



The BUCKING Board

NEWS AND UPDATES FROM SILVER BIRCH RANCH



January - March 2021

LEADERSHIP: CAUGHT MORE THAN TAUGHT

- Dave Wager

And he sat down and called the twelve. And he said to them, "If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all." And he took a child and put him in the midst of them, and taking him in his arms, he said to them, "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me." Mark 9:35-37 (ESV)

Servant leadership is the hallmark of all Christians. Jesus, who was in a position to be served by all, came to serve. The church is called to serve, and as they serve, they create community, a community that lasts a lifetime.

Servant leadership is demonstrated best when those who are in positions of leadership serve those who have nothing with which to repay them. History will judge those who served the widows, orphans, and children, instead of themselves, as "great leaders."

Even though we agree that servant leadership is critical, and we teach servant leadership from our lecterns and pulpits, and we have books dedicated to this concept, we still seem, at times, anemic at best in producing this kind of leader.

Perhaps this is because the definition of servant leader has changed to mean that we serve when it is convenient or benefits our own personal interest. Perhaps it has become more of academic pursuit, or something we have heard so often, that it has now fallen on deaf ears.

Whatever the reason for its demise, Silver Birch Ranch remains on the front line of training young people to serve, whether they are junior high students who come to rake leaves, high school students who volunteer to do a dish crew, or college students

who choose to learn servanthood at the Nicolet Bible Institute, or by being at Silver Birch to serve as a volunteer/staff for the summer.

The need for training in servanthood has not diminished, and since servanthood is something that is caught, and is the most important ingredient in developing community, we once again invite you to consider the many opportunities Silver Birch Ranch affords your family and church to learn, practice, and demonstrate servanthood.

Young people benefit from being in an environment where you work hard for little or no pay for a cause that is greater than self. It has been a blessing to be a place that has focused on this aspect of training for over 50 years.

With that in mind, as we enter our 54th summer, I encourage families to consider encouraging their teen to first of all obtain skills (lifeguard, first aid skills, and more) that can be used to serve others, and then send them to camp to volunteer for some of the summer. I encourage college students to choose to come and learn leadership this summer, and I encourage parents, grandparents, and pastors to look to Silver Birch Ranch as a place to learn and demonstrate servanthood.

We look forward to serving the church again this summer, and we hope that many of our friends are planning to join us. Will you be a servant in this way?

SERVICE THROUGH RELATIONSHIPS AT THE WOLF RIVER REFUGE

- Matthew Shruck

Galatians 6:2 tells us to “Bear one another’s burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.” The Wolf River Refuge exists specifically for this purpose. We do this by “building relationships, investing in families.” At WRR this mission is carried out in multiple ways.

First off, my intern, Jordan, and I clean cabins, rake leaves, send emails, prep firewood, and more. But the reason why we do these things isn’t because fire is warm, emails are fun, or raking leaves is therapeutic. Instead, the reason why we do these things is to better facilitate the needs of our guests before and after their arrival.

Second, our mission is carried out by a variety of volunteers who are consistently involved in service projects, such as splitting wood, painting cabins, building new features like our pergola gathering space, or mowing. These volunteer visits are a tremendous help to us. But that’s not why they’re important. They’re important because God is glorified in work done for others in His name. Their constant helping hands are a large contribution to this ministry, and its growing reach into homes and communities.

Third, our ministry is carried out by our guests by visiting WRR and committing time for each other—carrying each other’s burdens by showing others Jesus, who takes their burdens away. In that way, every single person involved at the Wolf River Refuge, even just as reader of this article, is intricately involved in how the Wolf River Refuge stands as a place of healing and restoration.

That all being said, the fourth way that our mission is carried out is by praying for one another. As restored believers in Christ we have the privilege of being able to pray for one another. I would like to invite you to pray for the couples who have come to the Wolf River Refuge this year to re-center their marriage on Christ. Please pray for the families going through loss, or those struggling to effectively show Christ to their children. Please pray for the church elder boards that come, that they would be filled with God-fearing wisdom that touches their entire congregation. Please pray for the fathers and sons who once never spoke, but now play together around our cabins. Please pray for these people, and for everyone else who comes to both the Wolf River Refuge, and to Silver Birch Ranch. 2020 has been a difficult year for everyone, and Covid has caused many to miss out on camp this year. Please pray for them—all of your brothers in sisters in Christ, your family here in this life, and in Heaven in the next. True service is what is done to point others to Jesus. I look forward to seeing many of you at the Wolf River Refuge in 2021, where we will continue to serve our King through our relationships.

Top 10 List

1. Sewer Router/Snake
\$1,500
2. Mini Van (Housekeeping)
A donated van or \$2,500
3. Electric Golf Car
\$2,000
4. Golf Cart Charger
\$400
5. Cross-Country Skis (7 needed)
\$200 each
6. Hockey Skates (7 needed)
\$50 each
7. Tire Changer
\$500
8. Hand Tools
\$1,000
9. Generator
\$7,500
10. Power Tools
\$1,000

If you can help with one of these items, please contact us at 715-484-2742. Silver Birch Ranch is a 501(c)(3) organization. All gifts are tax-deductible and are appreciated. If you are interested in finding out about other ways to support the ministry of Silver Birch Ranch, visit our website.

