

My American Hero



Written by Jean Gutierrez and Conor Nee
Illustrated by Conor and Meaghan Nee

Conor Hee



**In memory of my uncle, Firefighter George Cain, Ladder 7,
Engine 16, Manhattan, New York**



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**Dedicated to the 343 firemen who lost their lives on September 11th
and to the families they left behind.**

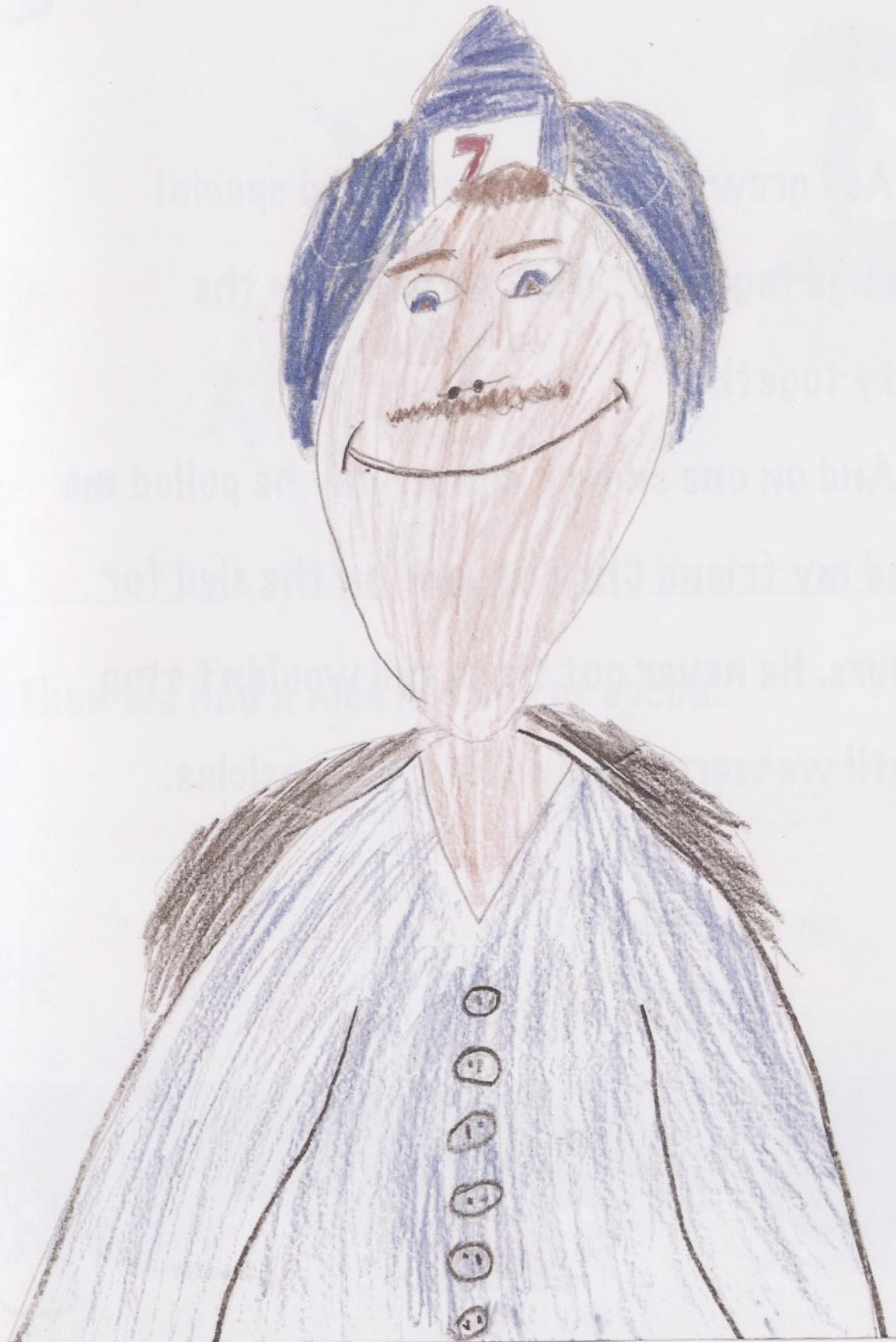
The top portion of the page features a stylized American flag with a blue canton containing white stars and red and white stripes, waving across the top.

My name is Conor Nee and I am 9 years old.

My uncle George Cain, was a hero to me long before September 11th ever happened.

When I was born my mom chose my Uncle Georgie to be my godfather because she loved him sooooo much!!

The bottom portion of the page features a stylized American flag, identical to the one at the top, waving across the bottom.





As I grew up my uncle and I did special things together. We took walks in the city together.

And on one snowy winter day he pulled me and my friend Chris around on the sled for hours. He never got tired and wouldn't stop until we were frozen like two popsicles.





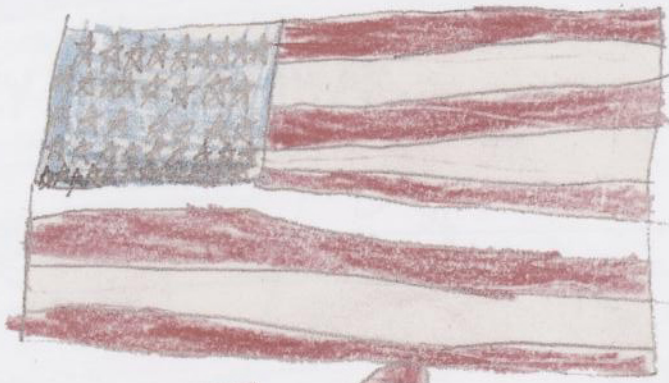
Then we had a nice hot cup of cocoa.





And during the holidays we would go to
Christmas parties at the firehouse. We
had so much fun jumping in the balloon
bounce and getting presents from Santa!





