



**The GOOD NEWS Letter**  
**Celebrating the Families, Volunteers, Donors and Staff**  
**of**  
**Winter Nights Family Shelter, Inc**  
**December - 2023**

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***Celebrating Our 20th Holiday Season  
of Light and Hope***

From everyone at Winter Nights, we hope you are having a holiday season wrapped in joy and tied with love! It is truly a time of light and hope.

Our gratitude for our volunteers and donors overflows at this time of year. Winter Nights is special in large part because of you. You are the best! Food boxes and gifts for clients have been donated and distributed with all your best wishes. New places to call home have been found and families are enrolled in job training programs.

Our wonderful staff and managers are the center of the safe and welcoming community Winter Nights creates for clients. They are the listeners, mentors and motivators as families and individuals work toward returning to housing. They are also the hub of all the activity to find, secure, and maintain housing. Bless them all.

We can all take great pride in the lives that are changed because of Winter Nights. Doing small things with great love is a gift we all give.

I'd like to share part of a letter we just received with a donation:

*Congratulations on Celebrating 20 years. It is amazing how many different ways you are able to help the homeless in our community. Adding a second Safe Parking Program is a lifeline. Also, it is wonderful how the alumni of your program are able to continue to be supported in small ways. I was particularly touched by the note from a recent donor who understands what it is like to be homeless and have people helping them out, Now they are paying it back. With shelter and a positive environment, these families are able to focus on rebuilding their lives.*

The end of our Annual Appeal is fast approaching, but there is still time to contribute before the end of the year. Thank you to everyone who has donated and we invite those who haven't to join with others to help more families home.

Wishing you a wonderful New Year.

Gratefully,  
Ann Lawrence - your Good News writer/editor  
ann@cccwinternights.org

## Family Shelter



It's time to thank the generous congregations and all their volunteers who served at the Family Shelter in December.

*We do not list the current location of the Shelter to protect the security and privacy of clients.*



**St. Paul's Episcopal Church-Walnut Creek**  
Coordinator - Sue Phalen  
Co-Host: Hillcrest Congregational Church  
- Pleasant Hill. Coordinator Angie Beal



**Lafayette United Methodist Church**  
Coordinator - Judy Stillman  
Co Host: Ygnacio Valley Presbyterian  
Church - Walnut Creek. Coordinator  
Paula Ash

Many thanks to everyone in your congregations and the community who served so generously.

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## **The Family Shelter**

December 20, 2023

**5 families - 13 guests**

5 adults & 8 children

(The children are 20 months to 13 years old)

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## **Christmas at the Family Shelter**

We have had 36 clients in the shelter since it opened in September.

Some families have chosen to move on without specific housing.

But many other clients are still working hard on job training and housing with our case manager.

Keep them all in your thoughts and prayers.

## **Keep 'em moving!**

Winter Nights helped with towing and repairs for two families whose cars broke down. Yeah! They are both back on the road.

Winter Nights van is full taking two families children to school and parents to Oasis. Sadly, we could not accommodate a new family because they had no car and the van was full.

## **Learning New Job Skills For Better Futures**

One Shelter parent, with 2 children, has been accepted into the **St. Vincent de Paul's Workforce Development Program**. It's a 24-week program with

training and work experience for those who are new to or have been out of the workforce. Congratulations and Good Luck!

One parent has been accepted into **Opportunity Junction's Administrative Careers training program** that helps job seekers successfully launch a variety of administrative careers. The program combines 12 weeks of computer and life skills training with up to 4 months of paid work experience. It also provides wrap-around support including: mental health counseling, job placement assistance, and long-term alumni advancement support.

Another parent has applied to Opportunity Junction's **Certified Nursing Assistant training program** and is waiting to hear if she is accepted. Good Luck to both of you, too.

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## The Safe Parking Program



**The Safe Parking Program in Pittsburgh**

3 cars - 3 participants

**The Safe Parking Program in Antioch**

2 cars - 2 participants

### **A Client reminds us that it is a Season of Light and Hope**

Christmas is such a special time for many of our Safe Parking clients. The Youth Group from St. Stephen's Episcopal Church filled twelve stockings with special treats including handwarmers, and delivered them to the Pittsburgh site. One of the clients said to the group, "Just because I am living in my car doesn't mean I don't have the Christmas spirit. I've decorated my car and come see this". She led them in to the SPP office to show them the small Christmas tree she had decorated. She also showed them the creche she set up. **"I brought it to remind everyone it is the season of hope".** Thank you for reminding all of us that it is a season of light and hope.



### **The Joy of HOUSING, a Gift for the Season**

A gentleman from Safe Parking in Antioch moved into his own place mid-December. We have reached out to Extended Families for help in getting his apartment set up.

