

CAMP CEDAR RIDGE DISPATCH: DISCOVER THE GOOD

Gratitude for Daffodils, a Grand Opening, and Everything In-between

Spring at Camp Cedar Ridge has a way of teaching you something new every year, and this season it was resilience.

When an inspection turned up bed bug casings in March, our first thought wasn't panic but "How do we take care of this, together?" And take care of it, you did. In just fourteen days, this community raised over \$24,000, and within days after that, we hit our full \$25,000 goal. What could have been a devastating setback became one more proof point of who we are: a community that shows up.

While the property was closed for treatment, our Housekeeping and Maintenance teams turned crisis into opportunity, giving every space a deep clean and reset. By March 26th we were officially bug-free, and our middle-schoolers were back for Outdoor School, right on schedule. Thank you doesn't feel like enough, but it's what I have: **Thank You.**

From there, spring moved fast. We prepped the property for more than 500 summer guests, welcomed new and returning staff into the CCR family, and celebrated Vernonia's graduating seniors, including several of our own employees, with **Discover the Good Scholarships.**

And then came June 12th, the day The Cookhouse, our newest addition to the Camp Cedar Ridge Canopy, opened its doors in the historic Brunsman Building. Watching neighbors, staff, Camp Cedar Ridge Board members, and even a few local celebrities gather for that ribbon-cutting was a full-circle moment. Every cup of coffee served there now helps fund the **Vernonia Commons Community Center**, another thread in the canopy of support that we are building together.

This issue is full of these stories, from The Great Bug Out, to a laundry room reorganized with love, a 300-foot Slip N Slide unrolled and ready for summer joy, and celebration of Mother's Day, and more. Thank you for being part of every bit of it. Together, we thrive.

With love and gratitude,
Dr. Kasey Wilson, Executive Director



We were blessed with daffodils this spring.



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Dr. Kasey Wilson
Executive Director

News from Camp Cedar Ridge

The Great Bug Out

Help us meet this unexpected and immediate need!

Donate via
Stripe at

[CampCedarRidgeOR.org/donate](https://www.campcedarridgeor.org/donate)

Donate via
Venmo or our
GoFundMe

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/the-great-bug-out>

\$25,000

\$22,844

\$20,000

\$18,000

\$16,000

\$14,000

\$12,000

\$10,000

\$8,000

\$6,000

\$4,000

\$2,000

\$0.00



In two short weeks, our community raised over \$24,000!

The Great Bug Out: Thanks for answering the call!

On March 13, an inspection discovered bed bug casings on the property. The call went out to raise the funds needed to do a full treatment and in just 14 days, our community raised over \$24,000. The full \$25,000 goal was met just a few days later. What felt like an overwhelming obstacle became a beautiful testament to the power of community.

While the fundraiser was underway, our team turned the closure into an opportunity. Housekeeping completed a thorough deep clean and property reset, including a reorganized laundry room, and Maintenance and Housekeeping worked in tandem to prep every space before treatment and put it all back together afterward.

On March 26, the exterminator gave us the all-clear: Camp Cedar Ridge was officially bug free. Guests returned, dozens of middle-schoolers came back for Outdoor School, and our staff got back to work, right where they belong.

To every person who donated, thank you. You kept our doors open, our staff employed, and the magic of Camp Cedar Ridge alive. This is "Together We Thrive" in action.

With love and deep gratitude from the Camp Cedar Ridge Team!

Doing Good with Dunks and Donuts

On Saturday, March 28th, the Open-Air Market in Vernonia was filled with energy, laughter, and the irresistible aroma of fresh donuts as Camp Cedar Ridge hosted **Doing Good with Dunks & Donuts!**, a joyful community fundraiser held as part of **The Great Bug Out**. From early risers gathering for donuts and coffee at 8:00 AM to the afternoon raffle drawing, the day was overflowing with fun and community spirit.

The crowd went wild at noon when Larry Steele, former Portland Trail Blazers legend, took the court to officiate the Basketball 3-Point Shooting Contest. The afternoon kept the energy high with a dunk tank featuring Jim Helmen, School Superintendent, and local community leaders taking the plunge for a great cause. There was also a bounce house, face painting, picnic games, and Holy Smoker BBQ.

