TAX LAWS REQUIRE CHANGES AT BROTHER BENNO’S

Dear Loyal Friends and Supporters,

It’s been said that the only thing certain in this life is change, and The Brother Benno Foundation is no exception. For the past 30 years, we have made every effort to stay basically an all-volunteer organization. We know that’s important to you, because it stretches your donated gifts; and it’s important to us for the very same reason.

Over the years, Brother Benno’s has been able to avoid the hiring of employees by offering things such as free housing and stipends to those dedicated people in our Servants of the Poor program and to some of our Recovery Program staff. And of course, our thousands of loyal volunteers over the years have been the very backbone of our entire mission; and they will continue to be for many years to come. This is what Brother Benno’s is about, and that will not change.

In recent years, tax laws and what qualifies people as employees has changed for non-profit organizations. We believe in 100 percent transparency with our supporters, which is the reason for this letter. As of the end of 2013, we were required to make our Servants of the Poor and our Recovery Program staff official employees. This was a more than difficult decision for us, but there was no alternative if we were to keep our non-profit status and keep our doors open to continue to assist the poor on your behalf.

Looking forward, it’s our goal, through attrition, to find ways to incorporate volunteers into most of the current employee-type positions so that we can get back to our original mission of being as volunteer-oriented as possible. And while this may take some time, we know it’s possible and are planning accordingly. Our goal is to have as many volunteers and as few employees as possible, while still running the Foundation in a responsible manner.

Thank you for your continued support and concern for the poor while we make this transition.

Harold Kutler, Founder, and The Brother Bennos Board of Directors

EXPERIENCED VOLUNTEER GRANT WRITERS NEEDED

The Brother Benno Foundation is seeking to expand its financial support from public and private grants. We need a volunteer (or two) who have past experience in writing grant applications. Much of the work can be done at home; however, office space, computer, and past grant applications are available at the Brother Benno Center.

It is our hope that new grants can be found to help the homeless and others in need. If you are interested, please contact Denise, our Volunteer Coordinator (760-439-1244, ext. 107).

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Seven Marines pitch in at the Brother Benno Thrift Shop.
So Thankful! Mary Holguin in our case management office had an out-of-the-ordinary opportunity to serve recently. An Afghan woman with a husband and four children (12, 9, 6, and 3 months) came in as a last resort, after trying to get help from other agencies. They had been in this country about three months, and it was soon obvious to them that the United States was not the land of immediate success they had been led to believe.

The woman had worked for the U.S. government in Afghanistan, and her husband was a doctor. He had assumed that finding employment would be relatively easy, but that was not the case, and he was continuing to look for work. They had enough money when they arrived in the United States to rent an apartment, but not enough to furnish it. The entire family was sleeping on the floor, wrapped up in their jackets.

Brother Benno’s was able to give them some basic furniture and kitchen supplies, clothing, diapers, and food. When the woman was told that these items would be delivered to their apartment, she told Mary, “My God, this is humanity!”

She came back two weeks later to thank Mary again, and to tell her that her husband now had several job interviews set up. “It was like Christmas in March when everything was delivered!” she said. “We are all so thankful for everything! I will pray for you.”

Another Outreach Project. As noted in the Auxiliary News this month, Brother Benno’s was the recipient of financial help from Blanchard for Others, an outreach of The Blanchard Companies. When Vikki Ramey and Vera Bayliss approached Blanchard for Others to ask them to be a sponsor for this year’s Annual Luncheon, they learned that the organization could no longer assist in that way, but they would be happy to contribute to projects for the Women’s Houses. One of the most pressing needs was the replacement of a fence that had blown down in a recent storm; and thanks to the Blanchard people, a new fence is now in place, built by Patrick Ivison of PJI Handy Service.

Reminder. Have you put November 1 on your calendar for the Auxiliary’s Annual Luncheon? See page 4 for more information.

