



Director's Message

*A Monthly Report from the Washington
State Department of Veterans Affairs*



Director John Lee
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VETERANS CONSERVATION ACADEMY GEARS UP FOR FALL 2008

With the resounding success of the 2007 Green River Community College Veterans Conservation Academy, the 2008 Legislature provided additional funding allowing programs to be started at Olympic Community College and Spokane Community College. Even before completing the program, four Green River students have started environmental businesses.

Certificate program options at Green River Community College include Water and Wastewater Management, GIS, Fire Science, and Natural Resources. Olympic and Spokane Community Colleges are currently developing their one-year certificate offerings and veterans can also work toward their Associates Degree at any site.

For veterans wishing to volunteer through the Veterans Conservation Corps, there are many summer volunteer opportunities throughout the state as well as several opportunities for summer jobs allowing veterans to explore what the environmental field has to offer.

For more information please contact Mark Fischer at markf@dva.wa.gov or 360-725-2224. Space is available for up to thirty students at Green River and up to twelve students at both the Olympic and Spokane sites.

EASTERN WA STATE VETERANS CEMETERY

On May 20, a team from WDVA, the Cemetery Governance Committee and JGM will travel to Washington D.C. to meet with representatives of the Federal VA State Cemetery Grants Program.

The purpose of the meeting is to review WDVA's Cemetery Master Plan submission which includes the full Master Plan Report, estimates and architectural narratives, a Wetlands Report & Delineation by Towey Ecological Services, a GeoEngineers Geptech Report and Full Size Master Plan Drawings.

The in-person meeting will allow for a thorough review of all documentation and provide the ability for questions to be asked and answered at one time.

YOU'RE INVITED!

TO PUSH UP YOUR SLEEVES AND HELP WITH A LITTLE OUTDOOR SPRING CLEANING!

The Washington Soldiers Home at Orting and the Washington Veterans Home at Retsil are holding Beautification Days and inviting staff, volunteers and community members to participate in some old fashioned spring cleaning on the grounds of these homes.

As you know, our facilities are more than just nursing care centers - they are *Home* to several hundred veterans, spouses and widows. We hope to see you outside at Orting on May 20 and at Retsil on May 23.

For more information on Orting's Beautification Day contact Romy Rivera at (360) 893-4501

For more information on Retsil's Beautification Day contact Jim Brown at (360) 895-4709

LICENSE PLATES AVAILABLE TO FAMILIES SOON

The 2008 State Legislature approved a measure allowing the families of veterans to honor their loved ones service and sacrifice by purchasing Armed Forces License Plates. Plates will be available to families beginning June 12, 2008.

Two new decals will also be available on June 12, "Family" and "Gold Star". Not only does this allow families to support their veterans by showing their pride and appreciation, it will also generate additional funds to be used for the first State Veterans Cemetery in Eastern Washington and to serve homeless veterans.

Number of Armed Forces Plates Sold as of 4/30/08

- Air Force: 1,669
 - Army: 3,094
 - Coast Guard: 529
 - Marine Corps: 1,846
 - National Guard: 386
 - Navy: 1,926
- Total: 9,450