



Brother Benno's Newsletter

Interdenominational Volunteers
Making a Difference in This World

“Uplifting The Dignity of Those We Serve”

May 2012

FACEBOOK IS ANOTHER OPTION

Brother Benno's recently launched a new Facebook page that will enable us to get instant information out to anyone who is interested in knowing about some of our most current events. Our Facebook page is not intended to replace the newsletter; it's just another way for us to appeal to volunteers, supporters, and anyone else who has an interest in what we do.

One great thing is that our Facebook page is accessible all around the world, and it's free! Take a look if you're so inclined, but know that the newsletter isn't going anywhere—except to your mailbox or your email! And if you'd like to switch from paper copy to email, send us a note to brotherbennos@gmail.com.

RECYCLING IS PROFITABLE

What started as a small experiment to bring in a few extra dollars for the needs at Brother Benno's has become an amazing recycling program that nets thousands of dollars. Over a four-month period last year, we made \$4,000. That same amount has already been raised in just the first two months of this year.

Most of the money comes from aluminum cans and plastic bottles, but we are also profiting from cardboard, paper, tin, glass, and scrap metal. A dumpster for cardboard brings in \$15 to \$20.

For large items like appliances, scrap metal, and junk cars (which must have proof of clear title), the staff can call the recycling company to pick them up. They do the hauling; Brother Benno's reaps the benefits.

Items can be dropped off behind the Center Monday-Friday, 6:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.; or Saturday, 8:15 to 12:30. Someone will be available to help you unload if necessary. For more information, please call 760-439-1244, ext. 119.

PROGRAM MEMBER FINDS HEALING IN WRITING

by Barbara Ladwig

Writing is often a powerful form of therapy. It allows people to “get things out of their system” in ways that are socially acceptable, as well as physically and emotionally beneficial. Writing about one's anger, fear, gratitude, or love is a way of channeling feelings into safe and productive avenues. And because of these benefits, it's not surprising that many of our Program Members turn to writing as part of their recovery journey.

Fifty-one-year-old “Edward” has been writing for almost 30 years. He started while he was in prison. First he wrote poetry because he was in love, then children's stories—not what one would expect, but the result of a need that grew out of his own difficult childhood, which included physical and mental abuse. Fourteen years ago, he sent 20 stories to the U.S. Patent Office, where they wait for him to come up with the money to get a copyright.

Since he's been in our Recovery Program, Edward has been writing poems; and he says he writes “what God wants me to write.” His relationship with God ramped up when he faced the newly passed Three Strikes Law in 1995 and discovered that he was destined to be in prison for the rest of his life after stealing three packets of double-A batteries. His first two offenses had been more serious crimes, but the law said any third offense was the third strike. “I never prayed so hard in my life,” he said.

His court-appointed attorney took a personal interest in him, and as it turned out, a special interest in his children's stories. “I know it was my writing that saved me,” Edward said. “My writing defines who I am inside, who I am as a person.

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EXPERIENCING THE BROTHER BENNO SCENE

by Barbara Ladwig

Need More Coffee? Our Servants of the Poor perform many different tasks at Brother Benno's, some assigned, others taken on as they see a need. **Diana Shields** got the idea of filling a carafe with fresh coffee and walking around the dining room during the morning meal. She said the Guests have been very appreciative, and it brings her joy as well. "I'm getting to know people better," she said. "I think it's hard sometimes for them to come here, to admit they need help, and this special attention puts them more at ease." Diana said she often refills the carafe three or four times on any given morning, and some of the diners have started calling her "Servant of the Coffee."

Lucky Kids. Another group of good people have provided new undies for children, adding to the batch given at Christmas time by the employees of the Neighborhood Services Department of the City of Oceanside. This time, members of Soroptimist International Oceanside-Carlsbad collected 288 items for our youngest Guests, and they were received on March 30 by **Harold Kutler**, who is so appreciative of all the generosity bestowed on Brother Benno's. We thank all the members of the club, and especially **Michelle Davis**, who coordinates this annual donation.

It Takes So Little. A new volunteer seems to have jumped into her job at the Center with both feet and tons of enthusiasm. **Julie Petrie** said she was trying to think of something to give up during Lent, when a priest suggested that maybe she could "do" something instead of give up something. That led to her coming to Brother Benno's, taking the tour, and filling out a volunteer form. For the past six weeks, she's been sitting at the front desk, where she answers the phone, greets Guests and visitors, and generally makes herself useful.

