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Would you prefer to receive this newsletter electronically? To add your email address to our data base, send an email with your current "snail mail" address to dmenarek@societysassets.org and read the next issue online. Society's Assets will not share your email address.

Mark Your Calendars

Society's Assets annual **Disability Awareness Week Banquet** will be held on Wednesday, May 11th at the Fountain Banquet Hall in Sturtevant. Our keynote speaker is Tony Memmel, a songwriter and performer from Milwaukee. He was born missing his left forearm and taught himself to play guitar, piano, and harmonica. He will tell his story, weaving music into the presentation called "The Courage to Be Differ-

ent." See pages 10 and 11 of this newsletter for nomination forms for awards that will also be presented at the Banquet.



Tony Memmel
One of Wisconsin's Finest One Armed Guitarists

The 18th annual **Society's Assets Open** golf outing will be held on Monday,

June 20th at the Kenosha Country Club. The event raises money for a scholarship fund that awards students with disabilities seeking a college degree. Participants and sponsors are needed. Lunch, golf, dinner, raffles, and a silent auction combine for an enjoyable day topped with the inspiring presentation of scholarships to deserving students developing their potential.

To register, or receive more information about these events, contact the Society's Assets office in Racine, (262) 637-9128, ext. 3605.

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Racine, WI

Independent Living Quarterly

Winter 2011 Volume 21, Issue 1 Complimentary Copy

Her Home Away From Home

"It's okay to ask questions," Pam DeVuyst tells the children who see her wheel over to them. "As a preschool teacher for 20 years, I encouraged kids not be scared of a person who does things differently than they do." Even though she is unemployed now, Pam finds a way to fulfill her passion for working with children. She volunteers at the Kenosha Public Museum as a greeter and with children in the Museum classrooms and field stations. She enjoys all the hours she

spends at the Museum every week. Pam also volunteers at the Society's Assets office and with the agency's Peer Power program. This program is geared toward high school students with disabilities.

When she was in her last year of high school, Pam went through the student teacher program to show that she could care for children, even though there were many people that said she couldn't. Her education continued and Pam received an associate degree in early childhood education. Pam says, "When I put my mind to something, I can do it. Where there's a will, there's a way."

Much of Pam's time these days is spent as an advocate for people with disabilities, locally and throughout the state. Her experience is valued on several area boards and committees, including the Kenosha Area Disability Services Unit, the Parent Advisory Committee for Kenosha Unified School District, the Kenosha Transit/Caravan Advisory Commit-

tee, the Fun 'n Fit Committee, and IRIS (Include, Respect, I Self-Direct). She is active in the Grassroots Advocacy Group hosted by Society's Assets. Pam has also been an AVON representative (off and on) for six years. She credits her birth mom with her organizational skills that help her stay focused on the meetings and responsibilities of each day. She also believes that a sense of humor is important.

Pam doesn't sit still for very long; she enjoys being out and around town. She's



always ready to try something new and is looking forward to snow skiing and scuba

diving in the near future. Pam spends time with her boyfriend of over 18 years, Cornelius. She shares her apartment with Princess, her six year old cat, and her new fish Prince William.



Pam helps a student during a tour of the Kenosha Public Museum, her home away from home.

Pat's Walk Marks 25th Year in September 2010



The scenic route along the Kenosha lakefront led to the Civil War Museum and a hearty lunch . . . all while raising funds for the Society's Assets Transportation Fund.



The *Independent Living Quarterly* is published four times each year by Society's Assets, Inc. The *Independent Living Quarterly* is available in alternative formats (i.e. electronic, audio, large print) upon request.

Society's Assets, Inc. Mission Statement

To ensure the rights of all persons with disabilities to live and function as independently as possible in the community of their choice, through supporting individuals' efforts to achieve control over their lives and become integrated into the community life.