### **Winning the Lottery!**

Did you know that there are so many qualified applicants for some available Senior Housing that they hold a lottery to be put on the list? We are thrilled that a client at Safe Parking-Pittsburg was picked in such a lottery, and is now on a list to receive senior housing.

To date:

In the past 6 months, 4 Safe Parking clients have found housing. They all are so grateful!

### **Generosity from our Safe Parking Host Sites**

Congregations are very busy at Christmas time, but that doesn't mean they don't want to wrap their arms around those living in their cars.

Our Pittsburg Safe Parking host arranged for clients to stay, rather than leave the site early Christmas morning. So from Christmas Eve through the 26th clients were able to stay put and Winter Nights staff was there to supervise.

At the Antioch site we actually use the entry to the church as an office each night. That would not work for the many evening services at Christmas, so the congregation arranged for 2 nights in a motel for each client, Christmas Eve and Christmas night. There will be extended hours for New Year's Eve and New Year's Day.

### **More Generosity**

Pastor Stacy and Pastor Christy from the Church of the Nazarene-Pittsburg have given the clients at both Safe Parking sites a gift card for a free oil change at Oil Changers.

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Continued Success



### **Continued Success Celebrates the Holidays**

#### **Christmas Food Boxes and Gifts.**

Knights of Columbus were secret angels, providing Christmas Food Boxes, including a turkey, for Winter Nights alumni families.



### **Adopt a Family**

Three Continued Success families were "adopted" by individuals from the community, including one family with seven children. Donors provided gifts for adults and children alike. Two other families received gifts from community members for their six children.

### **Christmas Party for Alumni**

Our Continued Success Christmas Party in early December was such fun. Families and individuals who are alumni of the Family Shelter or Safe Parking gathered to say hello to the Staff, and share their Christmas cheer. Volunteers and retired staff came too. Hi Bill. Hi Jo. It was so good to see everyone. Take a look at the photos below.



~ Teri Lundvall, Continued Success coordinator



2023 Continued Success  
Alumni Christmas Party



Winter Nights Managers, Staff, Board  
Members, and retired heroes Jo and Bill



Girl Scout volunteers, Troop # 30783



Bill Shaw, retired Executive Director  
Jo Kerner, retired tutor, grant writer, and all-round volunteer.






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## Winter Nights in The Community

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### Orinda Rotary Celebrated the Holidays and selected Winter Nights as their Evening's Charitable Beneficiary

The Orinda Rotary invited Winter Nights to their Holiday Party and selected us as the recipient of their evening's donations. Dan Swander, Winter Nights' Board President, attended and really enjoyed meeting this lively and generous group.

Rotarians who have been volunteers at the Family Shelter grabbed the microphone and spoke enthusiastically about the program, the good it does and the fun of being a volunteer.

We thank you for your generous words and your generous donation of over \$700. Yes, Dan, it was a good idea to put a Winter Nights "tip jar" at the bar!



Left side, front to back: Melissa Roeder, Yassodra Sudra, John Donnelly  
Right side, front to back: Gil Roeder, Betsy Donnelly, Dan Swander (WN Board President),

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**MORE**  
**Help ▲ Families Home**



**We are nearing the end of Winter Nights  
Annual Appeal 2023  
We want to help more families home with your help.**

*This season it takes **\$1622 per day** to fund Winter Nights*

**We have raised 82% of our \$175,000 goal  
There is still time to make an end-of-year donation.**

*My mom and I were frequently homeless when I was growing up because of financial insecurity and mental health struggles. It is truly a sacred thing to be able to show up for people at the most vulnerable and hardest times of their lives. I'm honored to support your work and thank you for all that you do! ~ Winter Nights donor to the 2023 Appeal*

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**DONATE ONLINE**

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**Don't forget to check if your employer has a Matching Fund.  
Employee Donations have been received through  
The Benevity Community Impact Fund, YourCause, United Way Bay Area, Community Health Charities, Genentech, CyberGrants, Lawrence Livermore Labs, Target, Sherwin Williams**

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.  
EIN 84-4775540**

Checks can be written to:  
**Winter Nights Family Shelter, Inc.**  
404 Gregory Lane #7  
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

**Whatever way you choose, for whatever amount,  
YOU are helping us serve more families and individuals.**

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

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**Celebrating our 20th year and those who made it possible  
Winter Nights Shelters Families to Nurture Success**

[Link to article in Alamo & Danville Today News](#)

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## Wish List

*Gift Cards: Gas cards, Wal-Mart cards, Target cards,  
Hand Warmers  
Twin-size fitted bottom sheets, pillows, sleeping bags, Lysol spray,  
Lysol disinfecting wipes,  
Diapers (size5) and baby wipes.*

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➔ 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

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

## CONTACT US



**Faces of Homelessness**



### Our Contact Information

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

925-414-3883

<http://www.cccwinternights.org>

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