



# THE KENDALL<sup>TM</sup> GENTLEMAN

SEPTEMBER 2026 | ISSUE 9 :: VOLUME 2

## PEYTON TURK

IS THE KENDALL GENTLEMAN

KENDALL CO. HISTORY

*Ernst Kapp*

REVIEW

*Back To School - Whiskey Style*

MUSINGS OF JEV

*Town Water Tank*

BETTERMENT

*The Art of Style*



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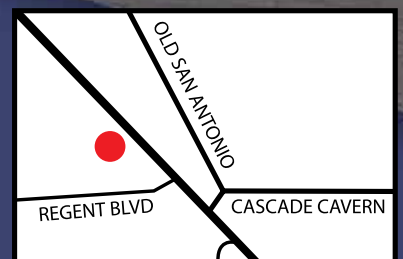
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PUBLISHER



# Knowing What is Important

We're pretty good at keeping score.

We count the money in the bank, the years on the job, the square footage of the house, and the names in our phone. We watch numbers rise and fall and let them tell us whether we're moving forward or falling behind.

Somewhere along the way, it gets easy to confuse what can be counted with what actually counts.

The older I get, the more I believe that knowing what is important may be one of the hardest parts of living well.

Life is loud. The urgent thing is always waving its arms, demanding attention. There is another deadline, another bill, another meeting, and another opportunity we're afraid to miss. We stay busy responding to whatever is directly in front of us, then wonder why the people and things we love most keep receiving whatever is left.

Important things are usually quieter.

Faith does not always shout. Family does not always demand an appointment. A friend may never say he needs a phone call. A child may not know how to explain that he needs our time more than anything we can buy him.

Meaningful work rarely announces itself with applause. More often, it looks like showing up again, keeping your word, and caring well for whatever has been placed in your hands. Knowing what is important does not make every decision easy. It gives us something steady to measure those decisions against.

It helps us recognize when more money is not worth less peace. When another commitment is taking too much from home. When winning an argument matters less than protecting a relationship. When success on paper is costing us something that cannot be replaced.

Sometimes we know exactly what matters, but we still fail to give it our attention. We

tell ourselves there will be more time after this deadline, this season, or this next big push. Then the calendar turns, the children grow, our parents get older, and another year disappears.

That is the part we do not like to admit. Knowing what is important is only the beginning. We also have to protect it.

“It also reminds us that an ordinary life can be a deeply meaningful one.”

That may mean saying no to something good so we can say yes to something better. It may mean putting the phone down, leaving work on time, or making the drive to see someone we have been meaning to visit. It may mean returning to church, repairing a friendship or finally having the conversation we have avoided.

It also reminds us that an ordinary life can be a deeply meaningful one.

You do not need a title to lead. You do not need a platform to influence people. You do not need public recognition to leave a mark on your town.

Sometimes a legacy is built behind a counter. Sometimes it is built at a kitchen table, in a classroom, on a jobsite or in the cab of a truck. It grows through a thousand small decisions to be present, dependable and decent.

Most of those decisions will never be noticed while we are making them. But they count. The cover story in this issue brought that truth back into focus for me. Peyton Turk did not set out to become the subject of a magazine profile. In fact, he would probably prefer that we keep the attention somewhere else. But his story raises a question worth carrying into our own lives:

Does the way we spend our days reflect what we claim is important?

It is an uncomfortable question. That is probably why it is a good one. We cannot give our best attention to everything. We can only decide what deserves it. Then we have to live in a way that proves we meant what we said.

As you read Peyton's story, I hope you will think about the people, places and responsibilities that have been entrusted to you. Not the loudest things. Not the things that look most impressive from the outside. The things that truly matter.

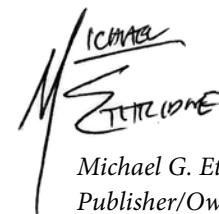
And when you finish, I would like to hear from you. Send me a message and answer this question:

What is one thing in your life you have decided is important enough to protect, even when something else has to give? Message me on social media or email [michael@thekendallgentleman.com](mailto:michael@thekendallgentleman.com).

Tell me what it is and why it matters. Your answer does not have to be polished or profound. It just has to be honest.

A good life is not necessarily the biggest one, the busiest one, or the one that attracts the most attention. It is a life spent caring well for the right things.

That's important.



Michael G. Ethridge  
Publisher/Owner

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**8/26/26**

## **The Growth Quarter Mastermind Group**

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**9/3-6/26**

## **Kendall County Fair & Rodeo**

Kendall County Fairgrounds  
1307 River Road, Boerne, TX 78006

[www.kcfa.org](http://www.kcfa.org)

The 120th Annual Kendall County Fair is scheduled for September 4–6, 2026, in Boerne, Texas, at the Kendall County Fairgrounds. This Labor Day weekend tradition features a rodeo, live music, a parade, livestock shows, and carnival rides.

**9/5/26**

## **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

**9/12/26**

## **Cars, Coffee, & Cigars**

The Oak of Boerne  
605 S Main St, Boerne, TX 78006  
[www.theoakofboerne.com](http://www.theoakofboerne.com)

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**9/14/26**

## **American Legion General Membership Meeting**

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

[www.alpost313boernetx.org](http://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)

**9/8/26**

## **VFW Business Meeting**

VFW Post 688  
Kendall Masonic Lodge  
897 E Blanco, Boerne, TX 78006  
[www.vfw688.org](http://www.vfw688.org)

**9/21/26**

## **Masonic Lodge Stated Meeting**

Kendall Masonic Lodge No. 897  
897 E Blanco, Boerne, TX 78006  
[www.kendalllodge897.org](http://www.kendalllodge897.org)  
Monthly Stated (Business) Meeting at 7:30;  
Supper at 6:30

**9/25-26/26**

## **8th St. Market Vintage Flea Market**

523 8th St, Comfort, TX 78013  
[www.the8thstreetmarket.com](http://www.the8thstreetmarket.com)  
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**9/12/26**

## **Open Bowling**

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**Tuesdays**

## **Trivia Night**

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**Wednesdays**

## **Mens Bible Study**

First Baptist Church of Boerne  
631 S School St, Boerne, TX 78006  
[www.fbcboerne.org/men](http://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**

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**Sundays**

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# The Art of Style

by Frank Addington, Jr.

“Style is very personal. It has nothing to do with fashion. Fashion is over quickly. Style is forever.” - Ralph Lauren

The art of being yourself sounds simple, yet many people fall into the trap of trying to keep up with trends, wearing specific brands simply because they are popular. I have never cared much for fads; I have embraced the same personal style since I was a teenager.

In my previous columns, I wrote about the importance of handwritten notes and the simple art of saying “Howdy” to the folks we cross paths with daily around Boerne. Life is short, and the people we meet along the way are truly among life’s greatest blessings.

This column is about staying true to yourself and feeling comfortable in what you wear, regardless of the occasion. My goal is to encourage you to discover what you genuinely want to wear each day and to inspire you to create your own original style.

When I was in high school and college, nobody else wore cowboy hats to class, but I did. I wore boots, jeans, a polo or a well-starched button-down shirt, and a western buckle every day. I even wore the bibbed western shirts made famous by John Wayne, and had posters of John Wayne, Clint Eastwood, and Ronald Reagan on my walls. My roommates even dubbed my room “the ranch.”

