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OCTOBER 2014

VOL. 1 NO. 1

RESIDENTS ORGANIZE COMMITTEE TO INCORPORATE

Staff Writer

KINGSBURY—On April 26, 2014 a meeting of about 50 Kingsbury area citizens was held in the fire station, and initial discussion of the possibility of incorporating a two square mile area of the overall Kingsbury community into a city commenced.

At the behest of several area citizens Myron Boerger chaired the meeting. Mr. Boerger spoke about information he had learned from Eddie Daffern, the mayor of the newly incorporated city of Staples, and how Staples was incorporated. After a number of questions and comments from those in attendance Mr. Boerger asked for a show of hands of those who thought incorporation should be investigated fur-

ther, and a majority of hands in the crowd were raised. May 17 was agreed upon as the date for the next general community meeting on the subject, and the date was posted. At the May 17 general meeting a steering committee of 6 citizens of the Kingsbury area volunteered to work on further investigation.

Original steering committee



MEMBERS OF THE KINGSBURY INCORPORATION COMMITTEE MEETING POSE FOR A PHOTO AT THEIR JULY MEETING

members were Myron Boerger, Millie Glasgow, Cecil Ricketts, Allison Ward Heinimier, Shane Heinimier, and Cathy Medlin. The purpose of a steering committee is to educate itself about the subject of incorporation and share the knowledge gained. As of this printing three more members have joined the steering committee: Patrick Howard, Dave Medlin, and Bob Grafe. Since April 26 there have been nine general and steering committee meetings combined. More citizens have joined in through unofficial support and action.

The Committee retained the services of attorney Art Martinez de Vara, who offered his services at no

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >

Q. & A. ABOUT THE PROPOSED CITY OF KINGSBURY

By Art Martinez de Vara

VON ORMY—When a community begins discussing the possibility of incorporation, naturally many people have questions, rumors circulate and people seek correct and accurate information.

The following Q & A was compiled from questions that have been asked at several Kingsbury Incorporation Committee meetings.

Q. What is the Kingsbury Incorporation Committee (KIC)?

A. KIC is a committee of Kingsbury residents organized for the purpose of applying for an election on the question of whether Kingsbury should incorporate into a city. There are many steps required to apply for an election. Membership is open to anyone willing to work towards fulfilling the necessary requirement to have an election on Kingsbury incorporation. It was started in the summer of 2014 at a public meeting held at the Kingsbury Fire Station.

Q. How big is the proposed City of Kingsbury?

A. The proposed city of Kingsbury is 1.8 square miles and contains over 400 residents within the proposed city limits. Among the 9 cities in Guadalupe County, Kingsbury is closest in population to New Berlin which has a population of 511.

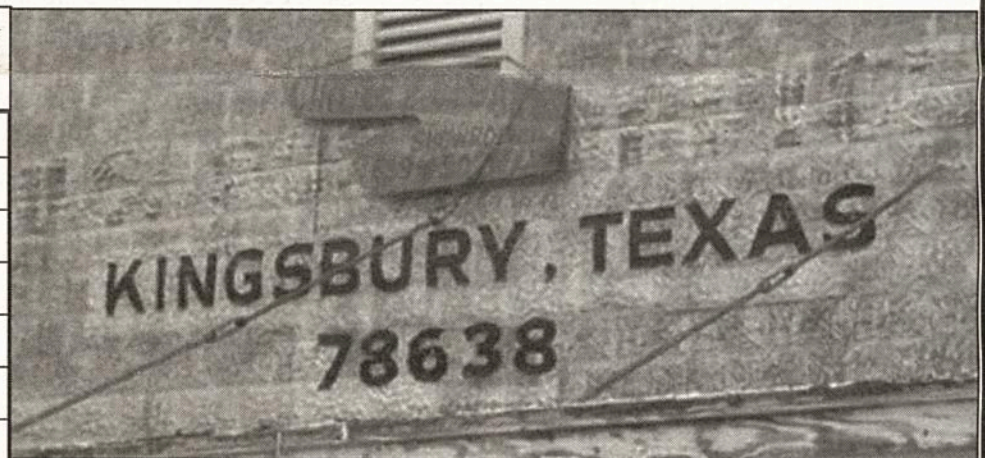
Q. What is a "Liberty City" and can Kingsbury be one?

A. The term "Liberty City" has

GUADALUPE COUNTY CITIES BY POPULATION, 2010

New Braunfels	60,761
Shertz	34,883
Seguin	26,272
Cibolo	19,580
Selma	5,540
Marion	1,066
Santa Clara	991
New Berlin	511
Staples	220
Kingsbury	782

been used in the media to describe a movement of new cities formed by its residents to ensure limited government, preservation of its resident's property and civil rights and dedicated to keeping taxes and spending at a minimum. Some "Liberty Cities" have been noted for rejecting property taxation and debt and operating primarily or exclusively off of consumption taxes. Examples include Von Ormy, Staples and Sandy Oaks. Liberty Cities also avoid restrictions on civil liberties, such as local gun regulations and fireworks restrictions. In areas where a large urban city is expanding by annexation, some have used the term "defensive cities" as well because residents incorporate to preserve their rural way of life and avoid urban city regulations, taxes and restrictions. The Kingsbury Incorporation Committee is dedicated to organizing a Liberty City, or defensive city for the residents of



Kingsbury.

Q. What type of government would the City of Kingsbury have?

A. The proposed City of Kingsbury will have an Alderman form of government comprised of a Mayor and a board of five Aldermen. The board of Aldermen is commonly called the "City Council." The structure of an Alderman form of government is defined in state law.

The Mayor presides over the council and votes only in the case of a tie. The Aldermen are initially elected at-large, meaning all the voters of the city can vote for all Aldermen. Each voter will be able to vote for 5 candidates and the top 5 will be elected.

The city may, if it wishes, create districts for Aldermen. In this case, only the voters who reside within a given district can vote for Aldermen candidates running for that district.

State law also provides for an elected City Marshal, however, in most cities this position is abolished in favor of an appointed police chief.

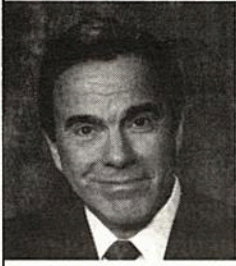
Q. What type of City is being proposed for Kingsbury?

In Texas, there are two categories of cities, home rule and statutory. Home rule cities have a city charter that is adopted by residents that defines the structure and operations of the city. In order to adopt a city charter the city must have 5,000 residents and already be a statutory city. All new cities in Texas begin as statutory cities. Statutory cities have their structure and operations defined by state law (hence the term "statutory city"). In order to adopt a city charter, a city must have a population of 5,000 persons and the charter has to be approved by the voters of the city in a public election. The City of Kingsbury would start as a statutory city.

