



WINTER NIGHTS
Family Shelter

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

DECEMBER - 2022

HAPPY HANUKKAH



Happy
Kwanzaa!



Blessings of the Season

It's December and we are full to the brim with the joys of the season.
We wish each of you all the blessings that this time of year offers.

The Winter Nights' office looks like "Santa's Workshop". Gifts for clients have been pouring in. Our gratitude overflows, too. See below for a sample of the generous groups who have dropped off toys, parent gifts, food boxes and stockings.

Our gratitude to our financial donors overflows too. You make it possible for us to serve those in need. Winter Nights is special because of you. We have the most remarkable staff and managers.

They are the center of the safe community Winter Nights creates for clients. They are the listeners, mentors and motivators as families and individuals work toward returning to housing. And they are the hub of all the activity to find, secure, and maintain housing.

These talented staff members and managers have also gained quite a reputation in the community. The Safe Parking Program's approach to provide supervised overnight parking and to go the extra mile to work with participants on housing is unique. It has earned us the opportunity to work with The City of Antioch to establish a 2nd Safe Parking Program. Soon. In Antioch. Working on it! More on that in a future issue of Good News.

Bill Shaw's retirement party in December was 'fantastic', as Bill would say. Bill, the program and the staff also got a warm shout-out during the party from Fran Walsh of the Extended Family program of Walnut Creek United Methodist Church. They furnish homes for those moving into new housing.

"We love helping Winter Nights families because the staff and volunteers have prepared them so well for success. The families are stable, goal oriented and eager to start over in their new homes. Thank you for the work you do"
~ Fran Walsh

Family Shelter



The Family Shelter is in its 11th week and at its 7th Host Site.

We want to thank all the volunteers from the Episcopal Church of the Resurrection-Pleasant Hill, San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church, St. Isadore's Catholic Church-Danville and the Danville Congregational Church for your time and generosity in November and December.

(We do not publish the Shelter's current site to protect the privacy and security of our guest families)



Episcopal Church of the Resurrection
Host
Coordinator:
Janelle Towles



San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church
Host Coordinators:
Kal Peters, Nancy Garrick
Co-hosts
St. Isadore's Catholic Church Pat Black
Danville Congregational Church Richard
Stein

The Family Shelter

5 families - 17 guests

7 adults & 10 children

5 girls & 5 boys

10 months old to 14 years old



A Family is Home

Mom, Dad and their three children are now housed and will be spending the holidays in their own place. The kids are ages 6 through 13. Best gift ever.



More Good News:

A mother with her four children moved from the Safe Parking Program into the Family Shelter this month. She has 3 boys and a girl, ages 1,8,13 & 14.

Little milestones:

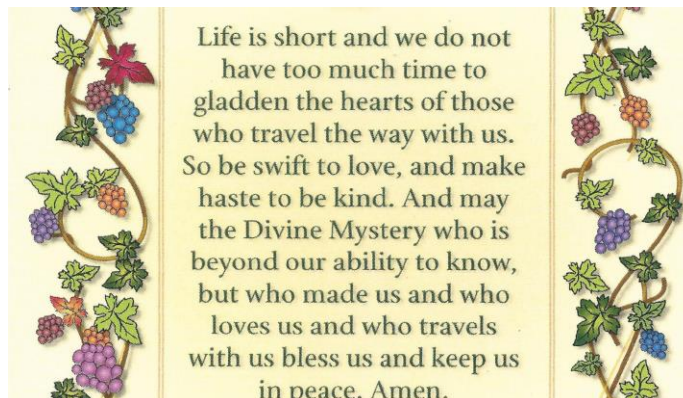
Volunteers had a great time with a not-yet-walking toddler who was crawling, then pulling herself up and trying to stand on her own. Such a precious time of life, working so hard to stand and walk. Everyone was laughing, smiling, and offering encouragement. A two-year-old was "helping" her, sort of. She was showing how it was done by pulling things on to the floor and dancing around the pile.

