



Brother Benno's Newsletter

"Uplifting The Dignity of Those We Serve"

Volunteers Making a Difference

February 2019



SPECIAL FUND PROVIDES HELP FOR THE HELPLESS

A recent homeless pair added to Brother Benno's long list of amazing stories. "**Flora**," in her sixties, and her nephew "**Jake**," 40-something, came to the Center one morning at the urging of some of their new homeless friends. They had come by bus to Southern California, Flora said, because she was tired of the cold wet weather in West Virginia, and she remembered how wonderful our weather was out here from a visit she'd made in the 80's. The only problem was, she didn't have any plans beyond getting here, other than she was sure they could "live off government subsidies."

They were taken to the office of our special Outreach Team, where Jake managed to tell **Dennis Pinnick** and **Douglas Milovicz** that he knew it was a crazy idea, but he came along so he could help his aunt when things fell apart. After several weeks, Flora had to admit that our weather wasn't very wonderful (it was cold and wet), they had no money, and scrounging for food wasn't anyone's idea of a good time.

Fortunately, Brother Benno's has a discretionary fund, set up many years ago by **Harold Kutler**, that doesn't fit into our usual budget but can be used in desperate circumstances. Two people stranded in a strange place with no hope for bettering their situation certainly fit the criteria. With return bus tickets in hand, Flora was eager to get back home, where she knew a family member had a room for her. Douglas drove them to the bus station, watched them board, and left with the feeling of satisfaction that comes from knowing that once again we'd been able to help with a problem that other agencies don't address.

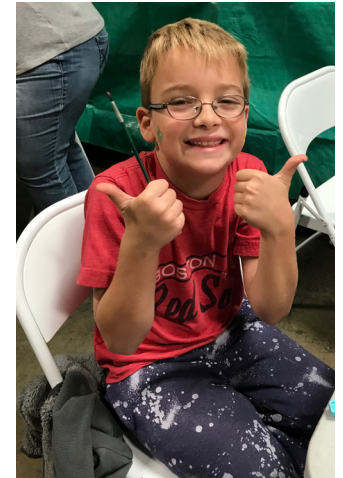
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CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY BRINGS JOY TO EVERYONE

by Helen Parsons

2018 was a year of changes and challenges, yet the year ended with all of us coming together to give our Guests a happy, fun-filled holiday party.

All year, the Center and Thrift Shop saved supplies for us. Needed donations of gift cards and pajamas started arriving, along with hundreds of stocking stuffers. As the children's party drew closer, requests went out for wrappers, cookie bakers, stocking stuffers, cleaners, and decorators. Our beloved Auxiliary responded as usual. We had business park neighbors, teens from St. Vincent's, local business supporters, caring families, employees, Program men and women, Girlfriends Care members, and long-time volunteers helping, helping, helping!



Santa came. Carolers from a church in Escondido sang. Faces were painted and balloons were twisted into animals. All of us there witnessed the joy in the faces of the children and their parents. What better gift could we have been given as servants of the poor! I thank you all!

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WOMAN FINDS STRENGTH IN DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

by Barbara Ladwig

“Tessa” was the manager of Brother Benno’s House of Martha Ann Mary Ida (MAMI) when it was a temporary safe haven for women and children. (It is now used for women in our 26-week Recovery Program). If walking in another’s shoes was an important qualification for people who serve at Brother Benno’s, Tessa was well qualified.

“I started here as a resident myself,” she said, adding that her willingness to help beyond the normal duties required of residents led to her being named assistant manager and eventually manager.

At 49, Tessa looked back on all the experiences that played a role in her growth as a person, and that made her uniquely qualified to help other women whose lives were falling apart. She lost her mother when she was a baby, and her father died when she was 18. She married, but the marriage ended in divorce.

Jail. A major life-changing experience came at age 42 when she spent six months in jail for using a knife on a woman (a stranger) who barged into her apartment and refused to leave. Even though being jailed traumatized her, she found she was able to help many of the other inmates. “I had never been a patient person,” she said, “but I learned patience there.” By listening and offering support, she felt she made the stay easier for others; and she gained strength within herself as well.

Following her jail time, Tessa was given five years probation. She found a job taking care of an elderly woman, and things started to look promising. But when the woman’s son decided to move her out-of-state and asked Tessa to go along, she found herself in a dilemma. She was not given permission to leave California; but fearing she wouldn’t be able to get another job, she left anyway.

Hitting Bottom. When she came back to California four years later, she reported herself to the authorities, at which point she was given a 30-day jail sentence for violating her parole. Again, she found something inside herself she didn’t know was there, and she survived. But she said she came

out of jail feeling worthless. “I felt that everything that happened to me was my fault, and my faith in God was badly shaken”.

With no place to live, she went to a shelter, only to find that it was closed. “I sat on a bus bench near the shelter, and all I wanted to do was cry,” she said. “A man was sitting there reading a book, and he asked if something was wrong. I said, ‘No, everything is fine.’ He didn’t buy it, and he told me he knew a place where I could go for help, and it was just a few blocks away. He even offered to show me where it was. I was suspicious of him, but for some reason I followed him. The place he took me was Brother Benno’s. He disappeared and I never saw him again. I know it sounds weird, but I think he was an angel, sent to help me.”

