



From the President

What Now?

by Evangelist Wil Rice IV

The Lord granted us a marvelous summer here on the Ranch and West Branch. And yes, there were hundreds of people of all ages who made life-changing decisions for the Lord Jesus. But what about the days ahead, as these good decisions are tested by a fallen world?

Some people have the mistaken notion that the difference between making a decision for the Lord and keeping that decision over time is primarily one's sincerity: "Did he really mean it?" But haven't we all made decisions that we genuinely meant, perhaps regarding the calories we count or the books we read, but then we never followed through?

There is something more to keeping one's decisions than sincerity. Even a good decision needs encouragement, implementation, and discipline. The Bible calls the cultivation of this in others "making disciples."

So how does the Ranch follow up on the work of God in the lives of campers? Would a letter from a camp counselor or some literature from the Ranch be helpful? While I am sure these might be beneficial, nothing would be better than "boots on the ground." Wouldn't it be great if someone from the Ranch could make one visit to every city, town, township, burg, and borough represented at camp this summer to check up on every camper who made a decision this summer? The problem is, the sheer magnitude of such an endeavor makes it nearly impossible and, at the same time, completely inadequate for the purpose...if the Ranch is the primary player here.

But what if believers locally could follow up on campers in person and on a weekly basis? Now I know that you are probably way ahead of me; but this solution actually exists, and it

is not our idea. It is God's idea, and it is called the local church.

We do the work of an evangelist. Every counselor, each person on operational staff, and all of the full-time staff and Ranch Hands are part of that team. And it was a fantastic team this summer! But just as in a week of revival meetings held by an evangelist, so at camp no church group ceases to be a distinct group. Church groups stay together. They attend the services as groups. They enjoy camp as groups, and they have splendid fellowship with other groups from across the country.

While this gives camp staff a little less control than we might otherwise have, and while it requires even more effort and communication than it might otherwise, there is a very basic reason for all that effort. You see, we believe that no human influence at camp should be greater on a young person than the church that brought him! In truth, whether we believed that or not, that camper would still be going home with and to that church at the end of his week of camp!

Is any church perfect? No more than any family or government is perfect. And yet I have learned that we are hard-pressed to help a camper long term beyond his own church. That is why we encourage and host so many adults every week. If God works in the hearts of pastors, youth workers, and bus drivers, the campers will have the greatest chance for good discipleship and follow-up in the cool days of fall.

So, what now? Now is the time for the churches that prepared for camp as a group, stayed at camp as a group, sat in the services as a group, enjoyed camp as a group, and went home as a group to do what God has commissioned us all to do. Now is the time to cultivate the good work of God in the lives of hundreds. Now is the time to disciple..



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Visit billriceranch.org for photos, videos, registration forms, and exciting opportunities!



A Look Back & A Look Forward

by *Evangelist Bill Rice III*

It was Friday afternoon and time for the rodeo in the Nathan Kuntz Arena. "Any similarity between our rodeo and the real thing is purely coincidental," Dad used to say. And that is true. We don't have any bucking broncos. There is no calf dogging. There is no steer roping. There are just a many fun events that everybody can get involved in. The horse mount is a favorite. In this event, campers attempt to get on a horse – a tall one – without a saddle. Few succeed, but many do not!

The pig chase is always an exciting event. "Do you grease the pigs?" we are often asked. The answer is no, we don't. There is no need for it. The pigs are faster at running, juking, and darting than most campers of any age will be.

The sack race, the rope pull, and those kinds of events make it possible for anybody to enter.

I especially like the Family Week rodeo. Kids laugh at Dad and Mom, and parents holler and cheer for their kids. It really is great fun.

The one part of the rodeo that is real is the grand entry. Excellent horsemen on beautiful horses start the rodeo off with a galloping entry. First, Wil Rice comes in on Encore. The rodeo arena is fairly large, and Wil enters at a dead run. He and Encore circle the arena and wind up in the center facing the crowd.

Next, carrying the American flag is Cowboy Michael. Mr. Aulgur is the head cowboy on the Ranch; and he and his horse Anna come in at a dead run carrying the American flag. He is followed by Wilson and Zack carrying the Christian flag and the Tennessee flag. Everybody that enters the arena comes in with his mount running beautifully, circles the arena, and stops in a predetermined location. The American flag is in the center, and on the right and the left are the

Christian flag and the flag of Tennessee.

We then stand for the national anthem (please don't tell the folks at the NFL); and, quite frankly, it is a moving time. After the anthem, the riders leave, once again circling the arena and exiting in a very fast gallop. This entry is guaranteed to give goose bumps!

