



PEOPLE WHO CARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE

BROTHER BENNO'S NEWSLETTER

Uplifting the Dignity of Those We Serve

FEBRUARY 2025



BUILDING COMMUNITY: Bringing Holiday Joy to Children's Paradise Pre-Schools

BY ELIAS VELAZQUEZ, INFORMATION MANAGER/VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

During the holiday season, the Brother Benno Foundation continued to foster community connection through compassion by delivering toys, books, and games to infants and toddlers at Children's Paradise Preschool and Infant Centers. Children's Paradise has centers located throughout North County, including Oceanside, that support and prioritize childcare for homeless and low-income families.

Brother Benno's has partnered with the award-winning early education provider for many years by providing food support through Brother Benno's food rescue program. The toys were also collected from the same local stores that provide food donations.

Rob Sanchez, Operations Manager at the Brother Benno Foundation, shared how meaningful this initiative was. "These gifts aren't just toys—they're a symbol of community care and compas-

sion," Sanchez said. "Knowing children had gifts to open is a powerful reminder of why we do this work."

Children's Paradise expressed its heartfelt gratitude for the support, emphasizing the positive impact on their students and families. This collaboration underscores the importance of working together to uplift those in need and being neighborly with local businesses in our community.

"We are thankful for partners like Brother Benno's, who not only made our toy drive successful but contin-

uously impact our families throughout the year," said **Renee Mullen**, Chief Marketing Officer of Children's Paradise. "Their support reminds us of the strength of community, and together, we continue building a brighter, more supportive future for all."



Melytza Cabrera, Children's Paradise Family Services Manager, with Brother Benno's Rob Sanchez and Elias Velazquez



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and more!



www.brotherbenno.org

A LABOR OF LOVE: Volunteer Grant Writers Help Power Our Mission

BY V.C. SMITH

Behind every successful non-profit lies a dedicated team of volunteers whose tireless efforts often go unnoticed. Brother Benno's volunteer grant writers are a team who work diligently to help secure the additional financial support that grants provide to help keep Brother Benno's mission alive and thriving.

These enthusiastic volunteers invest countless hours researching potential funding opportunities, which requires strategic thinking and incredible diligence. Each grant application is a complex puzzle, demanding comprehensive research, precise documentation, and the ability to articulate Brother Benno's impact with compelling clarity.

Grant writers extract meaningful statistics, personal stories, and concrete evidence of the lives you have helped change. Grant writing is truly a labor of love.

Unlike other organizations that rely on direct federal assistance, which often restricts funding to specified

tasks, Brother Benno's depends entirely on donors' generosity and our volunteers' strategic grant-writing skills. This approach allows us to adjust our efforts to meet the critical needs of individuals and families.

With guidance from **Craig Yates**, Brother Benno's Grants Manager, these volunteers navigate intricate application processes, meet rigorous deadlines, and continuously educate themselves on evolving grant-writing best practices. They are key participants in measuring Brother Benno's performance under grants, assessing the results, and identifying improvements.

When asked about her service as a grant writer, **Karis Chodzko** shared, "With Craig's guidance, I am learning how to research and write grants for The Brother Benno Foundation. I can't think of anything more rewarding than working for an organization that has such a powerful impact on the lives of the homeless

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THANK YOU! Indoor Market Update

BY KATHLEEN DIEHLMANN, Development Manager

Thank you to the generous supporters who helped The Brother Benno Foundation raise over \$10,000 for the new Indoor Market! Your donations led to an additional \$10,000 matching grant from **The David C. Copley Foundation**. Stay tuned for updates on construction and the grand opening in 2025.

The indoor market is designed to help low-income families and seniors access food in an uplifting and

dignified environment. Some of the goals of this project are to address food insecurity and the stigma that can be associated with accessing food banks and pantries.

We hope the indoor market will also help our neighbors avoid falling into the cycle of homelessness by providing additional resources to help make ends meet each month.

Ω

"I am a client of Brother Benno's for many years. They are God sent. I lost my whole family. I was homeless for 7 years, been in many shelters and programs but because of the caring staff, too many names of volunteers, just wanted to say thank you and God Bless."

