



# The GOOD NEWS Letter

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

SEPTEMBER 2020

## Winter Nights “Re-Imagined” The 17th Season of the Winter Nights Family Shelter

We wanted to let you know, in case the news had not drifted your way, that due to COVID-19 restrictions, Winter Nights is “re-imagining” itself this season.

We learned in August that Winter Nights could not operate a congregate shelter (living in one large space) unless we follow specific guidelines newly set by Contra Costa County.

These include:

- Rather than stay two weeks per site, the shelter will stay one month per site (four weeks) to minimize the number of locations.
- To follow social-distancing rules, fewer clients than normal can be sheltered at a site.
- Tents must be placed 12 feet apart.
- Tables must be spaced 6 feet apart and used by only one family.
- Clients must be COVID-tested and found free of the virus before entry into the program.
- Daily screening for temperature and symptoms must be charted.
- Masks, handwashing, and surface cleaning protocols must be scrupulously followed.
- Clients must shelter-in-place except for essential jobs, school, trips to doctors or other key appointments.
- No volunteers will be allowed inside the shelter.
- Meals must be prepared in licensed kitchens, e.g. restaurants, groceries, delis, and delivered outside the shelter with no contact. Meals will be served by staff.
- Groceries delivered will be used by staff to prepare breakfast and lunch and snacks.
- Tents may not be disinfected and reused by another family. They must be taken by the family or discarded when a family leaves.



*“Old Style” tent spacing. Not this year!!*

The WN Executive Team, led by ED Judy Stillman, has been working hard to identify congregations and other facilities who can accommodate the social distancing requirements, a need for outdoor space for kids to get out a bit, and can host for a full month.

There are many congregations who are sadly unable to meet the shelter’s needs for time and space, especially if they have a preschool on their campus that is in operation. Sheltering in place means Winter Nights’ clients will be at the site 24/7, instead of from 5 pm – 7 am, and their preschools need to spread out to provide socially distanced classrooms during the day. We understand and look forward to returning to their congregations when conditions change.

### What is the Plan for Season 17?

**Winter Nights Family Shelter will open November 2<sup>nd</sup>** at a host congregation for all of November. Cohosts will provide restaurant meals and groceries for the month.

The shelter will then move to another confirmed site for December where cohosts will again help by purchasing prepared meals and groceries.

As of this writing in early September, there are eight other congregations working on plans and approvals to host for a month. From these possible sites, we are fairly confident that we will have a full schedule through mid-June. Fingers crossed.

## Winter Nights has hired an Office Manager

We are pleased to announce that Teri Lundvall, Winter Nights' Oasis Program Manager, has accepted the job of part-time office manager for WNFS, Inc.

This will expand her role in administrative support that she currently provides for the program. She officially started in this role September 1.

We are looking forward to the benefits of a strong link between program operations and overall program administration. Go Teri!



We also want to thank Charlotte Ginn, who has served as interim Office Manager, helping with office transition, new office set up, and administrative tasks.

## HELP WANTED: Bookkeeper for Winter Nights

WNFS, Inc needs a part-time, full charge bookkeeper, who is experienced with QuickBooks-Desktop for nonprofits.

The job is 3-5 hours a week and can be done remotely with some pick-up and drop-off at the office or bank. We hope to hire in September.

If you, or someone you know, would like more information, please contact Ann Lawrence.  
[ann@cccwinternights.org](mailto:ann@cccwinternights.org)



## Continued Success

Part of "re-imagining" Winter Nights is reflected in the Continued Success program, begun in July. It is up and running with staff managers reaching out to families who, in the past few years, have been successfully housed through Winter Nights. Our Alumni!

So far, managers have successfully contacted 14 alumni families. They have been happy to hear from Winter Nights and are glad to catch up. Winter Nights' goal is to continue supporting their independence with encouragement and, if needed, a bit of help or direction so they remain housed.



A father and son who were with us in 2018 have recently moved into their own non-subsidized place. Dad is working, and his son starts kindergarten this year. However, with COVID-19, they are not quite sure how that's going to work. Wish them luck!



We also caught up with a family from 2014-2015. The oldest son is working full time. The youngest son graduated college with a degree in graphic design and is currently working in marketing at a local casino. Dad continues to be stably housed and is active in his community. Best wishes for their continued success!

## The Passing of a Recent Client



We are sad to inform you that a Winter Nights' client from this past season, who was in treatment for cancer, passed away last week. She leaves behind two children who were with her at the shelter, plus their older siblings.

The family was with Winter Nights for the full 10-week season as she was in treatment and her kids were in school. It speaks to the strength of Winter Nights commitment to meet families where they are and provide the support needed.

Last month, Winter Nights and the Health, Housing and Homelessness department (H3) of Contra Costa Health Services arranged to move the family into their managed shelter program, which gave them all access to additional services. We want to thank H3 for their support of this family through a very difficult time.