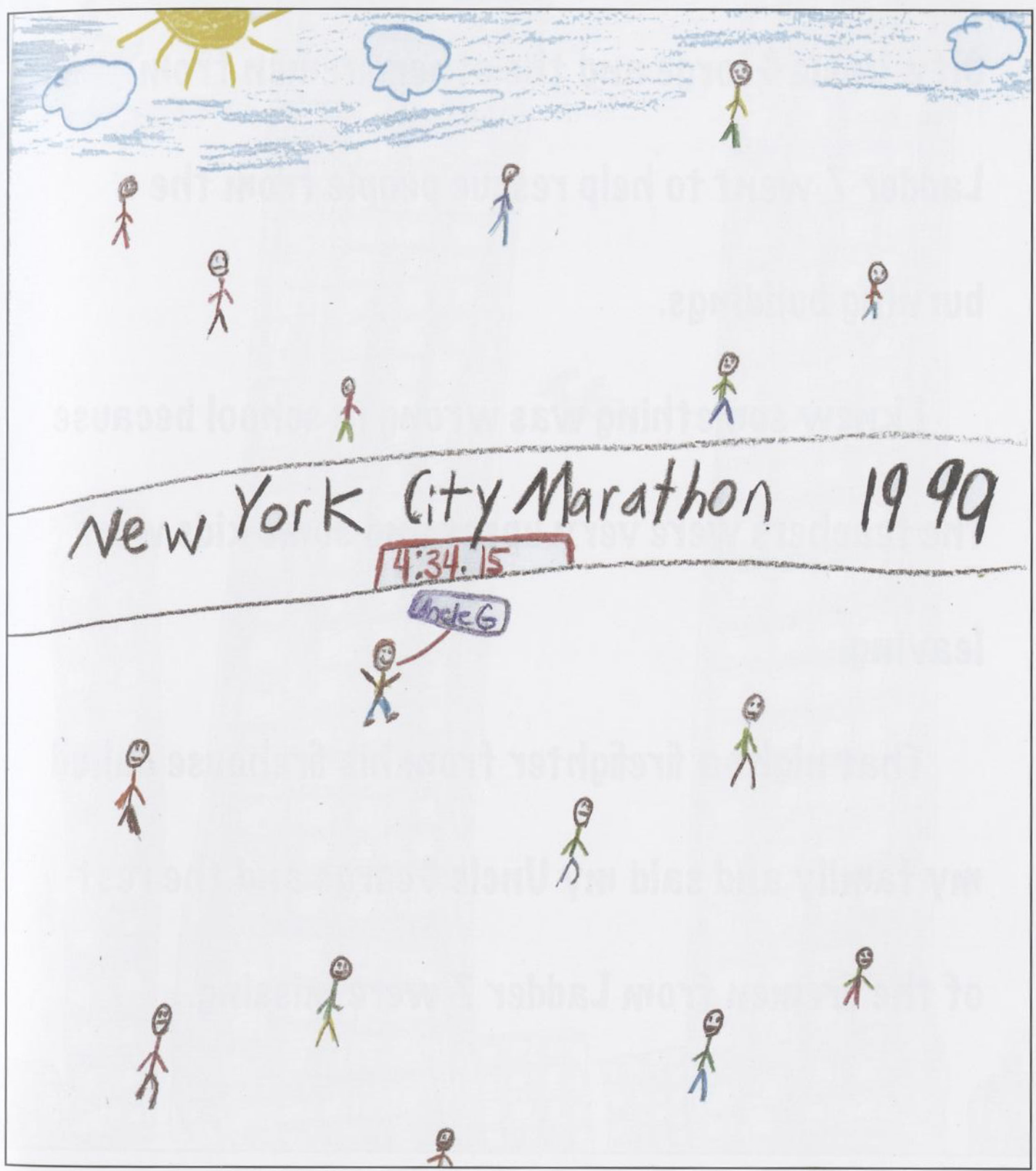
FIRE HOUSE





**When Uncle Georgie wasn't working as a fireman
he would go skiing on humongous mountains - and
he wasn't even afraid!**

He also loved to go hiking and he even ran in the New York City Marathon.



But on September 11th, 2001, terrorists flew planes into the World Trade Center in New York City. Uncle George and the other firemen from Ladder 7 went to help rescue people from the burning buildings.

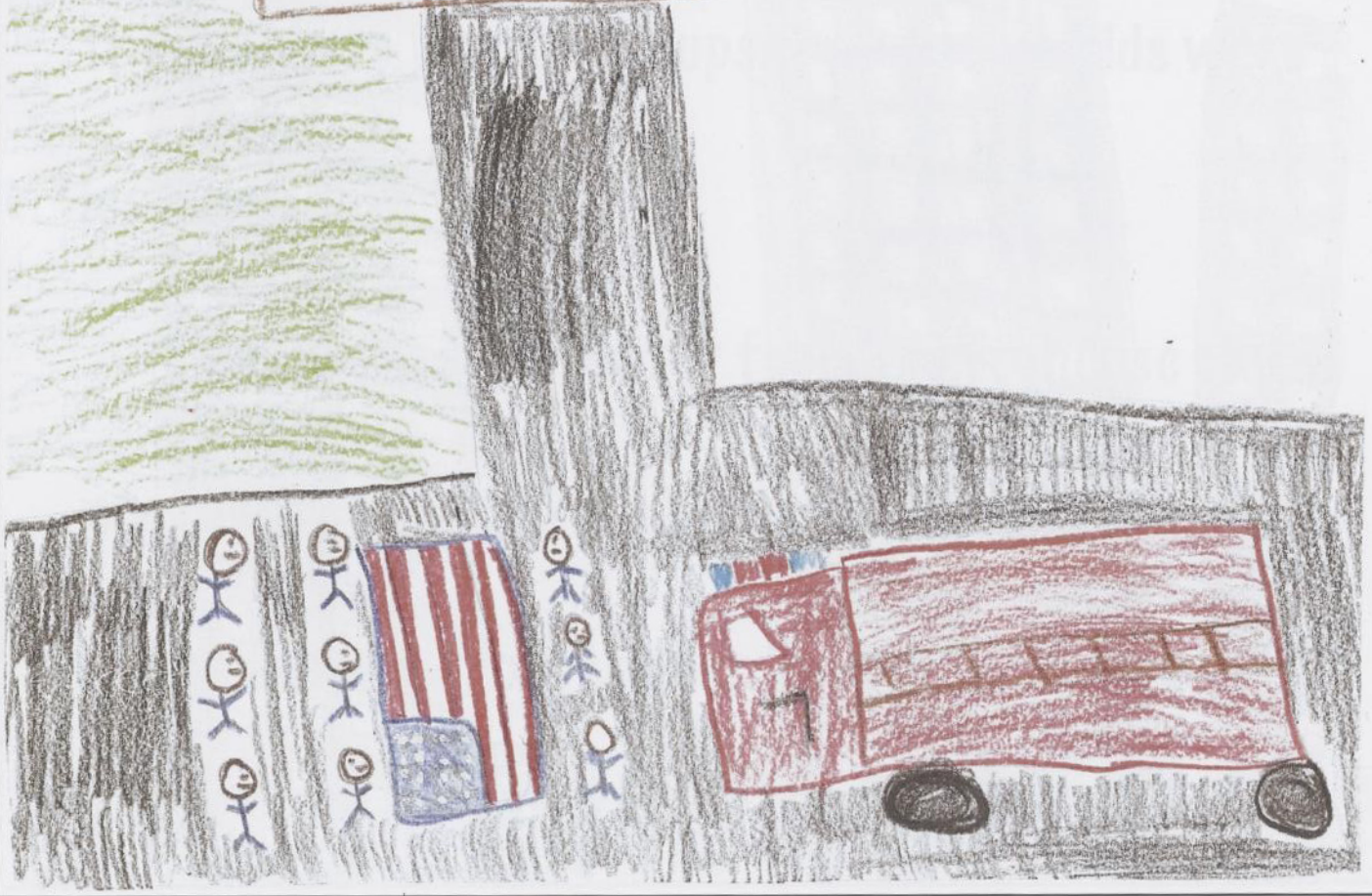
I knew something was wrong in school because the teachers were very upset and some kids were leaving.

