



Brother Benno's Newsletter

"Uplifting The Dignity of Those We Serve"

Volunteers Making a Difference

June 2016



MY LIFE WITH BROTHER BENNO

by Father Abbot Charles Wright O.S.B.



(Father Abbot Charles Wright (now Emeritus) of the Benedictine Prince of Peace Abbey in Oceanside has been a member of the Brother Benno Foundation Board since the beginning in 1983. He retired as Abbot in 2015 but continues

to be active in Abbey life and at Brother Benno's. The following are his memories of Brother Benno.)

I met Brother Benno in 1961. He had recently joined the original six monks who'd been sent from our founding house of St. Meinrad Archabbey in Indiana to establish St. Charles Priory, later to become Prince of Peace Abbey. After managing the kitchen at St. Meinrad for 25 years, where he cooked for a thousand people each day, Brother was given a lighter load—so everyone thought. After all, cooking for less than a dozen every day would give him a welcome respite. But that was not to be.

His altruistic energy opened the floodgate of possibilities that now he could be of even greater service to others. His kind and generous heart had already been unbridled in Indiana.

Brother Benno's "Let's Make a Deal" approach first saw the light of day when he managed to get two old pizza ovens in a trade for a few loaves of bread, which he'd baked in our tiny

oven. Those pizza ovens launched the famous "Brother Benno Bread Industry."

The gift of a pickup truck satisfied his ever-growing wish list and gave birth to the biggest horse-trader Oceanside had ever seen. In the 1960's and '70's, much of Oceanside was covered with farmland. Brother would collect all the produce that could not be sold, or that growers acquiesced to donate to the needy because of his plea tactics, or his good-humored guilt game.

Once when I was driving with him, we picked up about 20 cases of tomatoes. He asked me to drive to the home of a woman who he said "loved" tomatoes. When we pulled up, I grabbed a case and we were invited into the house. She thanked Brother over and over, and asked him to have a seat. He sat down, and I went outside to mosey around in her back yard, where I spotted five cases of rotting tomatoes. She apparently didn't want to refuse Brother's gift for fear that he'd never bring her any more.

On another occasion, he had some food left over from one of our meals, so we headed to the house of a large family who had no food nor furniture. They were obviously ashamed of their situation—we sat on crates in the living room and talked to them. Brother told a corny story or two and they quickly warmed up to him. When they were perfectly at ease, he embarrassed me by asking in a loud voice across the room: "Charles, ain't poor people wonderful?"

The education I received from Brother Benno far outweighed anything that comes from books or classes.

In 1983, I was assigned as Prior, the

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EXPERIENCING THE BROTHER BENNO SCENE

by Barbara Ladwig

Good People. It seems there's always someone behind the scenes, making things better at Brother Benno's. A recent case in point involved **Don Lamb and Ron McKinze of Plumbing Solutions.** They were being shown around the Center one day, and they looked into our water heater closet. "That thing is a dinosaur!" one of them said. "I'm surprised it even works!"

Well, it didn't always work, according to one of our staff members, so Don and Ron decided to donate and install a brand-new one. Now there's no danger of someone being in the shower when the hot water runs out, or there's no hot water at all for the kitchen.

Another business that has been donating time and materials for years is **Stevenson's Plumbing.**

These business people join a long list of our generous supporters who say, Tell me what you need and we'll provide it.

Volunteers Needed. We are in need of a serving team for breakfast on the fifth Thursday of the month from 6-8 a.m. If you have a group of six to eight willing pairs of hands, please call our Volunteer Coordinator, **Denise Seymour** (760-439-1244, ext. 104).

Correction. In the May newsletter, we printed incorrect information about the time frame for the collection of food through Feeding America. We have collected more than one million pounds of food between **August 1, 2015**, and the middle of **May, 2016**, which is almost ten months, not the four months reported. We are sorry for the error.

Tours. On the first Saturday of every month at 9 a.m., we give tours of the Center for anyone interested in learning more about what we do. At the end of the tour, anyone who wishes to sign up to volunteer can fill out a short form giving their contact information and some suggested jobs they'd be interested in. However, it's not necessary to have volunteerism in sight; just an interest

in Brother Benno's is enough!

A Quiet Giver. I've seen a man working outside the Center almost every day, sweeping and picking up trash. He even goes across and down the street, because he knows some of our Guests leave trash behind.

This man keeps his head down, barely answering when I greet him. One day I asked him his name, and he said something to the effect that he's just there and doesn't need any recognition. When I asked a staff member about him, I was told he has been helped at Brother Benno's and feels a strong need to reciprocate.

I was struck by the realization that some of us want a pat on the back when we do something for others. Yet here is someone whose only reward comes from inside himself. He is grateful, and he quietly shows it by his actions.

In Memoriam. It was with great sadness that we received the news of the death of **Gini Craig**, founder and active member of Girlfriends Care. Everyone at Brother Benno's who worked with her knew her to be a woman with a gentle presence, an all-encompassing smile, and a spirit of grace and caring. We offer our sincere condolences to her family and friends.

