

# BETTYLOU'S BRIGHT IDEA



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St. Rose Dominican Hospital's  
Women's Committee

Betty Lou Anderson

Story by Carol Bower

Front cover drawing by Sharla Monks

Back cover drawing by Brittley McDonald

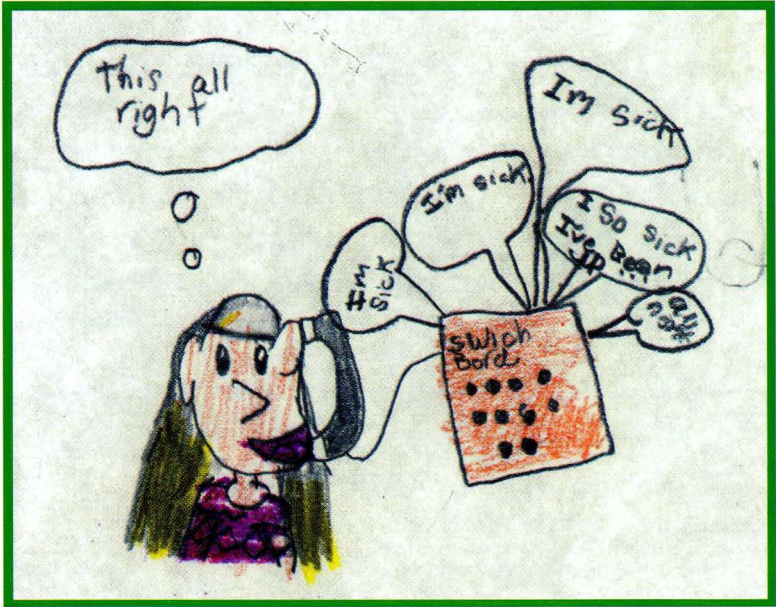
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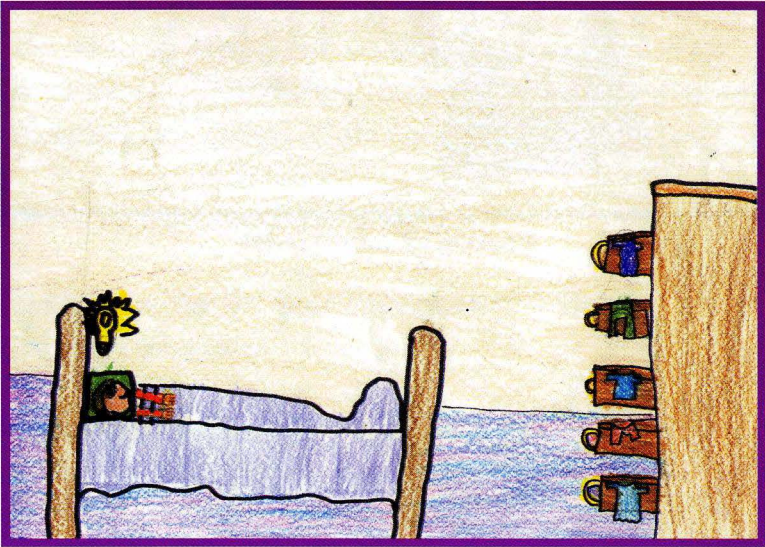
Drawing by James Dunn

This Book Belongs To:

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# BETTYLOU'S BRIGHT IDEA

As she lay awake in bed one night late in the month of March, streams of excitement trickled through Bettylou's body. Visions of one of the biggest upsets in hospital history raced through her mind. The plan had been carefully mapped; everyone had been notified. Like a spy, she awaited the hour when she and her friends would attack.



Drawing by Latasha Johnson

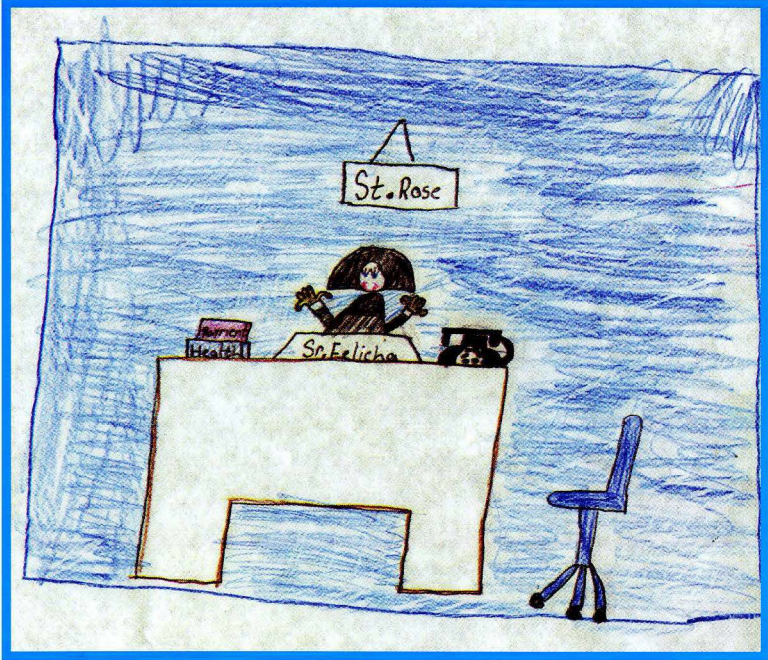
Finally, with one big yawn, she closed her eyes, and drifted away to pleasant dreams.



