



# Brother Benno's Newsletter

"Uplifting The Dignity of Those We Serve"

Volunteers Making a Difference

March 2019



## UPHOLDING THE DIGNITY OF OUR POOR ONE HAIRCUT AT A TIME

by Frank Doherty

We are blessed to have volunteer barbers who cut hair at Brother Benno's on Saturdays. These ladies go well beyond just giving haircuts. **Alice, Betsy, and Linda** come in to cut hair, but what they really wind up doing is bringing joy, light, and love to each Guest they touch.



Their kindness comes through as they talk to each person as they work their magic. They listen, and they treat each man, woman, or child as someone special. We see how much this adds a sense of acceptance as they begin to feel better about themselves. As humans, we all have the need to be loved and to know that we are lovable.

During the recent Christmas holidays, these women brought in hot chocolate and scones for the Guests to enjoy while they were waiting in line for their haircuts.

While most of our volunteers have the opportunity to encounter the poor, our barbers can touch and engage them in ways that can make a difference in their outlook, and sometimes in their lives. We are so grateful for the special gift of love they bring to our Guests.

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## "HOW CAN I GET IN ON THIS?"

by a Grateful Man

When I first came to the Brother Benno Foundation in 1999, I was your typical drug addict. My back was up against the wall, and I didn't want to go to prison (again). I also had a desire to change my lifestyle, or at least find a way to manage it better. I had been to programs before. Lots of programs.

Growing up in Los Angeles as a drug addict, and later as a drug dealer to support my habit, I had learned how to manipulate people in situations. I had also suffered the consequences of that lifestyle.

As I settled into the Brother Benno Recovery Program to "do my time," I noticed that the people overseeing the Center seemed concerned about the Guests who came in each day. There also seemed to be an abundance of food, clothing, financial assistance, and other items available. In fact, it seemed that every time someone with a genuine need would come through the door, they were provided for.

Most normal people seeing this would probably think, "Wow, what an incredible place!" As a drug addict, my thought was, "I wonder how much these people are making, they must be rich; and I wonder how I can get in on this."

I decided to investigate. I began to use my manipulative skills to get to know the Board members. I really thought I was being slick. Looking back on these experiences, I realize that most of those folks probably saw right through me and just loved me anyway.

Through my inquiries, I learned many things that transformed my thinking and eventually led to my own spiritual transformation.

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## EXPERIENCING THE BROTHER BENNO SCENE

by Barbara Ladwig

**Volunteers From Afar.** Hang out at Brother Benno's long enough, and you're sure to meet the most interesting people. One morning as I was about to leave the Center, I found myself in the middle of a large group of men and women in front of the building (16 of them, I discovered) who were talking and laughing but seemingly not sure what was coming next. It turned out they were waiting to take a tour of the Center, and volunteer **Helen Parsons**, tour guide extraordinaire, hadn't arrived yet.

I asked the two women closest to me who this group was, and they said they are a nationwide company, Strategy Source, a recruiting agency that finds executives for their clients. Once a year, they get together to plan for the coming year, and this year they chose Carlsbad as the base for this meeting. The motto of the company is "We Know People," and they decided that in order to know people, they need to serve people. That's where Brother Benno's came in.

In preparation for their meeting, one of their staff members used the Internet to find possible organizations that would welcome them to spend a day in service. She made numerous phone calls, only to come up empty. As a last resort, she called St. Patrick Church in Carlsbad, and she was encouraged to try Brother Benno's. And of course, we said "Yes!"

After the tour of the Center, they were directed to the Brother Benno Thrift Shop, where they spent several happy hours doing many of the endless jobs needed to keep the Shop running smoothly. Helen reported that "they rolled up their sleeves and worked non-stop sorting, lifting, organizing, etc. I hope they come back in the future!"

**A Gift of Flowers.** Some of the more unusual donations we receive are fresh flowers that come with food items given to us by many local markets. We often share them with Guests and volunteers; and **Julie Petrie**, who has volunteered in our Intake Office for eight years, delivers them to a nearby nursing home. She says the staff always greets her with big smiles and many thank-yous.