A huge thank you for the following specific Top Ten items given recently: compressor, hockey skates, cross-country skis, and basketball backboard.





THE GREATEST

- Rich Hess

Nicolet Bible Institute, with its campus located in the beautiful Northwoods of Wisconsin, offers a unique one-year program designed to train and prepare students to be effective disciples of Jesus Christ. Along with a curriculum of Bible and Bible-related courses, mentoring, and Christ-centered community, there also exists the crucial component of serving. The students reach out to minister to people in the neighboring towns - helping in youth clubs, service projects, childcare, and much more. They also serve those who attend weekend retreats and summer camps at Silver Birch Ranch-- supervising and facilitating activity areas from horses to housekeeping, from the Climbing Wall to the Canteen. Learning to serve heartily as unto the Lord regardless of the assigned task is a vital element in the NBI program, but their service goes beyond a physical task completed. It is such a joy to also witness the NBI students exercising their God-given spiritual gifts of knowledge, administration, mercy, discernment, and encouragement, with love and compassion in service to the Lord.

Why do we serve and include this so intentionally in our program? Is it not the very nature of God Himself? As we read in Philippians 2:7, we realize that Jesus Himself took on "the very nature of a servant." Serving is a God thing! The Lord set aside His dignity and glory to become a human being who served both the Father who sent Him and mankind who crucified Him. In our human nature, we serve ourselves, gravitating toward comfort and being catered to, and thus distorting what God had originally intended. In contrast, as a counter-cultural witness, the Lord Jesus instructs us in Matthew 23:11 that "the greatest among you will be your servant," and then He sends us out into all the world to love God and love people. At NBI, this missional focus continues to be our core calling as well.

IF ... you desire to identify with Christ and follow in His steps – be a servant.

IF ... your goal is to connect with people so that they may know and follow Christ as their Lord and Savior – be a servant.

IF ... you desire to hold a full-time job and honor God in the process – take up the towel - be a servant.

IF ... you long to live life to its fullest and discover God's purpose for your life – be a servant.

IF ... you as a believer in Christ long to experience genuine God-given joy – be a servant.

IF ... you desire to grow in your faith in Christ, come to NBI and learn to be a servant.

May we say as the apostle Paul expressed in 2 Corinthians 4:5: "For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake."

I appreciate what David Platt states in his book *Radical* that "ultimate satisfaction is found not in making much of ourselves but in making much of God." By God's grace may this be our prayer, our purpose, and our practice as we serve the One who is unquestionably the Greatest!

\$500 OFF NBI

If you or someone you know is considering being a Nicolet Bible Institute student for the 2021-2022 school year, now is the time to apply! We are offering \$500 off tuition for all students who apply before May 1, 2021. NBI is a great opportunity to develop a strong Biblical foundation, grow deeper in your relationship with God, and have fun learning how to serve within the context of campus ministry. Want a glimpse of what NBI will look like? Give us a call at (715) 484-2322 and schedule an in-person campus tour today! You don't want to miss out.



SUMMER 2021

- Jason Kemper

Christmas and New Year's Day have come and gone, and now our thoughts can't help but shift towards summer. Ideas, plans, and a tremendous amount of excitement are flying around as we look forward Summer 2021: The Search. Youth Camp registration is now open and Family Camp registration begins January 25th. We are anticipating that spots will fill up very quickly, so make sure not to delay, and head on over to silverbirchbranch.org/summer and register to camp today!

Also, if you are a high school student, college student, or an adult who would love to help make camp happen this summer, our Volunteer and Summer Staff Applications are now available. Whether you're interested in helping out with the zip line, Coffee Bar, horses, dish room, or anything in-between, we would love for you to serve alongside of us to help our campers this summer experience a life-changing moment with Jesus.

Head on over to silverbirchbranch.org/summer and start planning your summer with us.



Silver Birch Ranch
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Follow Us On:



- **Family Winter Weekends**
January, 2021
- **Winter Jam**
February 5-7, 2021
- **Adoption Family Retreat**
March 12-14, 2021
- **Do Your Own Thing**
March 25-28, 2021
- **Authored Couples' Retreat**
April 9-11, 2021
- **Spring Work Weekend**
April 23-25, 2021
- **Men's Spring Retreat**
April 30-May 2, 2021
- **Mother-Daughter Retreat**
May 21-23, 2021

Scan QR code with your smart phone to learn more about our events and retreats!



Family Camp #1	June 5-11
Junior-Middler Camp #1	June 12-18
Riding Adventure Camp #1/TRAX	June 12-18
High School Camp	June 19-25
CCC High School Camp*	June 26-July 1
Family Camp #2	July 2-7
CCC Middle School Camp*	July 7-12
The Chapel Middle School Camp*	July 13-17
Junior High Camp	July 17-23
The Chapel High School Camp*	July 23-28
StuCo High School Camp*	July 29-August 2
StuCo Middle School Camp*	August 3-7
Junior-Middler Camp #2	August 7-13
Riding Adventure Camp #2	August 7-13
Family Camp #3	August 15-19

*These marked weeks are reserved for specific churches and aren't open to public registration.