This distinction is very important when evaluating how the city operates. While all cities can perform the same basic functions, cities like San Antonio and Seguin may have very different rules and structures than Kingsbury because they have a city charter.

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EDITORIAL: A PARTIAL SCORE: REDSKINS 0, RAVENS 0, NFL



By Chris Marrou

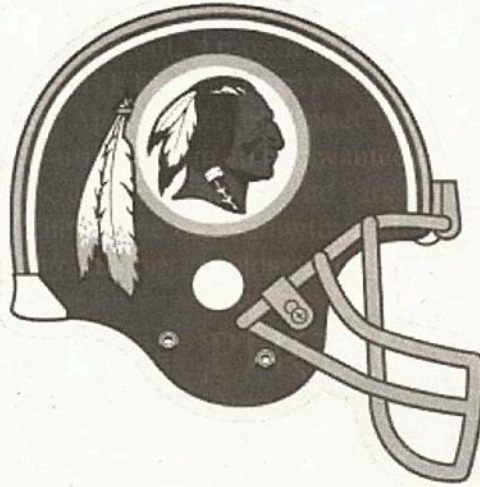
When John Adams (the beer guy's brother) wrote many years ago that we are a nation of laws and not of men, he meant that laws should be enforced fairly and evenly, not by allowing a few powerful people to decide how they want things to end up in any given situation.

However, this does not seem to apply to the forces of political correctness. They want things to work out the way they want them, whatever the law might call for. That attitude has shown up twice this year in connection to the National Football League.

For decades, the NFL was the least politically-correct organization in the United States, which is why so many people loved it. Two teams face each other on the field for an hour of play and a winner emerges. There are no complaints about the racial makeup of the teams, no demands that teams that have won "too much" be broken up, no handing out

of trophies to both sides after the Super Bowl. Men (no women) come on the field, play according to set rules, and one team wins and one loses.

But that is changing. The first big controversy this year was over the name of Washington's NFL team. Bad enough they had named themselves the Redskins; they compounded the felony by being the team of the nation's politically correct capital. Now, freedom of speech allows people to complain and to try to get the name changed, not that they believe in equal freedom for their opponents. But when the Patent and Trademark Office tries to take away all their trademark protection simply because the bureaucrats don't like the name—that goes well beyond a simple disagreement and declares that free speech (having a team named



the Redskins) is only what a government official decides is okay.

Another thumb on the scale of open debate is the control of most of the media by the Politically Correct.

While the rest of us may debate the naming of the team around water coolers, it's obvious TV sports people are being pressured to avoid the name completely. The word "Redskins" is heard on Sunday afternoon TV about as often as you see a "Jesus is my Homeboy" t-shirt in ISIS videos. These people know that if they

NFL rules were followed, as is proper in a nation of laws and not of men. Oops, not good enough for the PC crowd. They demanded more, so the NFL changed its rule to a six-game suspension in hopes of placating them. Then the video from inside the elevator became public and the screams began anew. NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell suspended Rice for a million-zillion games and banned him from everything but breathing. Not enough. The politically correct then demanded that Mr. Goodell resign, which makes about as much sense as firing Walmart's CEO after the Tracey Morgan limo accident last June. But no doubt they will eventually get what they want.

Because of the lunacy we live in today, we are now required to say that we oppose spousal abuse, as if somehow everyone who objects to anything the National Organization for Women says is a closet wife-beater. But we also oppose letting people's whims decide the future of a suspect instead of letting the law proceed. After all, even Mr. Rice's wife thinks the current punishment has gone too far.

Not that anyone will listen.

COMMITTEE, CONTINUED

charge or pro-bono. Mr. Martinez de Vara has extensive experience in helping communities incorporate, having represented a number of the recent new cities in Texas including Providence Village, Ivanhoe, Von Ormy and Sandy Oaks.

In talking with citizens, committee members report that they have learned that the citizens of the Kingsbury area are proud of a unique identity that they share with their neighbors and consider their own.

They want that identity left alone. Mr. Johnny Harborth of The Circle Two Cedar Company in the oldest section of downtown Kingsbury stated this feeling of pride when he was talking about the ramifications of being in the Seguin ETJ (extraterritorial jurisdiction) and the possibility of someday being a part of Seguin. Johnny

said, "Why we would lose our identity!"

The history and culture that we have would soon be gone." Johnny proceeded with several stories about the culture and history of Kingsbury. If this newsletter continues in the future it will have those stories.

Other people said they believed the Kingsbury area should be free of controls by outside governments, and one leading citizen stated emphatically that he didn't see "why we can't just be left alone."

To be fair it must be reported that some citizens expressed reservation at incorporation and were also eloquent in their reasoning.

Although the committee proceeded through its first meeting on the assumption that incorporation would involve simply the approval of the county judge, an election to incorporate, and an election of city officials, it

was soon discovered that Seguin had drawn a map placing the majority of the proposed city of Kingsbury within its extraterritorial jurisdiction in October of 2013.

Matters soon became more complicated. Steps to incorporate now include but are not limited to 1) Application to the Seguin city council for the release of the proposed city of Kingsbury from the Seguin ETJ, 2) gathering the signatures of fifty or more registered voters living within the borders of the proposed city of Kingsbury asking for such release, 3) creation of a working map of the boundaries, 4) finding a pro-bono attorney for the early phases 5) gathering written endorsements from prominent citizens, 6) filling communication needs with flyers, mailouts, gatherings of the general population of the proposed city, telephone calls, and this newsletter 7) gathering ongoing

donations, 8) working with the U.S. Census Bureau to get an accurate count of the citizens in order to meet the State of Texas requirement of 201 or more to incorporate 9) attending Guadalupe County Mayors Association meetings 10) producing a cost vs. revenue estimate for completion of this rather large task, 11) addition of subcommittees for needed tasks, 12) application to the county judge and getting approval, 13) election for incorporation 14) election of officials. The committee has accomplished or is within sight of accomplishing #s 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, and 9.

The other tasks, and possibly some tasks not contemplated at this time, remain, but work is underway. Some of the remaining tasks are likely to prove costly and extensive fund raising will probably be necessary if the proposed city of Kingsbury is to become The City of Kingsbury.