2011 Board Members

- Frank Germinaro, Chair
- John Murphy, Vice-Chair
- John Hawes, Secretary/Treasurer
- Joel Beck, HL Denton,
- Margaret DeZee, Terri Gilliland,
- Jim Harris, Kevin Kegerreis,
- Dan Krause, Mary Jane Lippert,
- James Lochowitz, Gary Nephew

Society's Assets, Inc.
www.societysassets.org
 E-mail: info@societysassets.org

5200 Washington Avenue, 225
 Racine, Wisconsin 53406
 (262) 637-9128
 (866) 840-9761 TTY

5727 6th Avenue
 Kenosha, Wisconsin 53140
 (262) 657-3999
 (866) 840-9762 TTY

615 E. Geneva Street
 Elkhorn, Wisconsin 53121
 (262) 723-8181
 (866) 840-9763 TTY

SAI Home Health Care, Inc.
 5200 Washington Avenue, 227
 Racine, Wisconsin 53406
 (262) 632-5886

English: For help in translating or understanding this document, please call the Society's Assets office nearest you.

Spanish: Para ayudar a traducir este documento, por favor llamar a la oficina Society's Assets mas cercana ati.

Hmong: Yog xav tau kev pab txhais lus txhais ntawv los sis pab kom muaj kev totaub txog cov ntaub ntawv no, thov hu Society's Assets lub chaw ua hawj lwm uas nyob ze koj.

All consumers have the right to be served without regard to race, creed, color, age, sex, national origin, or disability.
 EOE/AA



2011 Nomination Form

Dan Johnson Community Advocate of the Year Award

Sponsored by



Nominations are submitted to the Community Relations Committee by completing the form on this page. Nominations are due to the Community Outreach Coordinator at Society's Assets by April 20, 2011.

Nominations should be sent to the following address. Please make copies of this form if you would like to make more than one nomination. The Award will be presented at the Disability Awareness Week Banquet on May 11, 2011.

Society's Assets, Inc.
Community Relations Committee
c/o Donna Menarek
5200 Washington Avenue, Suite 225
Racine, Wisconsin 53406

This nomination form is submitted by:

Name _____
 Company _____
 Address _____
 City/State/Zip _____
 Telephone Number _____
 Date Submitted _____

Questions? Please call (262) 637-9128, ext. 3605 or (866) 840-9761 TTY.

Name of Nominee _____
 Address _____
 City/State/Zip _____
 Telephone Number _____

Have you told the nominee about the Award nomination?
 Yes No

The information below should pertain to advocacy and/or system advocacy activities since May 2010 (when the 2010 Award was presented). We will request more information if necessary.

Have the advocacy activities been voluntary or paid for?

Did the nominee state a goal or purpose? yes no

If yes, please describe. _____

Describe the steps the nominee took to address the issue. _____

Was the goal obtained? yes no

Please explain. _____

How will these advocacy activities impact the nominee or others? _____

Accessibility Award Sponsored by



Nominations are submitted to the Community Relations Committee of the Board of Directors for consideration by completing the form on this page. Projects nominated for consideration must be completed between January 1 and December 31, 2010.

A company can also be nominated for continually going above and beyond the standards of accessibility, even if a project has not been completed in 2010.

Nominations must be postmarked by April 20, 2011 and should be sent to the following address. Please make copies of this form if you would like to make more than one nomination. The Award will be presented at the Disability Awareness Week Banquet on May 11, 2011.

**Society's Assets, Inc.
Community Relations Committee
c/o Donna Menarek
5200 Washington Avenue, Suite 225
Racine, Wisconsin 53406**

This nomination form is submitted by:

Name _____
Company _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____
Telephone Number _____
Date Submitted _____

Resources for Accessibility Requirements

♦Society's Assets, Inc.
Karen Olufs, Director of Independent Living Services
5200 Washington Avenue, Suite 225
Racine, Wisconsin 53406
(262) 637-9128
(866) 840-9761 TTY
FAX (262) 637-8646

♦ADA Compliance Guidebook
"A Checklist for Your Building" Published by:
Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) Int.
1201 New York Avenue, N.W., Suite 300
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 408-2662
FAX (202) 371-0181

Company Nominated _____
Contact Person _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____
Telephone Number _____

Please review the following accessibility criteria and check all that meet or exceed the standards. Some examples are given in parentheses. Provide additional comments as desired. We will request more information if necessary. For more information about accessibility requirements, contact the resources listed on this page.

