

Henderson - Hospital

Dear Annie



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Drawing by Thalia M. Trentacarlina

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DEAR ANNIE

The sun was beginning to set as Eleanor sat at her desk peering through the hospital window. Recently she had retired from her nursing career at St. Rose Hospital. Thoughts of Annie, the life-like doll she used for demonstration in the CPR classes she taught, entered her mind. With pen in hand she began to write.



Drawing by Sierra Lee

Dear Annie,

Before I become too old and can no longer remember the wonderful times we've shared, I want to thank you for being there for me. As a doll, you represented all of humankind. You were child and adult alike. You allowed me to share the gift of love. Without you I could not have accomplished what has been done.



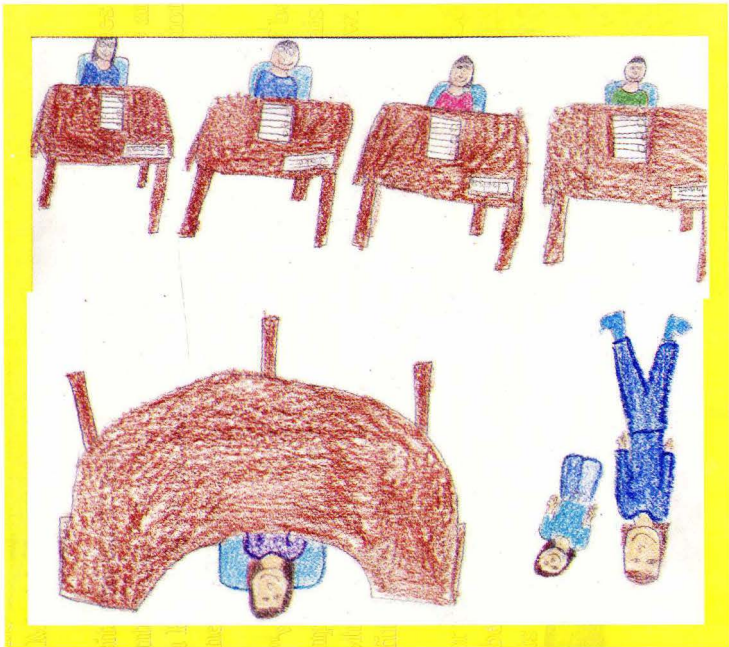
Drawing by Talhan Lucero



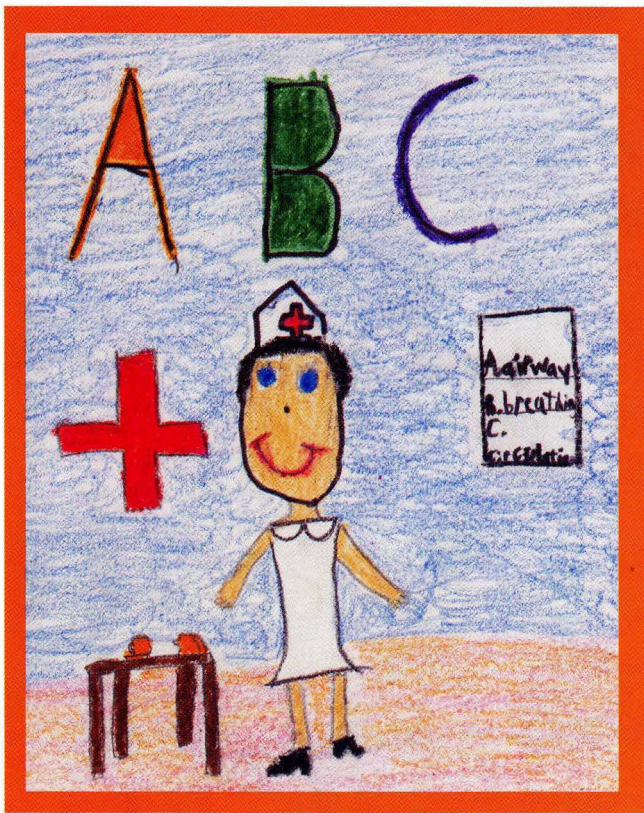
Drawing by Iesha Nash

I've taught many classes with you at my side. I can only hope that lives have been saved because of us. Our Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) moments were the best ever. You looked so cute dressed in your blue jacket with matching pants. The smile on your face is unforgettable!

