

Doug and Nancy  
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Dear Family,

It's about time!

Thanks for everyone's concern about little D.J.'s surgery! He did fine...but I was "Nervous-Rex". The surgery took 1 hr. 45 min. They did a Tympanostomies (tubes in the ears) because he had alot of gluey fluid behind his eardrum, reducing his hearing 30%. That only took 15 min. then they made an incision in his left eyelid, to make the opening large enough to fit a larger conformer. While they were in there, they found an eye-ball about the size of a pea. That was good news to us all because he is now diagnosed "microphthalmic" instead of "Anophthalmic" (meaning NO eye, and usually always associated with partially formed brain or learning disabilities, or mental retardation.) With Microphthalmia (small-eye) the brain is almost always completely normal. The doctors also dialated his right eye and took a good look. They did find an optic nerve and stump which were badly scarred, but which may still get enough message to the brain so that he can differentiate between light and dark. That was a real ray of hope for us, since previous doctors couldn't even see an optic nerve for sure, and couldn't offer us any hope for him. Earlier that week, Marsha, The teacher from the Utah school for the deaf and blind, who comes to our home once a week with the "Parent-infant" program, and I, went to Salt lake to see a physical therapist who would determine whether or not D.J. needs help in that field. She said in some areas such as grasping, he's right on par, but in most areas, his motor skills are way behind. He's functioning at a 3-4 month old level, and he's 8 months old. She suggested that we get him going with a regular therapist soon. It's really alot of work, time, and money to care for a special-needs child... but he's really worth it. I get a kick out of the comments that children make when they first see D.J. Some of them ask how he got a "broken eye", or a "red eye". One little girl tried to assure her mother that it wasn't her fault that he is that way. One day this little boy came to the door. I had never seen him before in the neighborhood, so he must have walked blocks. He boldly asked me; "I heard that you had a baby with no eye, is that true?" I laughed to myself... wouldn't his mother just die if she knew what he was doing at my door? When I answered him, yes, he said; "can I see?" So I led him down the hall to the baby's crib where he gazed upon him with curiosity. Then he looked at me with a look of confidence and exclaimed; "He's still pretty cute...he'll be okay, huh!" ...and I said "yah!" He is pretty neat, I guess we'll keep him.

Doug went snowmobiling yesterday, (april 27th) ON SUNDAY! shame-shame. whats even worse, he was chasing pot-guts (ground squirrels) and shooting at them. He really had a blast I guess, but the girls and I wressed him to the ground and beat him up for hurting those little fluffy things.

Doug does do alot of usefull things though! He built the kids the cutest little playhouse you've ever dreamed of. It's on stilts (railroad ties cemented into the ground.) It's all enclosed, sheet-rocked, wired with electricity, painted, wallpapered, carpeted, and has these cute little (3 of them) 2'x2½' pained windows with country style shutters (painted blue) and the roof has shakes, and there's a little porch to sit on. The girls think their in heaven. Doug even planted a couple of Aspen trees by it that Mom Hall dug up for us.

I am really glad I chose him, he's a good dad, (and husband.)

Well, I'd better sign off. Hope everybody is doing fine!

love D.& N. Mecham