



WINTER NIGHTS

Family Shelter

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

October, November, December 2025

From the Executive Director

By the time you're reading this, I'll have been with Winter Nights for five months—and what a whirlwind it's been. I've met so many of you already, from longtime volunteers, tutors, and donors to partners, former staff, and our amazing current team. I've driven more than 500 miles, crisscrossing Contra Costa County for coffees, conversations, and visits to the Family Shelter, Safe Parking, and the Oasis Day Center.

This season of giving and gratitude has me feeling deeply thankful. I'm continually struck by the heart and commitment of the people who make Winter Nights what it is. You welcome families with dignity and respect and generously support their journey back to stable housing.

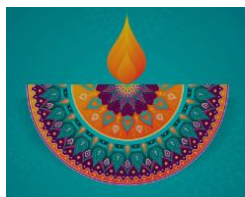
Over these first months, I've been listening, learning, and getting a real feel for the strength of this community. What I've seen gives me tremendous confidence in the work ahead and in what we can accomplish together.

With Gratitude,
Lenita



The Season of Light

We want to thank everyone who hosted and served at Winter Nights during the busy holiday season. Yom Kippur, Thanksgiving, Diwali, Advent, Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanzaa. Your giving spirit lights the world.



We'd also like to extend our thoughts and prayers to the Jewish Community in Australia and to those who lost loved ones. May their memories be a blessing.

2025 Annual Appeal

We have raised

\$154,320

77 % of our \$200,000 goal

MORE

Help ▲ Families Home

Together, We All Make Winter Nights Possible.

Thank you to everyone who contributed!

And thank you to those who generously increased their donation this year.

Donations are still gratefully accepted.

\$45,700 to go.



The Fall Succulent-Pumpkin Fundraiser

We made 280 pumpkins and raised \$6300 to support all our programs.

Thank you to everyone who took pumpkins to their customers, friends and congregations....

And to everyone who made a donation for a pumpkin...

And to everyone who helped make them!

It was such fun! See You Next October!

Are you ready for an 'All You Can Eat' Crab Dinner?

Dublin San Ramon Women's Club's annual Crab Feed will be held on **Saturday, January 31, 2026**, 5:30 - 9:00, at St. Raymond's Catholic Church, Moran Hall.

Proceeds benefit Winter Nights. See "Winter Nights in the Community" below.

Wishing everyone Hope, Love, Light, Joy, and Peace in 2026.

Gratefully, always,

Ann Lawrence

Your Good News writer/editor

ann@cccwinternights.org

Family Shelter



**Thank you to the Host Site congregations
who served in October, November, and December.
and to all the volunteers who served at the Family Shelter.**

*Shelter sites are listed only after clients have moved to the next site
to protect their privacy and safety.*

	St. Anselm's Episcopal Church-Lafayette Joni Pearce, Eva Woo, Anne Brown - Coordinators Cohost Groups Lamorinda National Charity League
	St. Anna's Episcopal Church-Antioch Cindy Sodowsky- Coordinator Cohost Brentwood Methodist Church
	Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church Michelle Browning, Lauren Gully, Rick Silvani, and Jim Reiter- Coordinators
	St. John Vianney Catholic Church – Walnut Creek Indira Pettebridge, Debbie Mellin - Coordinators Cohost Groups St. Stephen's Episcopal Church-Orinda: Andie Sheets, Dan Swander, Katie O'Brien, Coordinators Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church: Dan Gannett, Coordinator Boy Scout Troop 303
	St. Stephen Catholic Church- Walnut Creek Chris Lang, coordinator Cohost Groups Hillcrest Community Church-Pleasant Hill Grace Episcopal Church-Martinez

