

# THE H PPENING



An Annual Easter Publication - "The Village Years"

By Todd Osterei, E.B.



Dear Kessie's,

Earlier tonight I did my Cookeville run and watched Liam sleeping. I was running a little ahead of schedule, so I sat in his room and tried to remember the first time we met. Of all the Easter Bunnies, I believe he liked me best; at least I like to think so. Part of our job is to go to the factory and box up all the candy on our list. We put in our orders and begin to collect it just after the New Year. Well, my storage room is right beside Liam's dept. and he would stop by at the end of his day and ask me if I had extras, that might be damaged? He would wink when he said that, so I would know that it was his sweet tooth talking. In the beginning I would say, "not today" and his reply was always kind, and he would hold the door open for me. Each day I saw how he treated other children, always making time for the weaker ones, and of course the girls thought he was the golden egg around there! After that, we became close friends and I would pass along M&M's regularly to him. I was lost in thought when I heard him roll over and pull himself up to the bars on his crib. He looked me square in the rabbit ears and signed "more" with his hands. I said, "Next year buddy" and hopped out of his room. Gosh, I miss him, but the rest of his sisters, brothers and cousins hold a special place in all our hearts as well! They (Liam's family) ruled the halls. They were hard workers and were awarded a great deal of respect from management. You rarely saw any of them without seeing them all. Their height gave them away from a distance. Those long legs are still their trademarks back home.

I'll share one story, that I could be reprimanded for, but you should know it. It was June 28, 1998 when a little girl fell into the chocolate vat. Liam was 14 then, and didn't hesitate for a moment jumping in to save her. Trek was nearby and lowered himself from a pulley and pulled them both to safety. Once Liam discovered Trek was his cousin, they became inseparable from then on. Trek was given his first medal, Liam got a chocolate addiction and both saved a life that day. Trek wore his medal all the time, until Drake found it in Liam's bed the day he was sent to earth. About a week later I heard a voice ask me if I had any extras that might be damaged, I tossed Trek a bag of Reese's, as he held my door open for me.

So I hear that Hannah is moving out soon. I remember her when she was 4 years old and just moved to TN. That year Lassie chased me all around the farm and I spilled most of my eggs just

trying to stay alive. That was my first year solo and thankful I had a rabbit's foot for luck that night. Well I hope you all keep in touch as you go your separate ways. Be sure and keep in touch with me and let me know your addresses. Now that I have a Facebook page we can share pics! I haven't changed my hare-style in years, but I am thinking about it, so maybe Hannah can do mine at a discount?

I hope you enjoy the candy we made. Love you all!  
Todd