*"What we do for ourselves dies with us.
What we do for others lives on."*

~ *Author Unknown*

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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 Frank Doherty (760-804-1948 or doherlyfe@aol.com).

A SPECIAL EVENING AT THE THEATER

By Barbara Collins

The curtain went up at Vista's Broadway Theater in April, where Auxiliary members and their friends were treated to a special performance of "The Doyle & Debbie Show." The Auxiliary hosted a reception before the show, giving guests a chance to socialize and nosh on hors d'oeuvres and desserts at the theater.

Auxiliary President **Carol Sanford** gave special thanks to **Alma Boone, Barbara Collins, Thelma Hendrix, Donna Holub, Dorine Meade,** and **Vicky Squires** for providing the food and beverages.



Barbara Collins, Vicky Squires, Thelma Hendrix, Mae Signori, and Alma Boone

It was an evening of fun and fellowship for all. **Phil Johnson** and **Eileen Bowman**, aka "Doyle and Debbie," came out to meet the audience after the show. Ms. Bowman chatted with **Dan Boone** about her grandmother-in-law, **Virginia Sylwestrzak**, who was a key volunteer for many years at Brother Benno's.

The comical raffle that is part of the Broadway Theater experience sent a few lucky audience members home with "Doyle and Debbie" souvenirs.



Just before curtain time

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assistant to **Father Abbot Claude Ehringer**, our first Abbot; and in that position I had to make assignments and see that things ran smoothly. Brother Benno was still our cook, and we often had to bend the monastic rules of silence and being absent from community functions because of his zeal for serving the poor. It made my position lovingly more difficult, but we understood that the Lord was always on his side.

We learned that he was preparing and taking large amounts of food to the field workers. Most of them were Catholic, so he'd commandeer one of us priests to go along and offer Mass. The poor souls were not allowed to eat until they attended Mass.

Next came his feeding of the transients and homeless on the back patio of the Abbey—maybe the first soup kitchen in town. The number of these Guests grew to at least 40 per meal. Brother's policy was that the only "papers" one needed for a meal was an empty stomach.

It was about that time that **Harold** and **Kay Kutler** entered the scene, and that's when things really took off. At first there were no policies, no Foundation, no Board of Directors, no Auxiliary, no Thrift Shop. Only Love. But the honeymoon was soon over, and we had to start facing the implications of finances, insurance, risk management, housing, city ordinances, permits, and the whole host of programs that no one—especially Brother Benno—had anticipated.

Brother Benno died of Parkinson's Disease in 1992. All his earthly belongings fit in one banana box, but what he left behind to everyone who knew him was immeasurable.

My presence on the Board of Directors has seen monumental changes. While love is still the motive, it seems it must be pressed through a sieve of restrictions. However, Brother Benno's spirit of abandonment still moves in the hearts of all involved, and his spirit of love and humor will never die.

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AUXILIARY NEWS

by Carol Sanford

May was really busy for the Brother Benno Auxiliary! Our Breakfast Club members were at the Center to serve breakfast on May 7. **Eileen Ciganko** and **Vicky Squires** gave out Mother's Day gift bags on that day, and Father's Day gift bags were assembled on May 25—all under the able guidance of **Claire Carter**.

On Saturday, May 14, new member **Taylor Sivak** and her crew packed up all the donated food items at the La Costa Post Office from the Carriers collection, then drove to the Del Mar Post Office to pack up the second Brother Benno truck at that location! Thanks to everyone for all your help in making these events such a success!

Looking ahead, we are planning our "Christmas in July" event at the Outback Restaurant on Friday, July 29. The proceeds provide money for the gifts given to the children of the Center's registered families at the December 17 Christmas Party. We need a chair (or chairs), plus many more helpful hands.

Time to mark your calendars now for our Annual Luncheon on Saturday, December 3, again at the Sheraton in Carlsbad. We need a chair plus many sub-chairs for this, our most important fundraiser of the year, as we will celebrate our 20th year of supporting the Brother Benno Foundation.

Thanks to new member **Sharon Johnson** for setting up a new brotherbennosauxiliary@gmail.com account, where we will be able to safe-

ly (bcc) send out email "blasts" of important news to all online members, so be sure we have your correct email address.

At our June 22 (4th Wed.) meeting, our mini-speaker will be **Barbara Ladwig**, editor of the monthly Brother Benno newsletter. So come join us, 1 p.m. for social time with snacks, and 1:30 meeting, in the Center Dining Room. All are welcome!

