



*Photo courtesy The Meadville Tribune*

**Matt Roloff is the star of The Learning Channel's reality series 'Little People, Big World.'**

# Roloff proves that 'little people' can make an impact in a 'big world'

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"Little People, Big World" is a television series on The Learning Channel, which airs Saturdays at 8 p.m. The show captures the everyday lives of a family composed of both little and average-sized people. Matt Roloff and his wife, Amy, are both "little" people, standing approximately four feet tall. They have four children: 15 year-old twins, Jeremy and Zach, who is just a little less

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## You could win

■ Send an e-mail with your name to [eupspectator1@yahoo.com](mailto:eupspectator1@yahoo.com) for a chance to win a copy of Matt Roloff's book, *'Thrive, Don't Just Survive.'*

than four feet; a 12-year-old daughter, Molly; and their youngest, 8-year-old Jacob.

When Roloff gave his presentation Nov. 9 in Louis C. Cole Auditorium, he said that this was his first appearance at

a college or university. He said he wanted to familiarize himself with colleges because the twins are juniors and are planning to head off to college. He also mentioned that he never went to college.

Roloff said that the reality show cameras are set up in and around their homes approximately 12 hours a day. Sometimes the cameras are rolling as early as 7 in the morning and continue as late as midnight. There are two

**Roloff continued on page 2**

audience.  
He made his fans scream for

Fans from campus and from  
the area were not to take pictures and dance to

"Dark Horse" and "Eye of an  
Elephant."

## Roloff

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shifts for the camera crews and they tend to overlap. Roloff says he wanted to do the show not because of the money, but because it is "about educating the public on dwarfism."

While enrolled as president of the Little People of America (LPA), a nonprofit organization that provides support and information to dwarves, he realized that there was a need to help educate people about dwarfism, so he applied for several grants. He received a grant to do community outreach.

Roloff's goal was to go into fourth-grade classes and provide what he called, "dwarf training." Roloff spoke to about 26 classes. He felt as if it made a powerful impact, but he wanted to spread the word faster and on a larger scale. So, he made some calls and now he is working on the second season of "Little People, Big World."

Dwarfism and obesity, Roloff says, are the two most nationally ridiculed conditions. By airing the show, he hopes that it will change the opinions of the public. When he hears

someone's personal testimony, he feels glad he did the show. Roloff began his career as a computer programmer in the '80s and moved on to selling software.

He was very successful, selling software to large companies including GE, Toshiba, Toyota and Best Buy. He quit his job to go to a larger corporation, where he was hired.

About his first day on the job, Roloff said, "I could see it in their eyes ... these people didn't want me representing their product."

After that initial meeting, he was let go from his job. He said it was "eye opening," and faced it as just another challenge.

Roloff said that the six-hour flight back home was not a mourning process, but an opportunity. He said, "Wow, am I glad that that happened."

He told himself, "The first thing I'm going to do is contribute to the little people."

He did just that, serving as the president of Little People of America, and although he is no longer president, he sits on the



One of Matt Roloff's goals is to inform students about dwarfism.

board of directors.

He also wanted to work on his farm. And so he did just that. His 34-acre farm, located outside Portland, Oregon, offers peaches in late summer and pumpkins in the fall and is closed for winter and spring. Currently, the peach trees are being ripped out and the Roloffs are focusing on pumpkins.

Among the pumpkin patch is a world that Roloff designed for his children. He said that wanted to build a playhouse for the kids, but wanted it to be unique.

The structure of the playhouse consists of a western town, a full-size pirate ship, a medieval castle and a three-story tree house.

He said building the farm has been a business success. Around 30,000 people went through the farm during this year's pumpkin season.

Roloff's new project consists of building an elaborate shop that he likes to call "the men's crisis center."

He says there is only one rule: "There is no criticism allowed." Afterward, he would like to construct a mountain bike trail since his son Zach just got a mountain bike.

Roloff also wanted to make an inexpensive kit to offer hotels the opportunity to help make a little person's stay more comfortable and safe.

The kit includes a closet adapter, to lower the closet's pole to hang clothes; a security latch adapter, to secure the latch on the door; a reach grabber; a push-pull tool; and a custom step stool all offered by Direct Access Solutions.

These products are currently being offered in Marriott, Hyatt and Radisson Hotels, and Carlson and Country Inn Suites. West Coast Hotels and Shilo Inns and Suites are 100 percent equipped.

Since February, Roloff has started selling software again. He continues to work on his farm, have his life taped and spread the word on dwarfism. Roloff said that, "Thriving is extra." You have to set goals and then achieve them — "goals that stretch you, stretch your intellect."

the cultural food they where  
entertained by Asfarah

UNEXPECTED AT A GLANCE