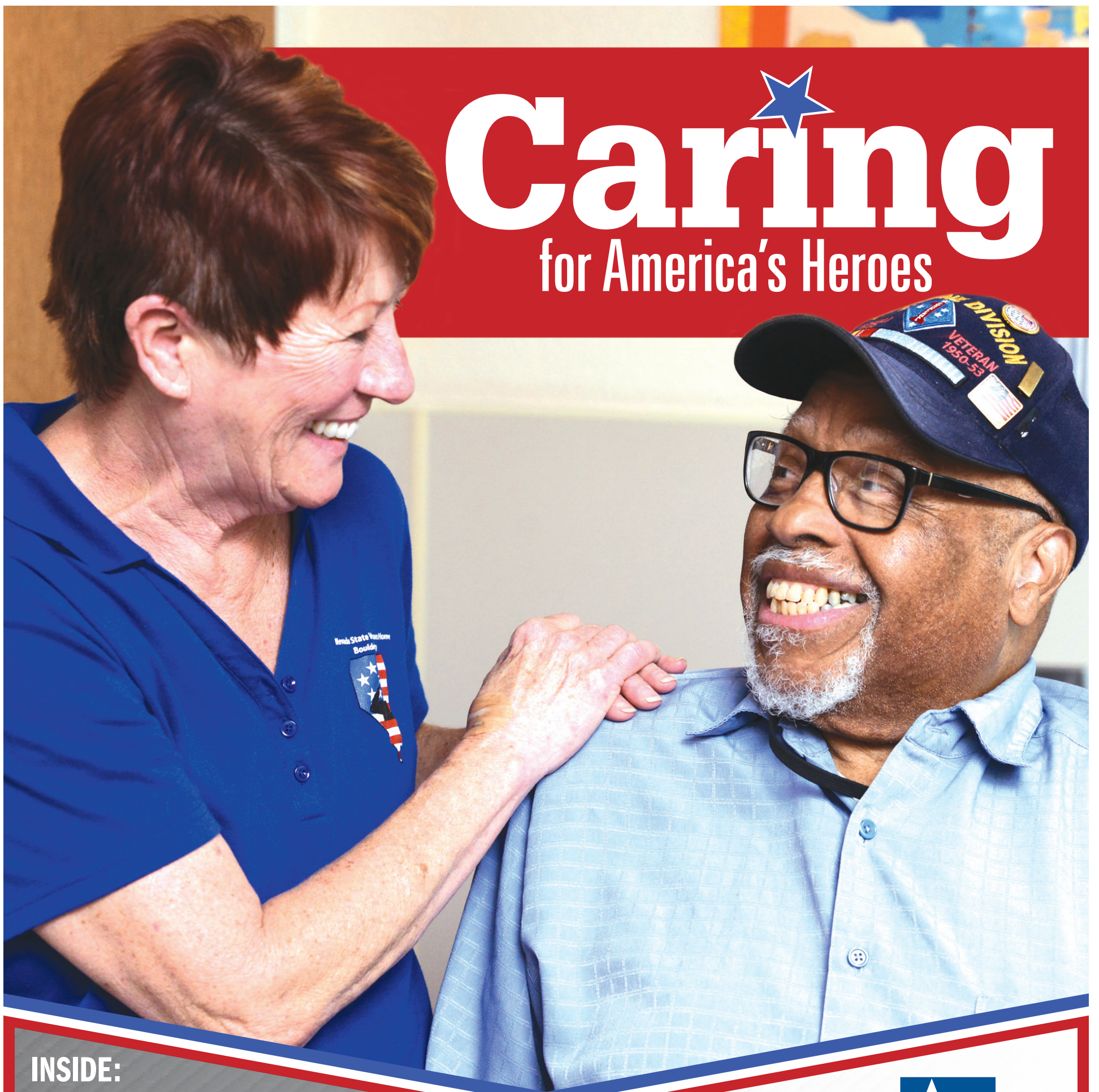


Caring

for America's Heroes



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**Nevada State
Veterans Home**



A Home for America's Heroes

Nevada State Veterans Home serves veterans and their families

by Brittany Wesely

Alfredo Arreola participates in a physical therapy session with Clinical Manager Nicole Brown. The sessions help Arreola relieve the symptoms of muscular dystrophy. PHOTO BY ANDREO JAB BUHAY



Veterans in need of skilled nursing care can go to any facility, but many choose the Nevada State Veterans Home. The 180-bed licensed medical home in Boulder City provides 24-hour health care for veterans, spouses of veterans and Gold Star parents.