Moving forward!

A mother is signed up for next session of Opportunity Junction's Administrative Careers Training program. She will be part of their 12-week skills training and then a paid internship for up to four months. Graduates typically find jobs as administrative assistants, clerks, and other office support positions. Moving forward for herself and her family. Yes!

Spa Day for the Ladies

At the Church of the Resurrections, coordinator Janelle Towles organized a spa day of facials and manicures. She brought in Clinique facial kits for them and they loved it. It's so fun to be pampered.





Donations make Christmas Brighter for Families and Individuals

Where do we start?

There are so many congregations and community groups helping.

Here is a partial list:

Darren Gutierrez and the Knights of Columbus from St Isadore's Church - Danville donated 20 Christmas food boxes that included a turkey in each, and 5 boxes of gifts, for Winter Nights Continued Success families and individuals. What a wonderful gift. We were not the only recipients. The group donated 480 food boxes to those in need in this community. The De La Salle soccer team helped with loading the 50-pound boxes. Darren has organized the effort for 22 years, beginning by helping his dad and now with the help of his kids. You are making the season brighter for so many.



De La Salle Soccer Team
moving heavy boxes of food to
waiting vehicles



Darren Gutierrez
with Winter Nights' Teri
Lundvall & Carmella Kowall



Knights of Columbus
food boxes headed to
WN alumni families

Sandy Inouye is amazing! She has again donated her handiwork of crocheted afghans, baby blankets and quilts – 31 of them to be exact. We are so grateful that she shares her talent and heart with so many. Thank you, Sandy.

The Mighty Miwoks, a father-daughter group from Alamo adopted two Continued Success families with a total of 6 children. They asked what each family member would like and delivered their holiday cheer to the office last week. The little Miwok daughters are about 5-years old. They were very excited to have helped other kids.



Carmella Kowall, Executive Director and Stephanie McGuire, Shelter Supervisor attended **United Way's Winter Wonderland** event in San Francisco. We were one of 4 nonprofits to receive Christmas gifts for kids in the program. We are very grateful.

Can you keep a secret? The group **Walnut Creek Newcomers and Friends** bought new pajamas for each family member at the Shelter to find under the tree Christmas morning. Nothing like receiving new PJs for Christmas! Thank you so much.

Sereno Group's 1% for Good's program director Kirsty Duncan organized the donation of 11 special gift bags for women. Her colleague, Wendy, just delivered them to the office. They are filled with special soaps and towels, beautiful hats, scarves and gloves – all things to make the moms feel as special as we know they are.



The Safe Parking Program



The Safe Parking Program
13 participants in 11 cars
2 couples & 9 individuals
No families at this time.

Deposit help.

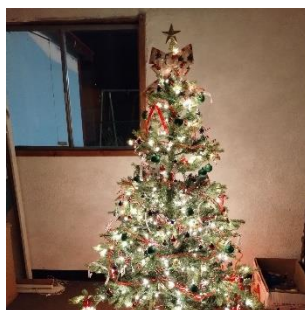
A woman at Safe Parking found an affordable rental but was short on savings for the deposit needed. Winter Nights will be helping her pay the deposit. Merry Christmas.

Windshield Blankets

The Pittsburgh Church of the Nazarene donated special windshield "blankets" to help prevent the ice that forms overnight at this time of year. These covers also help insulate each car. You are so thoughtful. Thank you.

Christmas Stockings for all

The **Youth Group of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church** visited Safe Parking last Friday night with stockings filled to the brim for everyone. About 7-8 clients were gathered around and were very touched and excited. They were most grateful for the "**Little Hotties**" hand and foot warmers in their stockings. Such a blessing on these very cold nights. Our thank to Janey McWhorter for organizing this project. A teen who helped deliver the stockings was happy to be part of Winter Nights again. He remembers helping Shelter kids with homework and activities before Covid.



