

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Growing Up In Bandera

By Glenn Clark

Special to the Prophet

When I awake on a cold winter morning and feel the chill that has set in, it always reminds me of earlier times at home when I had to be forced out of a warm bed to get ready for school. Brother Eddie and I had our bedroom on a screened-in back porch and the only source of heat was lots of blankets and body heat. The screened opening on the end of the porch had a roll up tarp that was lowered and secured during the cold months and could be rolled up during the summer. Not ideal conditions by today's standards but we survived.

It was during some of my cold morning walks to school when I learned to ice skate if there happened to be frozen mud puddles along the way. Of course I didn't have skates but leather sole shoes worked pretty well unless the ice was too thin and then I had to deal with wet cold feet. Most all of my modern day footwear has rubber soles. My dancing boots would be the exception but I don't know how to ice dance and I have zero interest in learning.

As a kid I was still drawn to the cold clear waters of the Medina River even when the cold north wind was blowing. Life was good if I could find a nice bed of leaves out of the wind along the river bank and just lay back while the sun was beaming down from a clear blue sky. It was always like a refuge from the things going on in the outside world.

As I am growing older I find that my walks along the river area are the thing that can easily help me connect to that magical time of my childhood here in Bandera. People, places and things around town are triggers too but I think it's the solitude along the river that makes it

special. Traveling the same trails that I did as a kid will bring on images of the faces of my friends and scenes from all the adventures we shared. It is a sad fact that the kids today will never know the freedoms we enjoyed as a generation not yet burdened with the population explosion in this area. With the influx of people came more fences and posted signs and a lot less freedom to roam. That was something we saw little of back in the day. I suppose it had to do with people being familiar with all the young folks around town. It is truly a different world in which we now live.

As a youngster I don't think I ever fully appreciated the natural beauty of our surroundings. Maybe it was because I was so busy being a part of it as I was Growing Up In Bandera. Today my slower pace affords me an opportunity to observe things more closely and to thank God for my many blessings he has provided for me.

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