“As a team, we all share the responsibility of caring for America’s heroes and we take that responsibility very seriously,” says Mark McBride, administrator of the Veterans Home. “We are about providing quality nursing care to our veterans, and we are proud to do just that.”

The home’s esteemed short-term rehabilitative and long-term care earned it two HealthInsight Quality Awards in 2013 and 2014. Without a doubt, the Veterans Home is a place where residents can feel comfortable and confident in the excellent care they receive.

SKILLED NURSING CARE

Nevada State Veterans Home is regulated by the state of Nevada, Veterans Affairs (VA) and Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Service (CMS), ensuring that it provides the highest quality of skilled

nursing care. CMS has given Nevada State Veterans Home four out of five stars. The home offers a full continuum of care with services provided on-site, allowing residents to spend less time being a resident and more time enjoying life.

VETERAN CULTURE

At the Nevada State Veterans Home, veterans are at the heart of everything they do. With a Veterans Services Officer (VSO) on staff and heavy involvement from nonprofits, including veterans service organizations like Nevada Veterans Assistance League (NVAL) and Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), residents will receive plenty of help navigating veteran benefits and services.

QUALITY OF LIFE

The Nevada State Veterans Home goes to great lengths to make sure residents have an enjoyable experience and comfortable surroundings. With a wealth of regular recreational, social and therapeutic activities, residents have a variety of options to get involved and stay active.

The cozy interior and lush outdoor gardens create a pleasant environment where residents feel at home.

MORE OPTIONS FOR NEVADA VETERANS

With one of the highest percentages of veterans in the country, Nevada is in dire need of an additional skilled-nursing care home for veterans. In response to the high need for skilled nursing care statewide, the Nevada Department of Veterans Services hopes to break ground soon on a new 96-bed home in Northern Nevada. The project is currently in the design phase and is awaiting federal and state funding. Once funding is secured, there may soon be one more place of honor and respect for veterans and their families in Nevada to get the care they deserve.

Mark McBride, administrator of Nevada State Veterans Home. PHOTO BY ANDREO JAB BUHAY



The Support He Needs

Resident learning how to walk again at Veterans Home

by Mike Blount

After 86-year-old William Corcoran underwent a complicated spinal operation in 2011, the normally healthy veteran suddenly needed around-the-clock care. Corcoran, a World War II Navy seaman and former NASA engineer, lost control of his hands and legs as an unexpected consequence of the surgery. He found the perfect environment to recuperate at Nevada State Veterans Home.

Corcoran moved into the Veterans Home two weeks after the surgery and was immediately impressed with the staff. Corcoran says he can depend on the nursing staff to help him with whatever he needs. They help him get into a wheelchair every day to get around the home so he can eat, socialize, participate in activities and go to on-site physical therapy sessions.

"Physical therapy has been great for me because I've learned how to use my hands and write again," Corcoran says. "I can use my iPad to email and keep in touch with my family. I couldn't use my hands at all at first."

The physical therapists and nursing staff are also helping him regain the use of his legs. Every day, Corcoran practices walking and building strength in his legs for at least an hour.

"It's been slow progress, but I am now able to walk short distances using an aluminum walker," Corcoran says. "Just walking 200 feet is still very, very hard for me. But one of the nurses will push a chair right behind me, so if I need to sit down, she is right there. It's not just a nice thing to do, it's the standard here."

Since becoming a resident, Corcoran has made many friends. He enjoys the daily routine at the Veterans Home. He plays a game of checkers every day to help him with his hand coordination. He practices walking short distances



William Corcoran had trouble walking and using his hands after he underwent a complicated spinal operation in 2011. He plays a game of checkers every day to improve the use of his hands, and through the home's physical therapy program, he is learning how to walk again.
PHOTO BY ANDREO JAB BUHAY

around the home and tries to go to as many daily activities as he can at the Veterans Home and off-site locations, including museums, restaurants and theaters. During his downtime, he roots for the Washington Redskins and visits with other residents.

