



WINTER NIGHTS
Family Shelter

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

August 2023
Annual Summary
A Summary of Season 19
July 2022-June 2023
and a Big Thank You!

The 19th year of Winter Nights is now history and we are beginning our 20th season. I hope you will take a moment to see what was accomplished last year and celebrate the growth, change and challenges met.

Winter Nights remains the only provider of safe parking in the county that we know of. We now have two sites: Pittsburg and Antioch. Safe Parking is for families with children, individuals, and couples living in their cars. We also welcome well-behaved pets.

Winter Nights Family Shelter is also unusual because we do not restrict the gender or age of clients as many shelter must. We welcome single fathers and their children, as well as families with teenage children and extended family members (a 19 year old child, a grandmother, an aunt). A family is a family. We also provide tutors for children, a van to get kids to school if parents are without a car, and case management for each family.

2022-23 was a year of leadership change, again. At the end of November, Executive Director, Bill Shaw, retired after 12 years with Winter Nights. His dedication to our programs and his ability to meet clients "where they are" were hallmarks of his success and became cornerstones of our continued growth.

At a farewell party in December, colleagues, staff members, and alumni gathered to say a profound thank you and to wish him well in his next endeavor.





On December 1st Carmella Kowall became Winter Nights' fourth Executive Director. A former Family Shelter client and member of the Board of Directors, Carmella hit the ground running.

She quickly developed a practical understanding of Winter Nights' programs from the "management side of the table" and established strong working relationships with every member of the staff. By the end of the year, she was introducing changes in roles and responsibilities to support continued growth and success of all of our programs.



The Admin Team



Carmella Kowall
Executive Director



Donation from the Community
Foundation of Lafayette

Finally, we know that Winter Nights could not do any of this without the support of our wonderful host and co-host congregations, our countless volunteers, numerous community organizations and businesses, and the foundations and donors who make everything possible.

Read on to learn more about the impact our programs are having on the unhoused in Contra Costa County.

Gratefully,

Dan Swander

Board President

What is Winter Nights?

Winter Nights began in 2004 as a program of the Interfaith Council of Contra Costa. Their Social Justice Alliance came together with congregations to provide temporary shelter, meals and support to families with children who were homeless. Now as an independent non-profit, Winter Nights Family Shelter has expanded and operates programs year-round.

- We continue our original mission, a **Family Shelter**, in partnership with dozens of congregations and community groups to shelter families from September through June. Our dream is to operate the Shelter year-round.
- As of July 2023, we now have two year-round **Safe Parking Program** sites: one in Pittsburg and one in Antioch, where we address the needs of unsheltered individuals, couples and families living in their cars.
- The **Oasis Day Center** was part of our original mission and continues as a place for clients on weekdays to access case management and other resources, or just hang out. Weekday showers are available for clients. Our van picks up Shelter families without cars to get their children to school and returns to the Oasis.
- Once housed, our alumni remain part of the Winter Nights' family with **Continued Success**. We stay in touch, get together for reunions and continue to celebrate and support their progress. It is a joy to see families and individuals continue to strengthen and grow.
- We are now able to provide small amounts of **Client Financial Assistance** when the unexpected happens and circumstances impact a client's or alumni's stability or their housing. We help them pay small, but essential, bills for things like car repairs, DMV fees, over-due rent/utilities and even rental deposits. Assistance is always paid directly to the "vendor".

Family Shelter



22 families were sheltered in 2022-23

- 22 families, 85 clients, 50 children & 35 adults. 22% more families than last year, and 100% more children.
- The children ranged in age from toddlers to 17 years old. 11 children were under 5-years old. Several children had special needs.