Over the years, people have occasionally commented on my wardrobe. Some remarks were kind, others less so, but it never mattered to me. I bought my own clothes and wore what I liked, refusing to change to meet someone else’s expectations.

The cowboy hat has been my signature since I was four years old. Today, I simply wear higher-quality hats, most of which are custom-made by Shorty, an iconic artisan and the country’s first female hat maker based in Oklahoma City. I also wear exceptional hats crafted by Spradley and Butch Dorer.

My sports coats typically come from M.L. Leddy’s in Fort Worth, which is a local legend and truly the pinnacle of western wear. In fact, if you watch Taylor Sheridan’s show *Landman*, most of the

characters in the *Cattleman’s Club* look like they stepped right out of the M.L. Leddy’s showroom. For daily western wear like jeans, shirts, and boots, I also try to shop locally at Billy’s Western Wear and Y-Bell Ranch Supply.

I share these details in case you appreciate western style, but the true point of this article is to encourage you to wear whatever reflects who you are and who you aspire to be. Whether your style leans toward Tommy Bahama, Hey Dudes, or a more modern look, embrace it completely.

These days, casual attire has become the norm. When I first started flying, men routinely wore a suit or a sport coat on a plane instead of sweatpants or shorts. Because the norm has shifted, you will easily stand out if you choose to dress up, and honestly, that is part of the fun. It’s not about the cost or designer; it’s about you and your expression via your wardrobe.

I’ve always admired Ralph Lauren because he marches to the beat of his own drum. He understands that inside every man is a little boy who once aspired to be a cowboy, a pilot, or an aristocrat. In my case, I guess I never outgrew wanting to be a cowboy.

Find your style and embrace it, from your wristwatch to your hat. God only made one of you, and we are all anxious to see the choices that will become your signature style. March to the beat of your own drum and always be you!

KG



*Frank Addington is a world-record-setting professional archer known for his skill with Hoyt recurve bows. He is also a sales associate at Texas Ranch Sales on Main Street in Boerne, named 2024’s “Top Listing Associate” with approximately \$101 million in ranch listings. Frank, his wife Amanda, and their two sons reside locally with their spoiled Australian Shepherd, Sanchez. [frank@thekendallgentleman.com](mailto:frank@thekendallgentleman.com)*

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## Grounded in What Matters

*By Jonathan R. Mallard*

Officer Jeffrey Wilson on faith, family, accumulated trauma, and the support that helps first responders keep showing up. For Officer Jeffrey Wilson, law enforcement grew from a childhood belief that public service could make a difference. Both of his grandfathers were Green Berets, a cousin served as a police officer, and family friends included a U.S. marshal. The examples around him made service feel both familiar and worth pursuing.

"I always kind of felt that maybe delusional feeling like I could change the world or make a difference," Wilson said. "That's what really led me into it."

### **Learning to Reach People**

Wilson grew up in Lehi, Utah, and served a mission in Washington state through The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Years before he wore a badge, that

experience taught him how to approach strangers, absorb hostility, and keep a difficult conversation from becoming a damaging one.

"Your whole job is to either talk to people about Jesus or try to provide a service," Wilson said. "When someone's really angry at you, you try and talk to them and at least have a good experience talking to them. I definitely learned to talk to people. That was a big one."

Those skills translated naturally into de-escalation and police work. When Wilson entered the academy, the fit became even clearer. He had never considered himself a strong student, but he earned some of the highest test scores in his class.

"It just all felt good," he said. "It was like where God wanted me to be."

During more than a decade in law enforcement, Wilson has helped locate a child in an Amber Alert, written major search warrants, and

helped disrupt criminal activity. Even when describing those successes, he is quick to deflect credit.

“That wasn’t me,” he said. “I definitely had help.”

### What the Badge Does Not Show

The public sees an officer’s uniform and authority. Wilson says it rarely sees what may have happened on the call immediately before an ordinary interaction. Early in his career, one of his friends was shot and killed. He has also responded to repeated incidents involving the deaths of children.

“I don’t think people understand what we see,” Wilson said. “You may get an officer that was less than cordial with you, and maybe 45 minutes ago he was at a death scene for an infant.”

That does not remove an officer’s responsibility to treat people well. Wilson is careful about that distinction. “It’s our job to manage it and to show up and be who we need to be when we go to somebody’s house,” he said. “But it would be nice if people understood that.”

The effects do not always arrive in an expected form. Wilson recalled one of his young daughters screaming after getting into an ant pile. The sound suddenly pulled him back to a call in which a child had died. His reaction was stronger than the moment called for, and his wife recognized that something deeper was happening.

“When I realized some of the things I’ve seen were bugging me, it wasn’t how I imagined it would be,” he said. “That’s where you recognize that emotionally you need to regulate, and it takes a lot of work.”

### A Foundation Strong Enough to Hold

For Wilson, faith is the center of that work. Family, prayer, and the ability to recognize the blessings waiting at home help him reset after difficult calls and seasons.

“I really believe that my faith in God is what has helped me heal from a lot of things,” Wilson said. “Just relying on our Savior.” Sometimes the reset is only a simple prayer or a few quiet moments in the car before he walks through the door. Then he returns to his wife and daughters, who are homeschooled and enjoy hunting with him.

“I go home and see how blessed I am with my kids,” he said. “They’re healthy and happy. That stuff kind of brings you back to reality.” That grounding is also what he urges younger men to establish before entering law enforcement. “They don’t do a good job of talking about what it does to you,” Wilson said. “Have something that you’re grounded in.”

### Support That Goes Looking

Wilson first encountered Hope for Heroes Texas through recognition events for officers who had endured traumatic experiences and through the organization’s luncheons. The level of community support stood out because it was different from what he had previously known.

He later learned that some of Hope for Heroes Texas’ most important work happens privately. Wilson knows of a responder Brad Cornell approached after recognizing that the individual was struggling personally and financially. To protect that person’s privacy, Wilson did not share details. What stayed with him was Cornell’s persistence.

“He continued almost aggressively to help him out,” Wilson said. “Like, ‘We’re going to help you. We’re going to help make you whole.’”

That initiative matters in a profession where people are often reluctant to admit that they need anything. “We’re not very good at going to seek it out,” Wilson said. “Brad just got in and asked me some of the tough questions, and then immediately had things that he suggested, resources that he would make possible.”

Wilson sees the organization’s value in the fact that its support does not stop at conversation.

“They’re out doing it,” he said. “Having an external organization that is willing to put their money where their mouth is and help people and provide resources, it’s huge.” The Small Moments That Make It Worth It Wilson and his wife returned to the Texas Hill Country after ten years in Utah. His wife grew up in Boerne, and serving near home restored the sense of purpose he felt while policing the community where he was raised. As Kendall County grows, he believes preserving trust depends on continuing ordinary contact between officers and the people they serve.

“Every time I go to some activity like that and interact with the citizens and see that support, it’s like, this is good,” Wilson said. “This is what kind of preserves that.”

He has seen that willingness to help after family tragedies and during recent flooding, when residents donated money, supplies, and labor as soon as they were given direction. He has also seen hope in the people he once encountered at their worst who later stopped him to say they were sober, staying out of jail, or building a better life.

“Those little things, like you helped be a part of making a difference, get you through,” Wilson said. “You know that it is for something.”