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NOTICE OF MEETING

A NEXT GENERAL MEETING OF THE KINGSBURY INCORPORATION COMMITTEE

is scheduled for Friday, October 10, 2014 at 7:00 P.M.

at the Kingsbury VFD Fire Station located at
1060 FM 1104, Kingsbury, TX 78638

This meeting is open to the public and to discuss the proposal to incorporate Kingsbury into a city. Come learn more about the future of our community.

For more information contact Cathy Medlin at
cathmed2003@yahoo.com

Q & A, CONTINUED

Q. What type of statutory city is being proposed for Kingsbury?

A. In Texas, there are currently three types of statutory cities, termed types "A," "B," and "C." Kingsbury would be a type "B" city. Type C cities have a commissioner form of government which has a Mayor and two Commissioners. Types A and B have Alderman forms of government. Type A is designed for populations over 700 persons, while Type B are designed for populations under 700 persons.

Q. What are some of the advantages of forming a city?

A. The following are common answers:

To keep government close to the people. Being part of Seguin or remaining in its ETJ in unincorporated Guadalupe County, Kingsbury residents are just 400 persons among 26,000 or more. By forming a city, the residents replace their local government with one whose sole focus are the 400 residents of Kingsbury. That government closest to the people governs best.

To establish specific services. The new city may establish those services that the residents feel are lacking. These may include fire, police, animal control, trash pickup, traffic controls, road maintenance, etc.

To control land use. The new city has the authority to regulate land use, such as the enforcement of building codes and restrictions, preventing the establishment of sexually oriented businesses, and regulating the location of industrial and commercial uses away from residential areas through zoning.

To control subdivision of land. The city may establish its own procedures for the subdivision of land, giving residents relief from the tens of thousands of dollars that subdivision costs in the ETJ of Seguin.

To prevent high taxes and assuming the debt burden of Seguin. Seguin currently imposes a \$0.5173 per \$100 valuation property tax on its residents. Much of this property tax goes to service its debt. According to the Texas Comptroller's website www.texasransparency.org the City of Seguin had \$48,755,000.00 (forty eight million dollars) in tax supported debt as of August 31,

2013. The City of Seguin had an additional \$14,905,000.00 (fourteen million dollars) in revenue supported debt. Tax supported debt in Seguin increased by 158.3% over the ten year period 2004—2014 and is trending upwards. This results in approximately \$1750.00 per capita or a household debt of \$7000.00 for a household of four.

The City of Kingsbury is able to set a much lower tax rate than Seguin because it will be debt free and can operate with greater efficiencies. By forming the city of Kingsbury, its residents will avoid the debt burden that comes with annexation by Seguin.

To qualify for various grants programs. As a small rural city, Kingsbury will qualify for state and/or federal grants that it did not qualify as an unincorporated area. Such programs include Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Texas Water Development Board, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and others.

To permanently prevent Seguin annexation. By forming a city, the residents of Kingsbury would not ever be annexed by Seguin or any other city.

To preserve land value, way of life and local control. Political decisions that affect the quality of life of the residents of Kingsbury are currently made by elected officials and bureaucrats who do not live in Kingsbury and many who are unfamiliar with Kingsbury. By forming a city all decision makers will be residents of Kingsbury and answerable to its residents, their neighbors.

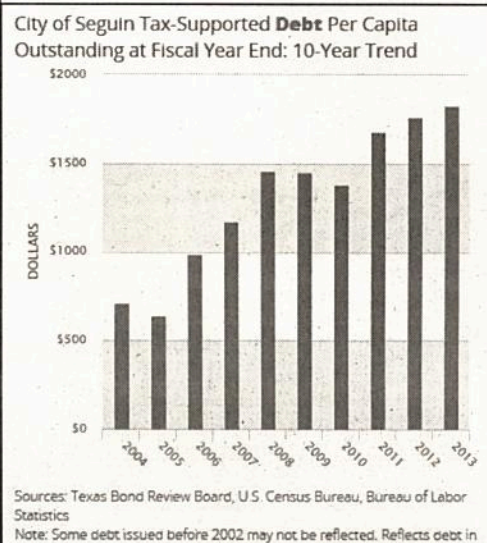
To gain representation on local, state and federal boards. Local government operates and is funded on a regional level through organizations such as the Metropolitan Planning Organization, Alamo Area Council of Governments, etc. By forming a city, the residents of Kingsbury will have direct representation on the boards and a seat at the table to argue for the benefit of Kingsbury.

To recover lost franchise fees being paid to other entities. Residents of Kingsbury pay franchise fees on their utilities. Because the area is not in an incorporated city many of these fees are collected and retained by outside entities. By incorporating, franchise fees can be returned to the city and utilized for its benefit.

To have the option to opt out of various districts. A city has the ability to start its own water and wastewater utilities. The city may also start its own fire department and EMS service, if the residents feel that is in their best interest.

Q. What are some of the disadvantages of forming a city?

A. *City brings liabilities that require risk management.* A city must purchase liability insurance and manage its risks. The Texas Municipal League has simplified this by providing a low-cost intergovernmental risk pool (self-insurance) for Texas cities for decades.



BBQ

Fundraiser

Benefitting the Kingsbury
Incorporation Committee

Saturday Oct. 18, 2014
11am to 2pm
on Railway Street in
Downtown Kingsbury

Come Support the Incorporation Effort
and Learn More About Our Future City

Volunteers and Donations Needed
Contact Cathy Medlin at cathmed2003@yahoo.com

In case of bad weather, event will be at Fire Station on 1104

Along with government come taxes. For a city to operate it must have a source of revenue. This means that taxes in some form are typically imposed. However, some cities, like Staples and Sandy Oaks, avoid property taxes altogether and instead rely on sales taxes and franchise fees to operate.

Road Maintenance. By incorporating, some county maintained roads become city maintained roads. However, since resident's continue to pay County taxes many rural Counties continue the maintenance of county roads. This was the case in Staples, Texas, the most recent city to incorporate in Guadalupe County.

Grant requirements. For all the good that grants provide, many come with staffing and regulatory requirements that can increase the size of government and place a burden on the city. Before applying for and accepting a grant, the city must evaluate the benefits and costs of accepting the funds.

Q. What functions can a city perform if it so chooses?

A. Statutory cities have the ability to perform a number of services. Each requires action by the city council to establish. Most small rural cities keep it simple and provide the basic essential services its resident's desire. However, legally a city may operate a police force, provide fire protection, emergency medical response services, animal control, health care services, sanitation services, street construction and maintenance, garbage and solid waste removal, collection, and disposal, establish and maintain parks, libraries and library maintenance, community, neighborhood, or senior citizen centers.

