

# The Bandera PROPHEET

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Growing Up In Bandera

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The Bandera Prophet

When I think back to those wonderful years as a youngster living some great adventures along the banks of the Medina River I realize there were some disappointments too. We watched Daniel Boone and Davy Crockett on tv and tried to fashion our lives after them. Here I am with seven decades behind me and I still haven't outgrown the desire to own a coonskin cap.

How many times did we see them on tv building a log raft to escape from harm's way by floating down the river? Way more times than we ever built a log raft that would actually float. The answer was always the same. We had to include inner tubes in our raft construction to get the desired results. More times than not we would get bored and just use the inner tubes to float downstream.

Looking back at some of our early projects brings to mind other challenges that we sometimes met with failed engineering. Those crude go carts we built without engines to ride down the hill on the gravel Mayan Ranch Road led to more disasters than I care to remember. That beautiful smooth paved road you see today is nothing like the treacherous potholed flood eroded challenge we faced. We launched ourselves from the top knowing we probably couldn't negotiate that ninety degree turn at the bottom of the hill. There was no bridge to saves us. Make the turn, hit the ditch or land in the river were our only options. Oncoming traffic would quickly eliminate any options other than the ditch.

Toy wagon wheels and a few boards were the makings for those early attempts at having fun. John, Gordon and Tommy Evans who lived on

the corner where you turned to go to The Mayan Ranch were our friends and helped with the construction of those vehicles with no brakes and little steering ability.

John who was the oldest among us racked up more crashes since he always nominated himself to be the one to do the initial test run. He also held the distance record for launch into the river after failing to negotiate that curve at the bottom of the hill.

It seemed he was always walking on the edge and paying the price. A broken leg slowed him down when he volunteered to climb up into a pecan tree to shake the pecans out for the rest of us to gather. A broken pecan limb sent him down to the ground proving once again that no good deed goes unpunished.

We dodged a lot of bullets along the way as we were Growing Up In Bandera. Many things our parents warned us about simply became a challenge so we often learned our lessons the hard way. That may be one of the few things that will never change around here. That and the fact I still want a coonskin cap.