

# The Bandera PROPHEET

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Growing up in Bandera

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Special to the Prophet

It's just a fact of life that if you want the best food available then it has to be homemade or homegrown. Eggs and vegetables are good examples. Free range eggs taste different than those you get at the supermarket. Same applies to homegrown tomatoes. Tortillas and bread? No contest!!! Homemade without a doubt.

My wife is an excellent cook as you can tell by my uncontrolled waistline. Her chicken enchiladas I would put up against anything you can get in a restaurant. When it comes to potato salad, no one can compete with her. It was rumored that I married her just so I could have unlimited access to her potato salad.

Some may have thought I married my wife for her money and it's true that she had forty dollars in the bank back in 1966. Our 53+ years of marriage has lasted through some financial hardships over the years. We survived and that potato salad is still as good as ever.

The only thing I had in the bank at that early time of our marriage was a note on my 58 Chevy. Thanks to Burgin Davenport at the First State Bank in Bandera for having faith in a young man with no down payment funds.

My early credit score was established there and it was soon helped along by Wilvey Smith at the Western Auto and Irving Billings at the Free State Oil Co. They all contributed to keeping me on the road during my daily commutes to the city for work. I will be forever grateful to Ruben Brown and Clint Dowell who made some auto repairs affordable when I first started out too. As they say, "It takes a village".

When the jobs became scarce in the city I had to rely on work along the Texas coast in the oil refineries. It was tough at times having a family at home while I struggled to make enough money to support that family and my weekly road expenses. Later on I would rely on odd jobs around home to make ends meet because my wife, who had been employed as Bandera Middle School's secretary, was carrying the load.

I think what made Bandera such a special place to be back in the day was due in large part to the fact that everyone knew everyone else and there was a trust and willingness to reach out and help those in need. I don't think my early life's road would have been as smooth had I been growing up in a big city. I believe it was truly a blessing to be raised in our small town.

As I follow what is going on in town through personal contact and social media I feel that things aren't as good today as they were for me Growing Up In Bandera. Thankfully we have some good citizens doing great things for people in need as the outside world is closing in around us. Bandera will never be what it once was but that doesn't mean it can't still be a great place to live.

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