



Remembering Boomer Kingston, San Angelo's Radio Legend

SAN ANGELO, TX — Boomer Kingston was upstairs in his office about sometime around the summer of 2015. He was the program director for a cluster of radio stations in San Angelo. He also hosted a radio show on San Angelo's top country format station KGKL 97.5 FM. I had a proposal for him.

High school football was coming up. Would Boomer want to promote our Friday night football scores reporting if I promote his game of the week? The deal was made. Boomer was the only radio guy who could make a deal like that.

During football seasons, Boomer traveled to some of the smallest football stadiums in the region and give the play-by-play over KGKL every Friday night. Boomer was an encyclopedia of knowledge about local football history. These were his games of the week.

While 6A San Angelo Central games likely had more in their audience, the quality of Boomer's broadcasts of those 2A football games or the even smaller 6-man match-ups was high because Boomer knew who played or coached in that stadium 40 years ago, or he understood the intricacies of the rivalry between the two teams competing that day. Boomer provided context.

Andi Markee, who managed the radio stations from 2015 until 2017, said Boomer understood music just as well. He was the drive time DJ from the mid-afternoon until 7 p.m. weekdays in addition to being the director for

operations and program director. He was the steady hand on the rudder for the flagship KGKL, keeping the music selections in line with what the audience expected.

And everyone knew Boomer.

“I always admired his community service,” Terry Hucks said. Hucks was the GM of a competing radio station when he first ran into Boomer. “Back then, I’d always shake his hand when I saw him at a public event. It was a professional admiration,” he said.

When Hucks accepted the GM position at West Texas Broadcasting in 2008 and became Boomer’s boss, he said Boomer expected he would fire him. Hucks said that was the farthest from the truth.

“No one gave back to this community more than Boomer,” Hucks said. The two plotted a plan to modernize how Boomer and his colleague and on-the-air personality Catfish were packaged in order to attract more ad dollars.

“Boomer was one of these old school guys who never gave up on his community,” Hucks said. Together, they set forth finding ways to leverage that legacy. Hucks said his gamble was a good one, particularly because of Boomer’s effort. The programming guys got raises.

Teri Holland, who organizes the Cowboy Gathering every year where a portion of the proceeds go to a named charity, said Boomer was very important to her event’s success, especially when it was started in 2012.

“Boomer was always the first one to ask me if I needed help,” Holland said. “And he didn’t have a hidden agenda, either.” Holland said Boomer would arrange for live remote broadcasts at the Gathering and invite her

to on-the-air interviews to promote her event. The Gathering exceeded expectations the first year. Holland said they expected 250 tickets to be sold. They sold 500. Today the event attracts 1,100 people annually. Boomer never asked for a dime, Holland said.

“He was stoic and a man with not a lot of words. But you could see his heart through his work,” Holland said.

Hucks said a finding radio station professional with Boomer’s level of dedication is rare. He cared about the stations and its advertisers.

“I can’t tell you how many times Boomer would call me at 3 a.m. in the morning from the broadcast tower. He learned the broadcasting transmitter was down and was out there getting the signal back up,” Hucks said. “He’d inform me of what was happening and what was needed to fix it.”

At the same time, “Boomer was a calm man. He seldom raised his voice. He had a quiet and peaceful demeanor,” Hucks said.

Hucks recalled trying new ideas with his old school operations manager. “He’d listen, but I could tell he was not totally onboard yet. But I’d tell him we need to bring something different.”

After the early months of working together, Hucks sensed Boomer’s skepticism was fading. Successes early on built a level of trust. Eventually, we’d come up with a crazy idea and Boomer would sigh. “We’re going to do this, aren’t we?” Hucks recalled.

One of those ideas was moving KGKL on-the-air broadcasts to the rodeo fairgrounds during the San Angelo Stock Show and Rodeo. Hucks traded airtime for a large portable building that became the temporary studio.

“Boomer was the first guy who stood up and poured his heart and soul into making those early broadcasts successful,” Hucks said.

WATCH: Boomer Kingston broadcasting live from the San Angelo rodeo in 2015:

“He always came to me first. I didn’t have to ask,” Hucks said of Boomer’s work ethic.

“And don’t underestimate Boomer’s on-the-air talent,” Hucks added. “He had a great voice. People were drawn to him because he was genuine. I had so much respect for him. He’s the one who schooled me on creating great radio. He was really good at it.”

But what people will remember the most about Boomer was his dedication to community service and fundraising. Markee said he raised millions for local charities and in particular St. Jude’s Children’s Hospitals when she was managing the stations. “He was also the voice of the Relay for Life for years,” Markee said.

“The greatest thing about Boomer was his kind soul. He mentored and inspired those around him to be better people. He used his media platform to help others in the community and never said no when people asked for help. He was responsible for helping to raise so much for so many non-profits. San Angelo lost a true un-sung hero. We will miss him greatly,” Markee said.

Mary, Boomer Kingston’s wife, announced he passed away Tuesday.

“My dear husband lost his battle with cancer today. Words cannot express my love for him. We were blessed to share 25 years together and I will miss him dearly everyday. Thank you to everyone who has posted

and shared memories of their friendship with Boomer. I appreciate each and every one of them! The details of his Memorial Service are pending," she stated on Facebook.

According to his family, "Boomer began his radio career of 40+ years at KVLB in Alpine in 1974 and continued at KERB/Kermit, KGEE/Odessa, KGKL/San Angelo, and KPEP in Eldorado until earlier this year. KGEE was honored by the CMA as a Small Market Station of the Year in 1993 and also recognized by the Texas Association of Broadcasters as the Bonner McLane Public Service Station of the Year (Medium Market) 8 times."

Rest in peace, D.B. "Boomer" Kingston, April 18, 1954 - July 23, 2019.