

From the Heart...

...Lifeskills for Today's Family
By Sharon L. Benedict MS



Find Your Fun & Funny Bone

(published in Boerne Star, Friday, Oct. 4, 2013)

With all the unsettling news going on right now, how do you disconnect from the doomsday, scary stuff and just have some fun? Maybe we need to take some tips from the latest “government shutdown” and just “shut down” for awhile so we can find some rejuvenating balance in our lives, not just our budget.

I am finding myself of late frustrated, impatient, and just not much fun to be around. Maybe I will find out my hormones are just a little off and need some balancing when I soon have my annual physical. My Pollyanna attitude keeps slipping into the doldrums. It's time to find some fun. Are you in the doldrums or close to it?

Well, let's give ourselves a moment to check out some simple fun things to do, to not only relieve the stress hovering us, but actually make having fun a priority for us “so serious” adults! I watch kids naturally know how to have fun. What happened as we grew up? Better yet, let's just get going on the fun. For now, we will let the “whys” take care of themselves.

What fun comes to mind for you right now? I believe the one thing at the top of the list is laughter. How about seeing the funny side of whatever stresses you out. Spend time with people who love to laugh and help see the funny side

with just about anything. Can you think of a few jokes right now that will get your funny bone working?

If your funny bone won't cooperate, find someone you can help lighten up. You just might find relaxing much easier all around. Ask your friend to help you chill and have some fun.

We all harbor a lot of "should" and "must" thoughts that stop us from taking that first step to fun. Look over your list and decide today to remove that should or must from your agenda. You may find it really wasn't necessary to do anyway. Where is the space in your moments and days to chill and try some of these fun things to do?

- Make it simple . . . Take a walk or run.
- Go to a funny movie and laugh your heart out.
- Take a warm bath and soak the worries away (love this one!)
- Get the music going and dance, sing your troubles away.
- Buy yourself a present (but make sure it won't break the budget and resurrect and double your worries!)
- Get out your kids play cards, like "Go Fish" that don't require much thought, but offer lots of stress free game time with your kids or friends.
- Do you like to dig in the dirt? Start a small little garden patch of your favorite flowers or herbs. Be sure not to make it a huge project unless you are having fun with keep it up.

- While at work, take a moment to write down what happened that made work fun that day—what you or someone said, what you or someone did. Then find creative ways to have it become a routine part of your workplace fun that everyone can lighten up and enjoy.
- Be creative! Let your imagination free.

Make fun a priority and a goal as often as possible. Be patient with yourself, particularly if you have been on that stress treadmill for a long time and haven't found a way to slow it down or even turn it off. Keep trying. Don't give up! Just imagine the possibilities and fun coming your way!

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Finding Fun Close to Home

(published in Boerne Star, Friday, Oct. 11, 2013)

How many times have you sat in your easy chair and complained, "There just isn't anything fun to do around here." Maybe you have sat in that easy chair long enough, and it's time to find the fun right in your own community, close to home.

But before you get moving, stay in your easy chair just a little longer. I did some research for you. Here are a variety of local places for R&R and entertainment. Boerne and our beautiful hill country are replete with every considerable recreational and entertainment venue. Here is just a sample of all the possibilities to satisfy anyone's interest and taste:

For Bikers, Hikers, Kayakers, Bird watchers:

- Cibolo Nature Center, (830) 249-4616, www.cibolo.org
- Guadalupe River State Park, (830) 438-2656
- City Of Boerne, Parks/Recreation, (830) 249-9511
- Kendall County Parks, 830-537-3470; plus Kendall County Parks nonprofit, <http://www.kendallcountyparks.org/>

For Arts & Entertainment Lovers:

- Boerne Community Theatre, (830) 249-9166,
<http://www.boernetheatre.org/>
- Boerne Performing Arts, www.boerneperformingarts.com
- Live at the Library concerts, (210) 421-6132
- Boerne Paint Out & Texas Hill Country Invitational Exhibit, October 2013,
www.boerneprofessionalartists.com
- Dickens on the Main, 2013 Holiday Celebration, (830) 249-9511
- Hill Country Council for the Arts, www.HCCArts.org (arts advocacy nonprofit where you can find out what's happening in the arts)

For Golfers:

- Foresight Golf LLC, (830) 249-7528
- Tapatio Springs Resort & Conference Ctr., (830) 537-4611

For Hunters, Wildlife lovers, Dude Ranch/horseback Riders, R&R Resorts:

- Joshua Creek Ranch, (830) 537-5090
- Pipe Creek Ranch, (214) 369-8703
- Rancho Cortez, (214) 369-8703

For Sports Enthusiasts:

- South Texas Training Facility, (210) 383-0807
- City Of Boerne, Parks/Recreation, (830) 249-9511

For Touring, Sightseeing, Historical Sights, Lounging, Resort

Accommodations:

