



The GOOD NEWS Letter
Celebrating the families, volunteers and staff of
Winter Nights Family Shelter, Inc
NOVEMBER - 2022



Winter Nights Executive Director
Bill Shaw
retired Dec 1, 2022

Bill Shaw, the Executive Director of Winter Nights Family Shelter retired yesterday after 13 years with the organization, starting as a Site Supervisor in 2010 and rising to his current position in June of 2021.

During Bill's tenure he helped grow the organization from a program of the Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County to an independent non-profit. Along the way he directed the expansion of Winter Nights offering from its original Family Shelter Program to include a year-round Safe Parking Program and Continued Success, an effort that keeps in touch with former clients to help keep them housed.

Over the last two years he successfully navigated the challenges of Covid-19 and the frequently changing guidelines regarding shelter capacity, social distancing, vaccination requirements, and strict limitations on volunteer participation.

Bill has also worked tirelessly to identify, train, and develop staff; coordinate efforts with faith-based communities and other organizations to provide volunteer

support, and establish and maintain contacts with numerous county and city offices that provide services to support homeless families and individuals.

Simply stated, Bill Shaw has been the heart and soul of Winter Nights. His ability to recognize the uniqueness of each homeless situation and

his skill and compassion at guiding them toward sustainable housing is unique. He will be missed by all who have worked with him and everyone he has helped.

Dan Swander

President Board of Directors



Bill Shaw and Dan Swander

**From Bill Shaw
Upon his Retirement from Winter Nights**

Waking up each morning facing East & the Rising Sun, I embrace the new day. It reminds me to honor the new day and the blessings that come with it.

We open our hearts to the families, couples and singles who have forgotten the blessings of a new day. We offer them Hope, Love and Compassion to embrace the joy that is ahead of them.

Thirteen years of interacting with hundreds of families and seeing many successes, it has come time for me to follow the rising sun on a new journey. I leave knowing that Winter Nights has brought joy, love, comfort and safety to many families. They have faced the darkness only to rise with the Rising Sun.

The journey to hope continues. And it will continue with Carmella Kowall, who will be taking the helm as the new Executive Director on December 1st, moving forward to a new day.

With ongoing Love and Compassion, Winter Nights will continue to grow and flourish, meeting the needs of the many clients, staff and volunteers in the future.

We move forward in the day while resting during the night.

Bill Shaw

Executive Director - retired

Winter Nights 2010 -2022

Meet Carmella Kowall
Winter Nights New Executive Director

Bill Shaw's retirement touches us all, but there is good news too. Carmella Kowall has accepted the position of Executive Director of WNFS, Inc. effective Dec 1, 2022.

If you don't know Carmella, she's terrific. She was a client of the Family Shelter in 2014/15 with her teenaged son and daughter. She was employed by Kinder's while at the Shelter, and then went on to work for Toyota Walnut Creek in 2017 developing and managing their Concierge Services. In 2020 when we formed WNFS, Inc. she became a founding board member.

She brings an authentic voice with her lived experiences plus her skills as a leader and manager of staff, and her open and ready way with clients, staff, the Board, the community and volunteers. We are in good hands.

Family Shelter



The Family Shelter had been open for seven weeks, and is currently at its fourth host site of the season. In November St Anselm's Episcopal Church and Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church did the Hosting honors. Co-hosts helped at St Anselm's and LOPC served for two weeks without co-hosts.

Many thanks for your big hearts and hard work.



St. Anselm's Episcopal Church – Lafayette
Host Coordinators:
Anne Brown and Eva Woo
Co Host: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter
Day Saints -Danville Stake
Dan Jones, coordinator



Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church
Host Coordinators:
Robin Freeberg, Lauren Gully,
Rick Silvani, and Jim Reiter

The Family Shelter

6 families - 20 guests
9 adults & 11 children
7 girls & 4 boys

2 toddlers- 9 & 10 months old and 9 others from 2 to 13 years old

The Safe Parking Program



The Safe Parking Program

12 participants in 10 cars
2 couples & 8 individuals
No families at this time.

Thanksgiving at SPP

Thanksgiving went wonderfully. Not only did we have a beautiful ham dinner with mashed potatoes & gravy, green bean casserole, rolls and lots and lots of pies. Then the people from the AA meeting going on at the church brought over lots of turkey and fixings also. Every belly was full for sure. And for that we are truly grateful. We even enjoyed the time spent cleaning up. It made more room for pie! ~ Denice, SPP staff supervisor

Halloween, Safe Parking style!

Heather, another Safe Parking staff member, was at it again, creating a festive and supportive place for participants. She sent these photos.

Heather and her son Gage, and clients Emily, Kenneth and Paul dressed for Halloween.



Continued Success



A Busy November for Continued Success

Thanksgiving meal boxes

For the first time, Winter Nights organized Thanksgiving meal boxes for alumni families, individuals and even staff for them to celebrate Thanksgiving at home with all the fixings. A total of 16 different organizations and individuals contributed to our Continued Success Thanksgiving.

