Give Hope for the Holidays

IT’S HARD TO BELIEVE, but the holidays are right around the corner! Our staff are busy preparing to ensure that our clients feel at home for the holidays, regardless of how precarious their housing or income situations might be right now.

Your support will provide Thanksgiving Meal Kits with all the fixings to prepare at home, gift cards to buy presents for the holidays, and hot meals with care kits for those who are living on the streets in December.

Some of our neighbors have no home for the holidays. Others have shelter but lack sufficient resources to make the season the slightest bit festive for their children. That’s where Ritter Center can help. With your support, we can give the best holiday gift of all: hope and help.

Donate today to help us raise $500,000 this holiday season to ensure families, seniors, and people who are experiencing homelessness have food, access to medical and mental health care, housing support services, and essentials needed to get through one of the toughest times of the year.

RESOLVE
Real People. Real Impact.

Address Panel
PO Box 3517
San Rafael, CA 94912

3 EASY WAYS TO GIVE - THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR YOUR GENEROSITY

1. Donate Online at RitterCenter.org/Donate
2. Scan this QR Code:
3. Mail your donation in the enclosed envelope.

Ritter Center  I  415-457-8182  I  RitterCenter.org

Fall 2022
KEEPING A ROOF over your head and fresh food in your fridge is no small feat when living paycheck to paycheck. Here in Marin County, our neighbors often choose between paying the rent and buying groceries. And with inflation at a historic high, we are now seeing a marked increase in need as more and more hardworking families strain to make ends meet.

As many of you reading this know, Ritter Center is here for anyone in Marin who needs access to primary healthcare, housing support, and nutritious food. But did you know that we also run a range of seasonal programs that provide extra support during high times of need?

In this newsletter we provide info on several seasonal programs. Our Back-to-School Backpack Program has become a trusted source of school supplies for families. In addition, our holiday programs provide vital food, living essentials (e.g., backpacks, coats, sleeping bags), and gift cards for our families, veterans, seniors and other individuals experiencing homelessness during the more challenging colder months.

Our holiday programs are funded by donors and corporate sponsors through our Hope for the Holidays campaign, which launches Nov 1. (We hope you’ll consider donating this year!)

We have some big news! In order for us to more fully meet the needs of our community, our plans to relocate Ritter Center were unanimously approved by the San Rafael Planning Commission!

Our current building and location is outdated, and the new location will allow for an additional 2,500 square feet and provide appropriately sized physical exam rooms and behavioral therapy spaces, meeting rooms, administrative offices, and a food pantry on one campus. Most importantly, this new venue will give our patients access to Ritter Center with the dignity, privacy, and respect they deserve.

This season has been bursting with activity, hope, and action. We are thankful to you all for supporting our work and our community members in need.

In unity,

Mark Shotwell
Executive Director

P.S. You can now read all of our newsletters online too, visit RitterCenter.org/media
Going Back to School with Smiling Faces

OUR BACK-TO-SCHOOL BACKPACK campaign was a huge success! More than 111 donors raised over $32,000, smashing our original goal of $25,000. We were delighted to be able to give out 170 backpacks packed with school supplies and $50 Target gift cards to families dealing with the skyrocketing costs of sending children back to school.

As reported in the Marin IJ feature article, Dee and Paul’s four children, ages 4 to 14, came to pick out their favorite backpacks to start pre-K, second, fifth and tenth grade in style. This family has been relying on Ritter Center’s backpack program for several years now, and they were grateful to receive a $50 Target gift card for each child to help them buy the shoes and clothes they want to start the school year off with confidence.

To see the beaming smiles on these children’s faces was an inspiring moment for our team and volunteers. Thank you!

Heartfelt gratitude is extended to Ultragenyx volunteers, who helped children pick out backpacks; Juice Girl, who provided delicious, refreshing smoothies to our young students; and Camelbak for giving a huge discount on water bottles.

Special thanks to PJ O’Connell and Marin Homeless Aid who sponsored Under the Stars at the $10,000 Back-to-School level in memory of PJ’s nephew, Greg Baker, who passed away earlier this year.

“Thank you to everyone who made it possible for my kids to be happy returning to school with new backpacks and supplies. This is a huge relief as we are parents going through difficult times.”
—Lorena, parent and Ritter Center client

Meet Our Newest Board Members

RITTER CENTER is excited to announce the addition of two new members to our board: Rosalinda Camacho and Stephanie Plexico.

