A TINY ROOM, A HUGE PURPOSE
by Helen Parsons

Eight years ago, Brother Benno’s started a reading program for the children of our Guests. After the 10 a.m. meal on Saturdays, children are invited to come into this room and either read to one of our volunteers, or be read to. Each child chooses a book to take home “for keeps,” and also a small toy from the treasure chest.

We’ve had many devoted volunteers through the years. Jocelyn Shannon, a teacher, has been there since the beginning. Two of the children she helped were sister and brother Mireya and Jose Cervantes. They started in the reading room when they were 8 and 10. Not only did they love books, but they also became volunteers themselves, helping other children to read. Mireya could often be found helping in the clothing room, too. Her loving ways were a God-wink for our Guests. Jose was especially patient with two boys who thrived on the extra attention. How many teens give up their Saturdays to make life better for those in need?

Now the two siblings are in college, and Mireya will be going to Hong Kong for a year of studies. So what made these children decide to break the poverty chain and seek an education?

In his book, Soup Soap Hugs Hope, The Story of Brother Benno’s Life-Changing Soup Kitchen, Harold Kutler addressed two often-asked questions. The first question had to do with screening those who came to the Kitchen:

“Do you screen the people who come into your Kitchen to make sure you keep the freeloaders out?”

“We looked to Jesus for our answer. When He fed 5,000 people with the miracle of the loaves and fishes, He didn’t tell His disciples to screen the people first. Being ripped off or taken advantage of didn’t concern Him. Anyone who appeared to be an opportunist was needy in some way. He had come to heal those who were hurting for whatever reason.

“The second question concerned proselytizing our Guests:

“During the early days, a Guest would often ask, ‘When do you give the sermon?’ I admit I was tempted, because I like to give sermons. . . but my good judgment won out as I realized these people had already heard it all, and trying to tell them God loved them would have little effect. To me, the most powerful sermon we could preach would be to love and accept them. In that way, God’s loving and caring about them could become believable.

“One of our objectives, after meeting the basic physical and psychological needs of our Guests, is to reawaken their spirituality. We want them to have the opportunity to return to their own faith tradition. If they desire to seek another, that initiative must come from them, not us. We try to lead by example, not persuasion.”

(Harold’s book can be purchased for a donation in any amount, using the order form in this newsletter.)
EXPERIENCING THE BROTHER BENNO SCENE
by Barbara Ladwig

Another Young Giver. Seven-year-old Erika Weickgenant brought $99.54 to the Brother Benno Center on a Saturday in July. “It took one year to save up my $99.54,” she said. “It was from my allowance and birthday money. My sister Casey (age nine) also helped with this donation. She gave $15 of her money.”

Erika and Casey

Erika’s mother Karen told us that Erika had worked very hard to save up that money. “She resisted the temptation of using that money for herself many times,” she said.

When asked why she chose Brother Benno’s for her donation, Erika said she lives in Oceanside and wanted to help the homeless.

Ask and You Shall Receive. Girlfriends Care has once again responded to our needs with a donation of 375 toothbrushes, 440 razors, small and large tubes of toothpaste, and other miscellaneous toiletries.

As we mentioned in our August newsletter, our need for hygiene items is year-round for our homeless Guests as well as the men and women who live in our Houses. We thank the Girlfriends for Caring!

Destruction Turns to Blessing. Someone apparently took out his anger on the front door of the Brother Benno Center. The glass was smashed but there was no sign of entry or stealing. The upside of the event was that two former Program Members—one with ten, the other with twelve years of sobriety—agreed to replace the glass for a charge of $220. “The glass cost $210,” Harold Kutler said, shaking his head in amazement. And we can all do the math. These men said they were happy to do it, to give back to Brother Benno’s for the help they’d received years ago.

Share the Inspiration. Our volunteers often inspire each other by the way they conduct themselves and the extent to which they’ll go in order to help others. Julie Petrie found that inspiration recently when she noticed that Diana Shields was wearing a pair of flip-flops instead of her usual tennis shoes.

A woman had come to the Center in search of shoes. Diana looked through the clothing room, then went out to the warehouse, trying to find shoes that would fit. When she failed to do so, she simply took off her own shoes, tried them on the woman, found them to be a good fit, and gave them away. She then grabbed a pair of flip-flops in the warehouse and went back to work!

Happy Birthday to Harold Kutler! MVP*

Beloved and wise and young enough to play tennis!

(* most valuable person)
IN LOVE WITH BROTHER BENNO’S

When a new volunteer clicks at Brother Benno’s, everyone knows it. That’s what happened three years ago, when Kathy Christensen came on the scene. “She is so in love with us, the place, and those we serve,” said Harold Kutler. “She is amazing. It’s her openness; everything about her says, ‘How can I help you?’”

Kathy laughs when someone asks her what her duties are at the Center. “Anything!” she says, “whatever they ask me to do.” She can often be found helping in the Clothing Room, answering the phone, directing Guests to the various areas, helping Program Members organize their thoughts regarding the contacts they need to make, and getting the process started when someone needs help paying for prescriptions.

