



Brother Benno's Newsletter

"Uplifting The Dignity of Those We Serve"

Volunteers Making a Difference

September 2015



SUCCESS AIDED BY LEARNING TO WORK

Getting sober or drug-free is only part of the equation in a user's life. Even more difficult for some is figuring out what to do with the rest of their lives once they've achieved that goal.

"Lucas" started drinking in his teens, following in his father's footsteps. He left home at 15 and managed to live without ever learning how to work. By the time he became homeless, he had perfected his way of life by charming people out of whatever he needed. As he got older, he found that collecting cans and begging gave him enough cash to continue to support his drinking.

In 1998, he started living in the river bottom in Oceanside with many other homeless men and women. Some of his neighbors had made the decision to get help at Brother Benno's, and they encouraged Lucas to give it a try. He resisted as long as he could; but finally, in 2007, he came to the Center to look into the Program.

When he learned that he'd have to work at the Center as part of the deal, he balked. "No way," he said. But he knew his life was a mess, and something made him think that he'd better get clean or his life would spiral completely out of control.

Moving into one of the Houses and learning the rules proved to be an almost insurmountable hurdle. Almost every day, he vowed to quit, but his AA sponsor kept encouraging him to stay with it. "They actually had to teach me how to do the work," he said. "I didn't know anything about anything."

To Lucas's big surprise, he began to enjoy working at the Center. But at one stage of the Program, they said he had to go out and get a real job. "I told them I couldn't do that," he said. "But they gave me some leads—and lots of

encouragement—and I actually got the first job I applied for!" He had learned a few things about construction and landscaping while working at Brother Benno's; and to this day, he continues to hold a full-time job.

"I never had friends before," Lucas said. "Now, because of Brother Benno's and AA, I have lots of friends. And I'm happy. I feel good. Being sober, I can think straight. That's a big thing, thinking straight. I never could do that before."

Lucas's father got sober many years ago, and once a year, Lucas visits him in Mexico. "I always ask him for his forgiveness for all the bad things I've done in my life," he said. "He gives it to me, but I have to keep asking."

Since graduating from the Program in 2008 at the age of 56, Lucas has been living in a rented room; and he comes back to the Center on a regular basis to volunteer. "He'll do anything we ask of him," one volunteer said.

"I love this place. I love being here!" Lucas said. "When I'm not working, I'm here. And I love Kay! When I hear her voice*, I see her. I really do."

**Kay Kutler died in 2012, but her voice lives on—thanks to someone who saw to it that her morning greetings to our Guests, and her inimitable singing, are preserved on CD's*

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"Be the change that you wish to see in the world."

— Mahatma Gandhi

EXPERIENCING THE BROTHER BENNO SCENE

by Barbara Ladwig

Kids Read. One day **Ron** was looking at the low bookcase in the entryway of the Center. Usually there are two shelves full of books, and you can tell that lots of little kids have been searching for just the right book to take home and keep for their very own, so he periodically straightens the books to keep the shelves neat. But that day there were all of five books lying askew. "Where are all the books?" I asked him. "Gone," he said. "I hope there are some people out there who would like to donate the books their children no longer read."

Thanks—Again. One of our Board members received a phone call recently from a woman who wanted to thank Brother Benno's again for helping her family many years ago. She said she and her parents and siblings had been living in their car; and with Brother Benno's help, they got their lives and their dignity back. I have to wonder what prompted her to call after all that time . . .

A Circle of Giving. I wandered around the Center one Saturday morning, looking for stories for the newsletter. In a corner of the warehouse, I spotted one of our volunteers helping a man figure out the mechanism that operates a recliner. When I walked over, the man had the chair in a position where he could almost stand upright. "It's for his wife," the volunteer said. "She had polio as a child and has lived in a wheelchair. This chair will help her."

Then I noticed a walker behind me, and the man said, "That's mine. I had polio, too. But I can get around. My wife has a much harder time."

As the three of us chatted, I learned that the couple had met at a community college and have been married 41 years. "I was one year sober when we met," he said.

Twenty years ago, he met a bunch of Brother Benno's Program Guys at an AA meeting. They became friends, and now the man attends a meeting once a week at one of our Program Houses to study the Big Book with the Guys currently in the

Program. "I'm giving back," he said.

