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A. Title, Series and Author

ALWAYS AN ADVOCATE:
Champions of Change for People with Dwarfism and Disabilities

Dwarfism Trilogy, #3

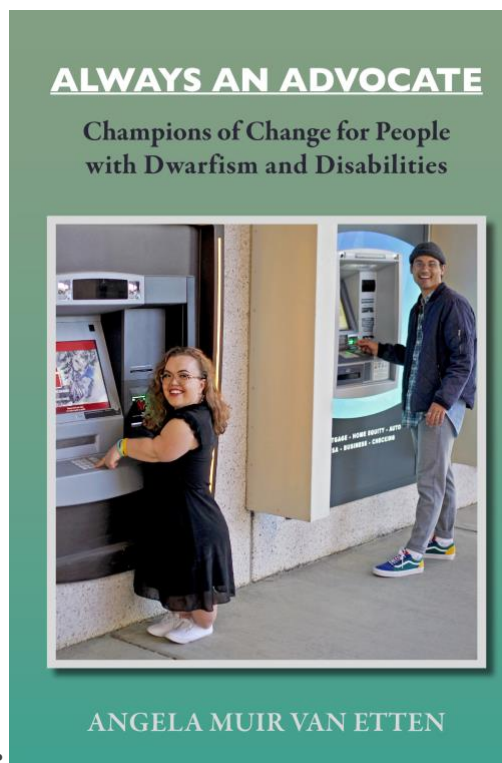
Angela Muir Van Etten

B. Blurb

If you're skeptical about changing society's discriminatory treatment of people with dwarfism and other disabilities, Van Etten offers hope with these words:

Advocacy makes change possible when people call out what is wrong, care enough to stand up for what is right, commit to the cause for as long as it takes, and have confidence in God's power to change hearts.

Van Etten repeatedly demonstrates the power of advocacy in this book. Titans of industry are now required to lower ATMs, gas pumps, and elevator buttons to be within reach of people previously ignored. Public transportation must be accessible. Cheering crowds applauding dwarf tossing contests are silenced. Many homeowners, school children, and volunteer leaders enjoy equal access, respect, and civility.



C. Front Cover

D. **Buy Link**, <https://www.amazon.com/ALWAYS-ADVOCATE-Champions-Dwarfism-Disabilities-ebook/dp/B09BBLSD8G/>

E. **Tagline**

Advocacy changes society's discriminatory treatment of people with dwarfism and other disabilities.

F. **Product Details**

Author: Angela Muir Van Etten

Publisher: Independent

Cover design: Michelle Stevens

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—Biography & Autobiography /
People with Disabilities

—Law / Civil Rights

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G. **Synopsis**

As long as there are people living on this planet, there will be a demand for advocates to advance the civil rights of people with disabilities. Van Etten offers hope for those who are skeptical about changing discriminatory treatment of people with dwarfism and other disabilities.

Always an Advocate is organized into three parts. Part I discusses the three times either Robert or Angela Van Etten served as President of Little People of America (LPA) as it grew from a membership of about 3,000 in 1980 to 6,000 in 2006. Part II discusses LPA's action to halt the atrocity of dwarf tossing in three states—Illinois, Florida, and New York. Part III covers equal access to the public sector via the built environment, education, emergency operations, housing, social security disability benefits, transportation, and voting.

The author encourages people with dwarfism and disabilities to advocate for positive change and not hold back because of the size of the task. The book is replete with advocacy principles and values. According to Van Etten, “success is not measured by outcomes or how we compare with others. Rather, it is measured by how we use our God-given talents. We only fail when we squander our abilities and live to please ourselves.”

Van Etten appeals to fellow advocates to train the next generation to advocate for what is right and just with her advocacy tools of preparation, perseverance, persuasion, and prayer.

H. Who Benefits From Reading *Always an Advocate*?

Anyone downtrodden and damaged by discrimination will benefit from reading this book. As Lee Fielder, a retired pastor with a profound hearing impairment, wrote after reading an advance review copy:

Most of us will not face the giants that Van Etten tackled, but we do encounter wrongs that need to be righted, misinformation that should be corrected, and demeaning social practices that ought to be opposed. In short, we need to do what is right. “Always An Advocate” shows us the way.

People with dwarfism and other disabilities—along with family, friends, and professionals—will see that injustice must be contested. They will be emboldened to advocate for changes that include and value all people regardless of differences that make them a target, such as ability, age, class, color, gender, health, height, nationality, or religion.

All people benefit when they accept that change is possible and care enough to do something, commit to the cause, choose the right forum, collaborate with industry experts, communicate clearly, and have confidence in God’s ability to change hearts.

I. Praise For *Always an Advocate*

[This] is a terrific book, and there have been very few as aptly named. Change requires a lot of effort. And when a righteous voice needs to be amplified, Angela rose to the challenge time and time again. Her seemingly endless supply of energy comes from her faith in God and her love of the underdog. She’s been a fierce advocate for decades, a righteous voice. She positively impacted millions and I personally owe her a debt of gratitude. She’s paved the way to a better life for me, my family and countless others. Thank you Angela!