### Message from Brad Cornell

“Jeffrey’s story shows why first responder support has to be personal, persistent, and available before a crisis becomes unbearable,” said Brad Cornell, founder of Hope for Heroes Texas. “The men and women who serve our community are exposed to difficult things over and over, and too often they are expected to carry that weight quietly. Hope for Heroes Texas exists to go looking for the person who may not ask for help, to listen without judgment, and to connect that responder and family with meaningful support. Jeffrey understands that faith, family, peer connection, and community all matter. Our job is to make sure no first responder in Kendall County has to carry the burden alone.”

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](mailto:jonathan@thekendallgentleman.com)

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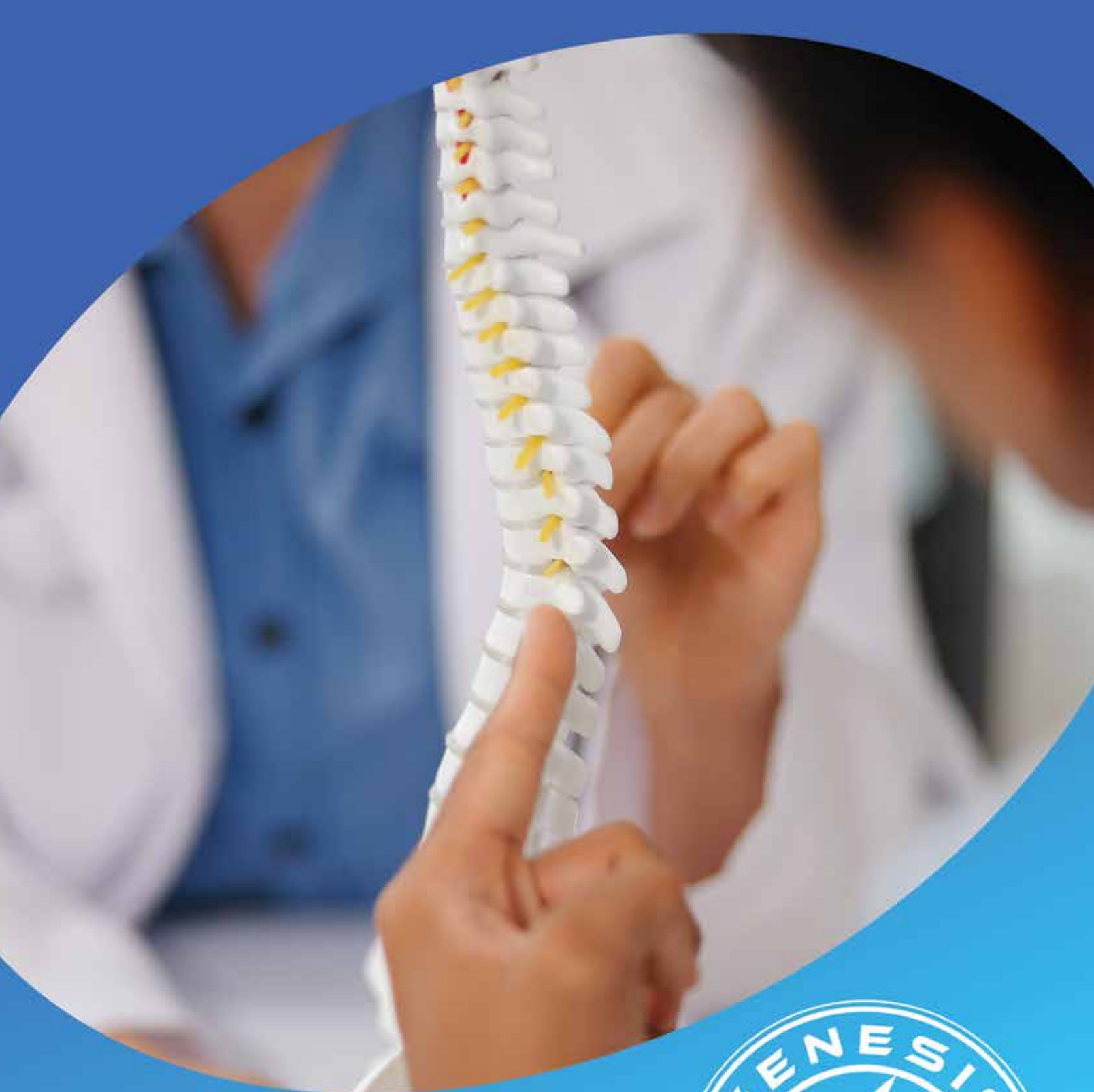


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# Summer Shootout *at* Inks Lake

*By Jed Mazour*

With the dog days of summer setting in, it can be a grind to do just about anything in the heat. With no breeze to push away the humidity, you can be sweating through your shirt by 9 a.m. - and that is not the most pleasant feeling.

But there was one more official fishing event left. One more hurrah before we gear up for the new season: the Summer Shootout.

Hosted by - and exclusively for - members of the Boerne Bass Club, the Summer Shootout is an opportunity to build relationships with our families, provide a low-pressure experience on the water, enjoy some friendly competition among our kids, and spend good old-fashioned family time together. But there is a catch, pun intended. The winning team takes home custom-made championship belt buckles, and that is a serious bragging right.

This event had been hosted at Lake LBJ for the past eight years, and it was due for a change. Inks Lake State Park was chosen for its lower boat traffic, state park amenities, smaller body of water, and fantastic summer fishing reports. Boy, did it pay off.

Denise and I rented a house on the lake for the weekend to host our family and manage all the moving parts needed for the event. Between us, we pulled the team boat, our personal boat, the team trailer, two dogs, and six people. That made for a full house and driveway.

Having the house allowed us to prepare for a successful event while also enjoying some decompressed family time together in the evenings. That usually looked like pizza dinners, sunset fishing, storytelling, and a bottle of wine or two.

Preparing for the event is serious work. Ty, Ellie's boyfriend, prepared 86 cheeseburger patties. Ellie and Karlee, Hunter's girlfriend, prepared the weigh-in station. Denise managed participant questions, breakfast, herding all the cats, and driving the trailer to the setup location. Together, they set up the entire site: the demo boat display, pop-up canopy, cooking station, merchandise table,

weigh-in location, and more. It is no simple task, but I think we have really dialed it in, and I am incredibly grateful for their support.

At 5 a.m., my alarm sounded. I woke up instantly feeling rested. Getting a good night's sleep is essential for a successful day on the water, and I was feeling great. Denise got up with me and made breakfast. We spent some time talking and enjoying a cup of coffee before the day took off like a tarpon.

At 6 a.m., my two young anglers arrived at the house, packed and ready to go. I had launched the boat the night before and docked it at our house, making the morning that much more relaxing. Any preparation you can do beforehand will greatly pay off on tournament day.

We walked down to the water, got loaded up, and situated ourselves. By 6:15, we were making our way across the lake to our first spot. The sun was just barely coming up, but it was bright enough to travel without concern. With such a small lake, it seemed as if the only people on the water were those competing in our tournament.

Those feelings start to set in with the cool breeze and open water - the dawn of a new day and an orange sunburst sky. Vaqueros del Agua.

This weekend, I had a young boy and girl on the boat. Both had some experience, but not enough to use a baitcasting reel yet. The night before, I prepared three spinning reels for each child: one with a topwater lure, one with a Texas rig, and one with a weightless Senko. They were simple, proven setups.

