



Brother Benno's Newsletter

“Uplifting The Dignity of Those We Serve”

Volunteers Making a Difference

April 2017



FROM CAR TO APARTMENT, HOW BROTHER BENNO'S HELPED

“**Darren**” and his wife often came to Brother Benno's for breakfast. They're in their late 50's and had lived in their car for almost a year. Both the front and back seats were crammed with clothing, food, personal items, medications, and their two small dogs.

They get a small Social Security check and an equally small disability check. Because Darren is a veteran, they were able to get a Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher* from the County, but the waiting list is at least three months long. He has serious health issues, so their living situation was especially troublesome for them.

For lunch and dinner, the couple sometimes warmed up packaged meals in a microwave at a convenience store or tried to find a barbecue in a park with leftover coals where they could cook a burger or hot dog.

Darren said most people take it for granted that they have a bed to sleep in, a stove to cook on, and a fridge to keep their food fresh. They don't think of these conveniences when they see a homeless person; they see only a nuisance who parks his car overnight in a neighborhood that just wants them gone.

One of our Staff members worked with Darren over a period of several weeks, discussing his particular needs and trying to figure out how to get him and his wife into an apartment. Their efforts finally paid off when two people from the Regional Office of the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs came to Brother Benno's to meet with them.

Darren and his wife are now in their apartment, and Brother Benno's has given them several pieces of furniture to complete what the couple

had in storage. Just being able to get rid of their storage unit gives them more cash to work with. Making that little extra effort is what Brother Benno's is all about.

* A Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher pays the balance of a rent payment that exceeds 30% of a renter's monthly income.
(Thanks to Alison St. John of KPBS for some of the facts in this story.)

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OUR WONDERFUL VOLUNTEERS!

The week of April 23 to 29 is National Volunteer Week, when volunteers are recognized for all their hard work and dedication to their organizations.

In **Harold Kutler's** book, *Soup Soap Hugs Hope, the Story of Brother Benno's Life-Changing Soup Kitchen*, he states: “Volunteers are the heart and soul of Brother Benno's.” This was true in 1983 when Brother Benno's served its first meal, and it is still true in 2017 with our four millionth meal having been served a few weeks ago.

Volunteers come in all shapes and sizes and possess the desire to help others. Truck drivers, food-box packers, thank-you note writers, accountants, receptionists, grant writers, intake office workers, sandwich makers, food-line servers, Thrift Shop sorters, computer room workers, housing and rental aid volunteers, Auxiliary members, Board members, and those who fly under the radar, WE HONOR AND THANK ALL OF YOU FOR GIVING US A PRECIOUS GIFT . . . YOUR TIME!

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EXPERIENCING THE BROTHER BENNO SCENE

by Barbara Ladwig

We Remember. Long-time volunteer **Harold Pirlot** died recently, and he is truly missed at Brother Benno's. He started volunteering once a month many years ago as part of a serving team with a group of friends from Pilgrim Creek Estates in Oceanside, and from there he "branched out" by becoming one of our volunteer barbers. How that happened is one of our favorite stories.

Kay Kutler, in her typically sweet arm-twisting style, chatted with Harold one day and asked him if he'd like to do some barbering. Harold's response was that he'd never cut anybody's hair in his life. Kay is reported as saying, "Oh, you'd do just fine, Harold!" She searched through boxes of donated items in the warehouse, and lo and behold, found an old set of barbering tools, which she gave to her new recruit.

After "practicing" on a few of our Guests, Harold told Kay the tools were too beat up and impossible to work with. Not about to give up, she went out and bought a new set of barbering items and pressed them on him again. Being the gentleman that he was, he tried once more, found out that he was pretty good at it, and that he actually enjoyed the job. Thus was born "Harold the Barber" at Brother Benno's.

Judging from the many donations being received in Harold's memory, he had many friends who are missing him as much as we are.

Peace Award. The Rotary Club of Carlsbad presented its 2017 Peacemaker Award to the Brother Benno Foundation in February. According to its website, "The Peacemaker Award is designed to honor members of the community who have made a significant difference in promoting tolerance, understanding, conflict resolution, and peace-making through their contributions and efforts for Peace Building."