~ Bill Klein

Co-author of *Life is Short* and Co-Star of TLC's *Little Couple*

Angela Muir Van Etten and her husband, Robert, have been respected members of the dwarfism community for many years. In her latest book, *Always an Advocate*, she tells the story of a turbulent era within LPA, recounts her campaign against the demeaning and dangerous practice of dwarf tossing, and writes about her work on public access issues for people with dwarfism and other disabilities. You will learn a lot about the challenges that dwarfs face in their everyday lives — and about the life and activism of this remarkable woman.

~ Dan Kennedy

Author of *Little People: Learning to See the World Through My Daughter's Eyes*

As I considered running for president LPA, I asked a former president about the time commitment. “Two to three hours a week,” the former president told me. *Always an Advocate* taught me that two to three hours a week was just a fraction of time compared to the 25 hours a week that Angela Van Etten dedicated to little people during the time she and her husband served the organization. Perhaps if I had asked Van Etten about the time commitment, I would have shied away from running for office. But I am glad I didn't. As a former LPA President, I am proud to be in the same company as Angela Van Etten. I am proud to be part of a community to which Van Etten contributed so much. *Always an Advocate* is a testament to Van Etten's dedication and commitment to service. Through this service, Van Etten contributed in countless ways to the advancement of the dwarfism community, the disability community, and the broader community.

~ Gary Arnold

LPA Past President

This book offers the reader a grand tour of local, state, and federal opportunities for advocacy. The only requirement is passion, dedication, a thick skin, patience, and a sense of humor.

~ Jim Kay

LPA Historian

In a year where we have seen a multitude of books tied to disability, and the disability rights movement, come out, Angela stands alone as THE guide book for how

to actually make the changes that we need to see in society. I strongly recommend this book for any growing advocate from the ADA generation and after. It reminds us that the battles that we fought aren't easy, and that the work is far from done, while also arming you with the level of analysis and thinking we need as a movement to succeed.

~ Rebecca Hare

Disability Advocate

Angela Van Etten is the best kind of advocate: one who effectively combines knowledge, expertise, and empathy springing from personal experience. Her accounts in *Always an Advocate* will inspire and motivate readers from all walks of life. Whether you have identified a disability in your own life, or know someone who has been limited by disability, this book will encourage you to step off the sidelines to become an advocate. This doesn't mean you will do or should do what Angela has done. But it does mean you will be open to the opportunities for advocacy in your own circle of influence, small or great.

~ Ava Pennington

Author of *Daily Reflections on the Names of God*

Having read her two previous books, I was eager to read the third volume of Angela Van Etten's autobiography. It exceeded my expectations. Her description of her years of advocacy on many different issues makes compelling reading, and I read the whole book in one sitting. The range of her concerns and actions include not only issues of concern to little people, but those of people of many other disabilities and ages. With balance problems of my own, I have used a walker for many years, and I can identify with and appreciate her concerns for inaccessible bathrooms, public transportation, and such necessities of life as ATMs and parking spaces. Reading her books has expanded my own understanding of the needs of others and how they might be met.

~ Dianne Callender

Retired church librarian

Do what is right. In *Always An Advocate* Angela Muir Van Etten chronicles a long journey replete with examples of the passion and the cost to those who choose to do what is right. Angela's many examples of her pursuit to realize remedies by agencies, boards, and governments demonstrate that achieving success in getting decision-makers

to correct problems or remove barriers is rarely easy, never automatic, and seldom a solo effort, however she shows all of us that it is doable.

Most of us will not face the giants that Van Etten tackled, but we do encounter wrongs that need to be righted, misinformation that should be corrected, and demeaning social practices that ought to be opposed. In short, we need to do what is right. *Always An Advocate* shows us the way.

~ Lee Fielder
Retired Pastor

Always an Advocate chronicles Angela’s adult life of activism dealing with numerous issues relating to rights for people who are facing challenges because of a physical or mental limitation in amazing detail. Being an unbelievably accomplished dwarf herself, you can understand just a few of the issues she faced, such as: making the dehumanizing act of dwarf-tossing illegal, the inability to reach elevator, gas pump, and ATM buttons; inaccessible transportation; the denial of Social Security disability benefits; and so much more. She successfully made a huge difference.

After reading the book, you will have a greater appreciation and sensitivity for the challenges that these folks face every day of their lives. Not just a day or a month or a year. Every day!

The author obviously has a calling from God to persevere in the face of what are sometimes overwhelming odds and is quick to give Him the glory. I will be anxiously looking forward to reading more from this author.

~ Karl Thonnes
Retired corporate executive

"The people who actually accomplish things in this world are those who are brave enough to go out on a limb, and brave enough to stay out there while everyone else is trying to shake them off." David Bradford, LPA volunteer

This quote not only defines who an "advocate" is, but also defines this strong woman of faith. As Angela so eloquently writes,

"little people have the same aspirations and abilities as other people. Our small bodies do not reflect the size of our minds or talent. Our similarities to the

average-sized population far outnumber the superficial differences of our appearance.

