



PEOPLE WHO CARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE

# BROTHER BENNO'S NEWSLETTER

*Uplifting the Dignity of Those We Serve*

MARCH 2025



## PLANTING SEEDS OF HOPE: How Small Steps Lead to Lasting Change

BY V.C. SMITH

In the garden of human potential, transformation begins with a single seed. At Brother Benno's, we witness this truth daily as we serve our North San Diego County neighbors facing homelessness, hunger, and addiction. Like skilled gardeners, a dedicated team of staff and volunteers knows that sustainable change requires both immediate nourishment and long-term nurturing.

Each hot meal served is more than just sustenance – it's a seed of trust. When someone walks through the Center's doors, perhaps for the first time, that simple meal opens a conversation. It shows them they're valued, that this community cares. From there, deeper roots begin to grow.

Mirroring nature's wisdom, just as a plant needs various nutrients to thrive, our neighbors often require multiple forms of support to stabilize their lives. A warm shower and clean clothes restore dignity. Access to healthcare services through partners, such as True Care, strengthens resilience. Recovery support through our 12-step program provides the structure and community essential for sustained sobriety.

We've witnessed these seeds bear fruit

countless times. Take "Sarah", who first came to us for emergency food assistance.

"Before we moved into our new housing, the environment living outside was very disturbing and burdening. People would walk past our car and even knock on the windows, waking us up. It was pretty stressful living in our car and trying to get rest and also having to be up on time for the street sweepers to come and give us tickets. We had been out there since 2015, that's nine years almost ten, and the whole time was a struggle. We had to jump through hoops all those years. On top of everything, it had become even more stressful because we were getting sick out there.

One of the benefits that helped ease the stress and burden of being outside was Brother Benno's. If it wasn't for them serving breakfast and lunch, having showers, and necessities for us, I don't know what we would have done without them, really."

"Sam," whose recovery program journey began last summer, shared that he arrived at Brother Benno's "as a

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[www.brotherbenno.org](http://www.brotherbenno.org)

## GROWING OUR IMPACT: Enhanced Media Presence

BY V.C. SMITH

It begins with a single story—a seed that takes root and grows into something transformative. As Brother Benno's continues cultivating positive change in our community, we're excited to introduce **Susan Somers**, our new Public Relations lead, who is helping us share our stories across San Diego's media landscape.

In her first season with us, she has helped our message spread across multiple channels. She has connected with local television news stations, radio shows and podcasts. These media relationships have enabled messages about our mission and volunteers' inspiring work to be shared beyond our community.

Information about our annual golf tournament, changes at our Thrift Shop, and volunteers' work, are spreading through various media outlets, inspiring others to join in Brother Benno's mission and

### ... continued from page 1

completely broken human being." But through his recovery program and service at the Center "has been given the gift of sobriety, and the gift of deep, meaningful connection with the people around me..." He further shared that "this connection, this unconditional love and compassion, gives me the ability to be comfortable in my own skin in this exact moment: in true sense of ease and comfort."

We know, through his increasing sense of self-acceptance, Sam will be able to confidently express himself authentically, embrace his flaws and gifts, pursue his passions without fear of judgment, and build

growth.

"Every story you share is like planting a seed of possibility," says Susan. "When you spotlight fundraising events, the Thrift Shop, and volunteers' dedication, you're not just telling stories—you're cultivating a garden of inspiration that encourages others to join in Brother Benno's mission and work of growing positive change."

Brother Benno's staff, volunteers, supporters and donors are invited to share items you think Susan could promote to a wider audience. Send your scoops and suggestions, to us at [bbnewsletter@brotherbenno.org](mailto:bbnewsletter@brotherbenno.org).

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Visit our website [media page](#) to see our growing collection of press releases, news stories, media mentions, and interviews.

healthy relationships.

These transformations don't happen overnight. Like any garden, they require patience, consistent care, and faith in the process. Through your generous support, Brother Benno's continues to cultivate the fertile ground where change can take root and flourish.

Every donation you make, volunteer hour you contribute, and prayer you offer plants another seed of hope. Together, we're continuing to grow and nurture a community where everyone has the opportunity to bloom into their full potential.

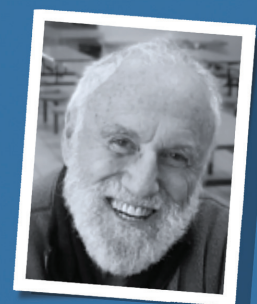
Ω

*"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  
HAROLD KUTLER  
SEPT. 22, 1926 - MAR. 6, 2018



*"He taught so many of us the meaning of unconditional love,"*



**SATURDAY  
MARCH 1 & 15  
9:00 AM**

*No reservation required.*

# Brother Benno Center

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

**Saturdays**  
Brunch  
9:30 AM - 11:30 AM  
Warehouse  
9:00 AM - 11:30 AM

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



## Board of Directors

### EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

**Joe McDevitt**  
Chairperson

**Jeff Epp**  
Vice Chairperson

**TBD**  
Secretary

**John Lavery**  
Treasurer

### BOARD MEMBERS

**Peter Joyce**  
**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,

Can you hear me? The indoor market project has begun, and it's been a bit noisy as they cut the concrete floor to run the new grease trap lines. We've had to move things around a bit and adjust our processes to accommodate the work crews, but I'm pleased to report that we've been able to maintain our services. It speaks well of the staff and volunteers' ability to adjust. More importantly, a lot of planning and preparation went into this project, so we are pleased to see it starting to take shape.

