



**WINTER NIGHTS**  
Family Shelter

**The GOOD NEWS Letter**

Celebrating the families, volunteers and staff of  
Winter Nights Family Shelter, Inc

**February- 2022**

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**We are celebrating Black History Month,  
Valentines Day, and Presidents' Day.**  
The Super Bowl was in there, too

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**With 2022 flying by so quickly,  
it is time to pump up the volume.**

The early days of February have not been easy. On February 7th, our transport van was involved in an accident. More about that later in the newsletter.

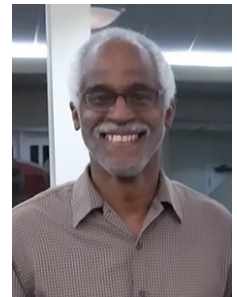
But, the clients loved their time at St. Timothy's Episcopal in Danville, received a gracious send off from Orinda Community Church mid-February and headed off to St Matthews's Lutheran Church- Walnut Creek. Each 2-week stay was filled warmth, love and support. Thank you to each host site and all the co-hosts, too.

A mother and daughter moved from the Safe Parking Program to the Shelter in early February. Then another mother and her two daughters had to quarantine with Covid at the County's Homeless *Positive /Under Investigation* facility in Richmond for a week. We are so glad they are well and back with us! It was a joy to see the two little girls come back to the shelter running, laughing and playing with the other children.

On Valentine's Day the shelter moved to St Matthew's Lutheran Church. As the families were settling in and putting up their tents, Pastor Rustin arrived and warmly welcomed them all. He even had gifts of reusable drinking cups to welcome for everyone.



Racing towards the end of the Shelter season in early June, a parent found employment which will help her in finding housing. We have connected two families with HOPE Solutions Housing Navigation for support in finding affordable housing. Hoping for the best!



**Bill Shaw**  
**Executive Director**

**Family Shelter**



**Sheltering Families**

**Thank you to the Host sites and volunteers who sheltered and fed families, and supported staff in January and February.**

**St. Timothy's Episcopal Church - Danville**

Joann Oliver, coordinator.  
Co-host: Beth Chaim Congregation; Naomi Ehrlich, Coordinator

Orinda Community Church- Orinda

Lani Shepp, coordinator.

Co-hosts: Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church - Orinda; Karen Kalvass coordinator. St. Perpetua Catholic Church; Karen Kalvass, coordinator.

Church of Santa Maria Catholic Church - Orinda; Susan Lundstrom, coordinator

St. Matthew's Lutheran Church - Walnut Creek

Craig Cole, coordinator.

Co-host: St. Ignatius of Antioch Catholic Church

Brian McCoy, coordinator.

Many, many thanks to you and your teams!



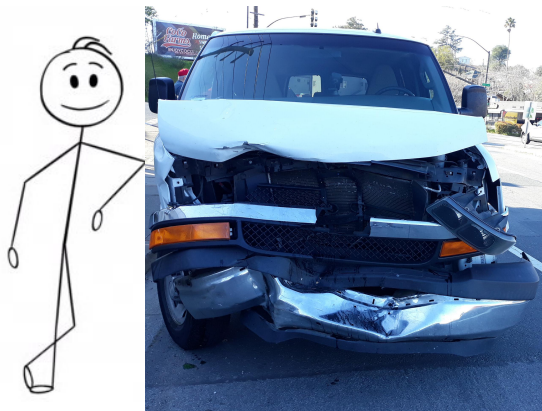
St. Timothy's Episcopal Church  
Danville



Orinda Community Church  
Orinda



St. Matthew's Lutheran Church  
Walnut Creek



**OUCH!**

Early in February our dear Winter Nights 14-passenger van was involved in an accident. **GOOD NEWS! Elijah, the staff supervisor driving the van, was not seriously hurt** and there were no clients in the van at the time. Whew! After running a light and hitting the WN van head on, the driver of the other vehicle was not hurt either. Such good news!

