

Jill Thatcher

VENTRILOQUIST.....

BIOGRAPHY

Jill Thatcher is a ventriloquist, puppeteer and songwriter from Nashville, Tennessee. Her performances include puppet characters which Jill has developed. Each puppet is a custom-made animal puppet, which Jill has found to be successful in communicating with children. Original songs are incorporated into the scripts Jill creates. Each script is carefully developed with extensive research and then scrutinized by education and entertainment professionals.

Jill, who has been performing for audiences for over 15 years, reaches thousands of children and adults with her programs and puppets. She has performed for organizations such as the American Dental Association, WIC Program (Women, Infant, Children), Friends of the Library, Opryland Hotel, Tennessee Performing Arts Center, Project Help, as well as schools, libraries, day cares and malls throughout the Mid-South.

Jill's resumé includes performing with the puppet troop, Kids On The Block Of Middle Tennessee which travels to hundreds of schools throughout Middle Tennessee presenting programs to children about disabilities, organ donation and child abuse. She also travelled extensively with The Puppet Mobile. Jill has taught puppetry workshops for Nashville Children's Theatre, Chaffin's Barn and Green Hills School Of Dance. Jill has a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Theatre with an emphasis on Children's Theatre and Puppetry from West Virginia University. While in college, Jill became a National Champion Public Speaker with an informative speech on puppetry.

Jill's interest in puppetry and ventriloquism began at a small church in Tyler, Texas when a friend introduced her to the art form. Ever since, Jill has spent her time preparing and performing for children bringing them messages of encouragement and teaching life skills.

Jill lives in the Nashville, Tennessee area with her husband and two children.



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FACTS SHEET

EXPERIENCE

Organizations Jill has worked with include:

- American Dental Association
- STARS (Students Taking A Right Stand)
- WIC (Women, Infant, Children)
- Project Help
- TPAC (Tennessee Performing Arts Center)
- NAT (Nashville Academy Theatre)
- Opryland Special Events
- Kids On The Block Of Middle Tennessee
- Vanderbilt Children's Hospital

BACKGROUND

- Bachelor of Arts Degree in Theatre, Children's Theatre and Puppetry, West Virginia University
- Puppet Mobile Touring Company.
- Leader of workshops on puppetry, acting and child abuse.
- National Champion Public Speaker with an informative speech on puppetry in 1988.

METHOD

Ventriloquism, animal puppets, original songs, audience participation, magic tricks, and humor are incorporated into the scripts Jill Thatcher creates. Each script is focused around a theme that is carefully developed with extensive research and then scrutinized by education and entertainment professionals.

MISSION

Jill's mission is to entertain and educate children with messages that teach life skills including: self-esteem, decision making, respect for others, conflict resolution, responsibility, literacy and safety measures.

PROGRAMS

In each of these specially developed programs, situations within the script are centered around the feelings, fears, dreams and desires of the puppets. In a non-threatening way, children's questions and situations are addressed. Call for current show availability.

REFERENCES

"The strong messages of the curricula that she has developed are so well meshed with the puppet characters who deliver those messages that it is a seamless, entertaining, educational experience."

Thomas R. Schnell, Ph.D.

Former Dean Of Education

University Of Missouri in St. Louis

"Jill is talented, cooperative and on target."

Betty Britnell, Counselor

W. A. Wright Elementary

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QUOTES

The program was very suitable for the MES student body. It reinforces ideas of friendship and kindness that we work on all the time. The students were mesmerized and enjoyed the show immensely.

**Barbara Woods, Principle
Marshal Elementary**

Jill Thatcher had a powerful message for everyone. She did an outstanding job presenting this message. We are very fortunate to have someone with such dynamic presentation skills. The

children will always remember how she related drugs to everyday things such as ketchup, mustard, and mayonnaise. The programs was an enrichment activity for our drug program.

Phyllis Eckel, 3rd Grade Teacher

I feel the entire performance was wonderful. You were very energetic, on the children's level, open with them, and informative. We only had K-3rd grade at the program. I wish we had invited the entire school. The program was very entertaining and educational. In a humorous manner you shared with the children the importance of friends and getting along.

**Debora Austin, K-Teacher
Millersville Elementary**

Our staff is still "taking bows" for scheduling Ms. Thatcher's performance for the children. We've heard so many positive comments about the programs' educational content and delightful presentation. The children were completely enchanted, as were the parents and other adults in attendance. We can't wait till Jill comes to visit again!

**Julia Marshall, Director
Macon County Public Library**



Jill presented a wonderful program, enjoyed by all students, She was not only a great performer, but filled with enthusiasm, energy, smiles, and an excellent ventriloquist...

**Butch Campbell, Principal
Walter Hill School**

Ms. Thatcher does an excellent job of keeping the children's attention! The program is both educational and fun!

**Dawn Martin, 1st Grade Teacher
H.G. Hill Elementary**

It was wonderful. The program appealed to wide age range, included songs, audience participation, and intriguing personalities. Jill Thatcher is highly professional in all her dealings and puts on a show that never fails to hold the eager attention of all ages. Her puppet characters are charming, her music and voices are delightful and you really can't see her lips move!

**Susan Johnston, Children's Department Manager
Ben West Library**

The children absolutely loved the show and so did I. Her performance was a wonderful lesson about how to be a friend. The program recognized that people that look different or think differently still have feelings and you can

still be their friend. The children continued to talk about the show and to tell their parents about it.

**Kristy Crawford, K-Coordinator
Percy Priest Extended
Day School**

