

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Growing Up In Bandera

By Glenn Clark

The Bandera Prophet

Looking back through the memories of my earliest years living in Bandera I have to admit I was mostly clueless as to what was happening in the outside world. We picked up the Sunday edition of The San Antonio light each week at The Corner Drug Store after church but all I was interested in seeing were the comics. I don't recall ever reading the headlines until I entered high school and then the current news became a subject to be discussed in some classes so I needed to be prepared. In my late elementary school days at St. Joseph's Catholic School the Dallas Cowboys appeared on the scene so the sports page gained my attention too. That happened somewhere around the seventh grade. Up until then the only football that interested me had been the St. Joseph's Mustangs and the Bandera Bulldogs. We lived within a block of the Bulldog Stadium and the visitors side had a fence that offered little resistance when I didn't have a quarter for admission. My friends and I didn't come to watch the game anyway because we were busy behind the bleachers on the visitor's side playing our own brand of football with a ball made from a stack of discarded drink cups which were readily available under the stands.

Now I can assure you that I did get nervous every time my mom would mention the word polio which was very much in the news. I knew it was a horrible disease and we were constantly aware of the danger thanks to her warnings. "Don't touch that!!! You're gonna get polio." "Go wash your hands before you get polio." During extended dry spells we were even banned from swimming in the river." Stay out of that nasty water.

Do you wanna get polio?" Suffice to say we didn't need to read the paper to know about the dangers of contracting polio.

My high school years more than made up for the innocence of my grade school days. The Cuban missile crisis, Kennedy assassination and the Viet Nam War were real eye openers. Little did I know that the worst was yet to come as I watched some upper classmen shipping out for military duty after receiving "greetings" from Uncle Sam. Sadly some never returned standing up.

Growing Up In Bandera had suddenly shifted into high gear. It was a time of realizing but not understanding what was happening in our world. Add in the frustrations of being a teenage boy lacking understanding of girls and it was a rough period of my life.

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