That night a firefighter from his firehouse called my family and said my Uncle George and the rest of the firemen from Ladder 7 were missing.





St. William
the Abbott
Church



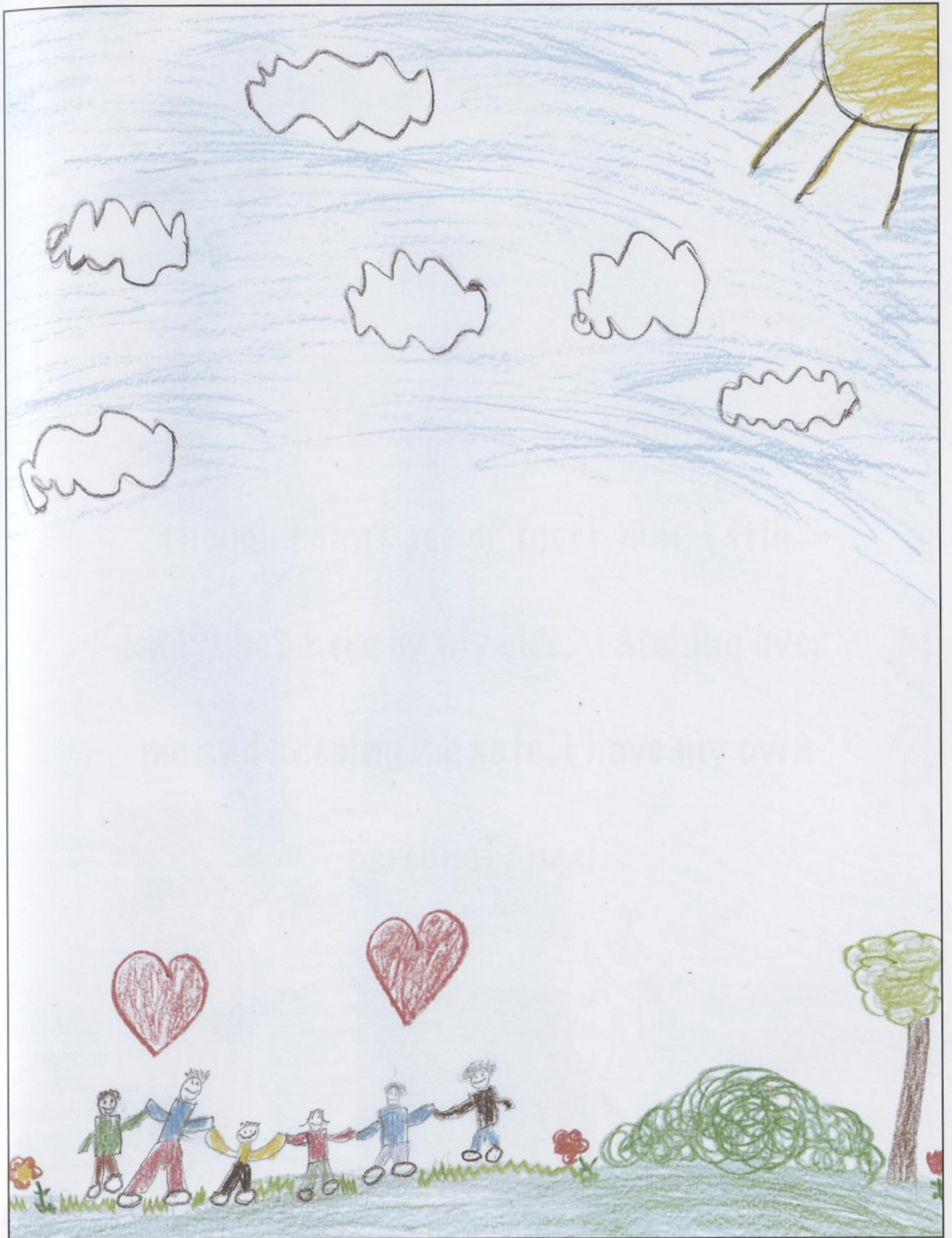
When I found out my uncle didn't survive I was very scared and sad. It was confusing and I didn't know what would happen next. My family cried a lot, I still hoped it wasn't really true.

Two months later there was a special memorial service for Uncle George. My family and I drove in a limousine to the church. There were firemen lining the sidewalks saluting us. After we came out of the church we heard the sound of bagpipes and helicopters flew over our heads.



It took me a long time until I felt a little better after September 11th, but I had help from my Mom and Dad, my sister Meaghan and brother Chris, my Nanny, my friends and my teachers. I even went to a special support group with other kids to help me talk about how hard it was for me to lose my uncle Georgie.







