

The Bandera PROPHEET

Gone Country
SNOVID-21

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The Bandera Prophet

We were prepared. Lots of food, bread and milk. Check. Every living plant and animal inside and secured. Check. Pipes all wrapped and secured. Check. Newly planted onions smothered in hay and freeze blankets. Check. Plenty of Wine. Check. Nothing could go wrong, right?

Of course not! Beautiful snow came cascading down on Valentine's Night and made it one beautiful and romantic scene. We had a lovely dinner, though grilling a choice steak was out of the question for any Texan. We tend to wilt when the temperature drops below 32 degrees. So, snow, romance and a restful sleep. Until I got up in the middle of the night to head to the bathroom and realized the nightlight was not working. I didn't think much of it until I flipped on a light switch and nothing. That's when I realized we were now functioning in blackout mode. I opted to go to the bathroom in the dark and go back to sleep rather than sounding the alarm.

But there was no avoiding the darkness the next morning.

As I grabbed a flashlight and raced to the candle closet, I realized we were plain stuck. Just about the time I was about to give up, that pesky electricity came shining thru. Within a few minutes we were back to normal. And then I realized we had no internet, and my world came crashing in. How would I check on the people in *People* magazine? Play my puzzles? Stream *Andy Griffith Show* reruns? Life was cold and bleak.

But not to worry. The electricity decided to go back off again.

Next time it came on, we discovered we had no hot water. Or cold water for the ice maker. As the day wore on with bouts of on and off electricity, I got so stressed I started writing down the times it came on and went back off. I learned there was a pattern, and it was ugly. An hour on, 45 minutes off.

Luckily, we have a gas stove top, but then I remembered that most of my stock of food needed to cook in the oven. I may never eat another bowl of chili again.

And why is it, when you can't count on electricity, it puts you directly into couch potato mode? Though we had no internet connection for 11 days, you heard me right, I could still get DISH so we could watch all the old reruns sure to drive us crazy. At least it kept us from fighting. Then we started hearing from family members who had neither water nor electricity, so we considered ourselves lucky. Until that first pipe burst. We're on rainwater catchment here at the ranch which means when a pipe blows, you are losing your precious water. I've never seen a man run as fast as My Future Husband as he dashed through the snow sprinting for the shutoff valve.

Then we had no water, and the power went off again.

After three days of all the fun, I decided it was time to do myself in. I started with scotch because I'd been making ice cubes and needed to use them with something.

As the temperatures warmed and we began feeling like Texans again, instead of winter Canadians, the electricity decided to simply stay on. I had to learn how to turn out lights all over again.

And then it snowed for an entire day and we made another pot of chili. Six days later I'm in my shorts.

Welcome to Texas, folks. We've survived SNOVID-21.