



Brother Benno's Newsletter

“Uplifting The Dignity of Those We Serve”

Interdenominational Volunteers Making a Difference in This World

January 2013

HOMELESSNESS IS CATALYST FOR CHANGE

Wisdom comes to us at different stages of our lives and from a wide variety of sources. **Brittany Poor**, at age 24, seems to have been given a large dose of wisdom through what seemed at the time to be the worst possible set of circumstances. She started drinking when she was 16, was kicked out of her home by her parents at age 23, and now is the Assistant Manager at Brother Benno's House of Martha Ann Mary and Ida (MAMI) for homeless women and women with children under the direction of Manager **Jan Roberts**.



“My parents were both in the military,” she said, “so they believed that tough love was the best way to go when I refused to give up drinking.” Her drinking got really bad when she was 20, and by the time she was 23, her parents had had enough. As she was shown the door, all she took with her was a backpack full of underwear and a blanket.

For six months, Brittany went from one friend's couch to another to sleep, and she often spent her days sitting on a bench by the beach. She was in AA at the time, and one day as she sat

on her bench, she had a revelation, like “seeing a fork in the road,” she said. She could continue doing what she was doing (drinking) and she would die. Or she could stop drinking, realizing that such a decision would make her life very uncomfortable. “I was all about being comfortable,” she said. “Drinking numbed me, and I believed that stopping would take a long time and be very painful.”

That night she slept on the couch at her sponsor's home. This woman knew someone at Brother Benno's, and she offered to introduce Brittany to her. That meeting opened up a whole new possibility—getting sober with the help of a group of people who were committed to being there for her through all the difficulties of conquering her alcoholism.

In October, 2011, Brittany moved into MAMI; then a few weeks later she went to DBRJ (Dorothy Barbara Rosemary and Joan), Brother Benno's sober-living house for women. One of the requirements for living at DBRJ is to get a job. She was afraid that would be impossible, given her recent past, but she was quickly hired by an Oceanside natural foods store, where she is now one of the managers.

Just one year later, in October, 2012, she was made the Assistant Manager at MAMI, where one of her duties is to do the intake for potential new residents and then follow up with case management. Something she commonly hears from these women is, “I'm sure you don't understand (what I'm going through.)” At that point, Brittany usually shares a little of her own story so that they know she does understand only too well.

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EXPERIENCING THE BROTHER BENNO SCENE

by Barbara Ladwig

We have many people to thank for all the special things they've done for us during the Christmas season. We will try to acknowledge as many as possible, beginning in this issue and continuing in the coming months; but even though we might miss some of you, please know that our appreciation extends to every person who has shown care and concern by providing for others.

First, there was the **Rotary Club of Carlsbad**, whose members came through with 500 pairs of new socks even before our request was made known in the December newsletter. The generosity of these good men and women translated into warmth for our male Guests, homeless and otherwise, in the gift packs that were given out on December 8.

Then there was the kindness of people who had never heard of Brother Benno's until one of our volunteers contacted them in order to make a purchase. **Bear (Peter Ashton)** told **Dennis Martinek**, one of our Operations Managers, that we needed a hundred new cafeteria-style trays to replace the ones that have been broken or damaged. Dennis contacted Cambro Manufacturing where the old trays had come from and found that new trays sell for \$7 each. He asked if non-profits could get a discount; the woman at Cambro asked what Brother Benno's does. Dennis gave a brief overview and referred her to our website. After behind-the-scenes consultations, the company remembered that they had some "obsolete inventory" that we could have for nothing—in fact, we could have 436 trays for free if we didn't mind bright orange. "We love bright orange!" Dennis told them.

Dennis said that when he and his wife **Suzy** (another B.B. volunteer) picked up the trays in Huntington Beach, "the manager and the men who loaded them had big smiles of satisfaction that come with giving. You could see they were proud of their company for doing a good thing. Two lessons come from this: 1. It's nice to deal with good people, and 2. Our website does a good job of letting people know what Brother Benno's does."

Another story is about a business that went beyond the norm to help someone less fortunate.

One of our Guests, "a feisty 62-year-old woman who has colon cancer," according to volunteer **Tim Marlin**, uses a scooter to get around. When the scooter broke, Tim tried to help her by finding replacement parts—only to learn that none were available. He went to **SoCal Engineering**, an Oceanside welding shop, to see if they could fix it. They could. Tim left the scooter at the shop, saying he would pick it up the following Monday.

On Thanksgiving Day he brought his mother **Bonnie** to eat at Brother Benno's. As they passed SoCal, he noticed that they were open, so he stopped in to check on the scooter progress. It was already finished and reassembled. After the meal, Tim said, he and his mom and all their friends at Brother Benno's went to Joyce's house to drop off her scooter.

