

# CAMP CEDAR RIDGE DISPATCH: DISCOVER THE GOOD

### With Gratitude, It's Been an Amazing Summer

As I listen to a marching band rehearsing and the squeals from a soccer team going down the Slip & Slide, it's hard to believe that we are finishing our fourth summer! In this issue of the Camp Cedar Ridge Dispatch, you will read about the many projects and improvements that have come to life because of our guests, volunteers, donors, and dedicated staff. We are growing, thanks to the wonderful support and love that we receive.

When we began in 2022, we compiled a list of projects and improvements that we wanted to do and over time, we added to THE LIST. Our most significant project to date is our new 40' x 70' concrete pad, christened the "Pavilion Patio." Thanks to the Hefferlin Foundation, CSL Chico, the Northwest Sufi Camp and several generous individual donors, we now have this wonderful improvement to the property.

We have also made significant progress on the development of the Whispering Woods Fairy Trail. This feature is designed to make the property more meaningful to younger visitors, as part of our goal of appealing to all ages. Thank you so much to each of the volunteers who contributed to working on the infrastructure of this area which we expect to open in 2026.

At the beginning of the summer, we received notice that the funding for the 21st Century Learning Community Learning Centers, which funds the Vernonia Village After-School program, was being withheld. Thankfully, the funding was restored and though we lost important planning time, we opened on time this week and welcomed 50 students into the program and registrations keep pouring in. We are grateful for the opportunity to serve children and families for as long as we are able. Each day matters in the life of a child, and we are grateful for every moment that we continue to operate this program.

As we move into the fall, we have several community events that we are focused on including the second *ThanksRidging*, our new *Vernonia Turkey Trot, Monster Mash at Loggin' Laundry on Halloween*, and our first Community Baby Shower, "*Vernonia's Cradle*" for expectant parents and those with newborns up to 2 years old (we hope that this become a tradition).



If you would like to support any of the work that we are doing at Camp, through the After-School program or with our community efforts, we invite you to donate, become a Cedar Sustainer, or sign-up to volunteer at this link: <a href="https://campCedarRidgeOR.org/donate">https://campCedarRidgeOR.org/donate</a> - together we will continue to "Discover the Good" and spread it!

With Love,

Kasey

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## **News from Camp Cedar Ridge**



The Dr. John Hefferlin and Marian Hefferlin Foundation is a nonprofit, grant-giving religious foundation incorporated under the laws of the State of California. Its Youth and Family grants are awarded to local and regional Youth Programs serving CSL's youngest children to teen, young adults, NextGEN, Camp Cedar Ridge, parents, and family programs.

### **Hefferlin Foundation Grant Received**

In July, the **Hefferlin Foundation** announced that Camp Cedar Ridge is the recipient of a \$15,000 grant to support the covered picnic barn expansion project. We are so grateful for this support.

In addition to this generous grant, we received nearly \$4,000 in donations towards this project from the following donors:

- Carol Judd Lincoln, CA
- Rev. Marilyn Sprague Portland, OR
- Doc Wilson Vernonia, OR
- Kathryn Richer Portland OR
- Northwest Sufi Camp
- Rev. Kathy Fernandes and Stewardship Council, CSL Chico
- Rev. Bridget McCann, Portland CSL



What a debut! The new concrete pad comes alive with a history-making rehearsal to remember.



Koko, CCR's beloved Mascot, leaves a lasting imprint.

Construction began the week of August 11th, with concrete for the final portion of the expansion poured the week of August 18th. While we anticipated that this would be a meaningful addition to our venue space, seeing it in person has exceeded all expectations—the space feels truly expansive.

On Saturday, August 23rd, the new Covered Picnic Barn concrete expansion project came alive for the very first time as one of this summer's high school band retreats took the space for rehearsal. It proved to be the perfect space for harmony, rhythm, and rehearsal.

The joy of seeing the new pad filled with music underscored just how valuable this expansion is—not only for band retreats but for countless future gatherings, celebrations, and community events.



