



Our place, our people, our purpose

Being mayor of Boerne has enhanced my life beyond my wildest dreams. The people I have met along this journey have inspired and challenged me, all in very good ways. Several weeks ago I had the privilege of welcoming US Marine Lance Corporal Hector Rodriguez and his family to the Boerne area. I was invited to say a few words at a very special community kick off to build a new home for this wounded warrior. Meeting this young man and his family, as well as many others over these last six years, is always very humbling.

What many people may not realize is how engaged the City of Boerne is in support of our veterans and active military. We are actively engaged with the local VFW Post 688; about ten years ago we adopted the Military Intelligence Battalion 338th out of Camp Bullis; and just a few years ago we became an official “Purple Heart City”. Our city staff, local organizations and businesses actively participate in events that support our troops – Turkeys for Troops, Thanksgiving Dinner for Lackland AFB trainees, VFW activities, and much more. I believe we must continue to demonstrate and support the efforts of these service organizations in helping our veterans move on with their lives after service. So I encourage the entire hill country community to volunteer, donate or host events showing compassion and appreciation for their sacrifices.

The annual Kendall County Relay for Life event supporting the American Cancer Society is another very humbling experience. What a powerful event honoring the most courageous people on the planet – those that fight the good fight against cancer. I especially want to thank all of the volunteers that provide their time and energy each year. I am very proud to report that our City Hall employees registered a fundraising team and, along with the Boerne Fire Department team, raised close to \$2700. Siria Arreola, our deputy city secretary, did a great job leading this effort.

You know how I like to talk about our city staff and all of the good work they do. In March we celebrated someone who has been working with the City of Boerne for twenty-four years and with another San Antonio area city before that. Our Emergency Management Coordinator and Fire Marshal, Mark Mattick, has retired from a long and productive public service career. Trained as a firefighter and first responder, Mark’s dedication to public safety and service to the community is incredible. As Boerne’s emergency management coordinator he piloted our proverbial ship whenever we had floods or other unexpected emergency events. He has had an extraordinary career and we wish him all the best fishing he can handle during the next several years.

Several weeks ago I had the privilege of attending an awards ceremony at the Boerne Police Department. Each year we recognize several members of this public safety team in a variety of categories. Officer of the Year is Eric Gomez; Dispatcher of the Year is Lilly Robinson; the Top Gun award was earned by Officer Cheyenne Weber; Top Fit for Duty award went to Officer Bo Patten; Lifesaving awards were presented to Officers Pablo Morales, Chris Padilla, and Eric Gomez; and Meritorious awards went to Officers Pedro Moncada and Ruben Trevino.

Behind the secure doors at the police department sits a vitally important public safety team of 911 dispatchers. These are the folks that answer our 911 calls for help twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, every day of the year. This team handles emergency calls for all of Boerne and Kendall County and for the city of Fair Oaks Ranch. It takes an extraordinary amount of patience, terrific listening skills, and clear and direct communication abilities, not just to understand a caller's emergency situation, but to accurately pass on the information to first responders. The ability to deal with callers who may be scared, confused, or panicking is a real challenge. These men and women deserve every ounce of praise we can send their way. As such, we celebrate Public Safety Telecommunicators Appreciation Week every April. If any of you know these great folks, please let them know how proud we are of them and we appreciate their service to our community.

We had a very special guest at one of our recent City Council meetings when the Boerne PD introduced a new officer on the force - a K9 officer named Tucker. She is a one and a half year old Belgian Malinois that successfully completed eight weeks of training with her handler Officer Kris Ujueta. Officer Tucker's primary assignment will be tracking and detecting narcotics. Tucker comes to us through a very generous anonymous donation.

There have been some other significant local actions that I also want to highlight. Construction and remodeling has officially started at what will be the new Boerne Family YMCA on Adler Road. A ceremonial wall-breaking event kicked off the project to transform the city's former civic center into a multi-use health, wellness, and fitness center. The City and the YMCA began talking several years ago; evaluated the feasibility of a joint project; studied the numbers; and crafted an agreement to create a much needed community center. This partnership is a huge win for the Boerne community and we are very excited to see and enjoy the improvements that are planned.

We opened Boerne's second Art al Fresco Public Art exhibition, a collaboration between the City, local artists and our local arts organizations. Several unique pieces are installed along Boerne's Trail system and at the library campus. You can vote for your favorite sculpture using a very friendly App on your mobile devices by downloading Otocast free from the App store. "Boerne's Choice" will be recognized at the end of this year-long competition when City Council will consider the purchase of a few of these sculptures to add to our growing permanent public art collection.

If you missed Boerne's first-ever Bier Fest at Main Plaza a few weeks ago you really missed out on a Hill Country Mile party. Some of you will say we have had a Boerne beer fest every Father's Day for the last fifty years, but this one was different. This was a "craft beer" tasting event where specialty beers from not only our four area breweries were featured, but other brewers from throughout Texas added to the fun. I am told the entertainment was also top notch. Proceeds from this event are helping fund the Boerne Village Band's multi-city concert tour in Germany this summer.

Being your mayor is indeed a humbling experience – we live and work in this amazing place, with terrific people, and with great purpose.