



PEOPLE WHO CARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE

BROTHER BENNO'S NEWSLETTER

Uplifting the Dignity of Those We Serve

SEPTEMBER 2026



WHY STRUCTURE CREATES FREEDOM

BY STEVE SCHUMM, Deputy Director of Recovery Support Services

Many people think freedom means living without rules or responsibilities. For men struggling with addiction, that belief often leads to the very opposite of freedom. Addiction creates chaos, dependence, and ultimately a life controlled by substances rather than personal choice.

At the Brother Benno's Men's Recovery Support Program, we teach that real freedom is built through structure, responsibility, and self-sufficiency. Every part of our program is designed to help men develop the skills and character needed to succeed long after they graduate.

During the day, our participants are encouraged to work, build healthy routines, manage their responsibilities, and become productive members of the community. Employment is about much more than earning a paycheck. It teaches reliability, time management,

financial responsibility, and the confidence that comes from providing for oneself. These daily experiences help men discover they are capable of living independently and contributing to society.

In the evenings, the focus shifts to recovery. Through counseling, recovery meetings, and working the Twelve Steps, participants address the underlying causes of addiction while learning principles that extend far beyond sobriety. Honesty replaces denial. Humility overcomes pride. Responsibility replaces blame. Service replaces selfishness. Forgiveness heals damaged relationships, and gratitude changes perspective. These are not simply concepts discussed in meetings—they are principles our men are encouraged to practice every day.

This combination of productive work during the day and

continued on page 7 ...

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

MEET CHEF LEVI

DONOR'S
CORNER

CITA

SAN DIEGO
GIVES 2026

8TH ANNUAL
BROTHER BENNO
CHARITY GOLF
TOURNAMENT

SERVING TEAMS
CALENDAR

and more!



www.brotherbenno.org

MORE THAN A MEAL: Meet Chef Levi

For **Levi Tucker**, every meal is a chance to bring someone comfort, dignity, and joy.

Brother Benno's new chef brings 22 years of experience to our kitchen, but his love of cooking began long before his career. Levi grew up cooking alongside his mother, who always told him he could become a chef. He fell in love with the creativity of cooking and the pride that comes from serving people a meal made with care.

Levi believes a divine plan brought him to Brother Benno's. The work is close to his heart because it allows him to give back to neighbors in need and to the men in our Recovery Program. Their hard work inspires him, and he believes they deserve a satisfying meal

at the end of the day.

The Brother Benno's kitchen also keeps Levi on his toes. Because many ingredients arrive through our food rescue program, no two days are the same. He may begin with one idea and need to create another. That challenge is part of the fun. It pushes him to stay flexible and transform donated food into nutritious meals our guests can enjoy each day.



With help from our donors and volunteers, Levi is serving up more than food. He is providing nourishment, encouragement, and care.

Levi's creativity extends beyond the kitchen. In his own six words: *"I am also a reggae artist."*

Ω

”

*"A recipe has no soul.
You, as the cook, must bring soul to the recipe."*

~ Thomas Keller

"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



**SATURDAY
SEPTEMBER 5**

9:00 AM
*No reservation
required*

"The personal satisfaction I receive from seeing firsthand what Brother Benno's does for the homeless makes it all worthwhile."

~

John Jarvie

Brother Benno Center

Monday - Friday
6:30 AM – 11:00 AM

Saturdays
Brunch
9:30 AM - 11:30 AM

INDOOR MARKET
6:30 AM - 10:00 AM

Closed
Sundays & Federal
Holidays*

* Breakfast & sack lunches
will be available on most
holidays. Exceptions are:
New Year's Day
Memorial Day
Independence Day
Labor Day



Board of Directors

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

Jeff Epp
Chairperson

Joe McDevitt
Vice Chairperson

Gregg Prather
Secretary

Peter Joyce
Treasurer

BOARD MEMBERS

Jeff Bizzack
Angela Kuhn
Tara McGrath
Father Charles Wright,
O.S.B.

HONORARY BOARD MEMBERS

Dr. Patrick Gilligan
Helen Parsons

DONOR'S CORNER

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

This month's theme is Recovery. While our recovery program has been around for years and is very successful, I'm not convinced that everyone understands how important and impactful it is. Working here one can see the very tangible results of a person finally being able to control their addiction and get back on the straight and narrow. In many ways it is truly miraculous. On a personal level it is a living testimony to the power of God. It reminds me of Harold's faith and his devotion to our mission.