Corcoran says he couldn't imagine a better environment for him. Because of his hard work, he has been able to make a lot of progress in only three years. But he also credits the staff's overwhelming positivity with keeping him motivated and giving him the support he needs.

"The nurses are so conscientious and caring, and they make sure I am taken care of 24 hours a day," Corcoran says. "They are always there when I need them. I couldn't ask for better caregivers."

"The nurses are so conscientious and caring, and they make sure I am taken care of 24 hours a day."
William Corcoran
Nevada State Veterans Home resident



The cost for a resident to stay in a semi-private room at Nevada State Veterans Home is \$110 a day — well below the Nevada average of \$216. Staff at Nevada State Veterans Home can help veterans identify benefits that can help defray that cost and potentially pay for all of their skilled nursing care at the home:

AID AND ATTENDANCE:

For veterans who served during war, this benefit provides both a cash award tied to a pension and a medication award. Veterans who are single and make less than \$1,750 a month receive all medication from the U.S.

Department of Veterans Affairs for free. Married veterans are eligible if they make less than \$2,050 a month.

SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITY:

This benefit is for any disability that is acquired during military service and is paid by the VA. Depending on the degree of disability, the payments will vary. Medication may also be provided by the VA.

CLARK COUNTY CONTRACT:

This program for veterans who are residents of Clark County provides medical coverage if they do not qualify for Medicaid.



Top: Debra Munson has worked at Nevada State Veterans Home for nine years. Right: DiAnn Lawson takes time to chat with resident Alvin Jones about his hobby playing guitar. PHOTOS BY ANDREO JAB BUHAY

THE CARE VETERANS DESERVE



Nevada State Veterans Home is known for the quality of care its residents receive. One of the reasons it continues to excel as a skilled nursing home is the high ratio of staff members to residents. There is one direct-care staff member for every six residents throughout the home (direct-care staff includes nurses and certified nursing assistants). In specialty units for residents with advanced stages of Alzheimer's disease or dementia, the ratio is 1-to-5.

Nevada State Veterans Home strives to hire people who understand the importance of caring for our nation's heroes. New employees go through a 10-day orientation where they interact with residents and learn the home's comprehensive policy and procedures. Staffing Coordinator Linzey Rondon says one of the most important qualities she looks for in a new staff member is a respect for the military and military service.

"[During the interview] we ask, 'Who is the most important person at [the home]?' " Rondon says. "The answer we look for is the resident. They served our country proudly and that's who we're here for — to give back to them."

More than 35 years ago, DiAnn Lawson became the first female assault boat driver in the U.S. Navy. Like their mother, Lawson's children all went into the military. Her daughter served in Afghanistan, and her two sons were awarded Purple Hearts for their service there. As part of a military family, Lawson understands the sacrifices veterans have made — and it's why she helps care for them at Nevada State Veterans Home.

"They are America's heroes and they depend on us to care for them," Lawson says. "The veterans we care for become like part of your family, and we try to give them the best care we can give them."

After she got out of the Navy in 1977, Lawson worked in nursing homes for several years. When a certified nursing assistant (CNA) position opened up at Nevada State Veterans Home in 2004, she knew

she would be a natural fit. She's worked at the home for nine years.

On any given day, Lawson is responsible for a variety of things for residents. She makes sure they get up and are ready for their meals. She makes sure they get a shower and are shaved and well-groomed. She helps them get to their daily activities or doctor appointments. Lawson says she is proud to be someone the residents depend on.

One thing Lawson loves about her job is the high level of care that the Veterans Home offers. All of the staff act as a team to make sure each resident gets the best care, including on-site occupational, physical and speech therapy.

"We really do offer so much here that we can beat any nursing home," Lawson says. "We have so many great nurses. They all communicate well with each other. Everyone has a smile. It's just so exciting to be a part of that."

