

# Brother Benno's Newsletter

“Uplifting The Dignity of Those We Serve”

Volunteers Making a Difference

May 2022



## THE POWER OF A SHOWER

By Kathleen Diehlmann

If you stop by the Brother Benno Center, you might notice a trailer outside emblazoned with the words “Humanity Showers.” **Jordan Verdin** leads this nonprofit organization that provides shower trailers to various locations in Southern California. Their outreach includes providing showers on Skid Row in Los Angeles, and recently they have offered showers to Ukrainian refugees in San Diego.



**Jordan Verdin**

“It’s an honor to work alongside and learn from the Brother Benno Foundation,” says Jordan. “I’ve looked up to (Brother Benno’s) since I was a child.” He explained that it is his nonprofit’s mission to uplift humanity, a mission shared by the Brother Benno Foundation.

Brother Benno’s and Humanity Showers began working together during the pandemic to address indoor restrictions, and we continue this partnership today. Showers are offered to our Guests on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday in the Humanity Showers trailer. Each Guest

can take a private shower in the six-stall trailer and is provided with a towel and other bath products.

In March, 658 showers were provided, and another 386 showers as of April 18. Our Guests say a shower makes them feel like a human being. While at the showers, they are also provided supportive services from Brother Benno’s Community Outreach Team and essential service teams.

Humanity Showers employs homeless individuals to help with cleaning and administration of the showers at Brother Benno’s. **Keith Boyd** oversees the workers at the Brother Benno Center. “Humanity Showers is a group effort,” Keith explains. “We’re just ordinary people trying to do something a bit extraordinary. While on the face of things it’s about hygiene and health, what it is really about is coming together with our brothers and sisters and seeing what we can do to help each other. We all feel that it’s an honor to be of service, and we appreciate this partnership with Brother Benno’s.”



Brother Benno’s and Humanity Showers are grateful for the donation of bath towels for showers. We continue to need towels and other shower supplies to support this effort.

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## SCHOLARSHIPS ARE GIVEN TO STUDENTS AT TWO COLLEGES

By Joe McDevitt

For the last several years, Brother Benno's has been grateful for the assistance provided by the Extended Opportunities Programs & Service (EOPS) Office at MiraCosta College in helping us manage our scholarship program that offers financial aid each semester to low-income students, sometimes homeless students, and students impacted by substance abuse. EOPS is a state-funded program designed for the orientation, recruitment, and retention of California residents who are economically, socially, and educationally disadvantaged. EOPS assists students in reaching their educational goals through academic support and financial assistance.

Based on the success of this scholarship program at MiraCosta College, Brother Benno's reached out to the EOPS office at Palomar College to extend these scholarship opportunities. With their enthusiastic assistance, we are pleased to report that scholarships were awarded to 19 EOPS students attending Palomar College in the total amount of \$9,500. Scholarships in the amount of \$10,000 were also awarded to 20 students at MiraCosta College.

Our volunteer Scholarship Committee, composed of **Belinda Smith, Suzy Martinek, and Jim O'Connell**, are encouraged by the students enrolled in the EOPS programs at both colleges who are determined to progress with their education and achieve career goals. They are impressed with the students' enthusiasm to succeed and their commitment to overcome obstacles. One scholarship recipient shared in his thank you letter the following: "This scholarship will continue to motivate me to do well in school and throughout my community. I am very honored to be awarded this scholarship. I'd like to thank you once again for everything. I will be using this money to support my academic journey."

We are looking forward to offering new scholarships in the 2022 fall semester.

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**The Easter Bunny welcoming our Thrift Store Customers**

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.



## SPOTLIGHT: MEET DENNIS PINNICK

By Barbara Ladwig

**Dennis** became a member of the Brother Benno “family” like so many others before and after him. He graduated from the Recovery Program and started volunteering shortly after that. But it almost didn't happen.



Men and women who come to Brother Benno's with the hope of ridding their lives of an addiction are interviewed and assessed before being accepted. Hopefully, once they've completed the six-month Program, they are well on their way to a new lease on life. Occasionally, however, some of them relapse, and they come back to try again. Dennis did that—and then he did it again.

After graduating from his first Program in 1999, he did well for about a year, then relapsed. He came back and tried again. When he went back to drugs following some serious difficulties in his life, it seemed futile to accept him for yet another try; those making the assessment turned him down. But Dennis didn't give up. He had gotten to know **Harold Kutler** quite well by this time, so he appealed to him to trust that this time he'd make it stick. Harold gave him that chance, and in 2010 Dennis started his journey into becoming a trust-

ed and valuable member of the Brother Benno family.