### **Staff Promotions**

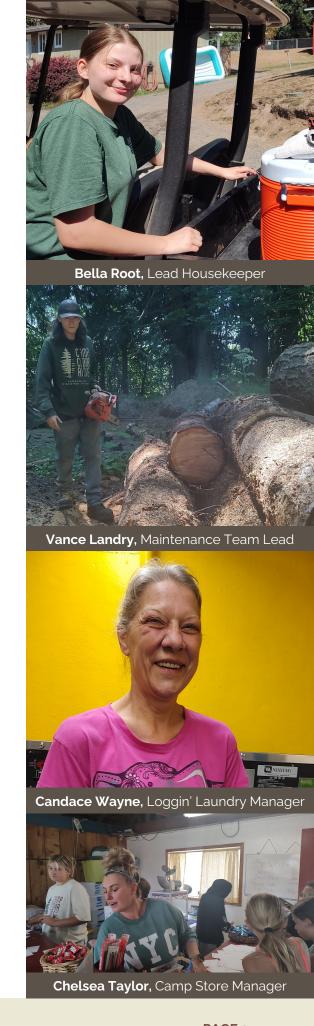
As part of our ongoing commitment to deliver radical hospitality, we're undertaking a strategic reorganization that both uplifts our service model and celebrates the talent within our ranks.

- Central to this effort is the launch of a dedicated
   Hospitality Department. The creation of this department is
   supported by newly appointed Lead Housekeeper,
   Isabella "Bella" Root, who will guide day-to-day
   housekeeping excellence.
- Simultaneously, we have elevated a seasoned team member, Vance Landry, to Lead Maintenance. This pivotal role expands our capacity to ensure our facilities remain safe, efficient, and guest-ready at all times.

Both of our new team leads are stepping into key frontline roles that bring energy, organization, and hands-on support to their teams. As working leads, they'll be side-by-side with fellow staff, helping to coordinate daily tasks and ensure things run smoothly behind the scenes.

We're also thrilled to announce two additional staff promotions that strengthen our camp operations team.

- Candace Wayne has accepted the position of Loggin' Laundry Manager. She brings exceptional skill and dedication to every aspect of laundry services—from maintaining facility cleanliness and supporting customers to managing copious amounts of laundry during camp turnovers. Additionally, she prepares linens for special events, such as weddings, reunions, and celebrations of life. Her loving touch even seems to work wonders with the "touchy" laundromat machines! In this new position, she is also assuming leadership of the bi-monthly Laundry Love community outreach events, extending care and service for individuals in need within our community.
- We're also delighted to share that Chelsea Taylor, a
   valued member of our Special Events Team and Vernonia
   Village Staff—and one of our beloved Decorating Divas—
   has accepted an additional role as Camp Store Manager.
   Chelsea brings an exceptional eye for visual
   merchandising and a remarkable knack for stocking the
   snacks and treats our sports teams and campers love.
   Most importantly, she brings a loving, "mom-like" presence
   to the Camp Store, creating a warm and welcoming
   environment for all our summer youth and campers.



## **Property Enhancements**

### Preseason Preparation: 150 Volunteer Hours Make Staff Village Shine for Summer Interns and Volunteers

Before the first intern arrived or the first volunteer-of-the-week unpacked a bag, a remarkable group of five women volunteers came together to transform our Staff Village cabins into welcoming, refreshed spaces ready for the summer ahead. With more than 150 hours of volunteer labor, three cabins received a full refurbishment—and the impact was felt all season long. Our heartfelt thanks goes to: **Terri Lahte**, one of our local volunteers; and four volunteers from Portland—**Mona Adams, Kathy Ballard, Frances Beasley**, and **Reta Jarvie**. Their loving energy is part of the sparkle that shines in every corner of these transformed cabins.



This pre-season initiative was no small task: deep cleaning to remove accumulated grit and grime, caulking, priming, painting walls and floors, preparing and installing wood trim around windows and doors, fresh paint on exterior doors, and installation of mosquito nets to keep insects out were all completed with incredible skill, care, and camaraderie. (Continued on next page)

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The Fab Five who made it happen with heart and harmony: (L to R) Terri Lahte, Kathy Ballard, Frances Beasley, Mona Adams, Reta Jarvie

- Reta Jarvie applying finishing touches on ceiling and trim
- Kathy Ballard applying third coat of paint on the floor
- 3. Mona Adams unloading just-in-time furniture donations
- 4. Frances Beasley applying numerous coats of paint on floor
- 5. Terri Lahte painting the interior of a staff village cabin

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### Preseason Preparation, continued from previous page

Following the repairs and painting, each cabin was lovingly decorated with its own unique flair. Every piece of wood furniture was polished to a deep sheen, upholstered furniture cleaned, new lamps obtained in garage sales were strategically placed for ambiance, and accessories added to create a space that felt personal and warm.

