

The Bandera PROPHEET

November 20, 2019

Growing Up In Bandera

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Special to the Prophet

What is it about Bandera that makes people who come here for various reasons want to make it their permanent home? Some came here because of work while others might have been on vacation. I hear from some that they were just passing through and decided to stop and fell in love with the area. Even as we are losing our small town charm they just keep coming. Maybe it's something in the water.

The changes in this hometown of mine have accelerated in the most recent decades. There are few changes in the way of new homes being built in town but renovation and repurposing of homes remembered from back in the day are quite common. My Granddaddy Kindla's old house remains pretty much the same on the outside. I don't have a clue about the inside but I'm happy with the way it appears to me as I pass by because it brings back many good memories.

From my front porch I have a clear view of the old Silver Spur Dancehall and Town Mountain. In the evenings I can hear activities going on across the river at The Mayan Dude Ranch. All of these places hold special memories for me even as the familiar faces associated with each have changed and/or disappeared over the years. I have often wondered if I could still manage a walk to the top of Town Mountain or climb those hidden stairs up to the Silver Spur as I often did in my younger days.

What a great treat it would be to go to the Wranglers Roost at the Mayan Ranch Ghost Town on a Tuesday night and listen to Adolph Hoffner and the Pearl Wranglers once again. Folks from 9 to 90 would be dancing under the stars. Of course there would need to be the traditional "I Left My Heart In San Francisco" as requested by Grace Hicks.

Walking in my neighborhood reveals familiar places with some of the same people I remember from my childhood days. Like my classmate and friend Charlie Fellows who still owns some of the property where he grew up. I can still visualize his dad sitting on the front porch. He always had one foot planted against one of the roof supporting posts as he looked at much of the same view I now enjoy from my porch in the evenings.

Other places have a new look and folks who seem to have appeared overnight. The Poe house resembles nothing of the place where Roger and Charlotte once lived with their mom, Beatrice. Thinking about when we first moved into our present home on 4th Street long ago, I don't believe Blanche Ross, our closest neighbor at the time, ever forgave me for cutting down a fig tree to make room for a storage shed. Even though it was on my property it seems to have been viewed as community property. Lesson learned and we never had another issue as long as we were neighbors. She was the best ever!!!

Growing Up In Bandera has been difficult at times here in my later years watching as things are changing rapidly. I would like for my family's younger members to experience what I had but I know it can never be. Time marches on and the times they are a changin'.