



# Brother Benno's Newsletter

“Uplifting The Dignity of Those We Serve”

Volunteers Making a Difference

March 2021



## BROTHER BENNO'S FACES CHALLENGES REGARDING CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT

by Barbara Ladwig

The City of Oceanside Planning Commission has been looking at Brother Benno's Conditional Use Permit (CUP) since October 2019 in response to complaints from several nearby businesses. These complaints concern loitering, littering, and over-night parking on the street in the business park.

A Standing Committee of the Commission put together their recommended changes to the CUP and presented them at a Zoom meeting on February 8, 2021. In addition to comments and questions from the six Commission members present (there is a total of seven members), 19 additional people spoke, almost all in support of the work done by Brother Benno's. Included in this group were representatives of the League of Women Voters and the ACLU, who strongly urged the Commission to focus on the many benefits provided to the City by Brother Benno's. Several speakers reminded everyone that “We must not criminalize homelessness.”

Over the years, Brother Benno's has been aware of the problems caused by some of the people who come for help, and staff members and volunteers have been diligent in trying to address their neighbors' concerns. Various speakers at the meeting pointed out that helping men and women who are struggling with substance abuse and/or mental illness can be a long-term process, and putting time limits (as suggested in the revised CUP) are not only impossible but often counter-productive.

**Marco Gonzalez**, an attorney who is working pro bono to help Brother Benno's with this issue, wrote this comment to the Senior Planner at the City of Oceanside: “It is the experience of the Brother Benno's staff that 1-year is far too short a

period of time for a chronically homeless individual to negotiate the myriad forms, meetings, and general day-to-day challenges that must be overcome to rise out of homelessness. Indeed, it is not uncommon for individuals to require 3 or more years to get off the streets. Given the impending end of the COVID eviction moratoriums and the likely additional economic pressures until businesses fully reopen, it is more likely than not that we will see significant increase in the need for homeless services, including those as important as providing mail service to receive government assistance checks, applications, appointment notices, and the like.”

One Commission member suggested that the City of Oceanside provide a safe area for over-night parking as other communities have done; the homeless who live in their vehicles do need a place to sleep.

Brother Benno's works regularly with the Oceanside Police Department's HOT Team—two police officers who are specially trained to work with the homeless—a partnership that has produced many successes.

The suggestions from the Standing Committee that were unacceptable to Brother Benno's were deleted, and the Commission voted on the new CUP—three in favor, three against. It was decided that the issue will be brought up again at the Planning Commission meeting on March 8 at 6 p.m. when all members will be present. Anyone wishing to speak at that meeting, please contact **Kathleen Diehlmann**, [kathleen.diehlmann@gmail.com](mailto:kathleen.diehlmann@gmail.com)

## PART-TIME VOLUNTEER NEEDED IN ACCOUNTING

Brother Benno's is looking for a new volunteer for 10-15 hours a week to help in the Accounting Office. We are looking for someone with experience in Accounts Payable, Cash Receipts, QuickBooks Desktop, and M/S Excel. If you are interested in joining our accounting team, please contact **Jim Napier** (760-802-6884) or jim.napier@cox.net

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## PROGRAM MEMBERS HONORED ON VALENTINE'S DAY

by Barbara Ladwig

It's been a tradition at Brother Benno's to celebrate Valentine's Day with a special luncheon for the men and women currently in our Recovery Program. (This year, we have 18 men and two women in the Program.) Even COVID couldn't stop that special event!

The theme, as always, was: "We Will Love You Until You Love Yourself." One volunteer said that addicts usually have very little self-esteem; they feel like they've messed up and aren't worth anything. Brother Benno's doesn't look at them that way, so the theme is meant to help them see that they are worthy of love.

This year's menu included steak and baked potatoes, and it was served on tables covered with tablecloths and Valentine symbols. Colorful bags of treats like home-made candies stood at each place, and big red hearts graced the walls.

Program mentors **Jan Roberts** and **Jimmy Shlemmer** spoke to the group, emphasizing how much the men and women are loved. It's the way **Harold and Kay Kutler** saw everyone who walked through the door, and how—by example—they set the tone for every staff member and volunteer, right up to today.

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## WE DON'T QUIT, WE JUST IMPROVISE

When Covid restrictions required us to close indoor services, rolling racks and bins (and lots of "muscle") made it possible to move the Clothing Room outside.

When rain required us to move again, rolling racks and bins were rolled indoors sharing space with food boxes.

No matter the weather or current restrictions, our Center Clothing Room staff and volunteers help provide homeless men and women with much needed (and appreciated) clothing and essentials. And with your generous donations, we've had lots to share. We couldn't do this without you! Keep those donations coming! Below is a list of current needs...