Q. What functions must a city perform?

A. A statutory city must do the following under state law. It must have a Budget Officer, which by default is the Mayor. It must select a depository (bank) in which to keep public funds, such as tax revenue. It must provide insurance for liability and property, which is available at a low cost from the Texas Municipal League Intergovernmental Risk Pool. <http://www.tmlirp.org>. A city must provide an engineer

Q & A, CONTINUED

standards.

Q. What type of activities of the city require public hearings?

A. A statutory city must call public hearings before doing any of the following: adopting subdivision regulations, zoning regulations, comprehensive plan, annexing property, adopting the annual budget, raising taxes, levying assessments for street or other public improvements, the sale of park land and condemnation of property.

Q. What types of funding will be available to the City of Kingsbury?

A. There are five basic types of revenue for a city.

The first is a sales tax. The state constitution caps local sales tax at 2 percent. The city must call an election to establish a sales tax.

The second type of revenue is property tax. Perhaps the least popular of all taxes, the property tax can provide the city with reliable revenue. The state constitution caps property tax at \$1.25 per \$100 valuation. The highest city property taxes in Guadalupe County are paid by the residents of Seguin at \$0.5173 per \$100 valuation, followed closely by residents of Shertz

at \$0.4974 per \$100 valuation. San Antonio residents pay \$0.56 and the Guadalupe County median is \$0.3840. The lowest property taxes in Guadalupe County are paid by residents of Staples, which have none. Santa Clara residents pay \$0.12 per \$100 valuation and Selma residents pay \$0.2342 per \$100 valuation. The initial tax rate for Kingsbury will be set by its city council.

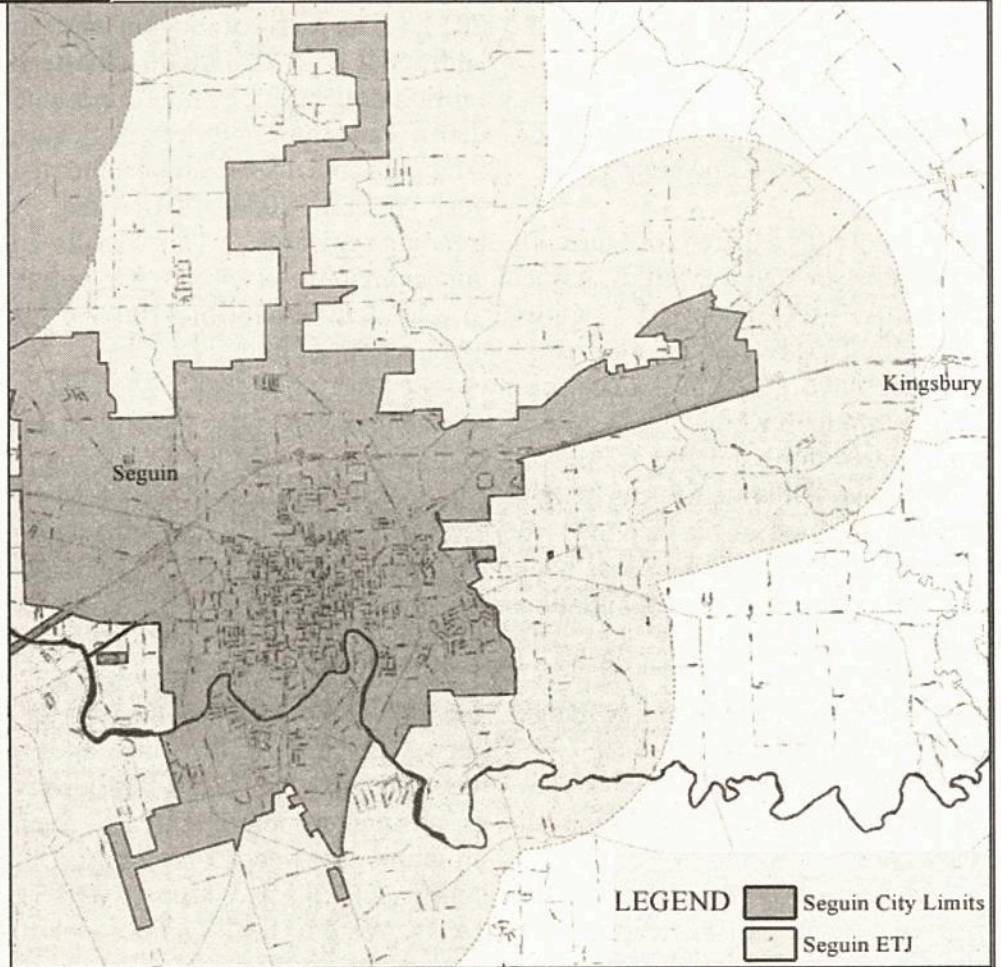
The third type are franchise fees. The fees are charged to utility companies for use of the public roads and rights of way. CPS Energy has a standard contract with all suburban cities that pays 4.5% of the electric bill back to the city.

The fourth type are fees and fines. Like most corridor cities, Kingsbury can expect to get most of its fines and fees from traffic violations on 90 and I-10. The city can also collect fees on permits and other services, but these generally are just a pass through cost.

The fifth type are grants. The city will qualify for a number of grants including CDBG, Texas Water Development Board, USDA and others.

Q. How do we draw a city limit?

A. There are several factors involved in drawing a city limit. First, the city limits should comprise an historically recognizable community, which Kingsbury is. Additionally, state law limits the amount of area a community may incorporate based upon its population. A community the size of Kingsbury may incorporate up to 2.0 square miles. If any of the proposed city limits falls within the extraterritorial jurisdiction of another city, permission of that city must be obtained in order to include that area in the new city. In the case of Kingsbury, roughly half



of the area of Kingsbury is in the extraterritorial jurisdiction of the City of Seguin. Population for the purpose of determining how much area can be incorporated is typically determined by census data. The 2.0 square mile limitation on the city limits for incorporation does not extend beyond the incorporation election. Once a city has formed it may grow through annexation.

Q. How do we request permission from Seguin to be released from its ETJ to form a city?

A. A petition requesting conditional release of ETJ signed by 50 registered voters is required along with a description of the proposed city limits. This petition will be filed with City of Seguin. Most cities upon receiving such a petition

will undertake a staff review and receive a staff recommendation. The ultimate decision however is a vote of the Seguin City Council. If approved Kingsbury will have 6 months to begin the process of incorporation and 18 months to complete it. If Kingsbury fails to abide by this timeframe, the permission to incorporate expires by law.