Service at the Beach. One of our Servants of the Poor helps out at a weekend beach breakfast for the homeless, put together by several church groups. She said it's a full-on breakfast—scrambled eggs, hash browns, bacon or sausage, pancakes—all prepared on a grill—plus juice and coffee. Thirty-five to forty people show up every week to eat! "And many of them stay around to help clean up afterward," she said.

Volunteer Extraordinaire. One of our most dedicated volunteers left Brother Benno's a couple weeks ago; and I, for one, am missing her. I tried to convince her to let me interview her for the newsletter, but she said, "No, wait till I'm gone."

Marie Abernethy is one of those Jill-of-All-Trades kind of person. Her experience in social work led her to become a manager of one of our Women's Houses. She oversaw the women as they worked at the Center, and she was also in charge of the furniture warehouse there. I'm sure there were many other tasks she completed, but she wasn't one to talk much about herself.

Marie was originally from Glasgow, Scotland, but she has lived in many other places around the world. The reason she left Brother Benno's is because she is on her way to work at an orphanage in Honduras for two years. In preparation, she is now in Guatemala for an intensive study of Spanish. She said she was told she would either fly or go by bus between countries.

"It's a 22-hour bus ride," she said, with her typical "well, whatever" look on her face. She also said she is both excited and fearful of what lies ahead. But then, with a shrug of her shoulders, she said, "But it's all good. God is in charge, right?"

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UPLIFTED BY WHAT WE DO

by Frank Doherty

I am continually amazed by the stories of our Guests regarding how Brother Benno's has changed their lives. I met a man named "Freddy," who is a former gang member. He had been incarcerated for 14 years at Pelican Bay State Prison, one of California's most dangerous and high-security prisons. He had spent a lot of time in solitary confinement; and during that time, he found God in his life.

When Freddy was released, his friends on the outside were waiting for him to rejoin the life of drugs he had left 14 years earlier. He prayed for God's guidance, and he remembered that someone in prison had told him about Brother Benno's. He knew he could not resist the temptation to go back on drugs on his own.

The day he arrived at our Center, all he owned were the clothes he was wearing. He was accepted into the Brother Benno Recovery Program; and after he graduated, he joined a union apprenticeship program that enabled him to acquire skills that have given him the opportunity to make a good life.

As many of our Program graduates do, Freddy credits Brother Benno's with saving his life. He is now married and has two beautiful children, owns his own home, and has a strong spiritual life.

Freddy will tell you that not only did Brother Benno's save his life, but it also enabled him to build a new life full of love and gratitude. He comes back now and then to visit with Harold Kutler; and he has spoken to the people who are currently in our Recovery Program, knowing that telling his own story is one way of giving back.

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TOUR WAS "AWESOME," GROUP INCREASES THEIR HELP

Twenty adults from Grace North County Church in Oceanside and San Marcos came to the Center in June to sort food items collected during the Postal Food Drive. They were so impressed with what Brother Benno's does that they then held a used clothing drive, and in July they delivered 52 bags of clothing with the promise of bringing in even more at a later date.

Elisha Morales, the Outreach Coordinator

at the church, took the Saturday tour before her group came to volunteer, and her response was: "It was awesome (on) Saturday!" And after she delivered the bags of clothing, she said, "I wanted to say thank you for allowing us the opportunity to help the organization."

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A TALE OF SWEET GIVING

"Annie" has been a Brother Benno supporter for many years. Whenever she receives a gift that "she really can't use," she thinks of Brother Benno's.

Such has been the case with a friend who sends her a birthday card with a gift card inside—usually for candy or other treats. Annie said she redeems the cards and gives the sweets to Brother Benno's. Her latest gift cards were for Baskin-Robbins, so she gave them to the members of the Women's Recovery Program. They were thrilled!

After a few years she said she was feeling a little guilty, so she wrote a letter to her friend and "confessed" that she was passing on his gift to others. He was so touched by her letter and the fact that she was sharing his gifts with others, that he dropped off a big bag of miniature Hershey bars at her house and said, "This is for Brother Benno's!"

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Your donation enables us to do all the wonderful things we do

My enclosed tax-deductible gift is: \$ _____

(make payable to: Brother Benno Foundation)

In memory of: _____

Please send a card to:

(name) _____

(address) _____

For a special occasion (birthday, anniversary, etc.):_

Send a card to: (name) _____

(address) _____

Or, donate online at <http://brotherbenno.org>

AUXILIARY NEWS

by Carol Sanford

It was with a saddened heart that I returned people's checks, when the First Annual Bunco Party was cancelled. So many "regrets" were received from people who could not attend because of prior family/visitor commitments, that we feel we should try this again in 2016, but in a different month. We'll keep the dice and scoring sheets warm until then!