**Be An Entertainer.** Are you someone who loves to be with people, has a flair for being "on stage," and would be willing to donate a few hours a

week to entertain the people we serve? Our Guests come for breakfast Monday through Friday between 6 and 8:30 and Saturdays 10-11:30, and we want them to feel that Brother Benno's is a warm and loving place. Sing a song, strum a guitar, tell a joke, read a poem, ask if anyone is celebrating a birthday—these are just some of the things you might do to brighten their day. You set your schedule: i.e., every Monday, Tuesdays and Wednesdays—whatever you wish. If you'd like to give this a try, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, **Denise Seymour**: [denise@artistofyourmind.com](mailto:denise@artistofyourmind.com) or 760-439-1244 ext. 104.

**Needs Explained.** Two items on our Needs list on page 5 need explanation.

The twin sheet sets with deep pockets are for the Women's Houses, where the women in our Recovery Program live for six months or longer. The mattresses are thick (comfy!), so only deep pockets work.

Regarding donations of used furniture, we have expanded our pickup area to include Solana Beach, Encinitas, and Rancho Santa Fe (We already pick up in Oceanside, Carlsbad, and Vista). Just call 760-967-7507 to arrange for free pickup.

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### "IT" HELP NEEDED

Brother Benno's has a need for IT-savvy individual(s), as our current computing platform is fast approaching obsolescence. We need an experienced volunteer to help guide us in proper IT project management as we upgrade and stabilize our computing infrastructure. We will also need help in managing the training of staff and our many volunteers who interface with our upgraded computing platform.

If you have IT experience and a passion for helping support the Brother Benno mission, please help us in "uplifting the dignity of those we serve." Please feel free to contact **Richard Giroux** at 760-445-9905.

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## A LESSON IN LOVE

by Frank Doherty

Brother Benno's message of unconditional love for anyone who comes through our door results in our getting to know many of our Guests on a personal basis as we listen to their stories. Often we experience their plight and their pain, as well as the absolute beauty and love and compassion they have for the people around them. Here is one story of a 77-year-old man named Ben who was waiting in line for our Saturday brunch.

As I reached out to shake Ben's hand, I noticed he had a patch over his right eye. I asked him what happened. He said he'd been hit with a brick in the eye at 2 a.m. as he was sleeping in his camp. An apparently mentally ill man yelled out, "You are a Russian spy!" as he threw the brick at Ben's face.

Despite this major wound and lots of blood, Ben managed to call 911, then walked to the street where the ambulance could pick him up to take him to the hospital. The hospital staff called in an eye specialist, but they were unable to save the vision in that eye.

I was amazed to hear Ben's next statement: "I feel sorry for the man who threw the brick." He never said anything about his own grief and pain in being attacked and losing his vision. I was so impressed at his acceptance of his situation and his compassion and forgiveness of the man who perpetrated such a terrible act.

When I saw Ben the following week, I asked him how he became homeless. He said he had to sell his home in order to pay for his mother's nursing care while she was dying. He had been an electrician who could no longer work because of his age and associated medical problems.

The message of my encounter with Ben is that some of the most beautiful people we will ever meet are among the poor. We as human beings cannot ignore their suffering and are called to provide them with unconditional love. Being there for the poor and working at the margins (where people have acute needs) is where we often find the most meaning in life, and where we find ourselves doing what we are called by God to do—to love and serve the poor.

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I found out that the Brother Benno Board of Directors is a working board. That means they are INVOLVED with what happens, and most of them have multiple responsibilities. For instance, our current President, in addition to his responsibility on the Board, also drives a truck to pick up food donations each Friday. On other days he is our Safety Manager. He is not an exception, either. Each member carries a lot of responsibility beyond the Board room.

When I learned how much these folks did, my next question was, "These men and women must make a lot of money; I wonder how much?" When I found out that the Board members are volunteers and are not financially compensated, I was amazed. All my life I thought everyone was out to get as much as they could from others, and that people were very selfish. I certainly was.

Getting to know these good people with kind hearts was a turning point in my life. Their love and dedication to others gave me the desire to be a better person. I went through the Brother Benno Recovery Program three times to get to that point. The last time was 2010. I have been able to stay with the Foundation as a part-time Staff member since then.

It is an honor and a privilege to be able to work beside the men and women on our Board. Thank you all for your service!

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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

The Membership Brunch on February 9 was very successful in providing an opportunity to share with members and guests the many fundraising, service, and support activities we provided in 2018. Sara Bussiere prepared a very informative power-point presentation that explained to new members what the Brother Benno Foundation is all about. It included a video clip of our volunteers, both at the morning Breakfast Club and our work party at the Thrift Shop. The presentation was well received.