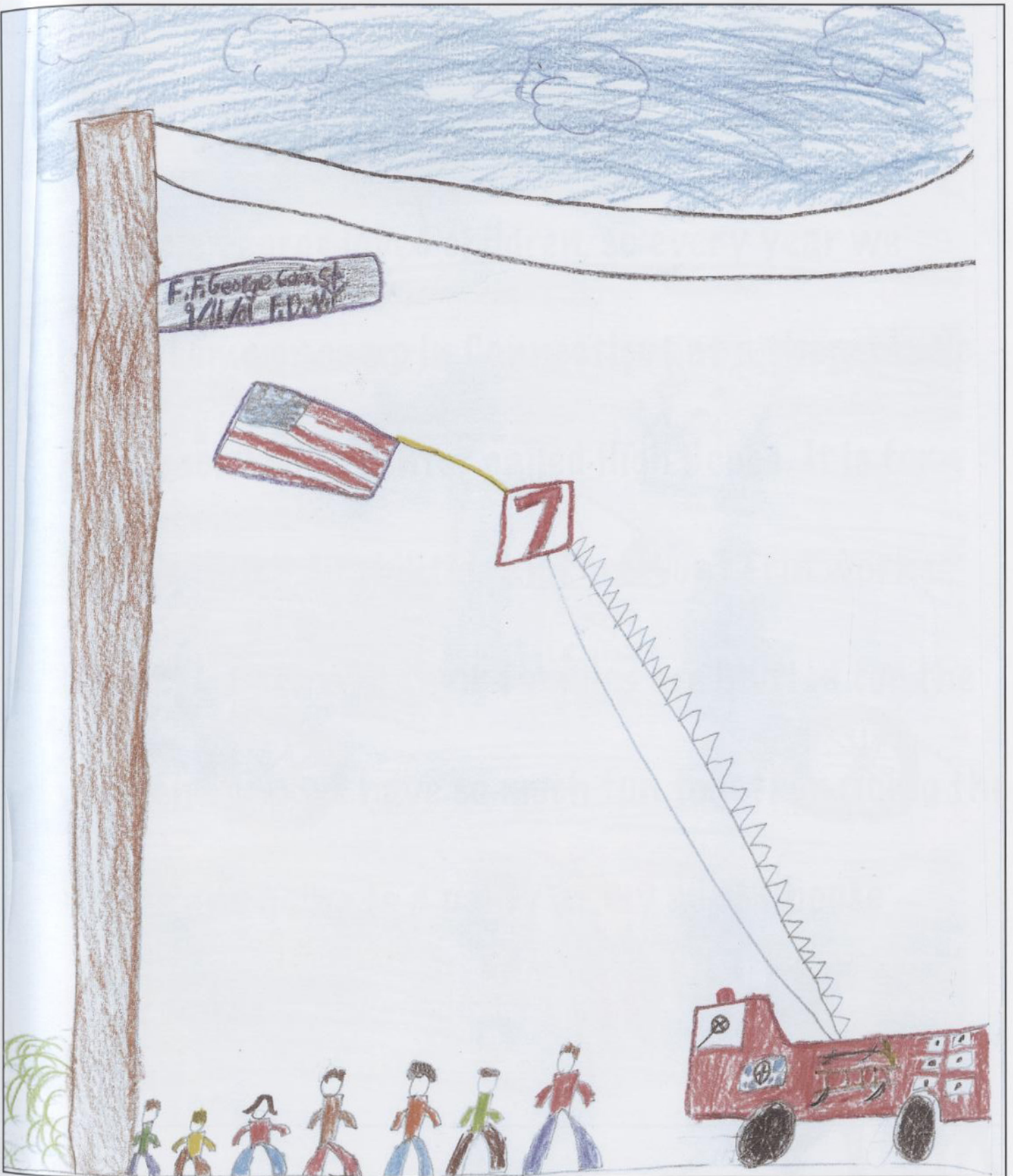
I miss my uncle very much but even
though I can't see or touch him, I still
know he's here by my side, watching over
me and keeping me safe. I have my own
personal angel.

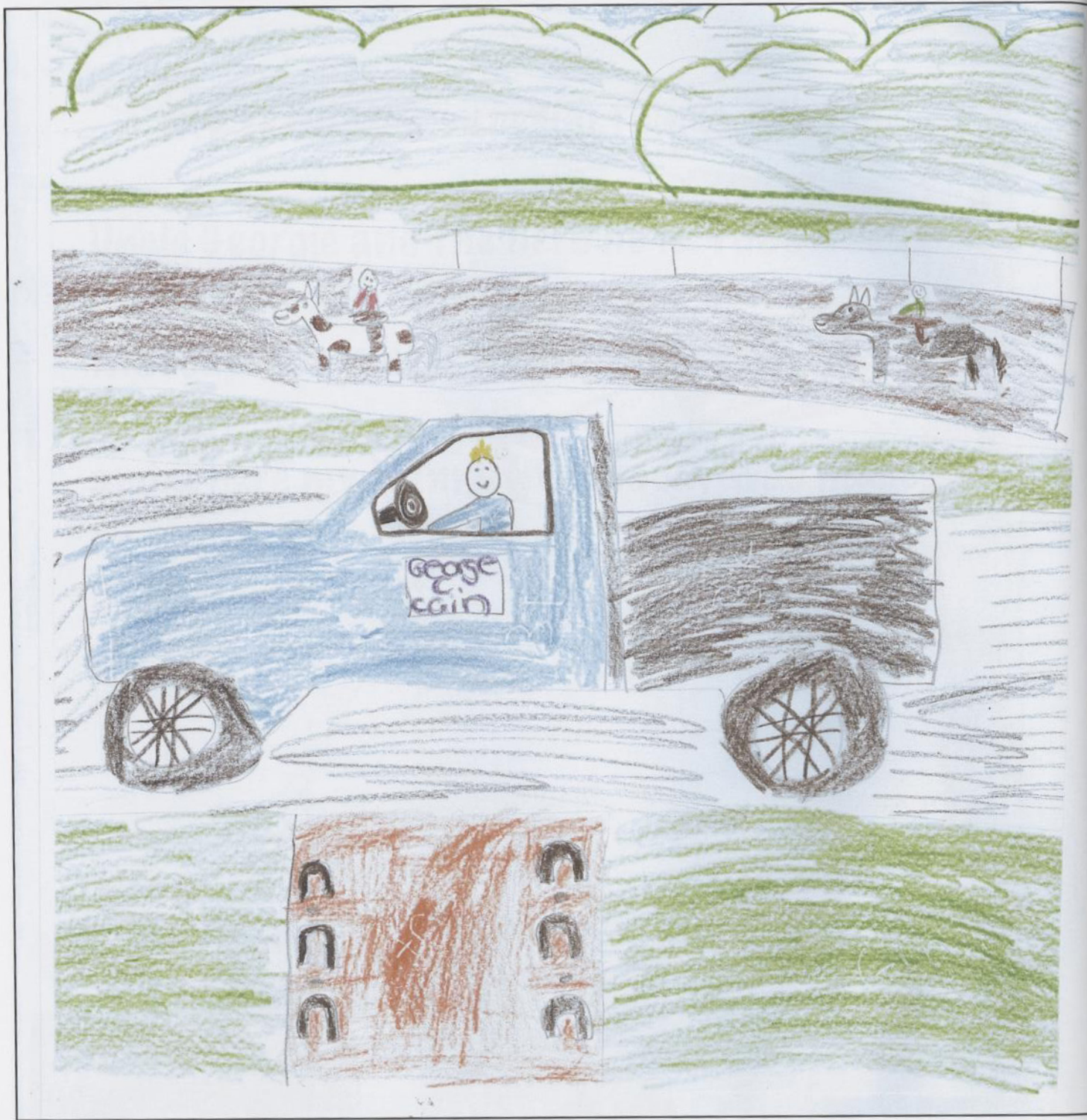


*I believe
in
Angels*

**My family does special things to honor
Uncle Georgie and the hero he is. The street in
Massapequa where he grew up as a little boy
and where my Nanny lives today was named
in his honor.**

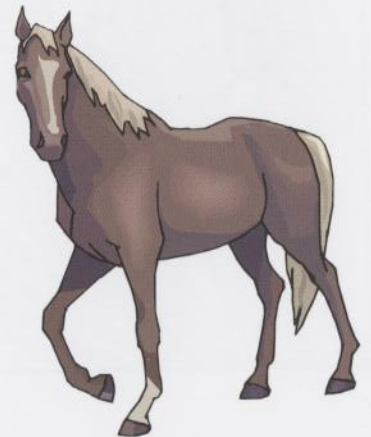








Uncle George loved children, so every year we hold a summer camp in Connecticut at a therapeutic horseback riding center called High Hopes. It is for children with disabilities and my Aunt Erin works there. Firemen and their families are invited for the weekend and we have so much fun together riding the horses and going to a party at my aunt's house afterwards.





