



# Brother Benno's Newsletter

"Uplifting The Dignity of Those We Serve"

Volunteers Making a Difference

April 2016



## DIXIE BALES, IN MEMORIAM

**Dixie Bales**, long-time volunteer at Brother Benno's, died on February 27, 2016, at the age of 94. Although health issues made it necessary for her to retire from the Center a few years ago, she continued special events possible. Even never met her have heard ways she con- the success of Benno Founda- Founder **Harold**



to come to whenever people who most likely about all the tributed to the Brother tion.

**Kutler** has this to say about Dixie: "She was a key part of the Brother Benno Family, and the impact she had on both our volunteers and the poor was enormous." In his book, *Soup Soap Hugs Hope, The Story of Brother Benno's Life-Changing Soup Kitchen*, he featured her in his chapter titled "The Golden Years," at which time she was 81: "Dixie is our volunteer coordinator who assigns and keeps track of the hundreds of volunteers in our many different outreach programs. She has the drive of a 30-year-old, the energy of a 60-year-old, and the experience of a matriarch. When she sinks her teeth into a job, she's unstoppable. Visualize a bulldozer coming down a hill, and that's Dixie at work on a Brother Benno project. She gives new meaning to the word 'chutzpah'!"

Dixie started volunteering at Brother Benno's in 1992, nine years after the Foundation was formed. In 1996 she started the Brother Benno Auxiliary and served as its president in 1986, 2001, and 2009. She organized the popular Luncheon and Fashion Show, the Auxiliary's most successful fundraiser to this day. She was also in charge of special events such as our Thanksgiving

dinner, the huge Christmas party for our Program Members and Guests, and the Back-to-School event for kids.

In his remarks at her memorial service, Harold included this tribute to Dixie: "Brother Benno's would not be what we are today, were it not for the love, dedication, and hard work of Dixie. . . . I can only imagine Dixie being reunited in heaven with **Kay (Kutler)**, **Blanche (Ogle)**, and **Virginia (Sylwestrzak)**, our saintly ladies who devoted their lives to serving the poorest of the poor. They have done God's work in this world, and I know their reward in heaven will be great."

All of us at Brother Benno's offer our condolences to Dixie's husband Lou and all her family. May she rest in peace.

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## MORE FROM "THE BOOK"

The following is Harold's introduction to his chapter, "The Golden Years":

"For many people, retirement is synonymous with The Golden Years—a time of no alarm clocks or schedules, no deadlines, no pleasing the boss—just free time. But many people find that they're bored after a few months of this freedom to play golf or bridge or watch TV. And for some, their health begins to decline from lack of a real purpose in their lives.

We at Brother Benno's have been blessed with many Super Adults who have discovered that the "gold" in their later years is found in meaningful service to those in need. We'd like to tell you about five of them, four in their eighties, and one 'youngster.'" . . . . .

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## EXPERIENCING THE BROTHER BENNO SCENE

by Barbara Ladwig

**A Visual Blessing.** Sixteen men and women in our Recovery Programs were able to take advantage of the Lions Clubs outreach, California Lions Friends In Sight, on March 5 at the Oceanside Senior Center. At this event, they were given free vision screening, and, if appropriate, a free pair of recycled eyeglasses that have been donated to the Lions. If certain health conditions are noted during the screening, licensed volunteer optometrists and/or ophthalmologists give professional advice on seeking further care.

**A Lotta Tuna!** Thanks to **Darren Parsons**, VP of Trade Marketing for Chicken of the Sea, Brother Benno's will again receive a donation of canned tuna. Darren is the son of Board Member **Helen Parsons**, and our great windfall will be 2,240 cases (48 cans in a case) of 4.5 oz. cans! In case you don't have a calculator handy, that's 107,520 cans! Thank you, Darren and Chicken of the Sea!

**Got Furniture?** **Michelle Hoppe**, Manager of Brother Benno's Thrift Shop, is asking for gently used furniture. "It must be in good, clean, reusable condition, ready to hit the sales floor," she said. If you'd like to have it picked up, just call the furniture donation line (760-967-7507) and leave a message. Someone will call back to arrange for a pickup time convenient for you. Michelle added, "You can feel good about donating your furniture to us, because we will turn it into cash to help the poor in the local area."

**Unbelievable Bargains.** Another bit of news from the Thrift Shop is that the Shop will have an old-fashioned "Rummage Sale" on Sunday, April 17, complete with free root beer floats! You'll be able to fill a bag for only \$2 (cash only). They have an abundance of women's clothing and housewares, and also designer clothing and boxes of collectibles to choose from.