As a quick update, and in order to save money and redirect those savings to support our guests, we are probably not renewing the rented office space that essentially accounting is using. The three-year lease is running out this year, and so we are working on a plan to remodel a portion of the Center's second floor and build some offices. Early analysis suggests this is probably a good idea, relatively inexpensive in comparison to renting but it is still

early. I will keep you posted as we continue to explore this path.

Some of the other irons we have in the fire are the continual refinement of the Development Department and its effort in supporting the remodel of the Minnesota house, solar for all the houses, improving our green footprint with stronger recycling efforts and eliminating single use plastics, especially water bottles, improving processes within the Clothing service, a re-entry support program helping formerly incarcerated individuals and a number of other smaller refinements.

It should be noted that not everything will be implemented at least for this year but I think it is important that you are aware of what we are thinking about. The intent of course is always to remain faithful to our founder's guidance in that we remain connected to the people God sends us and address their needs. 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



Volunteer Francisco lending a hand at the outdoor clothing room.



Pardon our dust! Warehouse plumbing work.



*"I was a mess, living on the street. (You) provided more than I ever could have expected. I was camped out by the water tower; bet my tent is still there along with clothing from BB that I couldn't carry when I finally left. I returned to Oklahoma, went to college, now I own my home, paid for, and a nice new car. I'm off the drugs and happy. . . If you need help, go to Oceanside . . . I found nothing but love and compassion there." ~ Walter, Former Guest*



## 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](mailto:bbnewsletter@brotherbenno.org). We'd be delighted to feature your story!



Foot Comfort Store Owners - Jesse & Laurie, and Brother Benno's Volunteer - Virginia

We're stepping into gratitude with a heartfelt shoutout to **Jesse**, and his partner **Laurie**! It started with a simple shoe donation box at their store and a chance connection through our amazing volunteer, **Virginia**. Touched by the stories of our guests, they have been generously providing gently used shoes for months. They recently visited to learn more about our mission. Their dedication to our community is truly inspiring and ensures our guests can take steps forward with comfort and dignity. A huge thank you for their compassionate hearts and much-needed support!

What does an extraordinary volunteer who works full-time do on her day off? She visits the Center to pick up her next "assignment" and visit with Dennis to learn more about how Outreach staff assist those in need!

**Marilyn** currently volunteers with our Development Manager. She recently completed armloads of Valentine's Day messages for our recurring donors. Thank you for sharing your time and talents with us!



Brother Benno Outreach staff, Dennis with volunteer, Marilyn

### Visiting the Center

The Brother Benno Center is open to the public six days a week and is the main location for our meals and services. Please visit our services page on [our website](#) for information, hours, and requirements for each service or program. Our twice-monthly tours are a great way to learn more about Brother Benno's mission, services and volunteer opportunities—no reservations are required.

## 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](mailto:recovery@brotherbenno.org)

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

## MAKE YOUR DONATION GO TWICE AS FAR

BY KATHLEEN DIEHLMANN., Development Manager

Did you know many companies match employee donations to The Brother Benno Foundation? Employees who work for companies like Chevron and Home Depot, among many others, have been able to double their donations through corporate giving programs!

Brother Benno's wants to make giving as easy as possible for you. We know you are busy, and getting your employer to match your donation hasn't always been a simple process.

Here is some good news! The Brother Benno Foundation is now partnering with Double the Donation,

which maintains the most extensive database of companies and subsidiaries that match donations from their employees to nonprofits.

Brother Benno's set up a webpage for **matching donations** in January 2025 where a supporter can search for your employer and then be connected to its corporate matching site:

[https://tinyurl.com/](https://tinyurl.com/BBF-MatchingDonations)

[BBF-MatchingDonations](https://tinyurl.com/BBF-MatchingDonations)

If you have questions or need assistance, please contact

[Development@brotherbenno.org](mailto:Development@brotherbenno.org).

Thank you for your continued support! Ω



## 2025 Golf Tournament is Building on the Success of 2024!

BY CHUY REYNA & AMY SELICH, Golf Committee Co-Chairs

Last year's Golf Tournament, held on September 18, 2024, at Goat Hill Park, was an excellent time for all participants. Thanks to our generous sponsors, underwriters, and donors, we are thrilled to share that we surpassed our financial goals by raising over \$367,000 to support The Brother Benno Foundation's mission and help continue to grow these services.