Several furniture donations were secured as part of the redecorating effort—made possible thanks to Mona Adams, one of our dedicated volunteers, who generously offered the use of her pickup truck, making it easy to transport and receive these much-needed items. An additional special thanks goes to Frances Beasley, whose generous donation of a floor rug for each cabin brought the finishing touch of comfort and charm. This thoughtful preparation ensured that each cabin was comfortable and inviting for those who called it home during their time in service throughout the summer season.

Thanks to this tremendous volunteer effort, CCR's Summer Intern Program and Volunteer-of-the-Week program thrived—built on a foundation of thoughtful hospitality and heartfelt intention. To everyone who lent a hand before the season began: your work truly made a difference. The summer may be over, but your impact will be felt for seasons to come.

### Event Barn Bar Gets a Fresh New Look

It all started with a simple post on Coast, CCR's employee app, about a virtual garage sale find that read, "I think we need this to level up the bar area...what do you think?" That \$50 black china cabinet garage sale find quickly became the focal point of a complete refresh, thanks to the vision and creativity of our beloved Decorating Divas, Chelsea Taylor and Dee Barklow.

Through their teamwork, ingenuity, and love for hospitality, the Event Barn Bar has been completely refreshed. What began as an idea became a shared project of fun, laughter, and dedication. Today, guests are being served in a beautifully redesigned space that feels warm, welcoming, and truly "upleveled."

We are so grateful for the heart and creativity poured into this project. Come join us and experience the new look by booking an event, attending the upcoming ThanksRidging Family Retreat, the Fourth Annual New Thought New Years Retreat or becoming one of our Summer 2026 Volunteers-of-the-Week.



Cabin 2 ready for occupancy.

## Summer Happenings: Volunteer Magic

Kicking off the summer with a tour of Loggin' Laundry, Tishua Kucharyson brought curiosity, heart, and the spirit of service to camp.



Bill and Jill at base of Cascading Causeway & newly installed footbridge.

### Volunteer-of-the-Week Magic

Every summer at CCR, something truly magical unfolds as volunteers from near and far bring their hands, hearts, and talents to camp. Week by week, these extraordinary individuals transform ideas into reality, strengthen the beauty and safety of our grounds, and pour love into every project they touch.

The Volunteer-of-the-Week program isn't about recognition—it's an invitation to spend an entire week at camp, offering sacred service that nurtures both the land and CCR community. With deep appreciation, we share the stories of our Summer 2025 Volunteers-of-the-Week and the lasting impact of their time here.

### **Summer Service Kickoff**

Our very first Volunteer-of- the Week, **Tishua Kucharyson** from Santa Rosa, California, arrived a few days before the summer season officially launched. She stepped right into the rhythm of camp life by lending a hand in Food Service. Then, with aplomb, she helped with the planning and preparation for welcoming the summer interns and the logistics for our half-day staff development gathering. She also made sure every staff member attending training signed the First Anniversary cards we are sending to our 2024 wedding couples. She even had an opportunity to visit Loggin' Laundry to see the camp's expanded laundry services. Her early arrival and thoughtful service set a beautiful tone for the summer ahead.

### Celebrating Second Season Volunteers Who Embody Exemplary Stewardship

Weeks 3 and 4 of CCR's 2025 Volunteer-of-the-Week season were made extra special by the return of **Jill Bittinger** and **Bill Larime** from Arizona for their second season of extraordinary volunteer service. Their exceptional skills, creativity, and tireless spirit accomplished numerous projects on "The List" that will benefit the camp for years to come.

Together, they built a privacy screen behind the potting shed and weeded and trimmed numerous areas throughout the camp, leaving the grounds beautifully refreshed.

Most notably, Jill and Bill reinforced every single step along the Whispering Woods Fairy Walk Cascading Causeway as well as constructed and installed a new footbridge at the base of the Causeway which accesses the main trail.

