

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Growing Up In Bandera

By Glenn Clark

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My association with horses has never been what could be viewed as completely enjoyable or successful. Not something you would expect from someone raised in The Cowboy Capital of the World. Maybe if I had some earlier in life experience with them things might have been different.

Brother Eddie and I worked for our Uncle Phil Kindla rounding up and penning the sheep when the Herrera shearing crew was scheduled to work. Uncle Phil was always riding a horse while we worked along side the dogs. The dogs did most of the work and we were mainly manning the gates. Anyone even remotely familiar with sheep knows that is no easy task. At that time I remember thinking if I was on a horse I could do a lot more.

One of the few perks we got working the sheep was when we went to the house for a break. Uncle Phil would give my brother and I one of his homemade beers. When I say one, that is precisely what I mean. He gave us one to split. He wasn't a real generous man when it came to his home brew.

We each got to pick a lamb for our FFA project as pay for our work. The lack of ribbons on my wall at that time spoke volumes about my ability to pick show quality lambs. That time in my life brings to mind our Ag teacher, Telvy Robbins. He might like to know that I don't think I can even do one push-up these days.

I can't even imagine what it was like for him to deal with teenage boys of our age and attitudes on a daily basis. I can tell you I have nothing but

respect for the man and what he did for this community in ways beyond his teaching duties.

Another job I remember with my Uncle Phil was burning prickly pear where I served as a firewatch. Having lived through droughts here in Bandera I now understand the importance of that job. The drought while making the pear burning necessary also made conditions extremely unfavorable for doing anything with an open flame. Luckily we never set the countryside on fire. The thing I remember most was the cows attacking the pear before it even cooled. Times were rough around here in the 50's.

I don't remember the year model Chevy truck he had at the time but I recall the wooden sideboards which were pretty common back then. I drove that old truck when Uncle Phil moved his tractor from field to field when it was plowing time. Good thing I was tall for my age because it helped me to reach the pedals and look out the windshield at the same time. Yes. I was that young.

Put it in low gear, let the clutch out real slow and remember to step on the clutch and brake at the same time if I had to stop. A mixture of scared to death and pride in knowing I was driving.

When my St. Joseph Catholic School 8th grade class went to Brackenridge Park for horseback riding my horse curse continued. We were told to stay together and stay in line following the man from the stables who was leading us down the trails. Yeah, that worked for the first ten yards or so. As I recall, it was Tommy Callahan and Stevie Mazurek who were the first to bolt from the pack. I swear I didn't mean to follow but my horse had a mind of his own. A short while later I discovered I had drawn the horse who liked to lay down in the water. That was a nice surprise. Seems I recall one of the nuns telling me that was God's way of punishing me for not obeying. I tried to blame the horse but as usual when pitted against a horse, I lost.

Back in the day the FFA had a youth rodeo at Mansfield Park and I would go watch some of the older guys practice. Being of the age when nothing was impossible until you tried it I envisioned myself a bullrider. As I recall they were practicing on steers. They never let me join in

much because they said it took up too much time dragging me out of the way so they could close the chute gate. Jerome Edwards stands out in my mind as having been thrown off the least amount of times. He was so much bigger than the rest of us that his feet were always dragging the ground when he rode. Anyway I scratched rodeo performer off my list at that point.

Next in my Growing Up In Bandera years came service station attendant. Now that conjures up some tales for later telling.

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