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Veterans Guest House Celebrates 15 Years in Reno

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Tom Henkenius
Channel 2 News



"There's no way we could leave home at 3 or 4 in the morning and get here and not have any rest at all," Mary said Monday morning. "And with his heart condition and everything else, it's next to impossible."

So the day before his appointments they load up his medications and medical equipment to come to Reno's Veteran's Guest House.

Right across from the VA Hospital, the Guest House is a home for veterans and their family members who need somewhere to stay while getting medical attention.

"We didn't have this kind of facility when I first came in the service," said Kenneth.

The Guest House celebrates its 15th anniversary this week and they estimate they've provided more than 20,000 guest nights in that time.

With only 12 beds inside, the house will quickly fill up so they've also developed partnerships with area hotels to help cover the overflow.

Noreen Leary runs the Guest House she says those hotels donate the room nights. In fact, they're \$300,000 budget is completely dependent on donors.

Those who stay are asked to give a \$25 donation. To make up the difference they rely on the generosity of others.

People like Kenneth Beck whose wife says he didn't get a hero's welcome when he returned from the Vietnam War.

Mary Beck says now, when her husband needs it most, he's found that "hero's welcome" at the Veteran's Guest House.

"When they embrace us they're embracing the men and women who've served this country and made sure that we have our freedoms," said Leary. "And you wonder, 'why did I let my husband go overseas for a year, year and a half, and I'm stuck at home with the kids and everything broken down?'"

Kenneth Beck served in Vietnam and says he is now living with the effects of Agent Orange like heart issues, aneurysms.

So his wife Mary must bring him the 280 miles from their home north of Winnemucca to Reno at least twice a month for early morning doctor appointments at the V.A. hospital.



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