So it has been an interesting few weeks. We are lucky that only one family at the shelter is without a car. Winter Nights staff is providing rides as needed. Our insurance company has been terrific. The adjuster has reported back and we are now working with a body shop that can handle large vans to get a detailed evaluation. **Totaled or not totaled? Stay tuned.**

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## **The Family Shelter**

4 families 9 guests

4 adults 5 children

3 Girls (2, 2 & 5 yrs old) & 2 Boys (2 & 9 yrs old)

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## **Client Voices**

*We were told about Winter Nights and I talked to Bill. I asked him, "If you were in our situation what would you do?" He said, "I'd choose Winter Nights." He told us to keep calling and he helped us get in. Other shelters asked us about separating us. But I know that God was telling us, "You are a family and you do this together."*

~ Father of a family of seven, stably housed since 2019

## **Family Shelter**

### **MOVING DAY**

## **Hat's Off to Bob Russell**

**How does everything get from one shelter site to the next, every 2 weeks?** Tents, sleeping pads, wardrobe boxes of family belongings, supplies, highchairs, toys, the kid's library etc. are packed up by clients and staff and then transported from one faith community host site to the next. But how are they moved?

**Bob Russell.** Bob's big box truck is loaded up every Move Day with the help of his friend, Greg Getty, and others and then taken to the next host site and unloaded for another two-week stay. Bob has driven his truck since the beginning of Winter Nights, 18 years ago. He says it is not good for long hauls, but works just fine for the short trips between host sites. Bob says he is 'keeping it alive' with maintenance when needed and occasionally new tires. What a guy!

His generosity extends through the summer months, when many of Winter Nights Shelter supplies like the tents, sleeping pads, portable children's library and highchairs are stored in the truck until the Family Shelter re-opens in the fall.

Bob's generous nature comes from his family's philosophy of helping those less fortunate, especially his mother, Natalie Russell. She was one of the co-founders of Winter Nights,



along with Gwen Watson and Dorothy Vance. Sadly, Natalie passed away a few days ago. She was 94 and Bob said it was a peaceful passing. We send our sympathies to the family and are grateful for Natalie's vision and ministry. And for raising such a wonderful son!

We want to thank Bob for his 18 years of dedication and service to the families of Winter Nights – he is a true hero! ~ Judy Stillman



Bob Russell in the truck with Greg Getty assisting.



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## Continued Success



## The Passing of an Alumna

We want to let you know of the passing of a lovely woman, and 2019 client. She was the grandmother of a multi generational family: mother of a single mother and grandmother of the two children. It was a pleasure and a gift to have known her for the brief time in her life that she was at the shelter and part of Continued Success. Her passing was not expected and left her daughter, and the grandchildren, truly shaken. Continued Success was able to provide her daughter a shoulder to lean on and some inancial assistance for the cremation and a month's rent because the family will no longer receive the social security income to help cover the rent.

This is Mom's note of appreciation to Winter Nights:

To: Winter Nights Family Shelter

2/7/22

Bill & Teri,

I am completely numb right now. This is such an incredible blessing and I will forever hold this in my heart. You have just made ~~that~~ one of the most traumatic + unexpected times of my life feel so much more manageable. I have been so sick to my stomach with worry, thinking we wouldn't be able to give my mom ~~the~~ a proper burial/ services + we can all bet she would be coming back to haunt me for that! 😊 But honestly, I don't know how I will ever thank you enough. This is by far the most help I have ever had to ask for, and Winter Nights did not hesitate to come to my rescue. Thank you for your heartfelt support + understanding.

The kids and I (and my mom too!) have ~~all~~ been given nothing but the most wonderful friendship, love, guidance + continued support from both of you + <sup>everyone</sup> Winter Nights, and we love you both + <sup>at</sup> thank you so very much! Love, & hugs - <sup>everyone</sup>



## Cakes4Kids and Continued Success help Vincente Celebrate His Birthday

Happy Birthday, Vincente! And thanks for the photos to let us share in the celebration. Love the Star Wars themed cake! It looks absolutely delicious. Your brothers and sisters look ready to dig in, too.



