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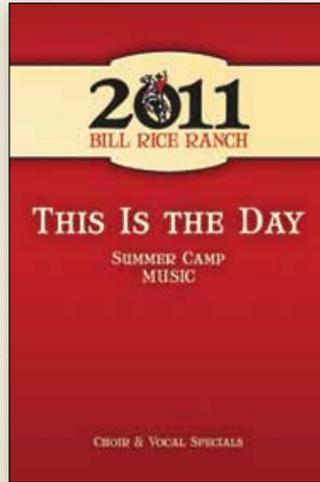
Aug.-Sept. 2011, Vol. 50—No. 4

# Branding Iron

BILL RICE RANCH MURFREESBORO, TN



## Bill Rice Ranch PUBLICATIONS



### This is the Day *new!* Summer Choir and Vocal Specials

Enjoy a part of Summer 2011 with this great songbook for your youth or church choir! Includes the Summer 2011 opening theme chorus as well as five choir numbers and two other vocal selections from the summer.

**Only \$4.00 per book!**

This songbook is only available over the phone and will only be sold until August 31.

NOTE: Prices DO NOT include shipping & handling.  
For orders, call **1-800-253-RICE, ext.117**



From the President

## The Frog Pond

by Evangelist Wil Rice IV

There once sat a frog pond across the pasture, through the thicket, and over the dry creek bed from my house. It may sound like it was a long way off; but in reality, it was no more than 150 yards away from the back door. I spent many a summer afternoon there as a kid.

“Why?” you ask. Well, if you have to ask, it is obvious that you are not a ten-year-old boy! What isn’t there to love about frogs, mud, and rock-skipping? My frog pond was backyard exotic. Close to home, yet marvelously untamed, it never failed to fuel my curiosity.

The overgrown puddle was dug out for our horses, but the frogs owned it. They ringed the thick, damp bank, cooling themselves in the half-submerged hoof prints of a dozen horses. Each hoof’s impression made a smaller, one-frog pond.

As soon as some aspiring little Davy Crockett crested the rise to the pond, the sentry frog chirped the alarm. Splash! Splash, splash! Hop, sail, splash! They hurled themselves at the cool soup, unleashing a volley of splashes on the pond like a pirate cannonade on the high seas. Summer’s kitchen wafted the scent of warm cedar, the spices of baked-hot field weeds, and the still, damp green of frogs and their pond.

I have soaked socks, found arrowheads, and fired a thousand BBs at my frog pond. It all came back to me last week. For the first time in a long time, I sat contentedly and a bit sleepily on a rock by the puddle’s edge, soaking it all in, so to speak. (Only frogs and ranch horses would have the stomach to drink it in any other way!)

It slowly edged into my mind that my boys had never been here! I had taken them to high mountain lakes that are frigid even in August. We had fished together off the coast of Alaska. We’d been to both of America’s

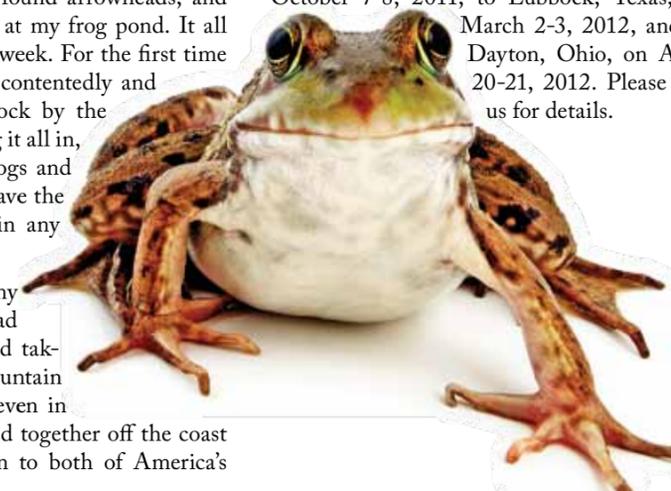
oceans and to the Gulf of Mexico. My boys and I had explored creeks across the country, but I had never taken them to the Mother Pond! I had completely overlooked it.

We changed that this past Saturday. While the girls (mother and sister) were away, I lead two air-rifle-toting boys and one tongue-toting family dog across the field, through the thicket, and over the creek that borders our backyard wilderness. We left after we had our fill, the chocolate lab with half the pond in her coat and us boys with grins wider than the water.

