

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Growing Up In Bandera

By Glenn Clark

The Bandera Prophet

I recently lost an uncle who had a big impact on my early years. My Uncle Tommy Kindla had a hand in several projects that were related to my early cub scout days and business adventures.

I have previously told the tale of my second place finish in the Pinewood Derby and how I still have that 60-plus-year-old hand-carved car thanks to my mom's habit of saving all kinds of things. It now becomes even more special because it was my Uncle Tommy who helped me cut, carve and shape it into a fast race car.

A couple years later he helped me build a shoeshine box too. Not sure whatever became of it but evidently it wasn't deemed worthy of saving by my mom. I made lots of quarters and dimes working with that little box outside the Purple Cow and The Silver Dollar back in the day. I even acquired a few silver dollars when the big spenders from Houston were in town.

I recall some of the antics of my uncle in his younger days. Like the time he caught an armadillo out in granddaddy's pasture and brought it into town. It got loose in his car when he got back home and as I remember, it crawled up under the dashboard and tore some wiring out before he was able to extract it. That wasn't the worst part either as the armadillo rewarded him with all the scat he could deliver while buried up in the dashboard. Remembering the smell I could swear that armadillos are somehow related to hogs.

Uncle Tommy was my mom's youngest brother and I was closer to him than any other uncle in my young life. I can recall when he left to serve

in the U.S. Navy and each time he came home on leave. Later in life we both worked in the plumbing construction trade in San Antonio.

We shared rides to work when our job locations made it possible. That was good news as well as bad news at the time. It was good because we saved on gas and wear and tear on our vehicles. It was not so good because we had trouble getting home on time. Passing by Pete's Place in San Geronimo where a cold beer, a pool table and horseshoe pitchin' were readily available was a constant struggle.

Later on in life we saw less and less of each other as habits and career changes began to take place. There were always the short visits at the post office or store which take place quite often when living in a small town.

After I joined him in the retirement years of Growing Up In Bandera we became a little closer again. I was a bit confused when I would recall some of the events like the Pinewood Derby car or shoeshine box that were big impacts on my young life but he didn't remember them. I guess there is a lesson to be learned about perception. Something might be of little importance to you but it could have special meaning to someone else.