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STORM WATER'S HEAVY HITTER

"I was put on this earth to help people. That's what life is about for me." - Myron "Heavy" Forrest

No one bothers to ask Myron "Heavy" Forrest where he got his nickname. He's a heavy lifter, a heavy equipment operator, and, at a hulking 6'1", he's just plain heavy. For the record, the 43-year-old Storm Water crew leader says the nickname comes from his earlier days as a boxer known for throwing hard punches.

"I got into boxing because I was tired of being bullied," Forrest says. Forrest was just nine-years-old when he began to train. Forrest boxed to defend himself against the older kids in his Mobile, Alabama hometown.

Later, as he began competing in leagues, Tough-Man Contests and Golden Gloves tournaments, he fought to stay out of trouble and earn some money. He kept himself in peak physical condition, running more than 10 miles a day before work and spending nights at the gym.

The ambidextrous heavyweight topped out at 220 lbs and maintained a virtually flawless record. By the time he retired at 34, he had logged 152 wins and 2 losses. Forrest weathered his long and winning career with few visible scars. His worst injury was a bruised kidney from an illegal punch thrown after the bell that made him feel paralyzed and took three months to heal.

The discipline and hard work that made him a formidable opponent in the ring make Forrest a valued leader and a force to be reckoned with at Storm Water. Operations Manager Donell Davis calls Forrest "unmovable and steadfast. His work ethic is top drawer."



Myron "Heavy" Forrest

Forrest leads the crew that performs pond maintenance, lot cleaning, and shopping cart collection. Forrest came to Storm Water in 2002 as a temp and quickly proved himself, becoming an equipment operator within months. Now, as a crew leader, he says his biggest strength is his ability to plan and problem-solve. "I'm always thinking ahead. What can we do to make things better next month?" he says.

Storm Water crews know him as the man who gets the job done, whatever it takes. Forrest's motto -- "I want this done" -- quickly made an impression on Davis. "I remember his always saying, 'I'll do it, Babe, I'll do it myself if I have to,'" Davis says. Another of Forrest's trademarks is referring to virtually everyone as "Babe" or, in the case of female acquaintances, "Doll." It's a sign of a warm heart beneath the tough exterior.

In fact, Forrest shows his heart often, reaching out to others in need both on the job and off. He views his crew members as "kids" and says that as a crew leader he provides "a shoulder to cry on." In his spare time, Forrest, an accomplished carpenter and mechanic, performs odd jobs for the elderly at little or no cost. "I was put on this earth to help people. That's what life is about for me," he says.

The former Little League coach credits his mother, a mental health nurse, for setting an example of helping others. She raised Forrest and his older brother and sister on her own but never complained, instead reaching out to help troubled teens with drug problems.

Forrest has three boys of his own, all of whom he put through college, but has never married. For Forrest, Storm Water has its own sense of family.

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