



# CASCADE CHRONICLES

Issue 8, 2026

*The mission of Cascade Volunteers is to connect individuals and communities to the Willamette National Forest and adjacent public lands through programs, stewardship, and education.*



Salt Creek Falls, (Willamette National Forest, OR), near Willamette Pass. It is the 2nd highest plunge waterfall in the state. Click [Here](#) to read more. *(Photo courtesy of Peter Buck)*

## 2026 Volunteer Appreciation Event – Rhonda Levine



On March 14, 2026, approximately 135 people gathered for the annual event. The theme was Hawaiian and tables were nicely decorated to reflect the occasion. Many folks came hours ahead to set up and make sure all details were attended to. The food was catered and offered a nice buffet featuring chicken teriyaki and Kahlua pork with leftovers available to go. The drinks were everything from sparkling water to Hawaiian beers. As folks arrived there were hors d'oeuvres available.

The entire evening was orchestrated by CV's very own Stacy Rudisill, (Program Manager), and Wenmimareba Klobah, (Volunteer Coordinator). They put in a lot of energy and many hours to make this very special. Jeff Southwick created CV Bingo cards and that encouraged folks to mingle. There were Bingo prizes.

Judy Mitchell, who served as the MC of the event, announced that dinner was served. She then welcomed the attendees, introduced the CV staff and then the Board Members. Forest Service representative Omero Torres gave folks an overview of what had been accomplished in 2025. Over 600 volunteers logged 40,000 hours with a value of \$1.4 million. Incredible! Duane Bishop, acting Forest Supervisor, spoke about the upcoming year and the importance of volunteers.

*And then it was time for the awards.*



*The Judy Mitchell Volunteer of the Year Award* went to *Becky Hope* and was conferred by Omero, Duane, and Stacy. Very briefly... Becky has been involved with CV for as long as it has been in existence doing horse packing, trail work, training, liaisons with other volunteer groups and oversees Skills College. This is far from all but you get the idea. (Photo = Duane Bishop, Becky Hope)

*The Willamette Lasting Impact Award* went to *Adam Kirsch*. Adam is a high school woodshop teacher in Corvallis. It was conferred by Forest Service representative Eric Gjonnes. Adam and his students, two of whom were there with him, designed, planned and made approximately 300 trail signs. And they are working on an additional 43 more! And they donate time and materials. (Photo = OmeroTorres, Adam Kirsch, Eric Gjonnes)

*The Cascade Trail Stewardship Award* went to *Garrett Turner*. It was conferred by Judy Mitchell and Riley McManus from the McKenzie River Ranger District. Garrett is a long-time Scorpion and has been doing trail work with that group for many years. He leads crosscut saw workdays, plans trips and collaborates with many others. He is a leader and a mentor. (Photo = Omero Torres, Garret Turner, Riley McManus)

Judy offered thoughts, information and announcements. She reminded folks of the upcoming **Skills College**. And then it was time for door prizes. Most of which were provided by CV. Some local artists also provided pieces. People could visit and enjoy time together.

A big thank you to Jim Suiter, Jeff Southwick, Becky Hope (and her BCHO group) and Matt Peterson from the WNF for helping with set up, and clean-up as well as washing dishes afterwards.

## Upcoming Events

### Skills College 2026 Registration Underway! – Stacy Rudisill

Cascade Volunteers is gearing up for its annual Skills College weekend scheduled **May 14<sup>th</sup> – May 17<sup>th</sup>** at HJ Andrews Experimental Forest. This fun-filled weekend is a great opportunity to meet other active volunteers while learning the fundamentals of trail maintenance and stewardship. Hands-on courses are run by experienced volunteers and Forest Service recreation staff.

The Skills College Planning Committee continues to strive to fill the long weekend with comprehensive courses and new offerings. Courses range from beginner, “Introduction to Trail Maintenance,” to more advanced courses like “Rigging” and “Maintaining Rock Retaining Walls.” Active volunteers interested in learning what it takes to be a crew leader should check out “Project Planning, Managing Crews, & Radio and Emergency Communications.”

