

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Growing Up In Bandera

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The Bandera Prophet

Oh yes!!! Those were the best of times in the 50s. It was summertime in Bandera and we said goodbye to St. Joseph's Catholic School and the nuns as we prepared for no shoes, no shirt and no homework for a few months.

My daily attire at that point was cutoff jeans and nothing else with the exception of Sunday morning church time. As school ended I had acquired several pairs of jeans ready for alteration by my mom's scissors due to some of my merry-go-round adventures. In addition, months of kneeling on the caliche battlefields waging marble wars against my friend Angel Martinez contributed to the need for patching holes in the knees of my "good school clothes." Wearing out the toes of my shoes while I was holding on for dear life while being drug around the merry-go-round after an unsuccessful dismount was the number one reason my mom would threaten to put me up for adoption. Second was when her efforts of patching the patches on my jeans to make them last a little longer became hopeless.

The first order of business to start our summer routine was heading over to Granddaddy Kindla's house for our buzz haircut. That was the only time in our lives when my brother Eddie and I had similar hair styles. Later in life when I arrived at Fort Polk, Louisiana there was a large group of us who all received that same exact haircut in a matter of minutes.

We were lucky to have gravel streets in town back in the day. It made walking bare footed possible. It was pretty warm but nothing compared to hot asphalt. When it became necessary to walk where there were no

roads that presented the problem of goat head burrs. Anyone who has ever stepped on one of those knows it is comparable to stepping on a board with a nail sticking up. I have personally experienced both. After the nail accident I had to soak my foot in coal oil which was a cure all for such things. Add a drop to a spoonful of sugar and it was cough medicine. Back in the day coal oil was a necessity around the house. Here in my later Growing Up In Bandera days I have a small metal can near my computer desk just like the one my granddaddy had. Why? Just because.

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