Often when we entered the classroom and looked at all the new students, I would become frightened. The fear was my own, you did nothing wrong. I was afraid someone would not understand what I was about to say, and in case of an emergency, the CPR technique would not be carried out properly. Hopefully we did it right.



Drawing by Stephanie Nam



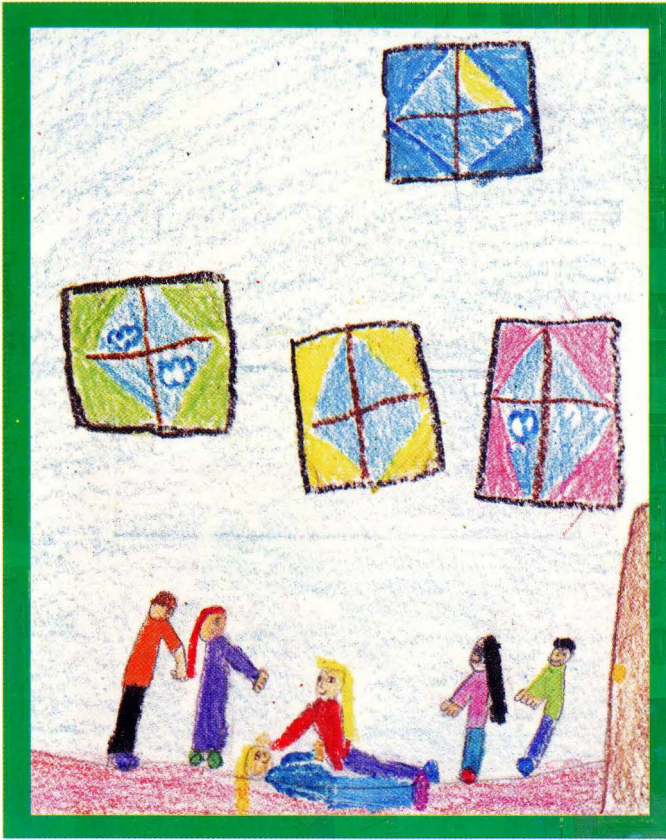
Drawing by Edgar Penaloza

If you never learned the entire alphabet, surely you will at least remember the first three letters: A, B, and C. They stand for airway, breathing, and circulation. Doesn't that sound familiar?

I'm sorry if I hurt your head while trying to demonstrate the breathing exercise. I didn't mean to hurt you; it was a necessary part of the instruction. And your poor lips must be raw and sore by now after the frequent attempts made to force air into your lungs. Bending over your body lying still on the floor wasn't easy on our backs either.



Drawing by Jasmine Pratti



Drawing by Jackie Song

The cave in your chest must be pretty deep. After all, numerous hands were placed there to depress it. It's a wonder you didn't scream! I would have.

Remember the time we were instructing the Fire Department and an overweight fireman knelt beside you on the floor? His pants ripped a little. Oh, how we laughed! It took me fifteen minutes to get everyone under control.



