

# Sister Buckaroo



Published by  
St. Rose Dominican Hospital  
Women's Committee

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Front cover drawing by Joshua Buck

Biography page drawing by Alicia Forrester

Back cover drawing by Jasmine Perez

Graphic layout by Jean Byrd

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McCaw and Robert L. Taylor Elementary Schools

Printed by Black Mountain Graphics

Published by St. Rose Dominican Hospital Women's  
Committee

Henderson, Nevada

March 2003



Drawing by Miranda Lemons

This book belongs to:

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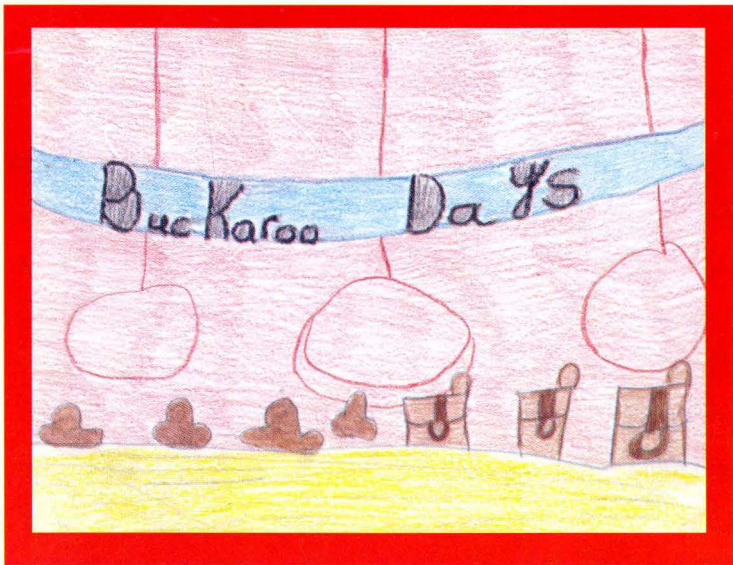
## SISTER BUCKAROO

"Oh What a Beautiful Morning", sang Sister Robert Joseph as she stacked her breakfast dishes into the kitchen sink. After a year of teaching health and nutrition programs to Henderson Elementary School children, the time to have real fun had finally arrived. Today was the beginning of the annual "Buckaroo Days" celebration.



Drawing by Andrea Wallace

During Buckaroo Days, St. Rose Hospital hosted a welcome program for local students. The purpose was to educate them about various hospital functions. Decorations such as worn saddles and western hats lay on tables. Bales of hay lined the hallways. Draped around some were rope lassos with leather trim.



Drawing by Calandra Rose



Drawing by William Hastings

The hospital employees, wearing blue jeans and cowboy boots, bustled about. Country music rang through the speakers in the entry. Even Sister Robert Joseph added a western touch to her white shirt, skirt, and lab coat. She readied herself for work by tying a red, white, and black calico print scarf around her neck. Then she placed a wide-brim straw hat on her head. Out the door she went, trotting along to the hospital.



School buses began to arrive at 10:00 a.m. Sister greeted the students with a cheerful "Howdy", as they stepped off the bus. "Good morning, Sister," they replied. Giggling, they walked with their teachers through the hospital front door.



Drawing by Ana Munoz



Drawing by Katrina Cregger

"Welcome to St. Rose Hospital," Sister began. "Today we will be visiting some important departments. When we're finished, we'll have lunch in the cafeteria." Standing attentively, the boys and girls smiled with approval.



First visit was to the Emergency Room. There they saw a doctor and two nurses bending over an old man lying on an examining table. Quietly they watched as an attendant placed an intravenous needle into his arm. Poor Mr. Jones! Apparently he was suffering from heat exhaustion. Working all day in the hot sun without drinking enough water left him nearly lifeless. When they heard the doctor say, "He'll be fine in a couple of days," they quietly backed out the door.



