

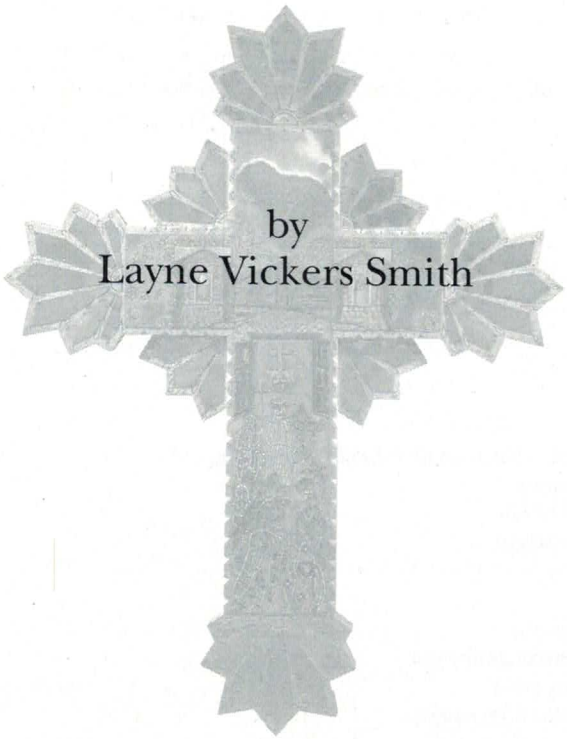
Holy Cross Hospital

SINCE 1936, A LEGACY OF CARING

by Layne Vickers Smith

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by Layne Vickers Smith
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This book is dedicated with gratitude

to the patients who have put their trust in the staff

of Holy Cross Hospital for sixty-five years.

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Foreword



As both mayor of Taos and the Chairman of the Holy Cross Hospital Board of Trustees, I know how important Holy Cross Hospital is to this community. In order for a community to thrive, it must have a good health-care system. In Taos we are fortunate to have an excellent facility with a superior medical staff to take care of our community's medical needs and also the needs of our many visitors. Since Taos is a quality tourist destination, the population we serve is always greater than our resident population.

Holy Cross Hospital began with the donation of a building by Mabel Dodge Luhan in 1936. From the beginning, Taoseños came to the support of the hospital. The Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth, who first operated Holy Cross, realized the need for a larger facility, which they built in 1960. When the sisters could no longer operate the hospital, it changed hands several times until Taos County voters overwhelmingly passed two bond issues in the 1990s to build and equip a new hospital on Weimer Road. Now, due to increasing patient load and shortage of space, Holy Cross Hospital plans to expand again, this time without needing to ask for taxpayers' help.

We are proud of the excellence of our medical care. We are equally proud of Taos' legacy of care and concern, which has made that level of quality possible.

Frederick A. Peralta

CHAPTER ONE

Where we think we are needed

YOU CANNOT COME TO TAOS WITHOUT FEELING THAT HERE IS ONE OF THE CHOSEN SPOTS ON EARTH. —D. H. LAWRENCE

THE YEAR 1936 was momentous. In Europe, Germany gave Adolph Hitler a majority of the vote and a civil war erupted in Spain. In England, King George V died and was succeeded by his son Edward VIII, who gave up the crown for the American divorcee he loved. In America, Franklin Delano Roosevelt won reelection in a landslide.

In San Francisco, a young couple considered the future.

Dr. Ashley Pond III had finished his residency, and the California hospital wanted him to stay. His wife, Lucille (Lou), was originally from Minnesota, and he had grown up in New Mexico. They met at Yale, where she graduated from the nursing program and he from the medical school. They married in Santa Fe before moving to California.

Now where would they go? It was time to make a decision.

In an interview, Lou Pond recalled her husband as saying, "We have three choices: we can stay in hospital work . . . or we can go where we think we can make the most money . . . or we can consider spots where we think we are needed."



Where We Are Needed: Lucille Olson and Ashley Pond III wed in Santa Fe in 1935. The following year the doctor-nurse team moved to Taos. Pond became known as Taos' first modern physician.

Photo courtesy of the Pond family.

The interview, conducted by Bill Hemp, is part of the *Let's Talk About Historic Taos* videotape series produced in 1998 by the Taos County Historical Society.

Dr. Pond's father was one of the founders of the Los Alamos Boys Ranch School, "so he knew the country, and he knew that rural New Mexico needed doctors," Lou said. "So that is why we came and stayed."

When the Ponds came to Taos, all of northern New Mexico was made up of small villages or settlements. The population of Don Fernando de Taos was less than two thousand and approximately 80 percent Spanish-American and 20 percent Anglo-American, according to Ruth Miller Martinez, then county rural-school supervisor, in manuscript notes made in 1936–1937. Population figures can be misleading. Taos Mayor Frederick A. Peralta notes that years later he grew up just three-quarters of a mile from the Plaza and his home was then considered outside the town limits.

The supervisor listed the population of San Geronimo de Taos, the ancient pueblo at the foot of Taos Mountain, as seven hundred. She did not note the population of Ranchos de Taos, about four miles away, which she characterized as an "almost (one) hundred percent Spanish-speaking settlement."



The Taos Touch: A street lamp faces stores on the Taos Plaza, 1939. A year earlier, the town made front-page headlines when the Associated Press reported that Taos, unable to pay for street-lamp electricity, planned to install oil-burning lamps on dark corners. Village youths were recruited as lamplighters under the plan conceived by a group headed by artist Rebecca James. "It's the Taos touch," wrote *The Santa Fe New Mexican*. "That's why Taos is Taos, lighting its own way in its own style."

Photo from the New Mexico Department of Tourism Photo Collection, No. 2785, courtesy New Mexico State Records Center and Archives.

THE PILL HOTEL

The couple moved into the Martin Hotel, run by the widow of T. P. (Doc) Martin, the popular horse-and-buggy doctor who had died a year before. Taoseños called it the "Pill Hotel."

"Dr. Martin very seldom sent out bills," Lou Pond said, "so when he died, Mrs. Martin decided she was going to do something with that the hotel and called in some of the outstanding bills. Most were collected in materials and labor, not cash."

In her memoir, *Edge of Taos Desert,* Mabel Dodge Luhan wrote that she enjoyed talking with Doc Martin. "He was one of the most energetic men in the village, and he was always ready to do anyone a good turn," she wrote.

But she described his office as "a caution!" Along the broad windowsill, there were all kinds of instruments: forceps, pincers, scalpels, hypodermics, mixed up with bottles of pills, pamphlets, loose rolls of absorbent cotton, surgeon's plaster, dust, and copies of the *Journal of the American Medical Association.*

She continued, "Several very large bottles labeled Castor Oil and Milk of Bismuth, and a variety of disinfectants stood on the top of a chaotic roll-top desk, and on a shelf along the wall ranged smaller bottles of pills: aspirin, rhubarb, antipyrin, and so on." The fishnet curtains had rents, and the floor, she wrote, "had a good many bloodstains on it, too. . . . Two Morris chairs faced each other under this window, for doctor and patient, and they, too, were ominously stained."

Fortunately, the Ponds did not take over Doc Martin's old office. Instead, they saw patients in the extra room of an apartment they rented from his widow. They were a husband-wife and a doctor-nurse team in a town that boasted water and sewer systems and a fire truck but no hospital. The closest hospital was in Santa Fe, a drive of more than seventy miles in cars that generally could not go more than forty-five miles an hour over the heavily potholed road.

The Ponds borrowed fifteen hundred dollars and ordered office supplies and furniture from Denver. During the first year on Bent Street, they performed a knee surgery, a tonsillectomy, delivery of a baby, and care of a young Rio Hondo man very ill with typhoid, according to Lou Pond's notes. Usual complaints included ringworm, scabies, trench mouth, and "crawlies" on the head. The doctor also made house calls, and she recorded one for an ingrown toenail.

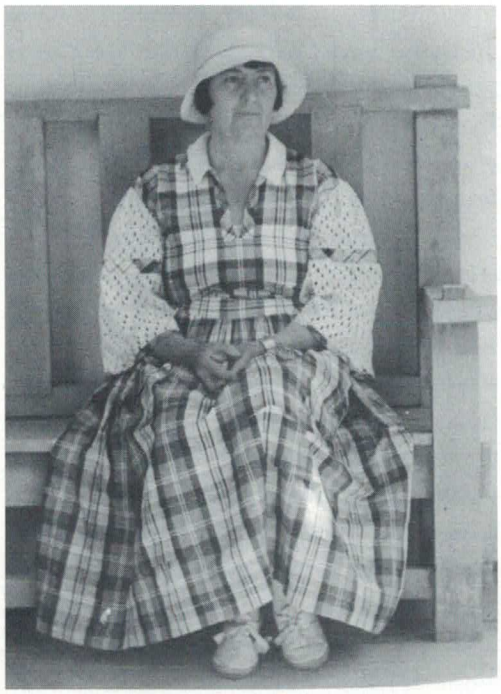
"It was a wonderful time to arrive in Taos," Lou Pond said. The Taos art colony had been active since 1898 when two painters from the East broke a wagon wheel, discovered Taos, and stayed. She especially remembered Joseph Sharp, Oscar Berninghaus, Bert G. Phillips, Ernest L. Blumenschein, E. Martin Hennings, Kenneth Adams, Victor Higgins, Andrew Dasburg, Joseph Fleck, and Regina Cooke.

"If only we had [had] money to buy some of their treasures," she later wrote. "But office visits at fifty cents to a dollar fifty didn't allow any extras."

MABEL DODGE LUHAN

The art world was where Mabel Dodge Luhan felt at home. After holding salons in New York and Europe, the legendary art patroness had come to Taos about twenty years earlier and declared it the Garden of Eden. She stayed in Taos until her death in 1962.

She publicized the three cultures (Pueblo, Hispanic, Anglo) and the breathtaking scenery, and attracted artists and writers to



Mabel Dodge Luhan in the 1930s

Photo by Will Connell. Courtesy Museum of New Mexico. Negative No. 16755.

Taos, which they sometimes called "Mabel Town."