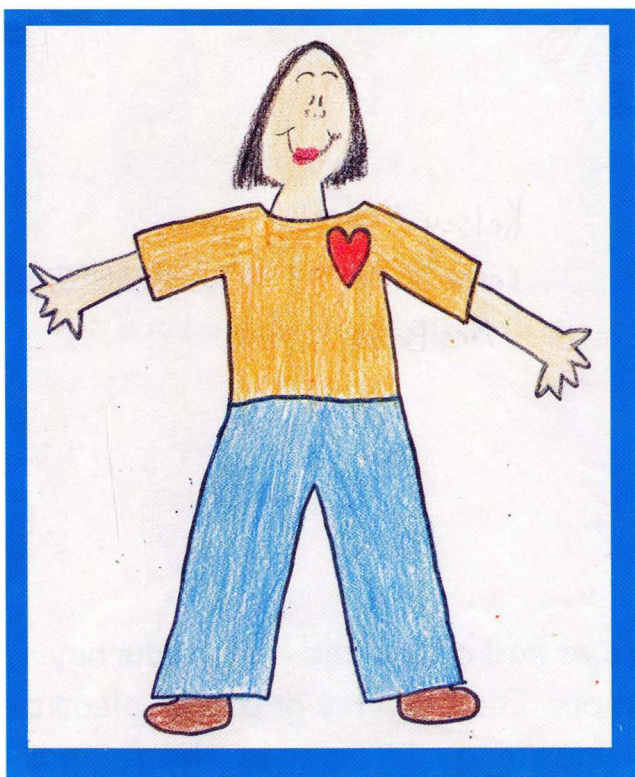
Drawing by Josilyn Delacruz



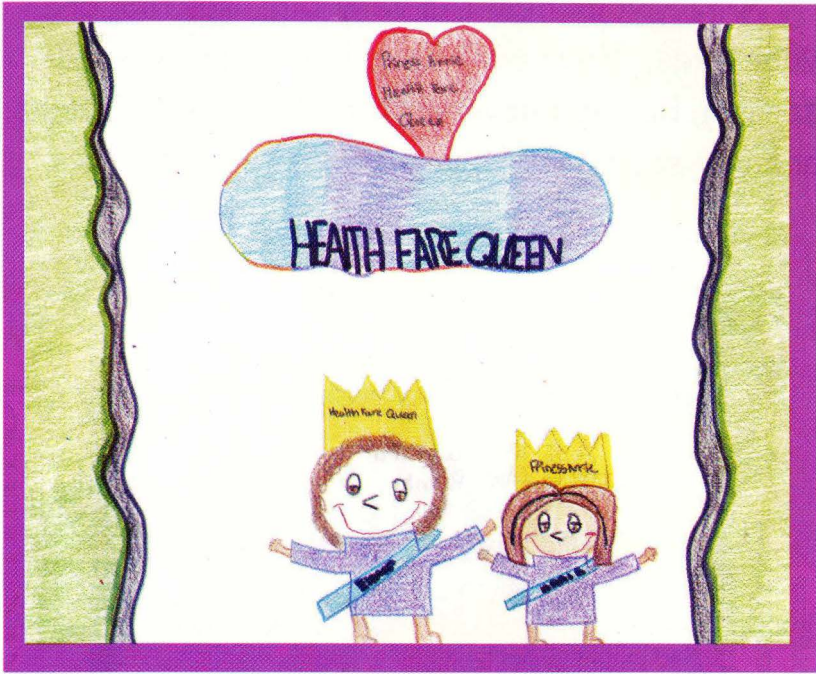
Drawing by Brooke Heroy

And remember the bunch of keys I wore around my waist? I used to call them the "Keys to the Kingdom". They were for special hospital rooms. Lord knows how many times I tangled your little feet in them! I'm sorry.

Annie, your heart is very big; so, too, are your eyes. Your ears have heard many words spoken, but you never uttered a sound. These are our secrets. Thank you.



Drawing by Kelsey Mastroluca



Drawing by Jessica Lara

We've had a long and happy journey together. It's been my greatest pleasure to carry you along. So many of the friends we've met along the way still remember you. You are a doll! Nowadays, they call me the Health Fair Queen; but you, Annie, are my princess.

Maybe someday I'll be able to hold you in
my arms once again.