Our event at the **Brooks Theatre in Oceanside** as a joint venture with the **San Luis Rey Rotary** and **Oceanside Civitan** on Friday, September 18, is shaping up well, and we are hoping for a sell-out crowd. We encourage you to contact **Mary Milew** (760-433-2221), **Maureen Hartin** (760-451-8913), or **Anne Speraw** (760-439-1543) for tickets, \$30 per person, for this 6:30 p.m. yummy snacks and wine and prizes social event, followed by the play, "**Barefoot in the Park**," at 7:30, and a possible meet-and-greet with the cast members as well. This is a new twist on community fundraising, using three groups to fill a larger venue, so come out and support all of us at once!

Our plans are well underway for our **Annual Luncheon/Fashion Show** on Saturday, November 7, at 11 a.m., to be held again at the Carlsbad Sheraton Resort and Spa. It's our most ambitious fundraiser of the year. Please contact **Penny Sallee** (760-912-8566) for reservations and tickets for this event. It's \$60 per person, or reserve your table for ten and round up your friends and neighbors to join us, too. If you cannot reach Penny (she's a new grandmother!), contact **Lyn Standefer** (760-390-2010). And be sure to get on our mailing list, so you won't miss out on

anything we are planning to do.

Looking forward from there, the **Annual Christmas Party** at the Brother Benno Center will be held on Saturday, December 19, at which time the proceeds from our "Christmas in July" fundraiser at the Outback Steakhouse will be used to shower the registered families with toys and goodies to warm their hearts for the holiday season. While warming their hearts, ours get warmed as well—that's the wonderful thing about volunteering.

Come join us at an Auxiliary meeting, held the fourth Wednesday of the month—snacks at 1 p.m. and meeting at 1:30 in the Center dining room. You'll see us in action as we plan all these fun events that reach so far out into our community to fill so many different needs for so many different people who come our way. You might find a new "home" for your talents!

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"Cowardice asks the question, 'Is it safe?' Expediency asks the question, 'Is it politic?' But conscience asks the question, 'Is it right?' And there comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe nor politic nor popular, but because conscience tells one it is right."

~ Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Information & Online donations:brotherbenno.org

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[Twitter.com/BrotherBennos](https://twitter.com/BrotherBennos)

Soup...Soap...Hugs...Hope:

The Story of Brother Benno's Life-Changing Soup Kitchen

This book is offered as a gift to donors who contribute whatever their budget allows...The important thing... is that you have one...

Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip Code _____

Donation \$ _____
Number of copies _____

Memorials

Ron Alexander	William & Vennita	Kathryn D. Pent	Jane Hoyt
Frank Barnet	Flanagan	Mary Peterson	Joseph Nares
Brother Benno	Louise Foussat	Jane Pfau	Squirrell Family
Edith Blaiser	Joe & Ida Friend	Ruth Hazel Pierson	Nysewander Family
Andrea Boersma	Mary Gerrity	Mary Pullman	Bernie Weiler
Roland Bond	Bob Gleason	Catherine L. Quinlan	Frank Onstott
Bill Boster	Tom Hayward	Dora Ramirez	Mary Lou Bryer
Agnus & Joan Boyd	Elizabeth Holms	Dick & Terry Riley	Agatha Johnson
Bill Buckner	Alice Jordan	Margaret Rossini	
Deacon Art & Mary Carr	Ben Kouns	Ann Sauer	
Mary Teresa Carr	Richard Kurtz	Mary Shankle	FOR ALL THOSE
Anna Correia	Carole Kutler	Naomi Shelton	WITH MENTAL
Don & Dorothea Daybell	Kay Kutler	Bernice, Samuel &	ILLNESS
Phyllis H. Dierlam	Bill & Louise Lakoff	Milton Silver	
Frank S. Dolley	Ben E. Lewis	Will Skinner	
Anita H. Donahue	Helen Lucas	Mike Stendahl	
Dorothy M. Donahue	Bill & Joan Maloney	Margaret Stephan	
Fr. Luke Dougherty	Helene McGill	Virginia Sylwestrzak	
Roseanne Dreibelbis	Monty Nares	Mother Teresa	
Fr. Abbot Claude	Mary Nordstrom	Harold Thompson	
Ehringer, OSB	Bud & Blanche Ogle	Rosemary Tucker	
Myron Eichen	Ben Osgrove	Walter Ulloa	
Richard Farhquar	Pope John Paul II	Fred Williamson	

