

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Growing Up In Bandera

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Special to the Prophet

I often write about the various things that are associated with my early years of living here in the hill country. Places, people and things that bring back the great memories of what life was like for me back in the day. Walking along the Medina River recently made me realize that familiar smells can also trigger pleasant thoughts.

Sycamore and Cottonwood trees have a similar distinctive smell and it immediately sends my mind racing back to adventures on the river and creeks around Bandera. I would rate it number one in my book when it comes to ranking tree smells.

Cypress wood fires were a part of many of our all night fishing camps along the banks of the Medina River. Burning cedar is another one of my favorite smells and a reminder of early campfires shared with friends. Some of my wife's family who now live in the Lubbock area came down for a visit and loaded up with small pieces of cedar to take back for burning in their fireplace because it reminded them of their early years living around Blanco. Just a little medication to kill a homesick feeling would be my guess.

Mountain Laurel blooming is one smell that is so strong and sweet at times that it can almost be overpowering. When it is thick in its natural habitat it can hit you like a wave as you drive down the highway. It is used quite a bit in landscaping these days and it is one of my favorites for its beauty and scent.

Back in the day at the Clark home we had a big honeysuckle vine just outside our kitchen window. As kids we discovered we could pluck the bloom and suck the nectar out before the bees and hummingbirds got to

it. They didn't go hungry though. There was plenty to go around because that vine was huge. Yellowjacket nests were the main hazard we encountered anytime we went near that area.

My current lifestyle includes daily morning walks around town and I still encounter smells which are a reminder of aromas from back in earlier Bandera times. I do my best to avoid the unpleasant buzzard roost areas for obvious reasons. Chicken coop and horse poop scents are plentiful and unavoidable as I continue my Growing Up In Bandera walking exercise routine.

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