Q. When will be the election for incorporation?

A. If Seguin gives its conditional approval, the residents of Kingsbury will have to gather a second petition of 50 registered voters requesting the County Judge to call an election on the question of incorporation. The election will be on the subsequent general election day, which

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5 >

CITY PROPERTY TAX RATES IN GUADALUPE COUNTY, 2013

City of Cibolo	0.4454
City of Marion	0.4901
City of Schertz	0.4974
City of Santa Clara	0.1200
City of Seguin	0.5173
City of Selma	0.2342

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5 PUBLIC HEALTH THREATS IN TEXAS SCARIER THAN EBOLA



By Anna C. Dragsbaek

There's no doubt about it: Ebola is scary.

The disease has a high mortality rate and no known cure.

No vaccine is available to halt its spread. And now it has arrived in Dallas — the first confirmed case in the U.S.

A media firestorm is brewing, and the public is understandably concerned. But the threat of Ebola spreading in the U.S. is nominal. Highly advanced disease surveillance systems, well-developed quarantine and isolation laws, adequate hygiene and sanitation, and top-notch medical services will keep the U.S. from facing a crisis similar to the one sweeping through West Africa.

But that doesn't mean we shouldn't be worried about infectious diseases. In fact, there are at least five other preventable threats right now that are far more menacing — and Texans would be wise to pay close attention to them.

1. Influenza: Last year, widespread influenza in Texas led to the deaths of 20 children, most of whom were unvaccinated. The flu vaccine is widely available through clinics, workplaces, churches, commercial pharmacies and schools, but influenza vaccination rates among adults in Texas remain low. In Texas, only one in three young adults (who are most likely to have small children in the home and to transmit the virus to them) were immunized against influenza last season. Children died not from a rare infectious disease but from a vaccine-preventable disease that we didn't protect them from.

2. Pertussis: In 2013, Texas reported 3,985 cases of pertussis, or whooping cough — more than any

other state in the U.S. This disease is particularly dangerous for infants, which is why the vaccine is recommended for pregnant women and caregivers. Yet only about one in four adults who live with infants have been immunized against it.

3. Neglected tropical diseases: Chagas, Chikungunya, dengue and other so-called neglected tropical diseases, or NTDs, are all circulating in Texas. Several of these diseases cause long-term disabilities and even heart defects. Yet despite the potentially devastating impact of NTDs, doctors don't always diagnose them



properly, and many cases go unreported due to inadequate surveillance and a lack of funding for vaccine development. To determine the true burden of disease, the Texas Legislature should appropriate funds to expand the capacities of existing clinics to detect a host of NTD threats.

4. Measles: So far this year, 595 cases of measles have been reported nationally — as many as the previous five years combined and the highest number in 20 years. Texas has seen its share of cases, with outbreaks in Tarrant County and a few cases in Houston. Unlike Ebola, measles is an airborne disease and is

highly contagious. Simply being in the same room with someone who has measles can — and almost always does — cause an unvaccinated person to be infected. A highly effective vaccine nearly eradicated the disease, but it has recently made a comeback due to the surge in children who are not fully immunized, which leads me to the fifth threat:

5. Vaccine refusal: Texas allows parents to opt out of vaccines for their children based on personal beliefs. This means that your child could be in a school with unvaccinated children, who would present a

stored, Texas parents don't have access to any information about the immunization rates in their children's schools. The parents of a child with an immune-suppressing illness have rights, too. The virus of vaccine refusal is based on pseudoscience, but it's spreading every day in Texas, and we're poised for a preventable tragedy.

Having spent six years living and working in Sierra Leone in a rural missionary hospital and later as a relief worker during the civil war, I've been watching the spread of Ebola in my former home with a heavy heart and a deep understanding of the overwhelming challenges facing the country. Given Sierra Leone's brutally hot climate and lack of resources and public health infrastructure, it's no surprise that the epidemic has quickly escalated to a public health emergency and humanitarian crisis.

But we can and will avert widespread outbreak in the U.S. The real threat is complacency and a disregard for the scientific evidence of vaccine safety. Texas must increase funding to fight vaccine-preventable disease, reform our laws to prioritize public health and respond to constant threats that jeopardize the health of our community.

Anna C. Dragsbaek is a public health attorney and the president and CEO of The Immunization Partnership, a Houston-based organization working to eradicate vaccine-preventable diseases. This article originally ran in the Texas Tribune <http://bit.ly/luenat7>

Q & A, CONTINUED

Q. When will the election for Mayor and City Council of Kingsbury be?

function only at this point.

Q. How can I learn more?

A. If the election on incorporation is successful the Guadalupe County Judge must call a special election to elect the city's first Mayor and Board of Aldermen. This second election can be called immediately, or the Judge may wait until the next general election date at his/her discretion.

A. The Kingsbury Incorporation Committee holds regular meetings at the Kingsbury VFD located at 1060 FM 1104, Kingsbury, TX 78638. The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, October 10, 2014 at 7:00 P.M.

Q. If the community of Kingsbury votes to incorporate, when will it start operating as a city.

Art Martinez de Vara is an attorney who has represented several communities through the incorporation process. He currently serves as City Attorney for the City of Sandy Oaks, Texas and is also the current Mayor of Von Ormy, Texas.

A. A city legally comes into being upon the signing of an Order of Incorporation by the County Judge, which occurs after canvassing the results of the election on incorporation. However, the city will not have a governing body until the Mayor and Board of Aldermen are sworn in and take of-

To contact the Kingsbury Incorporation Committee, please email Cathy Medlin at

City of Kingsbury



Low or no debt! Low or no property taxes!

A city made just how "we" like it!

Support and protect Kingsbury's history and its future!

Bob & Janet Grafe
Kingsbury, Texas

KINGSBURY—TOWN'S NAMESAKE RECRUITED SETTLERS

By Art Martinez de Vara

The community of Kingsbury, Texas in Guadalupe County is named for William Gilliam Kingsbury, a dentist, agriculturalist, and immigration agent for the Galveston, Harrisburg and San Antonio Railroad. He is responsible for a mass influx of German, Czech and English immigrants along the Sunset Route (I-10 corridor) between Houston and San Antonio. As an official immigration agent for the State of Texas and the Galveston, Harrisburg and San Antonio Railroad he promoted Texas, organized charter steam ships from Europe to Galveston and left a permanent imprint on the character, people and culture of this part of Texas.

Kingsbury was born and raised in Boonville, New York, on November 6, 1823. Boonville was a young town having been founded only thirty years prior in 1795. In the 1820s and 1830s the town served as a travel stop between the St. Lawrence River and the Erie Canal. Kingsbury attended the district school and a seminary at Cazenovia, New York and studied dentistry in Baltimore.