Drawing by Casey Thevenot

And so she slept well. Cheerily, she awakened the next morning filled with mischievous energy. Indeed, she was ready to greet the day with her Norwegian schoolgirl charm that masked the devilish prank lying within her innocent-looking body.





Drawing by Kyle Moyes

Meanwhile, at St. Rose Hospital, Sister Felicia was arriving. Ambitiously she came, hoping to maintain a well-run facility.



Drawing by Karley Royal

Before she could begin to straighten the papers strewn on her desktop, the telephone rang. Bettylou Anderson, the switchboard operator, was calling. "Sister" she said, I can't come to work today. I am so sick, and have been awake all night." Sister told her not to worry, everything would be fine.



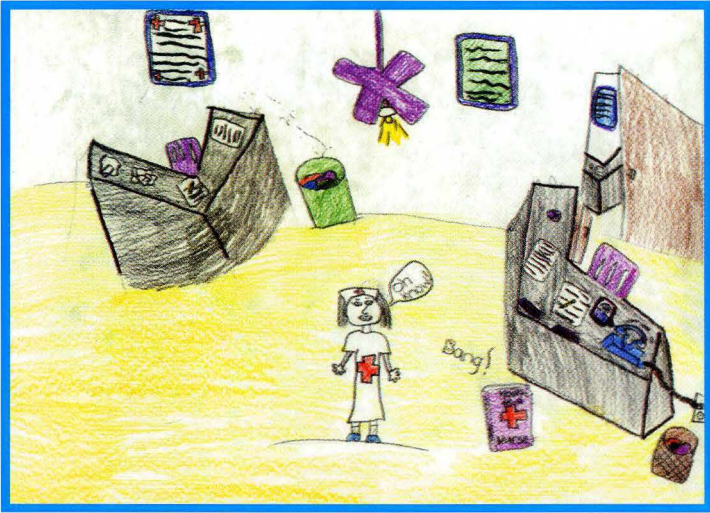


Drawing by Jennifer Trevillian

Just after placing the phone on its hook, it rang again. This time it was Mary calling to excuse herself from work because of a severe stomach upset. When sister replaced the phone, she became more concerned. Back in those days, there weren't many people employed at the hospital. The work was dependent on a few, and now two were sick.

"Oh well," Sister said to herself, "I'll just have to make do." Before she could seek assistance, another employee called. She too was sick. This time it was the Admitting Nurse. And to make matters worse, her two roommates who worked as nurses in the Surgery Department, were sick. Three of them would not be coming to work today.





Drawing by Jenna Williams



Drawing by Nicole Lightell

At this moment, Sister Felicia was about to give up. Suddenly a book fell from the edge of her desk. It hit the floor with a loud "BANG". The noise startled her, and a thought entered her mind. She decided to walk to the chapel and say a prayer. At least by doing this, some temporary relief would be felt. What an upsetting day!



Drawing by Courtney McConnell

She left her office, locking the door behind, and walked the narrow hallway leading to the chapel. After taking a seat in one of the pews, she changed her position and knelt down; maybe her prayers would be better heard.





Drawing by Ellyn Hurst

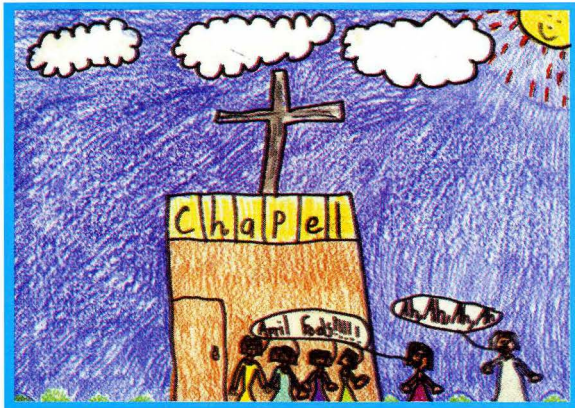
While bent in prayer asking the Lord for guidance, something was happening behind her. A small group of young women were gathering in the back of the chapel. One-by-one they tip-toed in. They watched Sister praying. Then a slight wave of guilt came over them. In unison, they knelt down and waited for Sister to finish.