We are deeply grateful to Jill and Bill for their exemplary stewardship of this sacred property entrusted in our care.

### Summer Happenings: The *Whispering Woods Fairy Trail* Walk

## From Vision to Enchantment: The Birth of the Whispering Woods Fairy Trail Walk

During Week 2, our Volunteers-of-the-Week from Portland, **Kathy Ballard** and **Frances Beasley**, devoted their time and creativity to bringing the *Whispering Woods Fairy Trail* Walk to life.

Their dedicated service began with walking the trail, carefully identifying natural stations along the path, and weaving them together into a Fairy Trail Walk narrative that will delight and inspire young visitors.

**Lily Valett**, the granddaughter of one of our staff members, served as a youth subject matter expert. She designed meaningful interactive experientials at several stations, which encourage children to pause, reflect, and engage with the magic of the forest.

Kathy generated enchanting visuals of the fairies and characters who reside at each stop. She also designed whimsical graphics for a *Whispering Woods Fairy Trail* Walk coloring book, ensuring the experience could extend beyond the trail.

Thanks to the vision and dedication of Kathy, Frances, and Lily, the *Whispering Woods Fairy Trail* Walk is set to open in Summer 2026—inviting children and families into a world of wonder where imagination, nature, and spirit beautifully intertwine.

## Building Safety into the *Whispering Woods Fairy Trail* Walk

During Weeks 9 and 10, Licensed Practitioner **Tim Wagner** from Asheville, North Carolina, took on the heavy lifting—literally—to advance the *Whispering Woods Fairy Trail* Walk. Tim measured with precision, dug deep post holes, and, once materials arrived, single-handedly constructed the new safety handrail along the Cascading Causeway—transforming one of the trail's steepest stretches into a safer, more welcoming passage. He also built a temporary safety rail so that attendees of the Summer Intern Graduation Ceremony could be the very first to traverse the Cascading Causeway in safety.

Through his dedication and craftsmanship, Tim ensured that the *Whispering Woods Fairy Trail* Walk is not only a place of beauty and imagination, but also one where visitors can explore with confidence and ease. His contribution reflects the heart of the Volunteer-of-the-Week Program—turning vision into reality, one post hole at a time.

And the story continues! Summer 2026 is your opportunity to join this circle of service—adding your hands, heart, and spirit to the unfolding magic of camp. The 2026 Volunteer-of-the-Week Season runs June 14–August 30, 2026. Mark your calendar, choose your week, and watch for applications opening in January.



Magic in the making! Kathy Ballard and Frances Beasley sprinkle creativity and a little fairy dust on the Fairy Trail Walk.



Lily Valett helped create inspired experientials.



Tim Wagner gave the Cascading Causeway a sturdy handrail—securing the path where fairies, nymphs, gnomes, children and families can safely wander.

## **Summer Happenings: Celebrating Summer**

Bucky Dennerlein surveys the roundabout layout for placement of majestic cedar log sourced from the property.



Natural beauty highlighted with cedar and greenery in the landscape redesign.



A proud swimmer poses with his certificate of achievement.



Details that speak of care: each place setting symbolized honor for every guest.

## **Upper Grounds Roundabout Landscaping Brings Long-Awaited Vision to Life**

Thanks to the generous dedication of **Bucky Dennerlein** from Grants Pass, Oregon, our Week 6 Volunteer-of-the-Week, the roundabout in front of the house on the upper grounds has finally been transformed. Her background in gardening and landscaping was the perfect gift.

Using natural resources from the property and carefully selecting plants that complement our native landscape, Bucky brought this long-standing "wish list" item into beautiful reality. Even more inspiring was the joyful determination and wholehearted effort poured into every step of the project.

## Community Swim Lessons Make a Splash in Fourth Successful Season

This summer marked the fourth season of CCR's 10-lesson community swim program, and once again, it was a sellout success. Designed for youth swimmers of all ages and skill levels, the program provided a supportive and fun environment for building water confidence and safety.

Throughout the season, participants progressed through a series of engaging lessons led by certified water safety instructors. The program was wrapped up with a well-attended end-of-season picnic, where families, friends, and community members gathered to celebrate. Each swimmer received a certificate of completion to recognize their hard work and achievements in the water.

