



PEOPLE WHO CARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE

BROTHER BENNO'S NEWSLETTER

Uplifting the Dignity of Those We Serve

JANUARY 2025



HOW ARE WE TO SERVE? A Reflection for the New Year BY THE NEWSLETTER TEAM

As we step into 2025, many of us are drafting resolutions and setting goals for personal improvement. Yet thirteen years ago, our founder **Harold Kutler** offered a different kind of New Year's reflection – one that shifts our focus from self-improvement to the transformative power of humble service. In this timeless piece from January 2011, Harold's words resonate with particular poignancy today.

Harold's fundamental vision of service – rooted in humility, performed with love, and expressed through simple daily acts – continues to guide everything we do. In a world that increasingly values grand gestures and viral moments of kindness, Harold's message is a timely reminder.

As we navigate the changes and challenges ahead, we find ourselves returning to these foundational principles. We're honored to share Harold's words anew, not just as a tribute to his legacy, but as a living blueprint for the way forward. His reflection remains as relevant today as when it was first written.

"How Are We to Serve?" by Harold Kutler, Jan 2011

At the Last Supper, Jesus washed the feet of His disciples and told them that

this was the way they were to serve one another. (John 13:4- 9) This symbolized how our Christian service is to be performed: with great humility. We cannot wash someone's feet while we are standing or sitting. We must get down on our knees in a nonjudgmental position of humility and prayer. Then we are serving out of our own poverty, not out of our strength.

Living out the gospel each day means that we humbly serve those in need with love and compassion.

Most of the people we encounter each day are in need. They hunger for a smile, a kind word, a prayer. They want the gift of love, compassion, appreciation, caring, or affection. Just touching or hugging someone can free them from their prison of loneliness, and sincerely complimenting a person can help remove their blindness to their own goodness.

Mother Teresa and Brother Benno have shown us the way to live out the gospel in our everyday lives. Humbly serving the needy with love and compassion is an irresistible force that can make a real difference in our world and in our own lives.



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www.brotherbenno.org

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BY JOE MCDEVITT, CHAIRMAN BOARD OF DIRECTORS

With support from our friends, donors, volunteers and staff, Brother Benno's is moving forward with five key initiatives to better serve people in need which includes the working poor, those persons who are homeless, and those persons in recovery from substance abuse. The initiatives are





- improved Thrift Store customer service
- expanded community outreach assistance (focused on the specific needs of individuals and families particularly to avoid eviction or to find a path out of homelessness)
- upgraded indoor grocery service with greater food selection for extremely low-income families, renovated shower service for homeless persons offering privacy and improved access for disabled, and
- the renovation of two recovery and sober living homes to provide a supportive living environment to program members progressing in achieving sobriety.

We are able to proceed with these initiatives through the dedicated support from our generous donors, staff members and key volunteers, many of whom have committed their lives to help people in need.

Many staff and volunteer members have themselves progressed out of homelessness, recovered from substance abuse, have overcome living in poverty or experienced living with family members suffering from substance abuse. They offer a common background to the people they support and their sincerity, patience and understanding opens communications and trust in finding paths forward to uplift and give hope. Our staff and volunteers understand the importance of listening, not judging, and remain in contact with people they assist to offer encouragement and support.

In moving forward with these key initiatives, our donors, staff members and volunteers are guided by the words of **Harold Kutler**, our founder: "Only love and acceptance can reach a heart that has been disfigured by rejection, conditional love or ridicule." Ω

Help support our mission by donating a vehicle - running or not!

 <p>CALL or go ONLINE It's free and easy.</p>	 <p>TOW Schedule a vehicle pick up, at no cost to you.</p>
 <p>COLLECT Brother Benno's will receive the proceeds.</p>	 <p>RECEIVE Receive a donation receipt at the time of the pick-up.</p>

More Info: <https://tinyurl.com/BBFCARS>
Call 855-500-RIDE (7433)

We accept all types of vehicles, including cars, trucks, motorcycles, trailers, boats, and more!

Our vehicle donation program is coordinated by CARS a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that helps us, as well as thousands of nonprofits provide for turn-key vehicle donations.

