

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Growing Up In Bandera

By Glenn Clark
The Bandera Prophet

Sitting here this morning on my computer in a house being warmed by a central heating unit my mind wanders back to sitting on a stool by a wood burning stove in my Granddaddy Kindla's kitchen when the weather was cold. The woodpile was located about 50 feet from the back door which was pretty convenient when you considered that the outhouse was another 30 feet or so further.

I don't know for sure what the other guys were doing but I reserved a trip to that little shack for only serious business back then. Anything less and I'm pretty sure I wasn't the only one whizzing behind a tree. That was especially true when it was dark. Not that it's any of your business but just in case you were wondering, I still do. It's a country habit and country is what I am.

About halfway between granddaddy's house and the woodpile is where I helped my momma build fires under two big cast iron pots to do laundry. There was no plumbing in the house in those early 50s years. The overhead lighting consisted of a single bulb hanging from a wire. As simple as that was I know it had to be a huge improvement over what granddaddy had when he was a kid. I look back and think how tough that was compared to what I have today and it makes me more appreciative of everything God has provided for me and my family. I pass by granddaddy's old house these days and it is nicely painted and everything around it is well kept but I can't help feeling a bit of sadness. The old cypress board garage/smokehouse and tool shed are gone. No sign of that old drafty outhouse where the cold air and wasp could easily get in but the smell never got out.

Out in the front of the house was what I remember being a storm cellar where my momma would threaten to take all of her kids every time a thunderstorm was threatening. Others like my friend John Tucker called it a root cellar. I found this out recently when he was confessing that as a young man living next to granddaddy's place he and Pudge Kalka went into the cellar and swiped a jug of wine. He didn't say but I would imagine it was mustang grape wine since that was granddaddy's specialty. They ended up paying the price because John's dad was on to them. The hangover wasn't the worst part of making things right because things were handled differently back in the day. Those oldtimers didn't believe in sparing the rod.

Looking back to my Growing Up In Bandera years around my granddaddy Kindla's house is bittersweet. I wish that I had been curious and asked a million questions about all those years before I showed up. I have bits and pieces of that side of my family history but it could have been so much more. Kindla was a familiar name among the early settlers of Bandera.

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