

After a short lay-up, golfer hits links again

FOREST GROVE — Rain may have made it too wet for golf Oct. 23, but it couldn't dampen the spirits of Hillsboro's Ron Stewart, back with his buddies again at Sunset Grove Golf Course for their regularly scheduled weekly round — their first since a stroke forced Stewart to lay up six months ago.

Stewart has been a fixture in the greater Hillsboro community all his life. The educator served as teacher and principal of Mooberry Elementary until his retirement in the 1980s.

Then he began volunteering at Marquis Care in Forest Grove.

Stewart visited residents and played his guitar, giving them something to think about other than their conditions — even learning to play the oft-requested "Ring of Fire" by Johnny Cash.

During his retirement, Ron also maintained the weekly golf game with other retired educators, picking up a latte at BJ's Coffee, before heading for an 8:04 a.m. tee time each Friday. On special occasions like birthdays, celebratory donuts always followed.

After the stroke, Ron ended up needing help in the same facility where he'd given so much of his time. Many people on Ron's rehabilitative team predicted he would not walk again, but with hard work, now Ron is scheduled to be discharged home on Halloween.

As a preview of his return to his old life, his team began preparation for his long-awaited return to the links, working extensively on teaching Ron to hit a golf ball again. They rigged all kinds of support together to enable him to swing a club.

His buddies greeted him with cheers and handshakes in the clubhouse, though the rain kept the golf action to the practice putting surface.

No doubt Ron will be back on the course as soon as the sun shines again.

Stewart also received a Legends award from Marquis, in honor of his years of volunteer service.

Marquis believes that regardless of a person's medical condition, "it's never too late to experience a new chapter in life," said Molly Gilbert, a Marquis account executive.

To that end, Marquis has formed the Vital Life Foundation to support organizations and programs that provide meaning and vitality in the lives of seniors and staff members living and working in long term care.

Information for this story courtesy of Molly Gilbert of Marquis Care in Forest Grove.



Above, Ron Stewart is greeted warmly by golf buddies Oct. 23 on his return to Sunset Grove Golf Course in Forest Grove. At left, Stewart putts with the help of support equipment designed by his rehabilitative team at Marquis Care center. Stewart, a longtime educator and community volunteer in Hillsboro, is scheduled to return home Saturday after being laid up for six months following a stroke.



Michal Thompson
The Argus

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