Finally Free. After being interviewed by a case manager, Tessa was sent to MAMI, and it was there that she was finally able to put her life on a strong and positive course. Along with the help of a psychologist whom she had met through a friend many years earlier, she had people to guide her into figuring things out for herself. She then was able to pass along that wisdom to those in her care.

The women and children at MAMI needed a safe place where they could think through their situations and figure out how they could get back to independent living. “You can’t clear your head in a chaotic atmosphere,” Tessa said, “so I try to keep things calm here. We’re a community, and everyone is expected to respect others and do chores daily—cleaning bathrooms, kitchen, and bedrooms.

continued on page 3....

Please consider contributing to the Brother Benno Foundation by way of your Will, Living Trust, Designated Beneficiary Account, Stocks, Life Insurance, Mutual Funds, or Real Estate. For more information, contact Suzy Martinek, 760-439-1244, ext. 116 or smartinek@miracosta.edu

AUXILIARY NEWS

by Nita Rodriguez

We are gearing up for our first fundraiser of 2019—our famously popular **Applebee's Flapjack Breakfast** on Saturday, March 9, from 8 to 9:30 at 2146 Vista Way in Oceanside. Auxiliary members will be greeting, seating, and serving everyone delicious plates of freshly scrambled eggs, pancakes, fried red potatoes, sausages, toast, coffee, juice, and milk—**ALL FOR ONLY \$10 PER PERSON!** (Generous tips are greatly appreciated and are a big part of the fundraiser).

You can download a reservation form at <https://tinyurl.com/y8zoct42> or call **Susan** (206-349-1371) to have a form mailed to you. We look forward to serving you!

Our next Auxiliary meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 27, in the Center Dining Room—1 p.m. for snacks, 1:30 meeting. All are welcome to attend and bring a friend. Can't attend a meeting but want to be a member? Call **Sara** (760-560-6089) for more information.

SAVE THE DATE: Friday, September 27, for the Brother Benno Auxiliary's **1st Annual Golf Tournament**. Watch this space for more information.

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.... Failure, continued from page 4

The Mentors and other graduates, all of whom are in Alcoholics Anonymous, have learned how to live life without having to drink or use. They have a daily reprieve from the obsession because of their relationship with their higher power. The work of recovery is endless, and Brother Benno's is committed to being there for everyone who is serious about changing and living a clean and sober life.

Donations from our many supporters, along with grants from local businesses and other entities, are what make it possible for Brother Benno's to offer what many call the most successful Recovery Program in San Diego County.

(Editor's Note: This is a slight variation of an article previously published in this newsletter.)

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....Woman, continued from page 2

"Some of the women never took care of a house before. If they didn't know how when they came in, they did by the time they left. Occasionally someone balked at the chores list, but eventually they realized it was part of the orderly transition they were making in their lives."

Tessa said she was always available when the women needed to talk. That's usually when her past experiences came into play. "I know where they're coming from and what they're going through," she said. "And when they don't want anything from me, I respect that, too."

At the end of the interview, Tessa said she had no problem sharing the personal details about her life. She wanted others to know that even people whose lives seem to be a hopeless mess can turn things around and use their mistakes to help others.

Brother Benno Founders **Harold** and **Kay Kutler** never saw anyone as a loser. Everyone who walks through the doors at Brother Benno's needs acceptance and love first; then it's time to look for workable solutions to their specific problems. And it isn't just the poor and homeless who benefit from this life-giving attitude. Just ask any volunteer why they can't wait to get to the Center or Thrift Shop for their shift!

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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>

FAILURE VS. SUCCESS

This is a story about two women who were powerless over alcohol and drug addictions.

“Jeannie” participated in three recovery programs in another state, graduating each time; but she continued to relapse and could not stay clean and sober.

“Mamie” went through the Brother Benno Work Support Program three times, and the third time she finally “got it.” She’s been clean and sober for more than seven years. She’s gone from what some would call a selfish and self-centered woman to one who is all about working a program of recovery.

What’s the difference?

Jeannie goes back to her old way of life after every program, failing to make any changes. She continues to live the life she’s always lived—same friends, same places, doing the same things she used to do. She even got her old waitressing job back.

Mamie has found a power greater than herself and has chosen to stay in touch with many of the people at Brother Benno’s who’ve helped her along the way. She has a sponsor who has taken her through the 12 Steps and the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous. She has a support group in AA and at Brother Benno’s that she stays in touch with on a daily basis. She goes to meetings and lives in a sober-living house, where she has the day-to-day support of other women who are also clean and sober. She gives back what has so freely been given to her.

Admittedly, there are other factors that have played into the success and failure of these two women. But Brother Benno’s has learned a great deal about men and women with alcohol and

drug addictions over the past thirty-plus years. It all starts with a decision, a decision to change their lives, to admit they are powerless over drugs and alcohol. They have to surrender to win.