With the water conditions and temperature, I expected some action right away on the topwater. That did not happen.

We spent the first hour sticking to our morning plan with no success. It was time for a change, and we were ready for it. I knew our location was perfect, so we did not stray. I put both kids on a Texas-rigged craw, and that was the moment things changed. Our day was dialed in.



Clarissa caught a couple of good-quality keepers right away. After a few hours, we made our way across the lake and began working down a main-lake point into a cove. There was a fishing pier with about six kids, each casting lines in all directions. They watched us, and we watched them.

Parker made a cast toward the shoreline into some grass peeking about six inches out of the water.

"I got one!" Parker yelled.

I made my way to the back of the boat and grabbed the net. By this point, all the kids on the pier were watching. As I dipped the net into the water, I saw the bass coming toward us with its mouth open. This was a big fish, and she was about to jump and shake that little hook out of her bucket mouth.

Before she had a chance to throttle down and shoot out of the water, I dipped the net in and scooped her up.

"This is the biggest bass I've ever caught!" Parker screamed.

I lifted it into the air so all the kids on the pier could see it, gave Parker a high five, and secured it in the livewell before we made any mistakes. Then it really sank in: I had just helped this young man catch the biggest bass of his fishing career. It felt pretty satisfying.

We fished the rest of the morning, catching plenty and keeping our three biggest fish for weigh-in.

At noon, it was last cast. We stowed the rods and throttled over to the event location. As we got closer, I could see all the people gathered around. I saw my family at work

and the beautiful sight of everything they had worked so hard to put together.

Denise was working like a busy little bee, multitasking. Ty was on the grill making nearly 100 cheeseburgers. Karlee and Ellie were at the most adorable little weigh-in station, getting a first look at the fish coming in. Hunter coasted up next to me after doing some fishing of his own, now back to help out.

That is a pretty special feeling.

We beached the boat in the sand and jumped ashore. It is rewarding to watch the kids dip their hands into the livewell and pull out the prize bass they worked so hard to catch. Everyone gathered around to watch the kids pull up and see what they had caught. One by one, each boat disembarked its crew.

This weekend was exceptional for bass fishing and produced the healthiest, largest bass count of any Summer Shootout tournament we have ever hosted. It was such a confidence booster for the young anglers and helped motivate them to press on and keep pushing until the very end.

Looking back on the weekend, I have a few takeaways.

One: If you do things for the right reasons, you - and the work you do - will be blessed. Keep what it is about, what it is about: Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. When you stray - and we all do - you will know it in your heart. Listen to it.

Two: Be a leader. The world is full of people looking for someone to step up. Be that someone. Find out what is important to you and work on it. Build something worthy of respect from your family and community.

I want to close this article with my gratitude. I am incredibly thankful for the full support of my wife, Denise, and my children, Hunter and Elizabeth. Over the years, my passions and hobbies have been somewhat consuming at times. Thank you, and I love you.

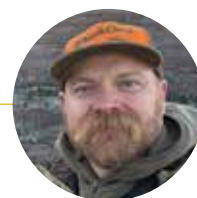
Without the support and generosity of so many Boerne citizens, we would not have these opportunities for kids. I commend every person and business that has helped us along the way.

To the parents: Thank you for stepping outside the box of normal extracurricular activities and giving us a chance to share the passion of the outdoors with your children.

If you have a child interested in the club, or if you have a boat and are interested in being a volunteer boat captain, please reach out to us. We are hosting a membership and informational meeting Tuesday, August 11, at 6 p.m. at Cibolo Creek Brewing Co. Everyone is welcome.

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](mailto:jed@thekendallgentleman.com)



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# Back to School-Whiskey Style

By Renita Reavis

School is back in session for the youth in our community. Many adults take continuing education courses to maintain their licenses. I signed up for a whiskey course as something fun to do the first time. It ended up building my confidence and showed me that I did know quite a bit about whiskey and the distilling process. It confirmed what I had learned through passionate observation. Little did I know that the first course, Bourbon Steward, a Moonshine University course, offered by the Bourbon Women's Association – Texas Chapter and hosted at Garrison Brothers' Distillery, would be the start of a new career path for me. This experience made me feel proud of my knowledge and inspired me to keep learning.

I had been a long-time viewer of the Whiskey Vault and Whiskey Tribe YouTube channels. I was fully aware of the whiskey sommelier program offered by the Wizard Academy, where the Whiskey Vault is located. I had made numerous friends who had participated in the sommelier program and had encouraged me to do the same. They were confident I would be successful.

Wizard Academy, located in Austin, Texas, offers engaging whiskey programs, including its renowned Whiskey Sommelier course. Having completed three of the four levels myself, I can attest to the quality of its instruction. The campus, with on-site housing, catered meals, a working distillery at Crowded Barrel, and the famous whiskey vault with over 3,000 bottles, creates an inspiring environment for industry professionals and enthusiasts eager to deepen their knowledge. I encourage you to explore these programs and discover how they can ignite your passion for spirits.

Walking onto campus for the first time as a student was surreal. I had been planning it for a few years, but life kept pushing it to the side. I knew the instructors and the campus, and I thought I knew what to expect. My friends did not prepare me for some of the adventures and memories I was about to make. My confidence in knowing whiskey and being able to speak on the topic was blooming.

Staying at the Engelbrecht house on the WA campus offers a unique opportunity to connect with others, both inside and outside the classroom. The well-stocked kitchen provides breakfast, snacks, and adult beverages to loosen up conversation and encourage discussion. The mornings

begin with an uphill journey to the tower. The pathway leads to the tower at Wizard Academy (WA) and the legendary Chapel Dulcinea. Chapel Dulcinea is a beautiful location where hundreds of couples take their next steps together every year. Students and couples preparing to be married pass through a gate bearing a plaque: "Many

“Many adventures await you upon the road of life. Enter this gate and take your first step.”

adventures await you upon the road of life. Enter this gate and take your first step.” I always read it and remind myself that this is my adventure on my road of life, one I never expected to be on, but I'm enjoying every moment! At a fork in the road, the chapel lies to the left and the tower to the right. The tower itself holds mystical powers. Each level represents Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, with the classroom and the whiskey vault on the same level. Art and symbolism are found all over campus, waiting to be discovered during wanderings that lead to inspiration. You can hear the chapel bells ringing in celebration of the newlyweds throughout the day.

Returning to campus each time for whiskey coursework feels like coming home, a place you always belong. Reuniting with everyone in the Engelbrecht kitchen, the evening before class starts, is always filled with sharing whiskey from all over. Laughter and stories fill the air. Whiskey-related problems can be brainstormed for consideration when returning home. This sense of community makes the learning experience more meaningful and enjoyable.

Moonshine University has been a cornerstone of the distilled spirits industry for fourteen years. There was a recent announcement that its program will end at year's end, which highlights a major industry shift and the importance of seeking alternative educational resources. Over 300 distilleries benefited from its courses, and its Bourbon Steward program was essential for distillery staff to ensure accurate customer information. Their Bourbon Steward programs helped introduce people to the basic rules of bourbon, helping dispel the myths and falsehoods that continue to be spread. The industry is mourning this loss, prompting questions about how to continue learning in this evolving landscape.

