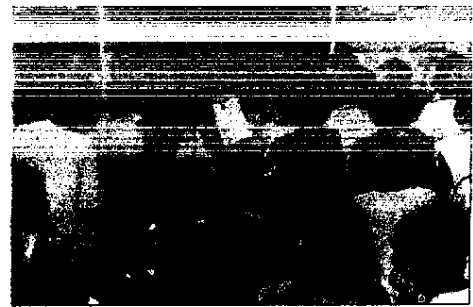


show hands and put them ready for puppeting. You'd be surprised at how much discipline and arm strength is necessary to hold those awfully lightweight puppets.

Of course, it takes more than just brute strength to put on a God-honoring puppet show. It also takes lots of memorization of lines and songs, blocking, and focus when you're performing, so that you don't break character by laughing at the funny puppet voices, or at your neighbors face twisting in agony next to you due to extreme arm muscles stress! Most importantly, it takes lots of prayer that God would communicate to the kids through the show.

Speaking of puppet shows, if you didn't make it to the summer program kickoff event, you missed one heck of a show which was preformed by the interns. The idea of the event was to get the East Austin families and kids excited about all that they were going to do and learn during the summer program. The puppet show we performed was specifically designed to get the older EA youth excited about puppets, since they would be performing a puppet skit of their very own for the younger children, which has

and how we can show it to others (John 13:13-15) We felt that it was very important to address this issue at the RLC since so many of the kids from EA were holding some serious grudges against one another. All too often



we had recurring problems between groups of children who just couldn't find it in their hearts to forgive on another. Through the puppet show, we taught them that we're all human and bound to make mistakes as we live.

The puppet ministry has been a great addition to the summer program, and has given us one more tool to teach God's Word. However, I must admit it has been somewhat humbling to find that while some kids wouldn't listen to lessons I was trying to teach, they were all too happy to learn the same lesson coming from the mouth of a puppet!

Local Non-Profit Partners with RLC, Teaches Martial Arts

By Courtney Cotterell

"Ha-le-luh-yah!"

This is what you would hear the kids yelling while practicing Galatia, a self-defense class coached by Dr. Bell, the director of Pipstart, a local non-profit organization that partners with the REALife Center in various programs throughout the year.

Through Galatia, Dr. Bell teaches kids self-defense and self-control. He includes practical Biblical lessons in his teaching that the kids can easily relate to. For example, Dr. Bell went over Galatians 5: 22-23: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against

such things there is no law."

Learning these concepts along with self-defense can help the kids with issues they deal with in East Austin every day. Instead of retaliating when someone pushes them, they learn to defend themselves efficiently or even walk away from the fight, since regardless of what others think, they have great worth in God's eyes.

I was impressed with how well the kids interacted with Dr. Bell. They had a blast learning new things and the interns had a blast watching. In the coming school year the kids will find themselves in the midst of confrontation, they always do in East Austin...only this time, they'll be prepared.

GROWTH continued

has had a chance to exhibit leadership while learning how to work with others in a team situation.

I personally have found the edge of my limits of peace and patience and am learning to rely on God when I'm not enough on my own.

Some people may have thought we interns were crazy or giving up our summers to work at the RLC. However, while our long summer days are nearly gone, the investment we made in East Austin these past 8 weeks will last forever. To me, that doesn't sound like a crazy trade-off at all.

The interns aren't crazy be giving up their summer.