- Adequate Parking (*Number, Size, Clearance*)
- Entrance (*Ramps, Door Handles*)
- Emergency Egress (*Flashing Lights, Audible Signals*)
- Interior Accessibility (*Circulation, Signs, Elevators or Ramps*)
- Usability of Rest Rooms (*Passages, Stalls, Lavatories*)
- Drinking Fountains (*Clearance, Height, Controls*)
- Telephones (*Height, Volume Control, TTY Equipped*)
- Products/Services (*Sign Language Interpreting, Disability Awareness Training, Closed-captioned TV*)

Additional Comments _____

Are you aware of any other accessibility modifications? If yes, please explain. _____

From the Director's Desk . . .



Bruce Nelsen

Students Discover Potential

Schools in our service area submitted over 900 entries for the Society's Assets Youth Art Contest that took place earlier in this school year. The winners were chosen for their creative representation of the contest theme, "Ability. . . Not Disability." Parasailing and visits to the park were featured in the winning contest entries. "Ability" won the race in another entry, and the sky is the limit for the astronaut with a disability. The young artists help others see that an individual should be defined by all that's possible and not by limitations.

Winning entries will be featured in the 2012 Society's Assets calendar. Congratulations to these students, their teachers, and schools.



Kindergarten - 2nd Grade

- 1st - - Luke Schmierer, Trinity Lutheran School, Racine**
- 2nd - - Jamie Pena, Roosevelt Elementary School, Kenosha**
- 3rd - - Dahlia Rogman, Trinity Lutheran School, Racine**
- Honorable Mention - - Nataly Galvan Fonseca, Darien Elementary School**
- Honorable Mention - - Ava McHugh, Roosevelt Elementary School, Kenosha**

3rd - 5th Grade

- 1st - - Jacqueline Sanchez, Walworth Elementary School**
- 2nd - - Claire Beyers, Walworth Elementary School**
- 3rd - - Kennedy Hansen, St. Bernard's School, Watertown**
- Honorable Mention - - Kay Ring, Calvary Baptist Christian School, Watertown**
- Honorable Mention - - Katie Schleicher, St. Bernard's School, Watertown**
- Honorable Mention - - Emily Vacula, Walworth Elementary School**

6th - 8th Grade

- 1st - - Jonathan Mills, McKinley Middle School, Racine**
- 2nd - - Timothy Robaczewski, Walworth Middle School**
- 3rd - - Sean Steensrud, Fox River Middle School, Waterford**
- Honorable Mention - - Emma Dreist, Fox River Middle School, Waterford**
- Honorable Mention - - Megan Kuroski, St. Edward's School, Racine**
- Honorable Mention - - Zoe Leptich, Riverview School, Silver Lake**

9th - 12th Grade

- 1st - - Jake Holloway, Williams Bay High School**
- 2nd - - Vincente Reynoso Jr., Prairie School, Racine**
- 3rd - - Rachel Buchman, R.E.A.L. School, Racine**



Students at Trinity Lutheran School in Racine were recognized for their winning entries. Luke Schmierer (left) placed first and Dahlia Rogman placed third in the Kindergarten - 2nd Grade division.

FREE Tax Help Available

Tax Aide, sponsored by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) and the Internal Revenue Service, will provide low and middle income taxpayers (especially those ages 60 and over) with quality assistance in filing their personal income taxes. Trained volunteers began meeting February 1st. Most, but not all, sites are open until early April. Call for days and hours and to make an appointment if necessary. Some sites offer electronic filing. The Internal Revenue Service announced the tax deadlines (State and Federal) have been extended to April 18th, due to the Emancipation Day holiday observed in Washington, D.C. on April 15th.

Taxpayers should bring a photo ID, tax forms received in the mail, previous year's (2009) tax returns, proof of 2010 income, Social Security and SSI records. For Homestead filing, taxpayers should bring 2010 real estate tax bill or Certificate of Rent form signed by their landlords.

Tax Aide Sites



◆Jefferson County

-Watertown Senior Community Center (920) 262-8080

◆Kenosha County

-AM Community Credit Union (262) 697-3700
-Kenosha Senior Citizens Center (262) 359-6095
-St. Mary's Lutheran Church (262) 658-3555
-Westosha Community Center (Bristol) (262) 843-3828

◆Racine County

-Dr. John Bryant Community Center (262) 636-9235
-Graham Public Library (Union Grove) (262) 534-2740
-Humble Park Community Center (262) 866-9612
-Love, Inc. (Burlington) (262) 763-6226
-Racine Literacy Council (262) 632-9495
-Sturtevant Village Hall (262) 534-2740
-US Bank (Franksville) (262) 886-9612

