

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Growing Up In Bandera

By Glenn Clark
The Bandera Prophet

As a youngster being raised in the small country town of Bandera, I discovered early on that a lot of lessons were not going to be taught in a classroom. The self-taught hard lessons of everyday life are the ones you never forget. Physical pain and mental anguish had a way of making lasting scars.

I was fortunate to have some association with oldtimers in my early years who were well educated in the early pioneer's way of survival. It wasn't that that I was being instructed in most instances, but rather I had opportunities to observe and learn. That was an era when the thinking was kids should be seen but not heard. In some ways it made me bitter and probably contributed to my lack of patience later in life, but I have never felt entitled to anything I hadn't earned.

I was blessed to be living close to an area of the Medina River where I was able to take advantage of all it had to offer. I had found a varmint trap in a barn behind our house and decided I would try my hand at being a trapper. It was a pretty common activity back in the day. It led to a close encounter with a critter I have respected ever since. I fully understand what it means to play "Possum."

I spent countless hours on the river with a cane pole in hand as a youngster, never realizing at the time that the future would have me in a boat running along at 70+ mph in pursuit of something I could not have even visualized back then. My bank account would probably be much healthier if I had stuck with catching perch instead of graduating to bass fishing.

During my high school years I worked with my granddaddy Harry Clark building fences. He taught me well in all the tricks of the trade and he had a lot more patience than most of the others I knew from his generation. That was the hardest work I had experienced at that time, but it was rewarding, too. He paid me well and as a senior I could get out of class early to go work with him.

My bike riding skills were self taught, and like everything else done in that manner came with side effects. Crashing and burning came along with getting a pant leg caught in the chain. I lacked adult supervision because my mom had a whole slew of kids to look after besides me while my dad was at work. While I'm on the subject, I was made aware recently of a Bandera girl, who is now a full grown woman, who cannot make a right turn while riding a bicycle. Unbelievable! I won't embarrass her by mentioning her name, but I think Bunny and Artie got some 'splainin' to do.

I have gotten into trouble here later in my Growing Up In Bandera life for teaching young folks how to use dangerous tools at what I was told was an age too young for such things. Due to my own trial and error ways, I just figured some things are better taught than self learned.

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