"Everyone has made me feel like part of the team, like I'm home," she said. I asked her if she's had any particularly meaningful experiences so far, and she said she's had lots of them. "Just the other day, a woman came in, and I could see she was having a really bad day," Julie said. "She started

telling me about all her problems, and I had no solutions for her, so I just stood up and gave her a hug. I could see that was all she needed—someone to listen and to care."

It's the same when she answers the phone. Sometimes Brother Benno's is unable to provide the help people need, but we can often refer them to other agencies—and again, we can listen. "I can feel their relief over the phone," Julie said. She told one woman she would pray for her, and she asked the woman to pray for her, too. That request seemed to resonate with the woman on the other end of the line.

From An Abundance. A check for \$1,000 was recently received from St. Therese of Carmel Parish in San Diego. The money was raised by the youth group at their annual St. Joseph's Table fundraiser, which has its roots in an Italian tradition from the Middle Ages. *During a severe drought and famine in Sicily, the people turned to St. Joseph for help. Their prayers were answered with abundant rain; and in gratitude, they set up public banquet tables to feed the poor.* A mother of one of the members of the youth group said that some people in the parish paid \$40 for a loaf of bread when they learned that the proceeds would go to Brother Benno's.

Thanks. Heather Pine, who coordinates Brother Benno's outreach at Vista Village Senior Living, has asked me to thank all the people who donated items she asked for in the March newsletter. She also said she can always use more volunteers; email her at heathertpine@yahoo.com if you're interested.

Kay Remembered. One of our volunteers, **Dorothy Richardson**, happened to see the following message on an internet blog on February 24 regarding the death of Kay Kutler: "I absolutely love this lady. I can still hear her singing, 'If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands. . . ' I bet she is singing it for God right now. God bless you, Kay. (signed J.T.)"

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And thank God (my attorney) saw who I really was on the inside and was not afraid to stand up for what he believed was right." The attorney discovered that the second strike had never been proven; and with that information, he was able to get Edward a lesser sentence.

Edward's present attempt at sobriety still deals with the echoes of past hurts and mistakes. "One day at a time, just one day at a time," he says. "I find that I can give some happiness (even if only a little) to people who read my things."

The following are two of Edward's poems written in the past few months here at Brother Benno's:

A Closer Look At Me

When I look into the mirror
Do I like what I really see?
Do I really like the person
Who's looking back at me?

Did I remember to pray
today?
Did I help a fellow man?
Am I really trying hard
enough?
Have I done the best I can?

Am I proud of myself for
yesterday?
And what about today?
And will I be proud
tomorrow?
It's only me who can say.

And when Brother Benno
sees me
From his place up above
Is there a frown upon his
face?
Or is it filled with love?

So when you look into the
mirror
To him have you been true?
And is the person smiling
That's looking back at you?

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Could Have Been An Angel

As I left a store one day
A stranger asked me for spare
change.
I knew nothing about him,
I didn't even know his name.

He seemed a little dirty,
Said he was down and out.
I wondered if he wanted
liquor
And what this was about.

Still, I reached into my
pocket
And fulfilled his request.
I didn't want to refuse him,
For this just might be a test.

He might have been an
Angel.
How am I to say?
But I felt something good
inside
As I watched him walk away.

And how he spent that money
I'll never know to my grave.
You see, it really doesn't
matter.
The point is that I gave.

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AUXILIARY NEWS

by Vikki Ramey

Thanks to everyone who brought in rice and beans for the Center food boxes, and for the candy for Mother's Day bags. Thanks to **Claire Carter, Karen Gallagher, Dawn Schawbe, Penny Sallee, Renee Lawson, and Elena Gonzalez** for filling the bags. Special thanks to Claire Carter for preparing the items for the bags, making is easy to complete the task.

Our meeting on May 16 will be at the Prince of Peace Abbey. Many of you have expressed an interest in knowing more about **Brother Benno** and the Abbey, and we are delighted that **Abbot Charles Wright** will speak to us that day. Cost is \$10, which will include lunch. Deadline for reservations is May 11. Please contact **Vikki Ramey** (760-803-6267) for more information.