Rosalinda Camacho is the Health Hub Supervisor at Marin Community Clinic. Her ties to Ritter Center go back to one of the most vulnerable times in her life.

“We were living in Terra Linda and our rent went up too much,” tells Rosalinda. “We were fortunate in that we didn’t end up on the streets. We were able to disperse into different family members’ homes.”

When asked about the lasting impact of that time, Rosalinda said, “Honestly, it was that experience that molded my compassion and empathy. I am still emotional about it. I am still touched by every story I hear. It hits home.”

“At some point in my youth, I was homeless and didn’t have a place to call home.”
—Rosalinda Camacho, Board Member

View our photo gallery at bit.ly/BTS22-thanks or scan:

Read Rosalinda’s full interview on our blog: RitterCenter.org/blog
Meet Our Newest Board Members (cont...)

Stephanie Plexico moved to the Bay Area in 1997, and recognizes that there are many myths surrounding the issues relating to people experiencing homelessness.

Feeling strongly about promoting awareness, Stephanie said, “Sometimes the public doesn’t recognize the intense challenges of making it day to day on a lower income or how someone who is working multiple jobs might struggle to put food on the table.”

A pivotal moment came when Stephanie volunteered with her children for the Marin Rotating Emergency Shelters Team, a program that provides dinner and beds each night to local men experiencing homelessness during the winter months. “We sat down and shared a meal and heard about their lives, which made a lasting impact on all of us,” she said.

“We can take the time to help each other out through obstacles,” Stephanie concluded. “It might be uncomfortable at first, but if we are able to stay with it, we can sometimes begin to see things a little differently, and that change can have a significant impact on a life.”

“No one should be deprived of health care in this country. I believe the same is true for support around mental health and access to food.”
—Stephanie Plexico, Board Member

Building Trust on the Road

RITTER CENTER’S MEDICAL OUTREACH TEAM provides health care to underserved and unserved individuals throughout Marin County via our mobile medical van.

“It is important for us to get out and to make ourselves accessible,” says Ritter Center Clinic Manager Rachelle Valenzuela, who oversees the Ritter Center street medicine program.

“Many places in the county, including West Marin, often get forgotten because they are so remote,” explains Rachelle. “We can make progress on a number of fronts simultaneously: harm reduction, street medicine, Hep C, HIV testing, vaccines, and more. The fact that Hep C is curable is amazing. When we raise awareness, we change lives.”

Recently, the team was at New Beginnings, a homeless shelter operated by Homeward Bound of Marin that includes a medical respite partnership with Ritter Center.

“We worked with one person in particular who had a lot of trauma,” says Rachelle. “Riter Center Medical Outreach Team provider Aisha Patterson made a connection with him. Then, when he came the other day to Ritter Center, he lit up when he saw Aisha.”

“They continue to build that connection,” she emphasized. “This is at the heart of our work. It is critical to be able to close the loop by engaging and building trust in the field in order to get a patient to come to the clinic because they know that they are going to see the same people.”

