

# VISUAL-EYES

A Bi-monthly newsletter sponsored by the Jackson Chapter, Mississippi Council of the Blind

**December 2011/January 2012**

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The Message Link  
601-949-9272

On the first and the fifteenth of each month information relating to the Jackson Chapter is posted. You may call this number at any time. The message may last up to 90 seconds. I encourage you to utilize this service. Thank you!

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Michael Smitherman

Greetings to you, the membership of the Jackson Chapter. I want to thank you for allowing me to serve as your President this past year. It has been a pleasure working alongside you and the Chapter Board. We had, I think, a very good year for fundraising. I hope that the next Board will consider doing a night with the Braves and a pancake breakfast again as fundraisers next year.

Make plans to attend the annual business meeting and Christmas party on December 3rd., which will be held on the campus of the Mississippi School for the Blind (MSB) in the Student Building. A couple of things you need to know: Bring a covered dish with something in it. The Chapter will be providing a ham and turkey. Also, please bring a new, unwrapped toy to give for Toys for Tots, a baked good or craft to sell, and last but not least, at least \$2 to purchase a 50/50 drawing ticket. The monies raised from the bake/craft sale and 50/50 drawing will go toward providing Christmas for a needy family. So, please come and participate in our annual event. We will start at 11:00 a.m. and will be finished by 3:00 p.m. Try not to be late because you just might miss something.

Again, thanks for letting me serve as your President, and remember, we will need to get behind and support the new Board which we will elect at this meeting.

Wishing you a Happy Thanksgiving, a Merry Christmas,  
and a prosperous and fulfilling New Year!

## The Real Story of Rudolph

A man named Bob May, depressed and brokenhearted, stared out his drafty apartment window into the chilling December night. His 4-year-old daughter Barbara sat on his lap quietly sobbing. Bob's wife, Evelyn, was dying of cancer. Little Barbara couldn't understand why her mommy could never come home. Barbara looked up into her dad's eyes and asked, "Why isn't Mommy just like everybody else's Mommy?" Bob's jaw tightened and his eyes welled with tears. Her question brought waves of grief, but also of anger. It had been the story of Bob's life. Life always had to be different for Bob. Small when he was a kid, Bob was often bullied by other boys. He was too little at the time to compete in sports. He was often called names he'd rather not remember. From childhood, Bob was different and never seemed to fit in. Bob did complete college, married his loving wife and was grateful to get his job as a copywriter at Montgomery Ward during the Great Depression. Then he was blessed with his little girl. But it was all short-lived. Evelyn's bout with cancer stripped them of all their savings and now Bob and his daughter were forced to live in a two-room apartment in the Chicago slums. Evelyn died just days before

Christmas in 1938. Bob struggled to give hope to his child, for whom he couldn't even afford to buy a Christmas gift. But if he couldn't buy a gift, he was determined to make one - a storybook! Bob had created an animal character in his own mind and told the animal's story to little Barbara to give her comfort and hope. Again and again Bob told the story, embellishing it more with each telling. Who was the character? What was the story all about? The story Bob May created was his own autobiography in fable form. The character he created was a misfit outcast like he was. The name of the character? A little reindeer named Rudolph, with a big shiny nose. Bob finished the book just in time to give it to his little girl on Christmas Day. But the story doesn't end there. The general manager of Montgomery Ward caught wind of the little storybook and offered Bob May a nominal fee to purchase the rights to print the book. Wards went on to print \*Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer\* and distribute it to children visiting Santa Claus in their stores. By 1946 Wards had printed and distributed more than six million copies of Rudolph. That same year, a major publisher wanted to purchase the rights from Wards to print an updated version of the book. In an unprecedented gesture of kindness, the CEO of Wards returned all rights back to Bob May. The book became a best seller. Many toy and marketing deals followed and Bob May, now remarried with a growing family, became wealthy from the story he created to comfort his grieving daughter.

But the story doesn't end there either. Bob's brother-in-law, Johnny Marks, made a song adaptation to Rudolph. Though the song was turned down by such popular vocalists as Bing Crosby and Dinah Shore, it was recorded by the singing cowboy, Gene Autry. "Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer" was released in 1949 and became a phenomenal success, selling more records than any other Christmas song, with the exception of "White Christmas." The gift of love that Bob May created for his daughter so long ago kept on returning back 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.

**Book Review**  
**The Simple Truth**

**by David Baldacci,**

Read by Faith Potts.

Reading time 14 hours 42 minutes.

Suspense

When Rufus Harms, a military prisoner for twenty-five years, suddenly files an appeal to the Supreme Court, his defenders start dying in mysterious accidents.