- Cascade Caverns, Inc., (830) 755-8080
- Cave Without A Name, (830) 537-4212
- Enchanted Springs Ranch, (830) 249-8222
- Agricultural Heritage Center & Museum, (830) 249-6007

Just for Kids:

- Boerne Soccer Club, Inc., (830) 755-2356
- Boys & Girls Club of the Texas Hill Country, (830) 249-1030
- South Texas Training Facility, (210) 833-0217
- YMCA - Boerne Hill Country Family, (830) 815-1040

This is just a few of the many places to see and enjoy. Boerne is fast becoming a major haven for art, animals, and antiques, along with restaurants, and hotel/bed & breakfasts. There is even a movie theater now at Boerne Cinema, <http://www.starplexcinemas.com/locations.php?theaterid=1028>. For more detail listings of fun places and activities to experience, go to the Boerne Convention and Visitors Bureau, <http://www.visitboerne.org/things-to-do/>, (830) 249-7277, and Boerne Chamber of Commerce website at <http://www.boerne.org>.

Life is more thoroughly enjoyed and fulfilled when giving yourself the opportunity to just have fun that nurtures your body and soul together. I leave you

with Henry David Thoreau's gem, "He enjoys true leisure who has time to improve his soul's estate."

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Don't Miss Out on Two Awesome Art Events Today!

(published in Boerne Star, Friday, Oct. 18, 2013)

Since October is the month for our Recreation-Entertainment lifeskill, I couldn't pass up a chance to tell you about two art events today you must NOT miss right here in Boerne. They are the *2013 Texas Hill Country Invitational* hosted by the Boerne Professional Artists (BPA), AND a special benefit reception, *Evening with the Texas Rangers* celebration hosted by Kendall County Historical Commission and Texas Treasures Fine Art Gallery.

Both the Invitational and the Texas Ranger celebrations begin tonight at respective locations where some of the most magnificent art is being showcased.

The *Texas Hill Country Invitational* (THCI) goes on from October 18 – 20, 2013 at the Cana Ballroom (<http://canaballroom.com/>) at the St. Peter's Church in Boerne. This invitational includes an art show and sale extraordinaire. Be sure to check out the sponsors (http://boerneprofessionalartists.com/?page_id=305) to thank them for making BPA's awesome annual event happen. The Hill Country Council for the Arts (www.HCCArts.org) is one of their proud sponsors.

Last year more than 1,500 art lovers and patrons from across the state attended the THCI where they experienced the artistic creations of more than

forty renowned Texas artists. Available for purchase, works included sculptures in bronze and stone, paintings in oils, acrylics, pastels and watercolor; photography, pottery, fine art jewelry, reliefs and mixed media. The works of more than a dozen *plein air* artists were also offered in a 'Silent Auction'.

This year the art show will feature over 40 artists and will include a paint out auction on Friday night from two previous days of painting by artists from around the U.S. including those of the prestigious Oil Painters of America. And for those wishing a great place to stay while visiting Boerne please go to Hotels (http://boerneprofessionalartists.com/?page_id=375) for information and deals.

For more details contact BPA at

http://boerneprofessionalartists.com/?page_id=105.

The other magnificent event you don't want to miss is the special benefit reception, *Evening with the Texas Rangers* celebration hosted by Texas Treasures Fine Art Gallery (<http://www.texastreasuresfineart.com/>). Kendall County Historical Commission continues to celebrate our Texas Ranger Legacy with this October gallery exhibit/fundraiser that brings legends to life.

The Texas Ranger holds a revered place in the lore of Texan culture. Protecting the new settlers in a wild and savage place, the Rangers time and again faced down Comanches, outlaws and horse thieves in an effort to bring order to the frontier. Many of these battles took place right here in Kendall County. Descendants of those involved have lived in this place for generations. For these reasons, the Kendall County Historical Commission, along with partners including the Former Texas Rangers Foundation, the city of Boerne, the

Patrick Heath Public Library, Texana Relics and the Hill Country Council for the Arts are bringing a series of events celebrating the Texas Ranger to Boerne in October.

During October, the Patrick Heath Public Library is hosting a gallery exhibition made possible by generous support from Cisneros Financial Services, LLC. "They Rode Straight Up to Death: The Texas Rangers" is a collection of images and collectibles from the era when the Rangers were often the only thing that stood between the pioneers and certain demise in the rugged 19th century hill county. The exhibit will be open all month long during library operating hours. The very special benefit reception, hosted by the Treasures Fine Art Gallery, is being held tonight, Friday, October 18, to showcase Texas Rangers history and the remarkable sculpture work of artist Erik Christianson and James N. Muir. Their series of western and historical art pieces featuring the Rangers are a must see. *"Art preserves history and can tell a compelling story through a variety of artistic expression,"* remarked Johnny Rosa, owner of Texas Treasures.