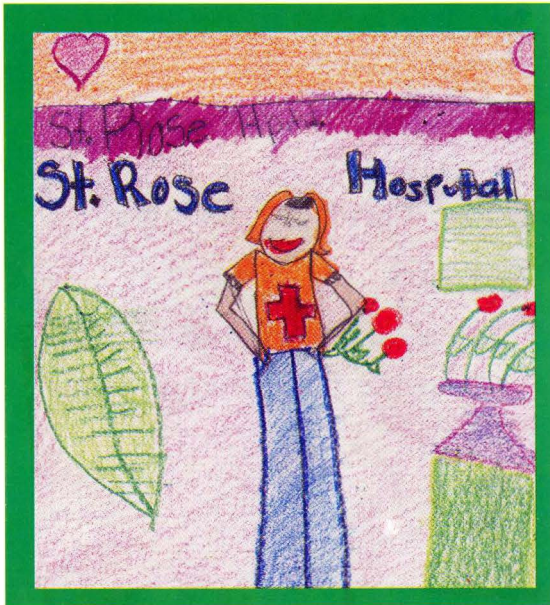
I love you, Eleanor



Drawing by Parker Riffin



Drawing by Amanda Rice



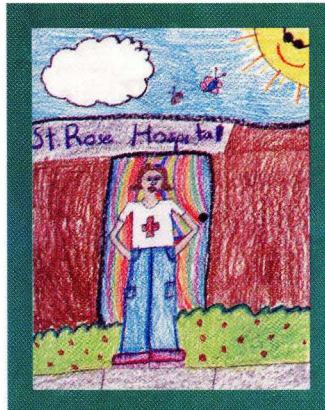
Drawing by Kristina Pease

BIOGRAPHY

Eleanor Cunningham graduated from nursing school at Mt. Sinai Hospital in New York City. In the early 50's she traveled to California where she obtained work as a nurse at Cedars of Lebanon Hospital. Later she became the first Head Nurse at Mt. Sinai Hospital in Beverly Hills. While there she met and married her husband. They moved to Las Vegas, and in 1958, she began work at St. Rose Hospital. Raising a family temporarily interrupted her career.

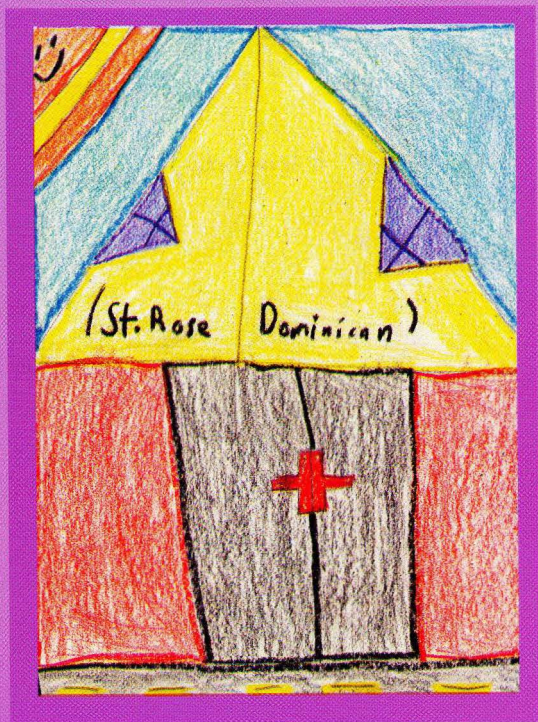
Upon her return, she was hired as Staff Nurse. She advanced to full-time work as Staff Educator. After twenty-eight years as an educator in nursing, CPR, and patient-diabetes, she retired in 1992.

In 1990 she was recognized by the March of Dimes as Nurse of the Year for longevity. Many hours devoted to volunteer projects have gained her the admiration of her peers as well as the Henderson and Las Vegas communities. She continues to volunteer at a local hospital as a patient-diabetic instructor.



AUTOGRAPHS

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