

WASHINGTON AND OREGON GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS HELP VETERANS

Lakewood, WA

Nearly 65 volunteers, a collection of Golf Course Superintendents from the states of Oregon and Washington working together with Military Veterans, prepared the American Lake Veterans' Golf Course for Spring in a large, collaborative effort on March 15th. This all-volunteer labor force provided time and equipment to aerate greens and tee boxes, while also cleaning the debris remaining on the ground from a harsher winter than normal. In less than 5 hours the course was ready for its spring rush of golfers.

The effort was a collaboration of the Oregon Golf Course Superintendents Association (OGCSA) and the Western Washington Golf Course Superintendents Association (WWGCSA). Each is a regional chapter of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA). 40 members of the two chapters were joined by 25 volunteers, veterans of American Armed Forces, who regularly help maintain the course – and they do so for no compensation, other than seizing the opportunity to provide a refuge for both active and retired, abled and disabled, military personnel.



Association Superintendents show off their version of "A Chorus Line"

American Lake Veterans' Golf Course, which was built after World War II in the mid-50s, is on the grounds of the VA Hospital in Lakewood, WA. Its mission is to "provide much-needed rehabilitation and recreational outlet for the growing population of veterans, many of whom are disabled..." It has served patients healing from all types of injuries for many years. In 1995, after the US government withdrew all funding for the course's operation and maintenance, volunteers offered to take up the challenge of keeping the course going.

Gabe Hughes, president of the OGCSA, expressed it this way: "American Lake is not simply there as a leisure retreat, but a place for rehabilitation, therapy, and socialization, to assist our Veterans. Any way that we can give back to them, is an honor for me and my fellow Superintendents." Hughes' counterpart, Sean Reehoorn, the

president of the WWGCSA said simply, "... an amazing day at American Lake Veterans' Golf Course, Oregon and Washington members working together, I'm so proud to be a part of this group."

Randy Moen is the Superintendent at the American Lake Veterans' Course, and he's also a volunteer. His reaction to the special day? "The course is in great shape thanks to unselfish professional generosity of the Washington and Oregon Superintendent Associations. Our Veterans that we serve, are most grateful. [The Superintendents] have made me an instant Rock Star with all of the "Heroes" I get to serve, for this, I THANK YOU!!!"

Getting the course ready for Spring with the help of the Golf Course Superintendents, who greatly admire the veterans that the American Lake course serves, is symbolic of the thanks that all Americans have, and a chance to provide some extra hope in an environment as beautiful as a golf course.

Watch this video produced by Washington Rock Quarries to get a feel for the day: [Veterans' Service Project](#)

Mission Accomplished.