M.E. Lopez, Guest
Brother Benno Center



REMEMBERING
BROTHER BENNO
GARRITY
FEB. 25, 1910 - OCT. 29, 1992



"...a man who looked at everyone through love-tinted glasses."



SATURDAY
FEBRUARY 1 & 15
9:00 AM

No reservation required.

Brother Benno Center

Monday - Friday

6:30 AM – 11:00 AM

Saturdays

9:30 AM - 11:30 AM Brunch

9:00 AM - 11:30 AM Warehouse

Closed

Sundays

New Year's Day

Memorial Day

Independence Day

Labor Day



Board of Directors

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Joe McDevitt

Chairperson

Jeff Epp

Vice Chairperson

Jim Napier

Secretary

John Lavery

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BOARD MEMBERS

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Helen Parsons

Gregg Prather

Father Charles Wright

O.S.B.

HONORARY BOARD MEMBERS

Dan Boone

Dr. Patrick Gilligan

Mary Holguin

Dr. Richard Shlemmer

DONOR'S CORNER

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

As many of you know we have a lot going on. The demand for our services continues to go up and so we are capacity building. Below are some updates on our projects.

Indoor Market – We have received approval from the city for the project and we are going to start in January. This project will also include improving the grease traps for the kitchen. Why that is important, aside from improving the kitchen, is that we can finally put the new flooring down for our clothing boutique and the conference room.

The indoor market design will allow our guests to have more of a supermarket experience, and for us to keep the food longer for better distribution.

Tied to this effort is a minor remodel of the Recovery offices which will allow Accounting to come back to the center and save us some money in rental costs.

Showers - The shower rooms need a remodel, and so we have drawn up plans to give our guests a better and more private shower experience. Once again for those who donated to that campaign – thank you. When you talk to our guests we receive a lot of positive feedback on the showers. When we were renting the shower trailer, we could only offer the service 2 days a week. Now we offer it 5 days a week. There is nothing like a good shower to change how one approaches the day.

Finally, we had two elected officials come visit us – Senator Blake-speare and Oceanside Councilman Figueroa. They are both supportive of our efforts, and it is nice to have them visit so we can show what the Brother Benno family contributes to the community.

So let me close with one of the great truths of our organization, we couldn't do it without you, so, thank you and -

God bless you all!
Mac



"Brother Benno's saved me and my baby from homelessness, this place is the only place that really helps people like me." ~ Ashley

UNSOLICITED REVIEW FROM OUR GOOGLE BUSINESS PAGE

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and working poor of North San Diego County."

Each grant writer's dedication ensures that Brother Benno's can continue its vital work. Whether used for motel vouchers, rental or utility assistance, or a bus pass, grant funds are an essential multiplier of your generous gifts.

"Volunteers are the backbone of

Brother Benno's, and this group of grant writers is no exception," **Joe McDevitt**, Chairperson of the Board of Directors, shared, "We are profoundly grateful for our grant writers' behind-the-scenes efforts in securing funds that support the programs and services that provide for those in need. It has been my immense pleasure to work alongside them."

Ω

CAUGHT IN THE ACT! Community Partners, Supporters & Volunteers Making a Difference

We deeply appreciate the support of our community partners, volunteers, and donors. Sadly, we only manage to document a small portion of these acts of kindness. If you have a photo or story you'd like to share, please send it to us at bbnewsletter@brotherbenno.org. We'd be delighted to feature your story!



South Oceanside Elementary School's Student Council donated **2,139 socks** collected during their December sock drive! Their sock drive was extraordinary because it was only eleven school days long! Sadly, we missed catching **Principal, Casey Doose** delivering the socks; she slipped away before we could grab our camera! Thank you all for these much needed socks.

Thank you, **MiraCosta EOPS staff and family members!** Excited to learn we had an opening, they jumped at the chance to serve breakfast to our guests. MiraCosta's **Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS)** staff are key to offering our scholarships for MiraCosta students.



FIRST ROW: Emilia M. (family member), Yesenia B. (EOPS Faculty Coordinator) SECOND ROW: Katie H. (family member), Kyaw H. (EOPS Counselor) Candy O. (EOPS Counselor), Maria G. (EOPS Student Services Coordinator), Freddy R (EOPS Counselor) BACK ROW: Dorian O (family member), Kyle O. (family member), Jose M. (EOPS Program Manager)



Photo is from their [Facebook page](#). [Visit & Like!](#)

Over 1,000 lbs. of non-perishable food items were donated thanks to the incredible generosity of the amazing members & employees of **Frontwave Credit Union**. The food was delivered to the Center by **Stacy & Colette** (pictured)! A thousand hugs and thank yous!

OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Paul 'Mac' McNamara

Executive Director

DinaMarie Ahee

Deputy Executive Director

Kathleen Diehlmann

Development Manager

Darryl Harris

Outreach Services Manager

Marina Pozdnyakova

Clothing Services Manager

Rob Sanchez

Operations Manager

Jim Shlemmer

Recovery Manager

Elias Velazquez

*Information Manager
Volunteer Coordinator*

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**

A FINAL GIFT OF LOVE

BY KATHLEEN DIEHLMANN, DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Rich Miro loved the Brother Benno Foundation. As a volunteer, a donor, and after his passing by leaving a substantial bequest, Rich found a variety of ways to show how much Brother Benno’s mattered to him.

Rich’s gift of his time began as he volunteered driving Brother Benno’s trucks. He also helped in the Community Outreach department and volunteered in the Brother Benno’s accounting department until his death in January 2024. Rich was a volunteer for almost 20 years.



Outstanding volunteers are now awarded the Miro’Connell Award for sustained extraordinary service over multiple years. This award was named in honor of Rich and his friend and co-volunteer in accounting, **Jim O’Connell**. The two men passed away within days of each other in 2024. Another longtime volunteer of Brother Benno’s, **John McCaffrey** (also a friend of Rich’s), received the inaugural Miro’Connell Award in 2024.

Rich shared his admiration of **Harold & Kay Kutler**, and **Brother Benno** with his friends and family. He was also a generous donor to the Foundation during his lifetime.

“Brother Benno’s does the things that need to get done: taking care of the poor, the homeless, and those in need,” Rich shared. “They’re performing the right mission in the right way. This is why I’ve chosen to volunteer my time at Brother Benno’s and be a recurring donor. I’ve even chosen to make a gift to Brother Benno’s as part of my estate plan.”

At the end of his life, Rich left behind a generous sum as part of his estate planning. The Foundation has received this gift and will use it to, as Rich

said, do “the things that need to get done.”

Rich was a dedicated servant and will be remembered as such thanks to his generosity and love.

The Brother Benno Foundation is fortunate to have many individuals who share their time, treasure, or their talent with us. To be able to receive all three was a true legacy gift Rich shared with his Brother Benno’s family.

If you are interested in discussing a planned gift or a donation, please contact [Kathleen Diehlmann@brotherbenno.org](mailto:Kathleen.Diehlmann@brotherbenno.org) or call (760) 231-1674.



On January 16th, Executive Director, **Paul ‘Mac’ McNamara** was recognized by **Sen. Catherine Blakespear** as the **January Champion of the Month for Senate District 38**. Sen. Blakespear also met staff and volunteers; she also learned about our mission, programs and services. This honor not only recognizes his work at Brother Benno’s, but also his long record of service to country and community.



SHARE YOUR LOVE: Join Our Thrift Shop Family!

BY MARINA POZDNYAKOVA, CLOTHING SERVICES MANAGER

This February, we're opening our hearts and doors to passionate individuals looking to make a meaningful difference in our community. Our beloved Thrift Shop, a cornerstone of Brother Benno's, invites you to become part of our dynamic volunteer team.

If you've ever dreamed of turning pre-loved treasures into community gold, this is your chance! Our Thrift Shop is a vibrant hub where creativity meets compassion, and every volunteer plays a vital role. Whether you have an eye for fashion, a special knack for spotting treasures and collectables, a talent for pricing and merchandising, or enjoy creating welcoming spaces, there's a perfect spot for you on our team.

As a volunteer, you'll participate

in varied and engaging activities that keep our Thrift Shop running smoothly. From transforming donations into attractive displays to ensuring our silverware sparkles with possibility, each task contributes to the bigger picture of helping those in need. You might find yourself arranging an eye-catching window display one day and helping grateful donors the next—no two shifts are quite the same!