We welcomed 14 new members and are looking forward to their participation in our various activities. Thank you to Sara and her volunteers who worked hard to make this event a success.



FRONT ROW L-R Patricia Ramirez, Elizabeth Onofre, Wendy Brophy, Frank Brophy, Misha Snow  
BACK ROW L-R, Abby Fisher, Loree Warren, Victoria Edrington, Barbara Burton, Linda Engstrom, Lauren Thomas, Vicki Tripp, Susie King, Heidi Fouts

We are proud to report that, at the Brunch, Nita Rodriguez presented a check in the amount

of \$38,000 to the Foundation. Board Member **Helen Parsons** happily accepted the check, which represents the money raised by the Auxiliary in 2018. We are genuinely humbled and blessed by all our volunteers who work so tirelessly.


**Our Applebee's Flapjack Breakfast is coming up on March 9 from 8 to 9:30 at 2146 Vista Way in Oceanside. Please join us! For a mere \$10, you will enjoy pancakes, eggs, bacon, sausage, orange juice, and coffee. Contact us at brotherbenno.org to pre-purchase tickets.**

New ideas are in the works for some interesting events this year. Keep watching for more information in this newsletter.

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, March 27 in the Center Dining Room. Snacks and fellowship begin at 1 p.m., followed by the meeting at 1:30. All are invited to attend and bring a friend. If you can't attend a meeting but want to be a member, download our membership application at <http://bit.ly/2oGkaB9>.

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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](http://brotherbenno.org)  
**Follow Brother Bennos online:**  
 [Facebook.com/BrotherBennos](https://www.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 \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of copies \_\_\_\_\_

### Memorials

Ron Alexander	Bob Gleason	Dora Ramirez	John & Helen Hager
Dixie & Lou Bales	Chance Hales	Dick & Terry Riley	Dorothy Barnell
Frank Barnet	Tom Hayward	Margaret Rossini	Leo Hutter
Brother Benno	Elizabeth Holms	Ann Sauer	Robert Buchach
Edith Blaiser	Alice Jordan	Mary Shankle	Paul & Irene Gray
Andrea Boersma	Ben Kouns	Naomi Shelton	Barbara LaMothe
Roland Bond	Richard Kurtz	Bernice, Samuel & Milton Silver	Andrew & Jane Yandura
Bill Boster	Carole Kutler	Will Skinner	Toni Keane
Agnus & Joan Boyd	Harold & Kay Kutler	Ann Grier Smith	Andrew, Horst, & Reinhold Zuther
Bill Buckner	Bill & Louise Lakoff	Alva & Frances Snider	Marie Atkinson
Deacon Art & Mary Carr	Ben E. Lewis	Squirrell Family	D. Deffenbaugh
Anna Correia	Helen Lucas	Mike Stendahl	Mary Boose
Don & Dorothea Daybell	Bill & Joan Maloney	Margaret Stephan	William Daley
Phyllis H. Dierlam	Helene McGill	Virginia Sylwestrzak	Fr. Bradley Dusak
Frank S. Dolley	Michael & Monty Nares	Harold Thompson	Bob Strawbridge
Anita H. Donahue	Zeferino & Dancy Nares	Carol & Herb Thornberg	Max Fackler
Dorothy M. Donahue	Mary Nordstrom	Rosemary Tucker	
Fr. Luke Dougherty	Nysewander Family	Walter Ulloa	<b>Happy Birthday</b>
Roseanne Dreibelbis	Bud & Blanche Ogle	June Williams	Jennifer Baker
Fr. Abbot Claude Ehringer, OSB	Ben Osgrove	Fred Williamson	
Myron Eichen	Kathryn D. Pent	Lou & George Asperson	
Richard Farhquar	Mary Peterson	Donna Brown	
William & Vennita Flanagan	Jane Pfau	Gilbert Brown	
Louise Foussat	Ruth Hazel Pierson	Mike Spong	
Joe & Ida Friend	Alan Port	Peggy Miville	
Mary Gerrity	Mary Pullman		
	Catherine L. Quinlan		

