BROTHER BENNO’S LOSES LONG-TIME VOLUNTEER AND FRIEND

John Jarvie, long-time Brother Benno volunteer, died on December 28, 2020, at the age of 96. Providentially, we had featured him in our December newsletter, so he was able to know how much he was appreciated by everyone who knew him.

If you missed the article, you can go to brotherbenno.org and click on Newsletters to learn what a remarkable man John was. In the obituary published in the San Diego Union-Tribune, it was noted that “John never retired from Brother Benno’s; he worked there until November 2020, when he became ill.”

Harold Kutler wrote about John in his book, Soup Soap Hugs Hope, the Story about Brother Benno’s Life-Changing Soup Kitchen in a chapter about the Golden Years. He tells about being introduced to John by a mutual friend, who told Harold that John was a “master of the building trades” who could build anything. After redoing the serving line at the Center, Harold asked John if he could convert one of the small rooms adjacent to the dining room into a chapel, where the staff could come together every morning “to remember our deceased benefactors and to offer prayers of petition.” That room has now been dedicated to John.

(Please see the article on page 3.)

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WOMAN REACHES OUT ON SOCIAL MEDIA TO HELP OTHERS
by Kathleen Diehlmann

Mary Ellen Reese, who lives in Oceanside, wanted to help people who are having trouble paying their rent or utilities. She knew she would be receiving a stimulus check from the government soon. She also knew she was one of the fortunate ones who didn’t need the extra money. How could she help fellow Oceanside residents who were in danger of losing their homes due to an inability to make these payments?

Mary Ellen ultimately connected with The Brother Benno Foundation. She found out she could make a donation either by check or at brotherbenno.org, but she needed to specify it was for it was for rent or utility assistance—and that’s what she did.

Then she thought, what if others wanted to do this, too? She reached on Nextdoor, a social media application, and wrote the following: “Many of us, particularly my fellow senior retirees, will be getting a $600 check that we don’t need. That money won’t change our lives at all. I am going to donate mine to Brother Benno’s rental and utilities assistance program and designate that the money go to Oceanside residents who are being threatened with eviction. I invite you to do the same! Money that won’t make a difference to us might keep some neighbors from becoming homeless.”

Thank you, Mary Ellen. You are making a difference in others’ lives.

Stay tuned for a status update on the support Brother Benno’s received and distributed for rental and utility assistance in a future newsletter.
Humble and quiet, Mary is responsible for case work at Brother Benno’s. She is responsible for helping with some of the most difficult problems our Guests face, and she does it with love and understanding. A boon to Brother Benno’s, she is fluent in Spanish, which enables her to communicate with a wide range of Guests.

Mary interviews the Guests, and when appropriate, helps them pay rent and utility bills when they have nowhere else to turn. She also provides them with other needs such as bus passes, hotel vouchers, gas for their vehicles, and medicines. In addition, she can refer them to other sources of help, such as finding housing and exploring other sources of financial assistance, including Social Security Disability.

There has been an incredible surge in requests for help due to COVID-19, and Mary works tirelessly to provide resources, help, and support. At this time, so many people need so much help. Mary especially focuses on keeping families with children off the street.

If you ask Mary why she has volunteered at Brother Benno’s over the past 20 years, she will tell you that she loves the poor. She says it did not take her long to realize that “there but for the grace of God go I.” Her best friends have come from the poor she serves, as well as other volunteers she works with at Brother Benno’s. She stays because of the joy she gets out of serving others.

Mary originally came to Brother Benno’s 20 years ago with a carload of clothing to donate when her husband passed away. Mary Robinson, Harold Kutler’s assistant, helped her unload her car and suggested that Mary might want to become a volunteer. She decided to do it, working at different times as a receptionist, helping Volunteer Coordinator Dixie Bales, and working in the Accounting Office. Now, in addition to being responsible for case work, she is also a member of the Brother Benno Foundation Board, where she is able to communicate the most immediate needs of the poor and homeless we serve.

Mary was born in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and her family relocated to Los Angeles when she was 13. She has two daughters, five grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, and one great-great grandchild!

Little did Mary know that dropping off donations 20 years ago would lead her to become an important, integral, and significant part of Brother Benno’s.

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THE PURPOSE OF THE CHAPEL
by Father Charles Wright O.S.B.

It has been said that John Jarvie would be the first to raise an objection to a chapel (of all things) being dedicated in his honor. And the whole idea seems strange because John, although he made the chapel, seldom entered it.

So where to start?

I recently read some quotes of children who wrote to God. One said, “Dear God, I think of you even when I’m not praying.” God, or what we choose to call the Creator and Sustainer of all life, is everywhere. But to dedicate a particular space for communicating with that Creator fulfills an unspoken need that is burning in each of us. That communication is nothing other than prayer.

Our dear Harold and Kay Kutler were deeply prayerful. They realized that to minister to those in need means to be sensitive to what the needs are, no matter how subtle. So to encourage others to pray is to either introduce them to God or offer a safe and quiet place to those who have already discovered the joy and need of praying.