And the donuts? Fresh-baked right at Camp Cedar Ridge, the result of our Food Director Carol Sohler's hard work perfecting the recipes and process. Every bite was a sweet reminder of our team's resilience and creativity.

Thank you to everyone who came out and supported Camp Cedar Ridge. You always show up and you always make it fun!

During the closure, Housekeeping did a deep clean and Candace Wayne, Loggin' Laundry manager, did 150 loads of laundry.

Artist, Charlie Campo, provided free face-painting at the **Doing Good** festival

News from Camp Cedar Ridge

Preseason Preparations

Each spring, Camp Cedar Ridge begins a major behind-the-scenes transition to prepare for the busy summer season. By the last weekend in May, we were ready to welcome our first group of the summer – with more than 500 guests!

Jim Bryson and the Maintenance team:

- Uncovered and upgraded the swimming pool
- Installed the 300-foot Slip N Slide
- Refreshed the Event Barn area with new wood chips
- Put up the pod tents and moved/installed bunk beds
- Added lighting to the forest wedding venue.

Jason Coleman, Director of Special Projects, added tiles to the bridal suite walkway and beautified the surrounding grounds,

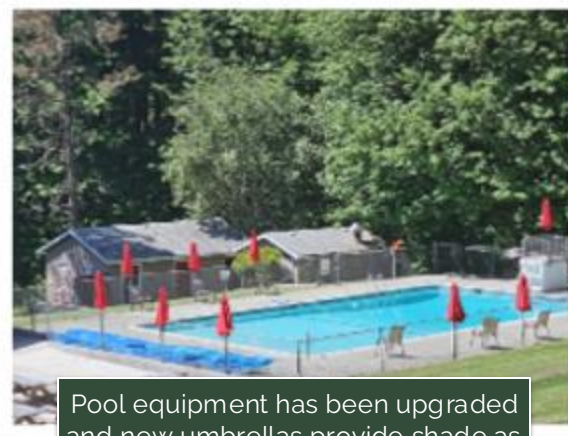
Rio Davenport, Aquatics Manager, prepared the team for swim lessons, including lifeguard safety training and aquatics readiness.

Meanwhile, the housekeeping team, led by **Mercedez Neill**, and proudly calling themselves "The Renegades," gave all the buildings and accommodations a deep cleaning and fresh linens.

What visitors experience as effortless summer magic is the result of teamwork, creativity, and countless acts of dedication behind the scenes.



Aquatics staff sharpen rescue skills during preseason water safety certification training.



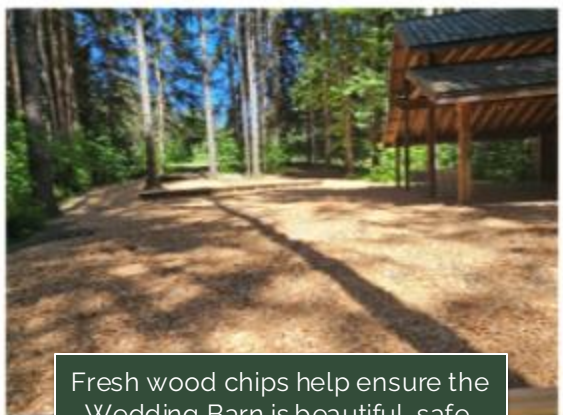
Pool equipment has been upgraded and new umbrellas provide shade as well as a pop of color.



New tiles enhance the walkway to the Wedding loft.



The 300-foot Slip N Slide, a guest favorite, is unrolled and ready to go!



Fresh wood chips help ensure the Wedding Barn is beautiful, safe, and ready for guests.



Special Projects expanded the forest lighting on the trail to the Tree Cathedral.