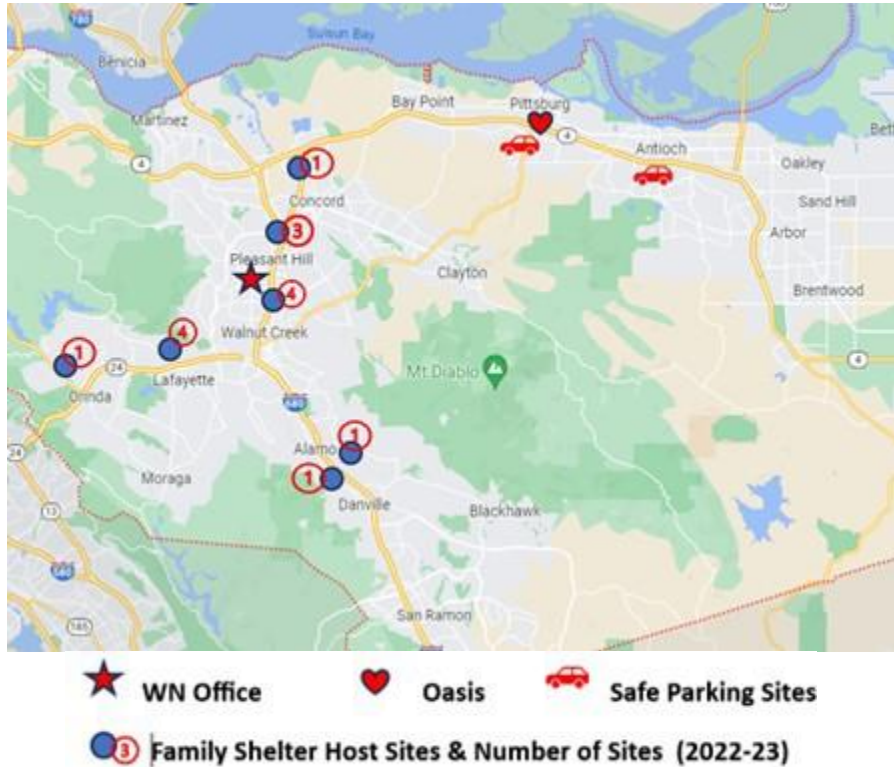
- **1 family moved from Safe Parking into the Family Shelter.**
- **The Shelter was open for 35 weeks, or 245 days.**
- The average stay of a family was **49 days**. The longest stay was 186 days and the shortest was 2 days.
- If you take the number of people in each family, and the number of nights the family was at the shelter, **Winter Nights provided a combined 3744 nights of client stays.**

Impact and Outcomes:

Rental housing, again, remained very scarce and very expensive. Staff and families worked so hard to find something suitable. But it was not always successful.

- **Six families found affordable rental housing.**
- **Two families moved in with a family member.**
- **Four families found space at long term supportive shelters like Mountain View Shelter, GRIP and Love-a-Child.**
- **Four families left at the end of the season unhoused, two of whom came into the program in the final weeks. All were given a few days in a motel to help them transition.**
- **Six families left the program on their own during the season.**
- **Four Shelter families with 7 children received a total of \$2,500 in Client Financial Assistance** for help with car repairs to get to work and take kids to school, storage units fees to keep the items they have left, finger printing fees for job opportunities, as well as school supplies and school clothes for kids. It doesn't take much to make a big difference!





♥ Our FABULOUS Faith Groups & Community Partners ♥
BRAVO! KUDOS! THANK YOU!

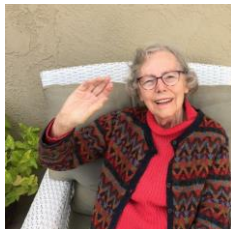
We hope you realize how grateful everyone is for the work you do.
 Thank you so much for your love and support for families at a very tough time in
 their lives. Your generous donation of facilities, time and talent is at the
 heart of Winter Night's mission
*Special thanks to the Orinda Community Church and St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church for
 being a host site for 4-weeks each.*



**40 Faith Communities and Community Groups
 were at the heart of Winter Nights last season.**
 35 weeks of shelter, meals and love for homeless families with children

- 16 HOST Sites in 2022-23***
- Beth Chaim Congregation – Danville
 - Christ the King Catholic Church - Pleasant Hill ***
 - Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints - Danville Stake
 - Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints - Walnut Creek Stake
 - Church of Santa Maria, Catholic – Orinda