Dennis grew up in a poor section of L.A., where everyone he knew was just looking out for himself. He was in and out of prison on drug charges for many years. When he eventually came before a judge in North San Diego County who was ready to send him back to prison, Dennis asked for another chance, telling the judge that he was about to enter his third Recovery Program at Brother Benno's. The judge told him, “I don't know you very well, but I know Brother Benno's,” and he granted Dennis what turned out to be what he needed to finally get his life under control.

As with all Program members, Dennis did a variety of jobs around the Center. One of his favorite duties was helping **Kay Kutler** during her morning songs-and-hugs routine with everyone who came through the food serving line. “She was already experiencing some of the side effects of Parkinson's,” Dennis said, “so I was on hand to be sure she didn't fall.” Anyone who knew Kay knows that just being in her presence was a privilege and a joy.

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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:

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For a special occasion (birthday, anniversary, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

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**The Brother Benno Foundation**  
**PO Box 308**  
**Oceanside CA 92049**

Or, donate online at <http://brotherbenno.org>

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"She hugged everyone," Dennis said, "no matter how dirty and smelly they were. Watching her, I learned how to be kind, how to be of service, with no expectation of reward."

But the rewards came over time, as Dennis also spent more time with Harold. "From him I learned to be grateful that I was 'allowed' to be of service, that serving others is a gift for the giver," he said.

At that time, Brother Benno's had a program called Servants of the Poor, for volunteers who pledged a minimum of one year of service in a specific area. Although Recovery Program Members weren't usually eligible for this program, Harold made an exception with Dennis. "He saw that I had a good rapport with the Guests," Dennis said with a smile, "so he gave me all the really tough cases."

And that's pretty much what Dennis does these days as Community Outreach Coordinator, overseeing six other volunteers. "Thanks to Harold, I understand that we are 'human beings, not human doings; and he taught me how to be 'in relationship' with others, both volunteers and Guests. I'm not the boss, we are all working together," he said.

Before Dennis was able to finally put his addictions behind him, he had married and fathered two children. Eventually his wife divorced him, and his son died of drug-related complications, but his daughter is a very important part of his life. "She's 18 now, a university freshman," he said. "We talk on the phone every week, and I've been able to spend time with her on many occasions."

One of those times was three years ago, when Dennis suffered a massive heart attack. "I drove myself to the emergency room, then died twice and was revived both times within a period of seven minutes," he said. No one expected him to survive. A good friend quickly arranged for his daughter to fly in and spend time with her dad. And little by little, he began to improve. After many months of rehab, Dennis was able to return to Brother Benno's and gradually pick up where he had left off.

*(Editor's note: Brother Benno's staff and volunteers believe that no one is a lost cause. If we're willing to put in the time and give of ourselves, we are almost certain to experience what others might call a miracle. Dennis Pinnick is the poster child for that belief.)*

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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:**  
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**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...

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**Memorials**

- |                        |                      |                      |                       |
|------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Ron Alexander          | Bob Gleason          | Jane Pfau            | Fred Williamson       |
| Dixie & Lou Bales      | Chance Hales         | Ruth Hazel Pierson   | H. Edward Smith       |
| Frank Barnet           | Tom & Louise         | Alan Port            | Family                |
| Brother Benno          | Hayward              | Mary Pullman         | Nick Jellison         |
| Edith Blaiser          | Elizabeth Holms      | Catherine L. Quinlan | Lou Ann McCartney     |
| Andrea Boersma         | John Jarvie          | Dora Ramirez         | Andrew & Jane         |
| Roland Bond            | Dorothy and Walter   | Dick & Terry Riley   | Yandura               |
| Bill Boster            | Jellig               | Margaret Rossini     | Peggy & Beverly       |
| Agnus & Joan Boyd      | Alice Jordan         | Ann Sauer            | Mivile                |
| Bill Buckner           | Ben Kouns            | Nick Sauer           | Donna & Gilbert       |
| Deacon Art & Mary Carr | Richard Kurtz        | Mary Shankle         | Brown                 |
| Anna Correia           | Carole Kutler        | Naomi Shelton        |                       |
| Don & Dorothea Daybell | Harold & Kay Kutler  | Bernice, Samuel &    | <b>Happy Birthday</b> |
| Phyllis H. Dierlam     | Bill & Louise Lakoff | Milton Silver        | Hollis King           |
| Frank S. Dolley        | Ben & Ozelle Lewis   | Will Skinner         |                       |
| Anita H. Donahue       | Helen Lucas          | Ann Grier Smith      |                       |
| Dorothy M. Donahue     | Bill & Joan Maloney  | Alva & Frances       |                       |
| Fr. Luke Dougherty     | Helene McGill        | Snider               |                       |
| Roseanne Dreibelbis    | Monty, Natalie, &    | Squirrell Family     |                       |
| Fr. Abbot Claude       | Michael Nares        | Mike Stendahl        |                       |
| Ehringer, OSB          | Zeferino & Dancy     | Margaret Stephan     |                       |
| Myron Eichen           | Nares                | Virginia Sylwestrzak |                       |
| Richard Farhquar       | Mary Nordstrom       | Harold Thompson      |                       |
| William & Vennita      | Nysewander Family    | Carol & Herb         |                       |
| Flanagan               | Bud & Blanche Ogle   | Thornberg            |                       |
| Louise Foussat         | Ben Osgrove          | Rosemary Tucker      |                       |
| Joe & Ida Friend       | Kathryn D. Pent      | Walter Ulloa         |                       |
| Mary Gerrity           | Mary Peterson        | June Williams        |                       |