The LaCosta Post Office has designated Brother Benno's as the recipient of the NALC Food Drive on May 12. We need volunteers to pack boxes as the postal carriers come back from their routes. Contact **Jannetha Long** (760-630-1093) if you can help.

Coming events: Outback Fundraiser July 14. Back-to-School Backpacks Program August. Annual Luncheon December 1.

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Your donation enables us to do all the wonderful things we do

My enclosed tax-deductible gift is: \$ _____
(make payable to: Brother Benno Foundation)

In memory of: _____

Please send a card to:

(name) _____

(address) _____

For a special occasion (birthday, anniversary, etc.): _____

Send a card to: (name) _____

(address) _____

Or, donate online at <http://brotherbenno.org>

VOLUNTEERS PROVIDE LOTS OF LOVE AND ATTENTION

“Ted” is a former Program Member, now on Staff at Brother Benno’s. He works full-time at the Center, as do all Staff members; and on his day off, he goes to Vista Village Senior Living, where he helps to provide activities for the residents.

Last September, **Heather Pine**—who runs the outreach program for Brother Benno’s—asked Ted if he’d like to help out. He is now an important part of a team that is doing wonders with the residents, many of whom are dealing with Alzheimer’s and other memory-related problems.

The facility ran into a problem with their Easter party, when a group that was scheduled to help was unable to do so. The Brother Benno volunteers stepped right up and provided everything that was needed, and then some.

A couple guys offered to barbecue, one man helped with security and with the giant jumping gym that had been set up for residents’ grand-kids, and the rest saw to it that everyone who wanted to dance to the music of the great band had help if needed.

Ted mentioned two women in particular who seemed to be having a really good time. **Ruth**, (pictured) who’s 95, had never spoken or smiled in all the time he’d known her, seemed disconnected from everybody and everything, and walked “a foot a minute.” But when she heard the music, she got up, left her walker behind, and danced for what seemed like hours. Another Brother Benno volunteer said she wore him out, and he’s way younger than she is. (Way younger!)

The other woman who delighted Ted was **Nellie**, a 76-year-old who doesn’t look a day over

50. “She’s a big flirt,” Ted said. She went from one man to the next, asking them to dance with her. And they all did.

Ted said the only down-side of this ministry is having to watch the people degenerate. But then he added something all volunteers seem to feel: “I get much more than I give.”

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Information & Online donations
brotherbenno.org

Soup...Soap...Hugs...Hope: The Story of Brother Benno's Life-Changing Soup Kitchen

This book is offered as a gift to donors who contribute whatever their budget allows...The important thing... is that you have one...

Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip Code _____

Donation \$ _____
Number of copies _____

Memorials

Brother Benno	Mary Peterson	Dora Ramirez	Peggy Higley
Pope John Paul II	Frank Barnet	Dick & Terry Riley	Douglas Kopeso
Mother Teresa	Frank S. Dolley	Bill Buckner	William Flanagan
Kay Kutler	Phyllis H. Dierlam	Mary Shankle	Nysewander Family
Ann Sauer	Monty Nares	Walter Ulloa	Squirrell Family
Joe & Ida Friend	Margaret Rossini	Fred Williamson	Agatha Johnson
Mary Nordstrom	Dorothy M. Donahue	Carole Kutler	G. Preston
Myron Eichen	Mary Teresa Carr	Will Skinner	McCauley
Alice Jordan	Ruth Hazel Pierson	Fr. Abbot Claude	Marshall Button
Roseanne Dreibelbis	Elizabeth Holms	Ehringer, OSB	Franklin Forthoffer
Richard Farhquar	Edith Blaiser	Fr. Luke Dougherty	Pete Treadwell
Deacon Art & Mary Carr	Ben Kouns	Naomi Shelton	Dad & Mom
Don & Dorothea Daybell	Bill Lakoff	Rosemary Tucker	Stanley LaMonte
Catherine L. Quinlan	Bernice, Samuel &	Ben E. Lewis	Alice Condren
Kathryn D. Pent	Milton Silver	Roland Bond	Merle Stokes
Mary Pullman	Anita H. Donahue	Anna Correia	Andrea Boersma
Joan Boyd	Margaret Stephan	Geraldine Howard	Roger Diot
Agnus Boyd	Bill Boster	Helene McGill	Bernie Weiler
Harold Thompson	Louise Foussat	Mike Stendahl	Joseph Opatkiewicz
Bud & Blanche Ogle	Tom Hayward	Richard Shea	Chris Kefalas
Bob Gleason	Richard Kurtz	Jeanne Nickel	Ed Raymond
Jane Pfau	Helen Lucas	PJ & John Daheim	Carolyn Halsey
Ron Alexander	Bill & Joan Maloney	and Mimi	