The best part? You'll join a warm, welcoming community of like-minded individuals who share your commitment to giving back. Flexible scheduling means you can choose hours that work best for your lifestyle, whether you're retired, working part-time, or have a few hours

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Thank you **Vista Sunrise Kiwanis** serving team!

♥♥♥ FEBRUARY SERVING TEAMS ♥♥♥

Thank you serving teams! The gifts of your time and caring service are received with heartfelt thanks.

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
					1 St. Thomas More
3 St. Elizabeth Seton #1	4 St. John The Evangelist	5 Stephanie's Team	6 Oceanside Pacific Kiwanis	7 San Luis Rey Mission	8 TVIA
10 North Coast Methodist	11 Riverview Church	12 Carlsbad Hi-Noon Rotary	13 OPEN	14 St. Patrick's	15 Girlfriend's Care
17 Sunrise Kiwanis of Vista	18 OPEN	19 Friends of Brother Benno	20 Ernest Packaging	21 St. Elizabeth Seton #2	22 La Costa Valley Volunteers
24 OPEN	25 Rotary Club of Vista	26 San Luis Rey Methodist	27 Signal	28 Oceanside Sanctuary	

This Month's URGENT NEEDS

UNDERWEAR

men's & women's - new

BLANKETS



PLEASE DROP ITEMS OFF AT THE THRIFT SHOP

MONDAY - FRIDAY
10:00 AM - 1:00 PM

SATURDAY
10:00 AM - NOON

[View our Donation Guide](#)



DONATE - SHOP VOLUNTEER 7 DAYS A WEEK

↔ NEW ↔ THRIFT SHOP HOURS

MON. - SAT.
10:00 AM - 8:00 PM

SUNDAY
10:00 AM - 6:00 PM



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
 Deacon Ron Diem
 Timothy Diem
 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
 Squirrell 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

Hedwig & Nicolay Johannsen
 Brother Blaise
 Adelina Craig
 Alan Heim
 Alice Miller

Ben & Pat Weseloh
 Jim Mills
 Claude Janowicz
 Dick Newell & Chance Hales
 Dick Shlemmer
 Donna and Jim Brown
 Frank Beesen
 Gilbert & Donna Brown
 Helen, Walter & Beau
 McEwen
 Jim Sanseverino
 Joee
 Lorraine Brown
 Michael Chapa
 Mom and Dad
 Nick & Mary Antone
 Pat And Earl Schmidt
 Peg and Dick Wilson
 Tanya Roberts
 Theodare Angmire
 Toni Keane
 Sheila Kebow
 Ron Beckman &
 Andy Tarnago

IN HONOR OF

Margaret Reilly
 Thelma Nichols
 Holy Family Ministry
 John and Judy McCaffrey
 Peter & Jinx Ring
 Suzanne Collins



Look what our Thrft Shop volunteers found. The perfect Valentine's tee! You can find unique treasures, collectibles, one-of-a kind items & more - 7 days a week.

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to spare each week or even once a month. (We can really use additional assistance at the end of the month sales!)

Your time and talents can help us continue providing essential services to those in need while creating a enjoyable shopping experience for our customers. Plus, there's something incredibly satisfying about knowing your efforts directly support the mission of Brother Benno's.

Ready to share your love & talents? Contact **Marina** at **760-967-7505**, or learn more about joining our volunteer family, email volunteers@brotherbenno.org. **Together, we can make this February – and every month – a celebration of love and community spirit!**



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

Non-Profit Organization
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 Oceanside, California
PERMIT NO. 166



Harold & Kay Kutler - Pictured, Brother Benno

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)

NEW HOURS!

Monday - Saturday
 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM
Sunday
 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM

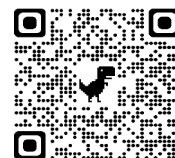
DONATE

Monday - 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



By the numbers: Your gifts are meeting needs

	DECEMBER 2024	OUR 41st YEAR		DECEMBER 2024	OUR 41st YEAR
Meals	7,943	5,079,764	Blankets	226	55,052
Market Visits	3,908	13,875	Tarps	95	9,715
Clothing	3,810	1,588,833	ID Vouchers	37	11,308
Showers	278	294,434	Lbs. of Food Rescued	264,734	5,658,950
Bus Passes	208	92,546	HUGS	1,000	1,036,244