



VOLUNTEERS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

BROTHER BENNO'S NEWSLETTER

Uplifting the Dignity of Those We Serve

MAY 2024



LENDING A HELPING HAND SOUTH OF THE BORDER

BY STEVE OETTING

Partnering with St. Elizabeth Seton Church, representatives of Brother Benno's delivered and provided food to the Nazareth Orphanage in Tecate, Mexico.

On March 23rd, **Elias Velazquez** (Brother Benno's new Volunteer Coordinator) and his girlfriend **Melisa Martinez** (a grant writer for Brother Benno's) loaded up a pickup truck and a Jeep and together with **Dennis Ofcacek**, (St. Elizabeth Seton), delivered nonperishable food items such as rice, peanut butter, and canned vegetables, to the orphanage.

Nazareth Orphanage shelters 50 to 60 boys and girls of all ages. While many of the children have lost both parents, others have been placed at the orphanage by their families who were unable to care for them. The experience was particularly impactful to Elias, whose mother grew up in a similar facility in Mexico.

Father Brian Kelly, a retired Naval chaplain, began this remarkable labor of love in 1994. Young Marines from Camp Pendleton helped him with these efforts at the start. Eventually, this

assistance became part of the St. Elizabeth Seton ministry.

After unloading the food, the Brother Benno's crew was able to assist with volunteer work, such as repairing broken bicycles. The children then treated them to a traditional dance performance.

Because Elias and Melisa speak Spanish, they were able to connect with the children in a personal way. Elias notes how impressed he was with their high spirits despite their dire conditions. There is no financial support of the orphanage by the Catholic Church, the Mexican government, or by any other means than through donations, like this. Elias was encouraged in our ability to "help each other out while running on faith."

Details for future trips are in the works, and Brother Benno's is already collecting donations of clothes, toys, and school supplies. "It is a tremendous blessing that Brother Benno's is able to supply food and clothing, down there," Dennis Ofcacek shared.

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www.brotherbenno.org

IN MEMORY OF JOHN BLASIER

By KATHLEEN DIEHLMANN AND RICHARD SHLEMMER

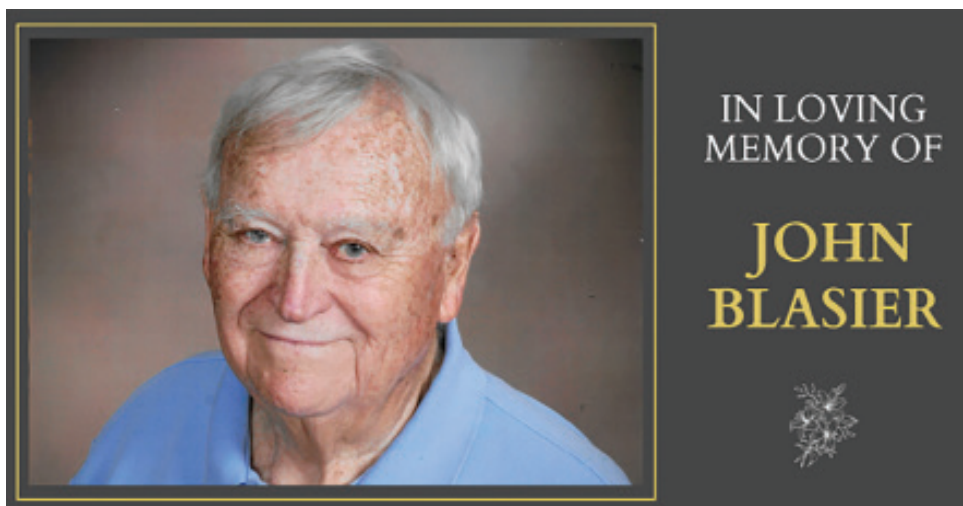
John Blasier became involved with the Brother Benno Foundation in the late 1980s through his friendship with long-time Brother Benno Foundation Board Member, **Nick Sauer**. John was the president and CEO of Monitor Products, an Oceanside business in the same business park the Brother Benno Center is now located in.