She had arrived as Mabel Ganson Evans Dodge Sterne. She divorced her husband, painter Maurice Sterne, and married Antonio (Tony) Luhan from the Taos Pueblo. Theirs was a controversial pairing, but many residents today can remember the two, a striking couple, as they appeared on the Taos Plaza. Former Mayor Eloy Jeantete remembers Tony as a big, commanding man with his long braids, colorful blanket, moccasins, and "expensive gabardine pants." His wife, Mary Jeantete, also remembers Mabel as expensively dressed, wearing long skirts. Mabel's hair was cut in a bob with straight bangs.

Mabel, a flamboyant figure, had both admirers and detractors. Even today Taoseños are divided in their opinions of her. Some say she put Taos on the map. Others say the writers, artists and free-thinkers she attracted were a fringe element that did not directly affect the community. One old Taoseño referred to the arrival of Mabel and her followers as "the first time the hippies came to Taos."

In addition to art activities, travel, and writing books and articles, Mabel liked to build and to entertain. Her large adobe home, Los Gallos (the roosters), became a center of hospitality. In 1926 she built another large house south of town called La Posta. According to Taos historian Vicente Martinez, it was so named because of a long post that "extends from the first-floor stairwell and protrudes through the second-story roof." Martinez's research indicates the post may have dated from a livery stable, or post house, on the property that might have been used by Long John Dunn for his stagecoach operation.

La Posta was built for Mabel's son, John Evans, and his bride. But the couple did not like the home and did not stay in Taos. In 1929 Mabel put the house on the market for eighty thousand dollars, a sum that would equal about ten times that in today's dollars. It was advertised as being suitable as a rental for a luxury home or resort. It sat vacant for several years.

LOOKING US OVER

The Ponds arrived in Taos in July 1936. As with all newcomers, the new doctor and his wife were scrutinized.

"Mabel apparently had been looking us over," Lou Pond wrote. "[She] almost showered us with attention and apparently was rather impressed that a young, well-trained doctor and nurse wife would come to Taos, with every intention of staying awhile."

In September, the Ponds' phone rang. It was Mabel.

Lupita Remembers Mabel



"Mabel always extended her hand," remembers Lupita Valerio, as she stands beside the portrait of Mabel Dodge Luhan in Holy Cross Hospital. In the early 1940s, she typed a book manuscript for Mabel and charged her thirty-six dollars. Mabel insisted on paying seventy-five dollars. She also remembers Mabel buying bolts of fabric and boxes of socks at J. C. Penney's to give to needy school children.

The plaque below the portrait was originally mounted on La Posta, the house Mabel donated, which was later renamed Holy Cross Hospital. The plaque now is in the hallway of the hospital on Weimer Road.





La Posta

"Please, at two o'clock this afternoon, meet me," she said. "I want you to look over something with me."

They met her at La Posta, which was far enough south of town that it seemed in the country. "She took us all through the building," Lou Pond said. "We had no idea what the purpose was."

Then Mabel turned to the young couple.

"Would this make a hospital?" she asked.

"Well, after we had taken care of patients in an extra room," Lou Pond said, "we decided that would make a wonderful hospital."

CHAPTER TWO

The Sisters arrive

"I IMAGINE the building was a 'white elephant' for Mabel," Lou Pond said later. "I learned later that she had offered it (La Posta) to the Taos County government, but they didn't have any money. And I think she'd offered it to the Town of Taos, and they didn't feel apparently they had the resources to develop it; and I think she'd even approached a few business people to see if she could interest them.

"Finally," she continued, "a group of us contacted the Archbishop in Santa Fe (Archbishop Rudolph A. Gerken) to see if some of the nursing orders would consider taking the hospital. He found the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth out of Chicago, predominantly Polish, and they took the hospital and started right away in redoing the whole building."

The Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth is primarily a teaching and nursing order, established more than 125 years ago in Rome. The order was founded by Mary of Jesus the Good Shepherd (Frances Siedliska), who presented her plans for the congregation to Pope Pius IX. She hoped to transcend national boundaries: Homes opened in Poland, France, England, and, in 1885, the United States. The sisters now number more than 1,700 and minister in fourteen countries. The foundress was declared "Blessed" in an official church ceremony in 1989.

The nuns who arrived in Taos to open the new hospital brought with them their motto, "Best Patient Care." The ten-bed hospital opened officially January 30, 1937, but making a hospital from Mabel's "white elephant" proved to be a challenge. The sisters were hardworking and took to the challenge. They named the building Holy Cross Hospital.

MAKING A HOSPITAL FROM MABEL'S WHITE ELEPHANT

"The first remodeling was for an operating room, even before the rest of the building was usable," Lou said. It was put on the second floor. Originally, the second story had had three large rooms: At one end was a studio, the middle was to be a ballroom, and the room with the southern exposure was intended as a solarium, according to her notes. These were divided into the operating room, the X-ray, and the obstetrics and nursery units. The middle area became a men's ward and the solarium a women's ward. The original guestrooms became offices.

"The Taos News" was originally called "El Crepusculo." It was changed to "The Taos News" on July 30, 1959.

The first floor remained basically the same. The nuns converted the dining room into a chapel. Later it became a conference room. Other first-floor space became the nuns' living quarters, and soon was known as "the convent."

Since all medical services were on the second floor, patients on stretchers had to be carried, with some difficulty, up a curved stairway. A resident chaplain designed and supervised the building of an elevator run manually by a rope. Later it was converted to run by electricity.

But what La Posta may have lacked in efficiency, it compensated for in beauty and history: beams and latillas on the ceilings, dark-red tiles made in Taos on the floors, and many beautiful wood doors carved by Manuel Reyna from the Taos Pueblo. Historian Vicente M. Martinez, as part of the La Loma Plaza Historic District Resurvey Project, wrote that Al Yaple, who installed door and window frames, claimed that old lead bullets "big as your fist" were discovered in wood used in La Posta. Yaple said Mabel took the two-foot timbers from old commissaries and forts in the area, Martinez wrote.

An October 31, 1929, article in *The Taos News* said the adobe among the trees, "in spite of its recent building, looks as if it might have stood in this spot for many, many years."

First Staff Meeting

Holy Cross Hospital officially opened January 30, 1937, but its first official staff business meeting was not held until July 12. Sister Mary Grace presided and recorded minutes. It was agreed that the executive board comprise four doctors and two sisters, that the regular meeting be held the first Tuesday of each month, and that the bylaws of Bethania Hospital be adopted.

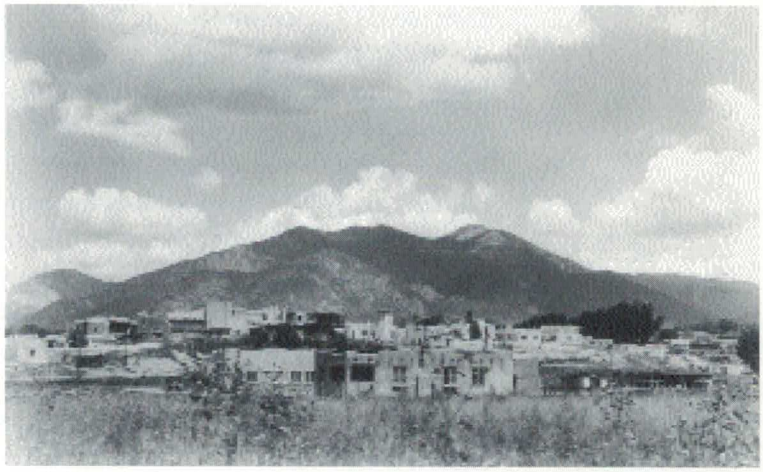
The four physicians who attended were Dr. Warner A. Onstine, who was elected president; Dr. Ashley Pond III, elected secretary; and Doctors R. Hollis and W. E. Huddleston. They agreed that each doctor would be assigned one week each month to take care of patients who arrived at the hospital without doctors of their own.

The report for July 1937 showed twenty-three patients were admitted for a total of 118 patient days. The daily average was three patients, but there were eight surgery patients, seven medical patients, and four obstetrical patients. Four births and one death were reported.

White elephant or not, Mabel Dodge Luhan's gift seems to have been, from the very beginning, a perfect symbol of how the rich history and cultural heritage of the Taos community was reflected in its hospital. Natives, newcomers, old ways, and new, tradition and innovation, all helped turn Mabel's 'white elephant' into a haven for Taos' sick and injured.

AT THE END OF THE TRAIL

"In those days, Taos was much more isolated from the outside world than it is today," said Dr. Ashley Pond III in a talk he gave about forty years later. He spoke at the 1977 dedication of the University of New Mexico Medical Center Library, now known as the UNM Health Sciences Library. "The road was rough, and it took over three hours to drive to Santa Fe, the nearest outpost of civilization. The only service that was better and faster than today was the mail."



Taos, New Mexico, 1933.

Photo by C. E. Lord. Courtesy Museum of New Mexico. Negative No. 11477.

Indeed, the Sisters must have felt the same way; they must have seen themselves as isolated at first, serving their vocation in an outpost at the end of a long trail, keeping in touch only by letters.

There is a chapter devoted to the Sisters in *The Golden Book 1889-1939: Fifty Years of Religious Life of Mother Lauretta Lubowidzka, Superior General.* The chapter is titled

A Horse-and-Buggy Doctor

Dr. Warner A. Onstine, well known by generations of Taoseños, was elected the first president of the staff executive board of Holy Cross Hospital after it opened in 1937. The Ohio State medical school graduate came to Taos in 1909. He often worked with Dr. T. P. (Doc) Martin, who had arrived in Taos in 1893.

At a 1950 open house honoring him for forty-one years of practice in Taos, Onstine recalled that he and Doc Martin sometimes had to perform operations by candlelight on kitchen tables. Many times they had to stretch a canvas above a bed to protect a patient from a leaky roof.

Like Doc Martin, Onstine was a horse-and-buggy doctor. He "drove a beautiful white-faced mare named Penelope," according to a 1950 article in The Taos News. Onstine and Penelope traveled on medical calls to Questa, Costilla, Tres Piedras, Amalia, and Rinconada—and sometimes into Colorado. He found Penelope far more reliable than the old army ambulance with recapped tires that he and other physicians later drove over the unpaved roads. Before joining the staff at Holy Cross Hospital, Onstine was house physician for the Don Fernando Hotel. He also served as medical director of the Taos Cooperative Health Association from 1941 to 1947. He delivered babies for several generations of patients.