Board Member **Richard Giroux and D.**, a Staff member, were at the dinner meeting to receive the award and to share their experiences and contributions with those in attendance.

Four Million! Early in March we reached

another milestone: serving the four millionth meal to one of our Guests. Starting with 18 homeless men who were served our first meal in 1983, we have consistently reached out to those in need; and for that we are grateful to our many friends, volunteers, and supporters.

At the historic four millionth meal, one of our volunteers shared how Brother Benno's has been a Godsend to him; and several Guests followed with their own stories. One woman remembered that when she was a child, Brother Benno used to drive through her neighborhood distributing his home-baked bread, and that now as an adult, she still occasionally needs the help we offer. Someone said, "The sharing was low-key, but the spirit was high."

Waste Not. I always assumed that "dead" vehicles ended up in the junkyard. Not so at Brother Benno's. Two large trucks that no longer run are now parked behind the Thrift Shop and serve as storage units. We don't waste anything!

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Fourth Saturday Serving Team Catholic Daughters



Please consider contributing to the Brother Benno Foundation by way of your Will, Living Trust, Designated Beneficiary Account, Stocks, Life Insurance, Mutual Funds, or Real Estate. For more information, contact Suzy Martinek, 760-439-1244, ext. 116 or smartinek@miracosta.edu

LUNCHEON BRINGS TOGETHER THE BROTHER BENNO FAMILY

by Barbara Ladwig

A party at Brother Benno's on Sunday, March 19, was like a family reunion. The invitation said it was to be a luncheon to honor our Board of Directors, and that intention was at the forefront; but there was so much more.

Included among the guests were long-time volunteers, and the entire event was hosted by a group that calls itself the Brother Benno Alumni—men and women who have successfully completed our Recovery Program. Lunch was a wonderful array of Italian dishes, finished off with a tempting selection of desserts.

Our dear Founder, **Harold Kutler**, was there with his son **Jim**. His wife **Kay**, who died in 2012, seemed to be there too, as her lovely voice on a CD led us in the Pledge of Allegiance, the Serenity Prayer, and her rousing version of Zip-a-Dee-Doo-Dah—just like it does every morning before our Guests sit down for breakfast.

In a casual moving-the-microphone-around-the-room, Board Members and other volunteers told about how they were “recruited” to become part of Brother Benno's, often by Harold himself. Admitting to caution at first, everyone agreed that there's just something special about being part of this seemingly dysfunctional family that accomplishes so much in spite of itself!

Program alumni spoke about a common theme—the acceptance they felt the minute they walked through the door, usually manifested by hugs from Kay; and they said that the acceptance continued, no matter how often they messed up along the way. They shared that they've been clean and sober for 11, 17, 20 years. Some are now on staff at Brother Benno's; others continue to come back to volunteer. They also mentioned that it was hard for them to believe that no one—not even the Board—gets paid.* That was not part of the world they were used to, where everyone seemed to be out to get as much for themselves as possible.

As we said our good-byes, I had two thoughts: I'm so lucky to be part of this family, and I can't wait to get back to “work”!

**(Because of IRS regulations, it is now necessary for some of our volunteers to become paid staff; but the vast majority continue to work for no pay.)*

PLEASE HELP OUR HELPERS!

Handling, sorting, and storing the hundreds of donations that come into the Center every week is sometimes a daunting task. Add to that the fact that many Staff members and volunteers are involved in the process—not always the same people every day—so keeping track and being efficient are top priorities

We know that people sometimes prefer their donations to end up with particular recipients. Items given to the Thrift Shop will be sold, and the proceeds are then turned over to the Foundation, where they are used for the various needs of running the Center and the Houses. Items targeted for Program Men and Women are used for their day-to-day needs and often include gift cards for Walmart and Target so they can buy hygiene items and clothing such as underwear. And the third category of donations go to the working poor and homeless and can include a myriad of different items, including—but not limited to—food, new or used clothing, and hygiene items.