New this year are group presentations built into every morning & evening with topics such as “Nonviolent Communication” and “Leave No Trace” presentations. CV will roll out the Volunteer Code of Conduct and offer drop-in Better Impact training sessions. Always fun - don't miss out on the Crosscut Saw “Competition” where everyone can experience using a crosscut saw.

Spring Leadership Summit takes place Friday afternoon and offers group/crew leaders and forest and CV staff the opportunity to meet ahead of the busy upcoming season for crucial updates, guidance and resources. Those interested in taking part should register early as class space is limited. All skill levels are encouraged. More information and registration details can be found [Here](#).

### Notice to Aspiring Sawyers: Spring 2026 CV Saw Classes – Wenmimareba Kobah

Save the dates for spring saw classes! These are two-day classes that lead to USFS certification.



Prerequisite is a first aid and CPR card; must have some in-person component and be completed before the date of the saw class. Minimum ages are 16 for crosscut and 18 for chainsaw.

Location is being finalized, however will likely be along the Hwy 126 corridor at HJ Andrews Experimental Forest.

Crosscut Class: **May 30-31**, registration now open  
Chainsaw Class: **June 13-14**; registration opens **April 30**

Who should take the classes?

Any volunteer interested in cutting on National Forest or BLM lands with a crosscut saw or chainsaw. Sawyers whose saw card has expired should take the class if they have not attended a Forest Service saw class for five years or more.

Sawyers whose card will expire this year may re-certify through a single-day field evaluation, often done during a planned volunteer workday that involves logcut.

The cost of the class is free; however, donations are gladly accepted to help keep the classes available for the future.

For questions contact:

- Cascade Volunteers Saw Program coordinator [Beth Dayton](#)
- Associate Saw Program Coordinator [Brad Engelbert](#)

If you do not yet have an account with Cascade Volunteers, please contact [Volunteer Coordinator](#). Click [Here](#) for more details on the CV Saw Program.

## Love Your Lake Update 2026 – Lyndell Wilken



(Lyndell, Heidi, Ane)

It appears that the adopt a lake program will be off to an early start this spring. With the minimal snowpack and warmer weather people will be venturing to the lakes earlier this year. The 70 Love Your Lake volunteers will be getting out their Forest Service Volunteer hats in preparation for a trip to their lake.



For new volunteers there will be training on **July 15** at Rosary Lakes. Contact Lyndell if you are interested.



(Lyndell, Sanjana, Emily, Karol)

## Other News & Stories

### Lower Breitenbush Hot Springs Public Meeting Summary – Woody Jackson

On February 28, 2026, the public was invited to a meeting at the Detroit Ranger District to discuss Lower Breitenbush Hot Springs and share preliminary concepts for a site plan. The meeting was well attended with approximately 50 people.

The presentation opened with Ranger King who set the tone for the day's discussions. Project lead Cayla Kennedy presented a brief overview of the springs' cultural and heritage stories and the district's work to restore the springs and bring them back online for the Forest and the public.



Following Cayla, the meeting moved into the district foyer to view a series of dioramas illustrating restoration possibilities. Attendees were encouraged to discuss the springs with landscape architecture students and district staff, which provided signboards and Post-it notes for comments.

To conclude the day the meeting was reconvened for final remarks and public questions/comments. The day was productive and encouraging. The event will, in part, spark public interest and further discussion about how to provide a vital family-friendly recreational opportunity in the Forest. Click [Here](#) to read the

February article in the Statesman Journal.

## First Aid/CPR Classes – Becky Hope

Cascade Volunteers offered First Aid and CPR certification classes needed by CV volunteers who work in the outdoor and saw programs. About 60 people were trained.

We want to thank Volunteer Paramedic Laurie Monico, Brian Roddy (CPR and First Aid Instructor with Mountain Rescue), Steven Eller (ski patroller and an NSP Outdoor Emergency Care Instructor), Becky Hope, RN(CEN) and Clackamas College for their instructional help.