"Nazareth's Indian Mission at the End of the Trail." It features a photograph of La Posta and another of a religious procession "entering Indian village, Taos, N.M." The book excerpt, made available by Sister M. Gemma, archivist of the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth, Des Plaines, Illinois, states, "Although the life of our Sisters away off at the end of the Trail is difficult and their path strewn with sacrifices, yet they are very happy and their heavenly Spouse rewards them with peace and joy that only a chosen few share."

And serve their vocation is exactly what they did, in spite of its remote and exotic location and the unusual character of the community. The hospital "served the purpose of the day, the chief problems being pneumonia, appendicitis, infant diarrhea, having babies, tuberculosis, and just stopping in to die of the various things that older people die of," Dr. Ashley Pond III recalled in his 1977 speech.

"People didn't bother us much with other things," he said. "I am sure they had depressions, colds in the head, anxieties and in-laws, but we weren't expected to cure all of these things as we are now days."

MEDICINE WAS PRIMITIVE

Geography was not the only challenge to the sisters in their new hospital. Those were days before miracle drugs and sophisticated sterilization machines and diagnostic tools. The first surgical patient was Ada Roybal with an acute appendix, according to Lou Pond's notes. "I boiled up the instruments in a copper wash boiler on a kerosene stove, the dry goods in a pressure cooker autoclave. I still have the old wash boiler."

The pressure-cooker autoclave was lost "quite a few years ago." After removing the inner receptacle, Lou Pond loaned it to Carmen Velarde to cook beans for a parish bazaar in Ranchos. It was later loaned to someone else and was lost.



The end of the trail: Teams at hitching posts near the Taos Plaza in the 1930s. The Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth referred to their sisters in Taos as "away off at the end of the Trail."

New Mexico Department of Development Collection, New Mexico State Records and Archives, Negative No. 2784.

CHAPTER THREE

A Community effort

As long as there has been a hospital in Taos, the Holy Cross Hospital Auxiliary has existed. As part of the Taos legacy of caring, the "auxilians" are proud to be members of the first and oldest hospital auxiliary in New Mexico.

In March 1937, a group of women met to discuss forming a hospital auxiliary. Maggie Gusdorf was in charge of membership. Twenty-nine women paid dues of one dollar each to become members of the new auxiliary formed with the expressed purpose of helping the needy with hospitalization.

The list of officers read: Mrs. J. Read, president; Mrs. F. Beutler, vice president; Mrs. F. Santistevan, secretary; and Mrs. P. Mares, treasurer.

Winnie Berninghaus was the guiding force in the actual formation of the auxiliary, according to Lou Pond, who served for years as auxiliary treasurer. The two women met with Dorothy Brandenburg and produced the bylaws of the auxiliary. Monthly meetings were held to socialize and make



Dorothy Brandenburg, left, one of the founders of the hospital auxiliary, and her daughter, Barbara Brenner, reminisce about Holy Cross Hospital. Dorothy's husband, Jack, said Sister Mary Grace gave a shot of whiskey (sometimes two) when someone donated blood. Barbara recalls Dr. Al Rosen threatening to clear her room of the many visitors who came after an appendectomy during her college years.

"Boys, What an Opportunity"

Over the years, the Holy Cross Hospital Auxiliary has undertaken many money-raising projects to support the hospital and serve its patients.

But one of the most ambitious was Hospital Week, held January 8 through 14, 1939, when the hospital was just two years old. According to a full-page spread in The Horse Fly, the opening event was a Sunday open house at the hospital. The public was invited to meet the sisters and to inspect the facility.

On Thursday, January 12, there was a bridge party at Thorne House: ladies only, admission twenty-five cents. Prizes were offered.

On Friday, January 13, and Saturday, January 14, there was a rummage sale at Read & McGonagill's Flower & Gift Shop. The teaser read, "Send your old clothes, or any other things you no longer use, to the shop before Thursday Noon; then come around Friday & Saturday and buy the things your friends no longer care for, but which YOU may like to have at Bargain Prices."

A "Hard Times Dance" was set for Saturday night at the Sagebrush Inn. Tickets were only fifty cents, "cheap at half the price." Prizes were to be given for the best costumes, "but anyone suspected of spending any money on costumes, will be heavily fined!"

A men-only "Hangover Party" capped the week. The buffet and smoker was held at Thorne House, supper served from 6:30 to 7:30, followed by games: minimum charge fifty cents, "but gents may pay any amount they wish! BOYS, What an Opportunity."

plans for the teas, raffles, picnics, and other fund-raising activities intended to provide sustained financial support and services for the new hospital and patients. The entire community supported auxiliary-sponsored fund-raisers to buy a five-thousand-dollar X-ray machine for the hospital.

THE AUXILIARY BUILDING

Activities increased even more in 1955 when the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth bought the former Los Alamos Officers' Club building. For many years after it was known simply as the Auxiliary Building. The Holy Cross Hospital Auxiliary furnished it with stoves, refrigerators, tables, chairs, dishes, and flatware. It was the site of many happy parties and meetings, bazaars, and smorgasbords. Many Taoseños remember Ernest Martinez and Art Merrill calling out numbers at the bingo games. The players competed for donated prizes. Euphie Tune managed the "Used A Bit Shop," the auxiliary's thrift store. At other times, the building was used as a place to feed 295 Boy Scouts traveling to the national jamboree in Colorado, 160 soil scientists from forty nations, and other groups ranging from garden-club members to postal workers.

When the second Holy Cross Hospital building was built in 1960, a lobby shop was established selling candy, gum, personal items for patients, and cigarettes, all displayed in a donated candy case. After about ten years, it was succeeded by a snack bar operating in a cubbyhole that had been a

drug-storage unit. Alice Maestas, working at minimum wage, managed it and sold coffee and small items including candy and gum.

The Auxiliary Building later was used as a pharmaceutical-distribution center after Presbyterian Medical Services bought the hospital from the Sisters in 1970. Lobby space that had been an administrative office was given to the auxiliary. Mrs. Eugene (Mary) Mingenback donated one thousand dollars to convert the space into a snack bar. The snack bar was used until the move to the new hospital building on Weimer Road in late 1994.



HOLY CROSS HOSPITAL BAZAAR. Sisters Pancratia and Savinia hold a landscape painting donated by auxiliary president Mrs. LeRoy Garcia (not shown) for a holiday bazaar in the 1950s. Mrs. Alfredo Trujillo and Mrs. LeRoy Maestas stand behind a display of yarn-decorated wastebaskets and an embroidered pillow for sale. The bazaar and dinner, held at the Auxiliary Hall, were among the many fun fund-raising activities held in the building.

Photo by Regina Cooke from *The Taos News*, from the auxiliary archives.

THE FIRST SIXTY YEARS

In her 1997 report on the first sixty years of the auxiliary, Lou Pond said the reception desk and the snack bar, both staffed by members, have remained the core of the services that the auxiliary has provided to the hospital.

But the auxiliary also has participated in, or has helped to sponsor, dozens of other activities including the "Christmas Casa Tour," "Community Christmas Card," two yearly blood drives, health fairs, a music series, and candy stripers. Volunteers work in the hospital's information booth and help in the cafeteria, outpatient surgery, emergency room, and snack bar. In addition, the auxiliary has helped distribute complimentary copies of *The Taos News* to patients for more than a dozen years and has assisted with television rentals. The auxiliary began holding its annual tea party in 1972, honoring the employees and staff of Holy Cross Hospital.

At the conclusion of her report on the first sixty years of the auxiliary, Lou Pond estimated volunteer time by members at about three hundred thousand hours. "If a monetary value could be put on those hours," she wrote, "it might be hundreds of thousands of dollars. Service, rather than fund-raising, has always been our goal, but we just couldn't help doing well financially and available records show actual donations of over $100,000."

Given the facts that Taos is neither large nor affluent, this record of activism and generosity is something in which all Taoseños may take pride.

Active since the beginning, Lou Pond died in October 2000. Her portrait hangs next to the hospital snack bar in commemoration of her extraordinary service. Mary Jeantete, Holy Cross Hospital Auxiliary president 1999–2001, praised her as "an inspiration to all of us who knew her. . . we will miss her guidance."

At the end of the year 2000, there were



Left: SILVER TEA PARTY: Mrs. Charles Younis, Mrs. Floyd Beutler, Mrs. Sadie Miller, Mrs. Jack Berrenberg, and Mrs. Elmer Turner (Ila McAfee) stand as Mrs. Arthur Merrill pours tea at the annual silver tea at the convent of Holy Cross Hospital in 1964. Auxiliary members acted as hostesses and gave tours of the old and the new hospital buildings. In later years, the auxiliary members dressed instead in their pink uniforms to serve tea and sweets to employees and staff at the hospital.

Photo by Regina Cooke for The Taos News, from auxiliary archives.

seventy-three auxiliary members, including fifty-one active members and twenty-two associates. Member Luella Kramer was elected state board treasurer and Doris Brandon, district chair.

Jeantete said although the only source of its income is from the snack bar, the auxiliary in 1999–2000 donated ten thousand dollars toward the purchase of a heart-monitoring machine; five thousand dollars toward a machine that measures bone density; more than nine thousand dollars toward the purchase of three automatically operated hospital beds; more than forty-five hundred dollars for intravenous pumps; and four thousand dollars for surgical stirrups.

The group awards four scholarships to high school students who will be entering the medical profession. The auxiliary also donates to Taos Feeds Taos, Citizens Against Violence, Habitat for Humanity, Casa Corazón, and Ben Meyers Ski Run for Hospice.

"Our volunteers are very dedicated and work diligently for the organization," said the auxiliary president. Jeantete agreed with member Evelyn Janosko, who said, "Our volunteers are called upon to serve beyond the call of duty, and we do so because our hearts and hands are in accord with the mission of the Taos Holy Cross Hospital." The legacy of caring continues: The sisters' motto of "Best Patient Care" guides the auxiliary to this day.



Right: PUNCHING UP SUPPORT: Margaret Esquibel, auxiliary member, and Mary Jeantete, auxiliary president, appeared in this poster asking Taoseños to sign a petition to restore Medicare reimbursement cuts made by the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 and not restored by the Balanced Budget Relief Act of 1999. The petition was available at the Holy Cross Hospital Health Fair in August 2000 at the Taos Civic Center.