Concord First Presbyterian Church
Concord United Methodist Church *
 Contra Costa United Methodist Church - Walnut Creek
 Danville Congregational Church
Episcopal Church of the Resurrection - Pleasant Hill *
 First Baptist Church - Pittsburg
 First Christian Church of Concord
 Good Shepherd Lutheran Church - Concord
 Grace Episcopal Church - Martinez
 Hillcrest Congregational Church - Pleasant Hill
 Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church - Orinda Lafayette Christian Church
Lafayette United Methodist Church *
Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church *
 Martinez First Congregational Church
 Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church
Mt Diablo Universal Unitarian Church- Walnut Creek *
Orinda Community Church *
 Restoration Church - Bay Point
San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church- Alamo *
St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church - Pleasant Hill *
St. Anselm's Episcopal Church - Lafayette *
 St. Bonaventure's Catholic Church - Concord
 St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church - Concord
 St. Isadore's Catholic Church - Danville
St. John Vianney Catholic Church - Walnut Creek *
 St. Mary's Church of the Immaculate Conception, Catholic - Walnut Creek
 St. Matthews's Lutheran Church - Walnut Creek
St. Paul's Episcopal Church - Walnut Creek *
 St. Perpetua's Catholic Church - Lafayette
 St. Stephen's Episcopal Church - Orinda
St. Timothy's Episcopal Church - Danville *
Temple Isaiah - Lafayette *
Walnut Creek Friends Church*
 Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church
Walnut Creek United Methodist Church*



The Safe Parking Program



Safe Parking in Pittsburg completed its 2nd full year of operation. It was open year-round ... 365 days of support for individuals, couples and families living in their cars. It provides staff-supervised, overnight parking, from 8 pm-7 am with restrooms, breakfast, snacks and hygiene supplies. Access to showers is available at the Oasis Day Center. Case management services are offered, as well as help paying for things that will lead to employment and stable housing, like a car repair, vehicle registration, driver's license fees, or help with rental deposits if needed.

Impact and Outcomes:

We served **82 clients in 56 households/cars**. This was **30% more than last year**.

There were **10 families with children** at Safe Parking, **50% more than the year before**. **16 children made up 19% of all clients**. Families were single fathers, single mothers as well as two-parent households. Only one mother and her 4 children chose to transfer to the Family Shelter.

Housing:

We were able to help 9 households find housing, including a mother and her child. This was 16% of households.

Client Financial Assistance for 4 client households helped with car repairs, DMV fees, storage fees, work tools and clothing etc.

A Second Safe Parking Site in Antioch

Last year was filled with planning for our second Safe Parking site in Antioch. The City of Antioch approached us, asking if we would organize and run a site in their city if they would pay for it. **YES!** We are so excited to say that in July 2023 Safe Parking-Antioch opened and is now serving individuals and families living in their cars.



Continued Success



Continued Success finished its second full year. It is a year-round program to stay in touch with alumni from the Family Shelter and Safe Parking programs in ways that enable them to stay connected and to remain housed. We are there to listen and laugh, to provide advice and referrals, and in some cases help with overdue rent or utilities, car repairs, phone bills or just gas and store gift cards,

We have reached out to over 80 alumni households through our quarterly email to check in on how they are doing. Our Facebook page has also been sharing resources with them as we become aware of them: sources for free diapers, free bus passes for kids - things like that.

Impact and Outcomes:

Every alumni household we helped has remained housed !

Thanksgiving Food Boxes:

22 Continued Success clients received Thanksgiving food boxes made possible by a total by the contributions of 16 different organizations and individuals.

Christmas Food Boxes and Gifts:

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.

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.

Client Financial Assistance was given to **10 alumni households** that included **18 children**. In total, **\$17,100** was provided for overdue rent & utilities, rental deposit assistance when one household had to move and for car insurance, car payments even a fee for a towed car. Do you remember what gas cost last year? One client, who had moved to another state, was given \$100 in gas cards to help with her return trip.

