

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Growing Up In Bandera

By Glenn Clark

The Bandera Prophet

Recently while going through the offerings of a yard sale I saw an old bicycle that brought back memories of my younger days of adventures in Bandera. Previous tales have revealed just what a cherished item my bike was and the impact it had on my life back in the day. I struggled to remember when I lost contact with something that was the center of my world at one time.

How many errands did I run for my mom up to Main Street to Rhodes' Country Shopper on that bike? The count must surely have been up in the hundreds. The struggles involving torn bags and loose dogs nipping at my heels have long ago faded. The joy of the Christmas when I received that not new but perfect gift is still strong in my mind.

Memories of those trips to the river for a swim with my buddies Charlie Fellows and Brandy Humphries will forever be tied to my bicycle tales. I don't see too many bicycles on the back streets of Bandera these days. I see lots of adults out on the highway in groups in and around Kerrville and to tell you the truth they sometimes look ridiculous in those funny little hats and colorful shirts and short pants. Are they people from my generation out there reliving those bygone days? Safety, you say? I would die of embarrassment if my friends from back in the day saw me dressed like that.

The trip from my house to Charlie Fellows place was a pretty easy five blocks of flat land and then we headed over to Cypress street where we could take advantage of the downhill run behind St. Stanislaus Catholic Church. We could coast all the way to Half Circle Courts to meet up with Brandy before hitting the dusty trails along the river heading to

Dripping Springs. The return trip was a little tougher especially if my younger brother Eddie was with me and riding on the handlebars. Goat head burrs and huisache thorns were the hazards to be avoided when riding our bikes. Sticking to well worn trails was the secret to avoid having to push a bike all the way back home to do repairs. That being said, I was an expert on breaking down a bike tire for tube repair and I knew the secret to keeping my hand air pump well oiled and in good working order. If I was out of repair patches it was going to be a long walk to Wilvey Smith's Western Auto Store.

Searching for the answer to what happened to my bicycle from my Growing Up In Bandera days brought me to the only logical explanation. Girls!!! About the time we became interested in girls all our common sense flew out the window. Suddenly being a teen boy on a bike just wasn't cool.

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