Options. Every once in a while we like to remind our readers about the options you have regarding the newsletter. You can receive it as a paper copy in the mail or as an email. If you now get it in the mail but would like to switch to email, simply send an email to brotherbennos@gmail.com and include your name and mailing address in order to help us identify you correctly.

We also have some donors who prefer not to receive a thank-you card or letter for each donation. If you’d like to be added to that list, please write a note to that effect and send it along with your next check. As always, we continue to appreciate you, even if we’re not sending you a notice.

And finally, you can still check us out or make donations online any time you wish. It’s brotherbenno.org.

Vikki Ramey, Vera Bayliss, and Blanchard committee members Cassie Johnson, Pamela Langness, Natalie Merrill, and Judy Fisher.
MENTORS SHARE THE JOURNEY OF THE FOUNDATION’S RECOVERY PROGRAM

The Brother Benno Foundation has been helping people who suffer from alcohol and drug addictions almost since the beginning of the Foundation in 1983, and that help has taken many twists and turns as it has evolved over the years. Eight men and one woman are now mentors in our Men’s and Women’s Recovery programs, a group that also includes two Board members whose responsibility it is to oversee every aspect of recovery. They meet weekly to discuss concerns they might have with their own recovery and also any problems that have arisen with the other men and women in the Program.

This mentoring group wants to share with you, our friends and supporters, what it’s been like for them to make the journey that continues to call them to accept the fact that it’s still “one day at a time” and always will be; and how they are now reaching out to other men and women who are in the midst of their own recovery process.

The Twelve Step Program of AA is now the fundamental underpinning of the entire process. “Everything we need is in the Twelve Steps,” said one man. “All Brother Benno’s does is offer support to those working the Twelve Steps. And then you must give it away.”

“You must give it away” is actually the Twelfth Step, and it was echoed by all in this mentoring group. Giving it away means they have to reach out to others who are still in need of help. This is done by regular attendance at AA meetings; and in the case of Brother Benno’s Recovery Program, it also plays a huge part in the day-to-day living in the Foundation’s recovery houses. No matter which stage of recovery a man might be in, he knows there’s always somebody nearby to talk to when he needs guidance and support.

This kind of help is also available to the women at our House of Dorothy Barbara Rosemary and Joan (DBRJ); the difference is that they have already completed a recovery program elsewhere and are now in a sober-living environment, preparing to go out on their own.

A recent change in the Men’s Program has to do with leadership. “We have evolved from a top-down hierarchy of command to shared responsibility,” said one of the men. “Our only leader is God. Now we’re more loving instead of punishing. It’s a collaborative effort.” They mentioned that they still have rules; that’s necessary if people are going to live together and get along. And it prepares them for the real world, where every aspect of life is governed to one degree or another by rules. But the focus has shifted from rules to recovery, and from one leader at the top to the shared leadership of the mentoring group.

Tradition 2 of AA states: “For our group purpose, there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as he may express himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants. They do not govern.”

The Men’s Recovery Program is set up in two phases over a six-month period. Phase One lasts three months and is the most strict of the phases. The men get an AA sponsor in the first couple weeks and attend seven AA meetings plus six House meetings a week. They keep a daily journal of their personal recovery. They are either at their House or working at the Center every day except Sunday, when they are taken as a group to an Oceanside park for a short visit with their families. They also get two 10-minute phone conversations with family members and their sponsor every day.

Phase Two is also for three months. These men can leave their House one day a week for eight hours, but they must check in by phone every two to three hours. During this time, they are encouraged to look into possible employment opportunities, spend time with their sponsor, go to outside meetings or the library. They work at the Center five days a week instead of six. As in Phase One, they are learning (or relearning) social skills, such as how to get along with the other men in their House; and they must always keep Recovery as their number one priority.

After the successful completion of Phases One and Two, a man “graduates” from the Brother Benno Recovery Program.

continued on page 4....
Thanks to everyone who attended the Prince of Peace Abbey event on May 1. It was a delightful and inspiring day, a great outing without having to work for a change.