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**Stop the Presses! O-o-o-h .... I mean .... Don't "Hit-Send" Yet**  
The reporter for the Alamo Today/Danville Today paper just sent us the email link to her article on **Cakes4Kids** that features Winter Nights.

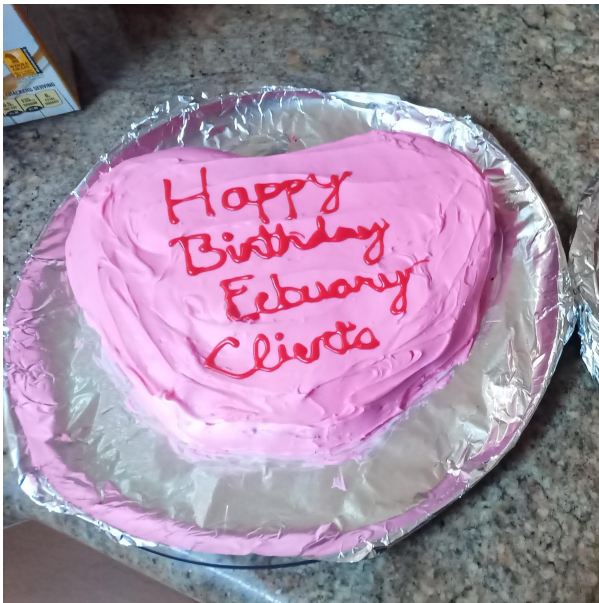
Enjoy a slice of joy and generosity! Zero calories!  
[www.yourmonthlypaper.com](http://www.yourmonthlypaper.com)

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## The Safe Parking Program



The Safe Parking Program  
15 clients in 11 cars  
*Including a mom and her 7 year old.*



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## Notes from Safe Parking

We celebrated February Birthdays with another cake made by Heather, SPP staff member. She also decorated for Valentines Day in her usual creative style. We love Heather!

A mother and her toddler were at Safe Parking for a bit before we were able to move them to the Family Shelter, where they are in the Hope Solutions' Housing Navigator que.

A couple and an individual are almost there with their housing applications. We are looking for a landlord willing to accept her Section 8 voucher.

A mother and her 7 year old have joined the program. We hope to get them moved to the Family Shelter when space is available.

Thanks for all your support!

Donna

Safe Parking Program manager

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## Small Kindnesses Go a Long Way For Those With Very Little

All of the families in the Family Shelter drive to day care, their kid's school and/or to work every morning. Most of the Safe Parking clients have jobs to get to too. Since gasoline prices remain near/over \$5 a gallon, gift cards for gasoline are greatly appreciated. A \$25 gift card will buy a family or SPP client about 5 gallons of gas. Cards for grocery stores, Target, and treats for the kids like Jamba Juice, Starbucks, McDonalds are also very helpful.

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.





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## share the spirit 2021

The Bay Area News Groups' Share the Spirit campaign raised more money for the 20+ nonprofits they supported than they expected. We were notified this week that we would be receiving an additional \$4,000 to help all our clients with financial assistance in those times when a bit of help is all it takes to take the pressure off and/or keep them housed.

**So unexpected, and we are so grateful!**

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### A Great Article about Winter Nights!

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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

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**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.  
Thank You.**

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



Welcoming Spring  
Winter Nights Family Shelter - Child's Artwork

[DONATE  
Online](#)

[CONTACT US](#)



**The Faces of Homelessness - Video**

**This Good News letter will be posted as a PDF on the  
Winter Nights Family Shelter website  
<https://cccwinternights.org/goodnews-archive/>**

### **Our Contact Information**

Winter Nights Family Shelter, Inc.  
404 Gregory Lane #7  
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523  
925-414-3883

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 the privacy of all of our clients. Any client photos are used only with their express permission.