



Brother Benno's Newsletter

"Uplifting The Dignity of Those We Serve"

Interdenominational Volunteers
Making a Difference in This World

August 2014

BROTHER BENNO'S IMMERSION PROGRAM

Brother Benno's has an Immersion Program designed to let anyone in the community experience a better understanding of what it means to be poor, and how we as a society can more effectively serve those in need.

Immersion means to be profoundly involved and to have a first-hand experience of a situation as it affects you and others around you.

At Brother Benno's, the Program starts at the Center on a Saturday morning. Participants will be given a tour of the Center, then join our Guests in line and sit with them to enjoy a meal. Participants will likely find themselves conversing with our Guests and realizing, to their surprise, that they have much in common with each other.

After the meal, the Immersion group will get together and be encouraged to reflect on what they experienced and what they might do with like-minded individuals in their community to continue reaching out to those in need. They will also be invited to come back and spend time with Guests again if they wish.

Harold Kutler said about the Program, "Having this experience validates my belief that serving others up close and personal is what we're all about. Unless we hear their stories, we don't really know how best to help people in need." He cites Matthew 25:31-46 as the basis for the Immersion Program: "In it, Jesus tells us that our life journey should be primarily about love of others and the welfare of those most in need—whenever you serve the least of your brothers, you serve Him. At Brother Benno's, you will have the opportunity to experience Jesus in His disguise as the Needy One."

This experience is open to individuals and families as well as groups. For more information, please contact **Dennis Pinnick** (760-439-1244, ext. 116), or send an email to dennispinnick@gmail.com and put IMMERSION in the subject line.

We are currently offering the Immersion experience during the week as part of the service learning program to Palomar College students, CSU San Marcos nursing students, and Kaplan College nursing students. Students who have already participated in this program have stated that the experience has given them a more compassionate view of homelessness and poverty.

If people feel compelled to seek volunteering opportunities at the Center as a result of their Immersion experience, we invite them to either come back on the first Saturday of the month for the volunteer tour, or to contact **Denise Seymour**, our Volunteer Coordinator, (760-439-1244, ext. 107) directly to find out what opportunities are available.

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"A kind heart is a fountain of gladness, making everything in its vicinity freshen into smiles."

~ Washington Irving

"When you stop giving and offering something to the rest of the world, it's time to turn out the lights."

~ George Burns

EXPERIENCING THE BROTHER BENNO SCENE

by Barbara Ladwig

So Sweet. A young mother came to the Center for the first time, early on a Monday morning. With her were her four- and six-year-old daughters, who clung shyly to their mom, but were willing to tell me their names: **Treasure** and **Unique**. I wasn't sure I was hearing right, so I asked them to repeat. Then I took a good look at their angelic faces, and the face of their proud mom, and I thought, "Perfect names!" And I was pleased that I was there to meet them.

Change of Heart. A recovery story that especially touched **Harold Kutler** is about a man we'll call "Ted," who graduated from our Program several years ago. At the time, Ted said he didn't believe in God; but in the course of the Program, he got to know another recovering addict, "Lester," who did believe in God and wasn't shy about sharing his beliefs.

Gradually, Ted realized that Lester had something that Ted wanted—he wanted God in his life, too. In his sharing with others, he went from declaring his atheism to giving a strong witness to his new-found faith.

A few months ago, Harold ran into Ted, who was with his wife and children. "They had been reunited after Ted graduated from our Program," Harold said. "I didn't even know he had a family!"

Refrigeration. So many businesses help Brother Benno's by giving us all kinds of food products, some of which need refrigeration, that we are now in need of a new refrigerator truck. The cost is \$65,000, and a special fund has been set up with an initial grant awarded to us by the County of San Diego in the amount of \$10,000. If you'd like to contribute to this fund but need more information, please contact **Dennis Martinek** (760-439-1244, ext. 105), or simply send a check made out to the Brother Benno Foundation, clearly marked **REFRIGERATOR TRUCK FUND**.

A Big Thank-You. Many volunteers work behind-the-scenes. One was **Roy Batchelor**, who did an amazing job with our website. I don't un-

derstand enough to be more specific about exactly what he did, but I do know that he put our newsletter on the website, usually so fast that readers had access to it before it was sent off to the printer! We're sorry to see you go, Roy—many thanks for your much-needed service.

From Feast to Famine. We were overloaded with children's books for a while, and now we aren't. If you have books that aren't being read anymore, and you'd like to donate them, just drop them off at the Center, marked **CHILDREN'S READING ROOM**. The most-asked-for books seem to be in the range of third to sixth grade levels, but any and all books will be appreciated.

It's the People. I chatted one morning with a man who is half-way through our Recovery Program; and as usual, I asked him how it was going. He said it's his first program, even though he's had his addiction for many years. "Why now?" I asked. "It was just time," he said. That's a fairly common response from Program Members, and I'm sure it means something different for each individual.

He said he knows about many of the other programs out there, and he knows what's different at Brother Benno's—it's the people. "They're always available to help," he said, and he mentioned several staff members as well as volunteers. "I know **Harold**, too—a good man."

