



Formerly Homeless Veteran Receives New Home

07/28/09 - 03:37 PM

By: Erin Hawley



Wewahitchka, Fla:

For the first time in a very long time, a man who dedicated his life to serving his country will be sleeping under his own roof.

All thanks to the service of his community.

Formerly homeless veteran Walter Refour has been applying for housing assistance since 2004, and until several months ago, had repeatedly been turned down.

Refour is constantly smiling, and his sense of humor shows when he says he's 77 going on 39. He recently returned to his hometown of Wewahitchka, homeless, and often sleeping in his car. His prayers for a home were granted after years of prayers.

"In my pursuit, I ran into a very good friend who worked for Tauntons," Refour explains.

That good friend is Joe Paul, a disabled veteran himself, who took on Refour's case.

"I decided to do all I could within my power to make sure that he got the house," Paul explains. He works with Taunton Truss, specializing in providing affordable housing in the Wewa area. After being approved for federal funds from USDA, state funds from Florida Housing Finance Corporation and local funds from the Gulf County SHIP program, construction on Refour's new home began.

Even though the hard part was over, Refour continued to show his gratitude.

"Every day he would come by he would stop and whether it was a different crew in here working on a different phase of the house he'd come up and shake their hand and tell them thank you," James Taunton recalls.

"Its just a great feeling to know that a person deserving of a house has a home today because of the efforts of everyone," Paul says.

"You guys are good, all of you, just great," Refour says, tearing up. "I love you all. Thank you, thank you, thank you."

Representatives with Florida Housing Finance Corporation say there are no HOP funds available currently because of state budget cuts but they do hope assistance will be available beginning in January.

Print

Close

Copyright 2009 WMBB-TV