

# puppets



Puppets are always a crowd favorite. Likewise, the Christian School Finals Competition Puppet event (1055) continues to grow each year. Through lovable and colorful characters, puppets reach out to all ages and provide a unique way to present Jesus to the world.

At Competition the puppeteer presents an original or published message in 5 – 8 minutes. While Competition guidelines require a background to screen the puppeteer from the audience, the background also provides the puppeteer the opportunity to creatively set the scene for the presentation. Similarly, presenters should consider pre-recorded music and sound effects to enhance their message.



The star of the show is the puppet. What the puppet says and does will determine the success of the presentation. The challenge of the puppeteer is to make the audience believe the puppet is alive through its words, movements and personality. In this issue, Kathie True shares strategies on achieving this goal and bringing your puppets to life.

# PUPPETS ARE ALIVE

By: Kathie True

Puppets have three facets: the head, the mouth and the body. Each one has a specific, but simple technique to make it appear lifelike. It is important to perform well in all three of these areas in order for the audience to believe that the puppet is really alive.



***The puppet's head is alive!*** Make eye contact with the audience. To do this, tip your hand down since the audience is generally at a lower level than the puppet stage. When talking to another puppet, alternate looking at the audience and the puppet who is speaking. Be sure when listening that you “look” attentive. Remember to move the puppet’s head around. Yes, even the head needs to move! No one holds his or her head completely motionless, even when listening. And no sky gazing! Many puppeteers tend to relax when the puppet is not speaking, resulting in an open-mouthed, heavenward look that is unrealistic and distracting to the audience. Practice holding your arm over your head to develop your muscles. You might feel strange doing it, but it helps avoid cramping.

***The puppet's mouth is alive!*** Mouth movements should be natural. That means that the mouth should be open when talking and closed when not talking. Sounds simple? Try it. Practice it. Use your hand as a puppet when you talk on the phone or when you sing in the car! The more you practice, the easier it will be. But don’t bite the audience! Push the words out through the hand.





*The puppet's body adds the final touch to make it alive.* Keep your puppet moving. Natural movements are best. If you have a small boy, scratch your nose! If your puppet is an older lady, pat her hair or play with a necklace. Practice in the mirror to see if it looks natural. Typical non-verbal gestures are great for puppets. Use the whole body: arms, hands and body to create the character. You are the puppet master!

When you combine the three basic components of the puppet, a wondrous being comes to life in your hand. It's fun! It's easy! And you can do it!

Taking the time to familiarize yourself with the guidelines for each event entered at Competition is beneficial. The guidelines for Puppets – 1055 are on page 158 of the 2009 Competition Handbook. Additionally, visit these links for other resources for your presentation.

*Free skits for puppets can be found at: <http://www.puppetsforjesus.com/scripts%20&%20skits.htm>*

*Instructions for making a PVC puppet stage can be found at: [http://www.dougledbetter.org/howto/puppet\\_stage/](http://www.dougledbetter.org/howto/puppet_stage/)*

*Kathie True has been involved with puppet ministry for the past 30 years. She enjoys the opportunity puppets give to remain in the background yet still impact the crowd. "I love to hear people laugh from behind the stage, knowing that they are getting the message just the same," True says.*

*Her passion to share the Gospel began early in life when she began teaching Sunday School while in the sixth grade. For the past five years, True has added serving students at ORU to her ministry and is a vital part of the Undergraduate Admissions office.*





## QUICK FACTS FOR CHRISTIAN SCHOOL FINALS COMPETITION MAY 17-22, 2009

### HANDBOOK

The 2009 Competition Handbook is available on the Competition Web site at <http://competition.oru.edu/>

The password to access the Handbook is faith2live.

### COST TO PARTICIPATE

- Student or sponsor \$250.00. ORUEF member student or sponsor receives a \$25.00 discount per participant
- Deposit of \$75.00 per person due on April 1st or March 1st for Early Registration. Balance due at time of registration. See Early Registration Information below.
- Athletic Team event entry fee \$50.00 per team
- Academic Bowl Team entry fee \$50.00
- Track and Field Team entry fee \$75.00
- Room key deposit \$25.00 per room key due at Registration

An **EARLY REGISTRATION DISCOUNT** of \$250 is available to schools that fully register (submit appropriate deposit and all Group 1 forms) by March 1, 2009. The \$250 discount will be subtracted from the total deposit due.

### FORMS

All forms will be online starting January 5, 2009. To access the forms, you must use your school's unique password. New schools must request their password. This is a different password than the one used to access the Handbook. Please contact the Competition office if you do not have a password.

### CONTACT US

To avoid delays with the Embassy, international schools needing invitation letters to obtain Visas to attend Competition should contact us by February 2009.

We would love to hear from each of you as your school is making arrangements to attend Competition 2009. We are available to assist you with your preparations. Please feel free to call our office at 918.495.6856 or e-mail us at [competition@oru.edu](mailto:competition@oru.edu).

We wish each of you a Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year.

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