Archives. Sometimes people ask about an article that was published in a past newsletter. If you're ever one of those people, just go to our website: brotherbenno.org and click on Newsletter. We have all the issues going back as far as August 2010. While you're there, you can also check out a description of our services and Recovery Program, and a list of volunteer opportunities. There's a nine-minute video, and information about our book: *Soup Soap Hugs Hope, the Story of Brother Benno's Life-Changing Soup Kitchen*.

THIRTY YEARS OF LOVING SERVICE

(Editor's Note: The following article was published in the September 2013 newsletter as part of our big 30th anniversary celebration.)

In October of 1983, **Brother Benno** brought a huge cauldron of soup that he'd prepared at St. Charles Priory (now called the Prince of Peace Abbey) to an old two-bedroom house on Minnesota Street in Oceanside, where 18 street people ate the first meal served by **Harold** and **Kay Kutler** and a few of their friends. Brother continued to bring the meal for the next few weeks, until that first band of volunteers got a handle on cooking their own food.

The meal was served in the evening in the back yard, where picnic tables and benches had been set up. At first, Harold thought the Guests should be served restaurant-style, but he soon discovered that they were more comfortable going through a line with a tray. Kay got up on a makeshift stage to greet the diners and to sing while everyone ate. She invited anyone who wanted to, to come up and sing with her, sing alone, play an instrument, or tell a joke. This impromptu entertainment feature became very popular, and it added to the homey feeling that Harold and Kay wanted to create.

We Grow. Today, in 2013, some things have changed but many remain the same. The Guests still carry their trays through the food line, but now it's in our huge Brother Benno Center on Production Avenue. A staff made up of Program Members cook all the food in a state-of-the-art kitchen, and local groups numbering about eight people each—from various churches, civic clubs, mobile home parks, the Auxiliary, and neighborhoods—dish out the food.

Until she became ill a few years ago, Kay—on a stage dubbed Kay's Korner—led the Pledge of Allegiance, the Lord's Prayer, and the Serenity Prayer, welcomed everyone with her contagious smile, and sang her heart out. And she still invited anyone who was so inclined to join her on stage to perform with her or alone. Kay died on February 15, 2012, but she still greets everyone through the miracle of technology, as someone had the foresight to record her opening and closing greetings and songs.

The Book and More. In honor of the 20th anniversary of the Brother Benno Foundation in 2003, Harold Kutler published a book, *Soup Soap Hugs Hope, The Story of Brother Benno's Life-Changing Soup Kitchen*, which chronicles the history of the Brother Benno Foundation. It includes a short bio of Harold and Kay and Brother Benno and how they all met, and it tells wonderful stories about the not-so-smooth path they had to tread in order to get their ministry off the ground. It tells about the people who are served, the vast majority now being families with small children. There's information about how the services have expanded over the years—going from serving one meal a day to providing clothing, food boxes, showers, laundry facilities, haircuts, blankets, rent, utility, and prescription assistance, and occasional nights of lodging.

In addition to the book, Brother Benno's has a website full of information about everything one could possibly want to know: brotherbenno.org. It includes copies of recent newsletters, links to Facebook and Twitter, and info about becoming a volunteer.

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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>

AUXILIARY NEWS

by Vera Bayliss

Save the date for the Broadway Theater outing on September 28, where we'll see a play called "Shaken Not Stirred." More details as it gets closer.

Join the Brother Benno Breakfast Club next month. Try it once and see what happens. You might find it fun and rewarding.

Of course, our Annual Luncheon will be on November 1 this year, so please mark your calendars. Our Chairs will need lots of help. It is so important to sell tickets for this, so start early and mention it to your friends and relatives. It is our biggest fundraiser. If you have Michael's coupons and will not use them, please save them for us to buy materials for table decorations.

If you would like to donate items for the layettes that Brother Benno's gives out, please see **Nita Rodriguez** at our monthly meetings. If you want to donate to the Marines at Camp Pendleton, please see **Carol Sanford**. Both are in the directory if you have any questions.

Our next meeting is August 27 (the 4th Wednesday). See you all there.

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Information & Online donations:
brotherbenno.org

Follow Brother Bennos online:

 **[Facebook.com/BrotherBennos](https://www.facebook.com/BrotherBennos)**

 **[Twitter.com/BrotherBennos](https://twitter.com/BrotherBennos)**

BY THE NUMBERS . . .

At the present time, 22 volunteers pick up donated food items on a regular basis from 33 North County businesses that include supermarkets, bakeries, fresh produce and health food stores, restaurants, coffee houses, and department stores.

A random sampling over the past three years shows that Brother Benno's has provided an average of 938 showers and 129 haircuts per month. Towels, shampoo, and soap are provided for the showers; and the haircuts are given by volunteer barbers, some of whom are barbers by trade, and others who do it because they can!

Since Brother Benno's moved to our present site on Production Avenue in 1991, we have provided 26,757 loads of laundry, 36,647 blankets, and 78,046 bus passes.

254,327 low-income families with children, seniors, and handicapped persons have received monthly food packs since 1991.

