Brother Benno’s helps many people each month with rent and prescriptions when we have enough funds to do so. We go out of our way to help when people are faced with emergencies, particularly when children are involved. One such situation occurred before Christmas.

A mother and her two children, ages three and nine, had been living in their car for four months. The three-year-old has autism, which manifests itself as hyperactivity. The mother was exhausted.

The family had been using Brother Benno’s for food, showers, and clothing. Their car had major problems, and the repair would have cost far more than they could afford. The mother had used up all of her savings, except for $100. All the local shelters that take women with children were full and had waiting lists. “There was no room in the inn.”

Without their car, and no shelter with room for them, they had nowhere to go. Given those circumstances, the Brother Benno staff got involved, surrounding the family with special care and love. Thanks to your donations, we were able to use money from our emergency “Changing Life” reserve fund to help with the auto repair. We also provided temporary shelter for the family while the car was being repaired.

The staff contacted Operation Hope and Solutions for Change for help. Despite being full, Operation Hope was able to put them up for a short time, and Solutions for Change graciously agreed to take the family in a few weeks later. There, they’ll have a place to live, and the mother will get counseling until she can get back on her feet. When she got the key back to her repaired car, she could not believe all that we had done for her.

This story seems to fit in well with the story of Christmas. Our collective efforts allowed this vulnerable family to have a safe and secure Christmas. We are so grateful to all of our donors. Without your help, we could not have made this happen.

Ω

NO ROOM IN THE INN
by Frank Doherty

A JOLT OF JOY

(Editor’s Note: The following reflection was written by John, a man from Ventura, California, whom we mentioned in the December newsletter. He spent a week volunteering at Brother Benno’s, where he hopes to spend more time in the future.)

Back from a week-long visit to Brother Benno’s in Oceanside. Part of the week I was in the Soup Kitchen, serving food or coffee. At one point, I experienced something similar to what happened when I was helping out at the Winter Warming Shelter in Ventura last winter. When a mother is there with her young children and my brain at first wants to “Photoshop” the scene before me –

Part of me thinks: this is sooo out of place—children this young should not be at a warming shelter, or in line at a soup kitchen—and then another part of my brain pipes up and says, No, the children being with their parent or parents are not out of place, not out of order. Rather, what is out of balance are the unmet needs of so many of our brothers and sisters. What is out of order is our acceptance of the situation.

And yet, in this same scene, I receive a gift, a blessing, for there is a young child–

continued on page 4....
Christmas Party
CHRISTMAS PARTY SPREADS
LOVE ALL AROUND

Brother Benno’s at Christmas time has to be one of the happiest places on earth! On Saturday, December 20, Santa made an early stop at the furniture warehouse next to the Center, where there were so many “events” taking place that people could hardly navigate from one end of the building to another.

The first stop was a table with punch and home-made cookies baked by a group of home-schooling parents who have treated our Guests before. As the children and their parents munched away, they headed to the balloon artists, then to the face-painter, and finally to the Christmas stocking table.

Well-organized volunteers were everywhere—way too many to list them all, but a few do get special mention.

Under the heading of “Never Too Old” were Auxiliary members Dolly Bartelme, 88, and Elena Gonzalez, 90, who were handing out stockings filled with candy and a toy—a little car for the boys, and lip gloss for the girls. Elena is the mother of Vikki Ramey, past President of the Auxiliary and one of the Chairs of this Christmas event. The other Chair was Helen Parsons, whose second “hat” is Brother Benno Board Member.

Morgan Williams did the face painting, which she said she loves to do because it makes people happy. She had two pages of drawings for the kids to choose from; and the smiles on their faces, when she held up a mirror so they could view her artwork, was proof that her goal had been achieved. Sonia Davidson and her two sons were the balloon artists, creating animals that sometimes popped and died before their time!

Rising above the happy chatter was the guitar music of Tom Troy, whose musical name is Troubadour Tom. He said he plays mostly environmental folk music “with a little Christmas music thrown in” for parties. He likes to promote “a kinder, gentler world” with his music, he said. He learned about Brother Benno’s when he was in college and volunteered here at that time; and now, at age 61, he’s been volunteering ever since.

Every child who came to the party received two age-appropriate gifts, a stuffed animal, a stocking, and a pair of new socks. The children whose parents are registered at Brother Benno’s also received a $25 gift card provided by the Auxiliary, and a ticket to Legoland, compliments of the Park.

Months of preparation go into this annual Christmas party. Year after year, the event gets more organized; but what doesn’t change is the commitment to making it a time to remember for everyone—those who give, and those who receive. Sometimes it’s hard to determine who benefits the most.

Ω

PROGRAM MEMBERS GET SPECIAL SHOPPING TREAT

Christmas shopping took on a whole new meaning at Brother Benno’s Thrift Shop on Sunday, December 14, for the men and women in Brother Benno’s Recovery Programs. About twenty women from Girlfriends Care were on hand to act as personal shoppers to each man and woman, who had the joy of choosing gifts, all compliments of Brother Benno’s, for their family members—husbands, wives, children, moms and dads, and siblings. For some, this would be the first contact they’ve had with their family in a long time.