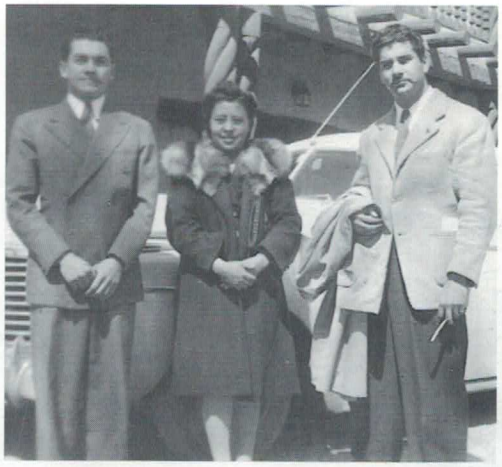
CHAPTER FOUR

The war years

THE HIGH DRAMA of the war years was acted out on stages impossibly remote from Taos, but the echoes of those heroic events could be heard even at the foothills of the Sangre de Cristos.

Some Taoseños, like Ashley Pond, went away to war. Pond went to China where he served with the medical corps, setting up hospital units along the Burma Road. He ordered moccasins for his troops, believing the native footwear better than shoes. Pond returned from the war, decorated for designing a casualty-loading ramp for medical airlifts. He still wore his moccasins, as he would all his life. He even owned a pair of black dress moccasins.

The war brought others to Taos, like Dr. Reynaldo Deveaux and Dr. Arturo Lamont, who arrived from Mexico in 1942 to a community whose young men and some young women had left the only home they had ever known to serve their country under arms and overseas. Before long, the Great Depression was almost forgotten, a bad dream only occasionally remembered during the waking struggle of the war.



Dr. Arturo Lamont, Aurora Onstine, and Dr. Reynaldo Deveaux. Lamont and Deveaux came to Taos from Mexico in 1942. Aurora Onstine was married to Dr. Warner Onstine, a longtime Taos physician.

Photo courtesy of Dr. Reynaldo and Beatrice Deveaux.

RECRUITING THE CHOIR

Some things remained constant as they always had: illness, childbirth, injury, death. "Best Patient Care" remained the motto of the Sisters at Holy Cross Hospital; they never forgot their commitment to that

ideal. They began recruiting help, and they began to plan for the future.

To help ensure that high standard of care during the early years of World War II, Sister Ann Patricia recruited members of the choir at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church to serve as nurse's aides.

Lupita Valerio and her sister Dolores were among the first to be recruited as nurse's aides around 1942. Lupita and Dolores Sisneros were then soprano and alto, respectively, in the choir. Their parents operated Sisneros Grocery, which had started in the living room of the family home, a building now occupied by a mystery bookstore near First State Bank.

"My sister Dolores and I liked to do everything together," Valerio said. They began going to one-hour evening training classes to become aides. The girls admired the young nun who taught them nursing skills. Valerio remembers the nun as "perfect to behold. Sister Ann Patricia couldn't have been much older than my sister and I," she recalls. "She was so slender, and she had this beautiful perfect face."

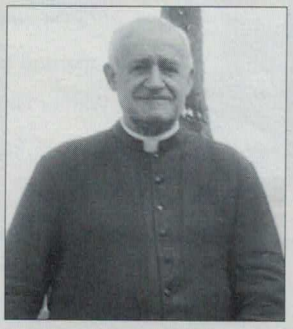
Valerio remembers about eight trainees starting in the class, but she and Dolores were among the few to stay. After a time of training and working with patients, "I remember when Sister Ann Patricia said, 'You can wear your caps now.' We were so proud.

"My sister and I remained until we had caps and uniforms. We acted like regular nurses." They remained aides until after the war ended. Valerio is grateful for the experience. "The things I learned, I've been using all my life. I helped nurse my husband, my mother . . . it has lasted all these years."

PATHS CROSSED, LIVES JOINED

Valerio also had a tie to Beatrice Desgeorges, who became an aide and also worked as head of the war ration-stamp office.

Popular Padre



Father Cesario Gutierrez was born into a peasant family in Spain in 1883. He began his seminary training in Madrid and was ordained in 1908. His first assignment was to teach at a seminary in Chihuahua, Mexico. Those were the days of the Mexican revolution, and Father Gutierrez liked to tell the story of his meeting with Pancho Villa, one of the leaders of that revolution.

Villa spared the life of Father Gutierrez and six other priests, on condition that they raise money to further the revolution. The seven priests managed to raise almost six thousand dollars, and Villa allowed them to travel to Juárez. From there Father Gutierrez crossed the Rio Grande to El Paso and remained in the United States.

Father Gutierrez' vocation took him to Amarillo, Texas, and then to New Mexico, first to Raton. From Raton he was assigned as chaplain of Holy Cross Hospital in Taos. In 1943 he became pastor of Saint Francis Church in Ranchos de Taos but returned after a short time to resume duties as chaplain at the hospital, where he served until his retirement in the early 1960s. He celebrated the golden anniversary of his ordination in 1958 at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, and later his fifty-fifth anniversary was noted in a warm article in The Taos News, which described him as a "popular padre . . . smiling and sympathetic." *Photo courtesy of Eloy Quintana.*

Desgeorges joked with the handsome Dr. Deveaux about his passport. They had met through pharmacist Fred Baca, a mutual friend. Soon they were dating, going to the drugstore or Mike Cunico's nightclub. Within two years, Valerio was arranging the flowers for Desgeorges' wedding to Deveaux. Euphrocine Younis, also an aide, was matron of honor, and her husband, Charles, was best man.

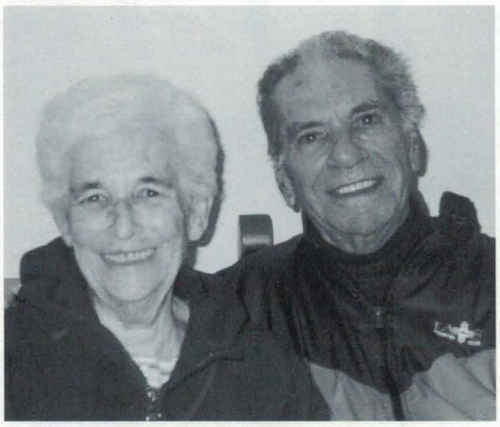
Deveaux had come to Taos directly from medical school, receiving credit from the National University of Mexico with a group providing medical services while many U.S. doctors were off to war. With him came Lamont. The two shared a room in the first floor of the hospital. The cook, Deveaux remembers, was so concerned about fattening up the skinny Lamont that she began making treats. "In six months," Deveaux said, "I gained fifteen pounds, and Lamont didn't gain any." Despite the pampering, Lamont later returned to Mexico.

Lamont, Deveaux, and Dr. Warner A. Onstine used an old army ambulance to visit outlying clinics weekly. There were no paved roads, some roads were no better than cow trails, and the recapped tires had three blowouts between Costilla and Taos. Other clinic locations included Questa, Peñasco, and Amalia. Each clinic had its own nurse, and each visit was a social as well as medical event since both sick and well people congregated when the physicians arrived. The doctors performed all sorts of medical services, including pulling teeth. Deveaux remembers it cost twenty dollars to deliver a baby, but only a dollar fifty for an office visit and fifty cents for an injection.



Sister Ann Patricia with Lupita Sisneros, about 1942. The nun recruited Lupita and her sister Dolores from the Our Lady of Guadalupe Church choir to become nurse's aides at the start of World War II.

Photo courtesy of Lupita Valerio.



Below left: Dr. Reynaldo and Beatrice Deveaux, 2001. This couple has been involved with Holy Cross Hospital for many years. She has been active in the auxiliary, and he, born in 1918, is the oldest living physician who practiced at Holy Cross. Deveaux delivered about 3,000 babies in his career of more than forty years as a family physician. But the delivery he will never forget happened in the rope-operated elevator at La Posta. "The woman was screaming all the way up, and I was saying, 'Don't push, don't push.'

DR. ALBERT ROSEN

It was at Holy Cross Hospital that Deveaux met Dr. Albert Rosen, who was to become a close friend until Rosen's death in 1982. Rosen, like Pond, was an athlete and an investor in the Taos Ski Valley. The legendary Al's Run is named for him. The trail is long, narrow, and mogul-covered, a brutal run meant to challenge the athlete to ski it from top to bottom without stopping. Rosen skied it often and well.

Sadie Knight remembers becoming a patient of Rosen's in the spring of 1945. "I had met him earlier," she said, "but I don't recall exactly when. His wife, Myrtle, had been my gym teacher when I was a junior in high school, so I may have met him at a

school function. He and Dr. Ashley Pond III had opened their offices on the plaza just across from the Safeway store, now the site of First State Bank on the southwest corner of Taos Plaza. It was called Pond Clinic."

She later went to work at the Pond Clinic as a medical secretary. "One morning Dr. Rosen called me to his office to give me dictation. He had just come from rounds at the hospital and had scribbled notes all over his hand. Guess the hospital didn't give him any note paper."

Rosen still was making notes on his hand years later, remembers Nancy Halmstad, a former Pond Clinic employee, who now is associate director of the Taos Medical Services Foundation. She remembers Rosen taking emergency calls. "It was not unusual to see him walking down the hospital hall in the middle of the night with an unlit cigar in his mouth and wearing his Mickey Mouse pajamas.

"If any skier would break a leg going down Al's Run, Dr. Rosen would fix it for free," she said. Rosen skied Al's Run even after he suffered a severe coronary and was ordered to give up skiing. He skied with a portable oxygen tank.

NEW TIMES, NEW CHALLENGES

Doctors Pond, Deveaux, and Rosen took care of the needs of post–World War II Taos. Enormous changes touched every facet of the country, including Taos. New medical procedures and miracle drugs such as penicillin and sulfa, born of the trials of war, were now available.

"The entire Taos valley has taken on new life as veterans and families who have been engaged in war activities have returned," wrote Ruth G. Fish in her 1946 column "The Week in Taos" in *The Santa Fe New Mexican*. "New homes are being built, old ones remodeled, with the result that the village and all its suburbs are already facing a housing shortage that one could scarcely expect in a community where there are not industries."

She concluded, "The very peace and freedom from strain and competition has attracted a number of new residents, including writers, painters, and army and navy families."

How would the hospital adjust to meet the needs of this new, changed-forever Taos?



On the La Posta balcony: Sister Florence, Dr. Reynaldo Deveaux, and Dr. Al Rosen

Photo courtesy of Dr. Reynaldo and Beatrice Deveaux.