26 amazing cakes were provided by Cakes4Kids bakers for the birthdays and graduations of alumni children.





Client Financial Assistance

Our **Client Financial Assistance** program has been a real success. Consistent with our philosophy of personal responsibility and self-sufficiency, in an emergency, Winter Nights helps clients and alumni with expenses such as overdue rent, utilities, phone bills, storage unit fees, car repairs, or DMV fees. In order to lower the barrier to secure affordable housing, we now also provide rental deposit assistance.

Client Financial Assistance provides funds directly to “providers” on behalf of clients who apply for the help.

Clearing small debts when a family is in need or helping with rent or deposits to secure or sustain housing, is a very cost-effective way to support our clients and alumni remain stable and housed.

We provided **\$25,238** in **Client Financial Assistance** to **19 households with 25 children.**

That is a 45% increase over the previous year.

FY 2022-23 Client Financial Assistance	Total Financial Assistance	Total # Households	Total # Household Members	Total # Children in Households
Family Shelter	\$2,489	4	12	7
Safe Parking	\$5,646	5	5	0
Continued Success	\$17,103	10	29	18
TOTAL	\$25,238	19	46	25



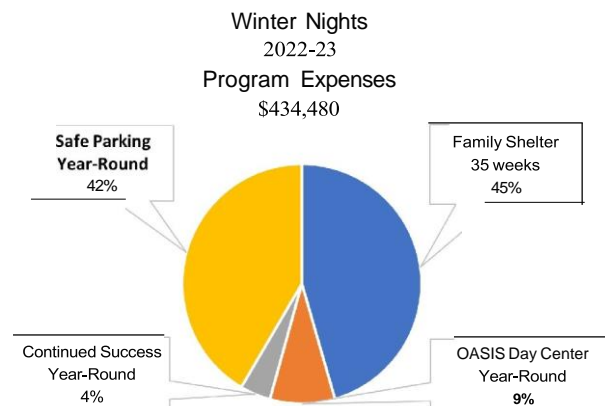
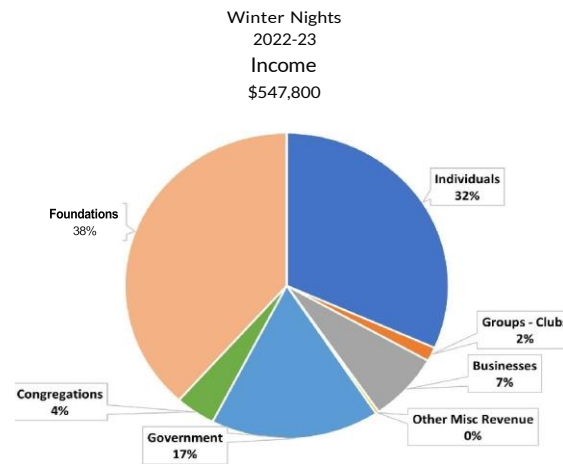
INCOME & EXPENSES

