



Stomper's Stars! Robert Lee ISD's Stomper's Stars for the past couple of weeks have recently been announced. Week 5 (above photo) includes the following: Samuel Gibson - PK, Byron Valdez - Kindergarten, Daniel Olguin-1st Grade, Sarah Valdez - 2nd Grade, Gavin Flanagan - 3rd Grade, Jazlynn Rodriguez - 4th Grade, Thomas Immel - 5th Grade, and Seeley Maddox - 6th Grade. Week 6 (top right photo) includes the following: Amara Thomas - PK, Michael Garcia - Kindergarten, Autumn Immel - 1st Grade, Sadie Budzise - 2nd Grade, Nevaeh Manis - 3rd Grade, Madelyn Torrez - 4th Grade, Peyton Cline - 5th Grade, and Avery Bosworth - 6th Grade.



Anthony Landeros - 1 of 2 passing for 36 yards, 5 carries for 63 yards 1 TD;
 Brayden Sherwood - 20 carries for 132 yards 1 TD, 8 tackles;
 Jose Heredia - 6 carries for 24 yards, 6 tackles;
 Denver O'Dell - 8 carries for 27 yards 1 TD, 2 tackles;
 Jaxon Tavarez - 2 carries for 1 yard, 6 tackles;
 Ryan Mendoza - 1 rec for 36 yards, 7 tackles;
 Fernando Sosa - 6 tackles.



The Genius of Our Places

By James M. Decker
*"Consult the genius of the place in all;
 That tells the waters to rise, or fall;
 Or helps th' ambitious hill the heav'ns to scale,
 Or scoops in circling theatres the vale;
 Calls in the country, catches opening glades,
 Joins willing woods, and varies shades from shades,
 Now breaks, or now directs, th' intending lines;
 Paints as you plant, and, as you work, designs."*
 Alexander Pope was an 18th century English poet and gardener who, among other things, coined the phrase "Genius of Place." This idea has become a key principle of landscape architecture, that a design should fit within the context of its place.
 Wendell Berry has often applied Pope's Genius of Place

to agriculture. Forests, grasslands, deserts, and wetlands usually exist in nature for a reason. In each of those places, there is a certain, unique beauty that arises from the natural fit of landscape, climate, flora, and fauna, and their relationship to one another. Consequently, agriculturists should consult the genius of place and act accordingly. We see this in the successes and failures of our forefathers. Cotton works as a cash crop in West Texas because it is suited for the semi-arid climate. On the other end of the spectrum, the Dust Bowl still haunts the memories of towns across the plains.
 The same principle applies to revitalizing our rural communities. Last week, I wrote of my trip to the San Luis Valley of southern Colorado. The genius of that place is easy to spot: the largest sand dunes on the continent, the Sangre de

Cristo Mountains, snow-fed streams, brilliant aspens, bugling elk, and more. Local, state, and federal leaders have worked hard over the decades to consult that genius, and as a result, it attracts over half a million tourists each year. Not every place has those qualities. That is neither good nor bad. It merely reflects the unique genius of each place.
 Almost two years ago, I bought a kayak for a new source of exercise and relaxation. Since then, the kayak has sat in storage. I am slightly embarrassed to admit that, but I am also honest enough to level with my readers. As I shared last week, physical challenges can intimidate me. I doubt my abilities. But on the return from the Strenuous Life Retreat, I vowed that enough was enough. If I could push myself on some challenging hikes, I could paddle

my butt around a lake with still water. So I did just that on Saturday morning. I unloaded my kayak on College Lake, a small lake on the edge of Stamford. I paddled from shoreline to shoreline, across the open water, and into inlets choked by cattails (of which we

have too many, but that's civic improvement for another essay). I considered the view of the lake from the surrounding area and vice versa. I went back on Sunday morning and I pondered this essay as I watched the sun rise.

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