Although we may look different on the outside, our inner desires remain the same. To find love, aspire to achieve and succeed in life, and to be accepted and respected for who we are.”

Angela's history as a relentless fighter for the rights of people with disabilities is a true David and Goliath story. As important as the fight is for the practical changes, adjustments and legislative actions necessary to accommodate the physical needs of those of smaller stature and others with special needs, it is as much about changing the perceptions and insensitivity that often accompany the demeaning and prejudicial attitudes of people who are different from others.

Angela's book will inspire and encourage us to bravely join her, "*to go out on a limb and stay out there,*" when advocacy calls us to action.

~ Stephanie Pennington
Christian grandmother from South Carolina

Angela has provided insight into advocacy for people with differences in this her third easy to read book. What it takes to make change happen when you know that change is RIGHT! Angela relays personal experiences from her years of advocacy and lets you see through her eyes what advocacy really means. This is a great book to read and help us to see the importance of advocacy when one knows something is right and to step up and advocate.

~ Judith Walters
Retired Speech and Language Pathologist

I first had the pleasure of knowing Angela, both personally and professionally, during our work together at the Coalition for Independent Living Options in South Florida. I knew her as a steadfast, energetic, and creative individual, dedicated to the mission of advocating for people with disabilities. In her third book on dwarfism, she chronicles the politics and leadership challenges in the LPA organization, tackles the monstrous "sport" of dwarf tossing, and explores her advocacy for people with

disabilities who must fight for equal access in so many areas such as education, transportation, voting, and housing.

People are people. There are stories of power struggles, ambition, relationships, cruelty, struggles, and victories. There are also specific challenges which little people face. You will not read *Always an Advocate* without being inspired and encouraged by Angela's determination to take on all challenges, and eventually overcome and master them with an ample dose of faith and humor thrown in for good measure. I thoroughly enjoyed reading this book and I encourage others to do so, especially if you think an obstacle is too big to vanquish.

~ Genevieve Cousminer, Esquire

Former Director of the Coalition for Independent Living Options, Inc.

J. Social Media Sites

1. Author Website: <https://angela-muirvanetten.com/books/>
2. Author blog: <https://angela-muirvanetten.com/blog/>
3. FaceBook Author Page: https://www.facebook.com/MuirVanEttenTrilogy/?ref=page_internal
4. Goodreads: https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/58368685-always-an-advocate#other_reviews
5. Pinterest: <https://www.pinterest.com/AngelaMuirVanEtten/>
6. Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/angela.vanetten7/>
7. Twitter: <https://twitter.com/muirvanetten>

K. Media Appearances

- Betsy Graziani Fasbinder. “The Morning Glory Project Podcast.” January 19, 2022, <https://www.themorninggloryproject.com/angela-muir-van-etton/>
- Keith Casebonne. “You First: A Disability Rights Florida” Podcast. November 18, 2021. Episode 32: Always an Advocate, https://disabilityrightsflorida.org/podcast/story/episode_32
- Steph Robson. “Pass Me Your Shoes: An Interview with Angela Muir Van Etten.” October 22, 2020. *Hello Little Lady*, <https://www.hellolittlelady.com/2020/10/pass-me-your-shoes-an-interview-with-angela-muir-van-etten/>

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- Shirley Marlow, "In No Small Feat, She Finds True Stature as a Writer." July 4, 1989. [Los Angeles Times](#) (Los Angeles, CA), <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1989-07-04-mn-3313-story.html>
- Abby Karp, "Little People's Biggest Problem: Small Minds." July 3, 1989. [The Baltimore Sun](#). (Baltimore, MD), <https://baltimoresun.newspapers.com/image/377910915/?terms=%22Little%2BPeople%27s%2BBiggest%2BProblem%3A%2BSmall%2BMinds.%22>
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L. Excerpts

1. PART I – VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES

Chapter 1, *International Union of Presidents*, pages 19-20 (498 words)

Meeting in Washington, DC

Our lives were about to change forever. By all appearances it was just another day in the life of two presidents when we met at the New Zealand Embassy in March 1981. As president of Little People of America (LPA), Bobby Van Etten represented a nonprofit organization that provides support and information to people of short stature and their families. As president of Little People of New Zealand (LPNZ) and a Winston Churchill fellow, I was there to further my research of American disability civil rights laws and public relations programs.

We had no idea our business meeting would blossom into romance and marriage seven months later.

Inhouse Assistant

After 16 months of going it alone as LPA president, Bobby acquired an in-house assistant when he married me in October 1981. Aside from all the other benefits of marriage, he gained a partner with whom to share the workload. I was both willing and able to pitch in. After all, I had time on my hands while waiting to start law school in the fall of 1982. And he sure needed the help. His presidential load was ten times what I had carried in New Zealand—literally, since LPA membership numbered about 3,000 compared to LPNZ’s membership of about 300.

