

## Volunteers Give 'And Then Some' At Renewal And Remembrance 2017



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"And then some." That's the advice that Jon Cundiff, then a member of the Kansas City Royals MLB grounds crew, said that Korean War veteran and legendary sports field expert George Toma shared with him. And he never forgot it.

As a young man, Cundiff worked for six years helping tend to KC's Kaufmann Stadium before launching his career as a lawn care pro. Cundiff recalls that Toma, now 88 and a member of both the NFL and MLB Halls of Fame, was fair, although he demanded that his employees go beyond merely doing their jobs.

On leaving the Royals, Cundiff founded and operated a successful lawn application company before joining Weed Man in 2001. Cundiff now serves as president of the [National Association of Landscape Professionals](#) and spoke at the opening ceremony of its 21st annual [Renewal and Remembrance Arlington National Cemetery Day of Service](#).

During his presentation he also cited the heroism of Audie Murphy, whose bravery at age 19 resulted in him becoming the most decorated U.S. combat soldier of WWII. Murphy went on to star in movies before dying in a plane crash in 1971. He, along with more than 275,000 other veterans and their dependents, are buried at Arlington.

Cundiff said that the 400-plus volunteers answering NALP's call to improve the grounds on July 17 at 645-acre [Arlington National Cemetery](#) and the nearby [U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Cemetery](#) in Washington, D.C., also were giving "and then some."

Volunteers come at their own expense from all over the country to help out at Renewal and Remembrance. Many suppliers also chip in with manpower, free material and loaning equipment.

As in recent years, volunteers again worked through a sweltering morning and early afternoon. Some workers pushed spreaders to lime the turfgrass through the rows of white marble grave markers. Others planted landscape material on a steep hillside. Volunteer arborists climbed high into mature trees to remove dead and diseased limbs.

And workers from several different companies combined their efforts to complete NALP's largest ever hardscape project at the cemetery. The volunteers removed a sizable square of turfgrass adjacent to a busy road and replaced it with granite pavers for the convenience of the tens of thousands of visitors there daily. The cemetery sees almost 4 million visitors annually.

[View a video clip about the hardscape paver installation at Arlington.](#)

Staging the annual Renewal and Remembrance community service project is a huge undertaking. It takes an incredible amount of planning and day-of-service coordination by NALP, its staff and officers, not to mention cooperation with cemetery management under the control of the [U.S. Department of the Army](#). Rules for working within the cemetery are strict because as many 25 burials a day take place there.

This year was a bit tougher on volunteers than usual. An unusually large influx of visitors, including hundreds of Boy Scouts, part of the 40,000 attending the quadrennial Jamboree in Mount Hope, West Virginia, made getting service vehicles around the cemetery a bigger challenge than usual.

Another challenge to getting work done for some of the volunteers, such as the 30 or so sons, daughters and grandchildren of volunteers who planted flowers at the cemetery, was the large number of media people gathering information, photographing and recording the event.

Local and national media demands to cover NALP's Renewal and Remembrance increase year to year, and have caused cemetery management to keep closer tabs on the media. But while some projects may have been slowed down a bit, the media attention gives credence to the selfless efforts of the NALP volunteers and the landscape industry's good work.