

Live Nativity performed

By Linda Schneider
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On Christmas Eve, Steve and Janice Busse, along with friends and family, presented a live Nativity performance for Bird City, McDonald and surrounding areas.

Their barn was decorated to resemble the stable where The Child was born. Guests wore warm clothing and brought flashlights and as everyone arrived, "census takers" asked if the reason for the visit to Bethlehem was to be counted. The audience was seated in front of the stage on hay bales and, while waiting for the show to start, was offered hot beverages.

Even as the Nativity was alive, so were the animals that were part of the scene in the original story. The horse was on loan from the Antholz family and belonged to C.J. Antholz. The sheep were on loan from the High Noon Feeds and Ketzner family, and the bucket calf from the Keltz's family.

Surprisingly, the sheep and calf did not make a sound throughout the whole presentation; however, the horse whinnied with Pastor David Rossbach's opening prayer right on cue. Mrs. Busse introduced the

play by telling the audience the reason for Christmas can lose its meaning in the bustling activities of the holidays.

"We want everyone to take a moment to remember what Christmas is all about," said Mrs. Busse. "That's why we have put this play together."

As the play started, a variety of participants filed in on stage, the angels were Sydney, Craig, and Stephanie Busse, Hayley Young, Elizabeth and Rachel Keltz, McKayla and Mackenzie Barnett, Teryn Carmichael, and Libby Kish; shepherds were Ty Carmichael, Caleb Keltz, Matthew and Michael Barnett, Jack Kish, Andrew Schields and Austin Cobb; Joseph and Mary were performed by Joshua Keltz and Manda Barnett, and The Child quietly performed by Ashlynn Schields.

For the next 45 minutes, the audience heard and sang along with the cast hymns and carols sharing the story of the birth of the Child Jesus. After the play, everyone enjoyed refreshments.

With the help of Sherri Carmichael and Phyllis Wright, news of the Nativity story spread out across the land and refreshments were served.



(L) JACK AND LIBBY KISH, MACKINZIE AND MCKAYLA BARNETT were angels in the presentation of the Nativity on Christmas Eve.

Times staff photo by Linda Schneider



WADE CARMICHAEL, ROBYN AND TIM RAILE, look over the smoker that is used to prepare their beef jerky. It is just one of the steps it takes to get the product ready for the customers.

Times staff photo by Linda Schneider

New business began casually in 2005

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What started out as casual conversation in 2005 is now a new business adventure for Wade Carmichael, Bird City, and Tim and Robyn Raile, St. Francis.

In 1990, Jim Banister, McDonald, introduced Mr. Carmichael to Monty Nuss. At that time, Mr. Nuss had a thriving portrait studio business and was interested in developing his hobby of cooking into a beef jerky business.

As it turned out, Monty Nuss Beef Jerky was born and a successful business began in 1996. Mr. Nuss opened a store front in Littleton, Colo. For nearly 10 years, Monty's customers crowded into his store to buy the only Monty Nuss Beef Jerky in the country.

The business continued to grow and grow, and what started out as a hobby demanded too much time away from his photography business. Mr. Nuss chose to close the doors on his jerky store.

About 3 years ago, Mr. Carmichael learned about Mr. Nuss closing up shop, called him, and asked if he was interested in selling Monty Nuss Jerky. At first, Mr. Nuss said, "No, not at this time." However, 3 months passed, Mr. Nuss gave Wade another call and said he was interested in selling his business.

Wade wanted this to be a family-owned and operated business, and Tammi, his wife, enjoying her career as a full-time teacher, did not have the time to commit to another venture and encouraged him to pursue the venture. Mr. Carmichael then asked Tim and Robyn Raile, his sister and brother-in-law, to join him.

"I asked them if they wanted to go on an adventure," laughed Wade.

Once the partnership formed, the three of them began a journey to learn all the aspects of opening a new business.

Tim and Robyn did, and they became partners and together

purchased the name and recipe rights to Monty's Beef Jerky from Monty and Carole Nuss.

In addition, working with them is Jessica Raile-Reimer who handles the marketing and web site design. Michael Raile, Teryn Carmichael, and Ty Carmichael have all pitched in smoking and packaging the product. Sherry Carmichael, Robyn and Wade's mom, is also there every step of the way.

"It took a lot of research and patience to make sure everything was in place before opening," said Mrs. Raile. "We wanted it right."

Mrs. Raile added that Cathy Domsch, executive director Century II Development Foundation, and Century II Board, have helped tremendously by giving her business information and contact people for her research.