- women's gently used and new crew socks\* and kneehighs\*
- men's gently used winter jackets and jeans
- men's gently used walking/athletic shoes
- handwarmers\*
- Mylar Thermal Blankets\*

\*have been added to our Amazon Wishlist  
<https://amzn.to/3t8ScPb>

### DONATIONS ARE ACCEPTED AT:

The Brother Benno's Center,  
3260 Production Avenue, Oceanside, CA 92058  
(760) 439-1244

Hours: 6:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. (Monday thru Friday – no donations on Saturdays please)

Questions? Contact **Jan** or **Darryl** at The Brother Benno's Center (760) 439-1244 ext. 102

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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 Jim Napier, (760) 802-6884 or jim.napier@cox.net.

### FROM THE BOOK

In **Harold Kutler's** book, *Soup Soap Hugs Hope, the Story of Brother Benno's Life-Changing Soup Kitchen*, Harold Kutler had a chapter called "Our Recovery Program" in which he told the following story:

As Dolores stood in the boarding area of the airport with her son Ernest, she said to him, "Son, I've done everything I can do for you. Now you have to make it on your own." Mentally she added, God, he's in your hands.

Ernest had been discharged from the Marines a few years earlier but had never quite made the adjustment back to civilian life. His use of alcohol didn't help, nor did his mother's enabling. . . .

Five years went by, and Dolores heard nothing from Ernest, but she kept praying and hoping. To keep him alive in her heart, she started making a quilt she called "The Path." A path led to a circle in the middle, where she planned to place a bird starting to fly. "It would symbolize Ernest being set free to become the person God created him to be," she told us later.

Dolores also shared with us that she was able to work on the quilt only 15 or 20 minutes a day, because any longer was too emotionally painful. By the end of the fourth year, she could no longer bear to look at it and set it aside. But several months later, she felt an urgency to finish it.

Within a few hours of the quilt's completion, a letter arrived . . . from Ernest, reaching out to reconnect with his roots. "I cried and cried," she told us. "I felt like my dead son had come back to life. . . ."

Back in Oceanside, he took up with his old buddies. Having a good time became his number one priority, and soon he was homeless. But eventually he found his way to Brother Benno's Kitchen, where he graduated from our program, then got a job and a place to live. We asked him why he waited five years to contact his mom.

"Well, the first two years I didn't have anything good to tell her," he said. "Then, as I started turning my life around, I was too embarrassed and full of guilt. I'd tell myself, 'next week,' but the weeks turned into months and the months into


years."

It was approaching Mother's Day that finally pushed Ernest into setting aside his fears and writing the letter.

We had the privilege of meeting with mother and son as part of their reunion. Such joy and love flowed during that meeting! I'll never forget it.

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In spring, geese head north, flying in a V formation. As each bird flaps its wings, it reduces wind resistance and cuts an easier path for the bird immediately following, allowing the flock to cover a greater distance than if each bird flew on its own. Basic truth: People who share a common direction and sense of community get where they are going quicker and easier because they travel on the thrust of one another.

**Information & Online donations: [brotherbenno.org](http://brotherbenno.org)**  
**Follow Brother Bennos online:**  
 **[Facebook.com/BrotherBennos](https://www.facebook.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>**

### AUXILIARY NEWS

by Joyce Cerimele

Exciting news! Our first fundraiser at El Pollo Loco restaurants is coming together very nicely, with **Linda Engstrom** at the helm. It'll be on March 24 between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. Please see the article below for all the details. If you have any questions, contact **Joyce** at [jcerimele11@gmail.com](mailto:jcerimele11@gmail.com)

Our Pay It Forward golf event is on track for October 5. Keep watching here in the newsletter and on the Auxiliary website to see how you can take part.

The next Zoom meeting for the Auxiliary will be on March 24 at 1:30 p.m. If you would like to be a guest at the meeting, please contact Joyce (see above) at least one day ahead. mail-to: [jcerimele11@gmail.com](mailto:jcerimele11@gmail.com). And if you're not a member but would like to be, contact **Doris** at [Dnyman5@cox.net](mailto:Dnyman5@cox.net) or 760-941-1737.

Again, we hope you are all staying safe and we can meet our new members in the near future at one of our regular meetings. Be well.

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### Save the Date - El Pollo Loco March Fundraiser

The Brother Benno's Auxiliary is excited to announce an upcoming fundraising event!

Two El Pollo Loco locations will donate 20% of their daily sales to the Brother Benno's Foundation.

Here are the dates and locations:

Wednesday, March 24

10 am - 10 pm

El Pollo Loco Oceanside

**3500 College Blvd.**

English flyer: <https://bit.ly/2ZeeYaB>

Spanish flyer: <https://bit.ly/2LL6apD>

Wednesday, March 24

10 am - 10 pm

El Pollo Loco Oceanside

**483 College Blvd.**

English flyer: <https://bit.ly/3jGnE36>

Spanish flyer: <https://bit.ly/3tRSbQ4>

In order to get the donation for Brother Benno's, customers **MUST** present a copy of the flyer with their purchase. The flyers are available to be downloaded and printed from the links above. Please print your flyer and send this email to all your friends and family so that they can do the same and help contribute to our cause (and enjoy a delicious meal, too!)