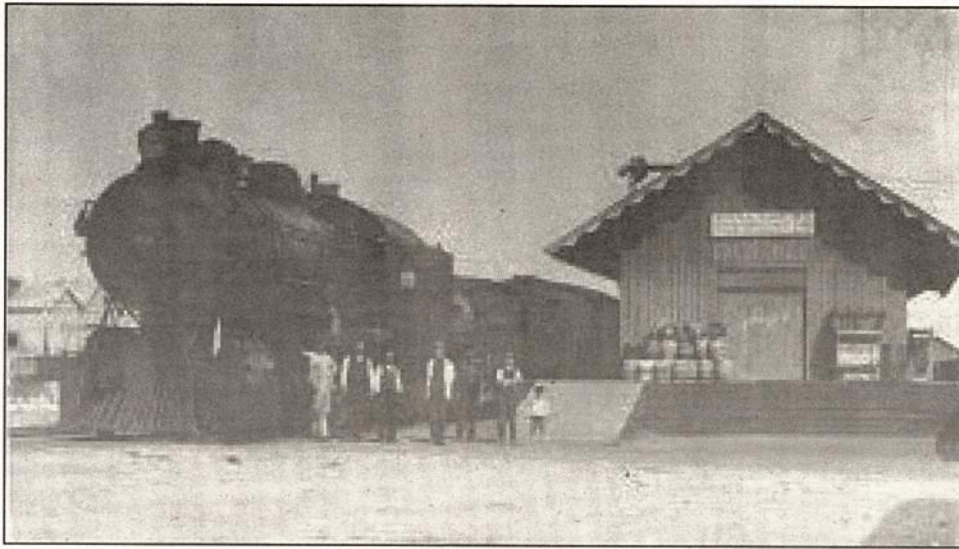
In January 1846 he moved to Texas to set up practice. One of his acquaintances there was the Texas Ranger Samuel Hamilton Walker, whom he accompanied to Mexico in the Mexican War; although he went along as a civilian dentist, Kingsbury received several wounds during that conflict.

After the war he practiced dentistry in various West Texas towns and finally settled in 1851 in San Antonio, where he practiced for the next twenty-five years.

He shared a vision of extending rail access from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific. This goal was an impossibility in the politically divided antebellum Congress. Senators and Representatives from both the North and South vied for the lucrative east-west route, resulting in inaction until after the Civil War. Kingsbury began to write about his experiences in Texas and travel guides to Texas.

William Kingsbury's writings caused the governor to appoint him commissioner of immigration, and as long as the Bureau of Immigration existed he was stationed in St. Louis. He represented several railroads in Europe; with headquarters in London from 1875 to 1884, he also used the title of Texas land and immigration agent. He is credited with having induced thousands of people, largely from England, to immigrate to Texas by his speeches, pamphlets, articles, and books, published in several languages. Editions of his pamphlet *A Description of South-Western and Middle Texas* were published in London in 1878 and 1883.

In his 1877 pamphlet intended for potential English immigrants, Kingsbury promoted "South-Western and Middle Texas" along the Galveston, Harrisburg and San Antonio Rail-



KINGSBURY, TEXAS TRAIN STATION ON THE OLD G.H. & S.A. LINE

road that connected Texas' only major port (Galveston) with San Antonio, the old colonial capital and center of South Texas regional economy.

The Galveston, Harrisburg and San Antonio Railroad was formed on January 24, 1870, from the holdings of several previous railroads dating back to 1850. Charter amendments, including the name change, the merger of the Columbus Tap, and authorization to build to San Antonio, Houston and Galveston, were approved by the Texas legislature on July 27.

Although the company also had authority to build to La Grange and New Braunfels, the main thrust was now San Antonio. Construction west of Columbus under the direction of Maj. James Converse began in April 1873. The railroad reached Schulenburg in December, Waelder in the summer of 1874, Kingsbury in the summer of 1875, and Marion in the spring of 1876. However, the rails did not reach San Antonio, 125 miles from Columbus, until February 5, 1877.

The railroad itself used the nickname Sunset Route, a name that was in general use by 1874 and was later adopted by the Southern Pacific for the entire line between New Orleans and Los Angeles.

Kingsbury wrote that the Galveston to San Antonio corridor was not only the "garden spot" of Texas but a

country "combing more natural advantages for supplying the wants of man, than almost any other portion of the Globe." He also envisioned a future westward extension of the G.H.&S.A. to El Paso where it would link with the Southern Pacific Railroad creating a route to the Pacific.

Kingsbury helped shape the image of Texas in Europe, drawing immigrants and capturing the imaginations of countless others. His writings not only celebrate the abundance of the land, the availability of water and other natural recourse. He portrays Texas as a land teeming with wild herds of mustangs. He romantically describes young cowboys and their riding skills, rope tricks and their preference for the rugged life over a settled and refined one in Europe. He writes, "The people of England would be surprised to see the Texas boys ride their horses, and the skill with which they use the lasso. I have seen them pick up a silver dollar from the ground with the horse at full speed, vault from the saddle to the ground, and with a spring, swing themselves into it again—throw their hats up in the air, and so maneuver the horse as to have it light upon the head." He describes the area that now holds his name as "the most beautiful in Texas" In connection with his immigration advertising, Kingsbury made arrangements with transatlantic streamliners North German Lloyd Line at Bre-

men, Germany and the Mississippi and Dominion Line at Liverpool, England. These were second and third owner fleets whose safety records were problematic. Conditions onboard were generally described as deplorable. Kingsbury travelled to Bremen and Liverpool to sign charter agreements with these lines based upon successful immigration recruitment of at least 500 immigrants per trip.