Nick asked John what he thought

“John was a hands-on executive,” said his friend and fellow board member **Richard Shlemmer**.

“Even though he had a demanding full-time manufacturing business in the neighborhood, he would spend countless hours at Brother Benno’s eating breakfast and lunch with guests and staff, getting to know everyone from the bottom up.”

John was gruff but loving and he was a good listener. He took a particular interest in the recovery program and the individuals working on their sobriety.



about the possibility of moving the Brother Benno’s Kitchen from its original location on Minnesota Street to its proposed new location.

“Well Nick,” John told him, “They’ve got to go someplace, and I can’t think of a better organization” to be a part of the business park. This led to John being asked to join the Board of Directors for the Brother Benno Foundation. He served as the President of the Board of Directors from 1993 to 2002.

A passionate alumnus of the University of Southern California, Richard recalls Brother Benno Foundation board meetings that would be interrupted by the USC fight song. He also had a pilot’s license and flew from Oceanside in his Beech Baron. He spent his downtime in San Antonio del Mar in Baja as well as vacationing in Hawaii.

John passed away on April 5, 2024 (Good Friday) and will be missed by all who knew and loved him.

Ω

“I needed some rental assistance and Darryl was able to save the day! The staff here is so kind and caring. Everyone I met came from a different background but were all so nice. Brother Bennos has a lot of resources for the community! I highly recommend them!!!! Thank God for Brother Bennos!!!!”

Rochelle Diane

Unsolicited Oogle Business Review, December 2023



To unsubscribe from receiving print editions of our newsletters:

- Email: unsubscribe@brotherbenno.org
- Call (760) 231-1619
- Send us a note using the enclosed donation envelope (print subscribers). Please make certain you include your name, mailing address, and phone number

Sign-up for our digital newsletter at the bottom of the page on our website:

www.brotherbenno.org



TO DONATE MUCH NEEDED ITEMS & HAVE THEM DELIVERED DIRECTLY TO THE CENTER, **CLICK THE BUTTON**



Brother Benno Center

Monday - Friday
6:30 AM - 11:00 AM

Saturdays
10:00 AM - NOON

Closed
Sundays
New Year's Day
Memorial Day
Independence Day
Labor Day



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Kaye Turpin
Chairwoman

Alice Jacobson
Vice Chairperson

John Lavery
Secretary

Jim Napier
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Joe McDevitt
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Helen Parsons
Gregg Prather
Father Charles Wright

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Mary Holguin
Dr. Richard Shlemmer

DONOR'S CORNER

Dear Friends, Supporters, and Donors of Brother Benno's,

As you may know, we have been giving the Center some long overdue TLC that it needed. With the changes, there are opportunities to improve our processes and our presentation. One of the items discussed is – are we recognizing all of our donors/supporters and volunteers as much as we should be, and our conclusion is that we can do a better job. When we reviewed how much and how long some of our Brother Benno family has been supporting us, we came to the conclusion that we need to acknowledge those efforts. To that end, we are exploring a Donor Wall for our long-term donors and a Volunteer Wall as well for our “Hall of Famers” and current winners. We are excited to show you when ready the final product.

I attended a brief on the state of

homelessness and the bad news is that things are getting worse, and not better in the county. The good news is that there are a lot of folks trying to make a difference. You are part of that group. I always find your efforts encouraging. While the numbers can sometimes be discouraging, it's good to know that we are all in the fight together.

Finally, we are committed to pursuing more of Harold's second level of service, and that is empowering our guests to become more self-sufficient. Our initial assessment is that this will be harder than it looks. I will keep you posted in the coming months of the ideas we are exploring and our progress.

Finally, I'll end with – we couldn't do it without you, so, thank you and -

God bless you all!