One sees our program members through the dedication of our counselors learning how to use the tools they need to control their addiction and by extension control their lives. On Thursdays we hear their testimony of how Brother Benno's has changed their lives. We see that a spouse has her husband back. A young child has his father back. A mother has her son back. It is very powerful

and moving.

What is also exciting is that we have developed a path forward to restart the women's program. It is embedded in our capital campaign, and we are hoping to kick it off in the fall of this year. We would be happy to share details with you and your friends if life brings you by the center. Stop in, we would love to share our excitement with you.

When you read this I will have just completed three years at Brother Benno's. I am very grateful that God guided me here. It has been an incredible experience in large part due to meeting all of you. So let me throw in one more big thank you for all that you have done for this wonderful organization.

Finally, let me close once again with one of the great truths of our organization, we couldn't do what we do without you.

Thank you and -
God bless you all!
Mac



*"We are going to love you until you can love yourself."
~ A Recovery Program Mentor*

Often those who are in the grips of an addiction have such a loathing for themselves that they don't believe anyone could ever love them again. Having been there themselves, program mentors know that experiencing love from someone else can eventually bring a person to the point where self-love is again possible.

Thank you for making this possible.

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!



EoTY - Congratulations to Don Johnston, our Employee of the Year! Don's dedication and hard work in our Maintenance Department help keep the Center running smoothly every day. Thank you, Don, for all you do!



North County Wellness - We had a great day at the North County Health & Wellness Fair, connecting with community members and fellow service organizations. We were proud to share information about Brother Benno's programs, resources, and the support available to individuals and families in our community.

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Paul 'Mac' McNamara

Executive Director

DinaMarie Ahee

Deputy Executive Director

Alycia Anthony

Volunteer and Events Coordinator

Kathleen Diehlmann

Development Director

Bryan Fabricante

Accounting Director

Darryl Harris

Supportive Services Director

Emily Hasting

*Grants Director
Food Recovery and Redistribution Director*

Marina Pozdnyakova

Clothing Services Director

Rob Sanchez

Operations Director

Jim Shlemmer

Recovery Director

Elias Velazquez

Information Director

Lileigh Waller

Self-Sufficiency Director

FOR CONTACT INFORMATION

[visit our website](http://brotherbenno.org)

*"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**



*At The Brother Benno
Foundation, we respect
everyone who comes to
us for help – and many
are working toward a
fresh start in life. So
while their stories are
true, guest names and
images may have been
changed to protect
their privacy. Thank
you for understanding.*

A SPECIAL DAY OF GIVING: SAN DIEGO GIVES 2026

BY KATHLEEN DIEHLMANN, director of development

On Thursday, September 17th, the Brother Benno Foundation will be participating in the 6th annual [San Diego Gives](#), a countywide day of giving.

While San Diego Gives is a year-round program that promotes nonprofit sustainability and donor education, these efforts culminate in an online, regionwide day of giving.

San Diego Gives unites our region in a powerful show of local generosity and community pride. By highlighting and supporting the work of San Diego-based nonprofits, the cam-

paign keeps donations local, strengthens organizations doing vital work, and builds a culture of giving that uplifts every corner of our community. It's not just about raising funds — it's about investing in the place we all call home.

In 2025, 111 nonprofit organizations in San Diego County participated, raising \$900,000 to power local missions. Please consider supporting Brother Benno's on September 17th, on Giving Tuesday in December, or whenever the spirit moves you!

Ω

Historical "Fun Facts"

The Brother Benno Foundation is named after **Brother Benno Garrity**, a Benedictine monk known for driving around Oceanside in a van to give bread to those in need.

On October 21, 1983, the first meal was served in a small downtown house owned by the co-founders, **Harold** and **Kay Kutler**; Brother Benno brought a large cauldron of soup he had made at the Abbey.

At the very first "Brother Benno Kitchen" opening, only 21 guests showed up—18 male street people and three of the founders' teenagers.

Co-founder Kay Kutler was famous for greeting every guest with a hug, believing that everyone needs to know they are a valued human being.

The foundation moved from its small downtown location to its current warehouse on Production Avenue in 1991.

JOIN THE FUN WHILE YOU STILL CAN AT THE 8TH ANNUAL BROTHER BENNO CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT

BY GOLF TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE

The 8th Annual Brother Benno Charity Golf Tournament on September 24th at Goat Hill Park in Oceanside is officially sold out, but there are still great ways to be part of this can't-miss event. **A limited number of hole sponsorships remain** available for businesses and supporters who want to make an impact on and off the course to help fund Brother Benno's vital program. And join **Kelly Slater** and our other sponsors for a **pre-tournament event at Outerknown at the Carlsbad Forum on Wednesday, September 23 from 4 to 6 pm** with a percentage of all sales donated to The Brother Benno Foundation.