Mark the date on your calendars and we hope you will support this easy and delicious fundraiser!

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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.

### 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	Hayward	Margaret Rossini	Frank Beeson
Dixie & Lou Bales	Elizabeth Holms	Ann Sauer	Carreen Golden
Frank Barnet	Dorothy and Walter	Nick Sauer	John Ciganko
Brother Benno	Jellig	Mary Shankle	Jim Severino
Edith Blaiser	Alice Jordan	Naomi Shelton	John Ellis
Andrea Boersma	Ben Kouns	Bernice, Samuel &	Bill Foran
Roland Bond	Richard Kurtz	Milton Silver	Bill Daley
Bill Boster	Carole Kutler	Will Skinner	Lee Hueston
Agnus & Joan Boyd	Harold & Kay Kutler	Ann Grier Smith	Ron Beckman
Bill Buckner	Bill & Louise Lakoff	Alva & Frances	Ream Braegger
Deacon Art & Mary Carr	Ben E. Lewis	Snider	Timothy Diem
Anna Correia	Helen Lucas	Squirrell Family	Alva & Frances
Don & Dorothea Daybell	Bill & Joan Maloney	Mike Stendahl	Snider
Phyllis H. Dierlam	Helene McGill	Margaret Stephan	Andrew Kranz
Frank S. Dolley	Michael & Monty	Virginia Sylwestrzak	Michael Chapa
Anita H. Donahue	Nares	Harold Thompson	Toyoto Avalon
Dorothy M. Donahue	Zeferino & Dancy	Carol & Herb	Gordon Wood
Fr. Luke Dougherty	Nares	Thornberg	Elaine Sauter
Roseanne Dreibelbis	Mary Nordstrom	Rosemary Tucker	Patricia Day
Fr. Abbot Claude	Nysewander Family	Walter Ulloa	Donna Kurtz
Ehringer, OSB	Bud & Blanche Ogle	June Williams	
Myron Eichen	Ben Osgrove	Fred Williamson	<b>Happy Birthday</b>
Richard Farhquar	Kathryn D. Pent	William Pry	Shane Poplowski
William & Vennita	Mary Peterson	Molly Wilbur	Paul & Gina Carlos
Flanagan	Jane Pfau	Bernie Weiler	
Louise Foussat	Ruth Hazel Pierson	Dorothy & Robert	
Joe & Ida Friend	Alan Port	Dow	<b>In Honor Of</b>
Mary Gerrity	Mary Pullman	Bill & Bernadette	Mike McNeil
Bob Gleason	Catherine L. Quinlan	Baer	
Chance Hales	Dora Ramirez	Bill Rego	
Tom & Louise	Dick & Terry Riley	Jeanne St. Amant	

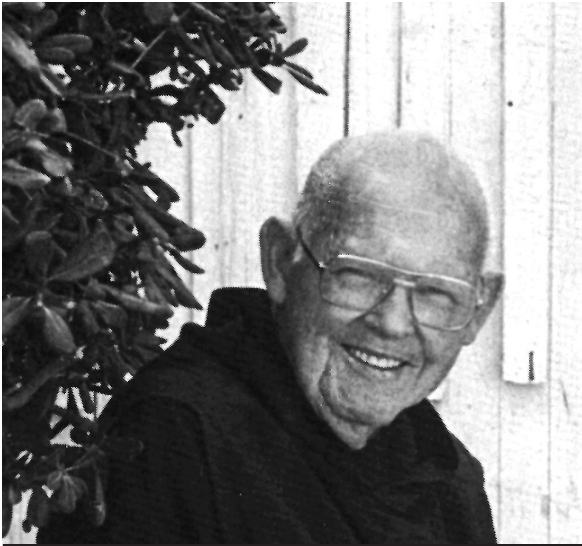
### NEEDS

small bags of chips  
 fruit cups  
 protein bars  
 crackers  
 bottled water  
 small juices  
 Gatorade



**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**

**Store Hours: Wednesday-Saturday 10-5; Donation Hours Tues. & Thurs. 10-2, Saturdays 10-12**

**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 2021	Our 37th Year		January 2021	Our 37th Year
Meals	9,675	4,585,358	Loads of laundry	0	28,628
Nights of lodging	830	325,320	Food packs	528	358,375
Articles of clothing	2,511	1,433,001	Blankets	128	49,226
Showers	0	271,036	Tarps	57	6,285
Haircuts	0	22,827	ID Vouchers	29	10,051
Bus passes	68	86,167	HUGS	0	1,011,244