◆Rock County

-Blackhawk Technical College (Janesville) (608) 743-4577
-The Gathering Place (Milton) (608) 868-3500
-Grinnell Hall (Beloit) (608) 364-2875
-Janesville Senior Center (608) 755-3040

◆Walworth County

-People's Bank (Elkhorn) (262) 472-9632
-Starin Park Senior Center (Whitewater) (262) 473-0535
-Walworth County Job Center (Elkhorn) (262) 741-5180

Tax-Related Web Sites

www.societysassets.org

Click on Resources & Links, then Helpful information to find Tax Help 2011

www.aarp.org/money/taxes/aarp_taxaide/

www.dor.state.wi.us

www.irs.gov



News Bits

Access This Activity

Enjoy the peace and solitude of winter when you use a cross country "sit ski" available at six Wisconsin State Parks, including Bong State Recreation Area in Kenosha County. A flat, groomed trail allows for easy maneuverability. Bong also has an accessible cabin for camping, a fishing pier, observation platform, and picnic areas with accessible tables. Bong is located on Highway 142, between Burlington and Kenosha. For more information, call (262) 878-5600.

Toy Guide Expands

Toys "R" Us offers a guide booklet in stores and online for customers who care for children with special needs. Featured toys have been selected and evaluated by the National Lekotek Center, a nonprofit organization dedicated to making play accessible for children with disabilities.

Toysrus.com/DifferentlyAble

www.lekotek.org

CLASSIFIED SECTION

Equipment for Sale

1. **Lift Chair**, good condition, asking \$300, call Robert (262) 723-2689.
2. **Scooter**, Invacare, Zoom 3, Lynx Panther Series, \$700 or best offer, call Ken (262) 495-2719.
3. **Hospital Bed**, Carroll Echo, twin, adjustable head and feet, used 6 months, \$350, call Sherry (262) 658-3389.
4. **Scooter**, Jazzy, red with gray leather seat, \$1500 new, asking \$500, call Cher (262) 412-3937.

Vehicles for Sale

1. **Ford Van**, 2001, Windstar, 85,000 miles, regularly maintained, hydraulic wheelchair lift, available late February, \$2000, call Christine (262) 260-8789.

The Society's Assets newsletter provides this Classified Section as a service for its readers. Items are listed at no charge in up to two consecutive issues. The agency doesn't guarantee any of the items. To list an item, call (262) 637-9128, ext. 3605.

Catch the B.A.S.S.

The Burlington Area Senior Shuttle (B.A.S.S.) is transportation for seniors (60+) and mobile adults with disabilities, to use for shopping, getting to appointments and services, or around town. The cost is affordable. Get more

Check This Out

□The Wheelchair Recycling Program has a new name. The **Mobility Store** offers quality, low cost mobility and medical equipment that has been restored and includes wheelchairs, scooters, walkers, hospital beds, commodes, bath equipment, and more. Contact the Milwaukee location at (262) 439-8248. www.wrp.org

□The Kenosha Area Loan Closet lends out free durable medical equipment such as wheelchairs, walkers, bath chairs, reachers, and other similar items to anyone in need. If you are interested in donating items that are in good condition, or know of someone who may need medical equipment, call (262) 605-6646 or (800) 472-8008. Donors will receive a donation receipt for tax purposes.

information by calling the B.A.S.S. at (262) 412-8641. Although B.A.S.S. is not equipped to accommodate mobility devices other than collapsible walkers, other options are available. Call the Racine County Specialized Transportation Program, (262) 638-6631.

Staff Spotlight

◆Simona Alexander, Personal Care Worker in the Racine Office, completed training and is now a Certified Nursing Assistant.

◆Deb Breckenfeld, Bench Aide in the Kenosha Office, is now a Scheduler.

◆Nicky Conley, B.E.S.T. Scheduler in the Kenosha Office, has a new position as Human Resources Assistant Manager.

◆Belinda Lunt, Lead Scheduler in the Kenosha Office, has also assumed the B.E.S.T. scheduling responsibilities.

◆Tyran McGee, a Personal Care Worker in the Kenosha Office, is now the Bench Aide.

Congratulations!