Continued Success



Judith and her children with gifts from Knights of Columbus.

View the video at the end of this Good News letter to hear Judith's experience at the Family Shelter.

They are a true Continued Success story

It's the season of Lights and Giving

As we have mentioned above, we have so many donors to thank for gifts and food for alumni families. Over 20 families received food boxes to put a beautiful meal on the table.

Thank you very much for blessing our family. We are grateful for your kindness. With Love

Thank you Winter Nights for always being there for our family!

Thank you for blessing our family. We are grateful and thankful for thinking about us and including us in these moments. Happy Holiday to you and your family.

Helping families stay housed with Client Financial Assistance

A single man from Safe Parking who was successfully housed is going to have to move, again. This time we were there to help with his deposit on a new place and he will remain housed. Blessings!

Birthdays to celebrate:

This month Cakes4Kids provided 3 cakes for children's birthdays.

Thanks for the support you give to our alumni.

~ Teri Lundvall for Continued Success



**Brother and Sister celebrate their birthdays together.
Thank you, Cakes4Kids, for making their celebrations so special**

Winter Nights' needs:

- GAS cards for clients: \$25 Arco, Safeway Gas cards
 - Sleeping bags: NEW only, Adult & youth size, rectangular 40 degree
 - Hand warmers- disposable type
-

Bill Shaw's Retirement

**You have always given us your best.
Enjoy this next part of your journey.**

Bill Shaw in Just One Word

At the December Summit Meeting for congregations and community group partners, Judy Stillman, Summit chair, asked us describe Bill Shaw's best characteristic with one word or phrase. Just one? That was hard. But here are my notes:

Compassion, Heart, Lightness of being, Totally trustworthy, Energy, Humor, A Treasure, Openness, Present, Exudes Joy and Humor, His Shining Welcoming Smile, Insight Into Client Needs, Understood What Volunteers Could Give, Intuition, Dedication, Count on him to be there when you needed him, Multitasker, Endless Enthusiasm, Calmness, Perseverance, Kept Things Rolling, His Laugh, Genuine, No Pretense, Enthusiastic, Magical With Young Kids, A Pied-Piper.



Ninja Bill

There was a retirement party for Bill, too.

On a very rainy Dec 3rd, over 50 people gathered at St Andrew's Presbyterian to honor the 13 years that Bill Shaw gave to Winter Nights, and what he meant to all the families, staff, and volunteers he worked with. It was a great gathering of friends and families, past and present.

Kudos to Teri , Stephanie, Decky, Dan, Rubin and Mike for making it happen and Ann for the flowers. Great food, great company, great "Bill" stories!

Bill said it had been a “fantastic journey” and that he was ready to trust and move forward with insights and blessings from his 13 years with Winter Nights. He said he was also ready to learn to sit and be still. Good Luck with that, Bill.





REMINDER
Look for the next Share the Spirit article on
Winter Nights in the East Bay Times/San Jose
Mercury News
Dec 27th

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2022

Winter Nights Family Shelter

FROM STABILITY TO SELF-SUFFICIENCY



[Read This Article](#)

MORE
Help ▲ Families Home

Appeal 2022 UPDATE

12-21-2022

**We are three-quarters of the way to our goal of raising \$150,000 for families in the Shelter, individuals and families sleeping in their cars in Safe Parking and for alumni families to keep them housed.
\$34,000 to go**

Winter Nights spends between \$1500- \$1700 per day, all year long, to provide the Family Shelter, Safe Parking and Continued Success programs.



"Thank you for not giving up on us"
~ A Continued Success alumni family

DONATE ONLINE

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

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

Thank You.

**Check if your employer has a Matching Fund.
It can double your impact.**

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



Kindness in Action

→ 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

<https://cccwinternights.org/goodnews-archive/>

CONTACT US

[Winter Nights - Family Shelter Stories](#)

Stories from Two Families - Family Shelter-2020



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