Read the full story on our blog: RitterCenter.org/blog
Tribute Gifts

Anonymous, in memory of Jane Lawrence
Andrea Aul, in honor of Linda Jacobs
Annette Lymbery, in memory of Anne Barman
Andrew A. Salter, Laura Webb, and Sister Lavina
in honor of Christina M. Kratzer
Anne Manhart, in memory of Martin Luther Church
Anna Nordin, in memory of Charlaine Patterson
Anne Stansig, in honor of the Doreen Donders Family
Arlene Hansen, in memory of volunteers at Ritter Center
Barbara Bobish, in memory of John
Barbara Moore, in memory of Anthony Robledo
Barbara Mahler, in memory of Tony Bobish
Barry Kolberg, in memory of Wallace Stegner
Celine Donaldson, in honor of the Johnson family
Charles Kuhns and Vasilina Srinivas, in honor of Penny McPhail
Christine Kesey, in honor of Joseph Gallardo
Colleen A. Yaros, in honor of Holy Cross Church
Cynthia Wuttman, in honor of Carl Finger
Dan GABEL, in memory of Dan Gabel
Debbie Gable, in honor of Dorothy Weaver
Dinah McCullum, in memory of Dei
Doris Linzer, in memory of Terri Dabney
Donna Farnum, in honor of David Carillo
Freida Kaplan, in honor of Russia Rolison
Fred Neely’s Group, in honor of Joe Garcia and Miriam Roa
Gretta Webb, in memory of Mom
Heather Grenier, in memory of Ritter Center Director Service Team Members
Jack Heggen, in honor of Eric’s Fraser
Jane Ahearn, in memory of Jane Ahearn
Jenny Melendez, Stuller, in memory of Ritter Center staff
Jill B. and Robert Greeman, in memory of Dave Poulter
Jill and Robert Greeman, in memory of John Kuhns’ Eagle Project: Barkcamp
John Hoffmann, in honor of Trip and Denise
John Karlsson, in honor of Amma Susa
Jonathan R. Korty, in memory of Deidra Chang
Kathleen Dring, in memory of Martin County Day School
Kenny Kinna, in honor of Suzanne Watts Shuyard
Keren Brandt and Paul Robertson, in honor of Anthony, Stelens, Jayne and Lori
Les Norley and Ben White, in honor of Tyler Schwartz
Mary Carol and Rick Shelvock, in memory of Kathryn and Ron Koch
Mary Rohrer, in honor of Douglas Collins
Matthew Holt, in honor of Lisa Swem
Mike and Jennifer Schuhler, in honor of Ben Stein
Myles Helmicki, in honor of homeless surfers
Paul and Christine Prusiner, in honor of Meme and Larry Martin
Peter Graumans and Terry Gant, in honor of Herwig and Lou Graumans
Phyllis Diane Damski, in honor of Lisa Sanfilippo
Rafael Tartera, in honor of Kari Tartera
Redemptorist Church, in honor of Margaret Tremont
Spirit Whisman, in honor of Mala
Steve Coste and Kate Lemke, in honor of Joyce Goldfield
Steve Fables, in memory of David
Suzanne Frazee, in honor of Ritter Center staff and volunteers
Tennencia Jenkins, in memory of Bailey Coleman
Thomas Farley, in memory of Heath Cawrey
Veronique Hensley, in honor of David Lamarr
Dil and Maritilde Danenberg, gifts made in honor of Samuel Heiligenhoven-Perez
Maryjane Danenberg, Lynn Ray, Eve Nelson, Anne Danenberg, Evelyn Roy
Alan Rippy, Jr., Claudine Perez, and the Danenberg Family
Tribute Gifts, In Memoriam

Adam and Kristie Pollock, in memory of Olivia and Bob Pollock
Allen Gies, in memory of Susan Adamson and George Westfall
Amy Jaeger, in memory of David J. Jaeger, III
Andrew and Paula Adamson, in memory of Keiko
Angela F. Ibel, in memory of Admiral Van Hoogstraat
Annie A. Morgan, in memory of Sherman Nelson
Antoinette Doyle, in memory of Corinne Bryan LeBeuf
Arthur and Edith Beaton, in memory of Paul Beaton
Barbara Cummings, in memory of Tracy Cummings
Barbara Kudis, in memory of Mike Kudis
Betty and Louie Benezet, in memory of Susan Adamson and George Westfall
Betzy and Brian Lewis, in memory of Leslie Baker
Bryan Hoek, in memory of Kristen Hoek
David Huber, in memory of David J. Hays, III
Dyllen Fuller, in memory of Guy Ackerman
Dorothy and Elmer Hagan, in memory of their brother
Elizabeth Taylor, in memory of Susan Adamson and George Westfall
Felicie Conte, in memory of Mary D. Conte
George Westfall, in memory of Susan Adamson and George Westfall
John Adamson, in memory of Susan Adamson and George Westfall
Jack Heggen, in memory of Betty Ong
Jane E. Adams, in memory of Susan Adamson and George Westfall
Jean Kay, in memory of Ann Kay
Jeffrey D. Thompson, in memory of Joan Kay-Lyke

