



Jan/Feb/Mar 2009

### Are Puppets A Thing of the Past?

When I meet people who work with children in their church, I will always ask them if they have a puppet ministry. The answer I usually get is, "Well, we used to have one... I think. I believe I saw some puppets in a bag in some closet at the church." Then I proceed with the dreaded, yet powerful death blow question, "What happened? Why did you stop the puppet ministry?" The answers are usually the same. "Well, no one wants to do it!" or "We can't find any help!" or "We can't afford it!" and the list goes on and on.

Just like anything else we do, we have to find ways to keep things current and up to date.

Puppets are NOT a thing of the past if you keep them up with the times. I have found that puppet ministry still does the same great and wonderful things it has always done, and a few new things as well.

1. Puppets still make kids smile and laugh!
2. Puppets create an atmosphere that is fun and exciting!
3. Puppets can drive the main point of the message into the minds of the children better than the actual human teacher!
4. Puppet ministry takes effort, time, and yes, even money, but when parents see a well organized puppet ministry,

it goes a long way with PR! (Parental Relations)

Puppet ministry is a GREAT TOOL of DISCIPLINEMENT! It gets people involved in ministry. Most all of my puppeteers are middle school students. I have one, Ginger, who is graduating this year and she has been a puppeteer for five years and she has become very good. When she goes to college she says she is taking her puppet with her! That is least I can do for her for being so faithful. Shy people are usually the people that will work a puppet. What a great ministry! You get to be someone else, with a

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### 2009 IBMA Retreat Report



This year's retreat was one of the most unusual ones ever— mostly because it was our smallest ever. Now I know the retreat is always small—20—25 people usually, but this year we had only five attendees. (Yes, I said five.)

Many of you who have been attending the retreat since the first one, were unable to attend because of the financial situation in your churches. I really missed getting to see those of you who could-

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## 2010 National BTI Conference Dates Set

We are excited about our 2010 National Bring Them In Children's Ministry Conference. The conference will be celebrating our 35th year of ministry. The dates and location will be:

August 9—12, 2010  
LifeWay's Ridgecrest  
Conference Center  
Ridgecrest, NC

While our regional conferences are excellent, this special conference will be a "super training event." The conference will have several tracks covering almost every area of children's ministry, including traditional ministries like Sunday school, children's church and bus ministry and creative ministries like Christian clowning, Gospel magic, and juggling (just to name a few). We will also have some great Christian performers and evangelists that you will enjoy and learn from. Everything will be designed for those who serve in the children's ministry of the local church.

We are still working on the cost of the conference but we do know that it will be as cost effective as we can make it and it will be all inclusive—the price will include your accommodations, your meals and the entire conference. It will be a great time to get away for a few days and enjoy the benefits of an exceptional training event—the sort of event you will want to attend along with all those in your church who work in your children's ministry.

We hope you will mark the dates and start planning now to join us for this unique opportunity for improving your ministry to boys and girls. We hope to have all the details ready for you by the end of the year.

Providing the best training possible has been the passion and goal of the Bring Them In Ministry for over three decades. We are elated that

this new conference will continue to do just that as we commemorate 35 years of ministry of helping churches reach children for Christ.

## Out of the Mouths of Babes

### LOT'S WIFE:

The Sunday School teacher was describing how Lot's wife looked back and turned into a pillar of salt, when little Jason interrupted, "My Mommy looked back once, while she was driving," he announced triumphantly, "and she turned into a telephone pole!"

### GOOD SAMARITAN:

A Sunday school teacher was telling her class the story of the Good Samaritan. She asked the class, "If you saw a person lying on the roadside, all wounded and bleeding, what would you do?"

A thoughtful little girl broke the hushed silence, "I think I'd throw up."

### DID NOAH FISH?

A Sunday school teacher asked, "Johnny, do you think Noah did a lot of fishing when he was on the ark?"

"No," replied Johnny. "How could he, with just two worms."

### HIGHER POWER:

A Sunday school teacher said to her children, "We have been learning

how powerful kings and queens were in Bible times. But, there is a higher Power. Can anybody tell me what it is?"

One child blurted out, "Aces!"

### MOSES AND THE RED SEA :

Nine-year-old Joey was asked by his mother what he had learned in Sunday School.

"Well, Mom, our teacher told us how God sent Moses behind enemy lines on a rescue mission to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. When He got to the Red Sea, he had his army build a pontoon bridge and all the people walked across safely. Then, he radioed headquarters for reinforcements.

They sent bombers to blow up the bridge and all the Israelites were saved."

"Now, Joey, is that really what your teacher taught you?" his mother asked.

"Well, no, Mom. But, if I told it the way the teacher did, you'd never believe it!"



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## Are Puppets A Thing of the Past?

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made up weird voice and no one ever



has to see your face! It's not hard to find puppeteers, you just have to look in the right place, so, tap in to the Middle School kids.

