

**GET-TO-KNOW**

# Ross Rintelman

## 'Rossman's' story impacting lives

*Cedarburg man recognized for building a better community*

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**CEDARBURG** —Every person plays an instrumental role in creating a community, and through their 10 years of friendship, Ross "The Rossman" Rintelman and Tom "Mel" Stanton have proven that we are all Better Together. The Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities present "Better Together: Sharing Stories, Sharing Lives," which has selected to share Rintelman's story about not only living with Down syndrome, but touching the lives of community members.

Rintelman and Stanton first met through the Special Olympics, and sports have continued to bond them.

"When I first met Ross and his friends, it impacted me deeply" Stanton said. "I wanted to get them more involved (in the community)."

Stanton "saw so much potential in (Rintelman) that he could do so much more" and offered him the opportunity to help coach the seventh- and eighth-grade youth Mercs baseball team. Rintelman instantly loved the job.

"The team treats me like one of the guys," he said. "They respect me."

Team members look forward to seeing him, which they make clear with their enthusiastic high-five greetings.

Though Rintelman said he likes "taking care of business" on the field, Stanton said they want them to learn about more than just



News Graphic file photo

Ross Rintelman is pictured at Mel's Pig Roast, one of many different activities with which the Cedarburg man is involved.

### Listen to Ross' story

To listen to the story a local coach submitted about Ross Rintelman of Cedarburg, go <http://goo.gl/FO1EGR> and click on "audio stories." To see a video about the Better Together organization, which is sponsored by the Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities, go to <http://goo.gl/VHJZ0o>.

baseball

"We're teaching them how to impact lives," he said.

Rintelman said they are teaching fundamentals on and off the field.

Seeing Rintelman flourish as a part of the Mercs coaching staff inspired Stanton to encourage Rintelman to get involved as a member of the Mel's Pig Roast executive board. Stanton began the roast 15 years ago as a fundraiser for many local charities, such as Special Olympics.

As the board's assistant secretary, Rintelman attends meetings, helps run

events and gives speeches to 800 to 900 attendees at the the pig roast.

"I just tell them what we've been up to," Rintelman said.

He said he never gets nervous before speaking because his father, who died in 1995, often gave speeches and inspired him to share his story with others.

"It's not just a title," Stanton said. "It's been really neat to see him grow in his writing skills ... (and become a) key member of the board."

His involvement with Mel's Pig Roast has helped Rintelman touch even more hearts in the community. Stanton said it's a good day when Rintelman tell his story and puts smiles on people's faces.

Rintelman's passion and talent for writing have led to a job writing his own column for the Ozaukee County Special Olympics website, titled Ross's Corner, which boasts of being "Often imitated, never copied. The man! The legend! Our man on the beat: Rossman!" Through the page, Rintelman posts updates on upcoming and past events through Special Olympics.

When not working for Mel's Pig Roast or writing for "Ross's Corner," Rintelman works in food services at Columbia St. Mary's Hospital Ozaukee, plays basketball, bowls for Special Olympics and hangs out with his mother, grandmother and friends.

"He's changed my life," Stanton said of Rintelman. "Although it's nice to see the impact we make with money raised through Mel's Pig Roast, it's worth more than that to see an incredible individual like Ross blossom. It's not about us; we're not here for recognitions. We're giving back to the community and touching people's lives."