Sometimes you don’t need to go as far away as you might think to make a good “family time.” You do not always need an entire week to refresh your home. I want to use moments both big and small to strengthen my home. How about you?

While families do come from across America and from Canada to our growing family weeks here on the Ranch, we have been pleased to launch a new series of local events, Ranch Regional Family Conferences. We have been thankful to see the way God has already blessed this effort, and we are excited about events in the near future.

Why not consider attending one of the upcoming events for the home? We take the Ranch on the road to Jackson, Michigan, on October 7-8, 2011, to Lubbock, Texas, on March 2-3, 2012, and to Dayton, Ohio, on April 20-21, 2012. Please call us for details.



LADIES RETREAT  
**PATTERNS OF FAITH**  
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Evangelist Wil Rice IV  
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For more details and to register go to [billriceranch.org](http://billriceranch.org) or call **1.800.253.RICE** Make your plans now—register today!

[www.billriceranch.org](http://www.billriceranch.org)

### Inside this issue

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“My boys  
HAD NEVER BEEN HERE!”



## Cowboy Town over the Moon

by Evangelist Bill Rice III

What significant event in American history took place on July 20, 1969? Yes, you should know. I remember that day. I mean, I haven't simply read about it—I lived through it. It was a Sunday and ... yes, you are correct, that was the day when men first walked on the moon!

Neil Armstrong, "Buzz" Aldrin, and Michael Collins had "lifted off" from Cape Kennedy, Florida, atop a Saturn V Rocket on Wednesday the 16<sup>th</sup> of July. After settling into moon orbit, Armstrong and Aldrin descended to the moon's surface in the lunar module named *Eagle*. We saw this on live television and anxiously waited for the men to come out of the lunar module and actually walk on the moon. We waited, and waited, and waited.

I should tell you who *we* refers to and where *we* were waiting. It was a Sunday night (I've already told you that), and it was the opening day of a youth week here on the Ranch. Several hundred teenagers had arrived, and we all assembled in the evening at the John Rice Tabernacle for the first service of the week. Knowing the historic nature of the moon landing, Dad had placed a T.V. set in the Tabernacle on the platform. His intent was to turn it on after the service

so we could all see that "... one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."

The service ended, and we waited. Neil Armstrong would come out of the lunar module in just a moment, we were told.

We waited. Kids were getting bored. We waited.

Finally, Dad stood and said that anyone wanting to go on to the Patio—the precursor to Cowboy Town here—could leave.

Just about everyone did!

I suppose the thinking among the teenagers and counselors was, "Why stay to see something historic but boring when you could go to the Patio with friends for a coke!" So today around this nation live scores of fifty-seven-year-olds who did not see Mr. Armstrong's small step.

I am conflicted! Yes, it was a very important moment in history. But it is hard to see history—when you are in the middle of it—as historic! Most of us are too busy living our lives. And while seeing an event like the landing on the moon may be commendable, so is enjoying



everyday life as a Christian. Besides, wouldn't a trip to Cowboy Town with a friend be considered historic?

Okay, maybe not. And I know you might look at me quizzically when I say this, but here goes. Some things historic may seem unimportant to an individual. And some things that are truly important may not be considered historic. A week at camp where the Bible is faithfully preached may never be called historic, but it is certainly important. And while seeing that specific historic step would have had some value, I can't help but congratulate the counselors and campers who also saw that week at Bible camp as important and part of their personal history.

As I write, the Royals from England are visiting the United States, the shuttle is making its final flight, and Congress is fussing over money—all historic events, I suppose. Personally, I am looking forward to going to the service tonight in the John R. and maybe taking a trip to Cowboy Town afterwards. A giant step indeed.

## FROM West Branch by Evangelist Troy Carlson

### Fifteen Hundred Miles from Home

I ran into five members of my home church this morning. No big deal, right? It probably wouldn't be except for the fact that we are all over 1,500 miles from home. I saw each of them in or near the dining hall this morning as we began another day of camp in Middle Tennessee. Our church is back home in Northern Arizona...just a bit down the road.

We all left home in May, making the trek to Tennessee to serve for the summer at the Ranch. Four of these young ladies are summer staff counselors; one serves on operational staff. We came because summer camp is a wonderful tool to see people saved and see Christians strengthened. Many testify to life-changing decisions they made at the Ranch when they were teenagers.