CCR Welcomes New and Returning Staff



Sunni Gayle has taken up residence at camp as the Director of Vernonia Commons



Mercedez Neill resumes her role as Manager of Housekeeping, after a short hiatus



Welcome, Rio Davenport, our new Aquatics Manager



We are excited to have Jason Coleman back as Director of Special Projects



Rev. Marilyn Sprague rejoins as Spiritual Programs Development Manager



NextGen alumni, India Grace and Bright Wingerter, have joined as on-site staff

Congratulations, Graduates!

Celebrating Vernonia's Future Leaders

Camp Cedar Ridge was honored to participate in the Vernonia High School Senior Awards Night on May 27, recognizing outstanding graduating seniors and their bright futures.

This year, the ***Discover The Good Scholarships*** were awarded to **Addie Coburn**, **Kate Nelson**, and **Elam Cieloha**.

The evening was a wonderful celebration of achievement, perseverance, and community support. We were delighted to see Camp Cedar Ridge staff members and Vernonia seniors **Robyn Naron** and **Luke Simmons** receive multiple scholarships from community organizations, highlighting the remarkable talent, dedication, and promise represented within Vernonia's Class of 2026.

Camp Cedar Ridge is proud to employ Vernonia high school students and extend heartfelt congratulations to all members of the Class of 2026.

Kasey Wilson named *Citizen of the Month*

Thank you to the City of Vernonia City Council, and Councilwoman Susan Wagner, for recognizing the work that Camp Cedar Ridge is doing in the community by selecting Dr. Kasey Wilson, Executive Director of Camp Cedar Ridge, as the March 2026, Citizen of the Month. Thank you for this acknowledgement of the teamwork and hard work of all the staff, volunteers, donors, Board Members, and everyone who contributes the mission of Camp Cedar Ridge.



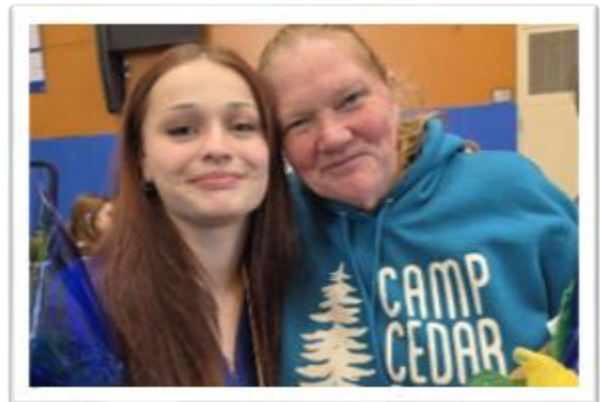
Vernonia City Councilwoman, Susan Wagner, with Dr. Kasey Wilson, Executive Director of Camp Cedar Ridge



Vernonia's Future Leaders: L to R: Kate Nelson, Addie Coburn, Robyn Naron, and Luke Simmons.

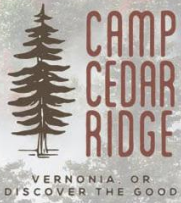


Elam Cieloha, a member of our Vernonia Village and Special Events team, takes third in High Jump at the state track meet in Eugene, OR.



We're so proud of Charlie Campo, long time camp employee and one of our most popular face-paint artists!

News from Camp Cedar Ridge Canopy



Thank you, Dee Barklow, for your many years of loving service and leadership!



Chelsea Taylor, Assistant Director, is a loving presence and mentor.



Vernonia Village staff ensure the programs are fun and engaging.

Introducing the *Camp Cedar Ridge Canopy*

Something exciting is unfolding in Vernonia! What began as a vision through Camp Cedar Ridge has grown into a network of five community-centered businesses: Vernonia Village, Loggin' Laundry, Communication Station, The Cookhouse, and Vernonia Commons, collectively known as the ***Camp Cedar Ridge Canopy***.

Each organization serves a unique purpose, yet together they form a canopy of support strengthening connection and creating opportunities for individuals, families, and the broader Vernonia community to thrive. In this issue, explore what's happening across The Canopy, including the Grand Opening of The Cookhouse.

Vernonia Village Looks Ahead to a Bright Future

There is much to celebrate as another successful school year comes to a close. The 2026–2027 school year contract has been signed with full funding secured — a significant milestone that provides a strong foundation for continued growth and service to Vernonia's youth and families.