She credits her background as a public defender for the State of Wisconsin—a job she held for 18 years—for her affinity with the needy. She believes in guiding people in ways that they can help themselves, rather than just doing it for them. She’ll tell a Guest where to go for further help, but she wants them to make the contact and follow through on their own. “I want to empower them,” she says.

It’s obvious that Kathy’s family is important to her. She met her husband when they were both 16, has three children and three grandchildren ages 11, 7, and 4 months, who live in Alaska, Wisconsin, and Las Vegas. “Our 11-year-old grandson comes from Alaska every summer to spend a month with us,” she said with her contagious grin.

The pluses for Kathy of being involved at Brother Benno’s are the many interactions with Guests, staff, and other volunteers. “It’s a wonderful community here,” she said. The downside is seeing how difficult it is sometimes for people to extricate themselves from their problems, some of which are self-inflicted and some that are beyond their control.

When asked what else she’d like readers to know, Kathy said, “I would like to encourage people to work with those in need, be part of the Brother Benno family. I also appreciate the people who donate money, because I see the good it does. Brother Benno’s is a fantastic steward (of the gifts it receives).”

Harold says that Kathy is in love with Brother Benno’s. Talk to anyone there, and they’ll turn that around—everyone seems to be in love with Kathy.

Ω

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 Vikki Ramey

Back-to-School Backpacks: Thanks to all who came out to assemble and distribute them the weekend of August 10 and 11. Over 400 backpacks were put together with school supplies donated by Auxiliary members. Despite the heat, the kids were thrilled to receive them as they get ready for school.

San Onofre Tour: Thirty-five members and guests visited the site on August 14. Thanks to Debbie Knight for arranging the tour, and to Dr. Eric Goldin, Ralph Herrera, and Dan Cleavenger for their time in teaching us about nuclear power and how the plant benefits our everyday life with electricity.

Shakey’s Pizza Fundraiser: Many members, families, friends, and neighbors came out to enjoy a good meal and make this fundraiser successful. Twenty-five percent of food sales will come back to the Auxiliary.

Annual Luncheon: It will be held on Saturday, December 1, at the Sheraton Carlsbad Resort & Spa. Tickets are $50 per person or $500 for a table. This year’s theme is “Special Hugs” in memory of Kay Kutler. Gather your friends, neighbors, and family and bring your checks to the meeting on September 26 to pick your table.

Ω

Information & Online donations

brotherbenno.org

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


### Needs

- **Diapers**: (All sizes, especially 4 & 5)
- **Adult diapers**
- **Recyclable items**
- **Men’s Shoes and Socks**
- **Men’s underpants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 St. Elizabeth Seton #1</td>
<td>4 St. John The Evangelist</td>
<td>5 Brother Benno’s Auxiliary</td>
<td>6 Oceanside Pacific Kiwanis</td>
<td>7 San Luis Rey Mission</td>
<td>1 St. Thomas More</td>
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<td>2012 Monthly Serving</td>
<td>8 San Raphael</td>
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<td>10 North Coast Methodist</td>
<td>11 Friends from Vista</td>
<td>12 Naval Hospital</td>
<td>13 Oceanside Civitans</td>
<td>14 St. Patrick’s</td>
<td>15 Girlfriend’s Care</td>
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<td>17 Sunrise Kiwanis of Vista</td>
<td>18 Christ the King Lutheran</td>
<td>19 Grace Anglican</td>
<td>20 Carlsbad Rotary</td>
<td>21 St. Elizabeth Seton #2</td>
<td>22 Catholic Daughters</td>
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<td>24 Christ Anglican</td>
<td>25 St. Mark’s San Marcos</td>
<td>26 San Luis Rey Methodist</td>
<td>27 Pilgrim Creek</td>
<td>28 Fallbrook Presbyterian</td>
<td>29 Shiloh Church of God In Christ</td>
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**Brother Benno’s Furniture Sales**

3242-B Production Ave., Oceanside (next to Center) 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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Brother Benno’s Services:

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<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>July 2012</th>
<th>Our 28th Year</th>
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<tr>
<td>Meals</td>
<td>12,942</td>
<td>3,286,952</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nights of lodging</td>
<td>1,063</td>
<td>228,112</td>
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<td>Articles of clothing</td>
<td>6,138</td>
<td>932,315</td>
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<tr>
<td>Showers</td>
<td>1,027</td>
<td>169,500</td>
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<td>Haircuts</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>14,348</td>
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<td>Bus passes</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>75,733</td>
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<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>July 2012</th>
<th>Our 28th Year</th>
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<tr>
<td>Loads of laundry</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>26,148</td>
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<td>Food packs</td>
<td>2,564</td>
<td>200,553</td>
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<td>Blankets</td>
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<td>ID Vouchers</td>
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<td>8,291</td>
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<tr>
<td>HUGS</td>
<td>2,250</td>
<td>831,694</td>
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Our services are the same for everyone without regard to race, religion, national origin, age, sex, or disability.

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The Thrift Shop
3965 Mission Ave. (East of Albertsons) 760-967-7505
Shop open Mon-Sat 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. -- Stop by to check out our Special of the Week Sales!!

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