

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Growing Up In Bandera

By Glenn Clark

The Bandera Prophet

I can't truthfully say I ever had an idea or ambitions concerning my future beyond high school. For sure college was out of the question for reasons which were out of my control. I was sick. Sick of school!!!

I had applied for apprentice plumber training in San Antonio because that's what my dad did for a living. I graduated from BHS in May and I started on the job training with Plumbers and Pipefitters Local Union #142 on July 1. Care to guess what I did in September? Yes, I started a five year schooling program to become a plumber.

I had to say goodbye to Irving Billings at the Free State Oil Co. in Bandera, where I worked and enjoyed a view of my future wife who was living with her grandmother next door.

Being a country boy it did take some adjusting to fit in with the big city surroundings. As luck would have it I was employed by a company that had a journeyman known to be the worst man to work for in all of the San Antonio plumbing shops. I did manage to survive almost a year before moving to another company.

It was like I had died and gone to heaven because the relief was so great. It was fun while it lasted and I felt like I was finally going places. This is about the time my Uncle Sam decided to start sending me places. And wouldn't you know, everywhere I went in the U.S. Army there was schooling involved.

After receiving my honorable discharge I returned to my previously chosen profession to complete three more years of schooling. For the first time in my public life I was getting paid to attend school thanks to my military service.

After becoming a journeyman plumber there were still classes to attend. Continuing education to maintain my plumbing license, OSHA safety classes and other job related training sessions were endless. Although required, some were a complete waste of time while others were enlightening and helped me to move ahead. At times I became the instructor and viewed some of my trainees as an example of an earlier me with no vision of the future.

One career highlight from my Growing Up In Bandera life was the night I received a call at home from that man who was instrumental in getting me fired from my first plumbing job. He was now a company owner and had gotten the plumbing contract on a hospital being built in Fredericksburg. He offered me a position to run the job for his company. My education was finally paying off. Thanks, but No Thanks!!!

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