In Kind

Adia De Arriba and Marica Arredondo
Alvina’s Sushi
American Conservatory Theater
Anima Scotia
Angela Honickley
Anna Noble
Aretha L. Quino
Ashwood Medical Clinic
Bolts
Benjamin Lye
Bonnie Prior
Buenos Vida Winery
Caroline Moore
Carvalho Farm Lodge
Chapita
Christian Sohren
Columbus Mountain-Housecrafted Estate Wine
Cristina’s
Dana Velenti Personal Concierge Services
Daren Love
Davida Howell
Delightful Bakery
Denny and Essential Eats
Diana L. Larko
Diana M. Larko
Diana Van Deursen
Donna Hughes
DSC Venture Capital
DuBois
Edward Eichenberg and Cameron McClellan
Eden and Quinoa’s Hideout
Edith Runyon
Elizabeth Chew
Elizabeth McCready
EVO Spa
First Congregational Church
Frank and Carol L. Zimmerman
Gallied
Garing Marin
Gravity Thrift Store
Greenley’s Cider Co.
H refuge, please note: Going forward, donor listings will reflect fiscal year contributions, rather than calendar year.
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Jean-Neau
Jean Cole
Jim Fetkul
John Pace and Margaret Stout
John Wilson-Brown
Joseph McCormick
Joseph Morena
Julie L. Huston
Julie Bauer
Karim Donohue
Kathleen O’Loughlin
Kahlo’S
Kingston Brewing Company
Laura Joy
Leela Stens
Lilly Weinaberg
Linda Kohn
Lynette Eichman
Marin County Sheriff’s Association
Marin Museum
Mark Day School
Mary Alice
Melina Monti
Michael and Lesley Bird
Mike Wallace
Mill Valley Music Fest
Mountain Highway Association
Mullberry Street Pizzeria
Naomi Follam
Nicolle Beyer
Nugget Markets, Inc.
Oakland Regional Hospital
On Board Experiential
Opry at the Opryland Village
Outer of Malta’s Western Association
Patricia Brune
Patrick McLaughlin
Peggie Clarke
Penny Hin
Rajesh and John Brimstone
Red Cross Club at Archie Williams High School
Redemptorist Preschool
Renew Toesmire
Ruth Colfax
San Francisco-Marin Food Bank
San Rafael Police Department
Saranac Lake
Seda
Sherwood-Selinger and Nancy Fox
Shin’s Bbq
Shuttle Airports
St. Anselm Church
Sue Ann Roy
Sweetwater
The Village at Corte Madera
Tribal Wages Project
Toyota Harrier
Trailer Joes
Tristan Hunt
Tyler Jackson
Umbertina Group
Varsha Yaya

In Kind

Adia De Arriba and Marica Arredondo
Alvina’s Sushi
American Conservatory Theater
Anima Scotia
Angela Honickley
Anna Noble
Aretha L. Quino
Ashwood Medical Clinic
Bolts
Benjamin Lye
Bonnie Prior
Buenos Vida Winery
Caroline Moore
Carvalho Farm Lodge
Chapita
Christian Sohren
Columbus Mountain-Housecrafted Estate Wine
Cristina’s
Dana Velenti Personal Concierge Services
Daren Love
Davida Howell
Delightful Bakery
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Edith Runyon
Elizabeth Chew
Elizabeth McCready
EVO Spa
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Karim Donohue
Kathleen O’Loughlin
Kahlo’S
Kingston Brewing Company
Laura Joy
Leela Stens
Lilly Weinaberg
Linda Kohn
Lynette Eichman
Marin County Sheriff’s Association
Marin Museum
Mark Day School
Mary Alice
Melina Monti
Michael and Lesley Bird
Mike Wallace
Mill Valley Music Fest
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Mullberry Street Pizzeria
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Outer of Malta’s Western Association
Patricia Brune
Patrick McLaughlin
Peggie Clarke
Penny Hin
Rajesh and John Brimstone
Red Cross Club at Archie Williams High School
Redemptorist Preschool
Renew Toesmire
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Saranac Lake
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Shuttle Airports
St. Anselm Church
Sue Ann Roy
Sweetwater
The Village at Corte Madera
Tribal Wages Project
Toyota Harrier
Trailer Joes
Tristan Hunt
Tyler Jackson
Umbertina Group
Varsha Yaya
RITTER CENTER is deeply honored by new and continued support received from community members, businesses, faith-based and community organizations, and foundations. We especially thank our many volunteers for their dedication to the community.

This list reflects gifts made during the 2021 calendar year, as well as Ritter Center’s fiscal year (July 1, 2021–June 30, 2022). We received $1,695,140 in 2,912 gifts from 1,624 donors. When the community comes together, great things happen.

* A donor advised fund of Marin Community Foundation
\* in memoriam

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