### Oregon Summer Star Program: Honoring the Children of Military Families

This summer, CCR was once again the host site for Oregon Summer Star program, a celebration for children whose parents are currently serving on active duty or who have experienced the challenges of deployment. These remarkable young people carry with them stories of sacrifice and resilience, and it was our privilege to offer them a week of rest, play, and community.

A special part of the week was a military demonstration that included Humvees and a Howitzer. As the Howitzer fired blanks from the basketball court toward the lower field, campers experienced a powerful reminder of the dedication and service that shapes their family lives.

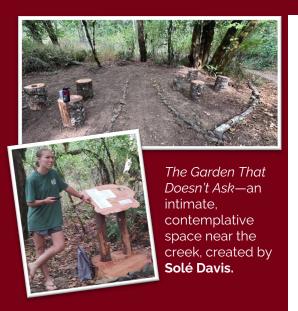
The week concluded with a moving closing banquet in the dining hall. Tables were set with formal place settings and table favors, creating a beautiful atmosphere of dignity and care.

The Oregon Summer Star camp is fiscally sponsored by Tsuga Community Commission, a 501c3.

To learn more about the Oregon Summer Star program: <a href="https://OregonSummerStar.org/">https://OregonSummerStar.org/</a>

Donate to the Oregon Summer Star program: https://bit.ly/osspaypal

## **Celebrating Our Summer Interns**







Work-in-progress draft of updated camp map created by **Harris Silcott** as part of an accessibility project, featuring detailed trails, landmarks, and plans for interpretive signage and historical context.

This summer, we hosted three interns for a ten-week intensive program of service, study and mentoring. They were able to share their unique talents in ways that advance CCR's commitment to radical hospitality, while gaining hands-on experience across camp life. Each summer intern also created a personal project. These projects became sparks of joy and contribution, shaping experiences that will continue to bless our CCR community.

#### Solé Davis: The Garden That Doesn't Ask

Nestled near the creek, Solé created *The Garden That Doesn't Ask*, a contemplative space and sanctuary for release, reflection, and renewal. The natural setting provides a soothing water-like effect, inviting visitors to lay down grief, sorrow, pain, and past trauma in a space held gently by nature. At its heart, the garden features Solé's original poem entitled *The Garden That Doesn't Ask*, offering words of comfort and invitation to all who enter. Symbols of peace and love mark the garden's pathways, reminding visitors they are free to roam the space, embraced by compassion and care.

## Jayden Parsons: Expanding Herb Garden with Thoughtful Design and Fresh Flavors

Jayden brought creativity and care to the camp's landscape by designing and installing a new tier to the existing herb garden, located just behind the camp kitchen. The project combined handson gardening with research and planning, as they selected herbs and companion plants that would thrive in the local soil and microclimate.

The new tier features a blend of culinary and aromatic herbs—all chosen for their resilience and usefulness in the camp kitchen. They also incorporated natural materials like log borders and stone pathways to echo the rustic charm of the surrounding area. The expanded herb garden now serves as a living legacy of Jayden's work, offering both beauty and utility to future campers and staff.

## Harris Silcott: Camp Accessibility Enhanced with Updated Map and Trail Project

Harris took on the ambitious task of updating and expanding the map of Camp Cedar Ridge to improve accessibility and visitor experience.

The first phase of the project focused on identifying, documenting and naming all relevant trails, clearings, and landmarks across the camp property. Harris sketched out detailed drafts, walked every path to verify accuracy, and cleared overgrown trails to ensure safe passage for campers and staff.

Looking ahead, he proposed a longer-term expansion of the project: designing, constructing, and installing new signs to clearly mark key locations; compiling historical context of the camp, developing a self-guided walking trail with narrative stops, and working toward the production of a professionally printed map for use by campers, visitors, and program leaders.

## **Expanding Community Partnerships**



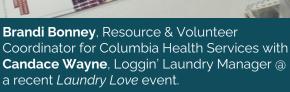


## New Partnerships Expand and Celebrate Community Engagement

We are excited to announce a new community partnership with **Columbia County Mental Health** as part of our Laundry Love outreach events hosted by Loggin' Laundry. Together, we share the purpose of increasing accessibility to vital community resources for individuals and families in need.