Kenosha Office

Dennis Frentzel is the



new Veterans Outreach Specialist. He will work with veterans who want to increase or maintain their independence by modifying their homes and using assistive technology. He

can also assist with finding resources, funding, and information. If you know a veteran that could benefit from this information, contact Dennis in the Society's Assets Kenosha office, (262) 657-3999, or by email. dfrentzel@societysassets.org

Elkhorn Office

Suzanne Schiltz joined the agency as an Independent Living Services Coordinator. In this position, Suzanne works to assess and meet the needs of



consumers who choose to live in their own homes and stay active in the community. She also facilitates the Grassroots Advocacy Groups hosted by Society's Assets. Members of the group are encouraged to share experiences and ideas with the goal of affecting change to improve their lives.

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Meade
American Cultural Anthropologist
1901-1978

Family Conference Planned for April Circles of Life

Wisconsin's annual conference for families of children with disabilities and the professionals who support them is planned for Thursday and Friday, April 28th and 29th in Milwaukee. The keynote presentation *Spirit of A Champion* will be given by Cindy Bentley, one of the state's most inspirational leaders and activists. Other conference features include listening and breakout sessions, activities for youth, and sibling workshops. Registration is required by April 1st. Social Work Continuing Education credits are offered for participation in select sessions. For more information call (608) 266-8276 or visit the website. www.colwisconsin.org

Notice to Society's Assets Consumers

The convenience of paying by credit card is available at Society's Assets. Mastercard, Visa, and Discover cards are accepted. You can call the office each time you want a payment made, or you can set up an automatic monthly payment. If interested, please call (262) 637-9128 and ask for the Private Pay Billing Coordinator.

Grassroots Advocacy in Action

Society's Assets hosts two Grassroots Advocacy Groups. One group meets in Kenosha every other Thursday from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. The other group meets in Racine every other Wednesday from 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. A third group in Walworth County is in the planning stages. Refreshments are served at the meetings. The groups work on various subjects of concern that affect our local community of people with disabilities, as well as provide support to one another. These advocacy efforts are happening throughout the state and are being led by Wisconsin's Independent Living Centers (like Society's Assets).

If you have a disability, or are a friend or family member of someone who does, please attend a meeting to share your significant issues and experiences. The group needs people who want to work with their peers to maximize their ability to affect change, manage their lives, and live with a sense of personal power.

For more information about the Grassroots Advocacy Groups and the days they meet, contact Suzanne Schiltz, Independent Living Coordinator, at (800) 261-8181.

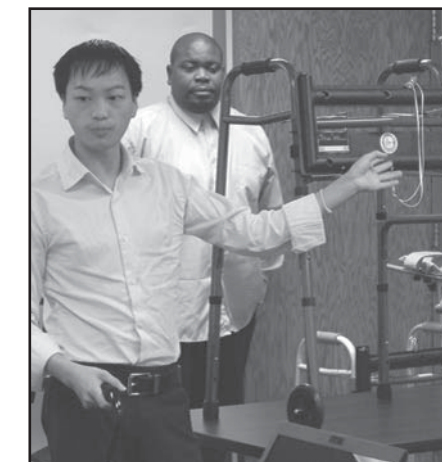
"Step & See" Lights the Way

The "Step & See" is a new, unique device that helps individuals using a walker or cane. The "Step & See" is a lightweight attachment that fits any cane or walker and is easy to install. The device has powerful LED lights that shine 40 feet away. Turn on these lights and the walk to the light switch or kitchen or bathroom in the middle of the night can be less hazardous. The "Step & See" also comes equipped with an alarm that operates with the simple pull of a string, notifying others in case of emergency.

This new device was created in Milwaukee by Cornelius Turner when he saw a need to help his father and brother who had

limited mobility. Avoiding a fall can help people live longer and healthier lives.

This product is part of the Try-Out Program at Society's Assets. Call an Independent Living Coordinator for information about borrowing the "Step & See" to find out if it works for you. Ask about other new equipment that is available.



The "Step & See" is a light to your pathway if you use a walker or cane.

Loan Programs Available

WisLoan

This alternative loan program allows Wisconsin residents with a disability to purchase needed equipment or make necessary modifications to homes to promote independent living.

Telework

This alternative loan program allows Wisconsin residents with disabilities to purchase computers and other equipment needed to work from home or from other remote sites away from the office.