CHAPTER FIVE

Patience, prayer, and hard work

THE PEACEFUL POSTWAR YEARS ENDED. The war in Korea raged. Times changed, but the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth continued to recruit help, in one way or another. In April 1951 Eloy Quintana and his mother went to the hospital to pay on his bill. He had had an appendectomy.

Sister Monica eyed the young man and the 1931 Model A truck he was driving, and asked him, "Why don't you work for us to pay off the bill?"

In those days, as now, in rural areas medical bills were sometimes paid with labor or chickens or vegetables or firewood or even an occasional painting or handicraft from an ailing artist. One patient paid the bill for an operation with an electric mangle. Sister Monica put Quintana to work with Joe Alex Maestas filling mud holes. After two weeks, Sister Monica stopped Quintana.

"We like the way you work," she said. "Why don't you stay with us?"

Quintana stayed with Holy Cross Hospital forty-six years.

After Maestas left his job a couple of years later, Quintana became head man and chauffeur. He drove the sisters to a Clayton hospital and other hospitals and schools run by the order in Texas and in Colorado. He enjoyed escorting the nuns, all wearing their black traveling habits with crisp white collars.

"There were just the three doctors here when I started in the early 1950s," said Quintana. "Doctors Deveaux, Pond, and Rosen. Sister Monica was there when I started work and was there when they sold the building in 1970," he said.



Eloy Quintana in 1960

Photo courtesy of Eloy Quintana.



"Those were the best years of my life. The Sisters were very strict. They taught me manners and respect. They were very good to me."

Quintana had a special relationship with Sister Mary Grace, the hospital administrator, who asked him to name his second daughter after her. He agreed. "I said, 'Mary Grace is a pretty name, anyway.'" The sister bought the baby a crib and mattress "and bought milk for a long time."

FASTER THAN THE ELEVATOR: Teresa (Tessie) Montoya Weston, shown in 1953 walking down the curved staircase in Holy Cross Hospital, then in the convent building. The nurse said it was faster to take the stairs than to take the elevator. She worked from 1952–1957 under Mother Hermina.

Photo courtesy of Teresa Weston.

SPARKLING WHITE

"The nuns kept everything so clean," Deveaux remembers. Others agree. Emma Ferguson grew up in a house behind the hospital in the 1940s and 1950s. "We were out in the country," she said. "It was more a trail for horses than a road, although a car or two would go by." The Sisters always appeared spotless, despite their hospital tasks, despite the dust from the road, and despite the dust raised by the scurrying of what seemed like more than a dozen turkeys the nuns kept on the grounds.

"I remember the Sisters hanging up the laundry, the hospital sheets and so forth, wearing their little aprons and their little white hats. It's a happy memory."

That memory reminds Quintana of a traveling-salesman story he swears is true. The man was trying to ingratiate himself with Sister Domenic. "How do you keep those habits so clean?" the salesman asked.

The doctors and their wives enjoyed a festive Christmas dinner with the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth. Seated, from left, Beatrice Deveaux, Al Rosen, Lou Pond, Ashley Pond III, Myrtle Rosen, and Reynaldo Deveaux. Standing, from the left, are Mother Superior Monica, Sister Ismaela, an X-ray technician, and Sister Justice (in black habit), the secretary at Holy Cross.

Photo courtesy of Dr. Reynaldo and Beatrice Deveaux.



"We wash them," she replied.

The doctors and other staff members also enjoyed the Sisters' sense of humor. Deveaux's favorite nun was Sister Bernadette, a nurse and "a very sweet and a good person. She used to call me 'brother,'" he said, after he donated a pint of his blood to her. "After that, she claimed to be part Mexican," he laughed.

patients," and to meet physical-plant requirements set by the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. A grant for $260,000 of Hill-Burton funds was approved, but matching funds had to be raised. The Sisters themselves contributed $300,000, a large portion of the amount needed. Their donation was made possible because their salaries had been used as operating funds since their arrival in Taos.



A new hospital building was constructed in 1960 in front of La Posta and then connected to the old hospital building. The number of available patient beds jumped from ten to twenty-eight.

Photo by Barbara Brenner, from the auxiliary archives.

HOMEY BUT INCONVENIENT

Deveaux, who shared a room for more than a year with Lamont in the convent, was intimately acquainted with La Posta. Although a wing had been added to the north end of the building, more room was needed for patient care. "It was very homey," he said," but inconvenient. It was not built for a hospital."

The Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth also saw the need for a larger, more efficient facility to provide "best care for

Generous benefactors and benefit projects made up the remaining amount.

THE SECOND HOSPITAL – 1960

The second hospital was built near La Posta at the corner of La Posta Road and Paseo del Pueblo Sur. It was a sprawling one-story building that cost a half-million dollars and nearly tripled the patient beds to a total of twenty-eight. The facility was considered state-of-the-art and capable of handling almost every type of emergency.

Patience, Prayer, and Hard Work

The Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth worked from eight to twelve hours at the hospital and spent another five hours in prayer, according to a March 3, 1960 article in The Taos News.

Administrator and mother superior of the hospital then was Mother Mary Humilia, who had a master's degree in hospital administration and had been at Holy Cross approximately three years. Ten sisters worked and prayed under her supervision.

"She is a woman known to be kind and sympathetic with the many problems and troubles brought to her," the article said.

"Today the 11 Sisters, who silently glide through the corridors, assisted by 13 nurses and aides, 6 maids, 2 maintenance men and an admitting clerk, work on three shifts caring for the patients who occupy the 29 beds, three wards and private rooms."

The sisters and their duties were listed as: Sister Mary Justitia, in charge of the admitting office and bookkeeping department; Sister Mary Feliciann, acting director of nurses and also in charge of the operating and delivery rooms; Sister Mary Claude, registered nurse and anesthetist; Sister Mary Wenceslas, in charge of the chapel; Sister Mary Ismael, licensed practical nurse and registered X-ray technician; Sister Mary Pancratia, medical technician in charge of the laboratory; Sister Mary Julita, in charge of the dietary department; Sister Mary Cesar, cook and baker; and Sister Mary Jeremia, in charge of laundry and mending hospital linens.

The article concluded, "Such is the atmosphere of Holy Cross Hospital where 11 Sisters who are, after all, only 11 lone women, care for and cure the many ills of the people—and at all times practice what they most believe in—patience and prayer."

Six hundred people, including high officials of both the medical profession and the Catholic Church, attended the hospital dedication in April 1961. Archbishop Edwin V. Byrne of the Santa Fe Archdiocese blessed each room and each piece of equipment in the multiwinged building. The popular chaplain Father Cesario Gutierrez gave the benediction, assisted by the Reverend Clarence Galli as deacon and the Reverend Ralph Herrera, subdeacon. The choir of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church sang, proud of its members who had joined the hospital staff and helped so many people over the years.

"A long list of speakers approached the microphone set up between the two hospitals to commend the nuns for their work and praise the new structure," wrote *The Taos News*. Among those lauded were three people instrumental in making the new building a reality: Sister Gutulia, mother provincial of the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth for the district; Archbishop Byrne; and Sister Mary Grace, hospital administrator. Sister Mary Grace was administrator of Holy Cross from its start in 1937 until 1942 when she was transferred to Chicago. Upon the death of Sister Mary Humilia, she returned to Taos to help complete the new hospital that replaced the one she had started.

Among the speakers was Dr. Al Rosen, then Taos County Medical Society president, who pledged the medical staff members would perform "at all times to the best of their professional ability."

But homage also was paid to the old hospital by *The Taos News*. "There are figures, we imagine, that can tell us how many in the



FATHER GUTIERREZ RETIRES: After many years as chaplain of Holy Cross Hospital, Father Cesario Gutierrez retired to move back to his native Spain. Front row, from left, Myrtle Rosen, Beatrice Deveaux, Father Gutierrez, and an unidentified clergyman, possibly Archbishop of Santa Fe Edwin Byrne. Second row, from left, Dr. Reynaldo Deveaux, Dr. Ashley Pond III, Lucille Pond, and Dr. Albert Rosen. Photo courtesy of Dr. Reynaldo and Beatrice Deveaux.

community first saw the light of day [in La Posta]," its editorial said. "There are also figures that would reflect those sad moments when there was nothing on this earth that could be done, and a loved one passed on. But there are no figures to show the number alive today, who might not be, had it not been for Holy Cross Hospital.

"There also are no figures to show the many, many hours of suffering eliminated by medical facilities," the editorial continued. "Taos has a right to rejoice Sunday [at the dedication of the new hospital], but it also has a duty to be thankful."



© Jeff Caven.



"THE MARCUS WELBY OF TAOS" is how Kean Spellman describes Dr. John (Bud) Wilson, shown here in 1993 with his wife, Barbara. Wilson is a general, thoracic, and vascular surgeon at Holy Cross Hospital. He is renowned for his compassion and kindness, said Spellman. "Bud will stay with a patient twenty-four hours." The surgeon hopes to retire to spend more time with his wife on their ranch near Llano, where each year they invite underprivileged children to spend several weeks at no cost. He promises, Spellman said, "to first find a younger version of Bud Wilson to replace him."



Eloy Quintana, who retired in 1997, receives an appreciative hug from auxiliary member Helen Abramowitz, volunteer at the information desk. Quintana came to work for two weeks to pay off a hospital bill in 1951 and stayed forty-six years.



TWO MEMBERS OF THE LEADERSHIP TEAM, 2001: Anna Abeyta, Chief Nursing Officer; and Kean Spellman, Chief Executive Officer, lead Holy Cross Hospital into the new millennium. Abeyta has worked at Holy Cross about thirty-three years and once received a nursing scholarship from the hospital auxiliary. Spellman has served Holy Cross Hospital for three years, and has 21 years of experience. They are joined by the CFO and over 20 Department Managers/Directors.





Above left: Dr. Robert (Bob) Hawley, shown at work in 1991, was a pathologist at Holy Cross Hospital for years. Well respected and well liked, he died a couple of years after this photo was taken.
Above right: Former mayor Eloy Jeantete and his wife Mary have been vital in the history of Holy Cross Hospital and in presenting its history in this book. They coaxed Taoseños to share memories, photographs, and family documents in order to make this book more meaningful and evocative.