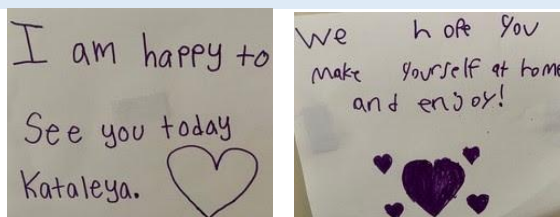
	Lafayette United Methodist Church Judy Stillman- Coordinator Cohost Groups Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints – Moraga Our Saviors Lutheran Church - Lafayette Grace Episcopal Church – Martinez for Thanksgiving Pledge to Humanity Perpetua's School- Lafayette Danville Lions Club Girl Scout Troop #31847 Boy Scout Troop #200 Boy Scout/Girl Scout Troop #402 Young Men's Service League Acalanes High School Service Club
	San Damiano Retreat Center – Danville Winter Nights coordinated Cohost Groups Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church - Lafayette Episcopal Church of the Resurrection- Pleasant Hill St Isidore Catholic Church- Danville Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church- Walnut Creek

A note from St Anselm's:

We enjoyed being the first congregation to host this year, and we had a wonderful experience with our guests. Right from the start, there were more families than usual, six in all, and there were three dads. One highlight was when a father and his young daughter attended our St. Francis' Day Family Sunday service for the blessing of the animals, and his daughter brought her stuffed animal to be blessed. She was so cute.

On the final weekend, two of the guests were very excited. One of the dads and one of the moms had both been hired in good jobs. The mom would be working at a local hospital, and the dad found a great construction job. He said it was the longest that he'd ever been out of work. We enjoyed celebrating with them.

~ Joni Pearce and Anne Brown.



Notes made by children at St Anselm's to welcome families to Winter Nights.

		
A St. Anselm's family makes wontons by hand for dinner	St. Stephen's Episcopal Taco Night. Rev Ryan and Scout Troop 303	Moraga Valley Presbyterian meal team. Dan Gannett and friends

Family Shelter



The Family Shelter

January 7, 2025

5 families – 16 guests

6 adults & 10 children

(The children are 2 to 14 years old)

All families have cars



Housed!



A single mother and her young child are settling into their new apartment. Walnut Creek United Methodist Church's Extended Family will be helping them with furnishings.

A father found a well-paid construction job. AND he, his wife, and their two children, are now housed. He wrote a thank-you card to Winter Nights, below. Their future looks very bright.

*To everyone at Winter Nights,
Thank all of you for your
help during our time of
struggle. Our family needed
the stability you all offered.
We are pleased to say we have
found a home in Pittsburg
and are now able to end each
night, safe, and together.
Thank You &
& Merry Christmas*

Thanking God for you.
EPHESIANS 1:16 NLT



Shelter Celebrations



Thanksgiving

Families from the Shelter, and a recently housed family, and a sister, joined with Grace Episcopal Church for a Thanksgiving dinner. It was wonderful. Thank you, Grace Episcopal

Christmas

At Christmas, families were at San Damiano Retreat Center, where they had private rooms with bathrooms, and could stay at the Shelter around the clock during the school break. Lenita and Teri want to thank the amazing community of Winter Nights who came forward to support Christmas Dinner. A last-minute "crisis" turned into a true "loaves and fishes" moment of grace.



The Safe Parking Program



Safe Parking

January 7, 2025

20 Cars - 23 Clients

including

1 Family with 3 children, ages 6-16

5 pets



Housed!



A father and his child from Safe Parking moved into their own place last week. They were so excited and they shared some photosa bit out of focus, but you can FEEL the love and excitement!





Celebrations



Thanksgiving

26 individuals from Safe Parking shared a Thanksgiving dinner provided by St. Ignatius. It was amazing. They set a beautiful table for their guests, and the food was amazing. Thank you, St. Ignatius.



Christmas

All Safe Parking clients were given the gift of two nights in a motel on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. St. Ignatius generously donated the motel rooms.



Client Financial Assistance



We were happy to help a Shelter family as they found a new home. They received assistance with the deposit and the first month's rent. Assistance was also provided to other families for appropriate work clothes and gas cards.