22 Continued Success clients received Thanksgiving boxes. There were enough Thanksgiving boxes donated that each staff member also received one., even those who are not Winter Nights alumni. We wanted all the staff to know how grateful we are for them.

Special Thanks to St. Isidore - Danville and Christ the King - Pleasant Hill for providing additional gift cards to help make everyone's holiday celebrations extra special.

It really warmed our hearts to be in a position to be able to meet the needs of so many of our Continued Success clients and staff members. I am honored to have been a part of this event and was moved by the generosity of so many wanting to be a part of it.
~Teri Lundvall for Continued Success

Helping families stay housed: Client Financial Assistance

In November one alumni family was assisted with 2 months back rent paid to the landlord. We know that getting caught up will make their holidays brighter and set them on a stronger path forward.

One client received \$75 in gift cards to help with groceries and another received \$50 in gift cards.

Birthdays to celebrate:

Cake4Kids provided 5 birthday cakes in November for alumni children.

Thanks for the support you give to our alumni.



Winter Nights Receives the Silver Spoon Award from The California Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, Diablo Valley District

Ashlie Lewis, of The California Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, presented Bill Shaw and Winter Nights with their Silver Spoon Award. We were nominated by Helena, a member and also a Winter Nights Volunteer from Mount Diablo Universal Unitarian Church preparing healthy meals with all of her skills. Our nomination was seconded by Ashlie, also a member and volunteer from MDUUC. CAND makes this award annually in recognition of contributions to improving nutrition and food security to those in need.



Diane Malteser, ICCCC Board President and Judy Stillman

Judy Stillman
Executive Director - retired
Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County's
Making a Difference Award

"Nominated by the Governing Board of the Interfaith Council for your years of leadership of the Winter Nights Family Shelter, both as a program of the Interfaith Council - and now as an independent non-profit. Your heart for service to those living without shelter is admirable, helping us create stronger community. Thank you for helping the faith community serve families in need!"

Judy started volunteering with Winter Nights early on, organizing the tutoring of the children which became the Traveling Tutor program. Upon Gwen Watson's retirement in 2014 she took the helm as Executive Director and served pro bono through June 2021. But she did not really retire. She continues to lead the Winter Nights Homeless Summit, a monthly meeting of congregations and community groups who support Winter Nights families and programs.

We would be remiss if we did not mention that Bob Russell also received the ICCCC Making a Difference Award for his many, many years of service to Winter Nights as the "Moving Day" volunteer. He donates his time and truck to move shelter supplies and client belongings to the next host site. Thank you, Bob!



Will McGarvey, Executive Director of ICCCC with Judy Stillman

Winter Nights Family Shelter

FROM STABILITY TO SELF-SUFFICIENCY



Winter Nights is part of the East Bay Times' Share The Spirit campaign. This article featuring Lea was in their Special Insert on November 20th. The full article, including Rick P's experience in the Safe Parking Program will appear December 27th.

[Read The Article](#)

MORE Help Families Home Appeal 2022 UPDATE

It's cold and wet at this time of year. We are so grateful for your support as we shelter, feed and work with each client to help them find stable housing.

We are half way to our goal of raising \$150,000



***"This is an amazing program. As a former client way back in December 2009, this program helped me in a number of ways and my son and I have been stably housed for the last 10 years and my now husband and I purchased our first home this year."
~ Cathleen Tarango-Ludewig***

"I'm very grateful for the program. It gives me somewhere to sleep that's safe and that's so important for me." ~ A gentleman in the Safe Parking Program

[DONATE ONLINE](#)

Or you can mail a check to: Winter Nights Family Shelter, Inc.
[404 Gregory Lane #7 Pleasant Hill, CA 94523](#)

Does your employer have a Matching Fund?

It can double your impact.

If you donate through a financial group or advisor, like a personal trust, charitable IRA, DAF or appreciated stock

remember, we are now

Winter Nights Family Shelter, Inc. an independent nonprofit
EIN 84-4775540

Whatever way you choose, for whatever amount, your gift makes a real difference in the lives of the children, parents and individuals of Winter Nights.

Thank You.

For questions or assistance please call the office **925-414-3883**

Or email Winter Nights at the **CONTACT US** link below

[CONTACT US](#)

→ Forward

If you would like to share the Good News about Winter Nights with family, friends or colleagues, please forward it.

Past newsletters are available on our website, where you can also subscribe

[Good News Archive](#)



Stories from Two Families - Family Shelter 2020

[Two Shelter Families - 2020](#)



Our Contact Information

Winter Nights Family Shelter, Inc.
404 Gregory Lane #7
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523
925-414-3883
<http://www.cccwinternights.org>

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Manage email preferences](#)

Winter Nights Family Shelter, Inc
is a 501(c)(3) public benefit
nonprofit.

Tax ID # 84-4775540

Donations are tax deductible to the
extent allowed by law, and no goods or
services are provided in exchange for a
donation. Winter Nights respects and
supports the privacy of all our clients.
Any photos of clients are used only
with their express permission.