Needs

Gently used furniture
Children's Books

Diapers
Men's boxer shorts, all sizes

Reading glasses
Baseball Caps

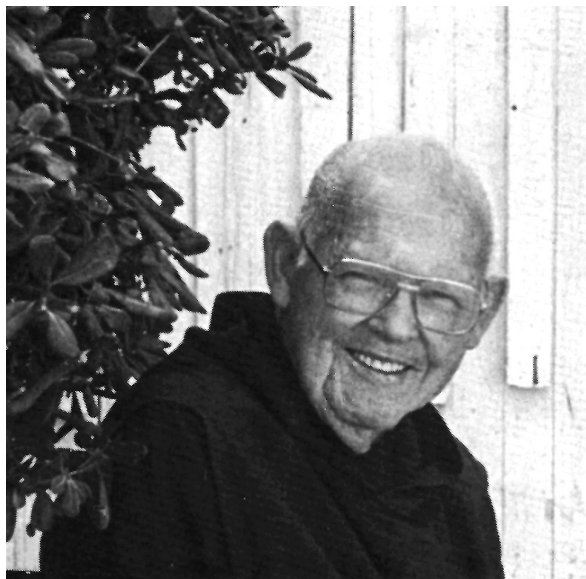
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
September		1 St. John The Evangelist	2 Brother Benno's Auxiliary	3 Oceanside Pacific Kiwanis	4 San Luis Rey Mission	5 St. Thomas More
2015						
Monthly	7 St. Elizabeth Seton #1	8 Hawkes Home	9 MLG 1st Class Petty Officers Assn	10 Oceanside Civitans	11 St. Patrick's	12 San Rafael
Serving	14 North Coast Methodist	15 Christ the King Lutheran	16 Grace Anglican	17 Carlsbad Rotary	18 St. Elizabeth Seton #2	19 Girlfriend's Care
Team	21 Sunrise Kiwanis of Vista	22 St. Mark's San Marcos	23 San Luis Rey Methodist	24 Pilgrim Creek	25 Sonrise Christian Fellowship	26 Catholic Daughters
Schedule	28 Christ Church	29 Welk Reort	30 Soroptimist International			

Furniture Sales at the Center

3242-B Production Ave., Oceanside 760-967-2742 **Open Tues. - Sat. 9 am to Noon**
We welcome your saleable furniture items. Please call 760-439-1244 ext.115 for free pickup.

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

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Brother Benno's Thrift Shop

(Helping the poor, one sale at a time)

Clothing, Household Goods, Furniture

Shop open Mon-Sat 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. -- Stop by to check out our Daily Specials!!

3955 Mission Ave. (East of Albertsons) 760-967-7505

Please use the enclosed envelope to make your tax-deductible donation to the Brother Benno Foundation. If you are viewing this online you can donate by going to brotherbenno.org and click on Donations. This will allow you to make a secure donation using PayPal or a Credit Card.

Your donation is used each month at our main center and eight operational houses to provide: meals, clothing, personal hygiene items, blankets, showers, laundry facilities, bus vouchers, nights of lodging, medical and mental health referrals, prescriptions, ID replacement, mail services, Social Security, and veterans' issues, food packs, men and women's drug and alcohol recovery program, rent and utility assistance when funds are available. We thank you for your continued support. 100% of your contribution goes directly to assist those we serve. Our modest administration costs are paid for by our Thrift Store revenues.

www.brotherbenno.org



Brother Benno's Services:

	July 2015	Our 31st Year		July 2015	Our 31st Year
Meals	13,813	3,766,704	Loads of laundry	24	27,103
Nights of lodging	1,065	264,753	Food packs	1,839	282,910
Articles of clothing	5,667	1,134,475	Blankets	109	38,836
Showers	1,145	207,792	Prescriptions	2	7,267
Haircuts	139	18,969	ID Vouchers	15	8,743
Bus passes	123	79,500	HUGS	1,800	901,444