There is so much you can do with puppets

and there are so many puppets to choose from. I strongly recommend having one puppet who is the "star" and who becomes the teacher's right hand man (puppet). Crazy puppets work well too, especially when it's time to learn a Bible verse.

When it comes to puppet stages, you have to build to fit your need. We have room for up to 14 puppets to be out at one time. I know that space is an issue as well, but, **YOU HAVE TO MAKE ROOM!** Have a theme for your puppet community and make it colorful and a bit wacky. I use a black puppets, white puppets, Hispanic puppets, and whatever else I have to use to reach all kinds of children I have sitting in our Kidz Connection services. Having puppets that kids can relate to makes a big difference as well.

Well, I could type FOREVER about this subject... but the fact remains clear, "PUPPETS ARE STILL COOL" as long as you keep them up to date and also in sync with the times and the problems that kids are going through. I would be happy to help you with your puppet ministry. Just shoot me an email with your questions and I will respond promptly. I also write puppets scripts and will tailor write scripts for your puppets, no matter what the theme or subject is. God bless you in your pursuit to

make kids laugh and point them to Christ!

*Jack Henry is the Children's Pastor at Grace Baptist Church in Powder Springs, GA where he heads up the Grace Baptist Kidz Connection. Pastor Jack is available for special children's meetings as well as camps and retreats. You can get more information by visiting [www.gracega.org](http://www.gracega.org) or by emailing him at [jackforkids@gracega.org](mailto:jackforkids@gracega.org)*

Whether you are just getting started or have been doing puppets for years, Bring Them In has all sorts of resources for your puppet ministry. Check them out in our online catalog.

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Any publication is only as good as its content and we want BTI News Online to be helpful to those who read it so we are always on the lookout for good material. If you have something you think would be beneficial to our readers, please submit it to: [bringthemin@bringthemin.com](mailto:bringthemin@bringthemin.com). Keep your articles to 500 words and feel free to attach photos.

## Support BTI

If you have found the ministry of Bring Them In helpful to you in some way, we hope you will consider supporting our ministry in any one of these five ways:

First, attend one of our training events—it helps you and us.

Second, shop our online catalog. A portion of all of your purchases directly supports the ministry of BTI.

Third, as the Lord leads, please consider joining what we like to call "God's Go Team." These are individuals who regularly pray for and financially support the BTI ministry. Be sure to read why some have joined God's Go Team.

Fourth, if you cannot join "God's Go Team," think about giving a one-time gift to BTI. No matter what size gift you give, it will go toward the ministry and be a help to us. (All gifts to Bring Them In are deductible for tax purposes.)

Fifth, pray for God to bless BTI.

You can get more information on all these things at our web site and you can be certain your support will be appreciated and used to help churches reach boys and girls and their families for Christ.

## Think You Couldn't Host a BTI Event?

We are working on the 2010 conference and seminar schedule and we are looking for host churches.

We are looking for churches that have a heart for children, that want to get quality training for their Children's Ministry leaders, and want to help other churches in their area reach kids for Christ as well. Oh, did we mention *it is a very low cost way to train and motivate your workers?* That's right. We have designed BTI Training Events to be very inexpensive to any church willing to host one.

One of the most-asked questions is what is the difference between a conference and a seminar? A conference is an all day Saturday event involv-

ing multiple speakers and several rooms in the church. A seminar is led by Dr. Larry Hipps, is three hours long and usually only involves one room.

We have conferences in all size churches in all sorts of locations, so don't let those things stop you from contacting us. We'll work with you to make a conference happen in your church.

You can get complete information three ways: check out the "Host a Bring Them In Event" link under the BTI Training Events tab on the menu bar on the home page of our web site, call us at 281-922-6743, or email us at: [bringthemin@bringthemin.com](mailto:bringthemin@bringthemin.com)

## The Woodpecker Might have to Go!



Everything I need to know about life, I learned from Noah's Ark

1. Don't miss the boat. We only get one chance at life—live it for Christ.
2. Remember that we are all in the same boat—be kind to your ship-mates.
3. Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark.

4. Stay fit. When you're 600 years old, someone may ask you to do

- something really big.
5. Don't listen to critics; just get on with the job that needs to be done.
  6. Build your future on high ground.
  7. For safety's sake, travel in pairs. A spouse or friend is one of God's gifts.
  8. Speed isn't always an advantage. The snails were on board with the cheetahs.
  9. When you're stressed, float a while.
  10. Remember, the Ark was built by amateurs; the Titanic by professionals.
  11. No matter the storm, when you are with God, there's always a rainbow waiting—even when you cannot see it.

*But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. Genesis 6:8*

Read the story of Noah for yourself in Genesis 6—8.