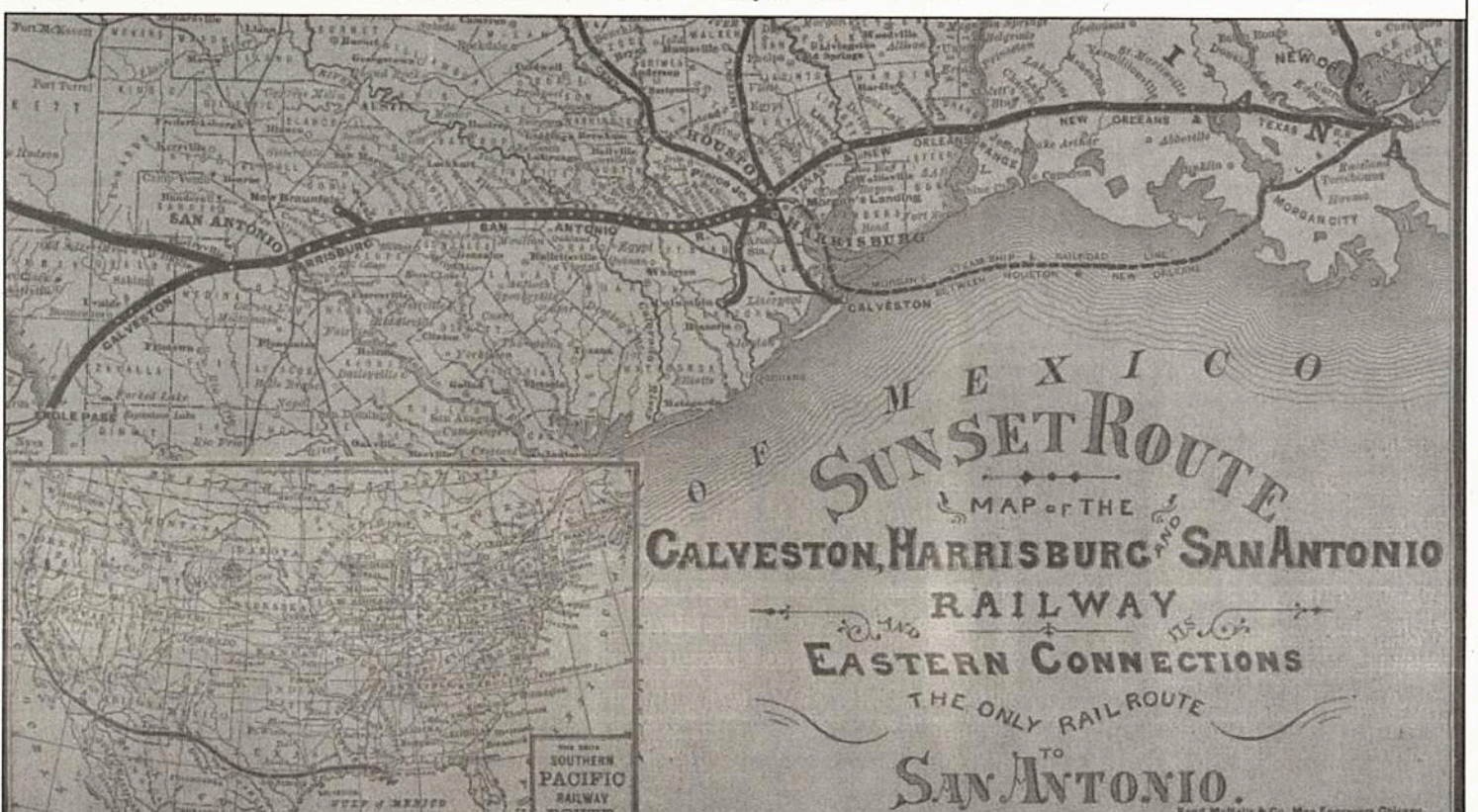
Kingsbury himself boasted that he had "placed in the hands of all licensed immigration agents throughout Germany a pamphlet descriptive of Texas, each book also containing a complete map of the United States. It was printed both in Hamburg, and distributed from that place 30,000 copies during the months of April and May....The Sunset road is doing all in its power, regardless of expense, and if the citizens of Texas will lend a helping hand by attentions and encouraging new arrivals, strangers at your gates, and getting them to write good letters home, we shall make it a grand success."

Kingsbury's efforts brought approximately 8,038 immigrants directly from Bremen to Galveston on charter steamers. Among the most used was the steamer *America*.

Ultimately, Kingsbury printed his pamphlet on Texas in German, English and Czech.

Kingsbury was also active in the field of agriculture and stock raising and wrote articles on these subjects. He served as corresponding secretary for the Agricultural, Stock-raising, and Industrial Association of Western Texas in the 1870s and pioneered ideas on the silo system of storing feed.

In 1872 Governor Edmund J. Davis appointed him one of three representatives of Texas at the 1873 Vienna World's Fair. Kingsbury and his wife, Elizabeth, had three sons. He died on September 11, 1896, and was buried in the City Cemetery in Boerne.



EDITORIAL: WHY SUPPORT

KINGSBURY INCORPORATION?

By Dave Medlin

KINGSBURY—Because it is the fair thing to do. The history and culture of Kingsbury is rooted in an independent and at the same time a quiet, country way of living.

It has been so since the early days of the community some 130 and more years ago when the original plat of the town was laid out. At that time there were no ETJ's or Executed Development Agreements and no large cities to utilize them. People lived their lives, took care of needs, and left each other alone to a large extent. An early history of

Kingsbury by Alleen J. Sramek points out that "this area was the first to be settled in Guadalupe County and had settlers before the Texas Revolution."

From the diary of Albert Wolfshohl covering 1904 to 1922 life is further described: "January 24 1910: John Schmidt's donkey was killed by train in night." That was a big piece of news. Everything else was probably quiet. People kept it that way. They wanted it that way.

The area has had periods of growth and periods of population loss over the last century or so. The

main street mostly burned down (despite a bucket brigade) and had to be partly rebuilt. Schools were built and rebuilt and then lost due to shortages of students and money. The community of Kingsbury, large, and then small, and now growing again, has remained. People in Kingsbury want it to stay quiet in their area as much as is possible.

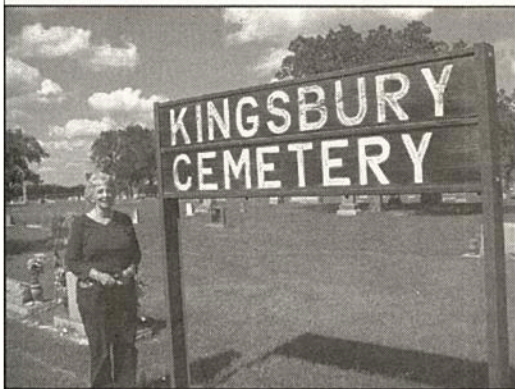
If there is to be "progress" they want to be in control of it as much as is humanly possible. They know things will change around them in time, but they want to keep control of that change themselves to at least

a degree, and not have another city entity do the controlling and "developing."

They would like to keep as much of their history and culture and way of life as possible and to do so they are trying to form an incorporated city. The only other choice, as they see it is to eventually become the eastern most section of the City of Seguin. The fair thing to do is to support them in their effort to form the City of Kingsbury.

