



# West Branch Trailblazer

Keeping in Touch, Seeking Your Prayer and Involvement

*West Branch is a ministry of the Bill Rice Ranch*

December 4, 2020

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Volume 14, Number 3

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## Prayer Requests

New building construction progress

Financial strain due to canceled or shortened camps

Planning 2021 camps and filling summer staff positions

## Project Status

**New building-** Plenty of details in the main article. Pray that we will be able to occupy it in early 2021.

**Campground-** We continue to work to trim up a lot of trees. We also would like to build two new stretches of cinder roadways to service our new building and an activity area of camp.

## Upcoming Events: 2021

- |           |                       |
|-----------|-----------------------|
| 3.19-20 & | Men on the Move       |
| 3.26-27   | Conferences           |
| 3.29-5.8  | Senior Trip Retreats  |
| 4.30-5.1  | Youth Retreat         |
| 6.4-5     | Ladies Summer Getaway |
| 6.10-20   | Staff Training        |

## New Building Progress

Throughout the fall, the work on our new 10,000 sq. ft. multi-purpose building has continued. First the concrete foundation was reinforced for a steel building and two 23' chimneys were put up. Then came the steel structure, roof, and first layer of insulation. A wood frame was added along with siding, windows, and doors. We are so blessed now to have a three-foot tall layer of rock wainscoting around the base of the walls and up the chimneys both inside and out. A second layer of insulation was added to the roof and electrical work for the building has been started.

That is a lot done in a short amount of time! As each step moves forward, we grow more and more excited about using this building. There have been setbacks, mostly due to many construction materials being harder to get, but we are grateful for all that has been accomplished.

The first phase of this building will not include the installation of the kitchen or even of plumbing. Those things will be addressed down the road. Primarily, the large space will provide more than enough room for services and indoor dining as needed. (Therefore, we will continue to use our mobile kitchen for now.) We envision numerous other uses for such a large amount of space, not the least of which is just having a place to get in out of the rain during monsoon season.



### New Multi-Purpose Building

To complete this first phase of the building, we still need to install the fire protection system and bring non-potable water to the building. This requires a \$58,000 pump which we have \$10,000 toward right now. Please pray with us for the provision of the remaining amount so that work on the fire suppression system can happen as soon as possible, as weather permits.

### Interior of Fireplace In Progress

We look forward to having this phase completed soon and are even looking at how we can use the facilities in mid-March for our Men on the Move Conferences if at all possible.

- 6.21-25 Junior Camp
- 6.28-7.2 Youth Camp 1/  
Deaf Camp
- 7.7-9 Family Camp
- 7.12-16 Youth Camp 2
- 8.12-14 Private Men's  
Retreat
- 8.26-27 Christian School/  
Home School Retreat
- 9.11 Arizona Regional  
Youth Conference
- 9.17-18 Ladies & Girls'  
Night in the Pines
- 10.8-9 Men & Boys'  
Camp Out
- 10.15-16 Church Family  
Retreat

Visit [westbranchAZ.org](http://westbranchAZ.org) for more details.

### Special Needs

- ~~Stihl chain-saw~~  
PURCHASED and in use!
- Utility dump trailer
- ~~New double-size bed  
mattress & box-spring~~  
DONATED and in use!!
- Compact Utility Tractor  
(e.g. John Deere, Kubota)

### Stay Connected

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Additional itineraries, schedules, & reports are online.

## Planning for 2021

This past year brought many challenges to our ministry as it did for everyone. The most difficult aspect was the cancellation of several events and the capacity limitations on the rest. As we plan for 2021, we are trying to be as flexible as possible to allow us room to adjust as needed based on the current requirements around our county and state. For that reason, we have already adjusted our very first event, the Southwest Regional Men on the Move Conference into two smaller events that we pray we will be able to hold on camp in our new multi-purpose building. We do not believe that holding this event in our local public school facility will be a viable option. We also would just rather hold it in our new building so that more people could see the progress made and perhaps be able to help us keep the development moving along.



Large Interior Space for Services

As for the rest of the year, we are planning more, not less. We have added a Youth Retreat in late April, a Christian School/Home School Retreat in August, and a Church Family Retreat in October to go along with the other events we have already been holding. Several Christian school groups from back east have already contacted us about sending their seniors out here for their senior trips. We missed having those in 2020.

## Recruiting Summer Staff



Some of our 2020 Summer Staff

While there is a large emphasis on building at West Branch right now, we are keenly aware that the even more important aspect of our ministry is having the right people to serve those who come. We thank the Lord for our resident staff, and we are currently working to bring in a great group of summer volunteers for teen, junior, deaf, and family camps.

With travel being a little more difficult these days and finances being a little tight, we have not visited all the Christian colleges that we normally visit to recruit our summer counselors. Nonetheless, we do have several young people committed to serve next summer.

While most of our operational staff, program staff, and Ranch Hand positions are filled, we still need several young people to serve as counselors. We look for those who have completed at least two semesters in a West Branch-approved Christian college to fill these spots. Our summer is about a five-week commitment and is a lot of fun. Serving with our summer staff is like building a family, and we look forward every year to seeing how the Lord provides.

If you know of someone that may be interested in serving with us next summer, please let us know!