A huge thank you to our dedicated committee and volunteers who helped make the day successful and smooth. Our second year at Goat Hill Park made the planning much more manageable and we were

pleased to have return sponsors like 11-time world champion surfer **Kelly Slater**, **OuterKnown**, **C3bank**, **Austin Surf Club**, **ADP**, **Firewire /Kelly Slater Design Surfboards**, and a new major sponsor, **Carlsbad BMW**.

Planning for this year's 2025 Tournament is just starting, and we'd love for you to participate! With a midweek end-of-September date planned at Goat Hill Park, **we are looking for volunteers for planning or on tournament day**. If you are interested in volunteering or learning more, email [golf@brotherbenno.org](mailto:golf@brotherbenno.org). We can't wait to hear from you!

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## FROM SMALL SEEDS, GREAT THINGS GROW: Be Part of Brother Benno's Mission

Your commitment to volunteer at Brother Benno's can nurture lasting change in our community. As our community's needs continue to grow, we invite you to help us cultivate positive change.

Our volunteer opportunities are as diverse as our services and programs. Brother Benno's needs

- **Greeters** to warmly welcome individuals and families seeking assistance.
- Dedicated **truck drivers** to help harvest and distribute donations that feed hundreds daily.
- **Thrift Shop volunteers**, who help our programs flourish. Volunteers are needed to sort donations, price items, hang clothing,

and create inviting displays.

For those who enjoy nurturing community connections, at Brother Benno's, the

- **Golf committee** needs enthusiastic members to help grow our annual fundraising tournament from planning key aspects to the day of the event.
- Newsletter team is in need of a **photographer** to capture behind the scene's shots and the work of volunteers and staff.
- Scholarship committee is recruiting scholarship application "readers" to help provide

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## ♥♥♥ MARCH 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 <i>OPEN</i>	14 St. Patrick's	15 Girlfriend's Care
17 Sunrise Kiwanis of Vista	18 <i>OPEN</i>	19 Friends of Brother Benno	20 Ernest Packaging	21 St. Elizabeth Seton #2	22 La Costa Valley Volunteers
24 <i>OPEN</i> 31 Oceanside Pacific Kiwanis	25 Rotary Club of Vista	26 San Luis Rey Methodist	27 Signal	28 Oceanside Sanctuary	29 Nativity Men's Group



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Email:

[unsubscribe@brotherbenno.org](mailto: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 go to the bottom of the page and enter your information.

[www.brotherbenno.org](http://www.brotherbenno.org)



## MEMORIALS

Ron Alexander  
 Dixie & Lou Bales  
 Frank Barnett  
 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

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Agather Johnson  
 Alan Heim  
 Anastasia Dietz  
 Barbara Brown  
 Bill  
 Dr. Michael McCarthy  
 Ervin Poka Jr.  
 Frank Beeson  
 Gilbert & Donna Brown  
 Leo & Grace Hutter  
 Michael Chapa  
 Paula Mathis  
 Rachel Wilson  
 Rebeca Garza  
 Sally Lipska

### IN HONOR OF

Jerry Klein

### ... continued from page 6

educational support for disadvantaged college students.

- **Grant writing** team seeks detail-oriented volunteers to help secure vital funding for our programs.

To join our volunteer family, take a tour, apply online, or

contact **Elias Velazquez**, Volunteer Coordinator, via [volunteers@brotherbenno.org](mailto:volunteers@brotherbenno.org).

Together, we can cultivate a more compassionate community where everyone has the chance to thrive.



There are many different ways to help the homeless and those struggling out there. Consider becoming a **Guardian Angel** with a monthly donation to The Brother Benno Foundation

<https://give.brotherbenno.org/guardianangels>

Your support helps our guests access clean clothing and a warm shower at the Brother Benno's Center six days a week. Volunteers and donors like you also provide hot coffee and a warm meal to hungry people. Numerous families and individuals can avoid homelessness through rental and utility assistance. Those struggling with addiction can get help and give back. Food that would have gone to the landfill will instead be available to those in need to prevent food insecurity. Brother Benno's is so much more than a soup kitchen. Thank you for your support!

**ARE YOU A**  
**GUARDIAN ANGEL?**

MONTHLY DONATIONS HELP THE BROTHER BENNO FOUNDATION CONTINUE TO CARE FOR THOSE WHO NEED IT MOST. SIGN UP TO BECOME A GUARDIAN ANGEL TODAY!

**BROTHER BENNO'S**  
 Uplifting the dignity of those we serve.

**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)

**OPEN EVERY DAY!**

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

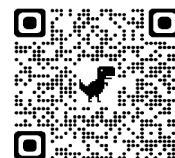
**DONATE**

**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](http://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**

	JANUARY 2025	OUR 41st YEAR		JANUARY 2025	OUR 41st YEAR
Meals	6,464	5,086,228	Blankets	168	55,220
Market Visits	2,312	16,187	Tarps	83	9,798
Clothing	3,792	1,592,625	ID Vouchers	36	11,344
Showers	252	294,686	Lbs. of Food Rescued	136,533	5,795,483
Bus Passes	255	92,801	HUGS	1,000	1,037,244