The choice of new gifts included toiletry items, jewelry, candles, fuzzy socks, gloves, and scarves; as well as selected items throughout the shop. Some of the men’s faces showed deep concentration as they looked at blouses and sweaters for the special woman in their lives. One 24-year-old said he was shopping for his mom and sister.

After the gifts were selected, the personal shopper took them to the back of the Shop where another group of Girlfriends were ready to wrap and tag the packages. Those that needed to be mailed out of town were set aside. In addition to paying the postage, this loving group of ladies also donated all the wrapping paper and other supplies.

Shop Manager Michelle Hoppe was available to answer questions, iron out wrinkles, and just in general, keep things moving smoothly.

No shopping trip can be completed without a little nourishment; so Helen Parsons brought her home-made clam and corn chowders, staples for any special event at the Thrift Shop. Huge pizzas rounded out the menu.

The entire evening was a feast for body and soul. Ω
Another year has passed and a new Board will be installed this month: Co-Presidents, Judy Calegari and Carol Sanford; Vice President, Penny Sallee; Secretary, Bonnie Gjerde; Treasurer, Vicky Squires; Parliamentarian, Thelma Hendrix; and Advisor, Vera Bayliss. Please be there to support our new Board.

We have lots of events coming up in the new year. Our first event is our new member drive. We need to gather more members this year.

Thank you to everyone who helped with the Christmas Party for the children at the Center, especially Vikki Ramey and Helen Parsons who planned and executed the event. It was a wonderful time for the children, and it felt so good to give a little joy to others.

Our next meeting will be January 28. Hope to see you all there.

Ω

....continued from page 1

perhaps three or so—and as I glance over his way, his eyes catch mine, and then his face lights up and he smiles like only a child can smile. And I think, Wow! What have I done today to be a recipient of such a jolt of joy.

Impact-wise, I am unsure how productive my week of volunteering was. Certainly, others were available to serve food, to refill coffees, to hand out food boxes, or even to fold napkins around forks to prepare for the next day’s meal. But there was more—there was a kinship (something Father Gregory Boyle* speaks so well on), there was a recognition of the dignity of others, the dignity of one another. Weeks like this remind me our world does not call out for more material possessions; rather, our world cries out for belonging.

*(Father Gregory Boyle works with gang members in Los Angeles; and in his book, Tattoos on the Heart, he writes eloquently about our need to belong to each other.)

Ω

Information & Online donations: brotherbenno.org
Follow Brother Bennos online:
Facebook.com/BrotherBennos
Twitter.com/BrotherBennos

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 __________________________________
City, State, Zip Code _________________________
Number of copies ________________________
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 Farquhar
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 Barret
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
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
William & Vennita
Flanagan
Virginia Sylwestrzak
James Carroll
Heffern Family
Mary Ann Mowery
Nysewander Family
Squirrell Family
Ray Johnson
Loretta Rubalcaba
Bill Severy
Gilbert Brown
Rose & Floyd
Caldwell
Allan Port
Dorothy & Walter
Jellig
Frank Forthoffer
Fred Roeder
Marshall Button
Robert Schmidt
Helen, Walter, & Beau McEwen
Bernie Weiler
Sedef Esener
Ella Mailand
Sarah McPherson
Dorothy Barnell
Patricia Miller
June Knox
Mary Gerrity
Basel & Gloria Lester
Zeferino & Darcy Nares
Ginny Bussey
Andrew & Jane Yandura
Imogene Helms
Enid Weiner
Catherine & Joe Martina
Leo Reuder
Kathleen Foley

Happy Birthday
Norma Dite

Needs

Gently used furniture  Diapers  Hotel-size shampoo, conditioner, shower gel, soap
Baby powder and shampoo  Men’s crew socks  Women’s hygiene items--pads and tampons

January 2015 Monthly Serving Team Schedule

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
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<td>Oceanside Pacific Kiwanis</td>
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<td>San Luis Rey Mission</td>
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5 St. Elizabeth Seton #1
6 St. John The Evangelist
7 Brother Benno’s Auxiliary
8 Oceanside Civitans
9 St. Patrick’s
10

12 North Coast Methodist
13 Hawkes Home
14 Stew’s Crew
15 Carlsbad Rotary
16 St. Elizabeth Seton #2
17 Girlfriend’s Care

19 Sunrise Kiwanis of Vista
20 Christ the King Lutheran
21 Grace Anglican
22 Pilgrim Creek
23 Sunrise Christian Fellowship
24 Catholic Daughters

26 Christ Church & Zion Lutheran
27 St. Mark’s San Marcos
28 San Luis Rey Methodist
29 Grace Anglican
30 King of Kings Lutheran
29 Shiloh Church of God In Christ

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.
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 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

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