

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Growing Up In Bandera

By Glenn Clark

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Even when I'm writing about the good life we had growing up in the 50s and 60s in Bandera I am always aware that there were tragedies and disasters along the way too. Floods, droughts, car wrecks and tragic accidents were a part of our lives and we shared the grief of our friends and neighbors when some misfortune fell on their family. I think community support ranked high among the many blessings we had in our small town life. Unlike when something happened in bigger cities, our whole town felt the impact.

The historic flood of 1978 and the most recent ice storm of 2021 are prime examples of a community's ability to react to hard times. The efforts of individuals and organizations as they come to the aid of fellow citizens in response to tragedy are many. Some are well publicized but there are many more that happen behind the scenes while not wanting or needing recognition. Small town folks let the politicians do the photo ops while they do the heavy lifting. If that's not in The Code of the West, it ought to be.

The elders who were around as my generation was growing up in Bandera were survivors of the great depression. They did things that don't make sense to a lot of modern day folks because life today is just easier and more convenient. Growing your own food and preserving enough to survive the whole year is beyond understanding for some. I catch myself reacting with disbelief as I see people losing their mind over the stress of having shortages of toilet paper and bottled water at the store.

Panic in the outhouses of old was due to not having many pages left in the Sears & Roebuck catalog or facing a corn shuck shortage. Preparing for hard freeze weather in that shack out back didn't involve hoarding water for flushing back in the day. Covering those cracks between the boards to avoid a cold draft was more likely. Bottled water wasn't invented yet so spring, well or tap water were the only choices for drinking.

I feel privileged to have known so many of the oldtimers around here and the way of life they experienced as I was Growing Up In Bandera. Now to have the opportunity to visit with some of them occasionally and get their reaction to the way things are today is priceless. Those reactions range from unbelievable to hilarious and a bit of sadness in between. Yes, it's true that the times they are a changin'.

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