



Brother Benno's Newsletter

"Uplifting The Dignity of Those We Serve"

Interdenominational Volunteers
Making a Difference in This World

January 2014

CHRISTMAS "MAGIC" AT BROTHER BENNO'S

You never know how the magic of Christmas will play out at Brother Benno's. Something special always happens, and this year was no exception.

The "big event" started on December 18, when about 40 volunteers filled bags with toys for approximately 600 families. The parents had been given vouchers after Thanksgiving, on which they could write the age and sex of their children. On the 18th, they handed over their voucher to a volunteer, who walked through the warehouse loaded with toys that had been placed on tables according to "boy" or "girl," and the appropriate age. An estimated two thousand toys were distributed. The process worked like clockwork, but the joyful chatter of the volunteers was just as evident as the precision of their work.

While toy bags were being filled, the parents and their children were treated to cookies* and punch, as well as entertainment.**

According to **Denise Seymour**, our Volunteer Co-ordinator, several families came to the Center the following day, saying they'd been unable to come on the 18th. "One mother ended up with a musical guitar that I felt would be appropriate for her little boy," Denise said. "She told me, as I walked her out to her car, that he had been asking for a guitar—and she was so pleased!"

Christmas Day, about 250 people came for the traditional dinner of turkey, dressing, potatoes, gravy, broccoli, rolls, pie, cake, coffee, and punch. Instead of the regular Wednesday serving team, the Guests were served by a group of various Christmas volunteers. **Suzy Martinek**, one of our faithful long-time volunteers, shared this story: "I had a middle-aged woman and her mother volunteer. It was their first time here. At

the end of the meal, the mom said to me, 'I am 88 years old, and I have always wanted to do something like this. This has been my most blessed Christmas of my whole life.' She signed up for next year. I guess she is a positive thinker!"

The music on Christmas Day was provided by an extended family of 15 who range in age from three to eighty, and who have been entertaining our Guests for the past several years. They are of Hawaiian heritage, and they play Christmas music on a variety of instruments.



Ukulele entertainment on Christmas

As Denise summed up the Christmas experience at Brother Benno's, she said, "It's one of our busiest events, involving many people on many levels, who contribute much effort in bringing it all together. There are always so many different experiences and emotions that (everyone) receives from (being involved)."

(* and ** – Please see page 2)

EXPERIENCING THE BROTHER BENNO SCENE

by Barbara Ladwig

***Stars.** A group of approximately 20 home-schooling families in Vista formed a Cookie Ministry last year in an effort to bring Christmas cheer to the less fortunate in our midst. Led by **Joy Highley, Yvonne Hamnquist, and Janette McIntock**, they bake cookies, package them, and deliver them to the Brother Benno Center for distribution to the families who are picking up new toys before Christmas.

This year, the Home Schooling Group baked more than 4,800 cookies! "We ask how many they think they'll need," Joy said, "and then we double the number." After they were distributed at Brother Benno's, the group was able to give quite a few to Solutions for Change as well.

The families bake the cookies at home, then they gather at the Vista Masonic Lodge to package them. "The moms put them in bags and tie them with a ribbon," Joy said, "and the kids put stickers and labels with a Bible verse on the outside. It's really quite a production!" The parents remind the children that Christmas is every day, and not everyone has the advantages they have.

****More Stars.** The entertainment for the families picking up toys on December 18 was provided by **Robbie Furman and Eddie Medrano**. Robbie was one of our lay ministers back in 2000. When he left Brother Benno's, he moved back east to start a successful "balloon animal" business. Each year he comes back to share his talents with our Guests and to visit with many of our staff members and volunteers. Eddie is a professional entertainer going by the name of Funny Eddie. He's a former clown with the Ringling Brothers Circus, and his skills include magic, balloon art, juggling, and comedy.

What a treat it was for everyone to have these talented men share their gifts with us!

