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Nativity scene displays power in partnerships

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The Powell Pallet Distribution crew, led by Julius Powell, in front, and, from left, Polito Torrales, his son Pete Torrales and Justin Bivins, built this stable from pallets for the live Nativity at Heath Springs for the Holidays.

Heath Springs' annual holiday event Nov. 27 gained a new addition with a live Nativity scene, complete with singers and actors, this year.

Dr. Zora Denson, Heath Springs' director of community relations, said nearly 200 people came to the day's event, which also featured a photo booth, music, step dancers, a woodwind ensemble from Andrew Jackson High School and a bounce house. Mitch Norrell sang at the performance, which Denson said was "definitely a crowd-pleaser."

Although the event is over, the wooden stable and manger backdrop built for it will remain up through Christmas on the campus of Total Restoration Church, 114 Main St., Heath Springs.

"We always get outside partners to help us initiate this event," Denson said. "This year, we wanted a live Nativity scene. And the live nativity scene had the people, but we didn't have a manger. So, someone mentioned to me, why don't you just use pallets?"

Denson said she went to Powell Pallet Distribution and learned that they use pallets to make everything by hand. They built the Nativity scene and two Christmas trees in just two days, and delivered it all to the event.

“I think that it’s a hidden jewel,” Denson said of the pallet company. “This is a grassroots company, they want to come on and they want to provide jobs for other people.

“I’ve gotten them in touch with SC Works, so they can do some helping with, you know, channeling and instructing and organizing how they should get this done. But their cooperation, their tenacity and their ability to do the work was just phenomenal.”

Julius Powell, who owns Powell Pallet Distribution, said his company completed the project free of charge as a way to give back to the kids in the area, and provide a positive influence for them.

“We said, ‘well, we’re just not going to give you the Nativity scene, we’re going to give you what we can and when we feel that children deserve,’ ” Powell said. “We made everything and we didn’t want any splendor, because the project, it cost us very little to make. But it really didn’t matter. It could have cost \$10,000 and if it brought a smile, it’s worth it at that moment.”

Denson said there is tremendous power in partnership.

“Partnership is key to anything that we do,” she said. “It doesn’t always take money. It takes the ingenuity, the efforts and then seeing the final vision — the total vision — in order for it to happen. When there’s mutual cooperation, much can be accomplished.”

Denson said she emphasizes the importance of volunteer help, community organization and local business support in creating a successful town event.

Powell also utilized the power of partnership, by collaborating with his agent Polito Torrales, the artist who did the painting and design. Powell said he wants to thank RAB Distributing in Lancaster for lending their workspace to Powell and his team to create the designs in.

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