Needs

Recyclable Items Hygiene Items Bulk Rice and Beans Socks, Socks, and Socks

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
May 2012 Monthly Serving Team Schedule		1 St. John The Evangelist	2 Brother Benno's Auxiliary	3 Oceanside Pacific Kiwanis	4 San Luis Rey Mission	5 St. Thomas More
	7 St. Elizabeth Seton #1	8 Friends from Vista	9 Naval Hospital	10 Oceanside Civitans	11 St. Patrick's	12 TVIA
	14 North Coast Methodist	15 Christ the King Lutheran	16 Grace Anglican	17 Carlsbad Rotary	18 St. Elizabeth Seton #2	19 DeMasi Family
	21 Sunrise Kiwanis of Vista	22 St. Mark's San Marcos	23 San Luis Rey Methodist	24 Pilgrim Creek	25 Fallbrook Presbyterian	26 Catholic Daughters
	28 Christ Anglican	29 Welk Resort	30 Soroptomist International	31 Grace Anglican		

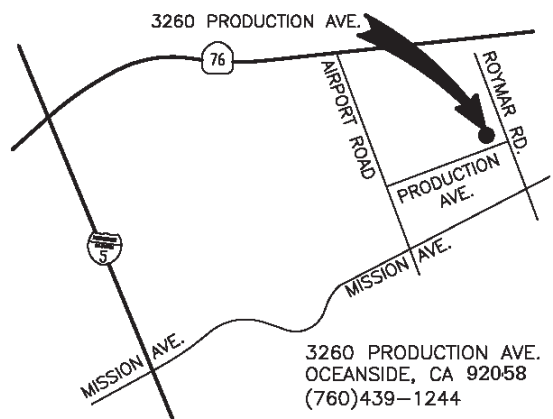
Brother Benno's Furniture Sales

3242-B Production Ave., Oceanside (next to Center) 760-967-2742 **Open Mon. - Sat. 9 am to Noon**
 We welcome your saleable furniture items. Please call 760-439-1244 ext.115 for free pickup.

Please use the enclosed envelope to make your tax-deductible donation to the Brother Benno Foundation. If you are viewing this online you can donate by going to brotherbenno.org and click on Donations. This will allow you to make a secure donation using PayPal or a Credit Card.

Your donation is used each month at our main center and eight operational houses to provide: meals, clothing, personal hygiene items, blankets, showers, laundry facilities, bus vouchers, nights of lodging, medical and mental health referrals, prescriptions, ID replacement, mail services, Social Security, and veterans' issues, food packs, shelter for women and small children, men's drug and alcohol recovery program, shelter for women in recovery, rent and utility assistance when funds are available. We thank you for your continued support. 100% of your contribution goes directly to assist those we serve. Our modest administration costs are paid for by our Thrift Store revenues.

www.brotherbenno.org



Brother Benno's Services:

	March 2012	Our 28th Year		March 2012	Our 28th Year
Meals	13,205	3,235,205	Loads of laundry	33	26,037
Nights of lodging	1,165	223,866	Food packs	2,563	190,079
Articles of clothing	3,987	912,023	Blankets	119	32,835
Showers	987	165,684	Prescriptions	40	6,945
Haircuts	136	13,888	ID Vouchers	11	8,248
Bus passes	74	75,462	HUGS	2,250	823,594

Our services are the same for everyone without regard to race, religion, national origin, age, sex, or disability.

The Thrift Shop

3965 Mission Ave. (East of Albertsons) 760-967-7505

Shop open Mon-Sat 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. -- Stop by to check out our Special of the Week Sales!!

Brother Benno Foundation, Inc.
P.O. Box 308, Oceanside, CA 92049

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