Well before the invention of the Internet, communication was limited to phone calls and snail mail. Thus, Bobby spent most of his spare time on the phone, writing letters, and preparing the *Golden Sheet*—a monthly bulletin mailed to about 80 elected and appointed LPA officers throughout the country. The *Golden Sheet* covered routine administrative matters plus personal updates such as the medical status of an officer in the hospital. Individual letters handled more sticky situations,

such as people not following through on their commitments or failing to work well together. For example, in 1982, correspondence was necessary to resolve a dispute among LPA founding members about the historic record being prepared for publication in the souvenir book marking 25 years since the founding of LPA by actor and advocate Billy Barty.

Media interviews and public speaking were also among Bobby’s presidential duties. On January 28, 1982, we got a kick out of the limousine ride to a television studio for an interview about LPA on *Good Morning Washington* with John Corchran. As the guest speaker at a Tall Club International meeting, Bobby took pleasure in drawing parallels between people of short and tall stature.

At the end of Bobby’s day at the office and LPA work at night, there was rarely a moment to just relax. So, I did everything I could to lessen his load and free up some couple time. Bobby saw me as a willing resource who could benefit LPA. This worked out well for us until Bobby gave me credit for my work. Bobby had broken LPA’s silent rule that the husband take credit for his wife’s contribution and he was criticized for being too reliant on my opinions.

2. PART II – THE RISE AND FALL OF DWARF TOSSING

Chapter 11, *Biting the Legislative Dust*, pages 105-107 (794 words)

Need for New York Law

Undaunted by the Florida legislative action, the dwarf-tossing promoters took their show to New York state. LPA was ready. At the national conference in July 1989, I accepted an appointment as the coordinator to get a similar law passed in the New York legislature.

Knowing the time commitment involved, Robert was reluctant for me to take this assignment and worried that it would be for naught if the law didn’t pass. Yet I felt compelled to try and stop this despicable practice. I didn’t need a guaranteed outcome and was ready to stand against such depravity. The sacrifice of my time was a small price to pay. Robert not only relented, but also sacrificed the special attention he deserved on his 40th birthday.

My first assignment was to build a coalition of people who shared my passion to stop dwarf tossing and dwarf bowling. In those pre-Internet days, it had to be done the old-fashioned way—with phone calls and snail mail. On July 17, 1989, I wrote the first of many letters to prospective members of the LPA New York Committee to Ban Dwarf Tossing.

These letters invited people to join the campaign and gave updates on legislative activity, media reports, and finances. Each month, I spotlighted the exceptional work of an individual campaign volunteer. There was also guidance on writing to and visiting state legislators at critical steps in the bill’s passage through the legislature. We greatly benefited from the legislative package prepared for the Florida campaign against dwarf tossing.

Media on New York Bill

In addition to tracking media response to the New York bill, I did about 25 local, national, and international television, radio, and newspaper interviews. Although the coverage was mostly fair, in January 1990 I was on air with one radio shock-jock whose only intent was to ridicule little people. He invited me to San Francisco where he offered to meet me at the airport, put me in his trunk, and take me to a place where he could throw me. His attitude was typical of the disrespect and derision dwarf tossing generated against people with dwarfism during this time.

In comparison, Phil Donahue hosted a show with a vigorous debate on the pros and cons of a ban on dwarf tossing and dwarf bowling in New York state-licensed establishments serving alcoholic beverages. On October 12, 1989, Donahue opened his show on violent entertainment with the statement:

Well, they’re throwing dwarfs—throwing live human beings. This looks like the most demeaning, humiliating, degrading, prejudice-provoking activity.

Phil’s guests included a medical researcher speaking to the dangers of violent entertainment, the dwarf-tossing business owner and dwarf “tossee” who opposed the ban, and me lobbying for the ban. The majority of the audience appeared to favor the ban, but a sizeable group opposed infringing on the dwarf’s freedom of choice to engage in dangerous activity. I responded with examples of the State making laws to protect individuals from the consequences of

their own actions and to protect the State from the cost of injuries suffered by uninsured risk takers. I cited the example of laws fining people for going over Niagara Falls in a barrel and requiring people to wear seatbelts and motorcycle helmets.

After acknowledging the libertarian view, I challenged viewers, “Why is there an audience? . . . this is appealing to a lower instinct in people. The problem with dwarf tossing is that we’re legitimizing bully behavior.”

I thanked God for putting the words in my mouth on the *Phil Donahue Show*. The exposure helped propel the bill forward. Soon after the program, we had a draft of the New York bill. As little people contacted their state representatives, legislators began signing on as bill co-sponsors. On December 21, 1989, it helped that Gary Abrams—a freelance writer for the Los Angeles Times—spurned dwarf tossing as the worst “sport” of the decade.