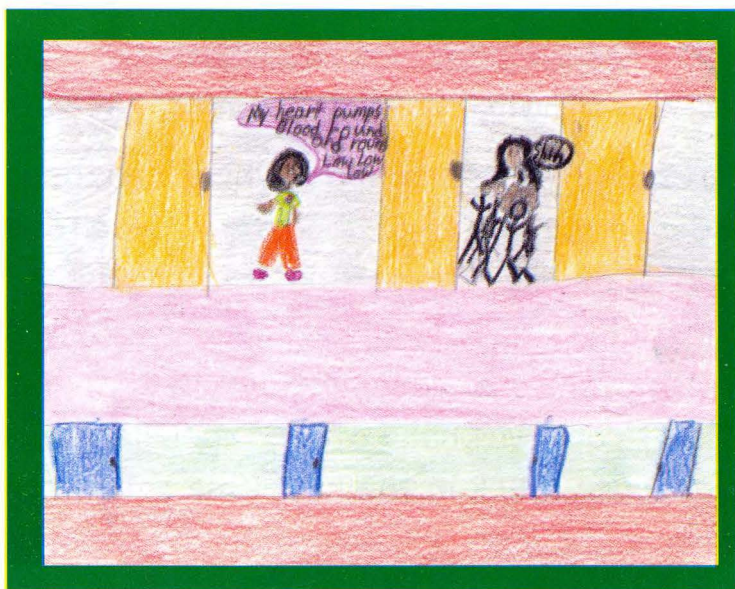
Drawing by Fernando Munguia



Drawing by Stephanie Ramos

A few steps away led them to the Laboratory where a long tray containing vials of blood samples caught their eyes. At a table sat several technologists working with machines called blood analyzers. Another technologist stood at a counter peering through a microscope. Sister explained how, with just a slight pin prick to the finger, samples of blood are obtained.

Lingering in thought, Sally who stood near the front remembered the song Sister used to teach them. She began to sing, "My Heart Pumps Blood Round and Round". Her teacher overheard, and with a finger held to her lips, motioned Sally to hush.