The Brother Benno Work Support Program is 26 weeks. The program of Alcoholics Anonymous is a daily reprieve based on your spiritual condition. To maintain their spirituality, every person has to find a “God” of their understanding, or what AA calls “a power greater than themselves.” All of the participants in our Program live in Brother Benno Houses (we currently have four for men and three for women); and all of their basic needs, including food and transportation, are provided so they can focus entirely on the work of recovery. They also work at the Brother Benno Center and/or Thrift Shop five days a week, which gives them the opportunity to learn the value of being of service to others.

After completing our Program, the men and women are encouraged to come back to the Center and be of service to those who are less fortunate and to those who are new in our Program.

continued on page 3...

Brother Benno Foundation
Recovery Program for Men and Women
 760 439 1244 ext. 101
 Changing people’s lives through the 12 Steps
 of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Information & Online donations:
brotherbenno.org
Follow Brother Bennos online:
 [Facebook.com/BrotherBennos](https://www.facebook.com/BrotherBennos)

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

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 Dixie & Lou Bales
 Frank Barnett
 Brother Benno
 Edith Blaiser
 Andrea Boersma
 Roland Bond
 Bill Boster
 Agnus & Joan Boyd
 Bill Buckner
 Deacon Art & Mary Carr
 Anna Correia
 Don & Dorothea Daybell
 Phyllis H. Dierlam
 Frank S. Dolley
 Anita H. Donahue
 Dorothy M. Donahue
 Fr. Luke Dougherty
 Roseanne Dreibelbis
 Fr. Abbot Claude Ehringer, OSB
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 Richard Farhquar
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 Louise Foussat
 Joe & Ida Friend
 Mary Gerrity
 Bob Gleason
 Chance Hales
 Tom Hayward
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 Alice Jordan
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 Linda Scott
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 Fr. Brad & Judy Dusak
 Loretta Hutter
 Manuel Mancillas, Jr.
 Bob Strawbridge
 John Hogan
 Marie Atkinson
 Agatha Johnson

Happy Birthday
 JoAnne Shlemmer

IN HONOR OF
 Elder Mathew &
 Bertha
 Donald Rodee
 John Jarvie
 Jan Roberts

Needs

Gently used furniture
 Men's belts sizes 30-40

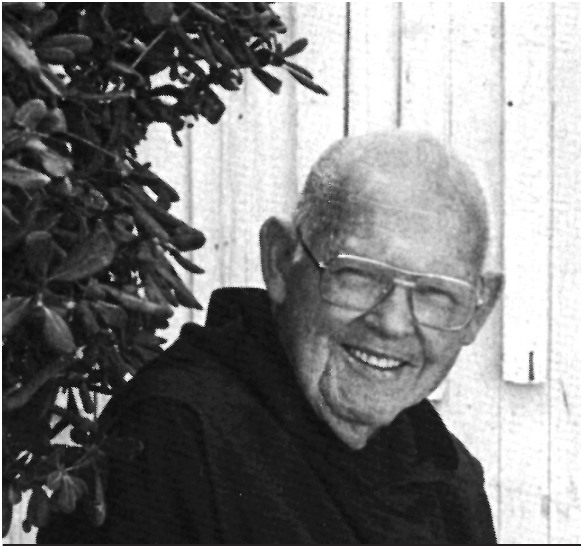
Sleeping bags
 Men's comfy shoes

Reading glasses 1.5 to 3.0

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
February 2019 Monthly Serving Team Schedule					1 San Luis Rey Mission	2 St. Thomas More
	4 St. Elizabeth Seton #1	5 St. John The Evangelist	6 Brother Benno's Auxiliary	7 Oceanside Pacific Kiwanis	8 St. Patrick's	9 Females in Action
	11 North Coast Methodist	12 Riverview Church	13 Fairwinds	14 Oceanside Civitans	15 St. Elizabeth Seton #2	16 Girlfriend's Care
	18 Sunrise Kiwanis of Vista	19 Christ the King Lutheran	20 Brother Benno's Auxiliary	21 Rotary Club of Carlsbad	22 Sonrise Christian Fellowship	23 Catholic Daughters
	25 St. Thomas More RCIA	26 Vista Hi-Noon Rotary	27 San Luis Rey Methodist	28 Pilgrim Creek		

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

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Brother Benno's Thrift Shop

(Helping the poor, one sale at a time)

Clothing, Household Goods, Furniture

Shop open Tue-Fri 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sat 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

We welcome your saleable furniture items. Please call 760-967-7507 for free pick up

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, men and women's drug and alcohol recovery program, 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:

	December 2018	Our 35th Year		December 2018	Our 35th Year
Meals	13,180	4,304,792	Loads of laundry	28	28,234
Nights of lodging	912	302,880	Food packs	989	339,635
Articles of clothing	6,261	1,357,237	Blankets	205	46,097
Showers	1,017	256,156	Tarps	92	4,411
Haircuts	31	22,628	ID Vouchers	31	9,347
Bus passes	71	84,207	HUGS	2,250	981,994