Mac



As someone who cares about the Earth, I now only use clothes from thrift stores. Bro B's is great! I can buy all cotton guilt free and often find some really great high end clothes. Plus it all supports the wonderful work Bro B does in our community. Thank you.

~ Joan Bockman Unsolicited Facebook Comment



OPINION: ON THE CAUSE OF HOMELESSNESS

BY STEVEN JELINEK

Recently, I was asked what I thought the root cause of homelessness was and if it could be solved. Many individuals suffer from a wide variety of challenges, the complexity of which I will not bore you with now; ultimately, the common denominator is chronic helplessness. Some individuals are unable to deal with the problems they currently have, and any attempt to remedy them is met with overwhelming hurdles that they can't conquer alone. In the haughtiness of human ambition, many set out to "cure" or to "solve" the problem of homelessness. However, our Lord says in Matthew 26:11 "For you will always have the poor with you...". It seems therefore that we can't "cure" homelessness. So, what can be done, and who do we look to for the answers?

Historically, a lot of the help came from the family. Working as a case worker here at Brother Bennos, I have come to find that a majority of the people who are chronically helpless come from fractured or hurting families. This could be caused by the political divide, high divorce rate, or the pervading culture which has resulted in the weakening of the family. This is not always the case, however. In some instances, a family must tie their hands to prevent enabling destructive behaviors. How then, can society address the com-

plexity of the situation, and help the people in need?

I believe it's up to each member of society to be loving and charitable to those less fortunate. It doesn't take a special skillset or personality to help; we all have something to contribute! The first step is getting involved in your community. This could mean donating, helping someone you see on the street, or volunteering at a place like Brother Bennos. Here at Brother Bennos, we care for all the needs of the homeless; from the basics such as showers, food, and connections to shelter, to helping individuals with finding detox centers, setting up appointments for mental health treatment, writing resumes, finding jobs, etc. I implore you, our readers! If you've ever felt the desire to help those less fortunate, or want to make a difference, then look no further than volunteering here at Brother Bennos!

Editor's Note: *If you are interested in volunteering with The Brother Benno Foundation, please email volunteers@brotherbenno.org to learn more. We also strongly encourage you to attend our tour and orientation held at 9 a.m. on the first Saturday of every month.*

The opinions expressed in this column are Steven Jelinek's and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Brother Benno Foundation, its Board of Directors, its staff or its volunteers.

Ω

Hi, my name is Gloria. I'm donating a vehicle to Brother Benno's. They helped, amazingly helped my son overcome his problems and helped him get on his feet, seek out a job, start a new life, and now he has a nice, wonderful family. I'm so proud of him. So, Brother Benno's, thank you so much. You deserve more than a vehicle, and if I can, I will continue to donate as much as I can.

~ Vehicle Donation Unsolicited Comment - April 2024

OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Paul 'Mac' McNamara
Executive Director

DinaMarie Ahee
Administration Manager

Kathleen Diehlmann
Development & Communications Manager

Darryl Harris
Outreach Services Manager

Michelle Hoppe
Clothing Services Manager

Rob Sanchez
Essential Services Manager

Jim Shlemmer
Recovery Manager

Elias Velazquez
Volunteer Coordinator

James White
Facilities Manager

Craig Yates
Grant Manager

FOR CONTACT INFORMATION

[visit our website](#)



"Thank God for Brother Benno's. They saved my life with all the services and my son went into the rehab, graduated and now is sober."

The recovery program helped my son get his family back and life back on track."

CORA R.



"Being imprisoned by addiction is a living hell. By interacting with the men and women in our recovery program, we become part of the key that will open the gate to their freedom."

