

# in the house

Veterans Guest House Newsletter

★ Our Mission ★  
To promote the health of veterans and their families by providing a warm, inviting temporary home and access to the medical care they need.

## Redefining Medical Care

### How You Help Veterans Overcome Mental Health Crises

Navigating the complexities of mental health treatment can be overwhelming, especially when compounded by the stressors of travel, accommodation, and stigma. Your support directly addresses these burdens, ensuring that veterans and their families are provided a welcoming, non-judgmental haven to focus exclusively on their health.



"My latest experience with VA Mental Health was very uplifting. I went from an unstable living environment with a dark mental state and negative coping strategies to being proud of what I have. Completing my mental health treatment while staying at VGH showed me that people cared and motivated me to continue solving my other psychological challenges." David Dutra, USMC

For those who have personally struggled or a loved someone who has grappled with addiction or mental health challenges, it can be difficult to talk about. Yet, these struggles are not uncommon. Sadly, we lose more veterans and service members to suicide each year than we do to combat.

Taking the first step to seek help is difficult and securing treatment can prove to be just as hard. Outpatient care lasts anywhere from six to nine weeks, translating to thousands of dollars for veterans making the trek to Reno for care. For veterans with limited resources, these essential services can be inaccessible, even if they are provided for free.

For veterans traveling to Reno for their mental health care, your support provides overnight lodging, transportation, camaraderie, and assistance with navigating the complexities of the VA system.

We salute the veterans who have found the courage to seek help and to you, our donors who remain a vital lifeline to our cherished veteran community. During this important month of mental health awareness, we remind those that are still struggling that they don't have to battle alone.

Less than  
**50%**  
of the veterans with mental health challenges sought treatment in the past year

Veterans are  
**15 times**  
more likely to develop PTSD than their civilian counterparts

Veteran suicide rates are  
**57%**  
higher than the national average

## Letters From Home

A special note for you  
Everyday, veterans and their families express their gratitude to staff for the special gift you have given them by donating to the Veterans Guest House. With your help, the Veterans Guest House is more than just a safe place to stay when seeking medical care. It's a place of respite, a source of comfort, and desperately needed relief during difficult times.

Handwritten notes and a typed letter. The typed letter reads:  
**THANK YOU!**  
I have been staying at VGH for various medical problems including bladder cancer. I have traveled here since 1995. Previously, I stayed in private motels at a great cost, causing me to limit my quality of care. Since I started staying at the guest house, I can accomplish much more medically.  
The VGH provides a feeling of being at home due to the friendly staff, the excellent facilities, and the other guests who have become supportive friends to each other.  
Your support is greatly appreciated.  
- Alan, Army Veteran

## Radiothon is almost here!

Tune-in Friday, November 3rd to Reno Media Group



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Holidays for Hero's Raffle Tickets on Sale NOW!  
\$5,000 Grand Prize and other cash prizes!  
Winning Tickets drawn on December 9th  
\$100 per Raffle ticket with only 500 tickets sold

# Basic Needs Fund: Driving Positive Change

## How You Help Veterans in Need

For 15 years, Ron, a Navy Vietnam veteran has made the trek from Carlin to Reno for medical care. The trip has taken a toll on both the 77-year-old and his trusty truck. The vehicle's failing radiator had become a roadblock to accessing the medical care he desperately needed. Unfortunately, with limited resources, Ron couldn't afford the costly repair. In the blistering summer heat, Ron's four-hour one-way journey would stretch into nine because he frequently had to pull over and allow his vehicle to cool down.

Enter the Basic Needs Fund, fueled by your unyielding support. With your donations, a small fund was established to provide essential one-time emergency support to veterans and their families facing critical circumstances. For Ron, it meant replacing his radiator, alleviating the heat-related stress to him and his truck so that he could safely travel home. For others, the fund has meant securing permanent housing. For all, it has transformed lives in remarkable ways.

The impact of your generosity on Ron has been profound. Grateful and overwhelmed, Ron shares, "I have no idea what I would do without you. VGH is truly a community of angels."

Your support has not only provided a functional radiator but has also helped Ron find renewed strength, knowing that caring individuals like you stand with him on his journey. Thank you for being the driving force behind these life-changing moments.