"She loves to be active, and she loves that scooter," Tim said. "I am just happy to be of service, and all the glory goes to God."

Our final thank-you for this issue goes to **Girlfriends Care**, a local non-profit whose members volunteer with organizations that serve women and children. For the fifth year in a row, 70 women, men, and teens came together on the second Saturday in December for the Annual GFC Christmas at Brother Benno's.

Gini Craig, a long-time GFC member, had this to say about their day here: "It was a huge success according to those being served and those who served. From the food-serving line to the Reading Room, to the greeters/huggers and gift givers, to those who created gift bags for the women in transitional housing, to toy sorters, placemat artists, rice and beans baggers, personal shoppers and gift wrappers for the Program Guys, to the singing of traditional Christmas songs led by Pam Shattuck—EVERYONE did a great job!"

House Manager of MAMI and DBRJ **Jan Roberts** sent GFC a note after they delivered the gift bags to the Houses: "Thank you! It's so thoughtful of you to think of our women and to take the time to put gift bags together for them. Thank you to GFC for always making our ladies feel so special!"

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Besides her work at MAMI and her job at the store, she will be receiving her Associate Degree in Liberal Arts and Humanities, with a focus on social work, at MiraCosta College this spring. She is also in the process of applying for scholarships so she can transfer to Cal State San Marcos next fall.

As Brittany looks back on the past, she sees two providential events in her life. The first is that, although she was shocked when her parents kicked her out of the house, she now realizes that she wouldn't have been able to make such a dramatic change in her life if she hadn't been forced to have everything taken away-- her family, home, car and possessions. She now has a good relationship with her family, and she gets together with them once a week for dinner.

The second thing for which she is grateful is the fact that Jan was willing to take a chance with her, even though at the time she didn't meet all the criteria for residence at DBRJ. "I also want to thank everybody who works at Brother Benno's" she said. "I am a miracle today, but without them, it wouldn't have been possible."

Brittany points to the Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi as her new way of living her life: "Grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love; for it is in giving that we receive. . ."

"Now I appreciate things," she said. "Now it's not all about me and my comfort; it's about being concerned for and helping others."

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Being unwanted, unloved, uncared for, forgotten by everybody, I think that is a much greater hunger, a much greater poverty, than the person who has nothing to eat.

~ Mother Teresa

Information & Online donations

brotherbenno.org

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>

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 _____

AUXILIARY NEWS

by Vikki Ramey

More than 500 people attended the Auxiliary's Annual Luncheon on December 1. We can't say "Thank You" enough to members and supporters who made this event such a huge success: **Vera Bayliss** and **Mary Vernaci**, Luncheon Coordinators/Ticket Sales; **Sharon Tasker**, Opportunity Baskets; **Mary Vernaci**, Centerpieces; **Edith Jones** and **Karen Gallagher**, Silent Auction; **Pamela Langness**, Programs; **Claire Carter**, Angel page and Photographer; **Judy Harris**, Name Game ticket sales; **Maureen Tutino**, Opportunity ticket sales; **Ruth Mortenson**, Centerpiece numbers; and to all who helped these ladies.

Brother Daniel Sokol from the Prince of Peace Abbey told a story about **Kay Kutler**, in whose memory the luncheon was dedicated, and he asked all of us to give hugs to each other. (Kay was the original Master Hugger at Brother Benno's). **Harold Kutler** gave a beautiful invocation. **Jan Roberts** and **Brianna Cedillo** spoke to us on behalf of the Women's Houses and to tell us about how Brother Benno's and the Auxiliary's HOW Committee continue to support the women residing there while they are on their road to recovery.

We thank the Angel page and prize donors who helped us financially, and also Southern California Edison (SONGS) for donating the first-aid kits for our thank-you favors.

As of the middle of December, we made over \$17,000 on the Luncheon, and there are additional donations yet to be received. It was truly a success!

We hope the holidays brought everyone happiness being with family and friends, and we pray that those less fortunate in our communities will find happiness in the near future. We welcome home our troops, who can now be with their loved ones.

General Meeting – January 23, 2013.