HAROLD KUTLER

**Brother Benno
Foundation
Recovery Program**

(760) 439-1244 ext.101
recovery@brotherbenno.org

**Changing people's lives
through the
12 Steps of
Alcoholics Anonymous**

BROTHER BENNO'S EMPOWERS MEN ON THE PATH TO HEALING

BY STEVE SCHUMM

Within the nurturing embrace of the Brother Benno's Recovery Program, men battling addiction find solace and strength in a community dedicated to their recovery journey. Amidst the compassionate guidance and support offered by Brother Benno's, the transformative power of community service stands as a beacon of hope for those navigating the tumultuous waters of addiction recovery.

With the unwavering support of our donors, these men in recovery are provided food, clothing and housing that encompass the environment of true family. Our men have the unique opportunity in the Brother Benno's program to live in one of our 3 houses in the community and live a domestic lifestyle as opposed to an institutional environment that most recovery programs provide. Along with the basic needs, transportation to and from support meetings is covered through donations to the foundation.

At Brother Benno's, men in recovery are not merely participants but active contributors to the well-being

of their community. Engaging in various service activities, from serving meals to the homeless to organizing donations and distributing food to those in need, participants discover a sense of purpose and fulfillment that transcends their personal struggles.

Through service, these men forge meaningful connections with their fellow peers and the broader community. Bonds formed through shared experiences of giving back foster a sense of belonging and acceptance, counteracting the isolation often experienced in the throes of addiction.

The ethos of accountability and responsibility permeates every aspect of the Brother Benno's Recovery Program. By actively participating in service initiatives, men in recovery learn the importance of integrity and commitment, laying the groundwork for sustained sobriety and personal growth.

Ultimately, the act of service at Brother Benno's becomes a catalyst for transformation, not only for the individuals in recovery but for the community as a whole. As these men give of themselves, they discover the profound impact they can

continued on page 6...

A promotional graphic for Mother's Day at Brother Benno's Thrift Shop. The background is light blue with white clouds and a yellow sun with a face. At the top, it says "Happy Mother's Day" in white. Below that, it says "50% Off Ladies Clothing, Purses & Shoes on Saturday 05/11/24! (Regular tag items only)". In the center, there is an illustration of a woman holding two children. Below the illustration, it says "Next 50% Off EVERYTHING Sale Saturday, May 25th! Tell your friends!". At the bottom, it says "For the latest inventory & sales, follow us on Facebook & Instagram: 'Bro. Benno's Thrift Shop'". The address "Brother Benno's Thrift Shop, 3955 Mission Ave., Oceanside (760)967-7505" is written in a cursive font at the bottom.

INDOOR MARKET BECOMES A REALITY

BY KATHLEEN DIEHLMANN

Families, people with disabilities and seniors on limited incomes face difficult choices when trying to make their dollars stretch to cover ever-increasing expenses. And, if an emergency, accident, job loss, or a serious health condition or disability arises, life becomes even more challenging. It is out of a desire to better address this need that the idea for Brother Benno's Indoor Market emerged. An indoor market would also elevate our existing food distribution process for our guests, thus fulfilling our motto of uplifting the dignity of those we serve.

The indoor market will provide our guests with a variety of food options; and we could increase refrigeration capacity to keep food fresher for longer as well. Plans

...continued from page 5

have on the lives of others, instilling a sense of pride and purpose that fuels their ongoing journey towards healing and wholeness. The spirit of service transcends mere volunteer

also include switching from food box distribution to reusable bags to make it easier for guests to carry items home. To "shop" the market, guests must be registered with Brother Benno's. (Registration can be completed in one visit during our regular hours of operation.)

Feeding San Diego has already committed to a grant that is funding 75% of the funds needed for Brother Benno's Indoor Market. In-kind donations such as food from local grocery stores, additional grant funding, and generous donations from supporters like you will cover the costs and materials not covered by the grant. Coming to the Center? We'd love you to see Brother Benno's Indoor Market. A temporary market is set up inside the warehouse and our guests appreciate the improved experience.



ism—it becomes a cornerstone of men's recovery, a testament to the resilience of the human spirit, and a beacon of hope for those seeking redemption and renewal.