Also, in partnership with **Columbia County Public Health**, Camp Cedar Ridge is looking forward to celebrating with expecting parents and families (and children under 24 months) at the **1**<sup>st</sup> **Annual Vernonia's Cradle Community Baby Shower.** Join us for food and games, a photobooth, donation SWAP & shop and so much more! Use the QR code to register in advance!







## **Upcoming Events**

### **Wedding Menu Tasting**

Thinking of having your wedding at Camp Cedar Ridge? If you've been dreaming of a wedding steeped in natural beauty, heartfelt hospitality, and unforgettable food—this is your invitation. Join us at our upcoming **Wedding Menu Tasting**, Sunday, October 19, 2025, at 2:00 PM. Come and experience for yourself the culinary creativity and care that makes Camp Cedar Ridge an extraordinary place to say, "I do." From locally sourced ingredients and seasonal flavors to stunning presentation, every bite reflects the love and joy we bring to each celebration.

Reserve your space now. Choose to taste what your special day could feel like. We look forward to welcoming you.

Registration Open:

https://CampCedarRidgeOR.org/wedding-tastings/

## Monster Mash on Bridge Street: A Halloween Spook-tacular

The Monster Mash on Bridge Street is a free, family-friendly Halloween celebration designed to bring our community together for fun, laughter, and spook-tacular surprises. Hosted by Loggin' Laundry, Vernonia's friendly neighborhood laundromat, this all-ages Halloween event offers a safe and festive space for families to enjoy games, music, trick-or-treating, and creative activities—with just the right touch of spooky. There's a special treat for the Vernonia Village After-School program participants.

As a thank-you for being part of the Vernonia Village After-School program, each participant gets to pick a grab bag from our Cauldron of Surprises—a magical treasure chest filled with Halloween goodies, spooky trinkets, and playful prizes! Whether you're a tiny witch, a brave superhero, or a silly skeleton, there's something exciting waiting just for you. Be sure to stop by the Cauldron and claim your surprise—it's our way of saying "boo-tiful job!" for being part of Vernonia Village.

So, plan now to join the fun! Show off your costumes, enjoy some tasty treats, and make unforgettable memories with your friends and family. With a focus on connection, inclusion, and light-hearted fun, the Monster Mash on Bridge Street is a chance for neighbors to come together, celebrate the season, and make warm memories in the cool Autumn air.







### ThanksRidging Holiday: Family Retreat + Turkey Trot + Community Dinner

Looking for a meaningful way to spend Thanksgiving weekend? Join us for an all-ages **ThanksRidging Holiday Retreat**—a joyful blend of fun, food, and family.

There are 2-, 3- and 4-night packages available. We will have lots of good food, games, activities, entertainment and even a talent show! View our retreat packages:

https://CampCedarRidgeOR.org/thanksgiving-camp/

On Thanksgiving Day, you can lace up for our **Vernonia Great Awake Turkey Trot**, a 5-kilometer (3.1 miles) fun run/walk that is a fundraiser for the Vernonia High School Cross Country Team and the Vernonia Village After-School program. All ages are welcome, including little ones in strollers or carriers. The Turkey Trot will begin at the Picnic Shelter at Anderson Park in Downtown Vernonia and continue around Vernonia Lake. Register for the Turkey Trot:

https://CampCedarRidgeOR.org/trot/

In the afternoon, everyone is welcome to enjoy a *free* **Community Holiday Dinner** in our beautifully decorated dining hall. Register for the Thanksgiving Dinner here:

https://CampCedarRidgeOR.org/thanksgiving/

With all these options, there really is something for everyone. Come for the race, enjoy the holiday meal or join us for the family retreat. We'd love to share this time of gratitude and connection with you!



VERNONIA, OR DISCOVER THE GOOD

AN OREGON EDUCATIONAL NON-PROFIT

### **Our Mission**

Camp Cedar Ridge, an educational 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, provides facilities for youth, adult, family, and organizational events. Camp provides educational programs with a focus on life-long learning, social-emotional development, philosophical curiosity, creative arts, diversity, and cultural responsiveness. Camp programs foster a love of nature and the environment through access to the outdoors, the promotion of eco-literacy, sustainable practices, and a healthy lifestyle with an emphasis on the whole person.