Membership Drive Luncheon – March 2 (note the date change)

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Joe & Barbara Barreras



Sharon Tasker, Karen Gallagher and Edith Jones



Vikki Ramey, Linda Garvey

Memorials

Brother Benno
 Pope John Paul II
 Mother Teresa
 Kay Kutler
 Ann Sauer
 Joe & Ida Friend
 Mary Nordstrom
 Myron Eichen
 Alice Jordan
 Roseanne Dreibelbis
 Richard Farhquar
 Deacon Art & Mary Carr
 Don & Dorothea Daybell
 Catherine L. Quinlan
 Kathryn D. Pent
 Mary Pullman
 Joan Boyd
 Agnus Boyd
 Harold Thompson
 Bud & Blanche Ogle
 Bob Gleason
 Jane Pfau
 Ron Alexander
 Mary Peterson
 Frank Barnet
 Frank S. Dolley
 Phyllis H. Dierlam
 Monty Nares

Margaret Rossini
 Dorothy M. Donahue
 Mary Teresa Carr
 Ruth Hazel Pierson
 Elizabeth Holms
 Edith Blaiser
 Ben Kouns
 Bill Lakoff
 Bernice, Samuel & Milton Silver
 Anita H. Donahue
 Margaret Stephan
 Bill Boster
 Louise Foussat
 Tom Hayward
 Richard Kurtz
 Helen Lucas
 Bill & Joan Maloney
 Dora Ramirez
 Dick & Terry Riley
 Bill Buckner
 Mary Shankle
 Walter Ulloa
 Fred Williamson
 Carole Kutler
 Will Skinner
 Fr. Abbot Claude Ehringer, OSB

Fr. Luke Dougherty
 Naomi Shelton
 Rosemary Tucker
 Ben E. Lewis
 Roland Bond
 Anna Correia
 Geraldine Howard
 Helene McGill
 Andrea Boersma
 Ben Osgrove
 Edward Raymond
 Donald Burt
 Carolyn Halsey
 Robert Crawford
 Robert McCoy, Jr.
 Fran & Lee Desmond
 Lora Kroeger
 Phillip Larsen
 Bill Severy
 Martin Lilley, Jr.
 Dorothy Jellig
 Steven Lilley, Jr.
 Hilda Dailey
 Bernie Weiler
 Roxane Walker
 Janice Harmon
 Franklin Hoffer
 Squirrell Family

Tim & Blanche Keane
 Tony & Wilma Derrigo
 Nysewander Family
 Rose & Floyd Caldwell
 William & Vennita Flanagan
 Douglas Faught
 Mike Stendahl
 Joe & Margie Opatkiewicz
 Art & Mary Hau
 Bill & Mary McCarthy
 Sarah Diot
 Kay Parker
 Andrew & Jane Yandura
 Helen, Beau, & Walt McEwen
 Richard Ryan
 Bob, Naim, & Rick Provost
 Stanley LaMonte
 Dancy & Zeferino Nares
 Paul Sperrazza

Needs

Mens boxer underpants
 Warm clothes like coats, jeans & sweaters

Diapers (All sizes, especially 4 & 5)
 Rain gear, ponchos, gloves

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
January 2013		1 St. John The Evangelist	2 Brother Benno's Auxiliary	3 Oceanside Pacific Kiwanis	4 San Luis Rey Mission	5 St. Thomas More
Monthly	7 St. Elizabeth Seton #1	8 Friends from Vista	9 Naval Hospital	10 Oceanside Civitans	11 St. Patrick's	12 Oak Hills
Serving	14 North Coast Methodist	15 Christ the King Lutheran	16 Grace Anglican	17 Carlsbad Rotary	18 St. Elizabeth Seton #2	19 Girlfriend's Care
Team	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
Schedule	28 Christ Anglican	29 Welk Resort	30 Soroptimist 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.

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

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The Thrift Shop

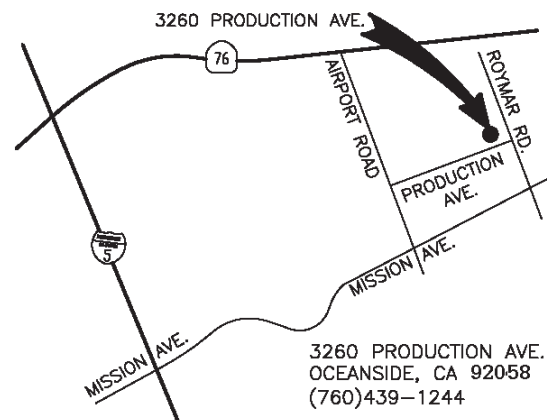
3965 Mission Ave. (East of Albertsons) 760-967-7505

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

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:

	November 2012	Our 29th Year		November 2012	Our 29th Year
Meals	13,721	3,340,895	Loads of laundry	27	26,265
Nights of lodging	1,159	232,589	Food packs	2,868	210,870
Articles of clothing	6,171	955,542	Blankets	158	33,766
Showers	972	173,610	Prescriptions	9	7,099
Haircuts	119	14,727	ID Vouchers	14	8,352
Bus passes	104	76,102	HUGS	1,800	839,344

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