The Holy Rule of St. Benedict, by which we Benedictine monks live, begins with the word “Listen.” And we know that true listening to another is a rare commodity these days, if not a dying art. But Benedict goes a step further by saying, “Listen with the ears of your heart.” So prayer is a two-way street—listening and talking in the heart. And we Christians believe that God is speaking to us every minute of the day. The more sincere the heart, the more open to God’s invitation, even if we are not consciously aware of it. John responded to that inner prompting because he was a good listener. He heard well the call for generosity, compassion, and dedication.

So that is why we here at Brother Benno’s have no hesitation in dedicating our chapel in honor of John Jarvie, the Good Listener and the Good Responder. May all who enter this sacred space listen intently to God speaking in their hearts and respond in the same manner that made John the living model of what we are all called to be. Children of God.

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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 Joyce Cerimele

We are ramping things up this month at the Auxiliary. The 2021 calendar is being planned with—we hope—some interesting events, some of which will be online. If the COVID closures are over by June, we’ll probably be able to have our Luau Dinner. And of course, our “Pay It Back” golf event will be going ahead again this year. The 2020 event was a huge success, and we are hoping for the same this year. More information will be forthcoming.

In spite of the lack of our usual fundraisers in 2020, those we did have (mainly the golf event) raised enough money to enable us to give $30,000 to the Brother Benno Foundation! We consider that an amazingly good thing, and the reason is the generosity of all you wonderful people who sponsor and support us.

Unfortunately, we will not be able to have our new and returning membership brunch in February as we’ve had for many years. But if you are not a member and would like to be, contact Doris at Dnyman5@cox.net or 760-941-1737.

Our next Auxiliary Zoom meeting will be on February 24 at 1:30 p.m. If you would like to be a guest at that meeting, contact Joyce at jcerimele11@gmail.com at least a day ahead and you’ll be Zoomed in.

Again, we hope you are all staying safe, and we will meet those of you who become members in the near future at one of our regular monthly meetings. Be well.

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If We Missed It
We Want to Fix It

We’ve discovered that some names that should have been on page 5 in the newsletter were inadvertently left off during 2020. If you’re aware that a name you sent in with your donation during that time was not acknowledged, please send it now as follows:

Email the name(s) to brotherbenno@yahoo.com

Subject: B.L.

In Memory of (name)
or

In Honor of (name)

Your name

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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

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___________________________________       Donation $________________
Address_______________________________           Number of copies__________
City, State, Zip Code________________________
Memorials

Ron Alexander
Dixie & Lou Bales
Frank Barnet
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
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Dorothy M. Donahue
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Richard Farhquar
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Flanagan
Louise Foussat
Joe & Ida Friend
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Bob Gleason
Chance Hales
Tom & Louise
Hayward
Elizabeth Holms
Alice Jordan
Ben Kouns
Richard Kurtz
Carole Kutler
Harold & Kay Kutler
Bill & Louise Lakoff
Ben E. Lewis
Helen Lucas
Bill & Joan Maloney
Helene McGill
Michael & Monty
Nares
Zeferino & Dancy
Nares
Mary Nordstrom
Nysewander Family
Bud & Blanche Ogle
Ben Osgrove
Kathryn D. Pent
Mary Peterson
Jane Pfau
Ruth Hazel Pierson
Alan Port
Mary Pullman
Catherine L. Quinlan
Dora Ramirez
Dick & Terry Riley
Margaret Rossini
Ann Sauer
Nick Sauer
Mary Shankle
Naomi Shelton
Bernice, Samuel &
Milton Silver
Will Skinner
Ann Grier Smith
Alva & Frances
Snider
Squirrel Family
Mike Stendahl
Margaret Stephan
Virginia Sylwestrzak
Harold Thompson
Carol & Herb
Thorndberg
Rosemary Tucker
Walter Ulloa
June Williams
Fred Williamson
Ron Beckman
Ted Novis
John, Helen, Matt
Hagen
Marie Atkinson
Agatha Johnson
Jim Severino
David Mitchell
Peg & Dick Wilson
Patrick Gorman
Marilyn Kracalik
Albert Garcia
Wayne McCoy
Ruth Johnson
Joel Heiser
Timothy Diem
Dancy & Zeferino
Nares
Linda Harder
Mary Louise
Wisniewski
Bernie Weiler
Joe Carver
Eileen Smith
Bill Mulligan
Robert DiCario
Beau, Helen, & Watt
McEwen
Joseph & Catherine
Martina
Ronald Turner
Joseph Schubert
Barbara LaMothe
James Paolozzi
George & Adelina
Craig
Tom, Harry, Margaret
Dawson
Jule & Ray Kelly
Marta Birello
Dorothy & Walter
Jellig
Lael Dewhurst
Hugh Murphy
Michael Chapa
Toyota Avalon
Gordon Wood
Elaine Sauter
Patricia Day

Happy Birthday
JoAnne Shlemmer

In Honor Of
Peter Ring
Jan Roberts
Barbara Driscoll
Grace Carlos

NEEDS

small bags of chips
fruit cups
protein bars
crackers
bottled water
small juices
Gatorade
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