Continued Success



Thanksgiving



Time to be Thankful and to Share all our Blessings.

Continued Success helped 16 alumni families, 27 adults and 29 children, with gift cards to help with groceries for their Thanksgiving dinners. It was so good to say hello to each family as they stopped into the office to pick up their gift cards. We are thankful for the "continued success" of our alumni. We are very grateful to all of you who made special donations for these cards.

The Knights of Columbus - Danville donated Thanksgiving food boxes to Continues Success households. They provided 20 turkeys and all the goodies to make the dinner special.





A Holiday Fest



In early December, Alumni gathered to enjoy some food together, and the opportunity to take needed household items and clothing home with them.



Christmas Gifts



Two Continued Success families with children were again adopted by Girl Scout troop #30632. We can't thank them enough for making Christmas bright for our Alumni. Winter Nights adopted one more family.



Winter Nights in The Community



100+

WWC

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

100+ Women Who Care Contra Costa County is a group of charitable women focused on raising funds for nonprofits in the local county each quarter. In October, Winter Night was selected to be the recipient of their generosity. **These generous women donated \$6339 to Winter Nights** in support of the Shelter families, those at Safe Parking, and the alumni in Continued Success. **Many, many thanks to all of you!**

sharethespirit
EAST BAY TIMES

" Finding Shelter, And A Community, When She Needed It Most."

In December, The East Bay Times published an article about Winter Nights as part of their Share The Spirit campaign to highlight local nonprofits. Judith Gonzales' experiences at Winter Nights with her family and their journey to housing was featured.



Pharmacy technician Judith Gonzalez prepares chemotherapy medications for cancer patients at the UCSF Bakar Precision Cancer Medicine Building in San Francisco.

Control-Click Here to Read the Article:

[**ARTICLE LINK**](#)



Dublin San Ramon Women's Club

The Dublin San Ramon Women's Club is a vibrant group of women who devote themselves to improving our community and supporting local nonprofits.

Winter Nights, along with Fostering Wishes, were selected as the beneficiary of their two annual community fundraisers: **the Murder Mystery Fundraiser in November and the always anticipated Carb Feed, January 31.**

Winter Nights Executive Director, Lenita Wheeler, and Operations Manager, Teri Lundvall, dressed up and attended the "Who Killed Vito" Murder Mystery lunch fundraiser in November. They had a wonderful time and were so impressed by the warmth and generosity of the Dublin San Ramon Women's Club



Dublin San Ramon Women's Club's annual and popular **Crab Feed** will be held on Saturday, January 31, 2026, 5:30 - 9:00, at St. Raymond's Catholic Church, Moran Hall.

It features an all-you-can eat Crab Dinner, a fabulous silent auction with experiences, restaurants, etc. And a scrumptious dessert auction!

Get your tickets early, as this popular event sells out. All proceeds benefit Winter Nights and Foster Wishes.

It's not too late to donate!

The 2025 Annual Appeal
Our goal is to raise \$200,000

We have raised
\$154,320
77 % of our \$200,000 goal

Thank you to everyone who contributed!
And thank you to those who generously increased their donation this year.

Donations are still gratefully accepted.

\$45,700 to go.

This season, it takes \$2000 per day to fund Winter Nights

You are such a critical part of the extraordinary team that makes Winter Nights possible.
Your support helps transform countless lives as homeless families and individuals work to find their way home.



MORE
Help ▲ Families Home

"We, as a family, have worked very hard and have a new life ahead of us. We don't know what we would have done without Winter Nights."

~ Mother and Father with one child

"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, 2023

[DONATE ONLINE](#)

Control - Click

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

Checks can be written to:

Winter Nights Family Shelter, Inc.

404 Gregory Lane #7

Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

For questions or assistance, please call the office at 925-414-3883

Or email Winter Nights at the link below

[CONTACT US](#)

Control - Click

➞ 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/>



Our Contact Information

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

<http://www.cccwinternights.org>

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Tax ID # 84-4775540

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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.