Edinburgh Whisky Academy (EWA) offers an accredited program through the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), providing recognized certifications across the industry. Their programs in whisky, gin, sensory analysis, and other areas of the adult beverage industry can help prospective students and professionals build confidence

in their expertise and advance their careers. The course catalog is impressive and growing with the spirits industry. The prestigious programs have opened my experiences in Irish and Sensory so far. I am excited to continue working my way through

Other programs, such as the Wine & Spirit Education Trust (WSET), The Council of Whiskey Masters, and many others, offer a wide variety of educational approaches and materials focused on the distilled spirits industry rather than whiskey alone. Research which one aligns best with your interests and start your educational path today to build a solid foundation and expand your knowledge in the spirits industry.

You never have to settle for a single program when choosing your professional learning path. Many mix and match to focus on different aspects as their careers or passions progress. Others focus on one path and become educators for that program. Hopefully, one day you will decide to find the magic at Wizard Academy and start your adventure by reading, "Many adventures await you upon the road of life. Enter this gate and take your first step."

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](mailto:renita@thekendallgentleman.com)



# Mulligan

*By Coach Stan Leech*

Golf gave the world a gracious word: Mulligan. Like a lot of good stories, there are several versions of how the word came to be. Golf historians still debate the true origin. My favorite traces back to a golfer named David Mulligan in Montreal during the 1920's. The story goes that after hitting a poor drive, he simply teed up another ball and hit again. When questioned by his playing partners, he called it a "correction shot." Before long, his friends started calling it a Mulligan. There are other stories and other claimants, but that's my favorite version. Maybe because the idea is so simple. We all understand the need for a correction shot.

Real golf doesn't officially allow Mulligans. The rule book is clear about that. But in the friendly Saturday morning golf most of us play, Mulligans seem to appear quite often, especially off the first tee. "Go ahead, hit another one." Two off the first tee have probably saved more friendships and pride than any rule in sports. Maybe that's why the

word connects with people so deeply. Most of us know life keeps an official scoreboard, but we still appreciate the grace of people who occasionally hand us another ball and say, "Try that one again."

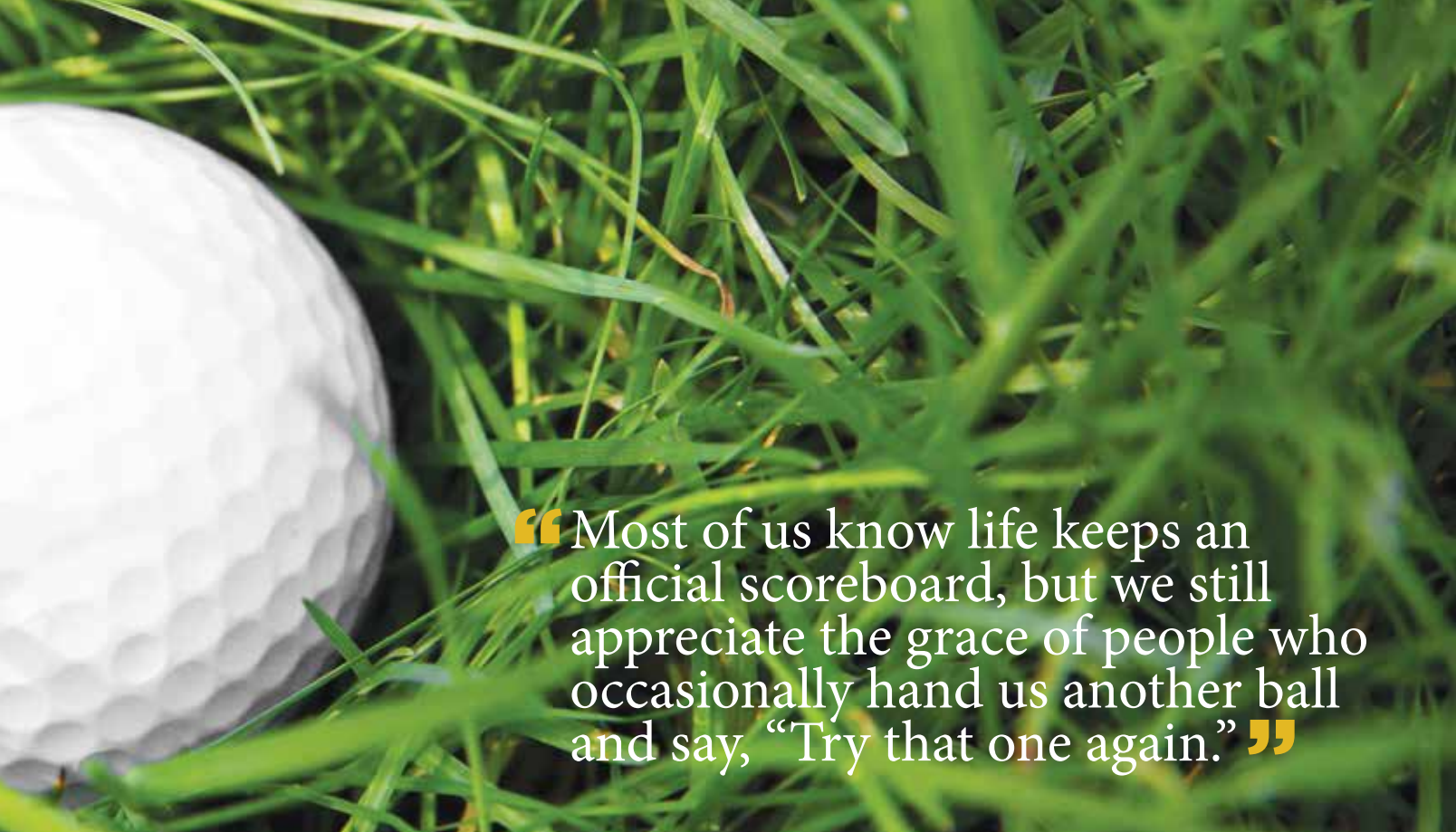
Athletes understand that feeling immediately. As an athlete and later as a coach, there are plays and games you never completely get over. The public forgets them. Newspapers yellow and disappear. Trophies gather dust. Seasons stack on top of seasons. But somewhere deep inside, there is still a play, a decision, or a moment quietly waiting for another chance.

The first time I realized the lifetime Mulligan wasn't just my issue, it came through a conversation with Jason Brown. Jason was serving as our youth director at the time, and we were talking about a player who made a mistake in a football game the previous Friday night. One play. One moment. The kind of play teenagers replay in their minds all weekend long. Jason was disappointed for the young man. Then Jason shared one of his own athletic memories. What struck me was who was telling the story. Jason is a member of the Wylie ISD Athletic Hall of Honor and former D1 baseball player for Dallas Baptist University. His athletic story turned out well.

Very well. Yet without hesitation, he talked about the play. The one he still wished he could have back. That conversation stayed with me because it revealed something true about competitors. No matter how successful our story becomes, we still want the Mulligan.

I have several. One of them still lives on a cold Saturday morning in Levelland, Texas, during a ninth-grade B team football game. Coach James Gee Morris called an end reverse near the goal line. I can still hear his instructions clearly all these years later. "Keep it wide." Very simple. Very clear. I took the handoff heading toward the corner cone and saw the defender coming fast. In that split second, I decided I probably couldn't beat him to the edge, so I planted my foot and cut inside. That wasn't the assignment. The play got blown up exactly the way Coach Morris probably knew it would. Funny thing is, nobody else likely remembers that play. The crowd went home. The film, if any, disappeared decades ago. The scoreboard is even long gone. But somewhere inside me, that reverse is still running on a loop across a cold field in Levelland.

