to a bus to Killeen and then Camp Hood, we had only been gone for a few hours, so had not eaten anything during that time. We took a vote, and I turned in all our meal tickets for candy.

Earl and I were put in the same training battalion, same company, same platoon, and same squad (Co. "A," 1st Platoon, 1st Squad). Our training began.

Earl was called Tumpy by his family and childhood friends, but at Camp Hood he earned another nickname. He had a reputation for using the expression, "Come tell Pop all about it," whenever one of the

other guys would get a little down in the dumps. It wasn't long before he was called "Pop" by everyone who knew him.

A few years after we got out of the service, Tumpy and Dorothy moved to Boerne and leased the 1,800-acre Gilliat Ranch on Upper Cibolo Road, along with several other ranches in the area. He and I had stayed in touch, and then our wives and kids became good friends as well. We remained close friends, and they lived on the Gilliat Ranch until just a few years before his death in 2004.

KG

*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.*



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MEN OF THE HILL COUNTRY:

Kendall County's Legacy in America's 250-Year Story

Featuring the Kuhlmann, Fabra, Herff, and Dienger Families

By Tom Allred, Sr.

As the United States approaches its 250th anniversary, communities across the nation are pausing to reflect on the people who shaped their corner of the American story. Here in Kendall County—where limestone bluffs rise above cypress-lined creeks and history feels as close as the next fence line—the men who built the Texas Hill Country stand as enduring reminders of what courage, perseverance, and community spirit can achieve.

Their stories are not abstract tales from distant centuries. They are the lived experiences of families whose names still echo through our schools, ranches, churches, and civic institutions. Among them, four families—the Kuhlmanns, Fabras, Herffs, and Diengers—represent the very best of what the Hill Country has contributed to the American experiment.

Their legacy is not only local. It is part of the broader national story of settlement, freedom, innovation, and service. As we celebrate America's semiquincentennial,

their lives offer a powerful lens through which to understand how ordinary men built extraordinary communities.

The Kuhlmann Family: Ranchers, Stewards, and Quiet Pillars of the Land

The Hill Country has always demanded a special kind of resilience from those who work its soil. The Kuhlmann family embodies that spirit. Arriving in the mid-19th century, they established ranching operations that would span generations and help shape Kendall County's agricultural identity.

The early Kuhlmann men were known for their deep understanding of the land—its rhythms, its challenges, and its potential. They practiced stewardship long before the word became fashionable. Rotational grazing, water conservation, and careful land management were simply common sense to them, born from a respect for the fragile balance of the Hill Country ecosystem.

Their ranches became more than economic enterprises. They were gathering places

where neighbors shared news, traded labor, and built the bonds that define rural life. The Kuhlmann men served as mentors to younger ranchers, offering guidance on everything from cattle health to fence building to surviving the next drought.

In many ways, their story mirrors the broader American agricultural narrative: families who built prosperity not through speculation or shortcuts, but through sweat, patience, and a commitment to leaving the land better than they found it.

As America marks 250 years, the Kuhlmann legacy reminds us that the nation's strength has always rested on the shoulders of men who understood that stewardship is both a duty and a privilege.

The Fabra Family: Merchants, Community Builders, and Anchors of Early Boerne

If the Kuhlmanns represent the agricultural backbone of Kendall County, the Fabra family represents its commercial heart.

Their contributions to early Boerne helped transform a frontier settlement into a thriving community.

The Fabra men were merchants, but they were also connectors—people who understood that a town's success depended on more than goods and services. Their stores became social hubs where ranchers, travelers, and townspeople gathered to exchange stories, share news, and strengthen community ties.

In an era when isolation could be dangerous, the Fabras provided stability. Their businesses offered essential supplies, but they also offered something less tangible: a sense of continuity and reliability. When a Fabra man opened his doors in the morning, the town knew it could count on him.

Their influence extended beyond commerce. Members of the Fabra family served in civic roles, supported local churches, and helped establish community traditions that endure today. They were the kind of men who understood that leadership is not about titles—it is about showing up, day after day, for the good of the community.

As we reflect on America's 250 years, the Fabra story reminds us that the nation's prosperity has always depended on men who built not only businesses, but the social fabric that holds communities together.

The Herff Family: Innovators, Healers, and Guardians of the Hill Country

Few families have left a deeper imprint on Kendall County than the Herff family. Their story begins with Dr. Ferdinand Herff, a man whose medical skill and pioneering spirit made him one of the most remarkable figures in Texas history.

Dr. Herff was more than a physician. He was a visionary who brought advanced medical practices to the frontier, performing surgeries that were decades ahead of their time. His work saved countless lives and established a standard of care that shaped the region's medical development.

But the Herff legacy extends far beyond medicine. The men of the family became ranchers, conservationists, and civic leaders. They understood that the Hill Country's natural beauty was both a blessing and a responsibility. Their land stewardship practices helped preserve the springs, grasslands, and wildlife that define Kendall County's landscape.

The Herff Ranch became a symbol of sustainable land management, blending agricultural productivity with ecological preservation. Today, the property stands as a living testament to the family's commitment to the land and community.

In the context of America's 250th anniversary, the Herff story highlights a uniquely American theme: the power of innovation, service, and stewardship to transform not only individual lives, but entire communities.

The Dienger Family: Champions of Learning, Culture, and Civic Life

If the Herffs shaped Kendall County's physical and medical landscape, the Dienger family shaped its intellectual and cultural heart. Their contributions to education, literacy, and community life remain among the most enduring in the region.

Albert Dienger, perhaps the most widely recognized member of the family, served as a librarian, civic leader, and cultural advocate. His dedication to learning helped establish the foundation for what would become the beloved Dienger Building—a landmark that continues to serve as a gathering place for readers, thinkers, and community members.

The Dienger men believed that a strong community required not only economic and physical infrastructure, but intellectual nourishment. They championed literacy, supported local schools, and encouraged civic engagement. Their influence helped ensure that Boerne would be a place where ideas mattered as much as industry.

Their legacy is a reminder that the American story is not only about settlement and survival. It is also about the pursuit of knowledge, the cultivation of culture, and the belief that education is essential to a thriving democracy.

As the nation celebrates 250 years, the Dienger family stands as a testament to the power of learning to shape both individuals and communities.

Threads That Bind: A Shared Legacy of Service and Community

Though the Kuhlmann, Fabra, Herff, and Dienger families contributed in different ways, their stories share common themes—values that define both Kendall County and the American spirit.

Resilience. Each family faced hardship—droughts, economic uncertainty, frontier dangers—and met those challenges with determination.

Service. Whether through ranching, commerce, medicine, or education, these men served their community with humility and purpose.

Stewardship. They understood that the land, the town, and the people were interconnected, and they acted accordingly.

Legacy. Their contributions were not fleeting. They built institutions, traditions, and landscapes that continue to shape Kendall County today.

As America reaches its 250th year, these families remind us that the nation's greatness has always been built from the ground up—by men who worked quietly, faithfully, and with a vision for the future.

Carrying the Torch Forward

The next chapter of Kendall County's story will be written by the men who step forward now—those who preserve land, mentor youth, serve in civic roles, build businesses, and strengthen community life.

In honoring the Kuhlmanns, Fabras, Herffs, and Dengers, we are reminded of the responsibility we carry today: to ensure that the values they embodied continue to guide us into the next 250 years.

Their stories are not just history. They are a call to action.

And here in Kendall County, that legacy continues—strong, steady, and deeply rooted in the Hill Country soil.

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.
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