

Work hard for students

Continued from 14A

barely a decade after the hospital opened with room for 20 patients. Initially the new hospital, which was founded by members of all white St. Peter's Episcopal Church, was met with derision. Blacks, many of whom had never been to a hospital, thought it was a place to die.

As need and trust grew, the hospital added the school to train nurses.

Over the next 40 years, the hospital continued to grow and by 1946 Good Sam launched its first capital campaign.

The goal - to raise \$110,000 to build dorm for nurses.

In the late 40s, when Spicer entered, the school was a unique place. For \$500, students got three years of training. Tuition included uniforms, linens, books and insurance. Curfew was 7 p.m. on weekdays. On Saturdays, it was moved back to 5 p.m. to ensure all students were on time for mandatory services at St. Michael.

School director Hazel Blakeney ruled with an iron thumb.

"We were a family," said Esther Sturgis, of the class of '55. "We didn't get away with anything. I don't think there was any other place like Good Sam's."

Students were not allowed to go

into Second Ward, an all-black neighborhood that boasted more than a dozen churches and at least as many "juke joints."

Nursing students worked all shifts and were required to clean and sterilize instruments. They mixed baby formula for the hospital's 12-bed nursery.

"It was hard," Sturgis said. "But we had our fun too."

Even with donations of food and money from the black community, there were certain programs the hospital could not afford to offer. Psychiatry and tuberculosis training was completed in northern hospitals. No southern hospital would open its door for the two to three months of training the black nurses needed.

Chemistry and microbiology courses were taught at Johnson C. Smith University.

Home economics, at West Charlotte High School.

Students often walked three miles to Smith to keep from paying the 10-cent bus fare.

"We had to sit on the back of the bus anyway," Sturgis said. "Sometimes that would really get to you. After we went to New York and had no trouble being accepted, it really started to get to some of us."

Despite the improvement made to the campus, the long hours and harsh conditions began to bother the students. In 1959, student nurses staged a strike which effectively closed the school of nursing. The integration of Charlotte Memorial Hospital in the late 50s coupled with the takeover of the hospital by the Hospital Authority in the 60s spelled the end for Good Sam.

"I just don't think it could have survived," Thomas said. "There was no way they were going to duplicate the services they had at Memorial at Good Samaritan. They weren't going to have two equal facilities."

Still, Good Samaritan graduates have made their mark.

After the closing of Good Sam, its nurses found their way across the country, from New York to California.

Although Good Samaritan only exists in hearts, minds and memories, its graduates promise to meet again in 1999. Good Samaritan, despite its shortcomings, remains dear.

"You know, there is no nurse that's better," Sturgis said. "I would put a Good Samaritan graduate up against anyone. They would either equal them or surpass them."

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Around Charlotte

Continued from 14A

• Meeting, Charlotte Mathematics Club, 9:30 a.m., Providence Day School, corner of Rama and Sardis roads. For more information, call 892-2343.

• Juba Saturday, 2 p.m., Beatties Ford Road Branch Library, 2412 Beatties Ford Road.

• Concert, Music Under the Skylight, 3 p.m., Beatties Ford Road Branch Library, 2412 Beatties Ford Road. Featuring jazz trio Upscale.

• Picnic, Oaklawn Park, 3 p.m., Corner Russell and Orvis avenues. Residents are asked to bring chairs, tables and their favorite desserts. For more information, Anna Hood, 333-4685 or Anne Roddey, 377-3227.

Sunday

• Funtastic Sunday, 3 p.m. Children's Library, 310 North Tryon St. Features games and activities from Mexico and Latin American.

Monday

• Workshop, "Orientation to Computers," 10 a.m., Beatties Ford Road Branch Library, 2412 Beatties Ford Road. Pre-registration required. For more information, call 336-2882.

• Meeting, Lockwood Neighborhood Association, 7:30 p.m., 1500 N. Tryon St. Guest speaker, Deborah J. Guilbault. For more information, call 375-4993/

• Workshop, "When Your Relationship Ends," 7 p.m. Covenant Presbyterian Church, 1000 E. Morehead St. Classes continue each Monday through Oct. 27. Series cost, \$125. For more information, call 332-9034, extension 3067.

Wednesday

• Meeting, Charlotte Charter Chapter - American Business Women's Association, 6:30 p.m. For more information, 596-2878.

• Workshop, "A Woman's Comfort," 7 p.m., West Boulevard Branch Library, 2157 West Blvd. For more information, 336-6802.

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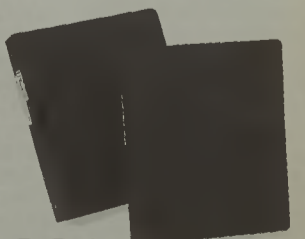
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