In fact, my fellow church members relayed several important spiritual decisions they made as campers at our camps in previous summers. Lindsey dedicated her life to the Lord at West Branch as a junior camper and now has consistently had the opportunity to pray with campers making the same decision. Brenda decided to attend Christian college during a week of



Aid Station. Ashley recalls a definite camp decision for the Lord at nine years of age that she now uses as a testimony for her own campers.

These summer staff members are not the only ones from my church who have made important decisions at the Ranch as teenagers. I did too. Though I never attended camp as a youth, I was still a teenager when I first served as a counselor. It seemed I made decisions daily in response to the preaching I heard. These decisions helped to cement my convictions and to direct my steps. I was even able to have some big questions about the assurance of my salvation answered while serving at the Ranch. This issue of assurance—one that came into focus at the Ranch—is an issue that comes up frequently now in my own preaching. I am grateful for what I learned here, and it is a joy to share these truths with others!

camp, then reconfirmed that decision as she watched her older sister make the same decision later on.

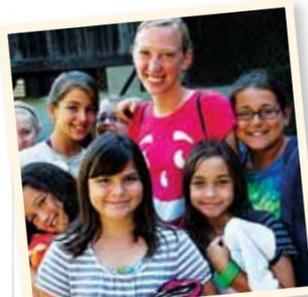
Whitney has kept a record of all her camp decisions through the years. Many of these decisions were recommitments to what she already knew was right. Those decisions helped keep her on the right path. Julie was already in college when she came as a camper for the first time. Now she helps campers daily in the First

There is no doubt about it—Northland Baptist Church of Flagstaff, Arizona, is making a huge contribution to the Ranch this summer: five summer staff members and my family of four are serving in the ministry every day, not to mention the fact that our pastor will soon be speaking here during Family Camp. But really, it is a mutual contribution because I am confident God will help our church through the work He does in our lives this summer.

## BACK AT THE RANCH...

### Mid Summer Report

**Philippine Deaf Camp** Missionaries Bob and Brenda Himes conducted a Deaf Camp in Manila, Philippines, May 16-20. There were 285 in attendance with 59 saved and 153 other decisions! Brother Himes has led deaf camps in the Philippines for over thirty years.



**Great Summer Start** Before any campers arrived, we already had nearly one hundred summer staff members joining us from all regions of the country from Hawaii to Alaska to New England to the Deep South along with Canada and Puerto Rico. Praise the Lord for many campers, coming from just about everywhere in between, who have made hundreds of valuable spiritual decisions at camp this summer!



**Day Camp Grows** Our second annual local Day Camp had a 55% increase in attendance with many young people trusting Jesus Christ as their Savior after hearing eternal truths throughout the week.

**Family Camps Keep Growing** Our two summer family camps keep attracting more and more friends from across the country. We had our largest Family Camp attendance in more than twenty years during our Fourth of July week with an additional 275 people joining us for Independence Day.



### Needs at the Ranch

- Rock Drill
- Small Sized Self-propelled Road Grader (for upkeep of road at West Branch)
- Digital SLR camera & external flash

If you have a lead on any of these items or you would like to make a donation of one of these items to the Ranch, please contact Dale Stover, 615-893-2767, ext. 105 or dstover@billriceranch.org



Visit the photo gallery at [www.billriceranch.org](http://www.billriceranch.org) to see more summer photos!

Reserve your week of camp for

# SUMMER 2012

for special perks over \$465.  
Deadline November 30.  
[www.billriceranch.org/fasttrack](http://www.billriceranch.org/fasttrack)

## FAST TRACK RESERVATIONS



We thank the Lord for providing summer staff volunteer allowances for more than one hundred summer staff members that have served with us this summer. Gifts designated to the **FAITH PROJECT** have accounted for 36% of the amount that needs to be raised. **Could you help us reach our goal with a \$50 gift** to cover one summer staff counselor for the final week of camp? We will distribute these allowances August 5.

Upcoming Conferences on *Marriage and the Home*:

Michigan Regional	Oct. 7-8, 2011	Jackson, MI
Bill Rice Ranch	Dec. 1-3, 2011	Murfreesboro, TN
Arizona Regional	Feb. 24-25, 2012	Phoenix, AZ
Texas Regional	March 2-3, 2012	Lubbock, TX
Ohio Regional	April 20-21, 2012	Dayton, OH

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