♥♥♥ MAY SERVING TEAMS ♥♥♥

| MON | TUES | WED | THURS | FRI | SAT |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | | 1 Stephanie's Team | 2 Oceanside Pacific Kiwanis | 3 San Luis Rey Mission | 4 St. Thomas More |
| 6 St. Elizabeth Seton #1 | 7 St. John The Evangelist | 8 Carlsbad Hi-Noon Rotary | 9 Servers R Us | 10 St. Patrick's | 11 La Costa Valley Volunteers |
| 13 North Coast Methodist | 14 Riverview Church | 15 Friends of Brother Benno | 16 Ernest Packaging | 17 St. Elizabeth Seton #2 | 18 Girlfriend's Care |
| 20 Sunrise Kiwanis of Vista | 21 OPEN | 22 San Luis Rey Methodist | 23 Signal | 24 Oceanside Sanctuary | 25 Camp Pendleton Ortho. Dept. |
| 27 OPEN | 28 Rotary Club of Vista | 29 Soroptomist International | 30 OPEN | 31 King of Kings | |

MAY NEEDS

Men's pants, men's shoes, caps or beanies, belts

Adult Jackets, Coats, Rain ponchos, Sweats & Long sleeved shirts, Unisex Hats and Gloves, men's and women's underwear (new)

Gently-used Adult Backpacks & Dufflebags, Blankets, size 6 diapers

Zip-lock Sandwich & Snack bags, Sodas, Juices, Bottled Water

Disposable razors, Dental Floss, Individual packets of Neosporin, Travel-sized: Soap, Shampoo, Conditioner, Lotion & Tissue packs



DONATIONS for our Guests?

DROP OFF INSTRUCTIONS

ALL CLOTHING



THRIFT SHOP

FOOD & OTHER ESSENTIALS



The CENTER



Not sure if we can accept your item - check our list.



MEMORIALS

Ron Alexander
 Dixie & Lou Bales
 Frank Barnet
 Brother Benno
 John & Edith Blaiser
 Andrea Boersma
 Roland Bond
 Bill Boster
 Agnus & Joan Boyd
 Bill Buckner
 Deacon Art & Mary Carr
 Anna Correia
 Don & Dorothea Daybell
 Don & Lael Dewhurst
 Phyllis H. Dierlam
 Frank S. Dolley
 Anita H. Donahue
 Dorothy M. Donahue
 Fr. Luke Dougherty
 Roseanne Dreibelbis
 Fr. Abbot Claude
 Ehringer, OSB
 Myron Eichen
 Richard Farhquar
 William &
 Vennita Flanagan
 Louise Foussat
 Joe & Ida Friend
 Mary Gerrity
 Bob Gleason

Chance Hales
 Tom & Louise Hayward
 Elizabeth Holms
 John Jarvie
 Dorothy & Walter Jellig
 Alice Jordan
 Ben Kouns
 Richard Kurtz
 Carole Kutler
 Harold & Kay Kutler
 Barbara Ladwig
 Bill & Louise Lakoff
 Ben & Ozelle Lewis
 Helen Lucas
 Bill & Joan Maloney
 Helene McGill
 Douglas E Milovicz
 Rich Miro
 Peggy & Beverly
 Miville
 Monty, Natalie, &
 Michael Nares
 Zeferino &
 Dancy Nares
 Mary Nordstrom
 Nysewander Family
 Jim O'Connell
 Bud & Blanche Ogle
 Ben Osgrove
 Kathryn D. Pent

