

Branding Iron

BILL RICE RANCH MURFREESBORO, TN



From the President

Why We Like Bulldozers

by Evangelist Wil Rice IV

My grandfather liked bulldozers. Doesn't every man? "Talldaddy" loved working the dozer because it was labor that rested him, much like the work of building a fence or working stock. Driving the bulldozer after spending hours in the office or weeks on the road was a different kind of work that produced a different kind of tiredness. This work somehow rested that other part of him that had been working so hard.

But there was another reason that Bill Rice liked bulldozers: progress! As a pioneer, few things he did communicated progress quite so graphically as clearing old brush and blazing new paths. In fact, Talldaddy delighted in having a large pile of dirt and a bulldozer sitting somewhere around camp to greet campers upon their arrival. On occasion, Bill Rice was the guy campers saw driving the contraption! He wanted people to see the progress.

At this point, our bulldozer is of retirement age but certainly not of museum quality; the Mighty Mite has been earning his keep this fall! We are grateful to God for the extraordinary momentum we have been enjoying across a number of projects. Timing is a crucial element of any progress, and for whatever reason, we seem to be gaining steam on several projects that have felt, at times, to be as slow as a rusting track on an antique Caterpillar.

God has repeatedly answered specific prayers in definite ways over these last few months. We ran a full-blown camp at West Branch in Arizona this past summer. In October, God enabled us to break ground on a new school building that will house additional classes for

a growing Bill Rice Christian Academy. The Lord has provided what we need in order to restore the Webber Auditorium after severe storm damage. And God is supplying precious fill, labor, and even the use of a large-scale bulldozer for the completion of the Meadow Project, all in answer to our prayers.

There is much yet to be done. But while we are not smug, we have confidence that we are on the right track and that we are gaining momentum. None of these endeavors are ends unto themselves. We are energized each time we think about the ministry every one of these goals will help us to facilitate.

During the recent Men's Challenge at the Ranch, the work did not stop, even though we were hosting men from churches ranging from Fort Lauderdale, Florida, to Baltimore, Maryland. Work on the Webber roof continued after dark

as men got settled into cabins and then enjoyed a hearty meal at the dining hall. The next morning, truck after truck of fill poured into the Meadow as men in hard hats helped the Ranch crew create the new landscape.

That Friday afternoon, we enjoyed games, horse rides, and a "target challenge"; but one of the most popular events of the day seemed to be down at the Meadow. As if they had scored box seats at a major sporting event, the men watched jealously as the operator on the burly bulldozer pushed fill around. Some men suggested that we set up bleachers to accommodate all the dozer fans! Somehow, I think that is an idea that would make Bill Rice smile.

We like progress. Doesn't everyone? This year, we are grateful to God for all the progress that we have enjoyed.



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“We have **CONFIDENCE** that *we are on the right track* and that we are gaining **MOMENTUM**.”



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

My Concerns with Professional Football

by Evangelist Bill Rice III



I know it is the holiday season, but I have something that needs to be said about football. Yes, football. And ladies, please stay with us. You may find this of interest.

I enjoy football. The only professional sport I have any legitimate interest in is football. There is a problem with the NFL, however. They have taken Monday night football away from broadcast television! The same is true for Thursday night football. And Sunday afternoons, for me, tend to be busy and short. So, I do not get to see as much football as I would like.

The simplest way for me to keep up with football is to watch the discussion/highlight shows. This is where the former coaches, players and network sports bigwigs discuss the games, show highlights and give their commentary. So, Sunday after church, I like catching these guys—you can get them on CBS, NBC or FOX—and it has become a hobby of mine.

But then I have a real problem. Have you seen the way the commentators dress on these shows? They wear suits! Suits! And they wear ties and interesting colorful socks. They are talking about a game, for crying out loud, and they do it dressed to the nines! It makes me wonder if the defensive coordinator of a football team is the guy who coordinates dress shirts, ties and suits every week!

It may be that when Terry Bradshaw, a Super Bowl winning quarterback who is on one of these shows, played football for the Pittsburgh Steelers, he looked like he came from a farm in Tennessee. But not now! Now he



looks like an executive on Wall Street, or maybe I could say he looks like a lawyer. I mean the guy dresses sharply!

Well, I can tell you, this bothers me. You see, I am a preacher and I have learned that the way to reach people with an important message is to look like a slob. Excuse me, I mean, to dress casually. Thank goodness, Sunday afternoons have their share of religious programming as well as the NFL shows. Turn to any religious broadcast and you will see a full helping of Hawaiian shirts, Levis and t-shirts with appropriate written messages on them. If a preacher can wear a t-shirt that says, "God loves you," why can't Terry Bradshaw wear a t-shirt that says, "Go Steelers!" It just bothers me that the football guys all dress up. Makes me wonder if they think they have some important information to give out to the viewers.

Maybe preachers should have an appearance that says the information they are imparting is important. No, that couldn't possibly make sense. It has really been confusing to me. When I watch these football guys giving information about winners and losers in the NFL, I want to dress up in my team's colors. That would be a blue suit with a tie which has orange in it.

I was talking to a friend on the phone

recently and in speaking about his desires in politics, he said to me, "I want someone to run for president like Bill Belichick." His reference was to a winning NFL coach and he was simply saying that Belichick is a winner and that is what my friend wants from his political leaders.

Do you know Bill Belichick? He is a coach in the NFL—I have already said that. But he is not really that sharp when it comes to dressing. He usually wears an oversized gray sweatshirt hoodie. To tell the truth, he looks out of place in a professional sport. Maybe he should consider being a preacher. I would just be happier if more football commentators followed the example of the disheveled coach and more preachers dressed like the once great quarterback.