Every year on Uncle Georgie's birthday my family holds a golf outing. Last year was the first time I actually was able to golf and that was very special to me.

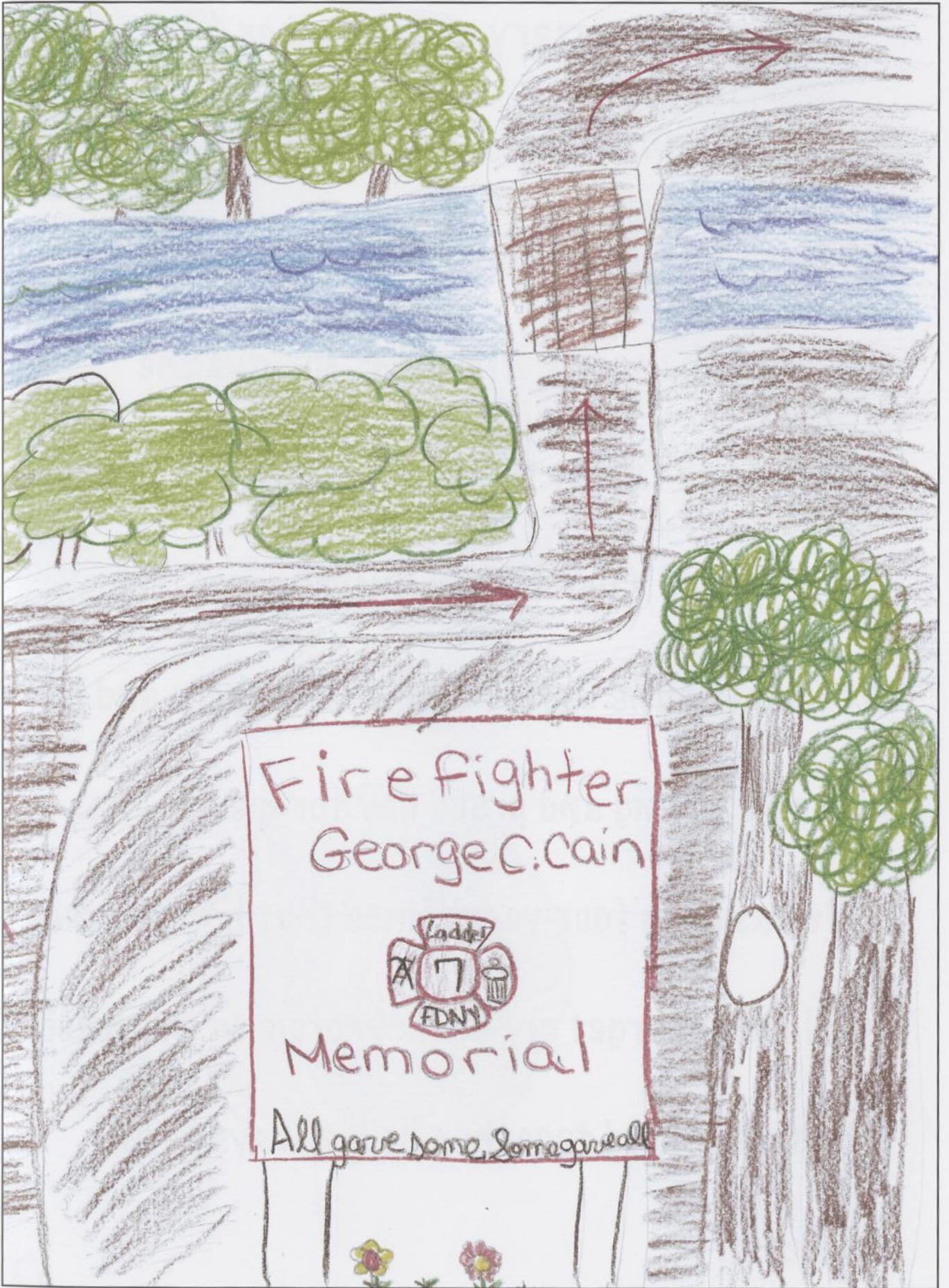






He also loved hiking so we had a trail in the woods upstate named after him. We go there with family and friends on Mother's Day. It is a beautiful place with a stream and I love to hike there.





Fire fighter
George C. Cain



Memorial

All gave some, some gave all



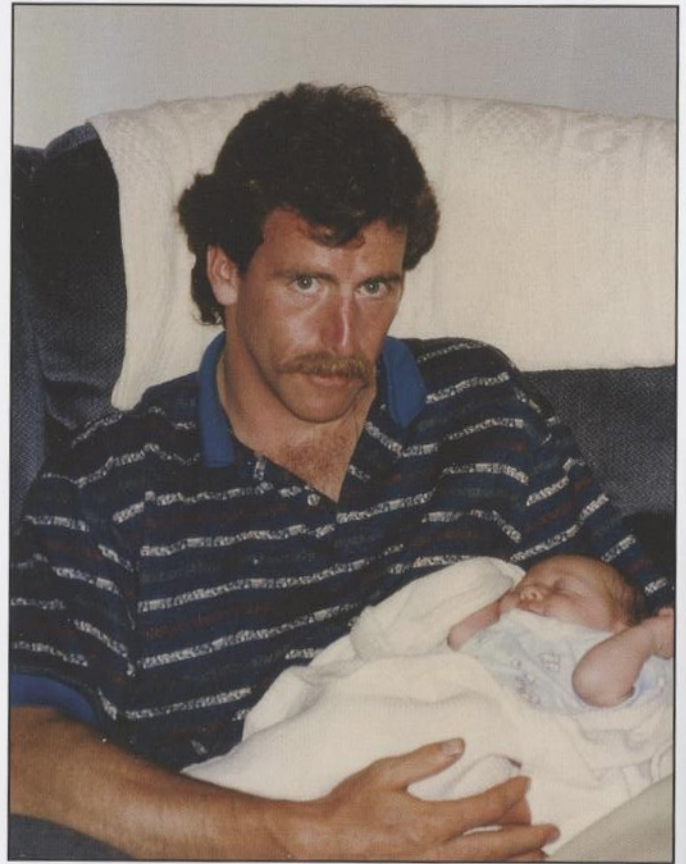
On the anniversary of September 11th my family goes to Ground Zero. This year my Mom, my Uncle Danny, and my Aunt Erin read the names of the people who didn't survive the attack. And I went to Washington D.C to receive the Medal of Valor for my Uncle George. The President of the United States was there and it was an exciting and proud day for me.