That's how Mulligans work. The moments don't have to happen on grand stages to stay



“Most of us know life keeps an official scoreboard, but we still appreciate the grace of people who occasionally hand us another ball and say, “Try that one again.””

with us. Sometimes the plays we replay the longest happen in almost empty stadiums with small crowds and no headlines at all. Maybe because deep down we know the moment wasn't really about football. It was about trust. A coach gave instructions. A player thought he saw a better way.

Experience turned out to be wiser than instinct. There's a little bit of Levelland in every leadership decision I've made since then.

Then there is Austin. One of my larger Mulligans goes back to the Regional Quarterfinals in 1994 against Waco University at Austin Bowie High School Gym. If you coach long enough, you remember the places as much as the plays. Certain gyms never leave you. That night, Erik Halgunseth made one of his patented drives to the basket at what we thought was the buzzer. The place erupted. We thought we had survived and advanced. Then came the discussion at the scorer's table. One second remained. Back then there wasn't instant replay. Nobody knew if it was 1.9 seconds or 0.1. You just knew there was still time.

What people forget is how hard our kids fought to even get there. Ben Schooley came off the bench and played the best second half of his life. Two huge three-pointers and

a steal. The kind of performance coaches never forget because it comes from heart and readiness. Then came the final decision. Waco University had a future Baylor quarterback throwing the ball inbounds, so we switched to man defense. Even now, I can still hear voices from the stands. “Now he switches to man.” Funny how crowds become coaching experts in moments like that. The pass traveled the length of the court. Their big man caught it, and in Christian Lattner as fashion turned, and shot it. And it went in. Just like that, the season was over.

For years I have replayed the moment. What if we had stayed in zone? What if we defended the inbound differently? What if? Players replay execution. Coaches replay decisions. The older I get, the more grace I try to extend to players, coaches, officials, parents, and even myself. Everybody is carrying a play they wish they could replay. Everybody has a Friday night, a missed assignment, a poor decision, or words they wish they could take back. We all have a Bowie Gym somewhere. We all have a Levelland somewhere.

Life rarely gives official Mulligans. But people sometimes do. And maybe grace does too. Maybe grace is God's reminder that

our worst moments don't have to become our permanent identity. Maybe wisdom is learning from the swing without allowing it to define the entire round. If life handed me unlimited Mulligans, I honestly wouldn't want them. Unlimited do-overs would cheapen responsibility. The missed shots and hard lessons shape us too much.

But every now and then, I'd still like one. Just one quiet walk back to that sideline in Austin in 1994. Or one more crack at an end reverse in Levelland. Same gym. Same field. Same pressure.

Mulligan.

KG



*Coach Leech, now in his 41st 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](mailto:stan@thekendallgentleman.com)*

# A DESTINATION, NOT A CHORE

*For nearly three decades, Peyton Turk kept Red Crest Pet Shop alive through illness, debt, competition, and a changing Boerne. Now, as the store winds down, the quiet man behind the counter considers what the place has meant to the families who grew up there.*

*By Michael G. Ethridge | Photography by Jonathan R. Mallard*

Peyton Turk knew the end would not come all at once.

The dog food would go first, then the cat food and whatever else sold faster than expected. He had stopped ordering inventory that might still be sitting on a shelf after the doors closed. Over six weeks or so, he explained, the store would simply dwindle. No big ceremony. No dramatic final act. Someone suggested a closing party. “I don’t do parties,” he said.

That is about as close as Peyton comes to making himself the center of attention. Even after nearly three decades behind the counter at Red Crest Pet Shop, he insists the story belongs to the place rather than the man who kept it going.

“It’s not really my story,” he said. “It’s the store.”

But a store does not survive on North Main Street for decades by itself. It takes someone willing to open the door, feed the animals, pay the bills, clean the cages, answer the same questions and return the next morning to do it again.

For Red Crest, that person has been Peyton Turk.

The City of Boerne describes Red Crest as a local tradition of more than 30 years. Peyton dates his own arrival to 1997, when he says he took over the shop from its previous owner, Bill McCullough.

Getting there took him through Okinawa, California, Germany, Mississippi, Maryland, Austin and the Internal Revenue Service. Peyton was born in Okinawa into an Air Force family. His father was a lawyer who served as a Staff Judge Advocate. Moving was part of childhood. The family lived near Hamilton and Travis Air Force bases in California and at Ramstein Air Base in Germany. They spent time in Mississippi, where Peyton remembers the family living on the Back Bay of Biloxi. They eventually had a pier and a small boat. Later, the family moved to the Washington, D.C., area.

One year, those moves put Peyton in three different fourth-grade classrooms.

“Three fourth grades in one year,” he said.

Mississippi gave him fishing, boats and time outdoors. Maryland gave him a high-school job at a neighborhood pet store that was mostly devoted to fish. Austin gave him St. Edward’s University, where he earned degrees in biology and English.

It did not give him a plan.

“I really had no idea what I wanted to do,” he said. He took a part-time job with the IRS because he needed work. The temporary job became a career, much of it in the agency’s training branch. “I needed a job, and then suddenly 20 years went by.”

The government job paid the bills, but animals remained the real interest. At one house, Peyton added a room measuring 26 feet by 13 feet. It had tile and drains in the floor and held 26 aquariums. He raised tropical fish and sold them to stores in Austin and San Antonio. Later, the room became an aviary.

It was not a casual hobby. It was years of work performed for the pleasure of doing it well.





His brother Chris, who lived in Boerne, knew about Red Crest and told him the store was available. Peyton met with McCullough and decided it was time for a change.

The first two and a half years tested that decision. Peyton was still living in Kyle and drove to Boerne and back each day. He made less money than he had in government work. "I'd say I make about half what I made at my previous work," he said, "but I enjoy it." He paused on that thought. "And, of course, since I'm still here, I still do enjoy it."

Boerne was different then. Peyton remembers a quieter Main Street and a smaller town where crossing the road required considerably less courage.

"You could close your eyes and walk across Main Street, and you are fine," he said. "Now you are in danger if you have both eyes open."

Retail required its own education. Manufacturers and wholesalers wanted shelves filled with their products. McCullough offered simpler advice: Do not buy more than three of any one item until you know it will sell. Peyton learned the rest one bill, one customer, and one animal at a time.

Then the birds made him sick.

He began coughing. He lost between 30 and 40 pounds and struggled with fatigue. The medical testing led to a lung biopsy, a collapsed lung and about a week in an Austin hospital. Peyton said doctors determined that he was hypersensitive to bird dander.

The message from his physician was blunt: "You've got to sell your store or get rid of all your birds, or you're going to die."

Peyton chose the store. "I said, 'Okay, I'm not going to sell the store.'"

He removed the birds and adjusted the business. Red Crest expanded its emphasis on reptiles, small animals, fish, and specialty pet foods. Peyton tells the story without inviting sympathy. It was difficult, but it was also a decision. The birds had to go, so they went.

That matter-of-fact response would be tested again.

An important specialty dog-food line suffered a major recall. Competition from larger retailers cut into the store's business. When another pet retailer entered the Boerne market, Peyton said he kept his staff working and paid even as his personal savings nearly disappeared.