3. PART III – EQUAL ACCESS

Chapter 14, *Let Me Ride*, pages 141-143 (700 words)

Taxis Refuse Rides with Scooter

Calling 911 wasn’t in our plan the night of LPA’s 60th anniversary banquet in Denver, Colorado, in July 2017. But hotel security staff supplied an oxygen tank, and Robert was rushed to the Denver Health Medical Center in an ambulance where he was admitted to the ICU in respiratory distress.

Although I followed in a taxi, the driver would have refused to take me and my scooter if not for the Sheraton hotel security supervisor reminding him of the contract Yellow Cab had with the hotel. Indeed, the supervisor was so disturbed by how poorly the cab driver treated me that rather than leave me to the mercy of Yellow Cab on my return in the early hours of the morning, she came to the hospital at 2:00 a.m. to give me a ride back to the hotel. When my scooter wouldn’t fit in her trunk, she got help to lift it onto the back seat of her car.

Even though Sheraton security staff gave me taxi vouchers to use when visiting Robert at the hospital, they were of little use when calling for a ride back to the hotel. Multiple cab drivers refused to transport me with my scooter. One night it took me two hours to get a taxi. The first driver took one look at the scooter and drove off.

When I called Yellow Cab to report this incident, the dispatcher said I had to order an accessible cab if I had a scooter. When I asked how long an accessible cab would take to arrive, the dispatcher wouldn't give me a straight answer. Upon further prodding, the dispatcher disclosed there was no guarantee that an accessible cab would pick me up at all. He admitted that the day before, eight riders who called for an accessible cab never got a ride.

Some other little people attending the Denver conference were also stranded when Yellow Cab refused to pick them up when they saw their scooter or wheelchair. It's bad enough to be stuck at home, but quite another to be stranded and unable to get home.

Each night I left Robert in the ICU after a day of medical staff giving him breathing treatments and diagnostic tests to rule out any catastrophic causes of his respiratory problem. Each night I was tearful and distraught outside on the sidewalk as I watched cabs coming and going without accepting my fare. If it had been daylight, and if my scooter had GPS, and if it had been in a safe neighborhood—I would have scooted back to the hotel on my own wheels. But that wasn't an option in the dark in an unfamiliar, rough part of town.

I called out to God daily for both of us and was grateful that others aware of the situation were also praying. Word spread like wildfire at the LPA conference that Robert went to the hospital in an ambulance. When Stacie Nichols-Pouliot saw me in the lobby the next morning she told me that she and Roger were praying for us. I had also alerted church friends via text of our immediate need for prayer support.

After two-and-a-half days in the hospital, the doctors determined that the most likely cause of Robert's breathing issue was the cumulative effect of being in the Mile High City for a week. As a sea level resident of Florida, Robert was classified as a flatlander. The medical consensus was that he would be fine once he got back to sea level. But in order to get home safely, he traveled with a portable oxygen concentrator.

The taxi issue was resolved by connecting with a private transportation operator servicing the Sheraton. After identifying a reliable and helpful operator, I got his

number and made reservations with him to pick us up when Robert was discharged from the hospital and when we needed a ride to the airport.

All credit goes to God for taking care of us both during this stressful time.

When I was desperate, I called out, and God got me out of a tight spot.

God’s angel sets up a circle of protection around us while we pray.

∞ *Psalm 34:6-7, Message*

M. Author Biography

As a dual citizen of New Zealand and the United States, Angela qualified as a lawyer in both countries and served as national president of both Little People organizations. At three-feet-four-inches, Angela has twice been awarded LPA’s highest honor, the Kitchens Meritorious Service Award. Angela and Robert married in 1981 and currently live in Stuart, Florida, where they have been active in church ministry.

In New Zealand, Angela practiced law for five years and, in the United States, she was admitted to the bar in Ohio and New York. She has worked as a writer and editor of law books for Thomson Reuters, a staff writer for the Christian Law Association, and a disability advocate and coordinator for the Coalition for Independent Living Options, Inc.

Angela’s experiences are chronicled in a dwarfism trilogy: (1) *Dwarfs Don’t Live in Doll Houses* (April 1988) covers her life from birth to young adulthood as a single person; (2) *Pass Me Your Shoes* (October 2020) chronicles 35 years of marriage; and (3) *Always an Advocate* (October 2021) highlights 38 years of LPA leadership and disability advocacy.



Dwarfism advocacy articles by Angela have published in the LPA magazine, LPA Today; in the HuffPost blog, October 19, 2011, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/dwarf-tossing_b_1020953, and in her weekly blog posts at <https://angelamuirvanetten.com/blog/>.

N. Suggested Interview Questions and Potential Answers

1. What is *Always an Advocate* about?

A demonstration of advocacy’s power to end discrimination and disrespect towards people with dwarfism and other disabilities in volunteer leadership, entertainment, public transportation, public buildings and facilities, emergency operations, voting, homeowner associations, social security disability benefits, and schools.

