

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Growing Up In Bandera

By Glenn Clark

The Bandera Prophet

The view you get of the old familiar water tower as you come into Bandera from San Antonio way is rapidly changing. Communication towers, modern rooftops and newer water towers continue to pop up. Billboards are becoming more commonplace as traffic increases. It's kinda sad to see the changes but to add a positive twist, they do distract from the sight of all the litter strewn along the roadways these days. The sound of a siren used to cause a bit of excitement around here but now it is so common that we hardly take notice. Even during my four o'clock trips out into the night air with my little dogs I find the sirens are blaring and neighborhood dogs are howling. Evidently the nighttime is a popular big truck traffic time too as the sound of engine braking can be heard almost non-stop as they head north and south on Highway 173. The late night motorcycle sounds always concern me as I think of the heavy deer and feral hog populations in the area.

I have memories of seeing Lon Cottingham flying overhead in his small plane while I was a kid running wild on the Medina River near the Mayan Dude Ranch. That was back in the days when the Mayan Ranch had a landing strip.

The last signs of the Flying L airstrip disappeared when the golf driving range took over. The history of it's famous visitors is long and impressive. It's been reported that John Wayne, Gregory Peck, and The Cisco Kid spent time at the resort back in the day. I have fuzzy memories of that facility in it's heyday. My uncle Phil Kindla and aunt Smokey Kindla had their wedding reception in the Flying L Airport Clubhouse.

Dead deer along the roadsides were not all that common in earlier times. The whitetail population was small and the Axis were almost non-existent. Thanks to education programs concerning our wildlife system the chances of hitting a deer with your vehicle have gone way up. I was way up in my adult years before I saw my first live porcupine in the area. After my black bear sighting close to Bandera Pass and hearing a cougar scream while varmint hunting I figured I had just about experienced it all around here. Then I discovered freshwater jellyfish. I wonder how many more discoveries await me as I continue my Growing Up In Bandera journey. I hope I have enough years left so I can pass on tales of the past to my great grandkids when they get a little older. Sadly, these are things they will never get to personally experience in modern day Bandera.

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