Dave Medlin is a resident of Kingsbury, Texas

PHOTOS OF HISTORIC KINGSBURY



(nearly 780) interred at the Kingsbury Cemetery--originally created by the Lutheran Church in Kingsbury in the 1880s for members of the church. The cemetery was later turned over to the Kingsbury Cemetery Association where Margaret now maintains detailed records of those interred there. The earliest date on a grave marker in the cemetery is 1895. Much of the west-side of the cemetery was reserved for members of the Lutheran Church while much of the east-side was set aside for member of the Woodman of the World. Interestingly, 24 grave-sites have been set aside in one area for "Preachers." Along the north-side of the cemetery is land area set aside for expansion purposes.

Staff Writer

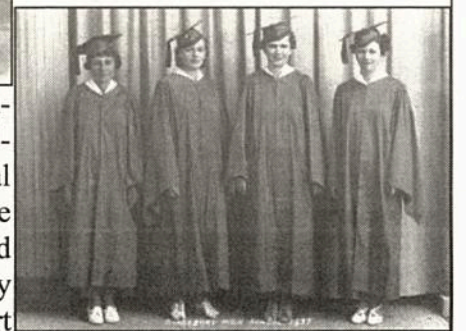
KINGSBURY—Margaret Taylor with the Kingsbury Cemetery Association is pictured above standing on the beautifully peaceful grounds of the Kingsbury Cemetery. Margaret manages many of the affairs of the association and is a wealth of information concerning the varied and exciting history of Kingsbury. Margaret enthusiastically reflects upon the details of the lives of many of those

The following historic photos have been provided by the Heritage Museum of Seguin and by the private photo collection of Margaret Taylor of Kingsbury.

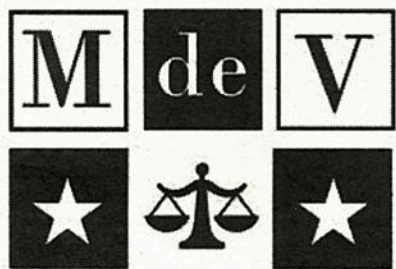


While not large in numbers of population, Kingsbury's citizenry has always stepped up to help the local community, state needs, and for the defense of our country. Pictured above (L to R) are WWI, Kingsbury service men, Circa 1917: Albert Coates, Earl Coates, Charlie Littlehohn, Otto Hageman, Alex Jones and John Coates. The buildings in the

background from left appear to be an unidentified saloon, the N.G. DeLany Grocery/Meat Market, an unidentified two-story building and the First National Bank of Kingsbury.



Graduates of Kingsbury High School class of 1937 are pictured (left to right): Viola Kluth, Irma Donsbach, Cora Glenewinkel and Jane Imhoff.



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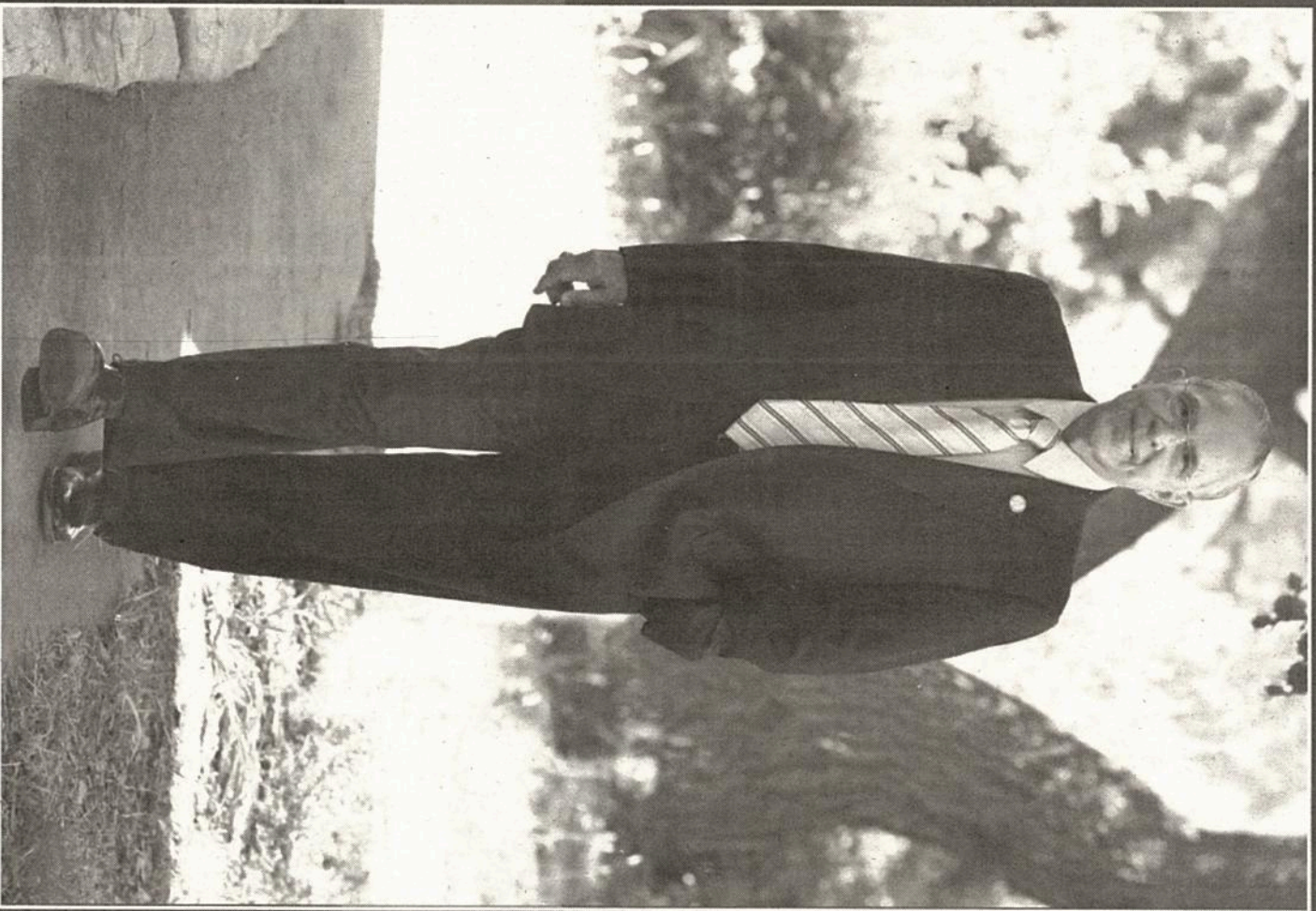
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