

The Bandera PROPHEET

September 17, 2019

Growing Up In Bandera

By Glenn Clark
Special to the Prophet

I wonder how many of my classmates from the St. Joseph's Catholic School could still make a book cover out of a brown paper grocery bag? Do they still put book covers on books in school today? Do they still use hardcover books? Do they still have books in school or is everything on computers and other modern gadgets? At the rate things are changing these days maybe they will do away with education as we know it.

Do you remember the big letters of the alphabet in our classrooms above the blackboards back in the day? I still remember when they replaced blackboards with greenboards. Didn't stop me from calling them blackboards. The green ones seemed to be easier to clean as I recall. Cleaning the erasers always turned into more than a simple job at St. Joseph's Catholic School. Usually a two student task that would quickly turn into an eraser throwing battle between two boys. We would begin cleaning by pounding the erasers on a wall at the back of the school and things would escalate from there. By the time we got back to the classroom we had chalk marks from head to toe due to the eraser throwing wars.

Spreading sweeping compound on the old hardwood floors and then sweeping it up was a regular routine. Saving it for future use was required to keep expenses down I guess. Even today when I get a whiff of that unique smell it reminds me of the lack of janitors we had at St. Joseph's.

Every day during school hours the street in front of the school was blocked off with barricades. That duty was always assigned to two eighth grade boys. Bubba Montague and I were in charge of doing it during our last year at the school.

When I reached high school the only custodian work I remember doing was in ag class with Telvy Robbins where we took care of cleaning the shop. Sweeping, mopping and taking out the trash was a daily routine. I know now that all of these menial tasks were preparing me for Army basic training when Uncle Sam called my number. I was truly amazed at the number of guys who lacked the basic house cleaning skills I had acquired long ago while Growing Up In Bandera.

#195 2019