

Forgiveness

By Natalie Lawson

When I was starting the fourth grade we moved to the country which is a historical area called Fort Bent. The Arkansas River runs nearby. When I think back, it really was a good life living in the country.

An American pioneer and fur trader named William Bent traveled from St. Louis, Missouri to settle down on this beautiful open space. He was responsible for the construction and successful management of the trading post with the help of his brother Charles and his friend Ceran St. Vrain. William Bent died in a ranch near Las Animas, Colorado which by the way was my birth town.

Kit Carson, another famous trapper, soldier and guide was known to have stayed at Bent's Fort on some of his expeditions as an Indian agent.

We took a field trip in the third grade to a small home in Las Animas to meet Kit Carson's last known descendant. I remember being enthralled meeting such an elderly woman. (Now I'm that woman.)

Our farm was about a quarter of a mile from Bent's Old Fort. The Arkansas River flowed at the end of our land.

One day my Mother was cooking our supper and my Father and brother, Nick, had driven into town. My sister, Mary, and I looked at each other with a glint in our eyes and grabbed Nick's brand new red bicycle. We took it down the field towards the river where there was a good sized slope we used for sliding.

We never had ridden a bike before. We figured we could just climb on it and coast down the hill and learn to ride it. So, so, easy! Of course, we ended up with a huge dent on the fender as well as skinned knees and elbows. We hurried back to the house; hopefully, unnoticed. I don't really remember what happened after that so I called my brother in Kansas and asked if he remembered that incident. My brother, Nick, had a stroke about a year ago, so I was surprised when he laughed and answered, "Oh yes, I remember. I already forgave you, oh, well, I forgive you. OK?"