

The Houghton Lake Resorter

Houghton Lake, Michigan

Volunteers install new doors at AMVETS cabins in Home Depot grant project

November 23, 2023



'EASIER THAN THE FIRST'

The Home Depot Assistant Manager Justin Longmire installs his second door of the day at one of the AMVETS of Michigan cabins, 106 Thorpe Ave., Higgins Lake, Nov. 16. Longmire said the second door was "easier than the first" to install. He was part of a small crew of employees from The Home Depot of Houghton Lake to volunteer to install 16 doors, as well as vinyl brick moulding. □

AMVETS of Michigan's lodge and cabins, located on the northwest shore of Higgins Lake, received some tender loving care Nov. 16.

AMVETS State Finance Officer Craig Robinson said the lodge applied for and received a Veterans Day Grant from The Home Depot Foundation for about \$5,700 for new storm doors on the cabins.

Volunteers from The Home Depot's Houghton Lake store started work at 7:30 a.m. on installing 16 Anderson 400 Series doors, 12 of which are intended for the cabins and the rest for the lodge.

The Home Depot Manager Jeromy Werra said it was part of The Home Depot Foundation's "Operation Surprise."

"The AMVETS Department of Michigan is honored to partner with them to give this a facelift," State Commander Keri Witte said of The Home Depot, adding that the lodge and cabins offer a comfortable respite for veterans and their families.

"Our local Home Depot has been superb to work with," Robinson said. "They've been fantastic."

Robinson said the effort was part of "phase 1," which included exterior painting. "Phase 2" will focus on the interiors of the cabins, he said.

"This was a huge project we wanted to get done before winter," he said. "They did a fantastic job!"

Participating were seven employees, Werra, Assistant Manager Justin Longmire, Assistant Manager Jeff DeWitt, Erica Underwood, John Richardson, Randy French, Tylor Quintel and Underwood's daughter, Olivia Linegar.

In September, 2013, the beachfront of the AMVETS of Michigan lodge and cabins was upgraded when a crew of about 120 employees from The Home Depot converged for the company's annual Team Home Depot project to benefit veterans.

Robinson said the AMVETS cabins are available year-round for veterans and their families. Each cabin can hold 10 people.

So far this year, 861 people were served, he said, and the year before, that number was 1,300.

Some of the cabins are named, such as the one named in honor of the late Duane Dewey, Michigan's only Congressional Medal of Honor recipient.

Robinson said the lodge was built in 1881 and was operated by veterans of the Spanish-American War.

Eventually, the State of Michigan asked the AMVETS to operate it, he said, and deeded it to the organization under a deed of perpetuity. He said the AMVETS' mission is to serve veterans and their families through education and recreation.

Lodging is available on a tiered fee basis, starting with AMVETS members, sons, auxiliary and riders; then veterans and first responders. The general public can rent a cabin at a much higher rate, Robinson said.

To book a cabin, he said to call the lodge office at (989) 821-6574 or email amvetsslodge@yahoo.com.

In the future, he said online booking will be available.

To make a donation to the AMVETS of Michigan lodge and cabins, make checks payable to AMVETS Department of Michigan, designating it for "renovation project."



WORKING TOGETHER

Tylor Quintel (left), an order fulfillment associate, and Randy French, a millwork specialist, install a door on one the AMVETS cabins. French said he has also volunteered on a Houghton Lake Historical Playhouse project and Habitat for Humanity projects downstate.



GIFT FROM THE HOME DEPOT

The Home Depot Manager Jeromy Werra (left) presents AMVETS State Finance Officer Craig Robinson with a canvas featuring an apron from The Home Depot. Robinson said he would hang it in the AMVETS lodge office.



BEFORE AND AFTER

AMVETS cabins received a facelift last week from volunteers at The Home Depot, Houghton Lake. (Above) the old storm doors were removed and (below) the new doors were installed. (Photos courtesy of Craig Robinson)



THE CREW

Employees of The Home Depot gathered at the AMVETS of Michigan cabins, Higgins Lake, at 7:30 a.m. Nov. 16 to start work on installing new screen doors. Pictured are (left to right) Manager Jeremy Werra, Olivia Linegar (daughter of Erica Underwood), Underwood, Tylor Quintel, Assistant Manager Justin Longmire, Randy French, Assistant Manager Jeff DeWitt and John Richardson. DeWitt and AMVETS State Finance Officer Craig Robinson (not pictured), both Navy veterans, recently learned they had both served aboard the USS John F. Kennedy.