It has been four years since that horrible day. I will never forget my Uncle Georgie or the special times we shared together. He'll always be in my heart.

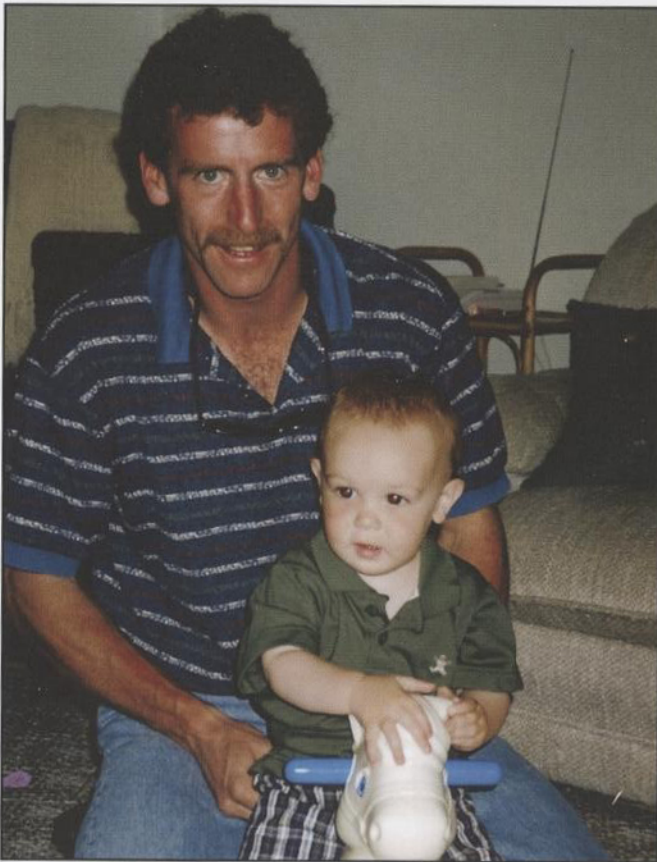




George riding tricycle - 1969



George holding Conor - 1996

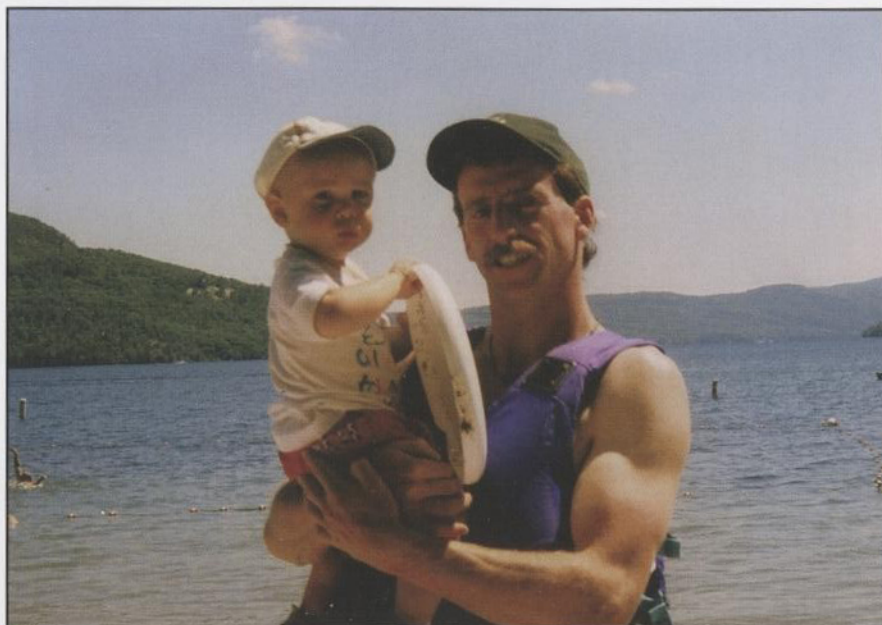


With Conor on his
First Birthday - 1997



George holding Niece Meaghan - 1994

George with Conor in
Lake George - 1997



Snuggling with Nephew
Christopher - 1997

George with family
(left to right)
sisters Erin & Nancy,
brother Danny & mother
Rosemary - 1997



