



# West Branch Trailblazer

Keeping in Touch, Seeking Your Prayer and Involvement

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

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- Dining Hall Construction Has Begun
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## Prayer Requests

Effective retreats, events, and church meetings

Dining hall construction progress

Financial strain due to canceled or shortened camps

Planning 2021 camps and filling summer staff positions

## Project Status

**Dining Hall-** Construction has begun! Phase 1 involves putting up the steel structure, roof, insulation, chimneys, exterior walls, and fire suppression system

**Rodeo Corral-** A large new multi-use rodeo corral was built from March-May and was used for events and services this summer.

**Campground-** We have been able to clean up even more of the property from natural and construction debris as well as adding new cinder roadways to the activity areas of camp.

## We Had Camp!

In spite of all the health and scheduling challenges this year has brought, we were able to hold several camps throughout the summer season. We could see in May that it would be unlikely that we would be able to have any camps until July, so we moved our Ladies Summer Getaway and Junior Camp later into the summer. Then, in the middle of Staff Training, we learned that our camp size would be limited to fifty campers per event based on our governor's order. Following the guidance of our local health department and making many last-minute changes, we were able to have a 2-night family camp followed by six 2 ½-day "mini-camps" to accommodate all those still able to attend. At least we had camp!

Our second goal was to be safe and healthy! We did a LOT of additional daily cleaning and followed new health protocols. By the grace of God, we got through our schedule with no signs of COVID-19 on camp.

The most important goal was to see the Lord work in lives through the preaching of the Bible. If this did not happen, the extra effort would not have been worth it. While I would not pretend to say that 2 ½ day camps were as effective as full-week camps, the Lord did do some great things. Several kids were saved, and many important spiritual decisions were made. We were also blessed to have some first-time groups attend camp! Our prayer was that we would hear even years down the road of great spiritual decisions made in 2020 so that we could marvel at the Lord's ability to do so much when our circumstances had so little to offer.



**Some of Our Summer Staff**



**Outdoor Service at Our New Rodeo Corral**

Having moved our Ladies Summer Getaway to the very end of July, we had just a few days break between the formal end of camp and this event. We were blessed to have several summer staff stay the week to help us prepare and conduct the camp. Ladies came from seven Arizona churches (still under 50 capacity). I believe the ladies not only had a great time of relaxation but also were helped by the lessons provided by our three speakers.

We now move ahead to several retreats this fall. Each one will be counted another great blessing to be able to serve people in spite of the current state we find our society in.

## Upcoming Events

- 8.27-29 Private Men's Retreat
- 9.12 Youth Conference Phoenix, AZ
- 9.18-19 Ladies & Girls' Night in the Pines
- 10.2-3 Men & Boys' Camp Out
- 10.9-10 Private Church Retreat

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

## Special Needs

- Stihl chain saw
- Utility dump trailer
- New double size bed mattress & box spring
- Compact Utility Tractor (e.g. John Deere, Kubota)

## Stay Connected

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Additional itineraries, schedules, & reports are online.

## Dining Hall Construction is Underway

After years of preparation, the dining hall construction is underway! With the generous help of a donor, our goal is to complete phase one by the end of the year. This phase includes a reinforcement of our current concrete slab, a steel structure and roof, exterior walls with rock wainscoting, two fireplaces and chimneys, and the fire suppression system.

We have been given the indication by our local building department that we can occupy this building for meeting space once this phase is completed. We will deal with additional utilities and the kitchen later on. The work is being done by local contractors with a Christian contractor overseeing the project. Once we near the end of this phase, we will need additional help moving on to the next phase. While a single donor is covering the cost of getting this building up and usable, we are still



Concrete Piers for Steel Pillars

responsible to raise additional funds and recruit volunteers to finish the inside, outfit the kitchen, and deal with the water and sanitation to support it. We also need to run the electrical supply throughout the building. (Power has already been brought to the building.) Please pray with us that we will be able to keep moving forward to make this building fully functional.

## Overcoming Challenges, Looking for Opportunities



Preaching at Our New Rodeo Corral

There is no question that 2020 has been a challenge for many. Schedules have been thrown out the window as each day seems to bring a new need for flexibility. The same has been true at camp. As expected, we had both meetings and camps canceled. Having a desire to still be a help, the Lord gave us the idea of challenging Christian parents to get their kids started reading the Bible each day. Using the 6-month devotional guide we created several years ago, we sponsored the Bible Roundup Challenge. Kids from 11 states signed up to read their Bibles in May. Many earned free Chick-fil-A treat cards generously donated by our local Chick-fil-A.

The Lord also allowed us to construct a new rodeo corral during the height of the pandemic shut down. He provided funds and volunteers led by missionary builder Mike Smith who took the concept from start to finish. We were also blessed to have many days of help from the folks of Maranatha Baptist Church in Yuma, Arizona. To see an addition like this in the midst of such a challenging time has been overwhelming!

While the financial challenge of this year has been significant, we are thankful for the Lord's provision, especially in new ways to serve Him.