



WINTER NIGHTS
Family Shelter

The GOOD NEWS Letter
Celebrating the families, volunteers and staff of
Winter Nights Family Shelter, Inc

January- 2022

From everyone at Winter Nights
Happy New Year



It's a Wrap!
Not just 2021, but our Annual Appeal, too

MORE Help ▲ Families Home

Thank you to everyone who made the 2022 Annual Appeal a huge success. Your generous support of the Families, Individuals and Programs of Winter Nights is so heartwarming.

Winter Nights could not do it without YOU

Our Goal was to raise \$100,000

You donated \$114,839 !!

235 donors in all

15% over the Goal.

Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!

We depend on donors, volunteers, and our staff to move families and individuals past their unique situations and into sustainable housing.



With a smile on my face and joy in my heart,
we survived a rough ride in January.

COVID-Omicron concerns continue to dominate the landscape. Even with colds, flu and COVID cases, the Family Shelter managed to beat the odds and rebound.

But it did take closing the Shelter for two nights and placing all the families in a hotel to reset. With the support of Anne Sparks from St Bonaventure, we provided each family with a room, snacks, breakfast items and dinner for both nights. We even celebrated Elijah's tenth birthday with cake and balloons for all the children at the hotel.

Winter Nights welcomed 2 families to the shelter in early January. A mom and her son and a mom with 2 young daughters. Our newest family is a multi-generational household. A dad, his adult daughter and her 3 children.

Kudos to Donna Zukauckas, Safe Parking Program manager, for working through the logistics of several participants testing COVID positive. Donna managed to beat back the COVID/Omicron outbreak with ongoing testing of participants and staff.

The support we receive always strengthens my faith that the Winter Nights Family Shelter mission continues to be strong and vibrant. Thanks to the many volunteers and supporters who bring life, love and caring to our families.

Bill Shaw
Executive Director

Family Shelter



Sheltering Families

Thank you to the Host sites and volunteers who sheltered and fed families, and supported staff from late December to mid-January:

Temple Isaiah - Lafayette;
Adina Zinn and Leslie Shafton, coordinators.

2-weeks with no cohosting help. Wow!

It was wonderful volunteering for Winter Nights this year. The atmosphere created by the Temple was extremely warm and welcoming. I felt really proud that we are a part of this community effort. ~ Arlynn Bloom - Temple Isaiah

St. Bonaventure's Catholic Church- Concord;
Anne Sparks, coordinator. Cohosts: Clayton Valley Presbyterian Church; Rev. Barbara Barkley and George Anich and East County Shared Ministry, Pittsburg; Debi Johnson

Bravo! Well Done!



Temple Isaiah
Lafayette



St. Bonaventure's Catholic Church
Concord

From Temple Isaiah's website:

"For the past 16 years, Temple Isaiah has helped shelter and feed over a thousand people through the Winter Nights program. THANK YOU for being a part of this amazing mitzvah, as Temple Isaiah comes together to provide warm shelter, great food and holiday cheer to homeless families with children."

The Family Shelter

4 families 12 guests
5 adults 7 children
4 Girls & 3 Boys

Big Thanks to Scout Troop 810

Scout Troop 810, based in Walnut Creek at Bancroft Elementary, with Scouts from Lafayette to Concord, Walnut Creek to Pleasant Hill,

volunteered their time to paint the Winter Nights' office. Not that we didn't love the bright robin's egg blue walls, it's just that a calm beige seemed better.

Our thanks to the five Scouts and one Eagle Scout alumni of the troop, plus the Scout masters Mr. Seligman and Mr. Doll for a long day of excellent work. Much appreciated, especially by Teri and Bill!

"The scouts had a marvelous time and enjoyed the opportunity to perform Community Service for such a wonderful organization that is helping local families. Thank you and please keep Troop 810 in mind for any future service opportunities!" Justin Seligman





For the second year in a row, Stephanie, with the **Concord Rotary**, dropped off 30 Ladybug bags in late November. They are filled with feminine products and gifts for the women in the program.
Many Thanks, Concord Rotary!



Stephanie from Concord Rotary with Teri Lundvall, Office Manager

The Safe Parking Program



The Safe Parking Program
14 clients in 10 cars
4 couples and 8 individuals
8 individuals on the waitlist



Lots of creative folks at the Safe Parking Program



Notes from Safe Parking:

- * Two clients had January birthdays to celebrate and there are three February birthdays coming up.
- * One client has an affordable room rental lined up with the help of Staff and is just waiting for furnishings from a partner agency.
- * Two individuals who are working with County housing navigators are almost there. Affordable rentals are hard to find these days.
- * Favorite staff quote of the month: *"You don't have to have everything you want to be happy, you just need to want what you have."*
- * All Clients received scarves, hats and warm gloves for Christmas.