Our next event will be the Outback Lunch on Wednesday, July 30, and we are still looking for a chairperson to head up this fundraiser. It’s an easy challenge, as we always have lots of help to make the job as easy as possible.

Save the date for our Broadway Theater outing—September 28. We will be seeing a play called “Shaken Not Stirred.” More details as it gets closer.

Our Annual Luncheon will be on Saturday, November 1, so please mark your calendars. Our chairpersons will need lots of help, as this is our biggest fundraiser. It is very important for everyone to sell tickets, so start early, and mention it to your friends and relatives.

Blanchard and Company has given us a check to cover all the expenses to fix the fence at one of our Women’s Houses. This was a very important project, and we cannot thank Blanchard enough for their big donation. We have given the check to the Foundation.

Our next meeting is May 28. See you all there.

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AUXILIARY NEWS
by Vera Bayliss

Phase Three is for men who need extra time in a structured sober-living environment, and it can last up to six months. These men must have a full-time job or be actively looking for one, and they continue to attend at least five AA meetings a week. They pay rent, and they have to save at least 50 percent of their pay every month. During this time, they can visit with family members and friends as they wish. One of the men put it this way: “They learn how to live life, no matter what happens. They learn to live life on life’s terms, how to deal with people, get mature, and clean up the wreckage of their past.”

A poignant remark made by one of the mentors seems to sum up the reasons why they are so grateful for the help they’ve received at Brother Benno’s: “For those of us who hit bottom, (we come to realize that continuing in our addiction) means that our future is either a mental institution, jail, or death.”

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

Information & Online donations: brotherbenno.org

Follow Brother Bennos online:
Facebook.com/BrotherBennos
Twitter.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___________________________________       Donation $______________
Address_________________________________
City, State, Zip Code___________________
Number of copies__________

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Memorials

Brother Benno  Jane Pfau  Tom Hayward  Helene McGill
Pope John Paul II  Ron Alexander  Richard Kurtz  Andrea Boersma
Mother Teresa  Mary Peterson  Helen Lucas  Ben Osgrove
Kay Kutler  Frank Barnet  Bill & Joan Maloney  William & Vennita
Ann Sauer  Frank S. Dolley  Dora Ramirez  Flanagan
Joe & Ida Friend  Phyllis H. Dierlam  Dick & Terry Riley  Bessie Silver
Mary Nordstrom  Monty Nares  Bill Buckner  Alan Port
Myron Eichen  Margaret Rossini  Mary Shankle  Bobby King
Alice Jordan  Dorothy M. Donahue  Walter Ulloa  Bernie Weiler
Roseanne Dreibelbis  Mary Teresa Carr  Fred Williamson  Eleonore Kloepfer
Richard Farquhar  Ruth Hazel Pierson  Carole Kutler  Squirrel Family
Deacon Art & Mary Carr  Elizabeth Holmes  Will Skinner  Nysewander Family
Don & Dorothea Daybell  Edith Blaiser  Fr. Abbot Claude  Harry & Jaundice
Catherine L. Quinlan  Ben Kouns  Ehringer, OSB  Kathryn F. Apaitie
Kathryn D. Pent  Bill Lakoff  Fr. Luke Dougherty  James Johnson
Mary Pullman  Bernice, Samuel &  Naomi Shelton  Rose & Floyd
Joan Boyd  Milton Silver  Rosemary Tucker  Caldwell
Agnus Boyd  Anita H. Donahue  Ben E. Lewis  Dorothy Barnell
Harold Thompson  Margaret Stephan  Roland Bond
Bud & Blanche Ogle  Bill Boster  Anna Correia
Bob Gleason  Louise Foussat  Geraldine Howard

Needs

Gently used furniture  Diapers  Bags of rice and beans
Razors...disposable  Tarps...9x12 is our usual size but appreciate all
Water bottles for individual drinking  women’s personal hygiene items
Coffee...regular grind not instant

May

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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

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| (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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