### Needs

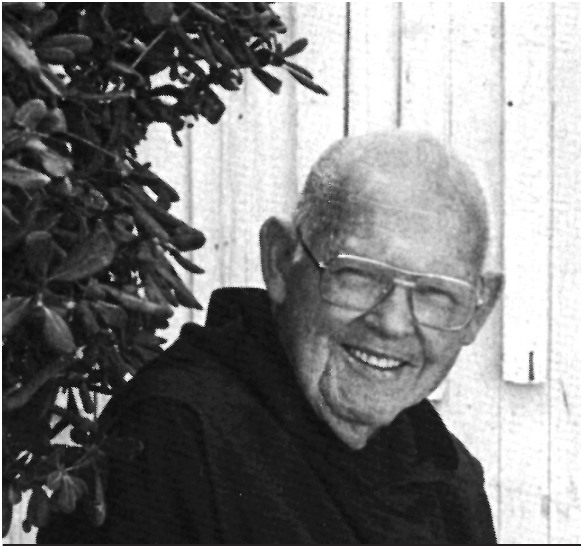
Twin sheet sets with deep pockets

Gently used furniture for Thrift Shop

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>March 2019 Monthly Serving Team Schedule</b>					<b>1</b> San Luis Rey Mission	<b>2</b> St. Thomas More
	<b>4</b> St. Elizabeth Seton #1	<b>5</b> St. John The Evangelist	<b>6</b> Brother Benno's Auxiliary	<b>7</b> Oceanside Pacific Kiwanis	<b>8</b> St. Patrick's	<b>9</b> TVIA
	<b>11</b> North Coast Methodist	<b>12</b> Riverview Church	<b>13</b> Fairwinds	<b>14</b> Oceanside Civitans	<b>15</b> St. Elizabeth Seton #2	<b>16</b> Girlfriend's Care
	<b>18</b> Sunrise Kiwanis of Vista	<b>19</b> Christ the King Lutheran	<b>20</b> Brother Benno's Auxiliary	<b>21</b> Rotary Club of Carlsbad	<b>22</b> Sonrise Christian Fellowship	<b>23</b> Catholic Daughters
	<b>25</b> St. Thomas More RCIA	<b>26</b> Vista Hi-Noon Rotary	<b>27</b> San Luis Rey Methodist	<b>28</b> Pilgrim Creek	<b>29</b> King of Kings Lutheran	<b>30</b> Shiloh Church of God in Christ

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

Non-Profit Organization  
**U.S. POSTAGE**  
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 Oceanside, California  
**PERMIT NO. 166**



**Brother Benno's Thrift Shop**

(Helping the poor, one sale at a time)

**Clothing, Household Goods, Furniture**

**Shop open Tue-Fri 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sat 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

**We welcome your saleable furniture items. Please call 760-967-7507 for free pick up**

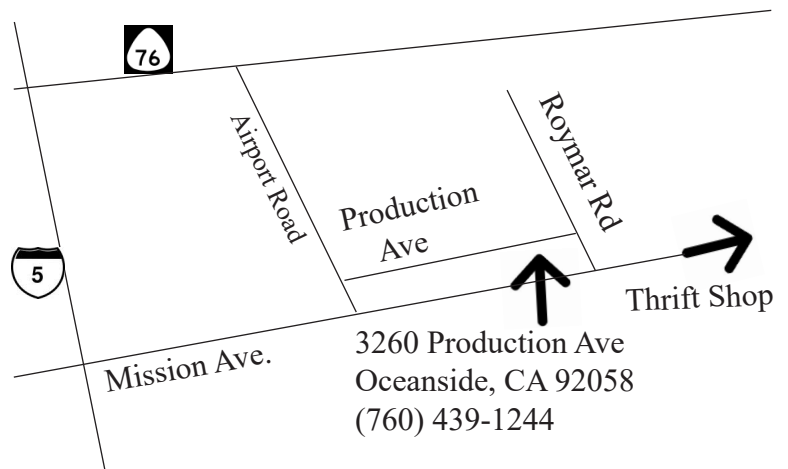
**Stop by to check out our Daily Specials!!**

**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](http://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](http://www.brotherbenno.org)



**Brother Benno's Services:**

	January 2019	Our 35th Year		January 2019	Our 35th Year
Meals	13,391	4,318,183	Loads of laundry	27	28,261
Nights of lodging	1,002	303,882	Food packs	1,179	340,814
Articles of clothing	3,738	1,360,975	Blankets	239	46,336
Showers	838	256,994	Tarps	120	4,531
Haircuts	33	22,661	ID Vouchers	53	9,400
Bus passes	58	84,265	HUGS	1,800	983,794