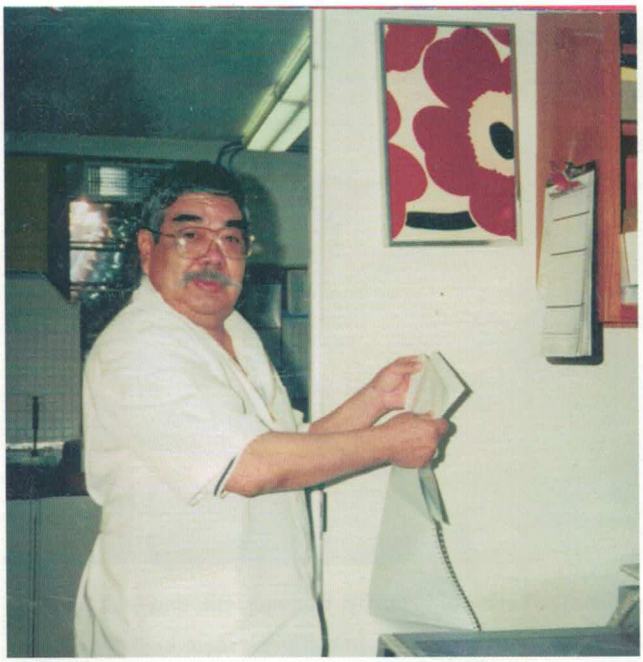


Most of our 1999 Medical Staff From left, Dr. Oskar Moller, Dr. Lesa Fraker, Dr. James Cardasis, Dr. Ashley Pond IV, Dr. Michael Kaufman, Dr. Ellen Warren, Dr. Henry Bramanti, Dr. Larry Schreiber, Dr. Keva Levin, Dr. John Morrison, Dr. Loretta Ortiz y Pino, Dr. Charles Anderson, Dr. William Droke, Dr. Kathleen D'Arrigo, Dr. Robert White, Dr. Rudolph Fedrizzi, and Dr. William Kilgore. By the year 2001, the hospital staff had grown to include more than seventy physicians. Photo taken in the beautiful front entrance courtyard on Weimer Road.



"Felice," the sculpture in the Holy Cross Hospital lobby. Artist R. C. Gorman made the piece in honor of his mother.

Photo by John Rudiak.



Left: Lab Manager Louis Martin worked at the hospital for about twenty-five years. He died in 1998.

Below: Paul Jones, left, and Julian Jaramillo take pride in keeping the hospital's unseen machinery running smoothly. Jones is director of engineering, and Jaramillo is one of four men in the maintenance department in 2001.





Paul Peters, director of materials management, and Amy Maestas check shelves in the stock room in January, 2001.

You can see forever, it seems, from the cafeteria. Patients and staff appreciate the many views offered from the hospital, of the mountains outside to courtyards within.





A float for the Holy Cross Hospital health fair, circa 1995.

A friendly tug-of-war at one of the annual hospital picnics.





Beatriz Gonzales (right) talks with artists Carmen Velarde and Maria Romano at the 1999 art wall reception.



Jock and Dee Fleming enjoy the art wall reception, 1999.

CHAPTER SIX

Changing hands – the 1970s

THE NEW HOSPITAL was a direct result of the Sisters' commitment to the ideal of "Best Patient Care," but the Sisters were to stay in Taos less than another decade. The number of women joining the order diminished, and there were simply too few to replace the elderly and the infirm. It was difficult for the order to staff its hospitals fully throughout the country.

In December 1969 the Sisters announced they hoped to transfer ownership of the hospital the following year, possibly to Presbyterian Medical Services of Santa Fe, a private nonprofit corporation committed to improving health care in rural New Mexico.

Leaders of the Presbyterian Church agreed and passed a resolution urging PMS, the Board of National Missions, and the National Missions Committee of the Synod of New Mexico, "with all due haste: to administer the hospital and/or develop a new program of community support for the facility to insure that Taos will continue to have hospital services."

"The Sisters were of the opinion that hospital services must continue in this area," *The Taos News* wrote in a full-page farewell. The new hospital building had added about fourteen thousand additional square feet. The property had been valued at more than one million dollars in 1966, an amount that did not include approximately ten acres of land on which the buildings were located. To ensure the hospital would continue, the sisters sold it all for $250,000.

"Rather than disappoint the community of Taos, the General Council of the Congregation decided, after due consideration, to meet the 'offered' price and donate the remaining value of approximately $750,000 worth of assets to the needy people of Taos," said the story published July 2, 1970.

Sister M. Reginella, president of the hospital's governing board, said that all the

hospital employees would be retained by the new owner.

Too soon, all the contracts were signed and all the preparations for the changeover were made. It was time for the Sisters to say goodbye to Taos and for Taos to say goodbye to the Sisters.

GOODBYE TO TAOS

In full-page newspaper spreads, the Sisters gave thanks to the entire community of Taos, and specific mentions included Taos Mayor Rumaldo Garcia, Archbishop James P. Davis and the clergy of the Santa Fe Archdiocese, the hospital auxiliary, fifty employees who represented a total of one hundred twenty-four years of tenure, and the medical staff. The medical staff included Deveaux, Pond, Rosen, and Doctors David R. Ashmun and William R. Kilgore.

The Sisters were feted by the auxiliary and other groups. In the newspaper, they thanked Governor Quirino Romero and elders of the Taos Pueblo "for having us with you on Sunday, June 28th, to help celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass at your humble Chapel, to witness and participate in your festive procession, and to partake of your wonderful Feast. Really, an occasion most memorable!"

THE CHANGEOVER

At first there was talk about changing the name of the hospital, but six months later the PMS Board of Trustees had not arrived at consensus and the matter eventually was dropped.

With the Sisters gone, there was a higher payroll to meet. Fifty-three percent of the operating expenses now went to salaries paid to local people, according to Jack Schacht, new Administrator of Holy Cross Hospital. He reported on the first six months of PMS operation in an open letter published in *The Taos News*. He said inflation, equipment purchases, and building improvements to conform with the new Joint Commission on Accreditation Standards also had contributed to a deficit of about nine thousand dollars per month, accumulating a deficit of fifty-four thousand dollars.

Financial problems plagued the hospital. And if the changes of the first thirty years of Holy Cross Hospital were substantial, the changes in the next decade or two came a

Unexpected Help

As now, Taos was a small close-knit community in the 1960s. Neighbors helped neighbors, and help sometimes came from unexpected sources.

"All my babies were small," said Jane Mingenbach, mother of five. She liked to check their weights often. When she took her children shopping at the Plaza, a grocery store owned by the Packard family, the butcher would say, "Now let's weigh the baby." He would put butcher paper on the scale and carefully position the baby. "That's how he weighed the babies for me, and I was very thankful for the service."

She also is thankful for the resourcefulness of an intern at Holy Cross Hospital in 1969. Her daughter Emily was a premature baby prone to jaundice. The young doctor went to three hippie communes to collect enough plant-grow lights to correct the baby's vitamin D deficiency. The communes had been using the grow lights for cultivating indoor "crops." Emily thrived.

lot faster and were even more profound. Technology and technique changed more in the period immediately after the second hospital was built.

In the mid-1970s, an intensive-care unit was added to the hospital. Major improvements were made to the emergency room area, the laboratory, and the X-ray department. The attempt to continue the Sisters' standard of "Best Patient Care" was upheld, but repeated changes in ownership complicated long-range planning for the hospital. PMS sold the hospital to a California for-profit corporation in 1979. It was sold again to a Santa Fe real-estate holding company in 1985.

NEW BUILDING NEEDED

No one could have foreseen how quickly the facility would become obsolete. What had been built as a state-of-the-art hospital now was in a bad state.

Just how pressing the need for a new facility had become was clearly demonstrated in a column written by Dr. Charles Anderson, hospital Chief of Staff, in *The Taos News* in April 1982.

"Of greatest concern to the medical staff is the need to proceed as rapidly as possible towards the building of a new hospital," Anderson wrote. "The current facility just cannot meet the demands of the community, and our feasibility studies have shown us that a combination of remodeling and expansion will be as costly as building a new hospital," he said. "This current hospital has lasted only 20 years . . . it has a life of another two to three years at most." The need for a new hospital was not only evident to the medical staff but also to patients and visitors. Pat Schumacher, now on the Taos Medical Services Foundation Board, remembers how dilapidated the room was where her mother stayed. "The care was excellent, but everywhere I looked in her room, something was broken, like the drawer, the bed stand, everything needed fixing."

TAOS HEALTH SYSTEMS, INC.

In the early 1980s, Taos Health Systems, Inc., was formed to provide a community organization to oversee and direct the operations of the hospital. This local board, representing all citizens of Taos County, has guided the hospital through the most challenging period of its history. As financial

Taking the Ambulance Home

Health care in Taos has always been a community affair. In May 1970 the Taos County Medical Society asked for volunteers to drive the ambulance on emergency calls. Dr. Al Rosen said the medical society would provide first-aid training for volunteers. "It won't be necessary to take off work or be away from home to be on call," Rosen told The Taos News. *"The person on call will just take the ambulance with him and if a call comes in, he'll answer it."*

losses mounted and it looked as if the hospital would be forced to close, the board kept Holy Cross to high standards. Even during periods of financial difficulties, the board of trustees insisted that generous salary increases be given employees to attract and retain a superior staff.

WORKING TOGETHER

"Through all the troubles," said Frederick A. Peralta, Chairman of the THS Board of Trustees, "the Board kept in mind that the people of Taos County needed and deserved better health care than the old facility could provide." Peralta spoke at the dedication of the new facility, the present Holy Cross Hospital, constructed about three miles southeast of downtown on Weimer Road, in December, 1994.

Construction began on this new hospital in 1993, after a remarkable coalition of concerned Taoseños persuaded the entire community of the necessity for building and funding the new facility, and then supplied the leadership that got the job done. In the whole history of Holy Cross Hospital in Taos, nothing is so striking an example of a community committed to "Best Patient Care."

