

Vernonia Springs Ready for Another Summer Season

Things just keep getting better at Vernonia Springs, the eco-friendly outdoor retreat and event center located six miles south of Vernonia on Highway 47.

Owner Jeff Walton has once again been busy in the off-season, and gave *Vernonia's Voice* a tour of the facility and showed us the changes.

Originally purchased in 2013, the 28 acre, forested property had been Lee's U-Catch trout farm, with a pond and large pavilion. Walton originally remodeled the pavilion, constructed a straw-bale lodge, and built a restroom and shower facility, before opening for business and renting the facility for weddings and retreats, as well as welcoming overnight guests.

"I think the big difference now is that we really have a direction," says Walton. "When we first opened we didn't know what the market was going to want."

Since opening Vernonia Springs

has added an outdoor kitchen area, with a food cart featuring a wood-fired pizza oven and offering breakfast and dinner for guests. They've installed five yurts and are in the process of constructing five wall tents for "glamping" – camping with amenities. Bicycle rentals have also been popular, including electric

bikes, with easy access to the Banks-Vernonia State Trail.

New this year is a micro farm which will provide fresh produce for events. A new fountain feature is also being completed, which will be a nice addition for weddings.

Weddings are making up the

bulk of the business at Vernonia Springs. Group events like yoga retreats and glamping have also been popular. Walton has also dabbled in special events, hosting a concert last year, and will host an Artisan & Farmers Market on July 6.

For more information go to www.vernoniasprings.com.



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