Well, we have done the grand entry in the rodeo for many years now. Dad started the rodeo back when I was a teenager, and I can still remember riding in the grand entry myself with Dad leading the parade. Dad would ride in along with Mother and then a couple of cowboys and myself. I remember this well, because in the particular summer I am remembering, I rode a very beautiful but ornery horse—a golden palomino. The horse was beautiful to watch, but he was cantankerous. And while everybody else rode in gallantly, I rode in making sure that my horse behaved himself!

In 1976, my father had a stroke from which he would never fully recover. He went to be with the Lord in 1978. However, in 1977 he was able to walk with the use of a cane and to speak, though very haltingly. He would drive up every Friday to the rodeo and park his car in the arena, being sure not to block the gate so that the grand entry would be grand. I remember well, one rodeo when the cowboys rode in at a dead run. We stood and sang the national anthem, and then the cowboys rode out. A couple minutes later I walked over to the car to say howdy to Dad. When he rolled the window down, there were tears in his eyes. My father actually worked on a cattle ranch in West Texas in the early 1930s. He loved horses – in fact he loved animals of all kinds – and was an expert rider. He used to say that he did not remember the first time he ever got on a horse. He remembers

that his father, when riding a horse, would often come over to the porch where his son was watching, pick him up, put him on the saddle, and then ride with his son Bill around the ranch yard. When my father left the cow country of West Texas to go to Bible college, he never expected to return; but in a way, he did. When Dad and Mother founded the Bill Rice Ranch in 1953, Bill Rice lived the life of a cowboy and invited, at first, scores and then hundreds and then thousands of people to "come apart and rest awhile" and enjoy life on a real ranch. In 1978, Dad went home to Glory, and one of my responsibilities then was to be in the grand entry. That continued until 2003 when Wil took over the leadership of the Bill Rice Ranch.

Now, the Bill Rice Ranch has come to the end of its 66th summer. And we still have the rodeo.

So is the Bill Rice Ranch a real ranch? Well, the answer to that is yes. We don't raise cattle, but we do raise horses. And the men who work with the horses on the Ranch in 2018 love their work as much as the founder did when he rode horses in 1953. But to say that the purpose of the Bill Rice Ranch is to raise horses would be as misguided as saying the purpose of its founder was to have rodeos or that the purpose of the current president is to ride in the grand entry. Yes, the Bill Rice Ranch did have rodeos forty years ago; but more importantly, it provided for times when godly men could preach the Bible to hungry hearts.

If you came to the Ranch in 1968, you probably do remember the rodeo with its "grand entry." But you doubtless remember something else with far more clarity. You came to a place where the Bible was preached faithfully and effectively, where you heard from God through His servant, and you learned eternal truths in an exciting setting.

That's the way it was in 1968. That's the way it was in 1984; and most importantly, that's the way it is in 2018.

It's okay to have tears in your eyes because you witness a sight that brings back warm and happy memories. But the reason for those warm memories of the past and the expected experiences of the future is that they all support the preaching of the Bible.



BACK AT THE RANCH...





See the West and hear Bible preaching in our camp atmosphere.
Contact us for more information.



928.635.2097



westbranch@billriceranch.org



On Friday, August 3, Bill Rice Bible Institute held its fourth annual graduation service. Twenty-six young people graduated with the Certificate of Bible and Associate of Christian Studies degrees. Several will be transferring to other Christian colleges this fall. We praise the Lord for these graduates!



NEED FOCUS



We are so thankful for the John R. Rice Auditorium! Only the Lord knows how many decisions that have been made for the Lord Jesus in this wonderful venue. But just like anything else there needs to be basic maintenance made to keep it looking like it should. Keeping this in mind we would like to raise \$1,500 for brand new ceiling tiles inside the John R. Rice Auditorium. Would you consider helping us with this project?




Calendar OF EVENTS

FALL RETREATS

- Elementary Retreat **Sept. 6-7**
- Junior & Senior High Retreat . **Sept. 13-14**
- Ladies' Retreat..... **Oct. 4-6**
- Men's Challenge..... **Nov. 1-3**
- Couples Retreat..... **Nov. 29-Dec.1**

REGIONAL EVENTS

- Youth Conference
Peoria, AZ **Sept. 8**
- Ladies & Girls Night in the Pines
West Branch, Williams, AZ **Sept. 14-15**
- Men & Boys Campout
West Branch, Williams, AZ. **Oct.5-6**

WEST BRANCH

Ladies & Girls Night in the Pines

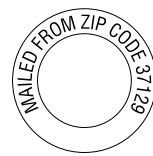
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