

The Bandera PROPHEET

December 3, 2019

Growing Up In Bandera

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Special to the Prophet

From the very first as I began writing my stories about my life experiences here in my hometown I was excited to share with others exactly what I had felt every step of the way. After all, that is what I had discussed with the former editor of the Bulletin as she encouraged and prodded me to get my tales into print. I had no way of knowing that the enjoyment I would personally derive from my recollections would be tainted later on with the disappointment of realizing how the way of life I so cherished was being erased before my very eyes.

I now realize that a lot of my later year decisions have been an attempt to hang on to what once was a special way of life for me. Trying to keep a few cows with no real expectation of making a profit was only a way of fighting the inevitable end of a era. Some days working from daylight until dark with only my dogs by my side I was right where I wanted to be and it was so satisfying. Fences in need of constant repair were simply a part of the daily routine. Unfortunately the end came for me as it has for many others who reach a point where it becomes a burden on family and finances and I just had to let it go.

I look around at places where families I had grown up with had farms and ranches and now there is a subdivision or big game ranch with owners who don't even live here. I can't imagine how hard it would be to let go of land that had been in the family for generations. I know the struggle is real and too often it comes down to the money factor finally winning.

I used to think we were a long way from the big city of San Antonio as I commuted to work daily from Bandera. Now we are faced with the problem of being consumed by the ever expanding suburban sprawl. Along with that comes the needs of the people demanding the conveniences they require in a place where such things don't exist. All the resistance to change is futile because most of the people moving in have no idea and can't be taught the feelings of what we had back in the day. If you didn't live it, you will never understand it.

I wish my youngest family members could experience the education I received at St. Joseph's Catholic School where we had two grades in each of the four classrooms and no nonsense nuns doing the teaching. I doubt that teaching morality and patriotism along with the three R's on that scale would be acceptable in this current attitude in which we live. It seems each and every classmate we had back then became a lifelong friend. There is nothing in our modern world that can compare.

I have a hard time trying to explain my view about what is happening in our area while at the same time being an advocate of property owner's rights. There is no way I can embrace what is rapidly changing my Growing Up In Bandera years of late and evidently there is damn little to be done about it. Some of us will continue to fight but the times they are a changin'.

#206 2019