

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Growing Up In Bandera

By Glenn Clark

The Bandera Prophet

While sitting in the dentist's chair recently waiting to get my teeth cleaned it occurred to me that back in the day I would have been situated smack dab in the middle of where Frank's Bakery was located next to Rhodes' Country Shopper on Main Street in Bandera.

I still see those bollards out front during my morning strolls and they remind me of when I was with my mom and we would park there to do some grocery shopping in Rhodes' Country Shopper. Our old chevy truck had one of those springy front bumpers common to trucks of that age and not much of a parking brake that was better known as an emergency brake back in the old days. She would let it roll the last few inches to those pipe rails and it would bounce a couple times before settling down.

That old truck played a significant part in our daily lives in the 50's. It served as an ambulance on at least two different occasions when a kid in the neighborhood had suffered a broken leg. Husbands at work leaving moms at home with the kids but no car was fairly common back in the days of one vehicle families. On rainy mornings we experienced just how small that cab was when four or five kids were crammed in there heading to St. Joseph's School.

I especially liked having that old truck available in the winter when riding my bike to do an errand became an unpleasant chore. I didn't always get a nod of approval when I asked to drive the truck alone on the backstreets even though it was tolerated by the local authorities at the time. It was a slow transition going from riding a bicycle to driving a vehicle. I cherish those driving lessons I received from my mom in that

old floor mounted stick shift equipped truck. I can recall her patience, encouragement and hesitance as I begged her to let me drive every time we went out.

I couldn't even guess how many trips that truck made to Dripping Springs for swimming in the summer. Six kids in our family and we were usually joined by other neighborhood kids as well. Add a watermelon or weiners and marshmallows for roasting and it was gonna be a good day on the river. Bread instead of the more expensive hot dog buns was good with me because I would end up throwing little pieces of bread into the water to attract fish just so I could watch them eat.

Growing Up In Bandera with my family, friends and The Medina River was a combination adding up to the best of times. Throw in an old truck, watermelons and weiner roasts and it adds up to a life that was unbeatable.

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