

THE H PPENING

An Annual Easter Publication - "The Village Years"
By Todd Osterei, E.B.



Kessie-Klan family of kids;

The hardest part of my job is not placing candy baskets along my path, or getting my team to read the computer stats for how many M&M's, Reese's, or Cadbury creams we need. The hardest part is when the children leave the Village. That's why most of my letters are spent talking about what happens here, because I love my kids, and we make great memories together! I have a wonderful memory; rabbits typically do, so when I get sad I remember things such as; Amanda taking her lunch across the cafeteria to sit with Alice who was by herself. Amanda found somebody everyday that needed a friendly face. The Café' is now called, Mandy's Tray. I remember Becca stitching up Josiah's knee when he slid into home during the Village World Series (they didn't know each other, she was just the nurse assigned to the game, She kissed the stitches after she finished and Josiah looked at me and mouthed, *"I think I'm in love!"*). I remember the twins taking a bottle of magical sand from The Dream Weaver Factory and mixing it in the snow machine at the Christmas Eve party. Santa overslept and about didn't get the presents delivered. We all delivered them, as all hands were on deck, that early morning! And we can't forget Canaan who played Cinderella and lead the Easter Parade all the way from Lollipop Blvd to Lose Tooth Junction. Nobody ever twirled a baton that long before. I remember Jared when he was an elementary school crossing guard. I walked out of *Hares to You* one morning and he told me he should give a jaywalking ticket to a group of girls, but can't. I asked, "why?". His reply was *"Moriah is in the group and she's the most beautiful girl I've ever seen!"* I asked him what he was going to do about it? He said, *"I'm just a second grader and she's a senior, she will never go out with me."* Then there was the Village Tennis Open where the finals in the men's singles were being played by Keenan and Jaden Agassi. Chelsea and Hannah were in the bleachers watching, when the supports broke and the bleachers started falling. Trevor was coming through the park and kicked his skateboard up on its side as a make-shift support. Hannah was heard saying, *"My Hero!"* One last one, everyone would stand in awe as Gunner played his drum solo from Central Park Pavilion, every year for 10 years, during the Fall Festival of Lights. His sticks are shadowboxed and on display at City Hall. I feel everyone here has done their part to train them to become what God has planned for them, it's just that I miss them, and I can't see them for 9 months after they leave. We just had a precious one leave,

and with all the others I can come look through their windows at night or if they are playing in the yard I can hop up to the tree line and watch them play. I can't do that when they are in the womb, but I can monitor their heartbeat and it's a strong one. This little one made the marshmallow cream that goes inside all the bunnies we pass out. Probably had a little too much over the years, so the first month or so will be a little rough on her mommy, 'cause all that sugary stuff needs to get out of their system. I spend a lot of time up here in the fall watching the leaves change, so I look forward to coming back to visit **Monica**. (*Horatio installed software to block the real name -Ugh!*) **Joey** learned several languages such as; English, Java Script, Python and one they don't even know on Earth yet called Pterodactyl esoteric F+ code. Pretty complicated but **Rachel** can speak it fluently.

There are a few little ones here preparing to leave the nursery for your homes. When they get this small, Drake places a wristband on them, so they don't get mixed up. So many volunteers in here holding them and caring for them, that mistakes could happen. It only happened once with the Blackburn/Clarkson baby, but never again. We don't just come in one morning and they are gone, we know when it's time, and we hold them until they close their eyes and we watch for a big smile to come on their face (*that's when they hear their Daddy's voice and feel their mommy's heart beating*), well, that's when we let them go. Chelsea & Keenan's grand-daughter is chief of staff in the nursery and she looks just like Chelsea. (*I'm not supposed to know that far in advance where they go after they leave here, but **Chandler** hacked the system while here and told me who she is. He was pretty stoked to find out she was his 1st cousin once removed. Pretend you never heard that, not from me anyway!*)

I want to share a story I've wanted to share for years now. This may shed some light on how decisions are made concerning where children are placed, but again we don't personally make those choices, somebody much higher does. In January I was walking through the Village and stepped inside City Hall to re-read the plaque that Titus and Liam got when they saved the children from the chocolate vat accident. You all remember the story I am sure, but to recap, a small girl was putting our secret recipe into the chocolate during the final mixing process and slipped off the catwalk and fell into the large 10,000-gallon drum. Liam was leading a tour of new recruits through the factory at the time and quickly climbed the steps to the catwalk and did an Olympic dive straight towards the little girl and brought her to the surface. He treaded "chocolate" while another little boy got lowered to help pull them out. Yada, yada, yada, Titus came along with his muscles and pulled all three to safety. Liam got a chocolate addiction, Canaan got her prayers answered and Titus discovered his strengths! This is why over the years I keep telling this story, because you'll be interested in knowing the names of the other two children. Recently, when I was at Moriah's wedding (*I was hiding in the trees and saw everything*) I smiled as I looked at Jared's children – they are about the same age as they were when this story took place. As I stood there looking at the picture and reading the plaque, which I have read to my senior students during orientation each year for over 20 years now, I began to weep at the mighty hand of God and how He weaves even the smallest details together. The little girl that worked the catwalks that afternoon was 10-year old Ava and the boy that bravely had himself lowered to rescue the two was 11-year old Elijah. They were sent to the same family to become brother and sister after they left the Village. As we know, all involved in that

miraculous event are now family on Earth. As Paul Harvey would say, *“Now you know the rest of the story, -good day!”*

Love you all and remember that this weekend we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. He loves you more than I do, and that’s very hard for me to understand, but He does.



Todd

Sadly ***Phoebe***’s best friend will be growing up near Denver, CO. The son of a Pastor, he lead crusades from Candy Hollow to Sleepy Valley and as far north as Tinsel Island. There was a petition to relocate the Johnson boy, but Dallas was as far East as we could do, so the Board changed his destination back to Denver.

The Villages