



TETON VALLEY RANCH

SUMMER RANCH CAMPS • FOR BOYS • FOR GIRLS

Jackson Hole • Kelly, Wyoming

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May 20, 1968

Dear Bill:

Needless to say, both Mary Ellen and I can fully understand how you feel about the trouble caused by either a disgruntled parent or a faculty member who is envious or jealous of a teacher who has such a following of the kids as you have enjoyed throughout these years. We certainly feel the agony of it all right with you, and we know just as surely as do you that if more teachers had the sincere warmth and interest in kids that is a part of your nature that we would have more sincere and concerned teachers. One would only put their heart and soul into their work as you have done all of your life if they loved the kids and want to see each one do well. There are parents who know very little about their kids and certainly do not understand any phase of education. These parents cannot understand any child wanting to be with an adult. They think of a school teacher as an old sour puss, beating kids, and the butt end of all jokes.

In a way Bill, I wish that you could tell them all to go jump, and then come out here on a 12 month basis. I have always said, and I still think, that if I was to ever have anything to do with a private school that you would be the first one I would get for my faculty. That would still be the case. I know that you have tenor and more important, a fight to win, which is more important. If you can think of anything that I can do, write to someone - anyone -, or even come back there and appear before a committee, or have the committee here, just let us know. If I can be of any assistance by hopping a plane and coming back there, I'll be only too happy to do so. I think that I know you inside out. I think that I understand why it is that you are able to make such a great contribution to the school program as well as to the summer program, and in general to the lives of so many youngsters. The one thing that this world needs is more Bill Brickers, and I am not alone in that opinion. It sounds as if you are on the right track to put up a battle, and by all means, don't back down one inch. If you want your old IV gang behind you, you could get a real rough and tumble outfit there. I can just see how someone like Jack Lyford, Thornton Lyford, G Sproul, any one of our counselors or cowboys. I know that Phil would like to get in on a battle if it got real rough. He has said many times that he learned more about camping from Bill Bricker than from anyone else. I think of the hundreds of kids from Teton Valley Ranch whose summers have been so enriched merely because they had the opportunity of being on a trip with Bill Bricker, I want to come back and get into the front of the battle line too.

We are not mentioning this to anyone, and we will not until you do so -- if you do so. We know that there is always the danger of being misjudged when we show some youngster a little affection, even though the one thing the boy or girl may need more than anything else is just that. Perhaps the reason that the trouble maker - who ever it is - thinks that something is wrong is because they have seen signs of your feeling friendly with the youngsters. This is understandable because certainly anything of this kind that you have ever done is right out in the open where everyone might see what is going on. There has never been anything to hide. Perhaps that it what bothers them. Some people just don't understand kids, and certainly they do not understand teaching.

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The more I think of this situation the madder I get. I would like to come back there and crack a few skulls together. I hope that it doesn't detain your departure. We would like to talk this over with you as soon as possible. Don't you ever entertain the idea of not coming back here because of something like that. Being accused as you are now seems to be a hazard of this kind of work. Be sure to tell your lawyer that we are ready at this end of the line to make any kind of a statement or, if necessary, to appear and testify. I hope, as I know you do, that this is cleared up with little talk and gossip. How would you like a job at the Southern Arizona School for Boys? You would have a real time at a school such as t Also, I am on the Board of Directors of the National Asthmatic Foundation. These kids could use a good man.

Things here are going along quite well. Dave Hughson did a GREAT job this winter. The buildings are in the best shape they have been in in the past 30 years. The partitions are out of all of the double or tripple room cabins. Now all cabins have just the one room and they look great. The new cabin by the pool in front of cabins 7 & 8 is a peach of a cabin. That will be the one most desired, I believe. It is a duplicate of C abin #1, and the clearing there is a beautiful site for a ca The new lapidary shpp is about set to go. It is old Cabin #13. We are gradually get the kids all up at the upper end of the ranch.

I am going to Rock Springs in the morning to get the meat from the slaughter house and take it to the cutter and packager in Pinedale. It will be frozen there and then we will haul it to the Jackson lockers.

Phil is busy now. He has a full house there too, and should have a great summer.

We could really use a good cowboy or two. We have had no word from Woody, and besides the men at the barn really don't want him back. He can't do anything in the cowboy line. The big news is that George is going to be married. The big event is t be in the fall, but he and his girl friend are making all preparations now.

I think I told you that Hugh Fry took off. He is working for a cow outfit on t West Coast. I am still having a battle with the Elk Refuge. The latest is that I ran them off and they are now trying to find a legal way to get in here to get the water for their irrigating. I'm going to battle them all the way. This week they have the Federal Attorney in Cheyenne trying to find something that can be done to get them in here so they can continue to run over us as they have in the past. I told them that all they have to do is to open their gates and we'll open ours.

Good luck Bill. We feel that we are in this trouble with you. Let us know as soon as anything happens. We are much interested -- BUT no matter what, we believe in you and you are to be here REGARDLESS!

Sincerely,

Wendell
Wendell Weenie Wilson

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