

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Growing Up In Bandera

By Glenn Clark
Special to the Prophet

Recently during a conversation with James McGroarty, who is a lifelong friend and shared the same growing up neighborhood as the Clark kids, he made an observation about local people's varying perspectives on our changing town. As usual he was addressing me as "Polander" because he knows my family tree all the way down to the roots and knows it is a legitimate tag even for someone named Clark.

He simply stated there is a big difference between being local and being native. It immediately hit me what he was talking about. It is not meant to be disrespectful to anyone but merely pointing out there is a special attitude filled with pride when you've been here since day one. Local or native, almost everyone can agree that Bandera is a special place to live no matter when you arrived.

My younger brother Eddie was present during this impromptu meeting of friends from back in the day and he hadn't seen James in years so it got real interesting as it always does when you begin to relive those bygone days in Bandera. Names started popping up and it was like someone reading from the pages of a Who's Who of Bandera notables. Sheriff R.B. Miller, Billy Clyde and Clay Wright, Harold Jenkins, The Bandera Ice House and Pat Boyle, all those good looking Mazurek girls and their brother Stevie were connected to stories that came pouring out. Now if an outsider had been listening in there may have been some doubt about some of those tales. But having lived and been witness to such things I can at least vouch for most of them being in the neighborhood of the truth. For sure the ones I was telling were totally accurate.

Stories about Arkey Blue and The Silver Dollar took up a good bit of the conversation as they always do when Bandera talk is going on. Who would think such a small place could hold so many memories. Good times, foolish pranks, tragedies and stories known only to folks who have a long history around here were recalled. Even an incident where James' dad ran some of us out of the OST with a shotgun after an incident in The Dollar resurfaced later in the same evening.

There is something special about reuniting with old friends from my Growing Up In Bandera journey and the ones that go way back are the most satisfying. I'm looking forward to our next gathering and maybe we will invite a few more friends to chime in. No tape recorders allowed!!!

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