## Swap Links with BTI

If you're a church, a ministry or a Christian business, we would like to swap links with you. Just contact us at [bringthemin@bringthemin.com](mailto:bringthemin@bringthemin.com) and then add our link to your website and we will do the same for you. It is easy and it benefits both of us. To see what sort of ministries and businesses have linked with us, visit the *Links We Like* page of [www.bringthemin.com](http://www.bringthemin.com)

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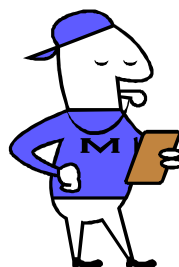
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# 2009 IBMA Retreat Report

*(Continued from page 1)*

n't attend and I hope you'll be there next year.

everyone's needs, challenges and problems as well as to share what each church was doing that was

working for them. There are always several good ideas that are shared at each retreat. This year we discovered that email addresses actually work better and change less often than phone numbers. Robby Greene told us that the best promotion he had used lately was giving a pre-paid cell phone for the rider with the most visitors, etc. It's inexpensive and the kids

really like it. Terry Rhodes confirmed that Money Cup Cakes still work—he had used it recently and the riders really responded. (Money Cup Cakes

was shared at the 2007 retreat and was shared in an IBMA newsletter.)

One of the objectives of the retreat is to give everyone some down time on Tuesday afternoon. This year Mark White and Terry Rhodes headed to the golf course while others visited with area friends or took in some of the local attractions. All-in-all, it was a very good retreat.

I hope that next year the economy will be better and everyone will be able to join us as we celebrate our 15th year. This is always been one of my favorite meetings of the year—it is such a blessing to fellowship will people who love the Bus Ministry. I have always left encouraged and recharged with lots of new ideas. Please get information on the 2010 retreat and think about joining the IBMA as a member.

*Report by Larry Hipps*



|                                                   |                                                                |                                           |             |                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Dan<br>Crawford<br><i>First Time<br/>Attendee</i> | Robby<br>Greene<br><i>Largest Bus<br/>Min.<br/>Represented</i> | Mark White<br>IBMA Char-<br>ter<br>Member | Larry Hipps | Terry<br>Rhodes<br><i>Long Time<br/>Attendee</i> |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------------------------|

I was thinking about not having the retreat at all but decided to have it despite the low attendance, and I'm glad we did—it turned out to be a very good one.

I was also concerned that we would have trouble keeping the discussion going with such a small group but I needn't have worried—we had no difficulty at all—in fact, we were still talking at noon each day.

We had some great discussions and it was good to be able to focus in on



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## Out of the Mouths of Babes

(Continued from page 2)

### THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD:

A Sunday School teacher decided to have her young class memorize one of the most quoted passages in the Bible; Psalm 23. She gave the youngsters a month to learn the chapter. Little Rick was excited about the task -- but, he just couldn't remember the Psalm. After much practice, he could barely get past the first line. On the day that the kids were scheduled to recite Psalm 23 in front of the congregation, Ricky was so nervous. When it was his turn, he stepped up to the microphone and said proudly, "The Lord is my Shepherd, and that's all I need to know."

### UNANSWERED PRAYER?

The preacher's 5 year-old daughter noticed that her father always paused and bowed his head for a moment before starting his sermon. One day, she asked him why.

"Well, Honey," he began, proud that his daughter was so observant of his messages, "I'm asking the Lord to help me preach a good sermon."

"How come He doesn't do it?" she asked.

### BEING THANKFUL

A rabbi said to a precocious six-year-old boy, "So your mother says your prayers for you each night? That's very commendable.

What does she say?"

The little boy replied, "Thank God he's in bed!"

### UNTIMELY ANSWERED PRAYER

During the minister's prayer one Sunday there was a loud whistle from one of the back pews. Tommy's mother was horrified. She pinched him into silence and, after church, asked, "Tommy, whatever made you do such a thing?"

Tommy answered, soberly, "I asked God to teach me to

whistle, and He just then did!"

### TIME TO PRAY

A pastor asked a little boy if he said his prayers every night.

"Yes, sir," the boy replied.

"And, do you always say them in the morning, too?" the pastor asked.

"No sir," the boy replied. "I ain't scared in the daytime."

### ALL MEN / ALL GIRLS?

When my daughter, Kelli, said her bedtime prayers, she would bless every family member, every friend, and every animal (current and past).

For several weeks, after we had finished the nightly prayer, Kelli would say, "And all girls." As this soon became part of her nightly routine, to include this at the end, my curiosity got the best of me and I asked her, "Kelli, why do you always add the part about all girls?"

Her response, "Because we always finish our prayers by saying 'All Men!'"

### SAY A PRAYER

Little Johnny and his family were having Sunday dinner at his Grandmother's house. Everyone was seated around the table as the food was being served.

When Little Johnny received his plate, he started eating right away.

"Johnny! Please wait until we say our prayer." said his mother "I don't have to," the boy replied.

"Of course, you do," his mother insisted. "We say a prayer before eating at our house."

"That's our house," Johnny explained. "But this is Grandma's house and she knows how to cook!"



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