

THE GILEAD GAZETTE

Volume 5, Issue 3 Christmas 2003



MEET GILEAD HOUSE

Gilead House is a transitional home for single mothers in need and their children. In addition to housing, we provide women with the skills and support they need to rebuild their lives and care for their families. Our mission is to offer hope to families by helping them transition to a stable life and permanent housing.

SUPPORTING CONGREGATIONS:

- Marin Covenant Church
- Tiburon Baptist Church
- Church of the Nazarene
- Bay Marin Community Church

PARTICIPATING CONGREGATIONS:

- All Saints Lutheran Church
- Crossings
- Presbyterian Church - Novato
- St. Francis Episcopal Church

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CHRISTMAS PRESENT, CHRISTMAS FUTURE



As we prepare for another Christmas at Gilead House, we know that this season of the year stirs up mixed emotions in our families. On the one hand, there is the joy and relief of being in a safe, stable living environment for the holidays—something that they may not have known on previous Christmases. And our Gilead House supporters always go a long way toward making sure the house is festive (and well stocked with presents) for the big day. But, on the other hand, our families also face the knowledge that some of their dreams have not come true yet. They long for a Christmas that finds them in a permanent home of their own with a job that is able to sustain them throughout the year ahead.

That reality makes us especially appreciative of everyone who has been part of Gilead House during this past year. Your financial support, prayers, and volunteer hours have enabled us to not only keep families safe in the present, but to provide them with hope for the future as they gain the skills and confidence needed to build an independent life for themselves. We have seen your generosity in countless ways:

- The teams of youth who have come to the house to decorate it for Christmas or give it a “spring cleaning” before a new mom moves in.
- The individuals and churches who have quietly and generously provided funds during lean economic times.

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CHRISTMAS CHALLENGE

The Schow Foundation has offered a \$3,000 challenge grant to the Gilead House for Christmas! What this means is that the Schow Foundation will match \$1 for every dollar donated to the Gilead House up to \$3000 during the Season. If you are able to give toward this goal, please write on the return giving card “Christmas Challenge.” Thank you to the Schow Foundation and all who are up to the challenge!



GILEAD HOUSE WELCOMES A NEW RESIDENT!

Julia and her beautiful daughter, Alivia moved into the house in early October. Julia came with a dream in her heart and the energy to make a change in her life for herself and her daughter. She has brought warmth and hope to the house with her. She set about looking for work and was able to get a job in record time. She is now working at a mortgage company in downtown Tiburon. She has plans to increase her job skills and take some classes so she can move up in the company some day soon.

Alivia is Julia’s delight. She loves her daughter with all her heart. It is hard work parenting a 16 month old on your own and Julia is eager to start

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CHRISTMAS PRESENT...*CONTINUED*

- The volunteers who helped us harvest and process 3 tons of olives at the Pine Ridge Winery and the Turley Olive Orchard in Napa for our annual Olive Oil fundraiser.
- The mentors who spend one-on-one time with each of our moms and give them the individual attention and support that makes our program successful.

The list could go on and on, because a program like Gilead House cannot exist without the investment and compassion of countless like-minded friends. And at this time of the year, we are especially grateful for each of you and the way all of our contributions have come together this past year to change lives one by one.

We are also excited about the year ahead and encourage each of you to continue your partnership with us. Our financial needs, of course, are always going to be a reality, and Christmas has traditionally been the time when much of our funding for the year to come has arrived. Also, there are always opportunities to volunteer your time (see www.gileadhouse.org/volunteer for some ideas!). Families who participated in our olive harvest together commented on how good it was for their children to have an opportunity to help others—especially around Christmastime. We believe those experiences of giving stay with them (and with all of us) and serve as the best reminder possible of the true meaning of this season.

Thanks again for all you have meant to us, and may all God's blessings be yours this Christmas!

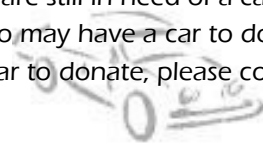
GILEAD HOUSE WELCOMES...*Continued*

some parenting classes with the other mothers at Gilead House. Alivia seems to be enjoying her new "brothers and sisters" and the house is full of love and laughter.

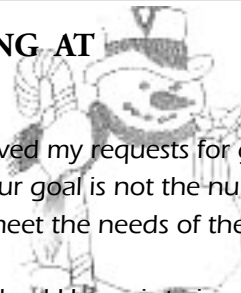
Julia and Alivia thank you for the opportunity to be here and they welcome your prayers for the year that lies ahead of them.

IN NEED OF A CAR

Two of our moms are still in need of a car. If you know of someone who may have a car to donate, or you yourself have a car to donate, please contact us at (415) 257-3866



CHRISTMAS MORNING AT GILEAD HOUSE



In the past, we have received my requests for gift ideas for the families at GH. Our goal is not the number of gifts, but rather ones that meet the needs of the house and families.

This year for Christmas, Gilead House is trying to improve the playroom to better meet the needs of the children currently living in the house as well as those who will live there in the future. Our goal is to transform the room from its current jumbled state into an organized and accessible place for kids to learn and grow. We would like to provide educational games and toys, art supplies, quality books and music which will help the children develop through creative movement, artistic expression and imaginative play. In order to do this, we need your help! Not only do we need quality books, games and supplies, we also need a large cabinet and containers to store the supplies and a child-size table for the kids to work on.

The other gift ideas address the specific needs of the families. Both the playroom Christmas list ideas and family Christmas list ideas can be found on our website at: www.gileadhouse.org/christmas.

SHOWERS OF BLESSINGS

One Wednesday evening in November, we were blessed to receive a home cooked meal prepared and served by the Crossings Youth Group. This is the same youth group that has donated many hours cleaning the house, gardening, and general maintenance. It is inspiring to see a group of youth so engaged in the act of giving. Gilead House families, Board members and their families, mentors, and friends joined in for this festive evening. Many thanks to the Crossings Youth Group for this wonderful evening.

We continue to be blessed with many other donations that help keep us going throughout the year. Some of the recent donations include:

- A couch
- Women's and children's clothing
- A donation of money for winter clothing from the Novato Chapter of Soroptimists
- A bed and rocking chair
- Tickets to the Nutcracker ballet for all the moms and children

MANY, MANY THANKS!

WISHING YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM ALL OF US AT THE GILEAD HOUSE!