*Life is short and we do not have much time to gladden the hearts of those who travel the way with us. So be swift to love and make haste to be kind. And may the divine mystery who is beyond our ability to know, but who made us and travels with us, bless us and keep us in peace.*

## Masks for Winter Nights from the Lamorinda Angel Stitchers



Teri Lundvall & Kathleen Garcia, Winter Nights' Program Managers, happily receive 100 masks.

Winter Nights received a donation of 100 hand-sewn fabric face masks from the women of Lamorinda Angel Stitchers. With the leadership of Barbara Bisel, more than 50 women have dusted off their sewing machines and seamstress skills to make over 4000 masks so far.

The masks have been donated to Freedom House in San Francisco's Tenderloin District, the Monument Crisis Center in Concord, the Bay Area Rescue Mission in Richmond, a prison chaplain, the Family Bridges Senior Center in Chinatown, the Moraga Royale assisted living facility and the Reutlinger Community in Danville. We are happy that they can now add Winter Nights Family Shelter to their list of grateful recipients.

Ours were crafted by volunteer Betsy Donnelly. Betsy made both adult and children's sized mask for the shelter in fun inviting fabrics. They are fantastic!

To pay for fabric and supplies, Barbara began to sell the masks. Money raised, in excess of the needs of the mask project, is donated to St. Stephen's Episcopal Church's Food for Families program. They buy food in bulk from Grocery Outlet and donate it to the Monument Crisis Center. So far, the Lamorinda Angel Stitchers have donated almost \$2000 to Food for Families.



Face masks, hand sewn by Lamorinda Angel Stitchers



Barbara Bisel making masks at home.



Betsy Donnelly making masks for Winter Nights

## Winter Nights' Board of Directors

You heard that Winter Nights Family Shelter, Inc, is now an independent 501(c)(3) corporate nonprofit, right?

As a corporation, we had to form a Board of Directors to act as the fiduciaries who ensure the program has responsible, legal, and ethical governance and financial management policies. The Board also ensures that the program has sound plans, staffing and financial resources to advance our mission.

When Winter Nights filed the paperwork to become a corporate nonprofit in February 2020, we had to quickly declare an initial board of at least 3 positions: President, Treasurer and Secretary, fully recognizing that these individuals were place holders for a larger and more diverse board. All the initial members were from the Executive Team, quite honestly because they had the time to do the work required, and a passion for the program. They are Harry Miller, President; Dan Swander, Treasurer and Ann Lawrence, Secretary.

You might know Harry from his years of service to Winter Nights in many capacities, including as the coordinator for education at the shelter and in charge of the Traveling Tutors. He also brings to the Board

his strong expertise in Information Technology and has been invaluable setting up the new systems. His deep knowledge of Winter Nights is a true asset in his role as Board President.

Dan Swander may be a new name to you. He has been the co-coordinator for St Stephen's week at Winter Nights for many years and is married to Ann Lawrence (fully disclosed in all filings). Because of his financial and management expertise, plus service on a variety of boards, Ann roped-him-in when we needed a Board Treasurer to get us started. Wives get to do that.

Ann Lawrence has been on the Executive Team for three years, and a coordinator for ten years. Her expertise is in managing "minutia" ... ask any of the other Team members. She initiated the One Winter Night donor campaign and this Good News letter. As Board Secretary she was responsible for all the state and federal filings to achieve our status as a 501(c)(3) public benefits nonprofit corporation.

Both Judy Stillman, WN Executive Director and Bill Shaw, Program Director are part of all the Board's discussions and decisions, as valuable non-voting members.



**Harry Miller**  
BOARD PRESIDENT



**Ann Lawrence**  
BOARD SECRETARY



**Dan Swander**  
BOARD TREASURER

See the website for contact information [www.cccwinternights.org](http://www.cccwinternights.org)

### A Board Nominating Committee is at Work

Now that we are settled in a bit, a real nominating committee is at work, led by Stephanie Baker. You may know Stephanie as a dedicated grant writer for Winter Nights and the coordinator for her congregation. But did you know she has her MA in Pastoral Ministry from Holy Names University?

With hopes to expand the board to include 7-9 members, Stephanie and her committee of Jo Kerner,

Harry Miller and Bill Shaw have been reaching out to potential candidates with a strong commitment to the work that Winter Nights does, skills needed at the board level like legal, financial, marketing and development and also life experiences needed to keep it real. Former clients of Winter Nights are specifically being sought out as candidates.

### Offering hope, One Winter Night at a time.

Your support helps rebuild the lives of so many families. Thank you.

Checks can be made out to

**Winter Nights Family Shelter, Inc**

and sent to: **Winter Nights Family Shelter, Inc · 404 Gregory Lane, #7 · Pleasant Hill, CA · 94523**

Online donations can be made through this link: [DONATE](#)

Winter Nights Family Shelter, Inc is a 501(c)(3) public benefit nonprofit · Tax ID # 84-4775540  
Donations are tax deductible, and no goods or services are provided in exchange for adonation.

Web: [www.cccwinternights.org](http://www.cccwinternights.org) Contact: [info@cccwinternights.org](mailto:info@cccwinternights.org)