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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Brother Benno's unveils new solar power system for Oceanside headquarters

Media is invited to attend October 24 ribbon cutting ceremony

OCEANSIDE, CA — Brother Benno's, a nonprofit agency providing food, clothing, addiction recovery and social services to North San Diego County's homeless, working poor and seniors, is also doing good things for its environment — with a new solar power system.

The system, a 67.2 kilowatt direct current system with 140 solar panels, will save an estimated \$30,600 in electricity costs per year. Local officials and Brother Benno's associates will hold a ribbon cutting to unveil the system from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Oct. 24 at the Brother Benno's Center, 3260 Production Ave.

Preserve Calavera, an Oceanside-based nonprofit organization, received \$4.4 million for its Oceanside Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Fund, and chose solar power projects, including this one for Brother Benno's to be among its first initiatives. Preserve Calavera hired [Hammond Climate Solutions Foundation](#) to manage the solar initiative.

"It is a privilege to help this solar project come to fruition, allowing Brother Benno's to reduce utility costs and reinvest into its mission, offering crucial services for the community," said Tara Hammond, founder and executive director of [Hammond Climate Solutions Foundation](#). "This solar project also stimulates the economy, supports local green jobs and lessens the impacts of the climate crisis, and we are grateful to Preserve Calavera and BQuest Foundation for making it possible."

"As we looked for opportunities to reduce Greenhouse Gasses in Oceanside- we couldn't have found a better partner than Brother Benno's," said Preserve Calavera Board President Diane Nygaard. "They committed to this project and did what it took to bring it to completion. Let's hope this is just the beginning of many such projects that will help Oceanside do its fair share to reduce Greenhouse Gasses and address climate change."

A grant from the Oceanside Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Fund at the San Diego Foundation on Preserve Calavera's behalf and a \$93,000 philanthropic solar bridge loan from the BQuest Foundation enabled the project.

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Encinitas-based Aloha Solar Power and Electrical Services installed the panels at Brother Benno's headquarters, 3260 Production Ave., in Oceanside.

"The savings provided by the new solar power system will help Brother Benno's serve more clients in need," said Paul "Mac" McNamara, executive director for Brother Benno's. "We're grateful for this opportunity provided by Preserve Calavera, Hammond Climate Solutions, BQuest Foundation and Aloha Solar Power."

In April, Axios, citing an analysis from nonprofit Climate Central, a nonprofit research group, [reported](#) that California leads the nation in solar power generation, with 68,816 gigawatt-hours (GWh) of electricity from solar power in 2023, up 9% from 2022. The California Energy Commission told Axios that solar energy will factor importantly in the state's push to achieve its 2045 clean electricity, which includes electrifying buildings, homes and cars that now run on fossil fuels

Harold and Kay Kutler started Brother Benno's as a downtown Oceanside soup kitchen and named it for Brother Benno Garrity, a Benedictine monk known for his tireless service to the area's poor and struggling people. The soup kitchen served its first meal Oct. 21, 1983.

Brother Benno's estimates that its original kitchen served more than 470,800 meals. Over time, to accommodate critical needs in the region.

About Brother Benno's

Brother Benno's is dedicated to serving homeless neighbors, the working poor and seniors in North San Diego County by offering essential meals, addressing basic needs, fostering community outreach and supporting addiction recovery.

There are many ways to support Brother Benno's mission. Cash donations volunteering, clothing donations, shopping at the thrift store, hosting a clothing or donation drive, funding a scholarship for a student who has been in foster care, donating a vehicle and planned giving are just a few ways to get involved. For more information, please visit www.brotherbenno.org.

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