## Ridgeline Magazine, Check it Out!

Do you know there is an [outdoor magazine](#) about Southern Willamette Valley? The editor, Chad Shelton, moved here from Bozeman, MT to take a job in 2022. He was a hiker, skier and fisherman. He wasn't finding information here about what to do and where to do it so he decided to create a magazine with that in mind. He modeled it on the Bozeman publication he read called Outdoor Bozeman. Its purpose was to let folks in one part of the state know about outdoor activities in other parts of the state. To get people out exploring and enjoying nature everywhere.

While Chad develops the magazine, he is also the regional marketing guy for Willamette Pass Ski Area as well as two other ski areas. He has begun to offer print editions of the magazine. You can go to their website to find locations or send [email](#) to learn more. He is reliant on ad printing for his operating funds and would love to have stories and photographs from anyone with a story to tell and a place to explore.

## Winter Trails and Shelters Report 2026 – Lyndell Wilken



Sadly, this snow season has not gone well given the low snowpack and inability to reach signs and diamond markers. The plan will be to scout the trails through the summer months and see if we need to organize work parties for a trail that needs help before next season begins.

On a positive note, we had two woodstoves donated by Roy Nelson and Jim Chenowith. Jim will be able to deliver more stoves in the future so the need for shelter stoves has been met. Reports have come in about downed trees on the trails, and the sawyer crews will take care of those as the summer and fall seasons allow. The stove pipes in Westview and the Gold Lake Shelters will need replacement and volunteer David Klick will be working with John Sides and the Forest Service to get that done.

Posters with QR-codes will be posted in all six Willamette Pass Shelters. This means visitors can use their phones to donate towards the maintenance of these shelters that are now decades old. Stacy Rudisill crafted the poster, and it was approved by the Forest Service. The old method of placing paper envelopes in each shelter will be retired.

Thanks to all the volunteers who have tried to check their trails and shelters despite lack of snow. These volunteers make sure the shelters upkeep is maintained and vandalism is reported in a timely manner.

## ODFW's Wolf vs Coyote ID Quiz

ODFW put together [this](#) fun and incredibly informative wolf vs coyote ID quiz. Now that more people are calling in about a potential wolf sighting, this might be something to help learn more on how to ID these mammals based on something other than quick looks or a blurry photo.

Upon reading each description, it will give you the answer, which has helpful information. For instance, wolves get fluffy in the winter to help protect them from the cold; a yearling wolf can look like an adult coyote. It's helpful and educational.

## Interview with David Klick – Rhonda Levine



David's reputation preceded his arrival. I already knew he was a man of many talents who was available to volunteer wherever needed in the Forest wilderness areas. He has adopted South Waldo Lake with the Love Your Lake program and is a steward of the shelter there. Which means he makes sure that shelter is taken care of and is ready for travelers. He thinks of it as the Marriott of the Wilderness.

David grew up in Portland. At 15 he wanted to be a Ranger. It didn't work out. He worked for many years in produce for Fred Meyer and at some point, decided to become an LMT. He trained at the Oregon School of Massage and that job sometimes overlapped with his produce job. As of 2 years ago, he retired from both jobs and now has time and energy to pour into volunteer work. Most of that is with Cascade Volunteers who he describes as "smart, hardy and inclusive". In Portland he helps with emergency earthquake training, SOLV (which does cleanup work), helps with Focus on Youth, he's a member of the Salmonberry Trails "Rails to Trails" group, and he's done more than 50 backpacking trips in all types of weather. I'm pretty sure there is even more that he has done.

He comes to Eugene regularly for 3-4 days, often camping in his car when the weather permits. He sometimes brings Jasper along... he's a 15-pound Lundehund also known as a puffin hound -- looks like a fox. You can find him helping the Scorpions, Camas Crew, Love Your Lake and more. He told us a tale of trying to get a trail through or around a 12' root ball on Horse Creek with the Scorpions. He fixed a broken chimney at the Fuji shelter. **Alone.** And he had no idea how to get the job done. It was repaired somehow.