When remodeled on the inside, the building has space for equipment, personnel, and

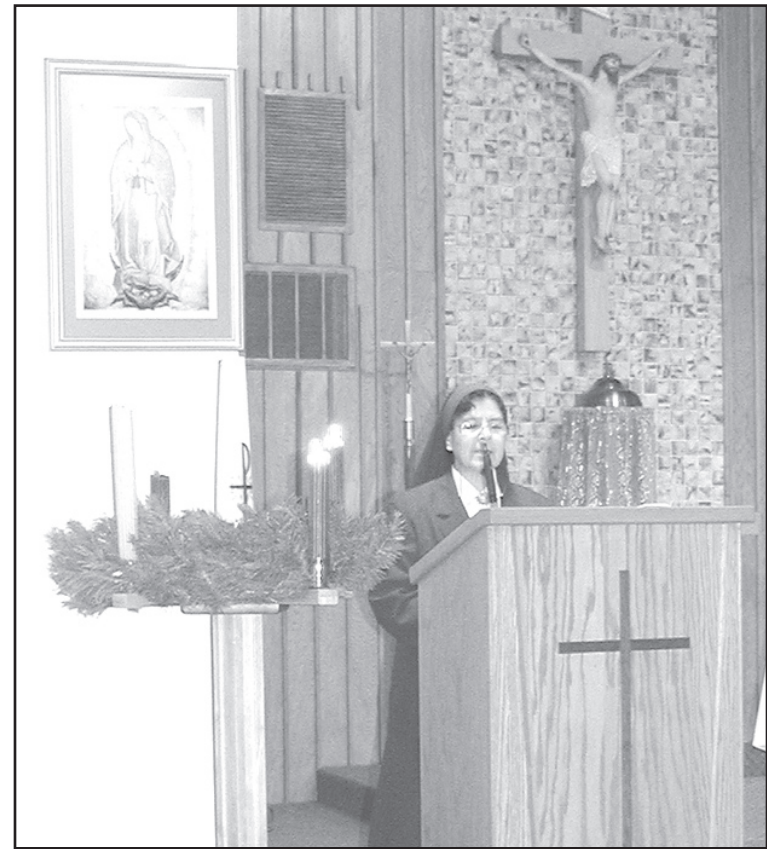
has passed the necessary state and United States Department of Agriculture food inspections. Mr. Raile stated "As the business grows we are looking forward to expanding and hiring additional people to help in production."

Operating at 215 S Bird Ave, as Monty's Smoked Jerky, the business opened during the Christmas holiday and is looking forward to the new year.

"We have the state level certification to sell beef jerky, and the business is now awaiting USDA certification to launch national marketing," said Mrs. Raile, plant manager.

Both the Carmichael and the Raile families look forward to the challenges of building the company together. Mr. Raile added we see this as a wonderful opportunity to lead by example for our children.

"It is exciting to be part of such an entrepreneurial family," said Ms. Reimer.



SISTER MARTHA IS SINGING along with the congregation during the service.

Times staff photo by Linda Schneider

Beloved Saint celebrated locally

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Nowhere in the world do cultures and religions have the freedom to celebrate their beliefs in whatever fashion they desire like in the United States of America.

In addition, with Mexico being one of our closest neighbors, America is starting to embrace many of the traditional festivals and holidays that are celebrated by Hispanic people. During the Christmas season, one of the main holiday celebrations is the "Our Lady of Guadalupe" (Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe.)

According to traditional Catholic accounts of the story, 10 years after the Spanish had conquered Mexico and its inhabitants, missionaries started arriving with the Spaniards to convert the Indians that lived there, the Aztecs, Incas, and other indigenous tribes. However, they were unable to convert the Indians and there was no explanation why.

Then on Dec. 9, 1531, during a walk from his town through the hills of Tepeyac near Mexico City, Mexico, an Indian named Juan Diego saw a vision of the Virgin (Mary) and was told to build a church on that site in honor of her. He went and spoke to a bishop who asked for Diego to prove what he had seen.

As the story goes Diego returned to the bishop and opened his coat and roses fell out. But, they were

not just any roses, they were Castilian roses, which were native to the bishop's home town in Spain and not on the hill, Tepeyac, where Diego brought them from. In addition, it was winter and roses just were not growing, and on the inside of his coat was the image of the Virgin. The church was built on the site.

On Dec. 12, the St. Joseph Catholic Church in Bird City held the sacred ceremony with many Hispanic patrons hearing a Spanish service given by Father Norbert Dlabal. After the service, everyone sat down to a traditional tamale meal and pastel (cake). Also served was the traditional beverage, hot punch made of cinnamon, guava and manzana silvestre (crab apple.)

In Mexico, the celebration traditionally is Dec. 9 through 12, but on that day, many Catholics from surrounding areas concluded the festivities by attending Mass and having a parade that included authentic Mexican dancers at the Our Lady Perpetual Help in Goodland. A meal followed the service.