Contact an Independent Living Coordinator at Society's Assets about these loan programs.

Aides Recognized, Awards Received

Congratulations to the three aides receiving awards! Jean Rumachik, Director of Home Care Services at Society's Assets, applauded their work. "Jeanette, Anita, and Lisa are fine examples of our skilled and dedicated caregivers."

Society's Assets Gold Star - Elkhorn

Lisa Mish joined Society's Assets as a Personal Care Worker in February 2009. She applied for a position after seeing a newspaper ad. Lisa regularly provides services for eleven consumers, and is always willing to pick up fill-in assignments. She worked as a caregiver at a group home in Illinois and cared for her mom when she was sick. In the past she also worked in retail, but now she's found a job that is different and rewarding day by day. Lisa said, "I enjoy helping others, using my skills and time to serve their needs. I know that my



consumers appreciate what I do. I get a 'thank you' when the job is done." Lisa has four children. The Elkhorn staff say that Lisa is reliable and conscientious. She provides exceptional care to her consumers.

Society's Assets Gold Star - Kenosha

Anita Kostas started as a Personal Care Worker at Society's Assets in April 2010. After working as an educator for almost 20 years, Anita has found a different kind of position that is fulfilling and rewarding. "I saw that the office was conveniently located and I walked in and applied." She was hired and now cares for ten to twelve consumers on a regular basis. She also helps out with fill-in assignments. "It is a joy to be of service to others in a community I live in and love to be a part of," said Anita. Crediting her mother for inspiration, Anita said she was encouraged to pursue her dreams.



When she's not working, Anita might be outdoors enjoying nature, reading, or playing the piano or pipe organ. The staff in the Kenosha office appreciate Anita's great attitude and note that her consumers love her and look forward to her visits.

Society's Assets Gold Star - Racine

Jeanette McMillian joined the agency in November 2008 and participated in the Direct Care Competency Program to become a Personal Care Worker. She heard about the Program from her sister Michelle McGee, Assistant Human Resources Manager. Jeanette works with one consumer on a regular basis, and fill-in assignments keep her week busy. She said, "I'm happy to be able to help people who can't do everything for themselves." Jeanette also works at In-Sink-Erator. In the past, she worked



Continue on Page 7

Aides Recognized

Continued from Page 6
for Service Master, cleaning at Ridgewood Care Center. She cares for her young grandson too. The Racine office staff admire Jeanette's patience and professionalism. She treats all her consumers with dignity and respect.

Finding Low Cost Prescriptions

If you don't have health insurance, or prescription costs are pinching your budget, check out these resources or contact an Independent Living Coordinator at Society's Assets.

□ Ask your pharmacist about discount programs offered by the store.

□ Tell your doctor about your needs.

□ Research websites.

ConsumerReportsHealth.org

www.needymeds.org

www.rxassist.org

rxoutreach.org

Guests Enjoy Holiday Events

Even during his busy season, Santa spent time greeting the guests at the Society's Assets Holiday Banquet at Roma Lodge in Racine on Friday, December 10th. Mrs. Claus baked cookies for the Elkhorn office.



Do you know how Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer came to be?

A man named Bob May, brokenhearted and broke after his wife's death from cancer just before Christmas in 1938, struggled to give hope to his four-year old daughter Barbara. Even if he couldn't buy her a gift, he was determined to make one. Bob had created a little reindeer named Rudolph, with a big shiny nose, and made him the star of the book he gave his daughter on Christmas Day.

The story Bob May created was his own autobiography in fable form. The character he created was a misfit like he was. As a child, Bob just didn't fit in. He was small, not too athletic, and often bullied by the other boys.

Bob worked as a copywriter at Montgomery Ward. The company's general manager found out about the storybook and offered Bob a nominal fee to purchase the rights to print the book. In a few years, more than six million copies were distributed to children visiting Santa Claus in those stores. Later Montgomery Wards returned all rights back to Bob May, and the book was printed by a major publisher. The singing cowboy, Gene Autry, sang the Rudolph song created by Bob's brother-in-law.

The gift of love Bob created for his daughter kept returning to bless him again and again. And Bob May learned the lesson, just like his dear friend Rudolph, that being different isn't so bad. In fact, being different can be a blessing.