



Attention Lords and Maidens:

Medieval Times tix at the Club Store!

LAPD

Breathing New Life

While off-duty, Detention Officer Juanita Kepford saved the life of a young boy who had stopped breathing.



Detention Officer Juanita Kepford holds a "Good Samaritan" plaque given to her by the community of Silver Lakes

Alot of City Employees are heroes day in and day out, for the great things they do for the City. It's not often their actions go past even that, but that's what Juanita Kepford did.

Juanita, a Detention Officer at the North Hills Area Jail, found herself using off-duty the CPR training she had learned for the job. And that training literally saved a life.

"My girlfriend invited me out to a carnival that was happening out where she lives, at Silver Lakes in Helendale" in San Bernardino County on July 3, she explained to *Alive!* "I was watching the kids, and then I heard a lady yell, 'Call 911!' I knew that something was wrong.

"So I looked down and to my right. [Sitting] a few feet from me was a little boy who a man had just brought out from the water, and it looked like the boy had drowned. The man said he wanted to start CPR, but he didn't know how. So I walked up to the boy, and I started checking for his heartbeat and for breathing. His color wasn't good. He wasn't breathing; he had no heart beat, and his eyes were dilated. I thought I'd have to act fast because this little boy is going to go.

"I started CPR right away. A lot of water came out of his mouth, and I continued with the breathing. I did compressions on his heart, and I continued back and forth for almost 10 entire minutes. A security officer at the park jumped in at the last minute; he did the compressions then, and then the fire department arrived [and took over]. But I continued, and in the last minute of those 10 minutes, the little boy started to breathe. He had shal-

low breathing. I knew that was a good sign.

"I looked around, and there must have been 100 people standing there, watching me do CPR on this little boy."

The boy, six years old, was then airlifted to Loma Linda University Medical Center, where he survived. The boy reportedly is doing fine now and in school. The family prefers privacy, and Juanita has not met him since he left her arms on that day. At press time, a medal ceremony is pending.

Grief and Sadness No More

Is this the first time you've ever saved a life?
"It is," she said. "It's the first time I've ever used CPR in real life, outside of my training."

But maybe she wishes she would have known it as a little girl. "There was a tragedy in our family growing up. When I was just a kid, my aunt's little girl, Caroline, dropped her shoes in a ditch. She went into the waters, and they took her. She drowned in that ditch. She was so beautiful. It's been a lifetime of grief and sadness that you go through because of that."

And you prevented that grief and sadness from destroying another family.

"Yes, I guess I did. I prevented that in this family.

"I was thinking about [Caroline]; I always think about her. But I was really thinking about that little boy because I was trying to help him as much as I could. I know the community is now calling him 'The Miracle Boy.'

"I thank God that he brought this child back. I just kept praying too in my mind. I kept saying that I wanted to bring this child back. I just feel that God listened to me or my prayer."

Alive! thanks Brian Hollenbaugh, Detention Officer and Club Member, for telling us about Juanita's great story.



Billy Rosenberg, Silver Lake City Council Member, presents Juanita with a plaque recognizing her heroic efforts.



At the Silver Lakes ceremony where Juanita received her plaque, back row from left: Consuelo Vasquez (Juanita's mother); Judy Martin, P.D.O., Van Nuys Station; John Martin, husband of Judy; and Dawn Tate (white top), Juanita's daughter. Front row: Joshua Kepford, Juanita's son; Juanita Kepford, Ella Tate, Juanita's granddaughter; Julie Suppa, Juanita's sister; and Nora Tate, Juanita's granddaughter. *Photo by Billy Rosenberg*.