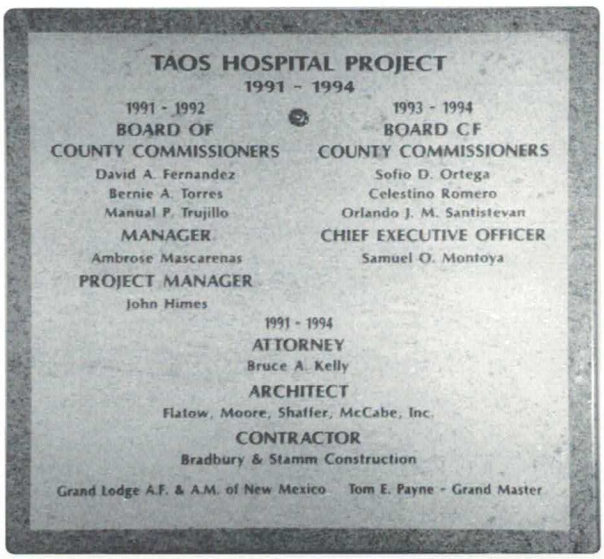
Eloy Jeantete, then Mayor of Taos and chairman of the hospital's blue ribbon committee, remembers the community quickly united behind the project once it became clear that the hospital would be managed by professionals and not by any political

The beautiful courtyard entrance to the present Holy Cross Hospital on Weimer Road.



organization. "It was not hard to sell," he said, once that point was made.

In 1991 Taos County voters overwhelmingly passed a countywide gross-receipts tax to finance a $11.7 million bond issue for construction of the new hospital. In 1994 another bond issue was approved. The second one was for $4.1 million to furnish and equip the new facility. That year Holy Cross Hospital admitted its first patient in its new hospital.



A plaque near the entrance commemorates construction of the Taos Hospital Project, 1991–1994.

The building was less attractive in its hard-hat phase.



Taos Medical Services Foundation

THE "OVER THE RIO GRANDE" donors' wall in the hallway of Holy Cross Hospital is not only a much-admired work of art, it also is the symbol most associated with the Taos Medical Services Foundation. Even the TMSF logo is fashioned after the sculpture.

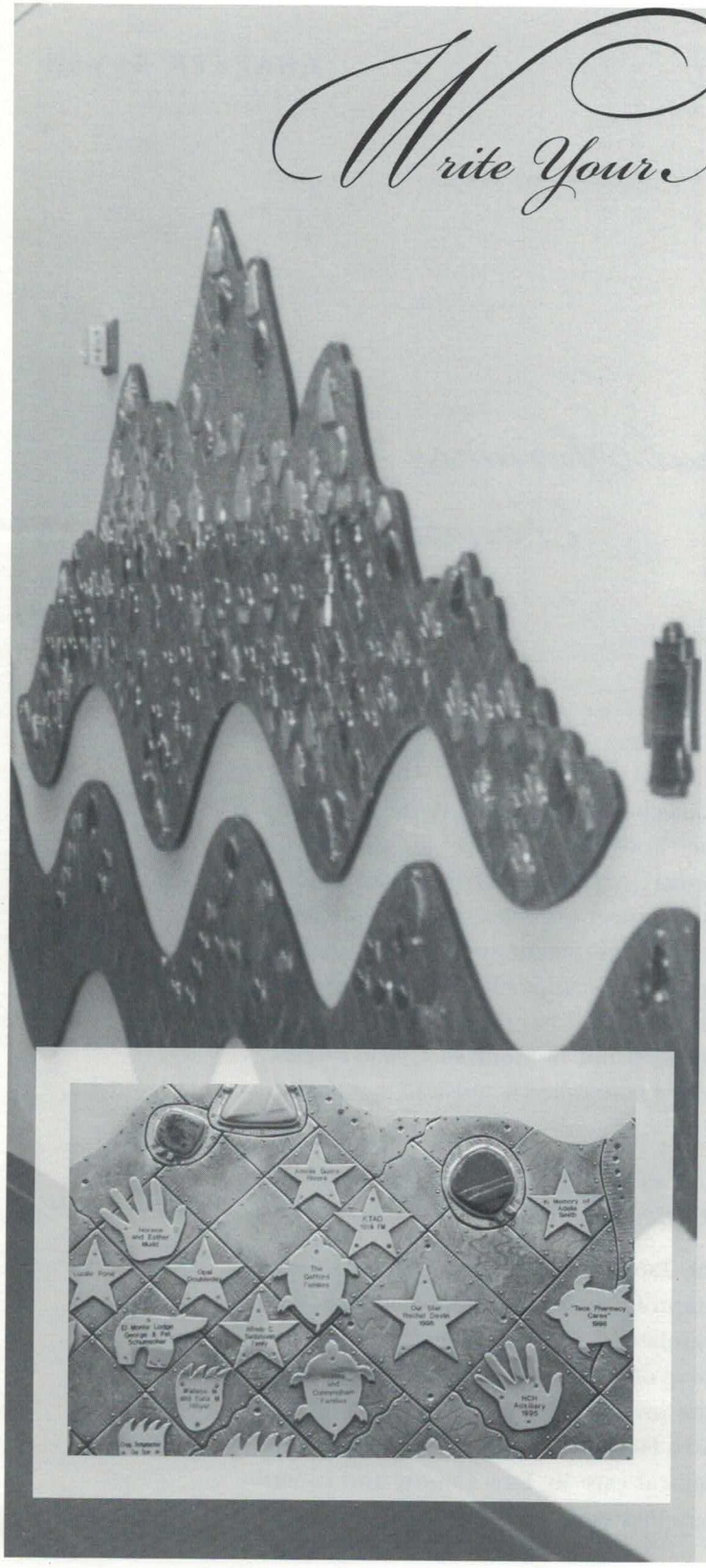
The sculpture, made of textured metal and highly polished stones, was designed and constructed by Thom Wheeler. It was commissioned by the Foundation after an open competition among area artists and designers in 1994. Wheeler, a Texas native, grew up in Houston and was well known for his large architectural sculptures commissioned by corporations. These creations were made of metal set with ivory, wood, cast glass, and stones such as jasper, turquoise, and malachite.

Since the wall was dedicated in November 1994, more commemorative brass shapes have been added to the sculpture. The brass plaques are engraved with donors' names, reflecting contributions that support purchases of state-of-the-art medical equipment and the provision for future scholarships and other endowments. Wheeler calls "Over the Rio Grande," which measures nine by twenty feet, "wall jewelry." Others have called it "the wall that heals."

TAOS MEDICAL SERVICES FOUNDATION

The Taos Medical Services Foundation, a nonprofit, tax-exempt, publicly supported foundation, was established in 1976 by a group of Taos doctors. The intention was to raise private funds for the support of Holy Cross Hospital, and improve the quality of medical care in Taos County and its surrounding area.

Write Your Name on the Wall



The donors' wall has been a popular, as well as a beautiful, addition to the hospital, according to Nancy Halmstad, Taos Medical Services Foundation associate director. She said a donor may honor a family name, an event, a friend's or an organization's name, or create a memorial for a deceased friend or loved one. The names of all donors of one hundred dollars or more are listed on a plaque with others giving that amount. A donor giving five hundred dollars or more may select an individually named plaque from a variety of shapes, depending upon the gift amount. She said the foundation also has a listing of memorials and named gift opportunities corresponding to various rooms or areas of the hospital starting at twenty-five hundred dollars and going all the way up to a quarter of a million dollars. For a donation in that range, a larger, engraved door plaque is placed on the designated area, and an engraved brass shape goes on the donors' wall. For those wishing to give larger amounts, arrangements can be made for pledge payments to be spread over five years.

Large picture: Over the Rio Grande" donors' wall

Inset: Detail photo of the wall shows brass plaques in various shapes.

Taos Medical Services Foundation Accomplishments

Since 1994, the Taos Medical Services Foundation has raised $1,650,850 in cash, pledges, and other assets. Its yearly accomplishments include:

In 1995:

- *TMSF established an office with a professional staff.*
- *The board raised funds for the donors' wall in the new hospital and sponsored its dedication ceremony.*
- *TMSF solicited and received a sculpture from artist R. C. Gorman for the entry of the hospital and sponsored its dedication ceremony.*
- *The board raised funds to purchase pulmonary-function test equipment, a new dictating system for the physicians, and eye-testing equipment for the hospital.*

In 1996:

- *TMSF established an endowment fund at a local bank, which will eventually provide scholarships to Taos County students entering the health-care field and other health-related endeavors.*
- *The board assumed responsibility for running the Taos Fall Arts Festival with cosponsorship of the Taos County Chamber of Commerce, raising $22,000.*

In 1997:

- *TMSF participated in the first "Tango in Taos" charity golf tournament, raising $7,134.*
- *In September and October, TMSF sponsored the Taos Fall Arts Festival, raising $23,000.*
- *TMSF raised funds to purchase a $56,000 bone densitometer for the diagnosis and treatment of osteoporosis, with the help of the first Michael Martin Murphey Cowboy Christmas ball benefit, and Tango II, in 1997 and 1998.*

In 1998:

- *TMSF participated in Tango II in Taos, raising $9,998.*
- *TMSF invested $45,000 in mutual funds for the endowment.*
- *TMSF sponsored the 1998 Taos Fall Arts Festival, raising $20,705.*
- *In December, TMSF established the Kids In Need Fund and raised $2,135.*

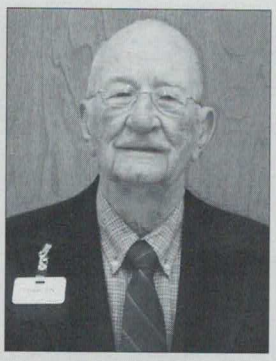
In 1999:

- *In June, TMSF participated in the Mary Jane Lamond concert, raising $350 for the Kids In Need Fund and participated in Tango III in Taos, raising $9,586 toward the purchase of cardiac telemetry equipment.*
- *In September and October, TMSF sponsored the Silver Anniversary of the Taos Fall Arts Festival, raising $17,000.*

In 2000:

- *In June, TMSF participated in Tango IV in Taos, raising $11,834 for the Kids In Need Fund.*
- *In September and October, TMSF sponsored the twenty-sixth Taos Fall Arts Festival, raising $24,000.*

Beloved Chaplain



Horace Mudd, longtime benefactor and volunteer chaplain, was honored in 2000 by Holy Cross Hospital.

