

## Patriots' Luncheon Raises Money For Military Charities

Posted: Jul 29, 2014 4:55 PM PDT  
Updated: Jul 29, 2014 5:01 PM PDT

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The Barracuda Championship gets underway this week. The golf tournament, formerly known as the Reno Tahoe Open, is just one PGA event that has helped raise nearly \$14 million for nine different military groups, since 2006. Every year, the Patriots' Luncheon is part of the Barracuda Championship and raises money for military organizations. This year's charities include the Veterans Guest House and K9s for Warriors.



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"It's an honor and a privilege for us to play a small part in the rehabilitation of some of these warriors who are reacclimating themselves back into civilian life," Jay Voelker, Business Development Manager for the PGA Tour's Community Outreach Department said.

Chief Master Sgt. Bill Kendall served 30 years in the U.S. Air Force, with seven deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. The Las Vegas resident also has severe Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. He credits K9s for Warriors with changing his life and saving his marriage, after getting a service dog through the program.

"I was probably on the verge of separation but she's come into our lives and really done a lot for us," Kendall said.

'Justice' is a year-and-a-half old Labrador Retriever mix and rescue dog. She's one of nearly 130 service dogs that have been united with returning veterans with PTSD or traumatic brain injuries.

"Got a new leash on life," Bob Duval, Vice President of K9s for Warriors said. "They're battle buddies, they've been beat up, they've been stomped on, they've got traumatic brain injuries. And now they've got something else to look forward to, another life."

Veterans train with their new best friends for three weeks. Duval says 24 veterans take their own lives because of PTSD, every day. The ones that go through his program normally arrive scared and uncertain but show improvement within a week.

"We've had people that haven't left their house in two years, that have come in," Duval said. "Now, they're going to stores, movie theaters, and everything else with their dogs."

The Patriots' Luncheon also raised more than \$15,000. At least \$5,000 of that will benefit the Veterans Guest House, in Reno.

"It's so wonderful that we're benefiting directly from the donation but it's so important that we keep in the front of our minds, our patriots, our men and women who serve this country," Noreen Leary, Chief Operating Officer of the Veterans Guest House said.

Kendall says these charitable donations save lives and offer a therapy that can't be found anywhere else.

"Medicine on four legs is what it is," Kendall said. "She's with me 24/7. She helps me out with anxiety attacks and

what not."

The K9s for Warriors organization says that six months after graduation, 92% of their graduates either reduce or eliminate prescription medication altogether.