One interesting adventure he's done yearly is with Cycle Oregon. He and 19 other LMTs, part of the "Cycle Oregon Massage Team", go along in their vehicles bringing massage materials so they can offer body work to the riders. In a week or so he can make 10% of his total income. He's a very busy man during that week!

Thanks to David a lot of projects are being done, and a lot of programs are functioning well. He's a great example of how passion translates to action. We are so grateful!

## Hubris – Mike Smith

I paddled upstream on Basswood River solo, the international boundary, knowing in advance that strong current is one of three things that will stop a solo paddler cold, the other two being wind and muck. All three require a second paddler to make forward progress. I had been fortunate so far; it was a nice June day, the current not strong, and I made good time.

I reached a small peninsula on the Canadian side, portaging the canoe maybe 50 feet, where I encountered a stronger current but thought if I paddled hard on my right, I would be perfectly situated to deal with the it and ferry or angle across the river to the US side to Horse Portage, a mile carry ending at Basswood Lake.

The solo canoe had a removable yoke that screwed on for portaging but unscrewed later, allowing one to paddle without interference. I decided to leave the yoke on while I crossed the river, for it was perhaps 100 yards' paddling, and I wouldn't have to put the yoke back on. I could handle this. My decision was at best lazy, at worst, not smart.

As I pushed off from shore I noted I was sitting higher in the canoe than I liked or was used to because of the yoke. Stories like these usually have a five-word phrase: "**the next thing that happened,**" I was underwater

and hanging on to the canoe, before I could say the bad six word phrase, “**This can’t be happening to me.**” I had literally been thrown out of the canoe. I was still close to shore and was able to push the canoe back to empty what little water was shipped. I then *re-portaged* the way I had come, so I could *relaunch* and use the spare paddle I had with me, a smart thing to have, to paddle downstream to *retrieve* the paddle that had left my arm, which would help me *relax*. Outfitters like their equipment *returned*, and I like paddling with something longer than my forearm. I fortunately found the other paddle in a quiet pool downstream. It was the only time I ever used a spare paddle on a canoe trip.

I was soaked, but the day was warm, and doing the portage for a mile would keep me that way. Better yet, nobody witnessed the event. I reached Basswood, paddled out to the Canadian side to where there was 100 square feet of bare, flat rock in the lake. I completely undressed, nobody within miles, dried myself, lay down for a while, while everything that was wet dried in the bright sun before continuing.

I had let complacency think I was better than I really was. The current requires constant attention and can never be misjudged. A man drowned in Basswood years later not far upstream from where I was, shooting

Upper Basswood Falls in Spring. He had done it before, remarkably dangerous, but did not realize how much more powerful the high water of spring was that year. He was 72. His wife survived. This is an example of **familiarity**, where doing something successfully once makes one think they can do it again.

See you on the trail or the portage. Nobody ever drowned on a portage. Wear a PFD while in a watercraft. Always.

## Attention All BottleDrop Users!

Behind every cleared mile of trail is a crew fueled by the community. They’re out in the Cascades putting in sweat equity, and you can help them keep the tools sharp!

By donating your Bottle Drop credits, you’re supporting the crosscut maintenance, lumber, chainsaw fuel, and gear that keep these trails open." Scan your Blue Bags or transfer your credits to Cascade Volunteers. Every nickel builds the trail! If you’d like blue bags with our scan code on them, contact [Karol](#) and we will make sure you get one!

## Closing Note – Rhonda Levine, CV Editor

Watch for the Newsletter the last week of alternate months. We encourage you to volunteer, as we are doing, to make a difference. And if you’d like to write something and include photos for **YOUR** Newsletter... please do.

When submitting photos, please ID the individuals, the location(s), and ensure that permission to use the photo(s) for publication has been provided.

Please send email with your articles and (photos) to [Rhonda](#). We ask that photos be an attachment or shared link rather than embedded in the text of the article. The **deadline** for the June Newsletter is **Monday, 6/15/2026**.