IT’S ALL ABOUT LOVE AND RELATIONSHIP

That title comes from a sentence our Founder, Harold Kutler, used to say. He believed we never know what someone is really going through until we spend some time with them and get to know them.

We now have San Diego County welfare workers coming into our Outreach Center every Tuesday and Thursday. They are doing a great job. Our Brother Benno Volunteer Case Workers support them in any way they can. Here is an example:

A few weeks ago, “Hank” walked in and asked to see a welfare worker. While he was talking with the social worker, he mentioned that he really wants to change his life and wants to stop drinking. The social worker reached out to our Community Outreach Team while Hank was still in her office. One of our Team members went to the office, asked our new friend a few questions and shared some of his own trials so that he would understand that we know how he feels. He then asked Hank if he was willing to go to a ten-day detox center. He said yes, so our Team member called for Doug, our “specialist.”

Doug has been volunteering in our Outreach Center for several years, helping and serving our poor and homeless community. He is always ready to drop anything he is doing in order to give one of our Guests a ride to an appointment or other service. His LOVE for others is felt by those he serves. Doug also went through the Brother Benno Recovery Program himself years ago, so he knows and can RELATE to folks who want to get sober.

Doug also volunteers regularly at the First Step House in Carlsbad, a ten-day detox program that many people have gone through and where they found a beginning to a new and purposeful life. Most important is that Doug begins a friendship of trust with the new person during his time with them. This friendship is sometimes the beginning of a life-long relationship.

Guess what . . . Hank was accepted into the Brother Benno Recovery Program a few days ago, and he looks so alive! When the Outreach Team member who had initiated the meeting with him and Doug saw Hank, he knew he looked familiar and was amazed when he realized it was the same person he’d met ten days earlier. What a transformation in such a short time!

Now is the time for Hank to begin his new journey at the Brother Benno Center. We hope he does well and finds what many others have found here at our little “Soup Kitchen” these last four decades: SOUP, SOAP, HUGS, and HOPE.

(Editor’s Note: the writer of this article prefers to remain anonymous.)
HAROLD’S WORDS CONTINUE TO INSPIRE VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF

(This article was first published in our newsletter of December 2018 and continues to be relevant today.)

In Harold Kutler’s book, Soup Soap Hugs Hope, the Story of Brother Benno’s Life-Changing Soup Kitchen, he continually stressed the importance of treating the people who come to us for help in a loving and respectful way. That starts with calling them Guests instead of clients, and it ends only when they no longer need our services. This excerpt from the book is typical of Harold’s thinking:

“Even though the Brother Benno Center is housed in a huge warehouse, the inside looks more like a party place. Color is everywhere. Decorations appropriate to the season or holiday draw you in . . .

“Everything is clean—the food-serving area, the tables, the floor. People hug and smile and laugh. Music plays—quietly in the background or right up front. . . Table coverings in the dining room are the extra touch that say: ‘You are our Guest.’

“Kay sings to the Guests—tender songs like ‘May the Good Lord Bless and Keep You’ or rousers such as ‘I’m Just Wild About Harry!* . . .

“The grandest party of all is Christmas, which we celebrate—not once, but twice a year—in December and July. The dining room bursts with color and warmth, but now the warehouse has been transformed as well. As adults and children walk into Santa’s Village, they are overwhelmed by a wall of 1,500 stuffed animals. ** (Their) last stop is our jolly Santa. He gives them candy, but his sweetest gifts are his cheery Ho-Ho-Ho’s.”

*Harold’s wife Kay died in February 2012, but recordings of her songs are often played for our Guests.

** With COVID restrictions, some things have changed, but the spirit remains.
This month we are shining the spotlight on Gregg Alan Prather (PRAY-ther), the Director of Facilities for the Brother Benno Foundation. He has been doing work for the Foundation for about 21 years and has been on the Board of Directors since 2020.

Over the years, Gregg has volunteered to be a sponsor for several men in our Recovery Program for alcoholism and drug addiction. As a sponsor, he is a mentor who guides the folks as they go through the program. Gregg himself recovered from such addictions when he was in our Program many years ago.

Gregg is a skilled electrician and has done various work and repairs on Brother Benno facilities. He created and built spaces for staff and volunteers so they can do their jobs more easily. The facilities include the Brother Benno Center, Food Pantry, Brother Benno Thrift Shop, and seven single-family homes that house the folks in our Recovery Program.