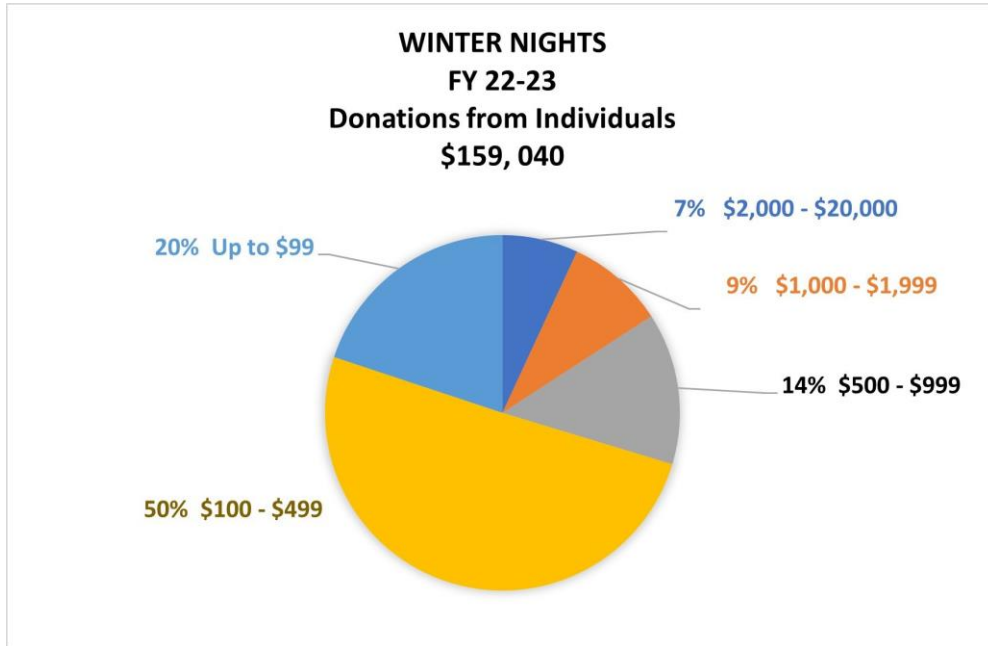
Let's Talk about Money

It's humbling to realize that we are a half-million-dollar operation, running year-round. In 2020, when we became an independent non-profit, we operated the Family Shelter and Oasis for 36 weeks and Safe Parking for 16 weeks with expenses of \$355,000.

Last year we operated the Shelter for 35 weeks and Safe Parking, Oasis, Continued Success and Client Financial Assistance for 52 weeks, and replaced our "totaled" Van, at a total cost of about **\$550,000**. We remained focused on the quality of our staff and programs (80% of our costs) and continued to work hard to raise the \$550,000 needed to fund our mission.

In FY 22-23 we basically broke even. Unfortunately, Income was down 7%, but Expenses were held to a 3% increase. **We closed the year with \$2,355 to spare.**





Congregations - Funding Donors 2022-2023

Brentwood Community United Methodist Church
 Christ the King Catholic Church - Pleasant Hill
 Concord United Methodist Church
 Episcopal Church of the Resurrection - Pleasant Hill
 First Baptist Church - Pittsburg
 First Church of Christ Scientist - Orinda
 First Church of Christ Scientist - Pleasant Hill
 First Congregational Church of Martinez
 First Presbyterian Church - Concord
 Grace Episcopal Church - Martinez
 Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church - Orinda

Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church
 Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church - Walnut Creek
 San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church
 Shell Ridge Community Church - Walnut Creek
 St. Bonaventure's Catholic Church - Concord
 St. Ignatius of Antioch Catholic Church
 St. John Vianney Catholic Church - Walnut Creek
 St. Paul's Episcopal Church - Walnut Creek
 St. Perpetua's Catholic Church - Lafayette
 St. Stephen's Episcopal Church - Orinda
 St. Timothy's Episcopal Church - Danville
 Unity Center of Walnut Creek

Foundations – Local Cities and County – Businesses 2022-2023

Charis Fund
 City of Antioch - CDBG
 City of Concord - CDBG
 City of Pittsburg - CDBG
 Community Foundation of Lafayette
 Contra Costa County - CDBG
 Contra Costa County - Keller Canyon
 Creating Healthier Communities
 Dean and Margaret Leshner Foundation
 Diablo Foods, Inc.
 Emergency Food and Shelter Program -
 FEMA
 Episcopal Impact Fund
 Firedoll Foundation
 Girl Scouts Troop #31474

John and Beverly Stauffer Foundation
 Kiwanis Club of Moraga Valley
 Lions Club of Rossmoor Foundation
 National Council of Jewish Women
 Reuben B. Robertson Foundation
 Rossmoor Rotary Foundation
 Sereno 1% For Good
 Share the Spirit - MediaNews Group Inc
 Sunlight Giving
 Swander Pace Capital Management Co.
 United Methodist Women - Brentwood
 VC Fund
 Wilcox Family Foundation
 Y and H Soda Foundation
 And others who wish to remain anonymous



Our thanks to so many of you for your In-Kind Donations

Individuals, Congregations, Community Groups, and Businesses

Gift cards for gas and stores, meals and snacks, sleeping bags, sheets, towels, pillows, blankets, cleaning supplies, art supplies, car seats, bicycles, baby & toddler supplies.