Through the years, Chaplain Mudd and his wife, Esther, donated about $28,000 to the hospital through the Taos Medical Services Foundation. One of his most recent contributions, donated in his wife's memory, was a $4,000 sign at the hospital entrance. Kean Spellman, hospital CEO, said out-of-town patients pointed out the need for an illuminated sign to find the hospital at night. Mudd is a former minister with the Oklahoma Conference of Methodist Churches and has been in Taos about eighteen years. He is still active in the chaplain program and is much beloved by staff members for his support and enthusiasm for their work. Rev. Mudd encourages others to remember Holy Cross Hospital in their charitable giving. Rev. Mudd has also remembered Holy Cross Hospital in his final bequests

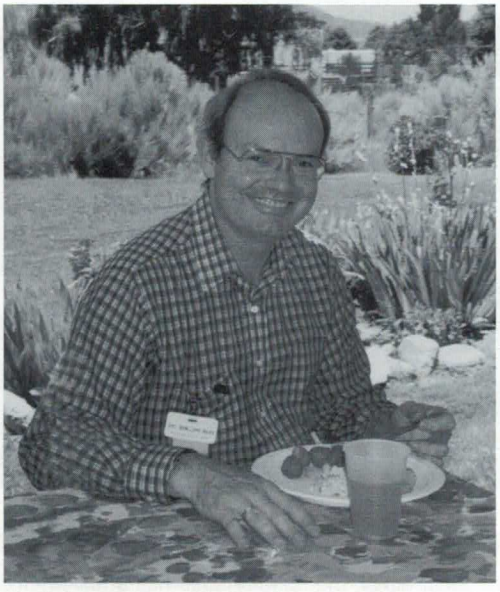
The original incorporators and first directors of the Foundation were Dr. Lawrence Barenholtz, Dr. Stephen D. Cetrulo, and Dr. Michael Kaufman. From 1976 until 1992, there was little activity in the Foundation. Rarely did TMSF have more than twenty thousand dollars in its accounts. In 1991, when the push was on to build a new modern hospital in Taos, the Foundation was revived as a fund-raising arm for Holy Cross Hospital.

In line with this mission, the organization's stated goals are: funding requests from Holy Cross Hospital that enhance, maintain, and increase services beyond the basics; funding requests for needed community health-care projects; funding and sponsoring health-related scholarships; and being a catalyst in the community on health-care issues. The TMSF Board was reorganized in 1992 and began to plan a fund-development program. Although the Foundation works for the benefit of Holy Cross Hospital, it is not employed by the hospital. Foundation members are local volunteers who are well-respected members of the community. The hospital has its own board, made up of representatives from all parts of Taos County, to oversee Holy Cross Hospital operations. Members of both boards personally pledge donations.

In 1994 a campaign was launched to raise funds to help purchase medical equipment for Holy Cross Hospital and to begin a permanent endowment fund to help ensure the high quality of health-care services. The $1,125,000 Phase I fund-raising campaign began as the initial phase of TMSF's long-range $2,000,000 Capital Endowment Fund Development Program. With tremendous support from the Taos community, the foundation board has raised $1,650,850 in cash, pledges, and other assets since 1994.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Best patient care continues



Warren K. (Kean) Spellman, CEO

"Today, Holy Cross Hospital is in an exciting position," says CEO Kean Spellman. As rural hospitals throughout the country are foundering and some are even closing down, Holy Cross Hospital is in excellent health.

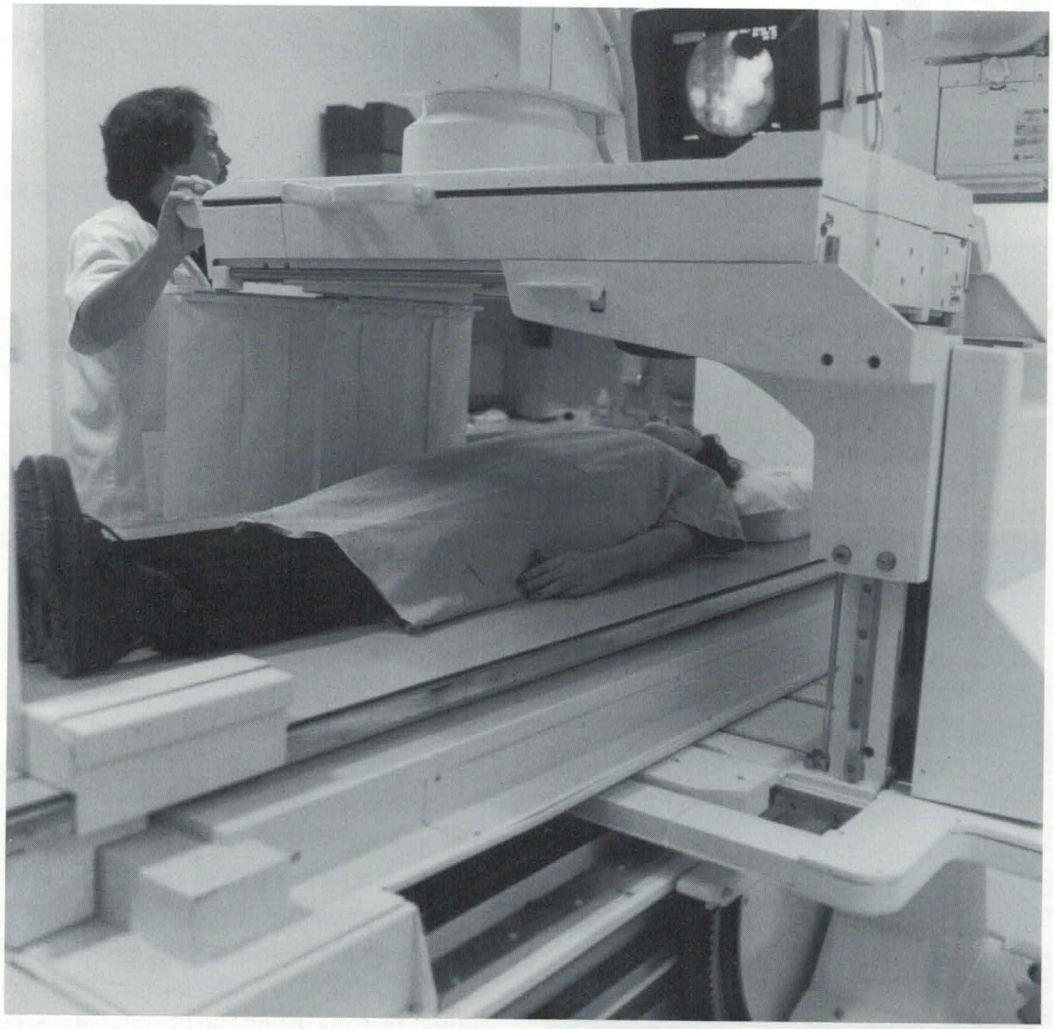
The number of patients has grown, the number of employees has grown to more than 300 working full-time and part-time, and the number of procedures performed has increased dramatically. Spellman said there have been days within the last two years when not a single patient bed was empty. In 1994, when the hospital opened, about seventy surgeries were peformed a month. Today the number is four times that.

In addition, the hospital averages more than a thousand patients a month in the emergency room, averaging thirty to thirty-five a day but spiking on the weekends.

IN THE BLACK

Spellman adds, "From a fiscal perspective, HCH takes in approximately 4 percent more money than we actually spend on care," he said. "That's a very modest margin by any standard, but at least we're in the black, and we've been in the black for seven consecutive years."

But the price of success, the administra-



BEST PATIENT CARE: High-tech and compassion combine for "Best Patient Care" at Holy Cross Hospital. In addition to radiology and imaging services using the latest diagnostic technology, the hospital also has a full-service clinical laboratory; rehabilitation facilities for physical, occupational, and speech therapy; a private, family-oriented birthing center; surgical suites; an intensive care unit; and a twenty-four-hour emergency room. There are more than seventy physicians, representing a broad range of specialties, on an active or consulting basis. Holy Cross Hospital began as a tiny ten-bed hospital and evolved into a forty-two-bed regional hospital that has become a rural health-care model for the nation. ABOVE: Long time radiologic technician, Mr. Alvin Herrera, positions a patient.

tor says, is a full house. "There's not a closet in this hospital that hasn't been packed with supplies. We are overcrowded and due to space constraints many systems haven't been maximized."

Spellman says the excellent staff has attracted more patients. "With the success of our specialist doctors, physicians in Raton, Cimarron, and southern Colorado are referring many cases in orthopedics, general surgery, and urology to the hospital, to a much higher degree than they ever had in the past."

He said the hospital's popularity has gained locally, too. In 1993 only about 35 percent of patients from Taos County chose Holy Cross. By 2000, he said, "we exceeded 78 percent preference."

NEW EXPANSION PLANNED

"All this has combined to form an extremely busy hospital now bulging at the seams and planning a major expansion." This time, he said, the hospital will not have to ask taxpayers for any additional help.

He expects an $8 million expansion beginning this year, possibly opening in 2002. The plans include expanding the number of patient medical surgical beds by eight beds; updating and expanding the pharmacy; increasing the amount of space in the emergency room and outpatient area; and increasing the number of operating rooms to from two to three or more. Administrative offices and nonclinical departments also may be relocated to open up space. The lobby and visiting areas also are too small, he said.

"Fifty-three percent of our business is on the outpatient side," he said. "This adds a lot more demand on equipment and on space, since more people are coming and leaving the same day."

Other facets of the expansion include building a breezeway between the hospital and the adjacent nursing home so that elders not be exposed to the weather or have to spend money on ambulance transfers. "This doesn't derive us any financial benefit," he said, "but it derives us a lot of emotional and social benefit to help our elders in a nursing home." A gift shop is also planned.

BEST PATIENT CARE

It is clear that the Sisters' motto of "Best Patient Care" lives on at Holy Cross Hospital. The hospital houses some of the most advanced equipment in northern New Mexico, "but we're equally proud of the fact that we dispense our modern medicine with a healthy dose of old-fashioned human compassion," Spellman said.

And so the legacy of caring continues. The history of Holy Cross Hospital is the story of a legacy of caring. A young doctor and nurse went where they were needed. A handful of nuns took themselves to the end of a long trail and devoted their lives to "Best Patient Care." They were joined by a small but growing number of dedicated professionals. Quickly, a diverse and unique community joined to support them, offering its love, time, material assistance, and encouragement. Today these individual stories weave into a fabric of enormous richness and strength, binding all Taoseños and residents of the Taos County region to Holy Cross Hospital.

Thank You to All Our Past Donors

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In Gratitude to Dr. Michael Kaufman and Bonnie Kaufman.
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