



Brother Benno's Newsletter

“Uplifting The Dignity of Those We Serve”

Interdenominational Volunteers Making a Difference in This World

September 2012

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? Maybe it was the free books. Maybe it was receiving a small treasure for no reason. But I am convinced it's the unconditional love that each one of our volunteers brings to this little room each Saturday. I believe the children leave feeling better about themselves.

In addition to Jocelyn, Mireya, and Jose, the following people come in one Saturday a month: **Randy Horton, Cheryl LaVerdiere, Gay Roche, Gretchen Koch, and Kate Saart.**

The impact of these volunteers on our little Guests is life-long. They are an essential part of Brother Benno's. Ω

HAROLD'S LOVE AND WISDOM

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.) Ω

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)

Ω

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.

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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) _____

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.

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Information & Online donations

brotherbenno.org



Getting backpacks ready



Saturday morning



San Onofre tour

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

Brother Benno
 Pope John Paul II
 Mother Teresa
 Kay Kutler
 Ann Sauer
 Joe & Ida Friend
 Mary Nordstrom
 Myron Eichen
 Alice Jordan
 Roseanne Dreibelbis
 Richard Farhquar
 Deacon Art & Mary Carr
 Don & Dorothea Daybell
 Catherine L. Quinlan
 Kathryn D. Pent
 Mary Pullman
 Joan Boyd
 Agnus Boyd
 Harold Thompson
 Bud & Blanche Ogle
 Bob Gleason
 Jane Pfau
 Ron Alexander

Mary Peterson
 Frank Barnet
 Frank S. Dolley
 Phyllis H. Dierlam
 Monty Nares
 Margaret Rossini
 Dorothy M. Donahue
 Mary Teresa Carr
 Ruth Hazel Pierson
 Elizabeth Holms
 Edith Blaiser
 Ben Kouns
 Bill Lakoff
 Bernice, Samuel & Milton Silver
 Anita H. Donahue
 Margaret Stephan
 Bill Boster
 Louise Foussat
 Tom Hayward
 Richard Kurtz
 Helen Lucas
 Bill & Joan Maloney

Dora Ramirez
 Dick & Terry Riley
 Bill Buckner
 Mary Shankle
 Walter Ulloa
 Fred Williamson
 Carole Kutler
 Will Skinner
 Fr. Abbot Claude Ehringer, OSB
 Fr. Luke Dougherty
 Naomi Shelton
 Rosemary Tucker
 Ben E. Lewis
 Roland Bond
 Anna Correia
 Geraldine Howard
 Helene McGill
 Mary & Joseph Opatkiewicz
 Andrea Boersma
 Bernie Weiler

Rose & Floyd Caldwell
 PJ & John Daheim
 Gilbert Brown
 William Flanagan
 Josephine & Charles Campbell
 G. Preston
 Jeanne Nickel
 Ream Braegger
 Agatha Johnson
 Stanley LaMonte
 Zeferino & Dancy Nares
 Mike Stendahl
 Edward Zincavage
 Alice Condren
 Robert Stauber III

Happy Anniversary
 Gerald & Lind Riley

Needs

Diapers (All sizes, especially 4 & 5)
 Men's Shoes and Socks

Adult diapers
 Men's underpants

Recyclable items

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

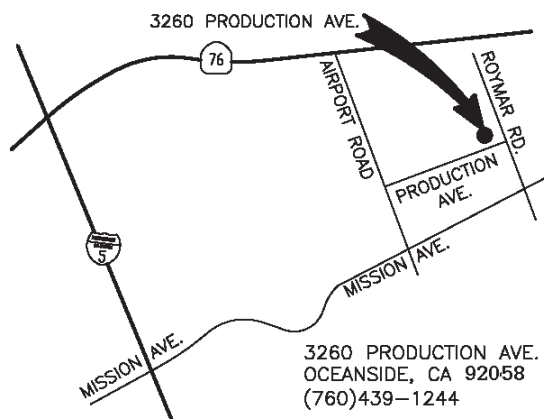
Brother Benno's Furniture Sales

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



Brother Benno's Services:

	July 2012	Our 28th Year		July 2012	Our 28th Year
Meals	12,942	3,286,952	Loads of laundry	28	26,148
Nights of lodging	1,063	228,112	Food packs	2,564	200,553
Articles of clothing	6,138	932,315	Blankets	102	33,250
Showers	1,027	169,500	Prescriptions	12	7,057
Haircuts	142	14,348	ID Vouchers	8	8,291
Bus passes	61	75,733	HUGS	2,250	831,694

*Our services are the same for everyone
without regard to race, religion, national origin, age, sex, or disability.*

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!!

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

Non-Profit Organization
**U.S. POSTAGE
PAID**
Oceanside, California
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