This transition also brings a touch of bittersweetness. Longtime Director Dee Barklow is stepping away due to changing family circumstances, and Assistant Director Chelsea Taylor has done an extraordinary job leading the program through the remainder of the year. As Dr. Kasey Wilson shared, "We love Dee to the moon and back and are exceedingly grateful to Chelsea for all she has done. She is a rock star." A search for a new Director is now underway.

The school year closed on June 10th with a joyful end-of-year field trip to Camp Cedar Ridge: swimming, a bounce house, the 300-foot Slip & Slide, and plenty of smiles. Parents, guardians, and siblings joined in, making it a wonderful community celebration and a memorable send-off into summer.

News from Camp Cedar Ridge Canopy

Loggin' Laundry: Small Improvements, Big Impact

Exciting improvements have been taking place at Loggin' Laundry.

- Jason Coleman put his "MacGyver" skills to work sourcing four replacement washers, ensuring community members have reliable access to essential laundry services.
- Mona Adams brought warmth and personality to the space by refreshing the folding table, adding colorful trim details, and installing decorative displays above the dryers.
- Customers can now pay using a mobile app, a highly-requested option.

Loggin' Laundry continues to be much more than a laundromat. Through the Freedge program, free food remains available to those experiencing food insecurity. The Laundry Love program continues to expand, helping ensure more community members have access to clean clothing regardless of financial circumstances.

The Communication Station Expands its Services

The Communication Station is now offering new and exciting services:

- Residents can now bring in packages for shipping with UPS and Amazon returns instead of having to drive 40 min. to the next nearest UPS location. Many customers have expressed how much they appreciate this service.
- On May 28th, our new Konica C251i copier was installed. We now provide expanded printing services to the local community and small businesses.
- We continue to search for and stock unique souvenirs, gifts, and books as well as local honey from Farmer Gene's Bees.

We are grateful to everyone who has supported Communication Station's continued growth and look forward to serving the community in even more meaningful ways in the months ahead.



The folding area has been refreshed and decorative updates have been made.



Mona Adams, one of our long-time and trusted partners, puts the finishing touches on recent Loggin' Laundry improvements



Customers can now pay for laundry with a credit card using the PayRange app.



Our new window decal



Besties check out the latest goodies.



Kasey oversees install of our new Konica copier.

Welcome to The Cookhouse!

The Cookhouse is located in the historic Brunsmann Building, and carries the spirit of Vernonia's timber heritage, resilience, hard work, and neighborly connection.

With the support of Camp Cedar Ridge staff, local businesses, volunteers, and many

generous friends, The Cookhouse held its Grand Opening on June 12, 2026. The Camp Board, local residents, friends, and even a few celebrities joined in the festivities.

Every guest we serve helps support the Vernonia Commons Community Center,

which offers classes, youth programs, community gatherings, and lifelong learning opportunities in The Cookhouse space after 2 PM. With grateful hearts, thank you for being part of The Cookhouse community — one meal, one cup, one connection at a time.

March: The work begins



Ben Pelster

April: The custom barn doors were built and installed, walls were painted, and the floor was sanded and painted. Customer seating was set up



Reta Jarvie



The crew takes a break to taste-test The Cookhouse's fresh donuts



L to R: Jim Bryson, Jason Coleman, India Grace, Mercedes Neill, Bright Wingerter, Geoff Hamburg, Diego Reyes