2. How did you pick the title?

A high school student asked me a question following a disability sensitivity presentation. It wasn't the typical question a person with dwarfism gets—about clothes, driving, the height of my siblings, or if I have children.

No, the question was, "*How long have you been an advocate?*"

I had to think about that one for a moment; then it dawned on me. I’ve been an advocate for as long as I can remember. Always.

After toying with various title ideas, *Always an Advocate* surfaced as the best choice.

3. What is the significance of the cover photo?

The six-inch reach barrier was broken in a national state and local building code standard on October 8, 1997 when the height of everything activated with a push, pull or turn in new or altered public buildings and facilities was lowered from 54 to 48 inches. This would make ATMs, gas pumps, elevators, and so much more, accessible to at least half a million people with dwarfism and other disabilities.

The change was the result of three years of intense advocacy in a David and Goliath battle with the powerful American Bankers Association, the Gasoline Pump Manufacturers Association, the Building Owners Managers Association, and many more. Initially, it seemed there was no hope for change. But I believed God could move

the hearts of ANSI Access Committee members to support the six-inch reduction. And by God’s grace, power, and justice, He made the impossible happen.

4. How has being a Christian influenced your advocacy?

God gets the credit for everything I have accomplished as an advocate. Though not apparent to me at the time, He guided all my career moves—from a legal aid court practice, to legal research and writing on disability and religious liberty laws, to advocating for disability rights. With every change in direction, He honed my skills and equipped me with the knowledge needed for disability advocacy battles.

When incensed by injustice, God aroused in me a strong desire to speak up for what is right. Yet I was daunted by commitments competing for my time—coordinating the New York State bill to ban dwarf-tossing, studying for the New York State bar exam, and working full time. But God supplied the stamina I needed to do all three simultaneously. Then he rewarded me with passage of the bill and passing the exam.

When asked to accept the assignment as LPA’s delegate to the ANSI Access Committee, I initially resisted. Removing the six-inch reach barrier seemed insurmountable. But I came to see it as God’s calling to advance the civil rights of people with dwarfism and other disabilities to full and equal enjoyment of public buildings and facilities. I knew God could change the hearts and minds of committee members and He did. Many little people say they think of me every time they use an ATM, but I think of God’s grace, power, and justice. He deserves the credit for making the impossible happen.

After becoming LPA president during a turbulent time in national leadership, I received some congratulatory emails expressing comfort and confidence in my ability to lead. What people didn’t know was that my strength and courage came from God. And in pursuit of Solomon’s wisdom needed to deal with difficult people, every month I added his words to my email signature paragraph. For example, in February 2006, my 220 outgoing emails closed with this quote:

*Pleasant words are a honeycomb,
Sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.*
∞ Proverbs 16:24, New American Standard Bible.

5. How have readers responded to the book?

Angela’s writing will motivate the reader to see people who may be different from themselves, as people FIRST. ~ Eileen, Director of Center for Independent Living

Angela shows us that one person can make a difference, and challenges us to do the same. ~ K Bates, MD

Her desire for equality and accessibility for people with disabilities will compel you to become an advocate as well. ~ Jane, advocate for pre-born children

Van Etten's perseverance will inspire advocates for the rights of underserved populations to follow their path and, with God's strength, continue to strive for the equality, dignity, and respect deserved by all people. ~ Dr. A Koebe, educator and advocate

Angela’s work speaks to me like few books have. I am left inspired and hopeful about the role I may play in making this world even a little bit better for my actions, and grateful for the lessons and wisdom she openly shares from her life-long journey in advocacy.

~ Juliana, teacher and mother

She inspires me to believe that nothing is too big a task to tackle and effect change with the grace of God. ~ Juliette, writer and mother

Reading this book gives me hope that one day there will be “Equal Access” for all.

~ Debby, mother of child who is blind

6. Why did it take three decades and three books to tell your story?

Dwarfs Don’t Live in Doll Houses, the first book in my dwarfism trilogy, was planned when I was single. Even though it was published in 1988, after I was married, I kept to the original plan and wrote from the perspective of a single person. When people were disappointed not to read about my whirlwind international romance with Robert Van Etten, we used to say, *wait for book two*.

Well it was a long wait, 32 years to be precise. First, I had to wait for our marriage story to unfold before there was even a story to tell. By 2004, there was plenty of

material and I started a book outline. But book plans were sidelined when I was drawn into LPA politics and changed jobs a couple of times. Finally, in 2012, I completed a draft manuscript of *Pass Me Your Shoes*, the second book in the trilogy. But once again the writing halted when I was diagnosed with aortic stenosis and had aortic valve replacement surgery. I no longer had the energy to juggle writing with work, church and family duties. So, *book two* was shelved until I retired in 2018.

My original intent was for *Pass Me Your Shoes* to be one book. However, it was too long and appealed to two different markets. As a result, I separated the manuscript into books two and three: *Pass Me Your Shoes* telling our personal marriage story and *Always An Advocate* focusing on advocacy.