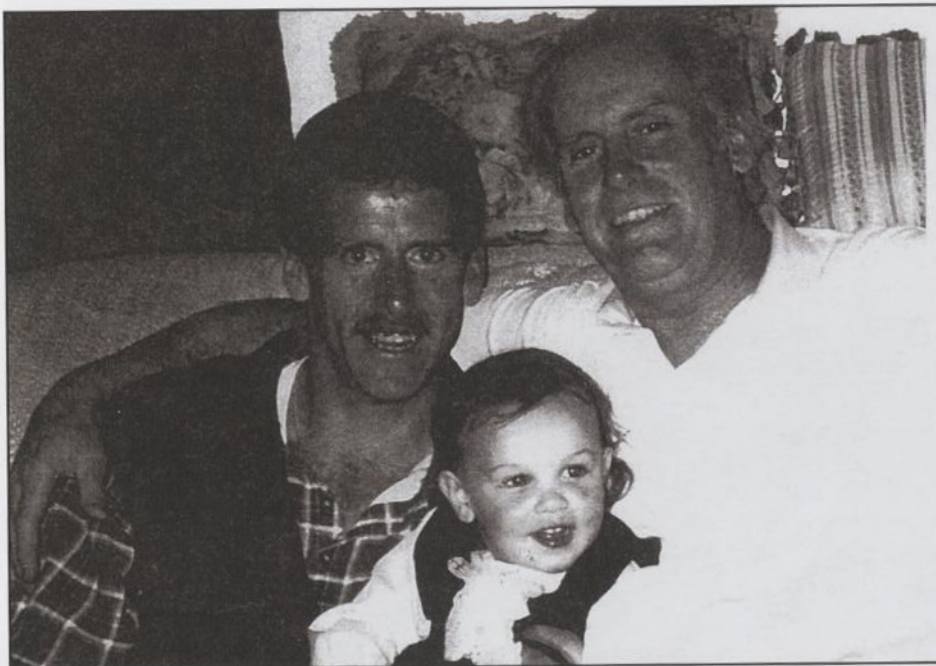


At firehouse Christmas party
with his Mom and Santa - 1999

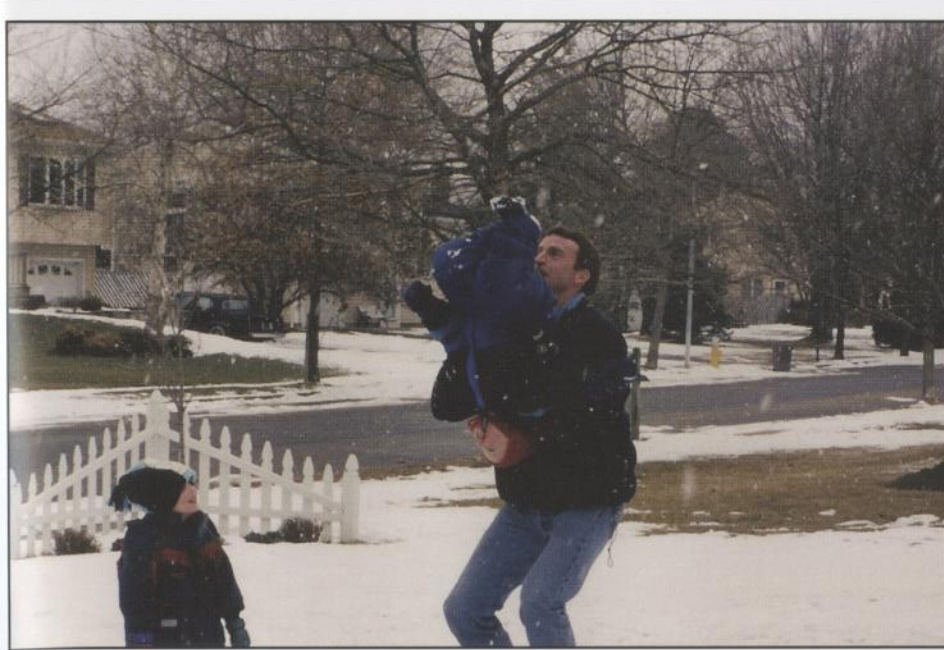
Conor's 3rd Birthday - 1999



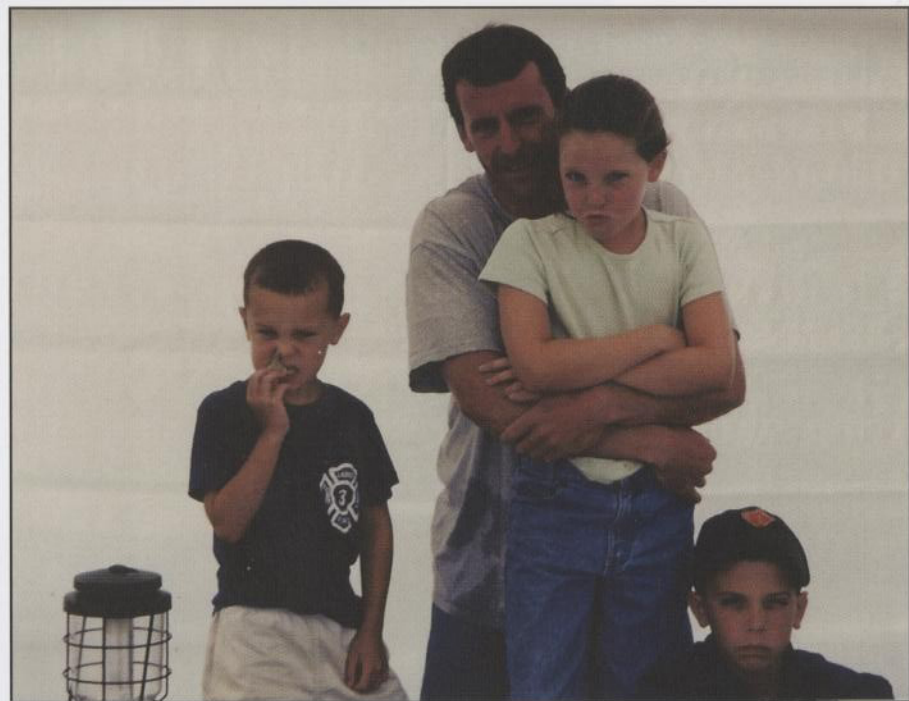
With Godfather
George Vasselmann and
Godson Conor - 1998



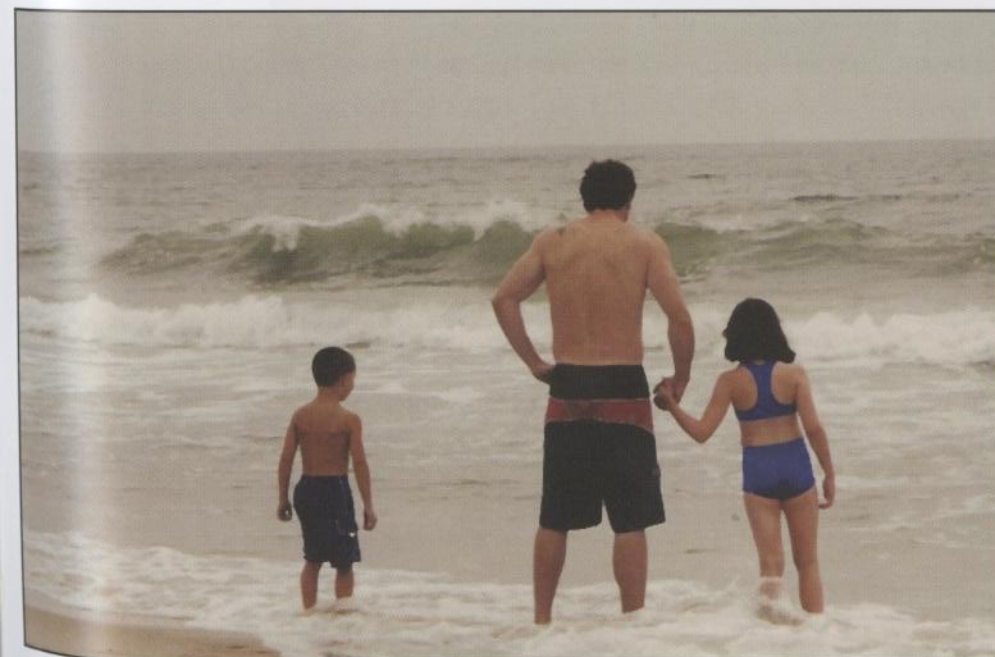
George playing with
Conor and friend Chris
in Snow - 2001



Camping in Montauk with
Conor, Meaghan, and
Christopher - Aug 2001



Checking out the
waves with Conor &
Meaghan - Montauk
- Aug 2001





George Christopher Cain (affectionately known as Georgie) was born on Friday, May 13, 1966. He grew up in Massapequa, New York, the 3rd of the 4 of us. While growing up he played soccer, and then at Massapequa H.S., he played on the ice hockey team. George has many friends from his school days, who stay in touch with one another and us and always count George as a friend, even today..