**Seeing Is Powerful.** I often run into people who have taken a tour of Brother Benno's; and

the most common thing they take away from that tour is this: "I never knew you did SO MUCH!" They usually continue with something like, "I knew you feed people, but I didn't know about all the other services you provide," and then they list the things that especially surprised them. I guess it's one thing to read a list of our services online or in this newsletter, but to actually walk through the Center and SEE everything that's going on makes a much deeper impression.

**If you've never taken this tour, put it on your calendar—the first Saturday of the month at 9:30. You don't need reservations; just come on in!**

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**A Lovely Poem.** A homeless male Guest who's been coming to the Center for about two months was moved to write the following poem:

### BROTHER BENNO'S

While walking, my feet hurt so bad, my toes  
almost cried.

Here I was homeless in Oceanside.  
I came across a place called Brother Benno's,  
Where help and love grows, and grows, and  
grows.

Breakfast, blankets, clothes, showers, and more.  
I never knew California like this before.  
Not a large city, in between San Diego and L.A.,  
But over one hundred people get help every day.

Brother Benno died, sadly, in 1992.  
But the people here really shine through.  
The staff and crew do what they can,  
To help every single woman, child, and man.

D.L.G.

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### UNUSUAL ORGAN DONATED TO THRIFT SHOP

What are the chances of a small reed organ, the kind that was used for religious services in the field during both World Wars, showing up at Brother Benno's Thrift Shop? Not likely, you say?

The story began when **Daniel Bissler**, a new volunteer, was talking with someone in the back of the Shop, and she mentioned that an organ had been donated and they weren't entirely sure what it was. Daniel looked at it and knew immediately.

It's called a Folding Chaplain's Organ; and by tracing the serial number, Daniel found that it was built between 1930 and 1935 by the Estey Organ Co. Of Brattleboro, Vermont. When not being used, it folds up into its own box with a handle on top for easy carrying.

Daniel recently moved to Oceanside from Maui, where he had been a stained glass artist. While restoring a window in a choir loft of a church in Hawaii, he acquired a pipe organ that had been decimated by termites. "It took a year to restore the organ," he said, "and it was in my loft in my home in Hawaii. The neighbors loved to hear it play!"

**Helen Parsons**, who oversees the Brother Benno Thrift Shop, knew about Daniel's many skills from the short questionnaire he had filled out after he took our Center tour. She asked if he'd be willing to look at the organ and determine whether or not it

Continued on page 4....

**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>**

### "RELUCTANT" MOTHER FINDS HELP AT BROTHER BENNO'S

"**Darlene**" and her two children, ages 12 and 6, lived in their car in a nearby campground for four months before she learned about Brother Benno's. This situation was brought about when Darlene's husband left them. She had almost no financial resources and no other family nearby to support them.

At the time, she had enough money to pay for the campsite, where she and the children could use the restrooms, showers, and picnic table next to their car; but she knew this was only a temporary fix. She signed up for Welfare, which included food stamps, and a few months later she found an apartment she thought she could afford. But after putting down the deposit, she didn't have enough left to pay the first month's rent.

Someone told her she might be able to get help at Brother Benno's, so she came to the Center—reluctantly—because she wasn't used to having to ask for help. When she and her children sat down with **Mary Holguin**, one of our case managers, she continued to hesitate when she was asked what she needed.

Mary was able to gently encourage her by explaining the various ways we could help, and eventually she agreed to the first month's rent and some clothing for her and the children. (When they'd had to leave their home, they brought along almost nothing.) We were also able to give them mattresses, bedding, and cooking utensils. "They were so happy with everything we gave them," Mary said.

At some point after their first visit to Brother Benno's, Darlene went to court and began receiving child support. She plans to get a job when her children are both in school full days; but for now, she is volunteering in her son's kindergarten classroom. She calls Mary every once in a while, just to tell her that they are doing well and to thank her again for all the help she received. When Mary asks if there's anything else they need, Darlene says no, she's sure there are other people who need help more than she does.

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### AUXILIARY NEWS

by Carol Sanford

Hopefully you got to enjoy the food and fun at our recently successful Applebee's Flapjack Fundraiser, so ably chaired for the second time by past President **Vera Bayliss** and **Terri Keyes!** Heartfelt thanks to all those volunteers who came early to seat you and serve you all the great-tasting foods. It takes many hands for each of our events!