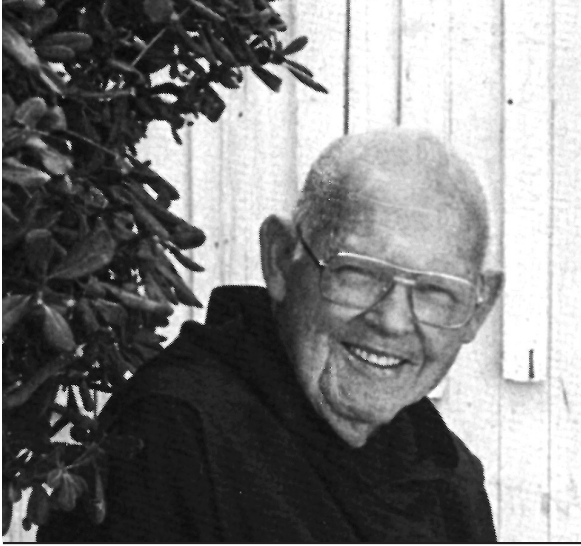
**Needs**

- |                       |                      |               |
|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Gently used furniture | Blankets             | Baseball caps |
| Diapers size 5 and 6  | Adult Unisex Diapers |               |

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>May</b>	<b>2</b> St. Elizabeth Seton #1	<b>3</b> St. John The Evangelist	<b>4</b> Juanita's Team	<b>5</b> Oceanside Pacific Kiwanis	<b>6</b> San Luis Rey Mission	<b>7</b> St. Thomas Moore
<b>2022</b>	<b>9</b> North Coast Methodist	<b>10</b> Riverview Church	<b>11</b> Rotary Clubs of Carlsbad	<b>12</b> Open	<b>13</b> St. Patrick's	<b>14</b> La Costa Valley Volunteers
<b>Monthly</b>	<b>16</b> Sunrise Kiwanis of Vista	<b>17</b> Christ The King Church	<b>18</b> Friends of Brother Benno	<b>19</b> Ernest Packaging	<b>20</b> St. Elizabeth Seton #2	<b>21</b> Girlfriend's Care
<b>Serving</b>	<b>23</b> Servers R Us	<b>24</b> Rotary Club of Vista	<b>25</b> San Luis Rey Methodist	<b>26</b> Open	<b>27</b> Open	<b>28</b> Catholic Daughters & Ahee Group
<b>Team</b>	<b>30</b> Oceanside Pacific Kiwanis	<b>31</b> Women's Club of Oceanside				
<b>Schedule</b>						

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

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**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**

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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](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 seven recovery and sober living 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.

**Please Note Our Mailing address:**

The Brother Benno Foundation  
Post Office Box 308  
Oceanside, CA 92049-0308

**If you wish to drop off donations or deliver donations in person, our physical address is:**

3260 Production Avenue  
Oceanside, CA 92058

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

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**Brother Benno's Services:**

	March 2022	Our 38th Year		March 2022	Our 38th Year
Meals	7,170	4,699,271	Loads of laundry	0	28,628
Nights of lodging	1,000	337,658	Food packs	1,155	367,682
Articles of clothing	3,111	1,474,147	Blankets	136	50,733
Showers	616	273,893	Tarps	68	6,898
Haircuts	0	23,357	ID Vouchers	20	10,412
Bus passes	159	87,414	HUGS	0	1,011,244

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