Want to help?

Gift cards for gasoline are greatly appreciated. So are gift cards for treats like Jamba Juice, Starbucks, McDonalds.

Coloring Books for grown-ups with Abstract designs. Have you seen these? Fantastic, detailed. Working with them is a stress reliever.

Do you knit? Crochet? Adult-sized hats, for men & women, are always needed.

Donations can be sent, or delivered, to the Winter Nights office.

404 Gregory Lane #7, Pleasant Hill, 94523 (in the Hillcrest Community Church complex) 925-414-3883.



Cookie Bakers flood the Safe Parking Program with their generosity.

The St Stephen's Youth Group (middle and high school students) baked hundreds and hundreds of Christmas cookies for the Martin de Porres House of Hospitality in San Francisco. Then, Martin's free restaurant was closed due to Omicron exposures.

Where to take all those cookies?

Tom Fregoso, the Youth Group's fearless leader, reached out to us, and the **Safe Parking Program** of Winter Nights was one of the lucky recipients of this unexpected bounty.

Thank you so much, St Stephen's Youth Group, for your generosity.

One of the volunteer bakers:

"This has been a fun way to spend our Christmas break!"



This Is Very Touching

A participant in the Safe Parking Program showed this poem to Donna Zukauckas, Safe Parking manager. Donna sends it on to me to share with you. It is from a Facebook post by Martha Mosley McWilliams

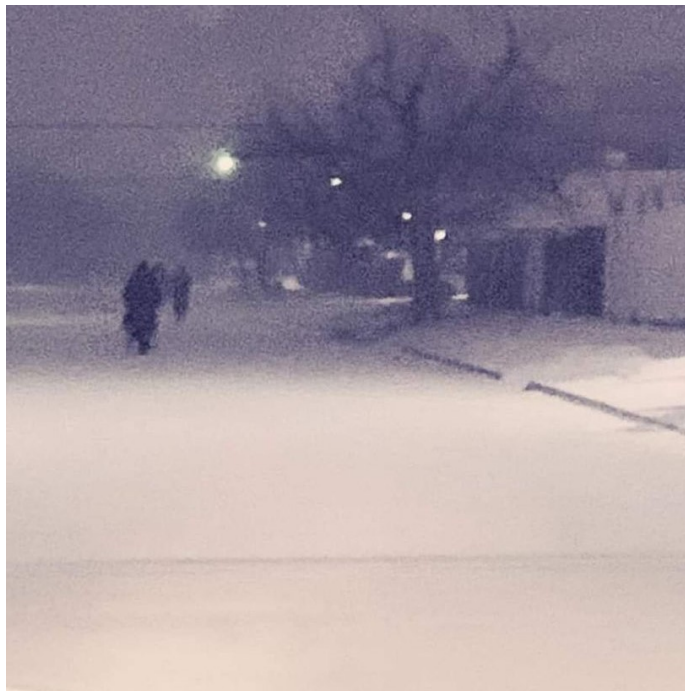
"I posted this last year and with the cold weather upon us (and hopefully, moisture....of any kind). I thought it to be a stirring reminder of the verse, Proverbs 14:31:

"Whoever oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God."

This photo was sent to me from a friend. The photographer who took this photo on a cold, snowy morning where I live spoke of how humbled and thankful he was for a life he sometimes took for granted. The photo was taken early in the morning as some of our homeless population were making their way to a place of warmth and probably a meal.

I was deeply moved by the photo as I have had my heart touched by so many of these folks in the last four and a half years. My daughter was homeless for a while and it's usually not until it comes to one's own doorstep, that we "see" things on a more humanitarian level. I started volunteering one day a week, working and fellowshipping with the homeless. Their stories are as unique as their DNA and fingerprints.

I wrote a poem in tribute to them." ~Martha Mosely McWilliams



I SEE YOU

Veiled behind a
curtain of snow;
Ghost-like figures in a
lamp's dim glow.

As dawn approaches on
a street still dark;
From makeshift beds
they disembark.

In a moment of wonder
I question my sight;
This illusion of ghosts
at dawn's first light.

My rational mind tells
a story more real;
They're making a trek
for the day's first meal.

Their faces unseen,
but I know they're there;
Lined and hardened,
from lives laid bare.

Many times I've looked,
but turned a blind eye
Till life made me SEE
they're no less than I.

Each has a story
unique to their plight;
Listen closely; you'll
gain insight.

Walk in their shoes
on a cold winter day;
for a hot cup of coffee and
warm place to stay.

A humbling experience
can soften a heart;
The perfect vessel
with which to start...