Bless the Bikers! Two sober motorcycle clubs, the **Pioneers** and **Messengers**, hold a yearly benefit ride for the homeless through St. Vincent de Paul's and Brother Benno's. The bikers meet for breakfast and registration (a \$10 donation) at San

Diego Harley in San Diego, then have a party after the ride at Kennedy's Custom Cycle located very near our Center. In addition to the Clubs' donations of blankets and jackets, Brother Benno's was the recipient of an additional \$1,000 donated anonymously during the event.

Shop Sales Translate to Help. The Brother Benno Thrift Shop on Mission Avenue in Oceanside made a few dollars shy of \$5,000 on Small Business Saturday recently. "With everything 20% off, that's a lot of inventory!" said Shop Manager **Michelle Hoppe**. **Denise Seymour** let the Shop staff know how some of that money helped our Guests: It kept a mother of three safe in a hotel for a week from an abusive father, and buy diapers for her little ones. It paid back a staff member who helped a woman living in her disabled car to get the car repaired so she could drive to Atlanta where a job was waiting for her. And it provided diapers for another mother of three whose husband wasn't able to support his family that week. These stories are just a few examples of what happens at Brother Benno's six days a week, all year long.

Abundant Roses. Speaking of the Thrift Shop, we had to hold over one of **Helen Parsons'** "Roses" recipients in the December newsletter because we ran out of space. So here it is:

"To our Thrift Shop staff and volunteers: A life surrounded by flowers for all of you each day! Our mission statement, to serve the poor one sale at a time, is a reality because of your unwavering devotion. You do what needs to be done, no matter what, including washing floors, scrubbing bathrooms, washing windows, baking goodies for special events, attending events that let people know who we are, embracing students who want to do community service. You are simply the best! You are the wind (spirit) beneath my (Brother Benno's) wings!"



Eddie Medrano, Magician



Santa with guest



Toy Giveaway



Robbie Furman The Balloon Man



Guests enjoying Christmas Meal



Christie Sahar, The Grinch and Denise Seymour



Diana Fairbanks-Shields, Minerva Anderson and Mary Holquin



Line at Christmas Giveaway



Pioneers & Messengers at Blanket Giveaway

AUXILIARY NEWS

by Vikki Ramey

Congratulations to the following Board Members for 2014: **Isobel Haring**, Vice-President; **Bonnie Gjerde**, Secretary; **Joan O'Connell**, Treasurer; **Vikki Ramey**, Advisor; **Thelma Hendrix**, Parliamentarian. We are still looking for members interested in becoming Co-Presidents or chairing a committee. Please contact Vikki Ramey (760-803-6267) for more information.

Thanks to all Auxiliary members who volunteered in serving refreshments at the Christmas Toys gathering on December 18. And many, many thanks also to everyone who donated socks for the children—we collected more than 375 pairs. **Vicky Squires** chaired this sock drive.


Our first meeting in 2014 will be on January 22. I'm looking for three members to volunteer to bring refreshments (please call me). Social time is at 1 p.m., meeting at 1:30.

Our Membership Drive will be in February, date to be announced.

Ω

Information & Online donations:
brotherbenno.org

Follow Brother Bennos online:

 **Facebook.com/BrotherBennos**
 **Twitter.com/BrotherBennos**



Jean McMath and Carole Muehe at Spirit of Christmas Fair at First Presbyterian Church in Oceanside.

Ω

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 _____

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
 Gilbert Brown
 Phillip Larson
 Robert McMath
 Bob Tupa
 Joy Whitman
 Mary Ann Mowery
 Rosalie Ryan
 Jeanne Nickel
 Eunice Bourque
 Bill Pollock
 Andrew & Jane
 Yadura
 Dorothy Barnell
 Zeferino & Dancy
 Nares

Frank Trujillo
 Bill Combs
 Marshall Button
 Paul Sperrazza
 Nysewander Family
 Squirrell Family
 Douglas Faught
 Pete Kopcak
 Fred & Helen
 Briscoe
 Lorna Kroeger
 Laurie Batchelor
 Alan Jay
 Dorothy & Walter
 Jellig
 Elaine Dillon
 Bernard & Virginia
 Jaeger
 Helen, Walter, & Beau
 McEwen
 Bernie Weiler
 Lorraine Ybarra
 Birthdays
 Frank Forthoffer
 In Honor Of
 Andrew & Meg
 Alma & Dan Boone