The veterans we care for become like part of your family, and we try to give them the best care we can give them.

DiAnn Lawson
Lead certified nursing assistant

Like Part of the Family

Nursing assistants passionate about working for Veterans Home

by Mike Blount

Debra Munson has also been a CNA at Nevada State Veterans Home for nine years. Like Lawson, she is happy to be serving veterans. It's her calling.

"They served our country proud and I love taking care of them," Munson says. "They are all such amazing people. You give them all the love you can, and they give it right back. I'm really happy to have my job and I know I'm there for a reason."

Resident Alvin Jones says he has built a good relationship with Munson in the last year. The former Marine enjoys talking with her about his life and the care he's getting at the home.

"She listens to me," Jones says. "That's a very good sign of someone who cares about you. She's going to make sure I get whatever I need, and it makes me feel good to know she is concerned about me and cares about me."



A waitress at a local restaurant takes orders for a group of Nevada State Veterans Home residents. Off-site outings occur several times a week. PHOTO BY ANDREO JAB BUHAY

Activities Bring Joy to Residents

A vibrant activities staff keep residents entertained

by Brittany Wesely

It has been said that laughter is the best medicine. The activities department staff at the Nevada State Veterans Home hold this sentiment to be true, and witness it firsthand with the residents they serve.

With nearly 50 activities happening on campus every month, the team who works in the activities department — lovingly coined the “Party Girls” — are very busy, but they love that every day is a celebration.

“Each morning our residents ask, ‘What kind of party are we having today?’” says Sue Vargochik, activities technician at the home. “Our residents get great joy being here with us because they know we care.”

Programs at the Veterans Home are designed to entertain the mind, body and spirit of each resident. With exercise classes, musical performances, arts and crafts projects, game nights and socials, there are plenty of options to meet everyone’s needs.

In addition to the abundance of activities at the home, the activities department also coordinates a variety of off-site outings that occur often throughout the month. The team frequently takes residents on shopping trips, to the movie theaters, for dinner out at a nice restaurant, and gambling at a casino. Vargochik says outings such as these are essential to making the

Veterans Home feel like a true home for residents.

“Our activities program is an adaptation of their previous way of life,” Vargochik says. “We try to incorporate what they did before into their lives here.”

Another key to success for the activities program is using an individualized approach to event planning. With an activities technician designated to each residential wing of the Veterans Home, the program is able to focus on the personalities and interests of each resident. Based

on those interests, the activities technicians set goals for each resident and are proactive to ensure that each goal is met.

Some residents enjoy being useful, so they’ll be invited to help set up an upcoming event.

Some residents enjoy music or painting, so their activities technician will make sure they are aware of related events happening that day. For others, though, Vargochik says, the focus is on personal connections.

Vargochik recalls a female resident whose daughter was unable to visit as often as she would have liked. The resident reminded Vargochik of her own mother, whom she also isn’t able to see regularly.

“My mother is not here and her daughter is not here. So I give her a hug each and every morning and she just smiles,” Vargochik says. “It’s wonderful to see the joy they have when you make them happy.”

**Our residents
get great joy
being here with
us because they
know we care.**

Sue Vargochik
Activities technician
at the Nevada State Veterans Home

BETTER LIVING

Nevada State Veterans Home offers many amenities that improve the quality of life for residents and guests:



WELL-BALANCED MEALS:

All meals served at the home are designed by a dietary director to provide quality nutrition to residents three times a day.



CLEANLINESS:

The Veterans Home is held to a high standard for cleanliness by state inspectors and administration.



BEAUTIFUL GROUNDS:

Areas outside the Veterans Home contain beautiful landscaping with multiple walkways and places to sit.



CANTEEN:

A canteen provides a place for residents to purchase snacks and toiletries.



BARBER SHOP:

Residents can purchase haircuts and beard trimmings at an on-site barber shop.



24-HOUR CARE:

Nurses and nursing assistants are available 24 hours a day to help residents with their medication and daily care.



ON-SITE LAB WORK:

Quest Diagnostics comes to the home every day to do clinical lab work, including taking X-rays and checking for blood clots for residents, if needed.