The reception tonight at Texas Treasures includes refreshments, a silent auction, books signings and the opportunity to meet several former Texas Rangers including Joe Davis, Bruce Casteel, Joaquin Jackson, and Ray Martinez. Texas Ranger and author Mike Cox will be on hand to sign his books recounting days of one of the most famous law enforcement brotherhoods in the world.

This exhibition and reception are just the first of many efforts by the Kendall County Historical Commission to bring the story of the Texas Rangers to

life. Dreams for the future include a Texana museum, with Ranger artifacts and lore, here in Boerne, just as the Former Texas Rangers Foundation works to open its doors to The Texas Ranger Heritage Center in Fredericksburg, Texas.

In June 2014, the Kendall County Historical Commission will be celebrating the 170th anniversary of one of the most important Texas-Indian battles in Kendall County. The Battle of Walker's Creek, an armed conflict between Native Americans and steadily advancing settlers, was a watershed moment that forever changed the history of our area. For more information on how you can be involved, contact Paul Barwick at 210.845.3693 or texasrailroads@yahoo.com.

What an incredibly wonderful place we all call home, not just in Boerne but the entire Texas Hill Country. Come celebrate with us and become a patron for the *Hill Country Council for the Arts* (www.HCCArts.org), to help them continue their dedicated efforts as a central arts resource with their partners for "United We Art" in the Texas Hill Country.

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Children are All Winners!

(published in Boerne Star, Friday, Oct. 25, 2013)

Since we are still on this month's lifeskill, *Recreation/Entertainment*, I wanted you to have a glimpse of young talent right in our midst. Children in our Hill Country communities shine with creativity as seen in a recent art contest. The Hill Country Council for the Arts (HCCArts), sponsored by Petland Boerne, and partnered with Boerne Public Library Foundation, Patrick Heath Public Library, Boerne Art League, and Boerne Professional Artists offered 'Drawn to Animals' Children's Art Contest in the past couple months.

More than 70 children entered their artwork, and judges were representatives from each HCCArts partner. Among other community locations, artwork submitted originated from Boerne schools (<http://www.boerne-isd.net/>), Comfort (<http://www.comfort.txed.net/>) schools, and Hill Country Montessori School (<http://www.hcmontessori.org/>).

Winners and awards were presented at HCCArts' *Conversation with the Arts* program October 9. Here are spotlights of the winners, runners up, and honorable mentions. What an amazing array of talent . . . all 70 plus entries, every one of them a winner for sharing their creative inspirations!



Figure 1 HCCArts 'Drawn To Animals' Winners & Runners up exhibited alongside professional artists at BPA's 2013 Texas Hill Country Invitational

- **FIRST PLACE** rosette and a bird habitat donated by Petland Boerne awarded to **Coggin Galbreath** for his body of work, *Sheltie, Lemur, Husky Puppy* and *Falcon*.
- **SECOND PLACE** rosette and a reptile habitat donated by Petland Boerne awarded to **Keira Oakeson** for *Watching Cat*.
- **THIRD PLACE** rosette and a small animal habitat donated by Petland Boerne awarded to **Braxten Barkley** for *Carnival Colors: Blue and Yellow Macaw*.
- **RUNNERS UP** ribbons and Gift Cards to Petland Boerne presented to **Olivia Lennon** for *Puppy* and **Holly Lennon** for *Cerdito*.

Winners and Runners Up were viewed alongside professional artists as BPA's Texas Hill Country Invitational last Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 18 to 20th, at The Cana Ballroom, St. Peters Church.

Additionally, **HONORABLE MENTIONS** were awarded to the following children (listed alphabetically):



Figure 2 HCCArts' *Conversation with the Arts* Oct 9, 'Drawn To Animals' Children's Art Contest Honorable Mention Winners

- Anahi Chavez-George, *Fluff Puppy*
- Caitlin Sangdahl, *Animal Palooza*
- Cali Nauman, *Puppy Eyes*
- Calista Perkins, *Dog Play*
- Carlee Ritchie, *Duck Dynasty*
- Chase Carter, *Skips the Rabbit*
- Desiree Garza, *Another Fish in the Sea*

- Elizabeth Myers, *Frogzilla*
- Ethan Schwab, *Cat*
- Garrett Bridgford, *Oky*
- Jasmine Abney, *Fluffy*
- Linda Chapman, *Cat's Paws*
- Lori Lewis, *Kitten*
- Maya Nalluri, *Owl after Falling in Paint Jar*
- Olivia Davila, *Owl*
- Sebastian Montalban, *Fluffy*
- Taylor Day, *Yorkie Pup*

All 'Drawn To Animals' Winners, Runners Up, and Honorable Mentions are currently being displayed at the Children's Galleries, Patrick Heath Public Library through November 21st. Be sure to stop by the Patrick Heath Public Library to view these children's exceptional artworks offered by our Texas Hill Country communities.

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