If by chance you missed that fun, be sure to join us on April 13 at 7:30 p.m. for our Broadway **Theatre Buyout in Vista for the hilarious "Doyle & Debbie Show,"** lampooning country music's iconic duets by SD Critics Choice winners **Phil Johnson** and **Eileen Bowman.** This fundraiser is \$30 per person, which includes the show plus pre-show appetizers and refreshments, and the infamous intermission drawing. For tickets, please call **Barbara Collins** (760-583-7933), or send checks made payable to Brother Benno's Auxiliary, P.O. Box 4161, Oceanside, CA 92052. Reserve your seats now! It's a cozy place!

As an aside here, let me reach out to say thank you to all those whose prayers and good wishes were extended to me during my recent health challenge. I must be doing something right to be so blessed! Thank you all from the bottom of my heart!

**ALERT!** The Center needs your **plastic grocery bags** for our Guests to gather and take home the wonderful array of food items available to them each day. Please drop off the bags at the Center at any time, or just bring them to the next Auxiliary meeting.

At our March meeting, we had a special presentation from **Jan Roberts** and **Jim Shlemmer** about the very special addiction Recovery

Programs that Brother Benno's offers to members of our community. At our April meeting, we'll hear from volunteer **Carol Muehe**, who will tell us about how the Center's Clothing Room operates, how the donations flow, and what special celebrations are held at the Center.

These mini-presentations offer our Auxiliary members another way to learn about and celebrate the uniqueness of Brother Benno's and our part in supporting it. So come to our meeting on April 27 at 1 p.m. social time and 1:30 meeting in the Center Dining Room. We welcome all with open arms! Come meet us old-timers, as well as some of the 23 new members who joined our ranks this year. I hope to see you there!

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could be repaired. He readily agreed.

"Over half of the notes were not working," he said. "Now all of them are. (After doing more work on it,) I was able to get it in near perfect operating condition."

Daniel told Helen that if the organ didn't sell, he would buy it. And that's what happened. He has a treasure; and Helen said, "Daniel is already a huge help to Brother Benno's.!"

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"She was always so nice to work with," Mary said. "I felt she was never trying to take advantage of us. And the children were so well mannered. I really enjoyed knowing them, and I love it that she continues to stay in touch."

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### 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	Pope John Paul II	Fred Williamson
Frank Barnet	Flanagan	Kathryn D. Pent	Zeferino & Dancy
Brother Benno	Louise Foussat	Mary Peterson	Nares
Edith Blaiser	Joe & Ida Friend	Jane Pfau	Nysewander Family
Andrea Boersma	Mary Gerrity	Ruth Hazel Pierson	Squirrell Family
Roland Bond	Bob Gleason	Mary Pullman	Dixie Bales
Bill Boster	Tom Hayward	Catherine L. Quinlan	Fr. Brad Dusak
Agnus & Joan Boyd	Elizabeth Holms	Dora Ramirez	Rose & Floyd
Bill Buckner	Alice Jordan	Dick & Terry Riley	Caldwell
Deacon Art & Mary Carr	Ben Kouns	Margaret Rossini	Mary Doyle
Mary Teresa Carr	Richard Kurtz	Ann Sauer	Gilbert Brown
Anna Correia	Carole Kutler	Mary Shankle	David Lorbati
Don & Dorothea Daybell	Kay Kutler	Naomi Shelton	Mary Correa
Phyllis H. Dierlam	Bill & Louise Lakoff	Bernice, Samuel &	Braden Massey
Frank S. Dolley	Ben E. Lewis	Milton Silver	Steve
Anita H. Donahue	Helen Lucas	Will Skinner	Murphy Cooper
Dorothy M. Donahue	Bill & Joan Maloney	Mike Stendahl	Tim Fawls
Fr. Luke Dougherty	Helene McGill	Margaret Stephan	Harry Opatkiewicz
Roseanne Dreibelbis	Michael & Monty	Virginia Sylwestrzak	Richard Rankin
Fr. Abbot Claude	Nares	Mother Teresa	Palma Ebert
Ehringer, OSB	Mary Nordstrom	Harold Thompson	Chuck Flood
Myron Eichen	Bud & Blanche Ogle	Rosemary Tucker	
Richard Farhquar	Ben Osgrove	Walter Ulloa	

### Needs

Gently used furniture  
 Women's Feminine Hygiene Items  
 Easy-to-Carry Blankets  
 Diapers, all sizes  
 Bottled Water  
 Reading glasses  
 Used Vehicles