~Martha Mosley McWilliams



Martha, serving an Epiphany Cake that she made for guests of The PARC, a day center for homeless individuals in Amarillo, Texas

Continued Success



Kent Peterson, an alumnus of Winter Nights from 2014, posted this note on Facebook in November 2021. He has given us permission to share it again.

I not sure why I haven't known to take a look at this website but this will be the first time I've had to publicly speak about the Winter Nights program. This program and the people that run it SAVED MY LIFE AND MY SONS. My wife passed away in 2011 and for the next couple of years I lost my way and ended up homeless in 2013.

I was always of a mind that I could make my way through life on my own without anyone's help. I WAS WRONG and by the grace of God my sons and I were taken in to the Winters Night Shelter.

I remember the first night, and I was dealing with the feelings from my sons about whether or not they would be ok with the whole idea. There was a group of teenage Girl Scouts cooking us a rib dinner and my sons jokingly said, "We can do this, Dad".

All joking aside, from that point on, every day, I was humbled and grateful for the people that appeared every day and night to give of themselves to make our situation better. I'm talking about the volunteers involved in the program. Winter Nights took us in and right away gave us the feeling of security that we had lost being homeless. I feel by doing that they bolstered my feeling of regaining my ability to be a self-sufficient member of society.

One has to work to maintain one's place on this earth and the staff at Winter Nights helped me to remember that, though it was a little tough. At the end I will always and forever be grateful and thankful to Bill, Teri, Judy, and everyone else for being there and having the faith in me to find my way out of what could have been a one-way road to misery and hopelessness, and again to all the hundreds of volunteers that we met and got to know. Thankyou for being the incredible people that you are and may God Bless you and yours forever. ~ Kent

A Great Article about Winter Nights!



Joanne Morgan, of Alamo Today and Danville Today News, wrote a wonderful article on Winter Nights Family Shelter.

Take a look. The link is below.

Thank You, Jody.

Alamo & Danville
Today

**We love the notes that often come with a donation.
They make our day!
They keep us going, too!**

We'd like to share some of them with you:

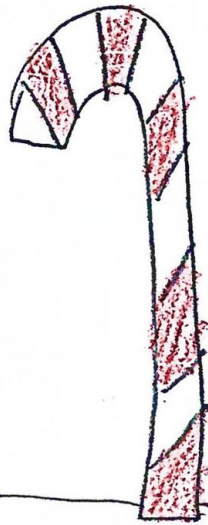
"I admire the work Winter Nights does to help many families get their feet on the ground. May all your efforts be rewarded ten-fold."

"I was so impressed by the work you do over at Winter Nights and even more so by the passion you all have in the work you are doing. I feel organizations like you are so incredibly important now more than ever to help stop the homeless cycle for families before it gets too late. And I think the emotional and logistical support you provide is crucial in this process."

"I shared with my family the work you do and we decided to collectively make a donation in lieu of the family Christmas Secret Santa exchange we typically do. Thank you so much for all the amazing work you do at Winter Nights!"

Best Program EVER! * Bless you for your good work.! * Thanks for what you do! * I will ask Chevron Corp. to match this donation.

Keep up the great work! * Merry Christmas!! We love the work you're doing for those in need. * Thank you to Bill Shaw for all of your amazing work. You are a blessing. * This donation is a Christmas Gift for my brother * We hope to be there to prepare a meal next year!



Dear Mr. Bill,

This is Kaavya, Riana, and Cam From Creekside Elementary School. We are donating toys and money so all the kids and families have a merry Christmas!

~~From~~ Warmest Wishes,

Kaavya, Cam, Riana

MORE
Help ▲ Families Home

Donating is as easy as mailing a check to:

Winter Nights Family Shelter, Inc.

404 Gregory Lane #7

Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

Donating ONLINE is easy, too.

Use the **DONATE ONLINE** link below

Whatever way you choose, for whatever amount, Thank you!
YOU are helping us serve more families and individuals.
YOU make Winter Nights possible.

For questions or assistance please call the office **925-414-3883**
Or email Winter Nights at the **CONTACT US** link below



Winter Nights Family Shelter - Child's Artwork

[DONATE
Online](#)

[CONTACT US](#)



Our Contact Information

{{Organization Name}}

{{Organization Address}}

{{Organization Phone}}

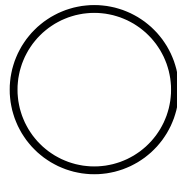
{{Organization Website}}

{{Unsubscribe}}

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Tax ID # 84-4775540

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A 3-minute video summarizing Winter Nights 3 programs: Family Shelter, Safe Parking and Continued Success, and how they work together. There is a special emphasis on the Safe Parking Program's expansion from 4-months to a 12-month program this year.