

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Gone Country

A Puzzlement

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The Bandera Prophet

The pandemic brought out the creativity in all of us: baking and puzzling while we sequestered. Even My Future Husband and I had a go at a 1,000 piece puzzle given to me by my all-time puzzle crazy Very Best Friend. But I'll get to that.

Let's start at the beginning of my puzzling years. When I was a kid, my parents always had a puzzle on the dining room table because we only used that table for Thanksgiving or when somebody with money came over for dinner.

These were the salad years of easy puzzling. We'd work hard on getting the outer frame done and then we would saunter our way through finishing it up. Walking by? Stop and figure out a few pieces. Bored? Go work on the puzzle. Mad? Throw all the pieces on the floor but then you have to pick them up, so I only tried that once.

My point is – puzzles were enjoyable and relaxing. It took me years to give away all the puzzles we had done because of the pleasant memories.

When I met my Very Best Friend (now of 45 years, thank you), she brought a few puzzles with her when we moved in together. I figured it was one of her wiles when she flirted with men. I was wrong. She was a Puzzle Shark.

ME: Well, we can't find any male victims to take us out tonight, so why don't we try a puzzle?

VBF: I LOOOOVE PUZZLES!

ME: Cool. Ok let's spread out here on the dining room table.

VBF: Perfect! You get all the straight edge pieces and I'll match up all the colors!

ME: Uh, I'm not sure you do a puzzle by color.

VBF: Well I do! See, here's the sky blue, oh look - periwinkle and I just love this fuchsia...

ME: Ok, well, knock yourself out Benjamin Moore.

VBF: I LOOOOVE PUZZLES!

And then she never stopped. Ever. Until it was done. After a couple of hours, I got bored, so I left and went on the hunt for cute single men with red hair. When I came home hours later, she was still at it plus she kept repeating over and over, "I LOOOOVE PUZZLES!" It was all I could do to pass out in my own bed.

When I got up the next morning, I found her face down in a totally completed 1,000 piece puzzle. I decided she was not my puzzling friend.

We forgot all about puzzles after that, but when she retired, Very Best Friend's addiction reared its ugly head. She started easy with 500 piece puzzles, then she bought herself a puzzle table that matched the furniture in her living room and last I heard she's graduated to those 3-D puzzles. The addiction is strong.

She keeps trying to get me hooked so at Christmas she sneaks a puzzle in as a present. This came in mighty handy when there was a pandemic. I pulled out her gift of the 1,000 piece Lucille Ball Vitameatvegamin puzzle while My Future Husband grabbed the trusty card table. Though "I Love Lucy," MFH and I didn't even get the outside edges done before we decided, "To hell with this. Let's bake bread!"

I understand during the pandemic she went through 67 puzzles and turned her lovely daughter into a puzzle addict as well. At least VBF has finally found someone that wants to puzzle until they pass out.

For Christmas, I'm buying her a 1,500 piece puzzle that's all white. Yeah, that should finally send the Puzzle Shark over the edge.