Supreme Court clerk Sara Evans and John Fiske, brother of one of the victims, begin to investigate. Meanwhile, Rufus escapes. Some violence, some strong language, and some descriptions of sex. Bestseller. [DB47257](#)

### September Chapter Board Motions:

The meeting was called to order at 6:22 p.m. A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes as read; the motion passed. After the Treasurer read his report, the time frame was July/August, a motion was made and seconded to accept this report; the motion carried. Voucher Administrator Peggy Maddox gave the transportation report, the time frame was July/August, a motion was made and seconded to accept the report; the motion passed. A motion was made and seconded to research the ten per cent fee some cab companies were charging their drivers; this motion passed. After all committees reported, a motion was made and seconded to accept the reports; this motion passed. A motion was made to use the proceeds from the craft/bake sale for the Fred Moore Memorial Christmas Project; this motion was seconded and passed. There was a motion to collect toys for tots at our annual meeting and party; this motion was

seconded and carried. A motion was made to spend up to \$100 on the toys for tots project; this motion received a second and the board passed the motion. A motion was made and seconded to adjourn; the motion passed. The meeting ended at 7:20 p.m.

Unusual State Facts:  
Submitted by Janice Gable

ALABAMA Was the first place to have 9-1-1, started in 1968.

ARKANSAS Has the only active diamond mine in the U.S.

CONNECTICUT The Frisbee was invented here at Yale University.

HAWAII Hawaiians live, on average, five years longer than residents in any other state.

IDAHO TV was invented in Rigby, Idaho, in 1922.

INDIANA Home to Santa Claus, Indiana , which gets a half million letters to Santa every year.

KENTUCKY Has more than \$6 billion in gold underneath Fort Knox.

MISSOURI Is the birthplace of the ice cream cone.

MONTANA A sapphire from Montana is in the Crown Jewels of England.

NEBRASKA More triplets are born here than in any other state.

NEW HAMPSHIRE Birthplace of Tupperware,  
invented in 1938 by Earl Tupper.

NEW YORK Is home to the nation's oldest cattle  
ranch, started in 1747 in Montauk.

NORTH DAKOTA Rigby , North Dakota , is the exact  
geographic center of North America.

SOUTH DAKOTA Is the only state that's never had  
an earthquake.

TEXAS Dr. Pepper was invented in Waco back  
in 1885.

### **Tasty Treasures:**

#### **Southwestern Meat Loaf**

**1 pound ground round**  
**1 cup frozen whole-kernel corn**  
**1/2 cup picante sauce**  
**1/3 cup regular oats**  
**1/4 cup minced fresh cilantro**  
**1 tablespoon chili powder**  
**1 1/2 teaspoons ground cumin**  
**1 large egg white**  
**Cooking spray**  
**1/4 cup ketchup**

**Preheat oven to 375F. Combine first 8 ingredients in a large bowl; stir well. Shape meat mixture into a 9 x 4-inch loaf on a broiler pan coated with cooking spray. Brush ketchup over meat loaf. Bake at 375F for 50 minutes. Let meat loaf stand 10 minutes before slicing. Serves 4.**

Jackson Chapter Birthdays:

DECEMBER

RALPH SMITHERMAN	12-09
LAVADA CAFFEY	12-12
FAYE JACOBS	12-13
TIM BOWIE	12-17
MANNIX JACOBS	12-17
PORTER WILLIAMS	12-26
DAVID MIXON	12-28
MIKE DUKE	12-29
EDDIE TURNER	12-29
MIKE SMITHERMAN	12-30
WENFRED CAFFEY	12-31

## JANUARY

TONI GOODNIGHT	01-02
ANNA MAYFIELD	01-02
J. ELTON MOORE	01-06
RAHYE PUCKETT	01-07
MICHAEL GANDY	01-13
MELVIN SMITHERMAN	01-13
MARGARET SMITHERMAN	01-14
JUANITA BISHOP	01-15
CHARLEAN DOUGLAS	01-16
BECKY FLOYD-COLLINS	01-23
BARBARA ROWENS	01-25
PAT WARD	01-25
JERRY BAILEY	01-28
SARAH JONES	01-30

**MCB MEMBERSHIP FORM:  
PLEASE PRINT:**

**NAME:**

**MAILING ADDRESS:**

**TELEPHONE NUMBER:**

**EMAIL ADDRESS:**

**PERISCOPE FORMAT:**

**BRAILLE: PRINT: EMAIL: TAPE:**

**BRAILLE FORUM FORMAT:**

**BRAILLE: PRINT: EMAIL: TAPE: COMPUTER CD:**

**CHAPTER AFFILIATION:**

**BIRTHDAY:**

**DATE OF JOINING:**

**FULLY SIGHTED? YES: NO:**

**MAIL TO:**

**GARY AUSTIN**

**MCB TREASURER**

**P O BOX 1590**

**INDIANOLA MS 38751**

**TELEPHONE: 662-887-5398**

**MCB STATE DUES: \$10**

**Ralph Smitherman  
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**FREE MATTER  
FOR THE BLIND  
OR PHYSICALLY  
HANDICAPPED**

**X**

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**MESSAGE LINK**

**601-949-9272**

**MCB**

**601-982-1718**

**MCB WEB SITE:**

**[www.acb.org/mcb](http://www.acb.org/mcb)**

**“IMPROVING TODAY FOR TOMORROW”**