

New Veterans Guest House breaks ground

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RENO, Nev. (KOLO) For nearly 25 years, the [Veterans Guest House](#) has been giving veterans and their families a place to lay their heads.



[Link to video media report](#)

"This is a house built with love," Noreen Leary, CEO of the Veterans Guest House, said. "There's no other way to say it. We're the only one in the country like us that does what we do. That speaks so much to this community and their love of veterans "

Without the guest house, veterans have been faced with unnecessary hardships just to get the medical care they need.

"We have a couple who actually didn't know about us, and actually ended up declaring bankruptcy because they've spent all their money on housing and food and things like that," Leary said.

But this home away from home is outgrowing its walls. There are currently 12 beds in the home, and each bed is taken almost every night.

"If there's a bed open on a Saturday night I will be surprised," Leary said.

Just this year alone, the organization has provided 4,000 nights of lodging for people who travel hundreds of miles for medical help. People like David Fisher, who is in the middle of a month-and-a-half treatment.

"I do radiation treatments twice a day, 5 days a week for 6 weeks," he said. "It would be impossible to drive back and forth every day. That's 300 miles round trip, so it's not an option."

"People come here from Bishop, Mammoth, Auburn, Grass Valley, Susanville," Leary said. "And in Nevada, Elko and everybody else comes down this way."

Thanks to the generosity of the community, a much-needed expansion is officially underway. By next year, the Veterans Guest House will have 33 beds, a kitchen, dining room, and all the comforts of home.

"There's no question it will be so homey," Leary said. They're going to have a safe home away from home that's being done because of the big hearts that we all have."

"It means everything because I couldn't get it without it," Fisher said. "I can't afford to stay in a motel or hotel."

Staying at the house also gives veterans and their families a chance to connect with others who are going through the same challenges.

"Just the camaraderie," Robert Thomas, a Navy veteran who has stayed at the guest house in the past, said. "The feeling of welcome, and the people. It's just excellent."

The expansion comes with a \$4.4 million price tag, and much of the money needed has been donated by the community. If all goes according to plan, the expansion will open in mid-2018.
