



Volunteers
of America®

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA
& NORTHERN NEVADA

First-edition EVER!

May 2026

VOICES *of* HOPE

How you're making bright futures possible
in Northern California and Northern Nevada

INSIDE: Stories of hope and transformation
you've made possible!

Henry spent years looking over his shoulder. **You helped
him finally breathe easier** **2**

Two people. One dog. **One place that said yes — all
because of you** **3**

Sue was homeless for 25 years. You helped her take her
life back. **Will you do the same for another neighbour
in crisis today?** **4**



Henry spent years looking over his shoulder. You helped him find safety.

“I didn’t have to watch my back anymore. I almost forgot what that was like.”

Henry is 74 years old. For too long, he lived in a home that should have felt safe but didn’t.

One night, things turned downright dangerous. But he had no money to make a move and no one to help him.

Just when he’d resigned himself to looking over his shoulder for the rest of his life, he met you. Your caring heart stepped in at just the right moment, giving Henry the refuge he needed at our emergency shelter.

“I didn’t have to watch my back anymore,” Henry reflects.

“That feeling... I almost forgot what that was like.”

For years, he’d been on high alert in what was supposed to be his safe place. Every sound, every movement. It wore him down in ways that are hard to put into words.

But at our shelter, that weight started to lift. He stopped jumping at every creak of the floor. He savored his meals instead of gulping them down. And he started introducing himself to new people.

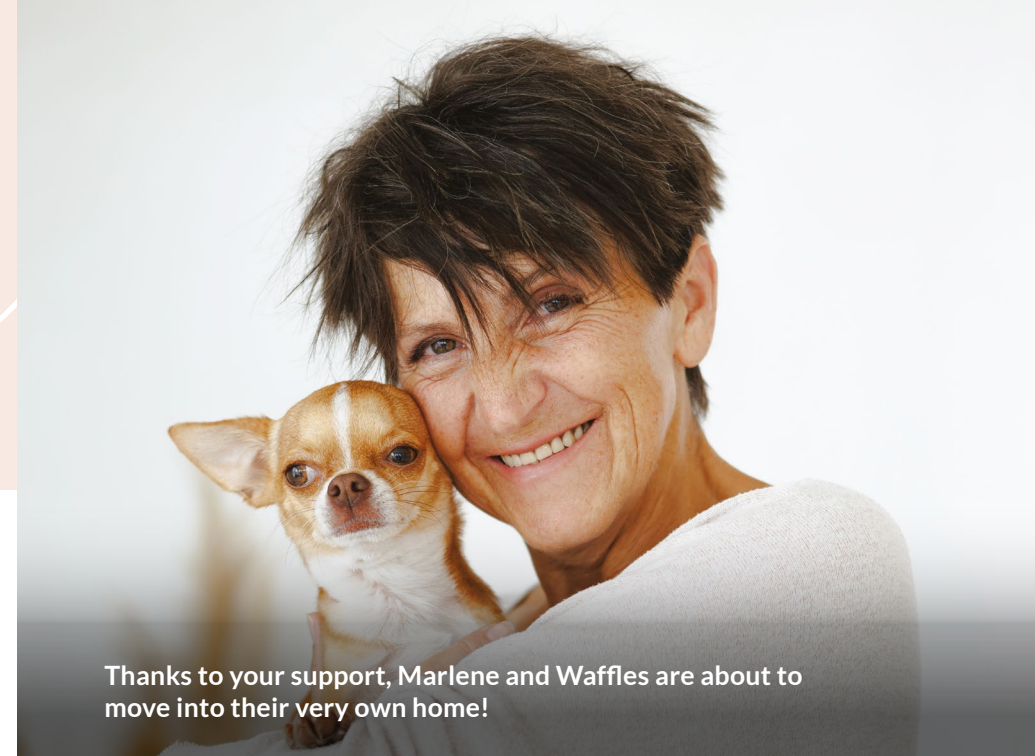
“People here, they actually care” he tells us. “I haven’t felt that in a while.”

Your generosity did that. ❤️ Because you showed up, Henry feels safe again for the first time in a long time. He’s on a journey to healing that he wasn’t sure would ever be possible. And he’s *excited*.

Your kindness and compassion helped him get there. We can’t thank you enough!



Henry feels safe again for the first time in a long time. You helped him get there.



Thanks to your support, Marlene and Waffles are about to move into their very own home!

Two people. One dog. One place that said yes — all because of you

Marlene and Waffles

For years, Marlene and her chihuahua, Waffles, have been homeless. They’ve been through a lot together — curling up tightly on cold nights and sharing half a water bottle on hot days. They didn’t always find safe places to sleep. When that happened, Waffles defended her mama as fiercely as she could.

But now? Now everything is different — for both of them.