7. Do you plan to write another book?

No! But then again, my original plan was two books so plans can change. For now, I'm quite content to write articles and weekly blog posts at <https://angelamuirvanetten.com/blog>.

8. In what formats is the book published?

Audiobook, e-book, and paperback.

9. Who narrates the audiobook?

I narrated the audiobook in several two-hour sessions with the support of audio engineer, Barry Grant Marsh.

10. Where can people get a copy of *Always an Advocate* and the first two books in the dwarfism trilogy?

Type in the author name, Angela Muir Van Etten, at <https://www.amazon.com/s?k=Angela+muir+van+etten> and all three books in the series will list in the search result.

The audiobook is also available on Audible and iTunes.

O. Press Release

<p>FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE</p>	<p>Contact: Angela Muir Van Etten Phone: +1-772-834-3951 Email: angela@angelamuirvanetten.com Website: https://angelamuirvanetten.com</p> <p>Amazon Central Author page, https://www.amazon.com/Angela-Muir-Van-Etten/e/Boo1KCIN1K Facebook Author page, https://www.facebook.com/MuirVanEttenTrilogy/about/ Goodreads, https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/58368685-always-an-advocate#other_reviews Instagram, https://www.instagram.com/angela.vanetten7/ Pinterest, https://www.pinterest.com/AngelaMuirVanEtten Twitter, https://twitter.com/muirvanetten</p>
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AUDIOBOOKS “INCLUDE” PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

STUART, FLORIDA, USA — Guide dogs, wheelchairs, curb cuts, disabled parking, and automatic door openers are among the many things that open up the world to people with disabilities. But don’t forget to add audiobooks to the list.

With audiobooks as the fastest growing segment in publishing, millions of people with various disabilities—vision, brain, neurological, cognitive, for example—can access books without using their eyes to read, hands to turn pages, or mind to process written words. This technology accomplishes the goal of inclusion which allows disabled and nondisabled people to engage in the same activity.

Enter Angela Muir Van Etten, the Stuart author of *Always an Advocate: Champions of Change for People with Dwarfism and Disabilities*. Ever since her childhood experience listening to talking books with her great grandmother, Angela has dreamed of publishing an audiobook. Partnership with her friend Barry Grant Marsh, a veteran broadcaster and advertising marketing executive, made this possible.

After laboring together for many months, Barry and Angela are thrilled to announce the publication of *Always an Advocate* as an audiobook. With God’s help, they succeeded in producing this important audiobook on disability rights that disability advocate Rebecca Hare says: “stands alone [in 2021] as *THE* guide book for how to actually make the changes that we need to see in society.”

Always an Advocate offers hope for those skeptical about changing discriminatory treatment of people with dwarfism and other disabilities. Angela shows how “advocacy makes change possible when people call out what is wrong, care enough to stand up for what is right, commit to the cause for as long as it takes, and have confidence in God’s power to change hearts.”

Always an Advocate is endorsed by many in the disability community:

“When a righteous voice needs to be amplified, Angela rose to the challenge time and time again. Her seemingly endless supply of energy comes from her faith in God and her love of the underdog.” ~ Bill Klein, Co-Star of TLC's *Little Couple*

“This book offers the reader a grand tour of local, state, and federal opportunities for advocacy. The only requirement is passion, dedication, a thick skin, patience, and a sense of humor.” ~ Jim Kay, LPA Historian

Always an Advocate struck a chord with me as a member of the LPA community and as a director of a center for independent living. The world needs more advocates, like Angela, to fight for equality and inclusion of all people.

~ Eileen Healy, Director of a center for independent living

Angela might be short in stature but don't let that fool you! This woman packs a mighty punch when it comes to advocating and making change for people with disabilities!

~ Donna Hosang, mother of child with a developmental disability

This book gives a peek into Angela's life, the life of a Little Person, and documents her willingness to jump into the battle to help those who are struggling due to any disability.

~ Debby Brackett, mother of child who is blind

The *Always An Advocate* audiobook is available on Amazon, Audible, and iTunes. Read more at <https://angelamuirvanetten.com/always-an-advocate/>, listen to a retail sample, and get your copy today.

To request a promo code to download a free copy in exchange for media coverage or a fair and honest book review, email angela@angelamuirvanetten.com.

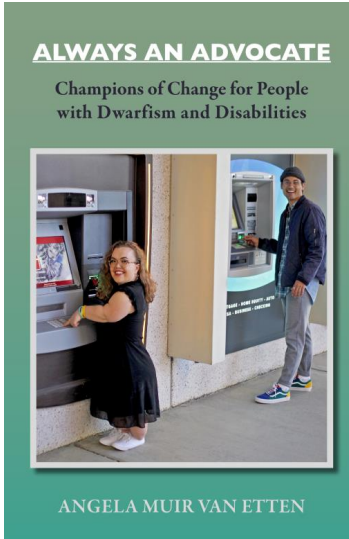

Always An Advocate is the third book in Angela's dwarfism memoir trilogy. *Dwarfs Don't Live in Doll Houses* (April 1988) covers her life from birth to young adulthood as a single person and *Pass Me Your Shoes* (October 2020) chronicles 35 years of marriage.