"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 Benno's has a lot of resources for the community! I highly recommend them!!!! Thank God for Brother Benno's!!!!"

Rochelle Diane
Unsolicited Google Business
Review December 2023



TAX ACKNOWLEDGEMENT LETTERS

will be mailed by
January 31, 2025
for your donations
over \$250



SATURDAY

JANUARY 4 & 18
9:00 AM

No reservation required.
COME & JOIN US



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

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

Joe McDevitt
Chairperson

Jeff Epp
Vice Chairperson

Jim Napier
Secretary

John Lavery
Treasurer

BOARD MEMBERS

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,

I grew up on the East Coast and January was typically the coldest month of the year. And even though it was cold, I really enjoyed January because the days became longer, and the promise of Spring and new beginnings was close at hand. This month we start a new year and once again we have the opportunity for a new beginning.

So, what does that mean in practical terms here at Brother Benno's? Well, I think it is a recommitment to the mission of our ministry. As I've written earlier, our volunteers and staff have worked very hard in refining our processes so we can serve better the ever-increasing number of guests who are in need of our services. And with that dedication and head down focus on work, we might lose sight of the forest for the trees.

So, it is important to take time to remember the words of **Harold** written almost a quarter century ago.

We operate on faith, we are dependent on God, our programs are based on the needs of the people God sends us, what we do is not based on cost effectiveness but rather is it what God wants us to do. And finally, we are based on gospel values, specifically, Matthew 26:40-41 "As often as you did it to the least of my Brethren you did it to me."

A good thing was created when Brother Benno's was founded and for 40 years it served the community. I think of this January as the start of the next 40.

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



”

Those of us who live "ordinary" lives hardly ever have the privilege of meeting people who are overcoming unbelievable odds, people whose inspiring examples prove the strength and resiliency of the human spirit. Many who serve at Brother Benno's, one of God's vineyards, do have that extraordinary privilege. ~ A Volunteer

Thank you **Valley View Casino** for their generous donation to the annual Christmas Party for the working poor.



Pictured, **Jim Napier, Board of Directors (center)** receiving their generous donation

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!



What a sweet catch! Providing pies for our Thanksgiving meal has been a long standing tradition of **St. Thomas More's parishioners**. The variety they provided offered all our guests a chance to enjoy a favorite or try something new.



We caught one of our wonderful donors, **Mary "Joanna" McClure**, dropping off hundreds of books for the Children's Christmas party. There is nothing like the gift of reading!



Frontwave Credit Union's Consumer Lending Supervisor, **Joan Perez** and **Andres Serrano** were caught donating warmly welcomed blankets, socks and underwear (a constant need!) for our guests. Thank you for collecting them!

Unfortunately, we didn't catch them, but we wanted to give a shout out to **Martin Luther King Middle School National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) students** for their donation of coats for our guests and children in need. These honor students organized the clothing drive and inspected the donations to make certain they were clean, without holes, broken zippers or missing buttons. They also donated coats to the Women's Resource Center and Operation HOPE-North County.

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 COMPREHENSIVE START TO THE NEW YEAR

BY KATHLEEN DIEHLMANN, DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Exciting and inspiring plans are in the works at The Brother Benno Foundation for 2025. One of our top priorities is reimagining the original building in Oceanside where **Harold** and **Kay** started Brother Benno's soup kitchen.

The house has been used for many years as a sober living house for Brother Benno's 26-week recovery program graduates. It has also been a popular meeting place for AA meetings and gatherings for many of our recovery program alumni. However, the house is in desperate need of renovation.

This property will continue to serve as interim housing for our men in recovery as they transition to becoming healthy and productive members of society. Brother Benno's wants these men to continue to pursue sobriety as well as address financial issues that occurred during their addiction to drugs or alcohol.

The house will be rebuilt to include two or three stories, with four bedrooms on the second and third floors. The bottom floor will have

an open-concept, commercial-grade kitchen, and two additional bedrooms. This property will also have an outdoor space, which will be used for AA meetings, gatherings, and other events.