During the store's early years, he accumulated about \$50,000 in credit-card debt. He listened to financial advice while driving and worked his way out of it. "It took me two and a half years to pay off \$50,000 in credit-card bills," he said, "making not a whole lot."

At one point, Peyton began counting how many consecutive days he came to the store. He remembers one stretch reaching 683 days. The doors may have stayed closed on Christmas or Easter, but the animals still needed food and water. "There really wasn't a

time when I didn't want to drive up here and open the door and go in and work," he said. "Which is something a lot of people can't say."

The work was not only about keeping animals alive. It was also about deciding where they belonged. Peyton told of a roughly 30-inch arowana that had arrived at the store at about six inches long. He turned away prospective buyers until someone with a tank large enough to house it came along. During the final weeks, Pixie remains at Red Crest, but her next home is already planned. Peyton chose a couple who had bought another frog from him years earlier and cared for it successfully. Only after satisfying himself that they could provide the right home did he agree to let Pixie go. "I'm real particular about who gets certain things," he said.

That sentence explains Red Crest better than any slogan could. It was a store, but the transaction was not always the highest priority.

Customers noticed.

Some came for aquarium plants or specialty food. Others came for advice about fish, reptiles, and small animals. Children came to see what was in the tanks and cages. Families stopped by even when they did not need to purchase anything.

"For a lot of people, it was a destination, not a chore to come here," Peyton said. "It's something they wanted to come to, a lot of them just for the heck of it."

Over time, children who had visited Red Crest began returning with children of



“It’s not really my story,” he said. “It’s the store.”

their own. As word of the closing spread, customers stopped in to tell Peyton what the store had meant to them.

“We had a lot of people come by lately just to say the store has been part of their family,” he said. “Which is nice.”

Employees grew up there, too. Peyton estimates that roughly 20 people worked for him over the years. He recalls that two went on to become veterinarians, while others became a nurse, a teacher and business owners.

He does not call himself a mentor. He speaks instead about having good luck with people. That is Peyton’s way. He understates his own part in nearly everything.

Outside the store, change is coming to the property as well. The building on N. Main St., which houses Red Crest and Boerne Grooming, is part of the proposed Park Plaza redevelopment. Plans call for replacing the existing structure with an approximately

11,400-square-foot, two-story retail building. A June 2026 tie vote on demolition was initially treated as approval, then reversed after city legal review determined that the tie did not authorize demolition.

The redevelopment adds another layer of change to Peyton’s decision. He had explored moving Red Crest about a decade earlier, but concluded that higher rent, renovation costs and the business lost during a move would make relocation difficult. This time, he chose to wind the store down.

He is doing it deliberately. He is not buying too much. He is finding homes for the animals. He is letting the shelves empty in their own time.

He does not know exactly what comes next. A friend who had already closed a business offered him advice: When you lock the door, walk away and forget it. It is over. That may be easier said than done.

For nearly 30 years, Red Crest was where Peyton spent most of his waking hours. It was where he met Boerne, watched the town grow and saw generations of customers pass through the same door. It was where he gave up the birds he loved, survived hard years and built a life he had never planned.

He still does not want to make too much of it. “It’s been good,” Peyton said. “I’ve enjoyed this.”

Then he added the part that mattered: “That’s important.”

For nearly three decades, Peyton showed up, cared well for what had been entrusted to him, and gave Boerne a place worth remembering. That is why Peyton Turk is The Kendall Gentleman.

KG




# FAIR OAKS BACK TO SCHOOL

## EMERGENCY ROOM

STAY HEALTHY. STAY READY.




Whether you're enjoying the last days of summer or getting ready for a new school year, here are important tips to keep you and your family safe!



## BACK TO SCHOOL SAFETY TIPS



### STAY UP TO DATE

Make sure immunizations are current and schedule a sports physical if needed.



### GET ENOUGH SLEEP

A consistent bedtime helps kids stay focused, healthy, and ready to learn.



### EAT WELL

Fuel your body with healthy foods for energy and better concentration.



### PACK SMART

Don't overload backpacks. Encourage good posture and take breaks.



### WASH HANDS

Good hygiene helps prevent the spread of germs—especially during cold and flu season.



### SUN PROTECTION

Wear sunscreen (SPF 30+), a hat, and sunglasses. Reapply every 2 hours!



### STAY HYDRATED

Drink plenty of water throughout the day—especially when outside in the heat.



### WATER SAFETY

Always swim with a buddy and never leave children unattended near water.



### BUG PROTECTION

Use insect repellent to protect against mosquito bites and prevent illness.



### HEAT SAFETY

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# Town Water Tank

By John Eddie Vogt

Uncle Willie's property was at the far west end of San Antonio Street and now is a subdivision of homes. He had a wooden water tank, that perhaps might still there but probably not. It was rather large, made of cypress and served Willie and Mattie for many years.

Willie had bought the tank from the City of Boerne. It was originally located next to

a well on the extreme western portion of the Plaza in downtown Boerne. Willie also acquired the six inch brass cylinder and several joints of 2½ or 3 inch galvanized pipe that were part of that city well.

The tank and well had been installed by the City to supply water for the use of the people of Boerne and for travelers who might stop to camp on the Plaza. This was in the days before city water ran from house to house and was especially for use by the citizens that could not afford their own well.

Cypress tanks were unique in the fact that when they would spring a leak and a wooden shingle would be driven into the crack or hole where the leak was located it would not immediately stop up the leak. But wait a day or two and no more leak.

Even more interesting, but common for this tank, was that it would spring a leak two or three days before a rain, and then quit leaking the very day that the rain occurred. I saw this happen on numerous occasions. Seemed like HOCUS-POCUS!

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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# Ernst Kapp and the Extraordinary Community of Sisterdale

*How a German Revolutionary Helped Shape One of Texas's Most Remarkable Frontier Settlements*

By Tom Allred, Sr.

History is often measured by battles won, elections decided, or fortunes accumulated. Yet sometimes history is made quietly, in places so small they scarcely appear on a map. Sisterdale, nestled among the limestone hills of western Kendall County, is one of those places.

Today, motorists pass through this peaceful Hill Country community without realizing that, during the middle years of the nineteenth century, Sisterdale became home to one of the most intellectually remarkable settlements on the American frontier. Farmers discussed philosophy after working their fields. Musicians gathered around pianos transported over rough wagon roads. Teachers, physicians, engineers, journalists, political reformers, and scholars built homes beside craftsmen and ranchers.

Together they created what became known as one of Texas's famous Latin Settlements - not because of their ancestry, but because many possessed classical European educations grounded in Latin, Greek, philosophy, literature, and science. Their conversations often ranged from Plato and Goethe to crops, livestock, and the challenges of frontier life.

Among these remarkable pioneers was Dr. Ernst Christian Kapp, a German educator, philosopher, political reformer, and one of Sisterdale's most influential early citizens. Although his international reputation rests largely upon books he published after returning to Germany, many of the experiences that shaped those ideas were lived here in Kendall County.

## From Bavaria to the Texas Frontier

Ernst Kapp was born on October 15, 1808, in Ludwigstadt, Bavaria. An exceptional student, he studied under the distinguished geographer Carl Ritter, whose work helped establish modern geography as an academic discipline. Kapp pursued careers in education and philosophy while becoming increasingly involved in the democratic reform movement sweeping the German states during the Revolution of 1848.

