

BLDG NAME BIGS STORE

RECORD 19.2

LOCATION 323 N. MAIN

ADDITION

BLOCK

LOT NUMBER

CURRENT OWNER

DATE

BUILDER

STYLE/ PERIOD

HISTORICAL DESIGNATION

YEAR

CONDITION

ALTERED

PHOTOS

CONSTRUCTION

ROOF

WINDOWS

ORIGINAL USE

PRESENT USE

PREVIOUS OWNERS

DESCRIPTION

SIGNIFICANCE



BIGS OF BOERNE
319 N. Main
Library File #19.2

OWNERS: Archie & Alice Gerfers	ADDITION: Town Lot LOTS: #	DATE: c1954 Style/Period: Commercial
BUILDER:	CONSTRUCTED OF: Wood	DESCRIPTION: Rectangular, commercial building.

HISTORY: BIGS Grocery and Sporting Goods opened at this location in 1954. It was owned by Mrs. Gerfers until 1978. Mrs. Gerfers kept it open a several years after Mr. Gerfers' death, then she sold the business to Mrs. Donald (Diane Nagel) Backer. Later Johnny Pfeiffer took part of the building for a feed store. A pet shop occupies the other part of the building.

Source: Boerne Public Library files.- May, 1999

[Back to Kendall County Main Page](#)

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Thursday, Aug. 30, 1951

Attention Farmers & Ranchers

We are the Authorized Cream Station for

Rio Vista Dairy

CREAM PICKED UP EVERY MORNING

HIGHEST MARKET PRICES PAID

Bigs Ice Service

ON MAIN STREET

1957
Business Review



Mr. and Mrs. Archie Gerfers shown with a display of guns and sporting goods at their store, Bigs of Boerne.

**Bigs of Boerne Has
Complete Grocery,
Sportings Goods Stock**

BIGS of Boerne will mark their seventh year in business on Easter Sunday next month.

Starting in 1950 with a few groceries and beer, BIGS has become the sportsmen's center of Boerne, as well as carrying a full line of groceries.

Owned by Archie and Alice Gerfers, BIGS carries the largest stock of camping, fishing and hunting equipment in the Hill Country.

An ice house is also maintained by BIGS. Scott-Atwater outboard motors are stocked by the Boerne firm which is located on Main Street.

Archie Gerfers says if you don't find what you want in his large stock, he'll be glad to get it for you.

Make BIGS of Boerne your regular stopping place for groceries and sporting goods.

VF - Grocery Trade
Bigs Assoc.

Bigs of Boerne 319 N. Main (Herfur 1950-1978)



VF - Grocery Trade - 1243

BOERNE STAR

AUGUST 15, 1968



The subject of this week's "HATS OFF" column is a woman who has been active in civic work in Boerne for many years. Her name is ALICE GERFERS, and she is the owner of BIGS Grocery and Sporting Goods Store in Boerne.

ALICE and her late husband, Archie, started their business here in May of 1950. The name of the business came about quite simply, when the couple realized that the products they would be selling (Beverages, Ice, Groceries and Sporting Goods) spelled out the word BIGS. The store has long been a center for hunting and fishing supplies in the Boerne area.

As Alice put it, it is hard to separate the things that she has taken an interest in from those of her husband, as the couple worked together so closely on all civic endeavors. Both were very active in the activities of the Kendall County Fair Association, of which Archie was president for seven years. They acted as Queen Chaperones for several years, and Alice has worked many times with the Queen's Contest, and Coronation. Both Alice and Archie worked diligently during the Golden Jubilee of the Fair in 1955. Alice has continued to be active in Fair activities.

For several years, Alice accompanied and worked with Archie as he served as chairman of Hill Country Day and the San Antonio Livestock Show. This is a day set aside to recognize all the people and products of the Hill Country area. Alice has been actively involved in setting up exhibits to display Hill Country products in the lobby of the coliseum. She is also a committee member of the Women's Division of the San Antonio Livestock Show.

She is a member of the Eastern Star, where she has served as Worthy Matron. She has also served as Mother Advisor to the Order of the Rainbow Girls here in Boerne, and has worked closely with these girls.

ALICE is a member of St. Helena's Episcopal Church, where she sings in the church choir. She is an active member of the Chamber of Commerce. She was a charter member of the board of directors of the Boerne Berges Fest. During this year's festival she was chairman of the concessions committee, and did a fine job. She has recently been reelected by the Chamber of Commerce to serve her second two-year term on this board. She is genuinely interested in the progress and growth of Boerne, and has always been willing to do her share to help with projects in the area.

"HATS OFF" to you, ALICE GERFERS, for the fine job you are doing for Boerne. It's people like you who make our town such a fine place to live!

Oct 12, 1978

THE BOERNE STAR

The "Bigs" Story



Alice Gerfers' decision to sell her 28-year-old business, one that she and her late husband, Archie, started in May of 1950, was not an easy one, but there are times when we all have to make decisions which alter our lives somewhat.

BIGS of Boerne was first owned by Archie and Alice and B.L. (Buster) and Anna Mae Rust, and first opened in the building at 325 S. Main (now Kutzer's Hill Country Sales) from which a "canopy" then extended to the street to shade the cars that stopped there. Soon the Gerfers' became the sole owners and after two years the store was moved to its present location at 319 N. Main.

The name BIGS was ingeniously arrived at by combining the first letters of the store's merchandise—Beverages, Ice, Groceries, and Sporting Goods! There are many features which set BIGS apart from the typical "convenience store" and give it a character all its own. One of these is the sale of block ice—Bigs is the only store in Boerne that sells it.