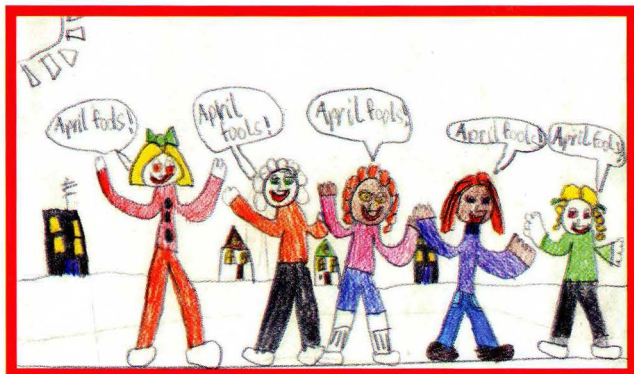
Drawing by Kyle Racker

Finally Sister arose. When she turned to leave, she was shaken beyond belief. There behind her, were five ladies kneeling on the chapel floor. Together they arose and walked silently outside. Now if Sister had been just a little more observant, she would have detected a snickering face here and there.



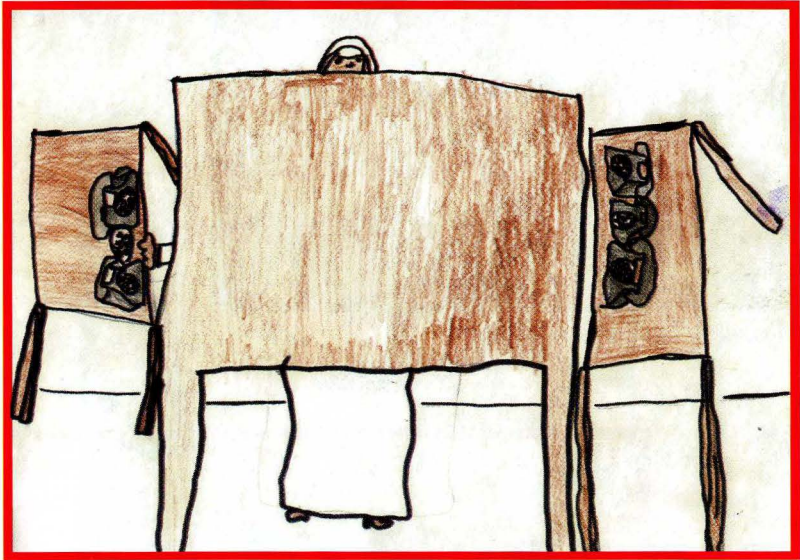


Drawing by Michael Kachnik



Drawing by Brittany Champeaux

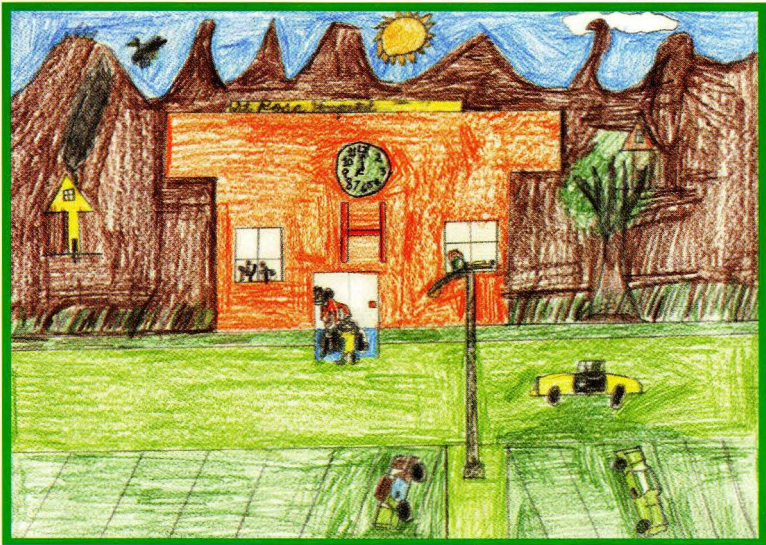
While following them, she began to notice someone directing the group. It was Bettylou motioning to her cohorts. When they were far enough away so as to not disturb the silence reserved for the house of prayer and meditation, a chorus of voices yelled, “April Fools!”



Drawing by David Weldon

Sister gasped, then clasped her hands together. She did not know whether to become angry or join in their laughter. Her red face suddenly beamed a wide smile when she remembered that today was April 1.