I know I have left someone off this list.

Please forgive me and know that you are also appreciated!

Julie Anderson
Anytime Fitness Berkeley
Suzan Bateson
Patricia Battersby
Cindy Bilsborough
Brentwood Community United Methodist Church
Cakes4Kids
Chrissie Brown
Camino Pablo Elementary School - Moraga
Christ the King Catholic Church - Pleasant Hill
Beth Crocker
Ann Farrell Diemer
Stephanie Doan
Linda Doran
Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church - Orinda
Sandy Inouye
Karen Kalvass
Mary King
Knights of Columbus
Lamorinda Lions Foundation
The Laser Members of Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church

Ann Lawrence and Dan Swander
Susan Lawson
The LIFT Group
Mike Maderios
Magical Miwoks
Patti Maxwell
Gloria Duffy
Gail Egbert
Eichleay, Inc.
First Presbyterian Church - Concord
Justin Gaumont
Shari Gonzalez
Elizabeth Haughey
Eileen Hock
Mary McGlynn
National Council of Jewish Women
Toni Noleroth
St. Vincent de Paul - Oasis
Vicki Pappas
Carolyn Paulson
Joni Pearce
Perales Interpreting Services



Thank you, Board Members, Management, Staff and Volunteers for being part of the 2022-23 Winter Nights' Team

Board of Directors

Dan Swander - President
Ashley Day - Secretary
Ann Lawrence - Treasurer
Alford Forney
Liz Haughey
Carmella Kowall
Catherine Mesgar
Bruce Smith
Leslie Dawson
Lea Esqueda

Winter Nights Management

Carmella Kowall, Executive Dir.
Bill Shaw, Executive Dir. (ret)
Teri Lundvall, Office Manager

Staff Volunteers

Ann Lawrence, *Donor Dev.*
Good News, Financials
Judy Stillman - *The Summit*
Jo Kerner, *Grant Writer*
Lani Shepp, *Grant Writer*
Ogie Strogatz, Integral coach
Peggy Woehleke, *Tutors*
Bob Russell - *Moving Day*

Staff Leads

Stephanie, Elijah

Staff

Brittany, Denice, Elaine,
Ginger, Heather, Jasmine,
Melissa, Nakiyah, Nikia,
Ramona, Randy, Schynell,
Tiffany, Ursula

Contractors

Elizabeth Haughey
Adam Tully



Managers: Teri, Elijah, Stephanie,
and Carmella



Volunteer Staff: Traveling Tutors
Kate Newkirk, Peggy Woehleke, Anita Weil

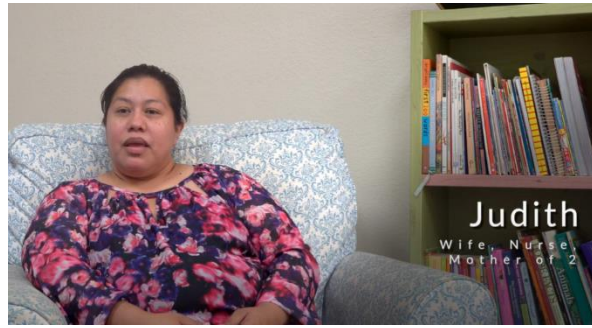
Let's end this summary of Season 19 on a Sweet Note.
Here are some of the cakes that Cakes4Kids baked and gifted with so much Love.



Here are two very short videos that share the special qualities of the Family Shelter and its impact on real families.



➤ The Faces of Homelessness



➤ Stories from Two Families

MORE
Help ▲ Families Home

DONATE ONLINE

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

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

Gold
Transparency
2023

Candid.



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.
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.

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