Drawing by Stephanie Benavidez

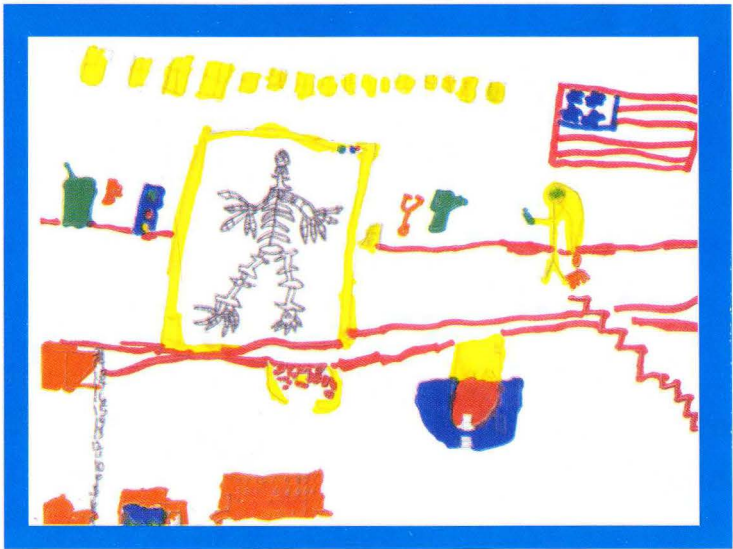




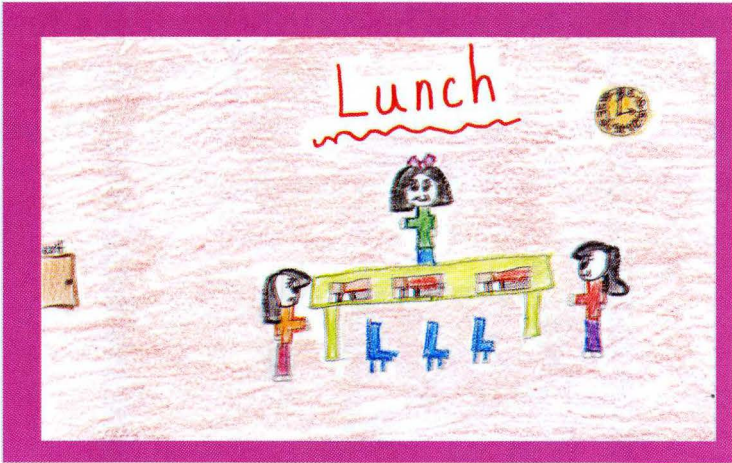
Drawing by Krystal Myers

Jeffrey, another child in the group, had wandered outside the Laboratory. He stooped at a bale of hay to tug at a narrow piece of rope sticking out. Then he screamed, "Sister, look!" Sister came running, and saw that the piece of rope was none other than the tail of a field mouse stuck in the hay. She called for a Maintenance Man. He came quickly, carrying in his hand a bag for disposal. Thank God, the mouse had suffocated and was dead!

The last department to visit was X-ray where they learned how x-ray machines take pictures of organs and bones inside the body. They even got to see some pictures that were hanging on the lighted screen.



Drawing by Efrain Gomez



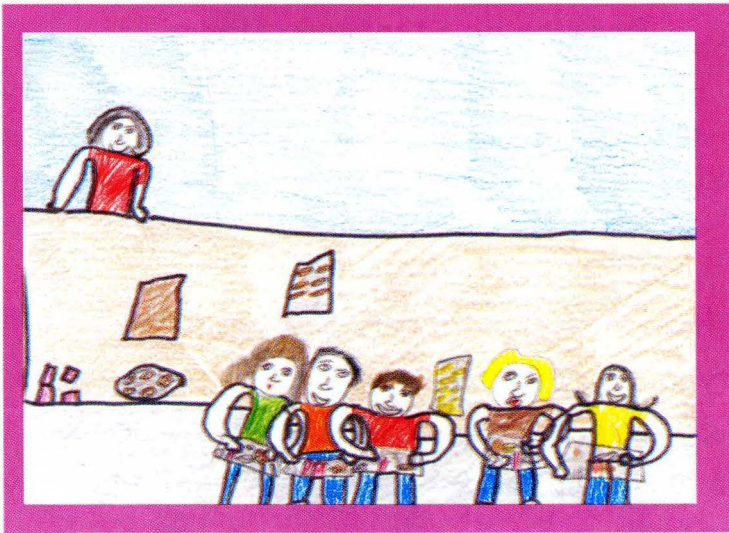
Drawing by Rayneica Gulley

At the end of the trail, they entered the cafeteria where a hearty lunch awaited. The children stood in line, then each began by lifting a tray. Proceeding forward, they stacked their trays with warm puffy hot dogs, corn on the cob, and baked beans. Some added cookies and milk for dessert.



When they finished eating, the children stood and presented Sister with a surprise poem they had written. It went like this:

Thank you Sister, thank you very much.  
We enjoyed our visit that had your tender touch.  
At home tonight when we say our prayers,  
We'll remember you as the one who cares.



Drawing by Consuela Cabrena



Drawing by Stephanie Albers

Choking back tears, Sister thanked everyone for coming. But when their backs turned to leave, she yanked a handkerchief from her side pocket. Her tears then happily flowed.

## BIOGRAPHY

Margaret Bailey was born on April 22, 1923, in Detroit, Michigan. She entered the Dominican Order of Sisters January 7, 1940, and chose the name Sister Robert Joseph in honor of one of her brothers.

She began teaching in 1941, as an elementary school teacher, and was assigned to missions in Illinois, Ohio, Michigan, Florida, Arizona, California, and lastly Henderson, Nevada. During the summer months when school was not in session, she worked as a volunteer dietician at St. Rose Hospital. Her teaching career terminated when St. Peter's School closed. She then became Director of Food Services at the hospital.

Her passion for education caused her to initiate several school programs through the hospital's Community Outreach Program. Special emphasis was on health, heart, nutrition, and reading. Sister Robert Joseph retired in 1997, and now lives in Adrian, Michigan, at the mother house of the Dominican Sisters.





# AUTOGRAPHS

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