Drawing by Jason Kiser

The clock in the hallway was ticking away. When the ladies saw the hands of the clock nearing 8:00 a.m., they rushed to their respective positions. The vacancies were again filled, and activity resumed at the hospital.



Drawing by Alicia Call

Later in the day, Sister Felicia went to the switchboard to see how the operator was doing. She chuckled to herself as she watched Bettylou's hands pushing and pulling the telephone wires in and out of the holes on the board.





Drawing by Nicholas Robinson

Sister asked how the day was going. Bettylou replied, “Uffda!” You see, Bettylou’s parents were Norwegian and often spoke the native language at home. In Norway, when a person is asked about the day and it is a very bad one, they reply, “Uffda”.

Many stories remain in the hearts of those who know or have worked with Bettylou at St. Rose, None however, are as deeply embedded in their memories as those of the April Fools’ joke, and her use of the word “Uffda”.

# BIOGRAPHY

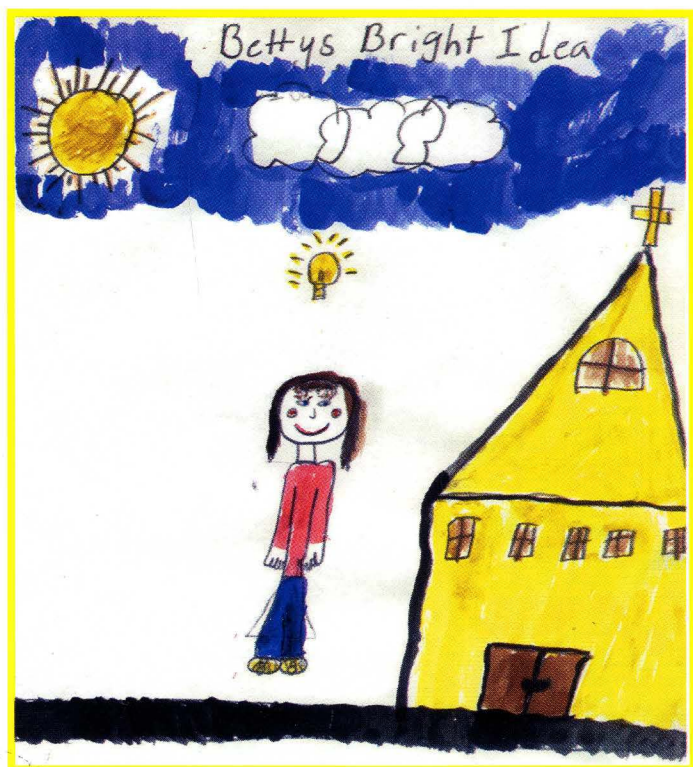
Born in Billings, Montana, where she attended elementary school in a one-room schoolhouse, Bettylou Anderson arrived in Henderson, Nevada in March of 1943.

Her parents, tiring of the cold Montana winters, were searching for farm work in California. While en route, they made a stop in Henderson, Nevada. The climate appealed to them, and Bettylou's father acquired a job at one of the local industrial plants. From that day on, they made Henderson their home.

In 1945 Bettylou began work at the Basic Magnesium Hospital which the Adrian Dominican Sisters subsequently purchased from the War Assets Administration. This occurred on June 27, 1947, and the hospital was renamed St. Rose Delima. In recent years the name has been changed to St. Rose Dominican.

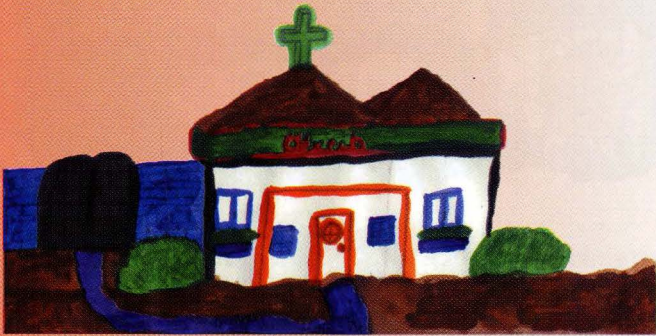
An invaluable employee, she worked as an Administrative Clerk, a Switchboard Operator, and eventually became an Assistant Administrator. All this occurred between 1945 through 1979 when she retired. Bettylou and her husband reside in Henderson where they enjoy playing golf and other activities. Her roots beckon her return each summer to the family homestead in Billings, Montana. Some of her favorite cooking recipes can be found in a treasured memory cookbook, a copy of which is housed in the Henderson Museum.

# AUTOGRAPHS



Drawing by Brittley McDonald





Henderson, Nevada  
March, 2001