"In the early '50's, we delivered ice by truck on a morning route to people who still had 'ice boxes' in their homes," Alice reported. "But we quit delivering when we moved to our present location." Happily, she recalled the year they sold over a **million** lbs. of ice—it was in 1951...

Bigs has long been a center for hunting and fishing supplies, including the most complete line of cast iron ware anywhere in the area. Hunters from all over Texas as well as Louisiana and Kentucky came regularly from year to year to shop and visit with Alice and Archie, who loved people and

were blessed with many friends. For many years, the store served as a "meeting place" for friends and out-of-town visitors, as the Gerfers' were involved in a number of activities involving out-of-towners.

Archie became President of the Kendall County Fair Association in 1951 and served until 1958, during which time the 50th "Golden Jubilee" Fair was held. He also served on the City Council and as Chairman of "Hill Country Day" at the San Antonio Livestock Show. Alice worked alongside her husband and served for a number of years on the Women's Division of the Livestock Show and as hostess during the show.

In 1954-1955, Alice served as Mother Advisor to the Boerne Assembly of the Order of the Rainbow for Girls, and in 1956-1957 she became Worthy Matron of Eastern Star, the same year Archie was Master of the Kendall Lodge.

Since Archie passed away suddenly in April, 1966, Alice has continued to be active in various capacities with the Fair Association and in 1976 was presented with a plaque naming her their "Official Goodwill Ambassador."

She was on the Board of Directors of Berges Fest when it organized in 1967, and served for 7 years. "In those first years it was held on the plaza," reported Alice. "And some real dignitaries, such as the Consul General of Germany from Houston, the beloved Mayor Emeritus McAllister from San Antonio and several Potentates of the Alzafar Shrine, came as special guests."

In 1970, Alice helped organize the Boerne Area Historical Preservation Society with which she has been active ever since. In 1972 she was invited to be Boerne's Ambassador for

the Texas Folklife Festival, and is still serving in that capacity along with Alvin Sueltenfuss.

Alice has served on the Chamber of Commerce, is a life member of the Boerne Turn Verein, a member of Daughters of the Nile and has sung in St. Helena's choir for the past 18 years.

With the help of Hollie Ramey, who has worked in the store since 1965, Alice has kept the business going since the death of her husband. "The time has flown," she said, "because of the stimulation of the people."

Through the glass that encloses the front of her store, Alice observed almost 3 decades of growth in Boerne, and was an integral part of much of that growth. "And what gives me the most pleasure," she smiled, "is seeing that, whatever happens to people, they just pick up and keep going."

When asked what she plans to do with herself now, Alice replied that she plans "to get organized." After that, she says she's just going to "let things fall into place."

Bigs To Carry On Under New Ownership



The new face at **Bigs** is one that is familiar to most Boerne residents. It belongs to Diana Backer, formerly Diana Nagel, daughter of Ernst Nagel of Boerne and the late Elsie Marquardt of Sisterdale. Diana will manage the store along with her father Ernst, father-in-law Don R. Backer and her sons Don, a BHS senior, and Doug, a freshman. Diana is the wife of Don E. Backer, manager of Community Savings and Loan in Boerne.

FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE

Although some gradual improvements are planned, the Backers hope to keep the "friendly General Store atmosphere," so well established by the Gerfers', going.

DEER STORAGE

Hunters will be happy to learn that Bigs' locker will be available for deer storage this hunting season. It is the only storage facility in Boerne.

SPORTING GOODS

The Backers hope to increase the sporting goods and at the same time maintain the other lines that Bigs has been known for such as hunting and fishing licenses, groceries, beverages, block ice and bag ice and cast iron ware. The Fishing Department promises to be the largest in the Hill Country.

"If we don't have items that customers want, we'll get them," said Diana. "We appreciate being told what they would like to see in stock."

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1979

Bigs Of Boerne

249-2646

319 N. Main

•Beverages •Ice •Groceries •Sporting Goods

•Gift Certificates •Jerky

Open 7 Days A Week

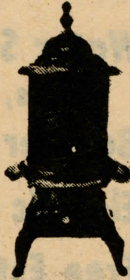
8:00 A.M.— 8:00 P.M.

WOOD STOVES

CAST IRON

CROCKERY

SCHRADE KNIVES



HUNTING

FISHING

CAMPING

LICENSE & EQUIPMENT



Metal Sculpture By "Hack" Coffee



Muzzle Loading Headquarters

Established In 1950

Diana Backer, Owner

Bigs To Remain A General Store

In keeping with the spirit that Bigs has maintained throughout the years, the new owners, Bob and Carole Buendia, have despite some of the new additions, promised to maintain Bigs as "come by and visit store."

Bob, who hails from San Antonio, and Carole, who calls the Longhorn city of Austin a part of her history, and their three sons, Perry, Rob and Jerry, took over the ownership of Bigs on August 8, 1980.

Bob is experienced in hunting and fishing and plans to keep all the latest equipment available. He is also able to repair guns and fishing equipment.

Carole, who has been in management for the past twenty three years, wants everyone to know that she will still be stocking these unusual gift items, such as cast iron cookware, crockery, and large wash pots.

For the hunting and



fishing enthusiasts, Bob also lists some unusual supplies, such as rifles, pistols and all accessories for the "Black Powder Shooter", including pyrodez replica black powder.

Also for your enjoyment, the Buendia's have installed a family game room including pool tables, foos ball and pin ball.

Everyone is invited to stop by and visit and see the large

selection of everything from A to Z at BIGS...It's bigger and better now than ever... and speaking of big...the Texas size jelly beans are something you have got to taste to believe!