You see, they recently arrived at our shelter. While they’re still curling up together at night, it’s for comfort, not necessity. And they’re both sleeping through the night, safe and sound.

That’s not even the best part. Soon, they’re moving into their very own home!

Marlene’s excited. You can hear it when she talks about it — her own space, her own front door.

That kind of change doesn’t come out of nowhere. It takes people like you — people who believe our homeless neighbors are worthy of love and dignity. People who give generously to make sure they get it.

Marlene and Waffles’ fresh start is coming. You helped it happen. ★★

Want to see the place that gave Marlene and Calvin their fresh starts?

Call the VOA office at (916) 679-3495 or email us at info@voa-ncnn.org to book a tour of our programs today.

CALVIN

The last thing Calvin thought he’d have to do was call Adult Protective Services.

But when his housing situation became unsafe and he didn’t have any family or friends to help, he had to make a (literal!) hard call.

That call connected him to VOA. And because of kindhearted friends like you, we had a place at our shelter ready and waiting for him.

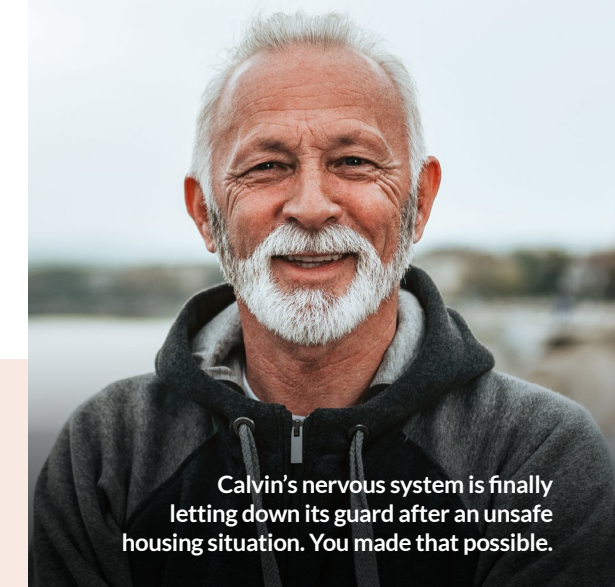
Not to mention his two dogs!

Now, Calvin wakes up somewhere quiet. Somewhere friendly. Somewhere safe. His heart rate is lower. His blood pressure has stopped spiking. His nervous system is letting down its guard.

He’s even starting to dream about his future — an apartment of his very own!

Calvin made a sign to thank the staff who’ve looked out for him. It reads: “To the staff at VOA, who looked at us when the world looked away. Thank you.”

That dedication belongs to you, too. We are so grateful that you choose to look at people like Calvin when the rest of the world looks away.



Calvin’s nervous system is finally letting down its guard after an unsafe housing situation. You made that possible.

Sue was homeless for 25 years. You helped her come home.

When everything unraveled, it happened at once. Her home, her job, her partner – Sue lost them all. She turned to substance use to cope and fell into a deep depression. Soon, she lost the motivation to keep fighting, too.

25 years of homelessness followed. During that time, she barely recognized herself. She had to become someone rough and wild just to stay alive.

She describes one particular day that was very windy and rainy and she felt like an abandoned wet dog. That evening she ended up sleeping in a porta-potty, too much for her body to handle. Through community support, she found herself outside the doors of our shelter. Those first few moments coming into a safe and warm space felt like home.

Safe shelter. Support for her sobriety journey. Caring staff who helped her overcome some of her trauma. Help finding her way back into the workforce. Because you give, Sue was able to access all of it.

And now? Sue is one year sober. She's working and saving her money so that one day, she can afford to rent her own place. She's showing up to therapy and reclaiming her future.

But if there's one thing she wants people to know about her story, it's this: Homelessness isn't just a bad choice or a temporary slip. It's a deep pit that takes everything you have to climb out of.

You're reading this because you extended your hand to Sue – or someone else like her – when she was in that pit. You helped pull her up far enough to



Safe shelter. Support for her sobriety. Therapy. Because of you, Sue was able to access all of it. Will you do the same for another homeless neighbor today?

realize that she had the tools within her to keep climbing.

And she no longer needed to make that climb alone.

Your support made all the difference for Sue. And it can make all the difference again for someone else experiencing homelessness and addiction.

Will you consider making a generous gift today to comfort someone in crisis on our streets? If you are one of our VOA committed donors, we thank you for keeping our programs strong and we hope these stories remind you of your impact.

★ Visit <http://voa-ncnn.org/newsletter> to extend your hand to someone like Sue today. ★



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All donations will be used for Board-approved programs and projects. When any need or project goal has been met, extra funds will be used in the areas of greatest need. We respect your privacy and do not rent or sell our mailing lists. Volunteers of America Northern California & Northern Nevada is a charitable non-profit organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.