The revolution sought constitutional government, freedom of the press, expanded civil liberties, and representative government. When the movement failed, many of its leaders faced imprisonment or exile. Like thousands of educated refugees who later became known as the Forty-Eighters, Kapp chose to leave Europe rather than surrender his principles.

In 1849, Ernst Kapp, his wife Ida Kapell Kapp, and their five children landed in Galveston before making their way into the Texas Hill Country.

## A Settlement Unlike Any Other

One of the most common misconceptions about Sisterdale is that Ernst Kapp founded the community.

He did not.

Historical records show that Sisterdale had already been established in 1847 by engineer and surveyor Nicolaus Zink, who built the settlement's first cabin. Kapp arrived shortly thereafter, purchasing land that included

## Why Was Sisterdale Called a "Latin Settlement"?

*The term had nothing to do with nationality.*

*Instead, it reflected the classical education of many residents, who had studied Latin, Greek, philosophy, literature, and science at European universities. Visitors often remarked that conversations about Plato, Goethe, Beethoven, and Shakespeare were as common as discussions of farming and ranching.*

Zink's original homestead. While he was not the founder of Sisterdale, he quickly became one of its most influential residents and helped shape its unique intellectual character.

Other remarkable settlers soon joined him, including Ottomar von Behr, Adolph Douai, Julius Fröbel, August Siemering, and numerous other educators, writers, musicians, scientists, and political reformers. Their shared love of learning transformed a remote frontier settlement into one of the most unusual communities in Texas.

## Building a New Life

Like every immigrant who settled in the Texas Hill Country, Ernst Kapp soon discovered that survival demanded practical skills as well as intellectual ability.

The university-trained scholar became a farmer, builder, stock raiser, and community

leader while continuing to read, write, and participate in Sisterdale's lively discussions.

One of his most unusual ventures was Badenthal, or "Valley of the Springs." There he established a hydropathic retreat based upon the nineteenth-century European practice of therapeutic water treatments. Patients came seeking improved health through fresh spring water, exercise, clean air, and rest.

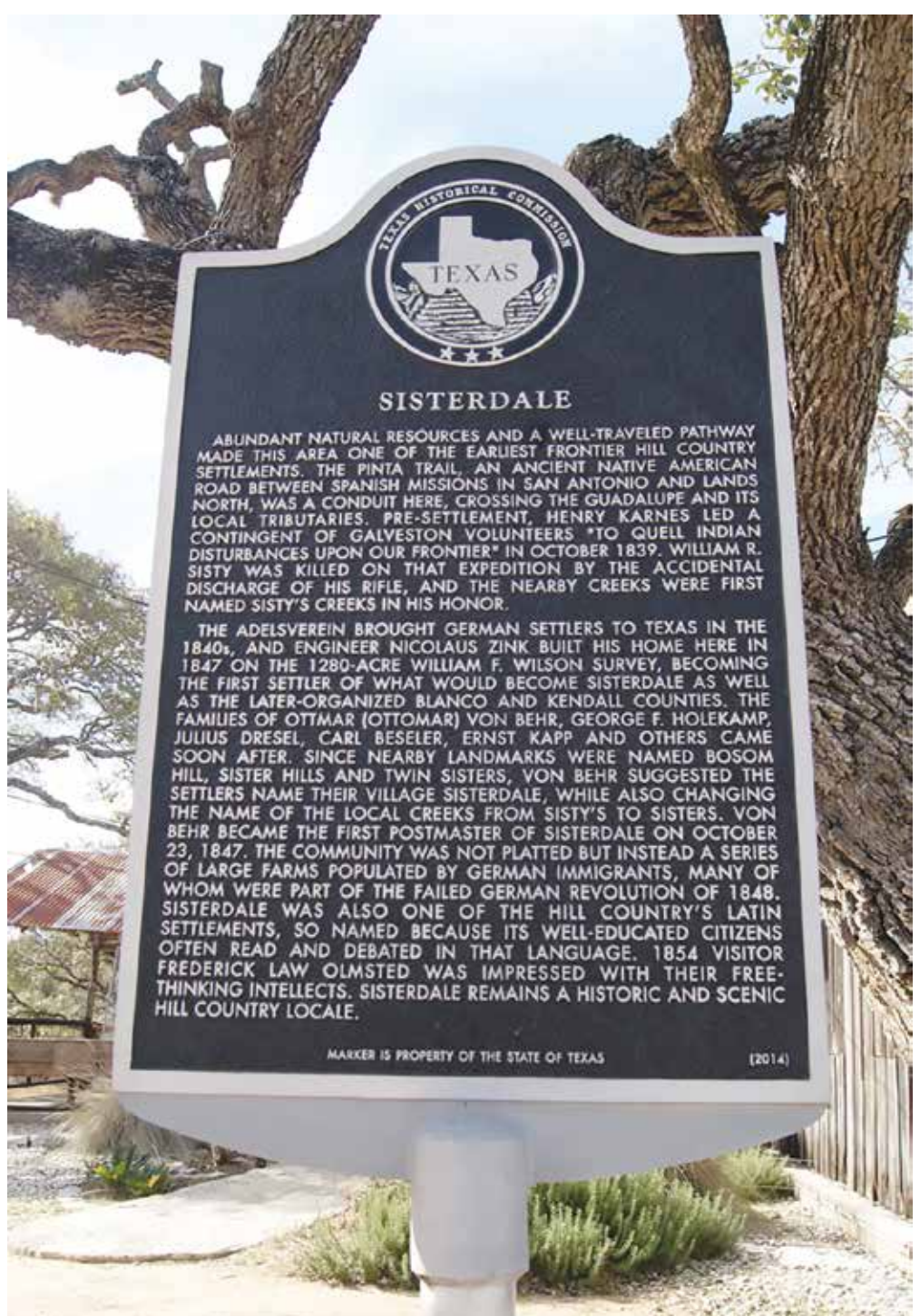
Although hydropathy has largely disappeared from modern medicine, it represented one of Europe's respected wellness movements during Kapp's lifetime. Today, the restored Kapp home remains one of Kendall County's most significant historic landmarks.

### A Community That Thought for Itself

The residents of Sisterdale were not merely educated—they were independent thinkers.

In 1853, Ernst Kapp was elected president of the Freier Verein (Free Society), an organization of German intellectuals in Texas. The society advocated expanded public education, freedom of conscience, separation of church and state, and broader civil liberties. It also opposed the expansion of slavery, a position that generated considerable controversy in pre-Civil War Texas.

Whether one agreed with their political views or not, there is little question that these immigrants brought thoughtful debate about citizenship, education, and democratic government to the Texas frontier.



More than 175 years later, the story of Ernst Kapp reminds us that Kendall County's history reaches far beyond ranches, railroads, and frontier settlements. It is also the story of ideas - ideas carried across an ocean by men and women willing to begin again.

Those ideas found fertile ground along Sister Creek, where a quiet Hill Country community demonstrated that learning and liberty could flourish together even on the edge of the Texas frontier.

That legacy remains one of Kendall County's greatest - and least appreciated - historical treasures.

*The story of Ernst Kapp continues online. Read more at [www.thekendallgentleman.com](http://www.thekendallgentleman.com).*

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](mailto:tom@thekendallgentleman.com)*



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