Volunteers Give Back

Even while battling cancer, Brad and Wanda Parker are dedicated volunteers

by Brittany Wesely

Caring for veterans is the name of the game for Brad and Wanda Parker. Whether that means giving extra hugs, offering a listening ear, or doing Elvis impressions to incite laughter, the Parkers go above and beyond to bring joy to residents at the Nevada State Veterans Home.

“I have been accused of spoiling residents, but I call it ‘overly loving’ them,” Wanda Parker says. “If spoiling America’s heroes is what I do, why would I ever want to stop?”

The Parkers began volunteering at the home shortly after Brad Parker retired from his 20-year service in the U.S. Coast Guard. They wanted to give back to veterans, but with both of them still employed, their schedules didn’t allow much flexibility. When the Veterans Home said the Parkers could volunteer in the evenings, they jumped at the opportunity.

For the last 10 years, the Parkers have been dealing the weekly Pokeno games at the home. Residents come pouring in for a fun-filled night, but the Parkers themselves are the biggest draw.

The authentic connections the Parkers make with residents at the home are what motivate them to volunteer each week.

The Parkers recall a resident named Martin. Martin was new to the home and a

little reserved. Brad Parker befriended him. The two discussed books and hobbies, and soon Martin began to open up.

“He told me his whole story — how he was in World War II as a B-24 bomber crewman,” Brad Parker recalls. “His bomber was shot down and he got captured. He was a prisoner of war for a while.”

The story really resonated with Brad Parker. Here was this veteran with an incredible history of service, and he was lonely. But not for long.

When the Parkers heard that the same type of aircraft that Martin flew was being featured in a nearby traveling aviation exhibition, they knew Martin had to see it. They drove Martin to the North Las Vegas Airport themselves.

“There were so many people there who were really into old planes, and they got pictures with [Martin] and the plane. He was like a celebrity. He was just something else,” he says.

The experience with Martin, who has since passed away, is engraved in the Parkers’ memory as an example of what a difference volunteers can make in the residents’ lives. Brad Parker says the impact is reciprocal.

In 2010 Brad Parker was diagnosed with colon cancer. Through his surgery



Top: Wanda Parker (left) helps a resident set up a Pokeno board. Bottom: Brad Parker deals Pokeno for residents. The Parkers volunteer at Nevada State Veterans Home every Wednesday night. PHOTO BY ANDREO JAB BUHAY

and chemotherapy treatments, he found comfort in his friends at the home. He never missed a volunteering day.

“What really helped me the most is no matter how bad I felt, or how I was feeling sorry for myself, I’d go down there and see a lot worse and see that they’re still going on,” Brad Parker says.

The Parkers say that they will continue to show up every week to give back to veterans who gave so much for our freedom.

“[The veterans] shaped our nation and they leave a genuine legacy,” Wanda Parker says. “I can only hope that I will do the same as a result of knowing these fine, brave people.”



If spoiling America’s heroes is what I do, why would I ever want to stop?

Wanda Parker
Volunteer at Nevada State Veterans Home

HOW TO GET INVOLVED



Volunteers at the Nevada State Veterans Home are dedicated, caring and passionate about giving back to veterans. Through their time and talents, volunteers provide a refreshing social dimension to the lives of residents at the home. The Veterans Home conducts background investigations on all volunteers, and provides each volunteer with ample training — ensuring that they are confident in their abilities and residents are adequately cared for. Volunteer opportunities include:

- Offering a helping hand to residents with limited mobility
- Working as a cashier at the canteen, where residents can shop for essentials
- Aiding residents during on-site activities and off-site outings
- Providing administrative and clerical support
- Facilitating games like bingo and Pokeno
- Assisting at special events like Veterans Olympics

To find out more about volunteering at the Nevada State Veterans Home, please contact the volunteer coordinator at 702-332-6741.

Frequently Asked Questions

Want to become a resident? Start here.

by Mike Blount



Who is eligible to live at Nevada State Veterans Home?

Veterans who have a military discharge other than dishonorable, spouses of veterans with a military discharge other than dishonorable or parents of a child who died during wartime service (Gold Star parents) are all eligible to live at Nevada State Veterans Home.