Mary Peterson
 Jane Pfau
 Ruth Hazel Pierson
 Alan Port
 Mary Pullman
 Catherine L. Quinlan
 Dora Ramirez
 Dick & Terry Riley
 Margaret Rossini
 Ann & Nick Sauer
 Ron Schmid
 Mary Shankle
 Naomi Shelton
 Bernice, Samuel &
 Milton Silver
 Will Skinner
 Ann Grier Smith
 Alva &
 Frances Snider
 Squirrel Family
 Jeanne St. Amant
 Mike Stendahl
 Margaret Stephan
 Virginia Sylwestrzak
 Harold Thompson
 Carol &
 Herb Thornberg
 Rosemary Tucker
 Walter Ulloa
 June Williams

Fred Williamson
 Andrew &
 Jane Yandura

A. Rex Victor
 Amy Boone
 Carl Burger
 Clara Ziegler
 Donna Brown
 Dr. B. Manley
 Erik & Ream Braegger
 Fr. Michael Nee
 Frank Beeson
 Hiroku Butler
 Jack Bloes
 Eric Boehle
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 Stanley Jaskol
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 Toni Keane

THANK YOU

San Diego County Employees' Charitable Organization

**FOR THE NEW
 SERVING TRAYS!**



**BROTHER
 BENNO'S**

Lifting the dignity of those we serve.

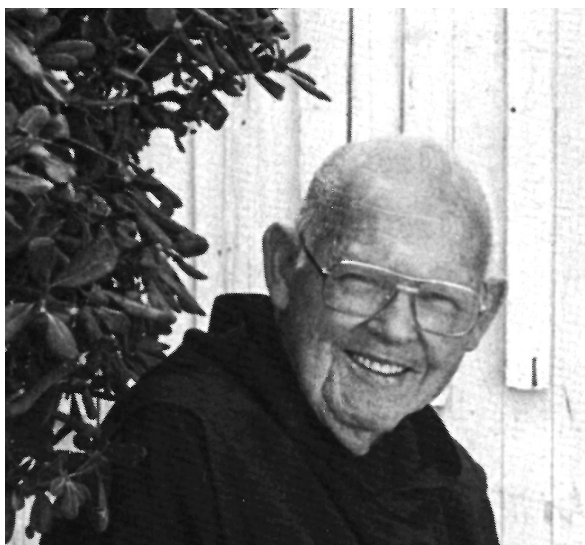
Shaping a future, one gift at a time.

Preserve your legacy and ensure the continuation of The Brother Benno Foundation's mission and services through a planned, future gift.

For more information about Planned Giving Basics, Gift Types, Benefits and more, contact Kathleen Diehlmann, (760) 888-7986 or send an email to kathleen.diehlmann@brotherbenno.org

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

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BROTHER BENNO THRIFT SHOP

“Helping the poor, one sale at a time”

3955 Mission Avenue
Oceanside, CA 92058

(Mission between Douglas and Rancho Del Oro)

SHOP

Tuesday - Friday

10:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Saturday

10:00 AM – 5:00 PM

DONATE

Tuesday - Friday

10:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Saturday

10:00 AM – noon

We welcome your sale-able furniture items. Please call 760-967-7507 for free pick up.

Please use the enclosed envelope to make your tax deductible donation to The Brother Benno Foundation or donate on-line under ‘How to Help’ at brotherbenno.org. Use your preferred service - Apple Pay, Google Pay, Venmo, PayPal, credit card or bank transfer. **Please note the Brother Benno Foundation’s mailing address:**

The Brother Benno Foundation, P.O. Box 308, Oceanside, CA 92049-0308



Brother Benno’s Services

| | MARCH 2024 | OUR 40th YEAR | | MARCH 2024 | OUR 40th YEAR |
|------------|-------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Meals | 9,257 | 4,998,403 | Blankets | 168 | 53,808 |
| Lodging | 2,232 | 366,061 | Tarps | 118 | 8,747 |
| Clothing | 3,484 | 1,554,414 | ID Vouchers | 26 | 11,015 |
| Showers | 283 | 291,100 | Lbs. of Food Rescued | 108,495 | 4,108,495 |
| Bus Passes | 163 | 90,508 | HUGS | 1,000 | 1,027,244 |