



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

APRIL - 2023



News from Winter Nights
Is it spring yet?

As we begin May with more (blessed) rain, we're looking forward to a beautiful spring – a season of renewal and promise. As always, our promise is to help families and individuals with a secure place to stay with services and support to plan for a bright future.

It is always a pleasure to share the Good News from Winter Nights with you. I'd love to hear from you, too.

On July 1st we will begin our 20th year. Truly a Good News milestone.

It's a great time to gather the stories, the memories, the old photos, old newsletters from Gwen or Judy. What do you have to share? It will be fun to put them together for a 20th Year issue of Good News.

If you are a volunteer, tell us about your experiences and why you volunteer. If you are a donor, let us know why you support Winter Nights. If you represent another nonprofit, we'd love to hear from you too.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Gratefully,

Ann Lawrence - your Good News writer/editor

ann@cccwinternights.org



April was National Volunteer Month, when the people who give their time and expertise to make the world a better place are recognized for their spirit of caring.

In the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.,

“Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, ‘What are you doing for others?’”

Winter Nights knows the answer to that!

Our volunteers are doing so many things for others!

You are doing a heroic job, up front and behind the scenes. Year after year you are the heart of Winter Nights. Your heart, energy, flexibility and humor are appreciated by clients, staff and supporters.

There would not be a "Winter Nights" without you.



Family Shelter



The Family Shelter is in its 30th week and is at its 16th Host Site.
The Shelter Season has 5 weeks to go, for a total of 35 weeks.

**These generous congregations and all their volunteers
made the Family Shelter possible in March & April.**

Walnut Creek UMC Judith Hall, coordinator and cohosts:

St. Mary’s Church of the Immaculate Conception, Barb Erickson, coordinator,

St. Matthew's Lutheran Church - Walnut Creek, Craig Cole, Coordinator,

**Contra Costa United Methodist Church -Walnut Creek, , Rev. Youngrae Kim,
coordinator,**

First Christian Church of Concord, Diane Maltester, coordinator

Mount Diablo Universalist Unitarian Church, Rev Rodney Lemery, coordinator

No cohosts.

Christ the King Catholic Church - Pleasant Hill, John Alonso, coordinator

No cohosts.

You are all truly remarkable and appreciated.

Thanks for your big hearts and hard work.

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

Oops. A Correction from Last Month
In March at Concord United Methodist Church, St. Bonaventure Catholic Church - Concord was also a cohost, *Anne Sparks* coordinator



Walnut Creek United Methodist Church



Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church - Walnut Creek



Christ the King Catholic Church - Pleasant Hill

The Family Shelter

April 30, 2023

5 families - 20 guests

9 adults & 11 children

4 moms, 4 dads, 1 grandmother

6 boys & 5 girls, from 3 - 14 years old

One child with special needs

Great News!

As our Family Shelter season winds down, a mother, father and their toddler have moved to the Greater Richmond Interfaith Program (GRIP) long-term shelter with support services for housing.

Update

If you remember, this mother was expecting their 2nd child in mid-April. Update: She had a little boy! He was born just after they moved to GRIP. Mom and baby are healthy and happy. Dad's doing fine, and big sister wants to be the one to hold him, all the time!

Thanks for the family photo! Best wishes and we will stay in touch.



More Great News!

A mother and her young daughter have moved to the Mountain View Shelter for long-term shelter with support services for housing.
We miss them and wish them the very best.



Even More Great News!

A family of 5 is now housed. Dad and his four children are in their own place in Oakland. We are so excited for them.



New Shelter Guests in April/May

As some families are moving on to long-term shelter opportunities or stable homes, new families are arriving:

- A single father and his young son
- A single mother and her teenager
- A couple and their 9-year-old child
- A family of 5 that includes the grandmother, and two children.

The youngest child is 4-years old with severe disabilities.

Thank you to everyone at Christ the King who helped get a special stroller for this little boy, and the special nutrition that his condition requires.

Easter At the Shelter

Mount Diablo Universalist Unitarian Church hosted the Shelter families for Easter, with all the trimmings: Easter baskets, Easter egg hunts, and a beautiful Easter dinner.

Easter Bunnies

Virginia Stuart, a donor and volunteer from St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, added to the fun by donating an Easter Bunny for each child. She told us it was because she remembers her childhood of love, but very little money, and gifts like Easter Bunnies were out of the question. Now that she is able, she wants to give back. Thank you, Virginia, for your kind spirit and generosity.

Special Fun at Christ the King

Families had a chance to enjoy special fun while hosted at Christ the King. There was a trip to the movies and a pizza dinner afterwards.

A very special Filipino meal was prepared one evening, accompanied by Filipino dancers. WOW!



Easter Bunny Donation



Filipino Dancers at Christ the King

Congratulations, Ramona

Staff Supervisor at Winter Nights

Ramona, a staff supervisor at Winter Nights Family Shelter/Oasis, and her husband welcomed a new family member in late April. Amelia Jane weighed 8 lbs 11 oz and is a beautiful, healthy little girl. Ramona is doing well and so is the rest of the family. Congratulations to all of you.



The Safe Parking Program



The Safe Parking Program

April 30, 2023

12 clients in 10 cars

Including one family of a mother and child and their pets



Great News!
One client at Safe Parking moved into his own place in April. He's excited and so are we!



