

Facilities Committee Spring 2026 Membership Update

Hello from the Facilities Committee and/or Monday Facilities Crew of Mariah Scott, Steve Wester, Ethan Avery, Kevin Denning, William Merring, and Art Shook,

I am excited to talk to you all about the Facilities Committee and Circle Pines Center's work to uphold our mission. While each committee's role is difficult to define, we in the Facilities Committee plan and work to keep the grounds of Circle Pines safe and functioning in a way aligned with our mission statements of environmental stewardship and cooperation. If you would like to join or know more, please reach out to the chair, Mariah Scott. Circle Pines is also a community of caring, hardworking individuals. So, facilities work at Circle Pines happens as a result of both collaborative and self-guided efforts of the Facilities Committee, the Monday Facilities Volunteer Crew, staff of Circle Pines, members, volunteers, guests, and the larger community!

I would love to give a special mention to Sean Ricksgers (Dino), Dan Ricksgers, Chris Schleuder, Tera John, Gerardo Reyes, Noah Silver-Mathews, Danielle Hoskins, Baby DuBose-Carlson, Ericka Gonzalez-Guzman, Noble Price, Tom VanHammen, all our Buttermilk Jamboree Volunteers, the volunteers from Trane Technologies, and Eddie DeGraw for all the work they have done for the Circle Pines grounds!

The committee has been focused on how to do a lot with a little. We have been utilizing limited funds, lumber milled from the property, our local connections, our expertise, and wonderful members of our community to get a lot done during the colder months of the year. Having a dedicated crew come every Monday to work on the grounds, a local business have a volunteer day with us (where Danyelle organized a day of volunteers from her office that had never been to CPC before), and all the great work that is done by Buttermilk Volunteers leading up to the festival, the grounds are looking better and better each week! We will try to list the facilities work and upgrades since the fall membership meeting, but there will definitely be improvements we forgot to include. We hope you notice to the improvements on the grounds!

- Keeping a maintenance log for facilities suggestions on the side porch
- A fantastic amount of work in the garden and landscaping areas near the farmhouse
 - This was a vision of many people, led by Baby DuBose-Carlson, Ericka Gonzalez-Guzman, and Noble Price who worked during the garden institute
- Mowing and cleaning of the grounds
 - A special and extreme thank you to Steve Wester for donating our new mower! William, Art, and Steve have been leading the charge on making landscaping improvements
- Cleaning the farmhouse basement, swallows basement, fuel shed, large barn, Buttermilk storage shed, the old sawmill area, butler shed, pizza chapel, rec hall, recycle shed, the yard in front of the green barn, and green barn itself to be functional work and storage spaces
 - Decluttering has been a major goal of the Monday Facilities Crew, that improves the cleanliness of Circle Pines, helps us better care for what we have, and allows us to respond to maintenance needs faster
 - With the advice of the CPC Staff, we have been finding the balance of sustainably reducing expensive clutter
- Removing larger pieces of clutter from the grounds, including a broken vehicle and most of an abandoned trailer, as well as repairing some of our trailers
- Pruning in the orchard
- Repairs to the ramp to swallows, which need additional repairs and likely a full replacement
- Painting the kitchen and repairing and replacing trim and tiles
- Cleaning the staff lounge, as an available conference room
- Replacing the yellow cabin roof
- Assorted cabin repairs, especially safety concerns in the Junior's unit

- Preparing the grounds for our busy season, which involved pipe repairs and improving the water areas, with Tom VanHammen leading the repairs in Royal Flush
- Assessing trees for what needs to be removed and when, along with several dead trees being removed in the Junior's unit
- Painting the yellow cabin, orchard bathhouse, art barn, rec hall benches, and butler shed. If a building with a mural needs to be repainted, we are photographing the mural beforehand, to make a scrapbook of the creativity of our community!
- Lots of cleaning!

Upcoming facilities projects in the near future will work on improving cabins, including repairing the storm damage to the yellow cabin, repairing water damage in Swallows bathrooms, and beautifying the campus.

Larger projects we are hoping to do when funds and supplies are available are to repair the sauna (see the land use report), replace the farmhouse and swallows ramps, and replace the kitchen floors.

We are really hoping to shift the space to be more welcoming to all and encourage people to leave the place better than they found it. A lot of volunteer hours and funds have been put into getting the grounds more clean and operational. We are hoping this reset to the cleanliness levels, change policies, and increase signage and communication will help people view care of the grounds as part of the cooperative spirit.

Example:

Before



After



Policy change: Have camper artwork on buildings be in specific areas for encouraged creativity, such as installed chalkboards, or murals planned with the art director.

There have been larger examples like this, but other examples include groups moving furniture, not putting tools back, graffiti such as swear words painted on a newly donated couch, and children not cleaning up after games and leaving a wooden fort in the way of mowing.