Needs

Gently used furniture Diapers Ladies underwear
 Coffee (the larger the cans, the better, but we'll take whatever)

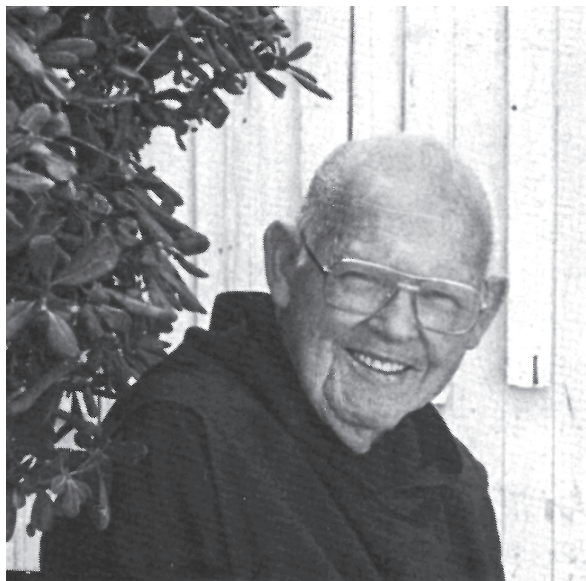
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
January			1 Brother Benno's Auxiliary	2 Oceanside Pacific Kiwanis	3 San Luis Rey Mission	4 St. Thomas More
2014						
Monthly	6 St. Elizabeth Seton #1	7 St. John The Evangelist	8 TBA	9 Oceanside Civitans	10 St. Patrick's	11 3rd MAW Medical
Serving	13 North Coast Methodist	14 Hawkes Home	15 Grace Anglican	16 Carlsbad Rotary	17 St. Elizabeth Seton #2	18 Girlfriend's Care
Team	20 Sunrise Kiwanis of Vista	21 Christ the King Lutheran	22 San Luis Rey Methodist	23 Pilgrim Creek	24 Sonrise Christian Fellowship	25 Catholic Daughters
Schedule	27 Christ Church & Zion Lutheran	28 St. Mark's San Marcos	29 Soroptomist International	30 Grace Anglican	31 King of Kings Lutheran	

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

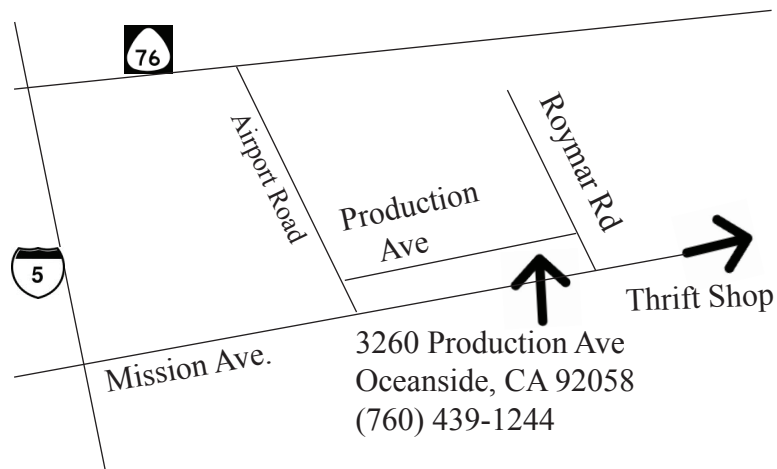
Shop open Mon-Sat 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. -- Stop by to check out our Daily Specials!!

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:

	November 2013	Our 30th Year		November 2013	Our 30th Year
Meals	13,085	3,501,070	Loads of laundry	32	26,587
Nights of lodging	979	244,945	Food packs	2,732	239,145
Articles of clothing	5,269	1,031,176	Blankets	124	35,610
Showers	980	186,278	Prescriptions	7	7,189
Haircuts	111	16,266	ID Vouchers	14	8,492
Bus passes	100	77,519	HUGS	2,250	862,744