

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Growing Up In Bandera

By Glenn Clark

The Bandera Prophet

I don't know about you but I kinda miss hearing screen doors slamming. It would be a nice reminder of my childhood days. It was usually quickly followed up with, "You kids quit slamming the screen door, were you raised in a barn?" Doors are just different now. No more springs stretched out to the max so as to ensure a quick closure to keep the flies out. I would bet that I'm not the only one still around who has seen a thread spool used as a pull for a screen door or drawer.

Ever seen a little cotton ball attached to a screen door? Another little trick from back in the day to keep pests away when the screen was starting to get little holes in it. Around our house back in earlier times with six kids running around it was usually a hand or head going through the screen.

Brother Eddie and I had our bedroom on the screened in back porch. When my mom said to lock the back door it meant to hook the latch on the screen door because there was no solid door to lock. In the winter it was covered with thick plastic sheets to keep the cold out. It seems there was always a little hole in the screen where the hook was located so access from outside was available. At the head of our bed there was a large screened opening. It was great in the late summer evening letting that cool night air in but not so good in the winter or during big thunderstorms. There was a rollup tarp to drop down if the weather was turning bad.

Both doors on the front porch also had screen doors but they didn't get the use and abuse that the back door endured. It was important to have good screens on all the windows and doors for letting the cool breeze in

because air conditioning was an oddity in early Bandera homes. We did have a big swamp cooler in the living room.

Even though we had two front doors everyone generally used the backdoor. Even friends and neighbors who came visiting would just walk in the back door while hollering, "Anybody home?" As a general rule none of the doors were ever locked unless it was a door leading into my twin older sisters' room. I always wondered what they were hiding in there.

The only bathroom in our house had to be accessed through the back porch area so you can imagine how much privacy my Eddie and I had in our bedroom. It was just off the kitchen too and like most country kitchens it was always the hub of activity. Our school homework was done there and any late evening visitors always gathered around the kitchen table.

We kept my Granddaddy Kindla busy repairing screen doors during my early Growing Up In Bandera years. He patched sheetrock walls too on a number of occasions when rowdy siblings were out of control. I'm sure he was never paid for his work. Well, not in this life anyway. I hope some of my interactions with him later in life made up for some of the trouble I had caused him in an earlier time.

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