77 year old Navy veteran Ron was driving from Carlin to get to his medical appointments without a working radiator.

# Adopt-a-Vet Dental Partnership

## Smile Bright: Unlocking the Link Between Oral and Physical Health

For months, Army veteran Bob's deteriorating teeth were making him sick. He was nauseous and rapidly losing weight because he could only manage to eat soupy, room temperature foods. Living in rural Elko, a region characterized by a scarcity of dental care resources, Bob's circumstances quickly became dire. He was referred to Adopt a Vet Dental Program (AAVD), a Reno-based non-profit that works with dentists to provide free services to qualifying veterans.

To get help, Bob had to get to Reno, but he didn't know how he could. VGH learned of his situation and helped Bob with a round trip train ride to and from his home. He also received transportation to his appointments, nutritious meals, and a comfortable place to heal after hours of extensive and painful dental work. Bob enthusiastically shares,

"Without VGH and AAVD, I am not sure where I would be. I was taken care of when I could barely care for myself. The services and hospitality I received were something special."

Only 5% of veterans qualify for VA sponsored dental services, leaving low-income veterans with few if any options for care. Your support helps VGH partner with organizations like AAVD to care for veterans across Northern Nevada. Thanks to you, Bob wasn't burdened with the financial burdens of travel, allowing him to focus on his health.

VGH and AAVD proudly partnered to help a veteran overcome barriers that would have been insurmountable for him to navigate alone. To every donor who helped make his story possible, Bob says with a great big smile, "Thank you so much for giving me my life back."

### Veterans living with gum disease have an...

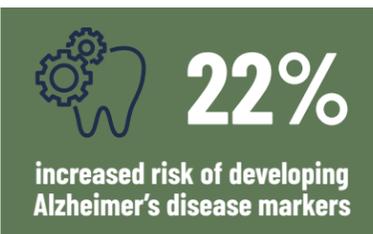
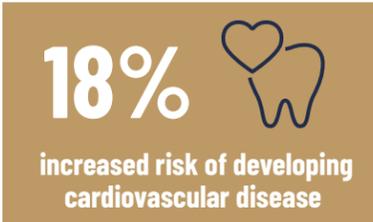


Photo courtesy of Adopt a Vet Dental Program. Poor oral health is directly associated with increased mental health challenges like stress and anxiety. When veterans get the dental care they need, they are happier, healthier, more confident in their smile.

# Nourishing Generosity: Community Steps in to Support Veterans

Over the past month, our cabinets had begun to become bare as the number of guests continued to rise. Fortunately, you swiftly responded to ensure there was plentiful food in our pantries. These quick and considerate contributions make a tangible difference, providing our guests with access to savory snacks and nutritious meals during their stay.



During your next trip to the store, consider giving these non-parishable fall food favorites to veterans in preparation for the holidays:

- Corn
- Ham
- Pumpkin
- Yams
- Cornbread
- Stuffing
- Nutrigrain Bars
- Keurig Coffee Pods
- Sugar Free Gatorade
- Hot Chocolate Packets



## The Holiday Season is Approaching!

As the cold weather draws near, your gift will ensure veterans are kept warm and safe:

- Gas Gift Cards
- Grocery Cards
- Uber Gift Cards
- RTC Bus Passes
- Walmart Cards

# Volunteer Spotlight: Debbie Brander, Claudia Vergilio, and Friends!

## Spreading Love, One Meal at a Time!

Meet Debbie Brander, Claudia Vergilio, and the dynamic group of volunteers who have brought delicious dinners to VGH for over seven years. These remarkable women started volunteering at a downtown homeless shelter, but when inclement weather prompted a change of location, they quickly took their talents to VGH. Their culinary magic continues to grace our tables, leaving our nation's heroes full and happy. What fuels their passion for volunteering? The answer is simple: giving back to brave veterans by showing them love through warm, home cooked grub.

Are you a home chef interested in volunteering? Contact Kathi at [kathieveteransguesthouse.org](http://kathieveteransguesthouse.org) if you are interested in hosting dinners for our guests!



**Pictured:** Linda Soloski, Claudia Vergilio, Debbie Brander, and Suzan Crawford  
**Not Pictured:** Karen Stangland, Jody Schoenbachler, Gina Jacobson, Diane Boone, Barbara Finley, and Janet Chism