And if you're here for the party, you're in luck—evening music tickets are still open. The post-tournament celebration features dinner, drinks, auctions, and a high-energy UK cover band that knows how to get the party started. Our tournament's live and silent auctions are chock-full of unique experiences and curated items you won't see at other tournaments,

Golf may be sold out, but the excitement isn't. Grab a sponsorship or snag your music tickets and be part of an unforgettable night supporting the Brother Benno Foundation at brotherbenno.org/golf.

Ω

♥♥♥ SEPTEMBER 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. John The Evangelist	2 Stephanie's Team	3 Oceanside Pacific Kiwanis	4 San Luis Rey Mission	5 Closed Labor Day Weekend
7 Closed Labor Day	8 Riverview Church	9 Carlsbad Hi-Noon Rotary	10 Rotary Club of Bonsall	11 St. Patrick's	12 Tennis Serves Others
14 North Coast Methodist	15 St. John The Evangelist	16 Friends of Brother Benno	17 OPEN	18 St. Elizabeth Seton #2	19 Girlfriend's Care
21 Sunrise Kiwanis of Vista	22 Rotary Club of San Marcos	23 San Luis Rey Methodist	24 Signal	25 Oceanside Sanctuary	26 La Costa Valley Volunteers
28 Jamie Morales and Team	29 Brother Benno's Volunteers and Staff	30 OPEN			

URGENT NEEDS

EMERGENCY BLANKETS

ADULT DIAPERS

BABY DIAPERS - SIZE 6

MEN'S & WOMEN'S
UNDERWEAR
small and medium

SOCKS



Kindly deliver your
donations to the
Thrift Shop

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

SATURDAY
10:00 AM - NOON

VIEW our
Donation Guide



MEMORIALS

IN HONOR OF

Joyce Cerimele

Robin Jedry

IN MEMORY OF

Barbara Olish
Ben & Ozell Lewis
Bruce Reeder
Deacon Ron Diem
Timothy Diem

Gilbert Brown
Hartley Curt Lowe
Isaiah McIver, Sr.
Jacquelyn Cooper
Jim Sanseverino

Peter Conlon
Ream & Erik Braegger
Tim McCoy

The Perpetual Memorials list can be viewed at <https://tinyurl.com/BBFMemorials>

... continued from page 1

intentional recovery at night creates lasting transformation. Men are not only learning how to stay sober; they are learning how to live. Each day provides opportunities to practice integrity on the job, patience with others, accountability for their decisions, and perseverance through life's challenges. Recovery becomes something they live, not just something they attend.

By graduation, our hope is that these habits have become a way of life. The structure that once seemed restrictive becomes the foundation of

genuine independence. Equipped with practical life skills, meaningful employment, and a daily commitment to the principles of the Twelve Steps, our graduates leave Brother Benno's prepared to build lives marked by purpose, self-sufficiency, and lasting recovery.

At Brother Benno's, we believe that freedom is not found in the absence of structure. It is found in developing the character, discipline, and spiritual foundation to live responsibly—one day at a time.

Ω

 Children's Christmas Party Gift Card Drive Now thru November 30	Your Name: _____ Address: _____ Please send your check or Walmart gift cards along with this form to: The Brother Benno Foundation. Att: Accounting PO Box 308 Oceanside, CA 92049 () I am sending _____ Walmart gift cards @ \$25.00 each () Please purchase gift cards in my name. Donation amount \$ _____ Cut and mail this form along with your check or gift cards
--	--

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

Donate! Shop! Volunteer!

**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 saleable furniture items. Please call 760-967-7507 for free pickup.

Please use the enclosed envelope to make your tax-deductible donation to The Brother Benno Foundation or donate online 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

	JULY 2026	OUR 42nd YEAR		JULY 2026	OUR 42nd YEAR
Meals	8,822	5,240,237	Blankets	103	57,939
Market Visits	3,651	79,972	Tarps	30	11,490
Clothing	5,600	1,669,999	ID Vouchers	55	12,076
Showers	474	302,131	Lbs. of Food Rescued	115,059	8,308,075
Bus Passes	97	96,759	HUGS	1,000	1,055,244