Applicants must be current residents of Nevada or provide verification of residency at the time of enlistment in the military. Applicants must not require care the home is unable to provide and not be a danger to other residents, staff or visitors.

How do you apply to Nevada State Veterans Home?

Anyone interested in becoming a resident must fill out and return an application to the admissions department. Applications can be picked up at the front desk, downloaded online at www.veterans.nv.gov or mailed to you by contacting Erin Dugger or Shirley Pfannebecker in the admissions department at 702-332-6717 or 702-332-6730.

What paperwork do you need to provide when you apply?

You will need to provide your military discharge paperwork, a state-issued driver's license or

ID, medical records up to the last three months and proof of income, including bank statements or tax returns. If you receive disability benefits, you will need to provide the Veterans Administration letter of determination. You will also need to show proof of insurance, such as a Medicaid or Medicare card. Nevada State Veterans Home does not accept health maintenance organization (HMO) plans. If you are applying for a family member, you will need to provide paperwork showing guardianship or durable power of attorney.

How long does the application take to process?

Once the application and additional paperwork is returned, it typically takes 48 hours to receive a response from the admissions department.

Are spouses of service members allowed?

Yes. Spouses will need to go through the same application process and provide the service member's military discharge paperwork and a death certificate if applicable. Gold Star parents are also eligible to apply, and will need to provide their child's military discharge paperwork and death certificate.

Are pets allowed to visit?

Yes. Pets are allowed to visit once they have been examined by a veterinarian. Pet therapy dogs that have been cleared by a veterinarian are also invited to visit the home.

When are family members allowed to visit?

Family members have access to residents 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Family members are welcome to stay at the facility, accompany their loved one on Veterans Home outings or bring their loved one home.

How much does it cost per day?

The cost is \$110 per day for a veteran. The cost is \$187 per day for a spouse or a Gold Star Parent.

Are there private rooms?

There are 14 private rooms. The remaining 166 rooms are semi-private.

What activities are there for residents?

Residents can participate in off-site activities, including dining at a restaurant, gambling, shopping or seeing a show or movie in town. There are also daily activities at the Veterans Home, including games and movies.





Staff of Nevada State Veterans Home

They Served Us. It's Our Turn to Serve Them.

The Nevada State Veterans Home offers a peaceful refuge for veterans in need of skilled nursing care. A mere 25 miles from the glitter and buzz of Las Vegas, the home is a relaxing, green oasis in the desert where Nevada veterans, their spouses and Gold Star parents may receive exceptional rehabilitative and long-term medical care.

The 180-bed home has a solid interdisciplinary team of on-site medical professionals who provide fully comprehensive care for residents. With modern amenities, a robust activities program and a strong veteran culture, the Nevada State Veterans Home is a place for aging and disabled veterans to get the respect they deserve and the care they need.

GIVE BACK

To become a volunteer or to make a tax-deductible donation to the Veterans Home, please contact the volunteer coordinator at 702-332-6741.

CONTACT

Call or visit today to find out more about the exceptional offerings at the home.



Nevada State Veterans Home
100 Veterans Memorial Drive
Boulder City, NV 89005
702-332-NSVH (6784)
veterans.nv.gov



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE



There are more than 80,000 veterans living in Northern Nevada. While Nevada State Veterans Home is able to serve veterans in the Las Vegas metropolitan area and Southern Nevada, there is a great need to build a corresponding home in Northern Nevada. Currently, the 180 beds at the home are full, and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs recommends the state add an additional 379 beds. Plans are underway to construct a new skilled nursing home in Northern Nevada to meet the needs of veterans throughout the state now and in the future. The project is currently awaiting funding, but has the

support of many state legislators and Gov. Brian Sandoval.

Additionally, the Nevada Department of Veterans Services is looking into establishing an adult day health care service at Nevada State Veterans Home to serve veterans and their families. Currently, there are nearly 5,000 similar programs operating in the United States. Adult day health care services provide a safe environment for veterans who require minimal assistance to socialize and receive medical care during the day, allowing family members to work full time or have respite from caring for their loved one.