At a recent meeting of our Communications Group, it was suggested that we ask our donors to clearly mark their donations as follows:

**THRIFT SHOP
PROGRAM MEMBERS
POOR AND HOMELESS**

If you have no preference, no need to mark your donations at all.

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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 Karen Gallagher & Nita Rodriguez

Our first fundraiser was held at Applebee's in Oceanside on March 25. So many hands working together made this a successful and fun event. We wish to thank Applebee's for sponsoring this event, and Chairperson **Judy Harris** and her crew of volunteer servers. Lastly, a heartfelt thanks to all of you who supported our efforts by buying a delicious breakfast and leaving such generous tips, all of which were add to the funds raised.

Once again this year we are coordinating with the National Association of Letter Carriers Stamp Out Hunger® Food Drive on Saturday, May 13. New Auxiliary member **Sue McQwoun** has volunteered to be the Auxiliary's coordinator for this service project. The food donated at the La Costa Post Office goes directly to the Brother Benno warehouse via our own trucks. It is used in food packs for the homeless, working poor, and seniors, and is food that Brother Benno's does not have to buy.

We're going to need many volunteers to help unload the donations from postal vehicles and place them in boxes for loading onto our trucks. More details on how you can volunteer will be posted on the Brother Benno Facebook page and also in the May newsletter. You can also send an email to Auxiliary@BrotherBenno.org requesting more information. (Please put "Stamp Out Hunger" Volunteer in the subject line.)

Claire Carter is coordinating the items needed for the Mother's and Father's Day Gift Bags. The bags will be assembled before the April and May Auxiliary meetings. About 50 bags are distributed at the Center the Saturday morning before Mother's Day and another 50 the Saturday

before Father's Day. We are collecting men's and women's socks (any style) plus "soft-chew granola bars through the end of May. Members—please bring these items to the April and May meetings. Contact Claire Carter (949-836-0438) for more information.

The Auxiliary's Brother Benno Breakfast Club is growing! So many members are willing to serve that we've added a second day. We are now serving on both the first Wednesday and the third Wednesday of the month. Thank you to **Penny Sallee** for coordinating the third Wednesday team.

The next Auxiliary meeting is Wednesday, April 26, in the Center Dining room. Social time and snacks are at 1 p.m. followed by the meeting at 1:30. Why don't you check us out? We welcome all interested men and women to join us at any time.

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If possible, drop off your Thrift Shop donations at the Shop, and the donations for Program Members and Poor and Homeless at the Brother Benno Center. (Please see addresses and directions on back page.)

And as always, Thank You!

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Information & Online donations:brotherbenno.org

Follow Brother Bennos online:

 [Facebook.com/BrotherBennos](https://www.facebook.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
 Dixie & Lou Bales
 Frank Barnet
 Brother Benno
 Edith Blaiser
 Andrea Boersma
 Roland Bond
 Bill Boster
 Agnus & Joan Boyd
 Bill Buckner
 Deacon Art & Mary Carr
 Mary Teresa Carr
 Anna Correia
 Don & Dorothea Daybell
 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

Tom Hayward
 Elizabeth Holms
 Alice Jordan
 Ben Kouns
 Richard Kurtz
 Carole Kutler
 Kay Kutler
 Bill & Louise Lakoff
 Ben E. Lewis
 Helen Lucas
 Bill & Joan Maloney
 Helene McGill
 Michael & Monty
 Nares
 Mary Nordstrom
 Bud & Blanche Ogle
 Ben Osgrove
 Pope John Paul II
 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 Sauer
 Mary Shankle

Naomi Shelton
 Bernice, Samuel &
 Milton Silver
 Will Skinner
 Ann Grier Smith
 Mike Stendahl
 Margaret Stephan
 Virginia Sylwestrzak
 Mother Teresa
 Harold Thompson
 Rosemary Tucker
 Walter Ulloa
 June Williams
 Fred Williamson
 Zeferino & Dancy
 Nares
 Nysewander Family
 Squirrell Family
 Janice Tait
 David Bunnell
 Theodore & Elizabeth
 Hillyer
 Rose & Floyd Caldwell
 Harold Pirlot
 Mona Strunk
 Christine McCoy
 Merle Beckman
 Bruno Acosta
 Marie Atkinson
 Mary Kennedy

