

Puppet Biographies

Olivia the Ostrich

Olivia is a tribute to Julia Child and the “Old Ladies” of Monty Python fame. Her personality is based on the Rod Hull puppet, Emu. She enjoys cooking and impersonating various animals. Olivia is very proud of her long neck, powerful legs, and the fact that she is a bird. She has a very animated personality and finds it very comforting to give Ostrich hugs. Olivia has evolved over many years. She began with no voice, and eventually became a very talkative Ostrich.

Poof the Dragon

Poof is the largest puppet in the family. He is the cousin of Puff (the magic dragon), but they have a long-standing dispute about a certain song. Poof claims to be the composer. Needless to say, it causes a great many family problems. His personality is based on the Red Skelton character of Little Willie.

Butkus

I was thrilled to design Butkus and have him created by the Muppet organization. He is a tribute to one of my favorite football players, Dick Butkus. He and I are lifelong fans of “Da Bears.” His one problem seems to be that he has made one-too-many tackles, and sometimes gets a little confused about things. It should be noted that his favorite person to talk about is “Papa Bear” George Hallas.

Professor Hoot

The professor hails from Boston, Massachusetts, and was created in honor of Major Charles Emerson Winchester, III, from the television show *M.A.S.H.* As a professor, he is very intelligent and enjoys clarifying things for people. He has a very dignified personality and is quite helpful with difficult questions.

Max

Max is a tribute to a cherished pet, friend, and family member whose full name was Frivolous Maximus. For 17 years this cherished friend accompanied me in ministry. He sometimes assisted with children’s sermons, office hours, and occasionally attended Sunday School classes. Max enjoyed life to the fullest and carried himself in a regal manner, befitting a West Highland Terrier.

Peli Can

In keeping with his pelican ancestry, Peli Can loves seafood. His bill holds quite a catch, and fish are often seen falling out of his mouth. Peli can be a little grumpy, but that is due to a hook stuck in his bill. He also loves sharing fishing stories.

Poco the Chimp

Poco joined the family while my wife and I were honeymooning in the Pocono Mountains. He is rather soft-spoken and is quite addicted to bananas. He is an avid fan of baseball, and sometimes feels that he should become a cowboy. He doesn’t know why – it just seems like the thing to do.

Deputy Barney Squirrel

I always enjoyed the character of Barney Fife on *The Andy Griffith Show*. Barney Squirrel pays homage to that comic deputy from Mayberry. Barney has one major quirk – he is nuts about nuts. He is always busy and very animated.

Mr. Fudd

Mr. Fudd (no relation to Elmer Fudd) is the only puppet whose voice and personality came immediately. That was a mystery until Mr. Fudd was in church with my father. It was then that we realized I had transferred my father's personality onto the puppet. Of all my puppets, Fudd is the easiest for me to work with, and he often shares lessons I learned from my father

Sam Sam the Wolfman

Sam Chardin was a parishioner, and dear friend, who lost his valiant battle with an aggressive form of cancer. Following his passing, Sam's Sunday School class presented me with this puppet and Sam Sam was born. He is a tribute to my friend, who was Puerto Rican and loved classic rock from the 70's. He loves to talk about sheep, but not always in a safe manner.

Toby Dog

Toby Dog is a tribute to a beloved pet named Toby. He was a Yellow Lab who loved people, bones, and life. Toby Dog is a wonderful puppet to hang out with if you enjoy life, and the occasional lick.

Sonnyboy

Sonnyboy is a hound dog from the hills of West Virginia. He is laid back, and likes to share his common-sense approach to life. His favorite activity is sitting on the porch and talking. He also enjoys a good howl when he hears something funny.

Ed the Raven

Ed was a gift from a little girl who said that I "needed" this puppet. He is named after Edgar Allen Poe, and is a fan of the Ravens football team. His personality is based on the crows that enjoy talking to me in the back yard.

Croc

Croc comes from the land down under, Australia. He is an outstanding swimmer, and expert on seafood with his favorite meal being sushi. His character was inspired by Steve Irwin and Paul Hogan. He is also a huge fan of Australian Rules Football.

Oli the Elephant

Oli comes from Liverpool, England. He is very proud of his trunk and enjoys packing it for vacations. Oli prides himself on his musical abilities as a trumpeter. There is some question to the validity of Oli's claim that he was part of the original Beatles. He claims that he left the band when they failed to live up to his musical standards but did help them out with the solo in the song *Penny Lane*. He also enjoys sharing stories about his mates from Liverpool.

Dude

Dude is a tribute to the 1960's. He attended Woodstock, and never left. For many years he only spoke a single word, "dude." After extensive study, in the art of speaking, he has expanded his vocabulary a little. Dude loves music and his two favorite musicians are Jimmy Hendricks and Igor Stravinsky.

Jacque Oz

Jacque is a very proud donkey from La Chambon, France. He has many stories from 1st century Palestine and enjoys fine dining considering himself a connoisseur of cheese souffle. His personality is a tribute to a beloved New Testament professor, Dr. Daniel Patte.

Clyde the Camel

Clyde was inspired by my first visit to Egypt, when I rode a camel up to the Great Pyramids. He comes from New York, by way of Philadelphia (where he became a devotee of cheesesteak subs). Clyde also has a unique allergy to sand. His personality is a tribute to Bruce Springsteen and Rodney Dangerfield.

Bull Frog

Bull is the newest puppet in the family. He was sought out to assist in a new ministry process. His personality (and voice) was inspired by a very large bullfrog that lives in a neighbor's pool. Bull enjoys catching flies, or as he puts it "fly fishing." His personality is still evolving, but he is very interested in faith development.

Semi-Retired Puppets

Herman T. Fuzzball

I adopted Herman in 1983 (I actually have the paperwork). He sounds a little like Willie Nelson, and bears a remarkable resemblance as well. He is a born and raise Tennessee puppet. Born into the Fuzzball family, Herman started life as a fuzzy puppet Affectionately called Lent. As he grew, and matured, he became a true Fuzzball. A little rough around the edges, Herman is a typical hill-country Volunteer. He enjoys semi-retirement and makes occasional speaking engagements as they fit into his peaceful lifestyle.

Retired Puppets

Harry the Hippo

Harry and I met in 1980 when I needed someone to practice debates for a class in philosophical problems. He proved to be an excellent partner, and we aced the course. He is the reason I began studying puppetry. Harry was the catalyst for many treasured experiences in the world of puppetry. He now enjoys retirement by watching over the other puppets in the family. Occasionally he and I talk about the early days and have plenty of laughs.