An uncountable number of hugs have been given to Guests, volunteers, and visitors since Brother Benno's was founded in 1983, thanks to **Kay Kutler**, who instinctively knew that everyone needs to know they are valued human beings.

(Our statistics are published every month on the back page of the newsletter.)

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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	Gilbert Brown
Pope John Paul II	Frank Barnet	Dick & Terry Riley	James O'Keefe
Mother Teresa	Frank S. Dolley	Bill Buckner	Judy Chow
Kay Kutler	Phyllis H. Dierlam	Mary Shankle	Virgil Wulff
Ann Sauer	Monty Nares	Walter Ulloa	Betty Hermsmeyer
Joe & Ida Friend	Margaret Rossini	Fred Williamson	Floyd & Rose
Mary Nordstrom	Dorothy M. Donahue	Carole Kutler	Caldwell
Myron Eichen	Mary Teresa Carr	Will Skinner	Hartley Lowe
Alice Jordan	Ruth Hazel Pierson	Fr. Abbot Claude	Zeferino & Dancy
Roseanne Dreibelbis	Elizabeth Holms	Ehringer, OSB	Nares
Richard Farhquar	Edith Blaiser	Fr. Luke Dougherty	Alan Port
Deacon Art & Mary Carr	Ben Kouns	Naomi Shelton	Phillip Larsen
Don & Dorothea Daybell	Bill Lakoff	Rosemary Tucker	
Catherine L. Quinlan	Bernice, Samuel &	Ben E. Lewis	
Kathryn D. Pent	Milton Silver	Roland Bond	
Mary Pullman	Anita H. Donahue	Anna Correia	For
Joan Boyd	Margaret Stephan	Geraldine Howard	Kevin
Agnus Boyd	Bill Boster	Helene McGill	
Harold Thompson	Louise Foussat	Andrea Boersma	
Bud & Blanche Ogle	Tom Hayward	Ben Osgrove	
Bob Gleason	Richard Kurtz	William & Vennita	
Jane Pfau	Helen Lucas	Flanagan	
Ron Alexander	Bill & Joan Maloney	Bobby King	

Needs

Gently used furniture
Men's boxer shorts and socks
Diapers
Little boys underwear
Women's socks

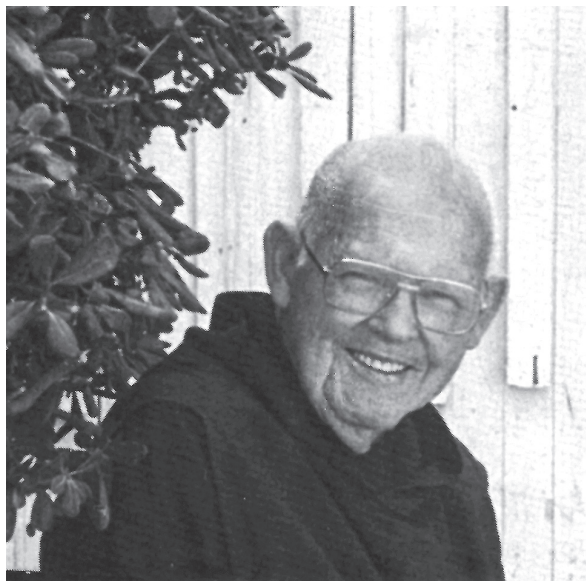
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
August					1 San Luis Rey Mission	2 St. Thomas More
2014	4 St. Elizabeth Seton #1	5 St. John The Evangelist	6 Brother Benno's Auxiliary	7 Oceanside Pacific Kiwanis	8 St. Patrick's	9 San Rafael
Monthly	11 North Coast Methodist	12 Hawkes Home	13 Stew's Crew	14 Oceanside Civitans	15 St. Elizabeth Seton #2	16 Girlfriend's Care
Serving	18 Sunrise Kiwanis of Vista	19 Christ the King Lutheran	20 Grace Anglican	21 Carlsbad Rotary	22 Sonrise Christian Fellowship	23 Catholic Daughters
Team	25 Christ Church & Zion Lutheran	26 St. Mark's San Marcos	27 San Luis Rey Methodist	28 Pilgrim Creek	29 King of Kings Lutheran	30 Shiloh Church of God In Christ
Schedule						

Furniture Sales at the Center

3242-B Production Ave., Oceanside 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.

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

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
 Oceanside, California
PERMIT NO. 166



Brother Benno's Thrift Shop

(Helping the poor, one sale at a time)

Clothing, Household Goods, Furniture

Shop open Mon-Sat 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. -- Stop by to check out our Daily Specials!!

3955 Mission Ave. (East of Albertsons) 760-967-7505

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:

	June 2014	Our 30th Year		June 2014	Our 30th Year
Meals	12,844	3,593,012	Loads of laundry	27	26,784
Nights of lodging	988	251,504	Food packs	2,045	256,372
Articles of clothing	5,414	1,068,611	Blankets	133	36,780
Showers	1,167	193,517	Prescriptions	4	7,226
Haircuts	148	17,208	ID Vouchers	9	8,572
Bus passes	76	78,122	HUGS	1,800	876,244