Update on Safe Parking - Antioch

On April 17th, St Ignatius held a meeting with their parish to talk about hosting Winter Nights Antioch site for a 2nd Safe Parking program. Carmella Kowall, our ED, Dan Swander, Board President, Father Robert, and Bob McCoy, member of St Ignatius and longtime WN Volunteer were there to provide information and answer questions. Antioch's Community Liaison Officer also attended.

Dan Swander described the meeting like this: *"The meeting was well attended, and many questions were asked. Specific concerns expressed about providing overnight parking for unhoused individuals and families living in their cars were addressed directly by Carmella. The way the Safe Parking Program operates with client*

prescreening, specific opening and closing times, no in-and-out privileges, on-site staff supervision, facilities access, and limits to the number of cars and participants went a long way towards convincing the St. Ignatius community of the value of hosting the program. There is still a fair amount of planning on the part of St. Ignatius to be done and there will be several more opportunities for them to inform the congregation on the specifics. Winter Nights still must hire and train staff. July 1, 2023, is the most likely start date, but stay tuned." ~Dan



Wish List Needs

Diapers: size 6

Baby wipes

Disinfecting wipes and spray

Gas cards - \$25

Shelter families can really use gas cards as our Shelter moves from one congregation to the next, extending their commutes.

Questions? Contact the office

925-414-3883 or info@cccwinternights.org

Continued Success



Quarterly Email to Alumni

Teri, our Office Manager and Continued Success coordinator, sent out the quarterly email to 80+ alumni households in April to stay in touch, share information and shower them with encouragement.

Here is an email she received from an alumni father with one son.
(Names withheld and edited a bit for length and clarity)

Hi, I'm doing great. I am fully retired now and truly grateful that Winter Nights helped me when I needed it most. I'd like to thank you again. It's been almost four years since I utilized Winter Nights. I am truly grateful. My son graduated high school and was going to DVC, but dropped out due to Covid. He's now working two jobs Yes, we're still in Martinez, thanks to the Shelter, and yes, my son still lives with me... I've been nothing but blessed since Winter Nights. I hope Winter Nights is doing well and thanks for helping us a long time ago... Sincerely, Single father with one son.

Helping an Alumni with Housing

We are working with a former SPP client right now. He has found housing that will accept his kitties and he is getting the paperwork together so we can help him with the first month's rent and a deposit.

Cakes4Kids

In April, lots of birthdays were celebrated by the children of alumni families. The bakers from Cakes4Kids were on it! Look at the beautiful cakes they made. Happy birthday !



Joyful Generosity

Thank you, Tommy Krause

We received a special donation of books, books, and more books from Tommy Krause. Like Tommy, Winter Nights is passionate about developing a love of reading in kids and we are so happy to have new books for the Shelter, Oasis and the WN office play area.

Tommy sent out a flyer to collect books:

"This is Tommy Krause... I am a seventh grader conducting a school service project to support the community. My goal is to collect as many children's books as possible and donate them to Winter Nights Family Shelter and Friends of Danville Library. I am passionate about young people who are not as fortunate as I am to be able to read and enjoy books just as much as I have had the chance to. Winter Nights is a crisis center for families who need a place to go. I have known about and seen what they have done for years and I am really looking forward to working with them."



Tommy and his mother delivering his book donation

Winter Nights in the Community



Visiting the Bay Area Rescue Mission

Carmella Kowall, and Winter Nights Office Manager, Teri, and Family Shelter Lead Supervisor, Stephanie, visited the Bay Area Rescue Mission (BARM) in Richmond. They were given a tour by Sherwin Harris, BARM's Ambassador & Civic Engagement, Director and Rose Russell, Program Manager of their Center for Women & Children.

"I had a great time touring our campus with Executive Director Carmella Kowall of Winter Nights Family Shelter and her staff today. They were able to meet Bram and David Smith as we toured. They were very surprised and impressed with the size and scope of programming we did here at BARM." - Sherwin Harris

BARM provides emergency shelter for single women and women with children, a separate emergency shelter for single men, community meals and food pantry, and 12-month transitional housing.



Party With a Purpose
Join the fun. Proceeds support
Winter Nights and Hope Solutions.
Episcopal Church of the
Resurrection
Saturday, May 6th
5:00 pm - 8:00 pm



MORE
Help ▲ Families Home

Year to Date

We are entering the last month of the Shelter season
and of our FY 22-23 fiscal year.

This Family Shelter season we have served 20 families with 43 minor children.

**If you are able to help these families with a donation of any amount
we would be so grateful.**

DONATE ONLINE

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

**For those of you with Schwab Charitable accounts,
here is a note from them about giving:**

"Grants before charities' fiscal year end

Several charities have a fiscal year that ends June 30 and hope to achieve their fundraising goals on or before that date. If you plan to support a charity before June 30, we invite you to submit your one-time or recurring grant recommendation no later than June 12."

Recurring grants: a time saver

"Many donors extend the value of their charitable giving by setting up recurring grants to the charities they support as a way to save time and maximize efficiency."

Don't forget to check if your employer has a Matching Fund.

It can double your impact.

**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, please forward it.
Past newsletters are available on our website, where you can also subscribe

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



Stories from Two Families - Family Shelter 2020



Our Contact Information

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