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# Andrews Joins Neighbors for Christmas Open House

Keri Suarez  
*Andrews University*

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The animals in the live Nativity were a pleasant surprise for many children who participated in the Christmas Open House. Staff from the Easter Passion Play at Andrews were on hand to keep an eye on the kids while they got up close and personal with the baby cow, sheep, roosters and a miniature horse that were keeping Mary, Joseph and Baby Jesus company in the makeshift stable.



Andrews shares an interesting tie with The Journal Era, the town's newspaper and one of the organizers behind the event: Andrews (then known as Battle Creek College) and the town's paper, The Journal Era, were both founded in 1874.



Andrews student Leslie Harris drew Santa hats on the face of four-year-old Keira Suarez.

## Andrews joins neighbors for Christmas Open House

Michigan — Andrews students, staff and faculty helped kick off the Christmas season with their neighbors in Berrien Springs, Mich., at the town's Annual Downtown Open House, "Kindle Your Christmas Spirit." This event offers members of the Berrien Springs community a chance to gather for an evening of festive fun with something for everyone. An estimated 700 members of the community filled the streets of downtown Berrien Springs to enjoy cookies, hot chocolate, Christmas crafts for kids and a chance to see inside many businesses located downtown.

Each year, Andrews' participation has grown. The first year of the event, members of the Andrews University Student in Free Enterprise (SIFE) club offered face painting. Since then, students have donned Santa hats and decorated an estimated 250 cheeks each year with snowflakes, Christmas trees and stars, to name a few.

This year the Office of Integrated Marketing & Communication shared building space with the SIFE team. Andrews volunteers assisted children in making a Christmas garland to hang on the town's Christmas tree located in Memorial Park. The children also made pine cone birdfeeder ornaments to hang on the tree. "Everyone enjoyed sharing a cheery, warm cup of Rosy Glow tea — a specialty from our own Dining Services, compliments of Andrews University," says Rebecca May, director of events and campus relations at Andrews University.

The Easter Passion Play team found a creative way to bring the story of Jesus to life through a live Nativity. Two Andrews students, Amarilis Rodriguez and Heber Garcia, dressed as Mary and Joseph while sitting in a makeshift stable full of live cows, chickens, sheep and even a miniature horse. Young and old alike enjoyed petting the animals, and the live Nativity was a fitting way for the Easter Passion Play team to participate in the event.

"Andrews is blessed to be part of a community that values bringing people

together," says José Bourget, a chaplain in the Office of Campus Ministries and producer for the Easter Passion Play. "Through the various festivities that each season brings, it's great to see Berrien Springs, our hometown, come together, especially now, to celebrate peace, unity and goodwill to all men."

Andrews University also provided pencils to Santa, who then handed them out to the children who came to share their wish list with him.

"It is our privilege to link arms with our little village on various community events and special occasions. Although there are dozens of resources available to the community on our campus, relationships are best built through personal contacts, not general invitations. We hope and pray that the influence of Andrews University in Berrien Springs will enrich the community we call home, in ways both large and small," says May.

Keri Suarez, media relations specialist,  
Office of Integrated Marketing &  
Communication, Andrews University