Other projects include our **Power of a Shower** campaign to rebuild the indoor showers at The Brother Benno's Center. The Brother Benno's Center, like the original soup kitchen property, is in need of additional improvements including, but not limited to, resurfacing its parking lot, providing heating and cooling for the Center and updating the front and back doors of the building.

Since the Foundation has many needs to address in 2025, we are pleased to announce that it will launch a **comprehensive fundraising campaign** in the coming months.

Please contact **Kathleen Diehlmann** (Kathleen.diehlmann@brotherbenno.org) to learn more about how you can get involved as a donor, volunteer, or supporter of this effort. We cannot do this without your help! Ω

You can help us get the word out about our Thrift Shop's new hours!

If you use **Nextdoor**, **Facebook**, **Instagram** or other social media, we'd love it if you could share the news about our Thrift Shop's expanded days & hours. And, if you're looking for a way to give back through volunteering, we might just have the perfect place for you! We specifically need someone to help with donations on Sundays. Groups are welcome, too. Contact Marina: 760-967-7505

RECOVERY TOOLS AND STRATEGIES: Building a Foundation for Lasting Sobriety

BY STEVE SCHUMM

Recovery is a journey that requires dedication, support, and effective strategies. At the Brother Benno Foundation, participants learn tools that empower them to achieve and sustain long-term sobriety. Central to our program's success is the 12-step model, a proven framework that provides both structure and community for individuals to overcome addiction.

The 12-step model plays a vital role in helping participants navigate the complexities of recovery. Its focus on personal accountability, spiritual growth, and peer support offers a roadmap for healing. Through regular attendance at meetings, working closely with a sponsor, and progressing through the steps, participants

build resilience and gain a deeper understanding of their addiction. This process fosters self-awareness and provides a support network that extends well beyond the program.

In addition to the 12-step approach, managing triggers and temptations is an essential aspect of maintaining sobriety. Counselors and program graduates emphasize the importance of identifying high-risk situations and developing personalized coping strategies. For instance, avoiding environments associated with substance use, maintaining healthy daily routines, and setting realistic goals can help reduce vulnerability to relapse.

[continued on page 7...](#)



Thank you! North Coast Methodist serving team.

♥♥♥ JANUARY 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 Closed Happy New Year	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 Mission San Luis Rey Parish
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 La Costa Valley Volunteers
27 OPEN	28 Rotary Club of Vista	29 Soroptimist International	30 OPEN	31 King of Kings	

This Month's URGENT NEEDS

UNDERWEAR

men's & women's - new

SOCKS

men's & women's - new & gently-used

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

CLOSED JANUARY 1

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
 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

Douglas Kopsco
 Ahiot Claude OSB
 Bill Stone
 Diana Garot
 Elaine and Jack Port
 Frank Beeson
 Hugo Grace
 Joan Boyd
 Larry and Basel Lester
 Milton Silver and his parents
 Samuel and Bessie Silver
 Ron Beckman
 Tim McCoy

IN HONOR OF

Clara Ziegler
 Dr. Wandz Costanzo
 Harold and Kay Kutler
 Irene Kinnear

...continued from page 6

Graduates of the program often highlight the value of mindfulness and grounding techniques, such as deep breathing and meditation, to manage stress and cravings. Staying connected to a supportive community—whether through AA meetings, volunteer work, or sober living homes—also plays a crucial role in sustaining progress.

At Brother Benno's, participants are not only given tools but also taught how to use them effectively in real-life situations. By combining the structure of the 12-step model with personalized strategies for managing challenges, individuals gain the confidence and skills needed to rebuild their lives and achieve lasting sobriety.

Ω



Thank you, Brother Benno's Children's Christmas party stocking stuffers!

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

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
 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

	NOVEMBER 2024	OUR 41st YEAR		NOVEMBER 2024	OUR 41st YEAR
Meals	7,901	5,071,821	Blankets	204	54,826
Market Visits	3,474	9,967	Tarps	93	9,620
Clothing	4,230	1,585,023	ID Vouchers	28	11,271
Showers	353	294,156	Lbs. of Food Rescued	127,429	5,394,216
Bus Passes	262	92,338	HUGS	1,000	1,035,244