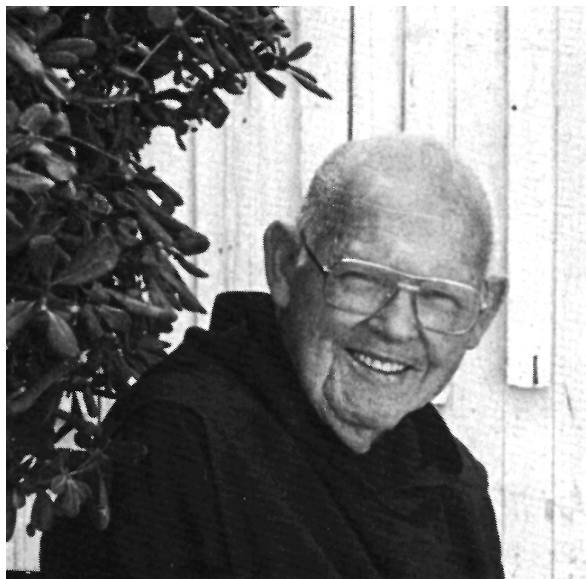
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>April</b>					<b>1</b> San Luis Rey Mission	<b>2</b> St. Thomas More
<b>2016</b>						
<b>Monthly</b>	<b>4</b> St. Elizabeth Seton #1	<b>5</b> St. John The Evangelist	<b>6</b> Brother Benno's Auxiliary	<b>7</b> Oceanside Pacific Kiwanis	<b>8</b> St. Patrick's	<b>9</b> Riverview Church
<b>Serving</b>	<b>11</b> North Coast Methodist	<b>12</b> Team Wyndham	<b>13</b> 1st MLG FCPOA	<b>14</b> Oceanside Civitanis	<b>15</b> St. Elizabeth Seton #2	<b>16</b> Girlfriend's Care
<b>Team</b>	<b>18</b> Sunrise Kiwanis of Vista	<b>19</b> Christ the King Lutheran	<b>20</b> Grace Anglican	<b>21</b> Carlsbad Rotary	<b>22</b> Sonrise Christian Fellowship	<b>23</b> Catholic Daughters
<b>Schedule</b>	<b>25</b> Christ Church	<b>26</b> St. Mark's San Marcos	<b>27</b> San Luis Rey Methodist	<b>28</b> Pilgrim Creek	<b>29</b> King of Kings Lutheran	<b>30-</b> Shiloh Church of God In Christ

### 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**

Non-Profit Organization  
**U.S. POSTAGE**  
**PAID**  
 Oceanside, California  
**PERMIT NO. 166**



**Brother Benno's Thrift Shop**

(Helping the poor, one sale at a time)

**Clothing, Household Goods, Furniture**

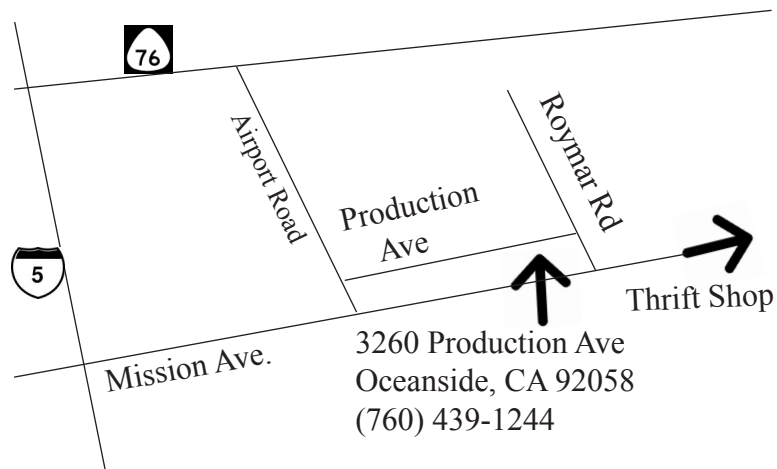
**Shop open Mon-Sat 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. -- Stop by to check out our Daily Specials!!**

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



**Brother Benno's Services:**

	February 2016	Our 32nd Year		February 2016	Our 32nd Year
Meals	14,318	3,860,223	Loads of laundry	23	27,281
Nights of lodging	946	272,190	Food packs	1,558	295,125
Articles of clothing	5,631	1,173,398	Blankets	156	39,895
Showers	1,474	216,062	Tarps	84	928
Haircuts	110	19,790	ID Vouchers	13	8,839
Bus passes	127	80,394	HUGS	1,800	915,394