Gregg was born in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, 59 years ago and is the second of five children. His father was a captain in the U.S. Marine Corps. When his older brother passed away, Gregg assumed the role of the eldest child. He grew up in Oceanside and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Economics from UC Santa Barbara.

Gregg is currently doing a special project at the Center and is very excited about it—making a new stainless steel serving line that will modernize the current line, making it more sanitary and food-safe. He will also be creating a scullery as part of this project, which is scheduled for completion this summer.

In addition to volunteer work for the Foundation, Gregg works full-time as an Electrician for the University of California San Diego (UCSD). He has held other jobs such as a bookkeeper and a substitute teacher at Oceanside and Escondido junior high schools. He enjoys backpacking and taking his nieces and nephews through the Sierra Nevada and Anza Borrego Desert.

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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)_____________________

The Brother Benno Foundation
PO Box 308
Oceanside CA 92049

Or, donate online at http://brotherbenno.org
Benno’s

This place they call Benno’s of which I’m a part has cleansed my soul and opened my heart. To think this all started with two gracious men whose love and whose kindness we freely extend.

A hand up not hand out would become the creed for so many families and people in need. When they come in we see the despair we clothe and we feed and show them we care. To give them some hope with respect and a smile things they might not have had for a while.

So how does this blessing continue to grow from the unselfish kindness of so many we know.

For without the donor or caring volunteer this thing that was started would all disappear.

God put us together it’s not just by chance for he plays the music and we merely dance.

So thank you to Benno’s for this new start for filling my soul and touching my heart.

–by a Thankful Program Member

Kathleen Diehlmann, Foundation Board President, said this about Gregg: “My father, Nick Sauer, (a long-time Board member until his death in 2019) always referred to Gregg as the “poster boy” of Brother Benno’s and its recovery program. When I came on the Board, I felt compelled to ask Gregg if he would be willing to become a Board member. I believe, although we never discussed it, that I would be honoring my father’s wishes. Gregg has been an incredible asset to the Brother Benno Foundation and its Board of Directors. He manages our facilities and understands the needs of our Guests, Program Members, and Staff. He is one of the kindest and most compassionate people that I know. Gregg is a great person to ask for advice and guidance. He is measured and thoughtful. Brother Benno’s is truly fortunate to have such a dedicated volunteer.”

Ω

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
Follow Brother Bennos online:
facebook.com/brotherbenno

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


Happy Birthday
Shane Poplawski

Needs
Gently used furniture  Blankets  Adult Unisex Diapers  Baseball caps

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<tr>
<th>March 2022</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>St. Elizabeth Seton #1</td>
<td>1 St. John The Evangelist</td>
<td>2 Juanita's Team</td>
<td>3 Oceanside Pacific Kiwanis</td>
<td>4 San Luis Rey Mission</td>
<td>5 St. Thomas Moore</td>
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<td>Monthly</td>
<td>8 Riverview Church</td>
<td>9 Rotary Clubs of Carlsbad</td>
<td>10 Open</td>
<td>11 St. Patrick's</td>
<td>12 La Costa Valley Volunteers</td>
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<td>Serving</td>
<td>14 North Coast Methodist</td>
<td>15 Christ The King Church</td>
<td>16 Nita's Team</td>
<td>17 Open</td>
<td>18 St. Elizabeth Seton #2</td>
<td>19 Girlfriend’s Care</td>
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<td>22 Rotary Club of Vista</td>
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<td>25 Open</td>
<td>26 Catholic Daughters &amp; Dina Ahee Group</td>
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<td>Schedule</td>
<td>28 Servers R Us</td>
<td>29 Women’s Club of Oceanside</td>
<td>30 Soroptomist International</td>
<td>31 Brother Benno Thrift Shop</td>
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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 Thrift Shop
(Helping the poor, one sale at a time)
Clothing, Household Goods, Furniture
Store Hours: Wednesday-Saturday 10-5; Donation Hours Tues or Thurs 10-2, Saturdays 10-Noon
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

www.brotherbenno.org

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

Brother Benno’s Services:

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<th>January 2022</th>
<th>Our 38th Year</th>
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Mission Ave.
3260 Production Ave
Oceanside, CA 92058
(760) 439-1244