As a dwarf of three-feet-four-inches, Angela Muir Van Etten has lived the disability experience and—for as long as she can remember—has advocated for herself and others as equal contributing members of society. Angela—a dual citizen of New Zealand and the United States—qualified as a lawyer in both countries and served as national president of both Little People organizations. As a professional, Angela wrote law books for lawyers and religious liberty articles for nonlawyers. Disability advocacy was her focus when employed by a Center for Independent Living and volunteering for LPA.

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P. Sell Sheet

<p>Title: <i>ALWAYS AN ADVOCATE</i></p> 	<p>Product Details:</p> <p>Genre: Nonfiction— —Biography & Autobiography / People with Disabilities —Law / Civil Rights</p> <p>Page Count: 234 Audiobook Length: 5 1/2 hours</p> <p>Formats: Audiobook Price – US\$17.46; released March 2022 E-book, ISBN 978-1-7373336-1-6 Price - US\$4.99; released October 2021 Paperback, ISBN 978-1-7373336-0-9 Price - US\$14.99; released October 2021 Retailer: Amazon, Audible, iTunes</p>
<p>Synopsis:</p> <p>Van Etten offers hope for those skeptical about changing discrimination towards people with dwarfism and other disabilities. She shows how <i>“advocacy makes change possible when people call out what is wrong, care enough to stand up for what is right, commit to the cause for as long as it takes, and have confidence in God’s power to change hearts.”</i></p> <p>People, once ignored, now independently use ATMs, gas pumps, elevator buttons, and public transportation. Crowds cheering dwarf tossing contests are silenced. Homeowners, school children, and volunteer leaders enjoy equal access and respect, and civility.</p> <p>People with disabilities are encouraged to advocate for positive change, not hold back because of the size of the task, and do what is right and just.</p> <p>Testimonials:</p> <p>Jim Kay, LPA Historian</p> <p><i>This book offers a grand tour of local, state, and federal opportunities for advocacy. The</i></p>	<p>Author and Narrator:</p>  <p>Angela Muir Van Etten</p> <p>At 40 inches tall, Angela has lived the disability experience and advocated for the civil rights of herself and others. A dual citizen of New Zealand and the United States, Angela was a lawyer in both countries and national president of both Little People organizations. Angela wrote law books for lawyers and religious liberty articles for nonlawyers. Disability advocacy was her focus when volunteering for LPA and working for a center for independent living in Florida.</p> <p>Testimonials:</p> <p>Bill Klein, Co-author of <i>Life is Short</i> and Co-Star of TLC's <i>Little Couple</i></p> <p><i>This is a terrific book. And when a righteous voice needs to be amplified, Angela rose to the challenge time and time again. Her seemingly endless supply of energy comes from her faith in God and her love of the underdog. She’s been a</i></p>

<p>only requirement is passion, dedication, a thick skin, patience, and a sense of humor.</p>	<p>fierce advocate for decades, a righteous voice. She positively impacted millions and I personally owe her a debt of gratitude.</p>
<p>Gary Arnold, LPA Past President</p> <p><i>Always an Advocate</i> is a testament to Van Etten’s dedication and commitment to service . . . to the advancement of the dwarfism community, the disability community, and the broader community.</p>	<p>Dan Kennedy, Author of <i>Little People: Learning to See the World Through My Daughter’s Eyes</i></p> <p>Learn a lot about the challenges that dwarfs face in their everyday lives — and about the life and activism of this remarkable woman.</p>
<p>Genevieve Cousminer, Esq., Former Director, Coalition for Independent Living Options</p> <p>Be inspired and encouraged by Angela's determination to take on all challenges, and eventually overcome and master them with an ample dose of faith and humor.</p>	<p>Karl Thonnes, retired corporate executive</p> <p>Van Etten successfully made a huge difference. The author obviously has a calling from God to persevere in the face of overwhelming odds and is quick to give Him the glory.</p>
<p>Ava Pennington, Author of <i>Daily Reflections on the Names of God</i></p> <p>Angela is the best kind of advocate: one who effectively combines knowledge, expertise, and empathy springing from personal experience. . . this book will encourage you to step off the sidelines to become an advocate.</p>	<p>Lee Fielder, retired pastor</p> <p>. . . achieving success in getting decisions-makers to correct problems or remove barriers is rarely easy, never automatic, and seldom a solo effort, however [Angela] shows all of us that it is doable.</p>
<p>Dianne Callender, retired church librarian</p> <p>I have used a walker for many years, and can identify with and appreciate [Angela’s] concerns for inaccessible bathrooms, public transportation, and such necessities of life as ATMs and parking spaces.</p>	<p>Stephanie Pennington, grandmother</p> <p>Angela's history as a relentless fighter for the rights of people with disabilities is a true David and Goliath story.</p>