Andrew & Horst Zuther
 Gerald Becker
 Opatkiewicz Family
 Molly Wilbur
 Peter Signori
 Donald Deffenbaugh
 Anastasia Dietz
 Bob Strawbridge
 Dick Ellis
 Clay
 Jack Gillen
 Margaret Gregoire
 Molly & John Samuelson
 Gilbert Brown
 Edward Essenmacher
 Rusty Walker
 Norma Gilley
 Daisy & W.X. Ross, Sr.
 Juan Chapa
 Robert Buchach
 Ann Smith

Happy Birthday
 Peggy Parham

In Honor Of
 Julie Anderson

Needs

Gently used furniture Sunglasses Adult and Baby Diapers (sizes 2-3-4-5-6)
 Ladies' socks Men's hoodies, jackets, belts, wallets, jeans (sizes 30 - 36)
 Men's and Women's Razors -- Gillette Mach 3 and Gillette Venus Gift cards for Walmart and Target

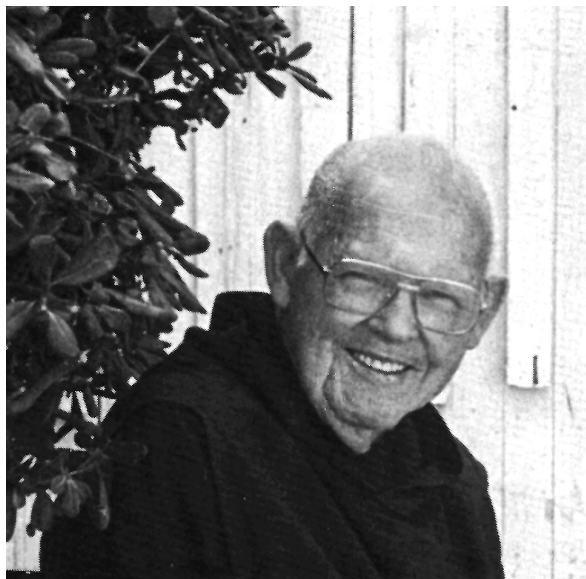
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
April						1 St. Thomas More
2017	3 St. Elizabeth Seton #1	4 St. John The Evangelist	5 Brother Benno's Auxiliary	6 Oceanside Pacific Kiwanis	7 San Luis Rey Mission	8 Riverview Church
Monthly	10 North Coast Methodist	11 Riverview Church	12 1st MLG FCPOA	13 Oceanside Civitans	14 St. Patrick's	15 Girlfriend's Care
Serving	17 Sunrise Kiwanis of Vista	18 Christ the King Lutheran	19 Grace Anglican	20 Rotary Club of Carlsbad	21 St. Elizabeth Seton #2	22 Catholic Daughters
Team	24 Christ Church	25 St. Mark's San Marcos	26 San Luis Rey Methodist	27 Pilgrim Creek	28 Sonrise Christian Fellowship	29 Shiloh Church of God In Christ
Schedule						

Furniture Sales at the Center

3242-B Production Ave., Oceanside 760-529-5481 ext. 200 **Open Tues. - Sat. 9 am to 1 pm**
 We welcome your saleable furniture items. Please call 760-439-1244 ext.102 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 Tue-Sat 10 a.m. to 6 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:

	February 2017	Our 33nd Year		February 2017	Our 33nd Year
Meals	12,704	4,018,256	Loads of laundry	22	27,593
Nights of lodging	792	283,202	Food packs	1,338	313,319
Articles of clothing	5,549	1,240,985	Blankets	183	41,910
Showers	1,109	229,910	Tarps	123	2,083
Haircuts	110	21,402	ID Vouchers	11	8,937
Bus passes	143	81,828	HUGS	1,800	938,794