

From Arena to the Mountains
By Brandy Branquinho
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It was June 2002 just after the Santa Maria Elks Rodeo. Some of the cowboys had stayed at the ranch in between rodeos. Well Johnnie was worried because we had a bunch of steers to gather in the back country and the cowboys would be leaving soon. So while all the boys were relaxing playing cards and swapping tales under the arbor I went down and asked them what you guys are doing tomorrow. Trav Cadwell answered "what ever you want". I said "great we are all gathering steers tomorrow..."

The Janeway ranch is located in the Santa Ynez Valley it is very rough and steep with lots of oak trees and brush, lots of good hiding places for the cattle. Johnnie had enough help that he used all our ranch horses including mine, so I got to stay home and make lunch for them all. Adam Maher young calf roper from Australia rode my horse Thursday. Johnnie warned him he better take care of Thursday or Johnnie would make Adam walk back in. Later that morning after a long ride to the top, then a chase down the mountain, some of the boys were waiting at the bottom for the rest of the group. Here comes Johnnie leading Thursday in, they all looked at each other and said he wasn't kidding he did make Adam walk. Not really Adam had to get off to follow some steers on foot down the mountain. Johnnie found Thursday tied up and brought him in. But it did give the boys a start.

Of course as some gathers go not all the cattle went into the corrals, six steers headed down the canyon to the flats. This meant that after lunch the cowboys had to go out again to rope and tie them down. Luke's horse went lame, so he got to ride in the truck with me and Johnnie, of course harassing the rest of the crew. They all split up into groups of two as they ran into the steers. On of them was chasing a steer, but kept missing him. As the steer came by the truck Luke got out and roped him. He handed the rope to someone horseback. Then they tried to heel it and again kept missing. So Luke who had another rope heeled him on foot, two feet, and then handed it to someone on horse back, and Luke tied him down. Boy did we have to listen to it, "who needs a horse". Ok the steer was big n fat and tired and slow.

By now it is late afternoon we have the steers caught and tied down. Everyone is hot tired and thirsty. Trav says great its time to head in, a big smile on his face. I said yes except for you. Trav you are riding Big Jim, he is the horse that has to pull all the cattle into the trailers. I will never forget how his face fell; he had about another hour to ride.

I am sure I have left out some of the story so if you ever run into any of these cowboys and cowgirl ask about the gather for Branquinhos at the Janeway. We will always remember that day and what good help we had from the rodeo cowboys and cowgirl.

In the picture from left to right
Tim Pharr riding Miss Piggy
Frank Gonsalves on Bill he is our brother in law
Todd Turner riding Winney
Kenny Capinni Riding Six
(Dad) John Branquinho on foot
Trav Cadwell riding Big Jim
Luke Branquinho on foot
Tony Branquinho riding Five
Adam Maher ring Thursday
Doug Pharr riding Goose
Mecca Mc Mullen Riding Dave
Casey Branquinho riding Charlie Brown