

# Jubilee, the spirit-filled koala, teaches, inspires

Stephanie Guerilus  
Tribune Staff Writer

Barney and Elmo have competition, as there's a new charmer in town to conquer young hearts and minds. Jubilee, the "spirit-filled" koala from Down Under, has sparked imaginations by taking audiences on an imaginary trip to his native Australia.

Al Hall, who has long had a passion for mentoring kids, explained the draw of his seven-foot brightly attired character.

"We entertain them. We focus on character building," he said.

"We sing and we dance with the children. We promote good health through exercising, through a stretch-and-flex program that we have, but more importantly, we focus on character-building. We piggyback on themes that elementary schools have, the day cares (centers) have, and what we basically do is create a skit or a theme based, if you will, around that particular theme, and then we present it to the children."

He has performed for and entertained hundreds of children since launching his creation on Sept. 11, 2008, in his native New Jersey.

The date was unintentional, but for its creator Al Hall, the significance only added to Jubilee's appeal. The nation's spirit had been broken on Sept. 11, 2001, but proved just as



The friendly Koala Bear Jubilee entertains children at a recent holiday event.

— PHOTO SUBMITTED

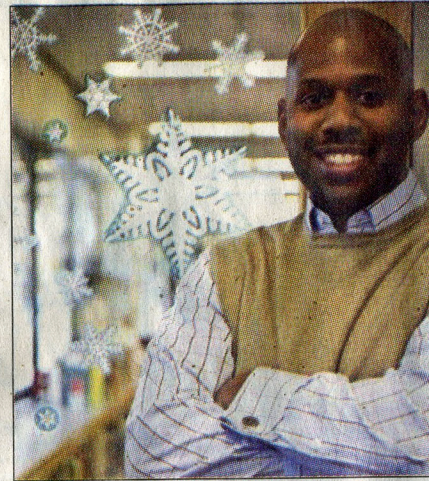
resilient as this new vivacious character.

"It does have significance, but it also marked the day in America's history as far as the nation where spirit was being broken and Jubilee being a spirit-filled koala bear, a positive spirit, a spirit of hope, basically I thought was important to start on that par-

ticular day," Hall said.

"As we prayed about it, we got peace about it. It was a day of hope, a day of a new spirit, a positive spirit to be introduced, and we just went with that."

Love, faith, persistence and empowering the lives of young children are just some of



Al Hall, pictured here, created Jubilee. — PHOTO SUBMITTED

the character-building themes that Hall has infused his creation with. The principles helped to guide his path toward embarking on Jubilee Children's Entertainment after previous ventures.

"I've always felt that God called me to be an entrepreneur. I tried different avenues. I tried real estate. I've tried a company called Internet Thoughts with greeting cards," he said.

"I kept coming back to this entertainment

and I began to see God more and find out what this would continue to come up in my heart; it was revealed to me that you should start a children's entertainment company."

He explained further why he pursued this career route.

"At that point, getting up early in the morning, seeking God, praying about it, asking for wisdom, knowledge and understanding, he gave me the entire business plan in a matter of days," Hall said.

He wanted the character to be unique. He wanted it to be a fit-looking animal, not obese or anything like that, because "health is very, very important to the body."

Hall was proud that Jubilee has proven to be a hit with its youngest critics in the New Jersey area and is bringing the character to Philadelphia. He also plans to take Jubilee international and hopes to secure a broadcast deal. Regardless of how he and Jubilee are received, Hall has placed his faith in a higher power to help him succeed.

"I'm not confident in myself, but I'm confident in God. This was God's vision; this wasn't anything I put together."

"This is God's ministry, and he just basically entrusted us with it. So, I'm just in awe about it more than anything."

For more information, Jubilee can be found on the Web at [www.jubileekidz.com/](http://www.jubileekidz.com/) and contacted at (866) 468-8468.