He came to love being a firefighter but it was not more important than his family. I asked him to be godfather to my son Conor who was born on May 27th, 1996. He took his role very seriously. Anytime that he could be with his niece and nephews was a special time for all. He taught my children Christopher and Meaghan to ski. He would play with them and have the best time, and they adored him in return. He introduced the boys to Lego's and would sit patiently with them, putting hundreds of pieces together. Whenever there was a family reunion, he was there. When we went camping at Lake George and Hither Hills in Montauk, he was there. He camped with us for the last time in Montauk in August of 2001.

Nothing meant more to him than his close relationship with our mother Rosemary. They had a wonderful cross-country venture from Colorado to California back in 1993 and we always celebrated their May birthdays together. Every moment spent together was precious and full of wonderful laughter and fun.

On the evening of September 10th, Georgie spent time with our sister Erin who happened to be working in the city and visited George at the firehouse. She had dinner with the "guys" and left him late that night. Early on the beautiful morning of September 11th, he and his fellow firefighters were out on an early morning run, when the first plane hit the North Tower. They went right down to the WTC. From what is known, George and his 5 firefighters bravely went into the Marriott Hotel, to evacuate people to safety. When the South Tower fell, the first to fall, George and his "brothers" fell too.

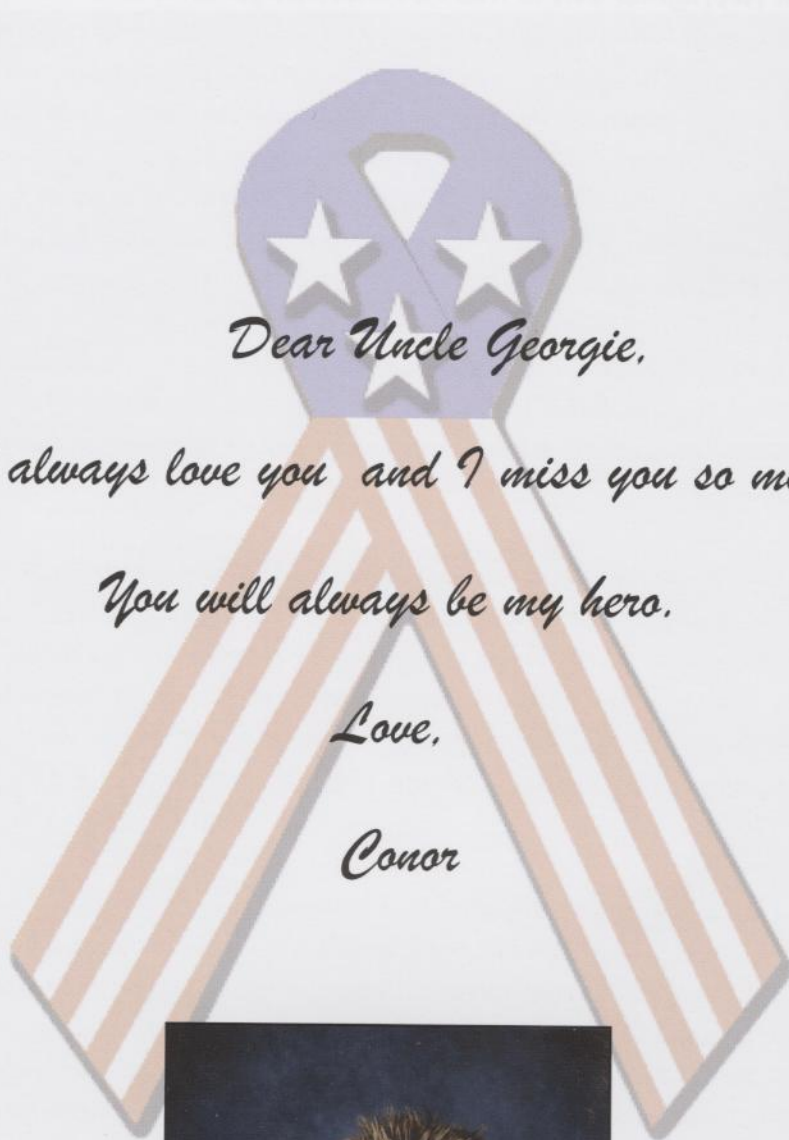
He was miraculously recovered on New Years Eve day, the same day our mom went into Ground Zero, to volunteer at the "tent", the area the Red Cross set up as a place of refuge for rescue workers. She says he waited for her to "come home". She courageously continued to work at the tent comforting other rescue workers until the cleanup process was over in May of 2002. She continues today, to be a dedicated advocate for the issue of Proper Burial, and having the memorial be a place of honor and respect. She also conducts tours of Ground Zero, for the thousands of curious visitors, who come to the site every day.

Our family has done many things to honor Georgie's memory. There are several benches with his name on them and our childhood street was renamed for him. A section of my children's elementary school library is dedicated in his honor, as well as a trail upstate where he lived. A memorial foundation was established at High Hopes Therapeutic Riding School in Connecticut. Our brother Danny and our mom started an annual golf outing with the proceeds going to High Hopes. The golf outing this past year was held on his birthday, Friday, May 13th.

Georgie will never be forgotten by his family and friends, his laughter resounding in our memories. He lived his life full of hope and excitement. Hopefully he will be remembered by future generations for his bravery and dedication to his family, friends and country.

Love you always George and you will never be forgotten! Until we meet again,

Love, Nancy xoxo



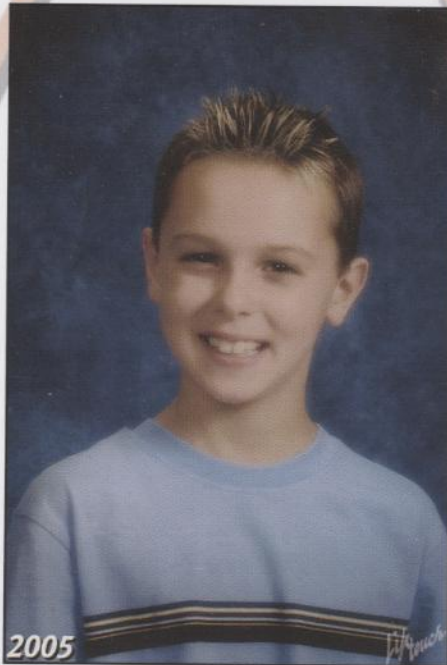
Dear Uncle Georgie,

I'll always love you and I miss you so much.

You will always be my hero.

Love,

Conor



written 11/2005