The mural is updated with pancakes



Artist, JB White

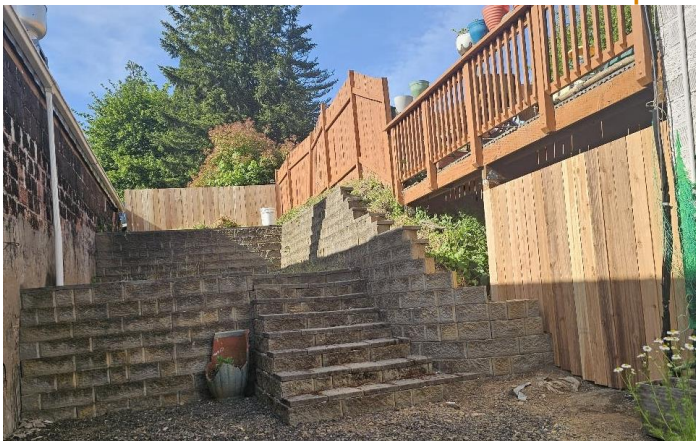
May: The new signs are up



Jason Coleman, Jim Bryson



June: Finishing touches include new privacy fencing and sails to shade the patio



The Point-of-Sale system is up and running



Michelle Geyer, Naomi Pelster

The Cookhouse Grand Opening, June 12

Welcome to
The Cookhouse!



The Rusty Buckets provided
entertainment and ambience



Delicious samples were
made fresh



Director of The Cookhouse, Tera Baker

Friends and celebrities alike turned out for the fun



Scott Laird, Vernonia's Voice editor and
Darcey Edwards, District 31 Representative



L to R: Steve Burton, Larry Steele, and
Diego Reyes



Kathy Ballard and
Candace Wayne



Mercedes Neill,
Rev. Marilyn Sprague,
Carol Sohler

Welcome, Camp Cedar Ridge Board



L to R: Steve Burton, Dr. Tye Minckler, Dr. Tracy Brown,
Dr. Steve Gabrielson, Rev. Dr. Stephen Rambo.
Not pictured: Charlie McClung

It's official - The Cookhouse is open!



Executive Director, Kasey Wilson, cuts the ribbon with
assistance from Stephen Rambo, CCR Board President

Vernonia Happenings

Hats, Hearts, and Blooms A FASCINATING TEA PARTY EXTRAVAGANZA



Each year, this Mother's Day tea sells out



Guests enjoy tea, treats, fellowship, and an array of festive fascinators at the Hats, Hearts & Blooms Tea Party



Teacups, playing cards, and a bit of Wonderland magic created the perfect backdrop for tea party photos

Hats, Hearts, and Blooms Mother's Day Tea

Camp Cedar Ridge was blooming with laughter, creativity, and heartfelt connection on Sunday, May 10th, as guests gathered for the second annual *Hats, Hearts, and Blooms Mother's Day Tea*, which sold out for the second year in a row!

Guests enjoyed elegant décor, delicious food, and meaningful moments together. The wildly popular *Fascinator Station* invited guests to design playful tea-party headwear, while the Gratitude Tree, where guests wrote personal notes honoring mothers, grandmothers, and mentors, gradually blossomed into a moving visual expression of love and appreciation.

A huge round of applause goes to Carol, Trina, Jessie, Cindy, and the entire Food Service team, who elevated the experience with beautiful High Tea artistry, including freshly baked scones, thumbprint cookies, delicate teas, and elegantly presented sweet and savory bites. Special appreciation also goes to:

- **Candace Wayne** for transforming teapots into whimsical fresh-flower centerpieces
- **Diego Reyes** for keeping the atmosphere uplifting as DJ
- **Jason Coleman** for the countless behind-the-scenes errands
- **Laura Paradiso, Donella Wallace, Danielle Root, India Grace, Suni Gayle, Dee Barklow, and Chelsea Taylor** for event support and décor that transformed the space into a magical setting.

Many attendees shared they had not previously heard of Camp Cedar Ridge, which makes the event not only a beautiful celebration, but a meaningful opportunity for community connection and outreach.



Volunteer Kathryn Richer welcomes guests



Guests express their creativity at the Fascinator Creation Station, designing festive hats for the tea party

Upcoming Events



Wedding Menu Tasting

Save the date

Sunday, October 18, 2026

weddings@CampCedarRidgeOR.org



Visit our Website for More Info: CampCedarRidgeOR.org/trot



Save the Date

Camp Cedar Ridge

5th ANNIVERSARY
WEEKEND
Celebration



MAY 21 - 23, 2027

Join us as we celebrate five years of camp,
community, and memories



MORE DETAILS COMING SOON!
CampCedarRidgeOR.org