Let's think a moment. Lawyers dress up in court. Executives dress for success. Politicians usually wear suits and ties. Sportscasters dress to the nines. Weathermen wear ties. Auto techs in my hometown Ford dealership are often in shirts and ties. When speaking to Congress, the President wears a suit. News anchors wear suits.

All of these people have something to say or do, which they believe is important. And I guess one could say they want to look the part. Preachers have something to say which they believe is important, also. And one of these things is evidently the burning question, "Where in the Bible does it say one can't wear a Hawaiian shirt?"

I know, looking like you serve the King isn't important with many preachers in our day. I just hope everyone else won't follow their lead. I respect Bill Belichick, I just don't want preachers to look like him when they are preaching! Naturally, I don't have the right to determine how one looks when he is in the pulpit, but common sense should. It seems to me that Terry and his buddies have a lot of that.

BACK AT THE RANCH...

BILL RICE RANCH



NEED FOCUS

Have you seen the outside of the **John R. Rice Auditorium** lately? If you have, you probably said, "Wow, it could sure use a fresh coat of paint!"

Well, we thought the same thing. After all, wonderful things happen inside its doors, and it is the central focus of the campground. So we wanted to give it a new coat of paint and a new color to match the Ranch color scheme. The problem? We needed \$3,000 to do the work.

Ready for the good news? The Lord has provided the specific funds for this project. And so, because of God's provision, it will be done. Thank you for your prayers and giving.



Creeping the Next Mountain

If you ever must have a vehicle breakdown, Frisco, Colorado, is a great place to do it! Smack dab in the middle of the Rockies, both the views and the mountain air are tremendous. Our episode happened in July, so the weather was great for “hoofing it” around town while the truck was being fixed. Frankly, it was the most enjoyable breakdown we have ever had! When our vehicle lost power, I just eased over into the center turn lane and stopped, consulted my smart phone for help options, and waited. Piece of cake! I enjoyed the experience even more in light of our travel on the road the next day.



other—for miles. In other words, there was no place to go in the event of a breakdown. Had we been stuck here, we would have been stuck with a large line of traffic behind us. God’s timing was perfect.

Our journey through the development of the West Branch property has been similar to this experience. At times, we have been “stuck.” At other times, we have enjoyed the ride through unseen territory. In any event, God’s timing has been perfect. Lately, we have been climbing mountains. After accomplishing so much in order to have our first full-sized camps this past summer, we have set our sights even higher for 2016.

Proceeding west, we made a series of climbs and descents, zig-zagged through canyons, and even passed through the occasional tunnel. The drive was beautiful! Since it was summer, we also had a nice view of road construction cones and barrels: one lane each way—a rock wall on one side and oncoming traffic on the

We have eleven camp buildings in which we need to install the sanitation, water, and propane systems. We need to install a 30,000 gallon fire protection system to protect these buildings. We also need to complete a support system for our mobile kitchen. Translation?

Big bucks, contractors, lots of trenches, government approvals, and volunteer work groups. Why are we trying to do so much this year? Timing.

Last summer we were given temporary permission to use our facilities. We have no guarantee to regain this permission annually. We must complete these projects to gain full occupancy and approval for yearly camps. That’s the goal, and the Lord has been providing. Over \$75,000 was raised this fall alone. At this writing, we need an additional \$115,000 (as best we know) to complete these projects. So, please pray specifically that this money will be raised, that God will provide each approval needed, and that God will give us the workers for projects we can do and success for the work contractors will do. We look forward to cresting this mountain and seeing how God blesses on the other side!



Visit www.westbranchAZ.org for the latest information on our campsite development.

Calendar OF EVENTS

SEASONAL RETREATS

Day of Champions **April 30**
 Father & Son Adventure..... **May 20-21**

REGIONAL EVENTS

Florida Day of Champions
Land O' Lakes, FL **February 6**
 Family Conference
Charleston, SC **March 4-6**
 Men on the Move
Williams, AZ **March 18-19**
 Family Conference
West Carrollton, OH **April 8-9**
 Family Conference
Valparaiso, IN **April 15-17**
 Ladies' Spring Getaway
Flagstaff, AZ **April 30**

SUMMER CAMPS

Youth I, Junior I, Deaf I **June 12-17**
 Day Camp **June 20-24**
 Youth II, Junior II, Deaf II... **June 26-July 1**
 Family I **July 3-7**
 Independence Day Retreat..... **July 4**
 Youth III, Junior III, Deaf III **July 10-15**
 Youth IV, Junior IV, Deaf IV..... **July 17-22**
 Youth V, Junior V, Deaf V **July 24-29**
 Family II, Deaf Adult..... **July 31-Aug. 4**



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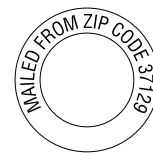


Ask questions or request an application:

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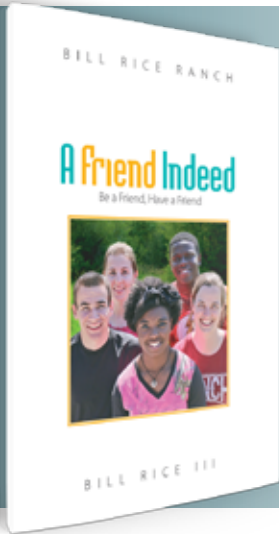
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A Friend Indeed

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Evangelist Bill Rice III

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SUMMER STAFF Volunteer your summer as a counselor or operational staff member and make a difference in the lives of others for eternity!



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WEEK I

July 3-7

(Jerry Sivnsky & Todd Sivnsky)

WEEK II

July 31-Aug. 4

(Mike Edwards & Chris Edwards)



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