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Information & Online donations:brotherbenno.org

Follow Brother Bennos online:



[Facebook.com/BrotherBennos](https://www.facebook.com/BrotherBennos)



[Twitter.com/BrotherBennos](https://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 _____

Number of copies _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Memorials

Ron Alexander	Joe & Ida Friend	Dora Ramirez	Ann Bakovchik
Dixie Bales	Mary Gerrity	Dick & Terry Riley	John Ciganko
Frank Barnet	Bob Gleason	Margaret Rossini	Rose & Floyd Caldwell
Brother Benno	Tom Hayward	Ann Sauer	Kathleen Shedd
Edith Blaiser	Elizabeth Holms	Mary Shankle	James Johnson
Andrea Boersma	Alice Jordan	Naomi Shelton	Bill Cahill
Roland Bond	Ben Kouns	Bernice, Samuel & Milton Silver	Roy Bruinsma
Bill Boster	Richard Kurtz	Will Skinner	Albert Mibeck
Agnus & Joan Boyd	Carole Kutler	Mike Stendahl	Rosalinda O'Brien
Bill Buckner	Kay Kutler	Margaret Stephan	Kevin & Sheila Flynn
Deacon Art & Mary Carr	Bill & Louise Lakoff	Virginia Sylwestrzak	Jim Bender
Mary Teresa Carr	Ben E. Lewis	Mother Teresa	Clay
Anna Correia	Helen Lucas	Harold Thompson	Louise & George Casperson
Don & Dorothea Daybell	Bill & Joan Maloney	Rosemary Tucker	Grace & Leo Hutter
Phyllis H. Dierlam	Helene McGill	Walter Ulloa	Bernie Weiler
Frank S. Dolley	Michael & Monty Nares	June Williams	Juan Chapa
Anita H. Donahue	Mary Nordstrom	Fred Williamson	Billy Pry
Dorothy M. Donahue	Bud & Blanche Ogle	Zeferino & Dancy Nares	Bob Strawbridge
Fr. Luke Dougherty	Ben Osgrove	Nysewander Family	Donald Deffenbaugh
Roseanne Dreibelbis	Pope John Paul II	Squirrel Family	Ann Grier Smith
Fr. Abbot Claude Ehringer, OSB	Kathryn D. Pent	Anthony Maurella	Marianne Smeltzer's Mom
Myron Eichen	Mary Peterson	Harry Opakiewicz	Rev. Bradley Dusak
Richard Farhquar	Jane Pfau	Betty Crawford	Peggy Miville
William & Vennita Flanagan	Ruth Hazel Pierson	Alan Port	IN HONOR OF Barbara Driscoll
Louise Foussat	Mary Pullman	Dorothy Kane	
	Catherine L. Quinlan		

Needs

Gently used furniture
 Women's Feminine Hygiene Items
 Easy-to-Carry Blankets
 Diapers, all sizes
 Bottled Water
 Hotel size hygiene items
 Baby Wipes
 Used Vehicles
 Hoodies, especially large sizes

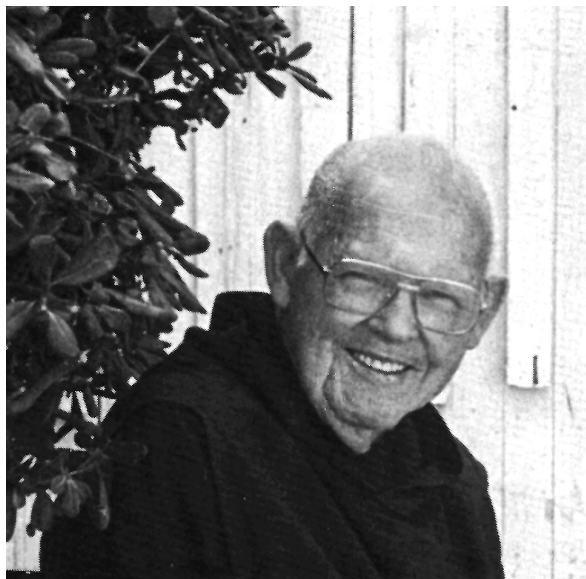
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
June 2016 Monthly Serving Team Schedule			1 Brother Benno's Auxiliary	2 Oceanside Pacific Kiwanis	3 San Luis Rey Mission	4 St. Thomas More
	6 St. Elizabeth Seton #1	7 St. John The Evangelist	8 1st MLG FCPOA	9 Oceanside Civitans	10 St. Patrick's	11 San Raphael Church
	13 North Coast Methodist	14 Team Wyndham	15 Grace Anglican	16 Carlsbad Rotary	17 St. Elizabeth Seton #2	18 Girlfriend's Care
	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
	27 Christ Church	28 St. Mark's San Marcos	29 Soroptimist International	30 Riverview Church		

Furniture Sales at the Center

3242-B Production Ave., Oceanside 760-967-2742 **Open Tues. - 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, 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:

	April 2016	Our 32nd Year		April 2016	Our 32nd Year
Meals	13,518	3,887,803	Loads of laundry	22	27,332
Nights of lodging	1,055	274,287	Food packs	1,486	298,093
Articles of clothing	5,729	1,184,760	Blankets	138	40,196
Showers	1,121	218,531	Tarps	97	1,130
Haircuts	160	20,071	ID Vouchers	0	8,839
Bus passes	126	80,648	HUGS	1,800	918,994