



Jeff

A daddy's journal





The birth from heaven

The day you were born was just a plain piece of cake. Like your sister, you arrived early. In fact, your mother didn't even know you were on your way until she went for a routine doctor's appointment. It was there and then that mom was pronounced "in labor." So your journey had begun. It was in the early part of the day, so everyone had a good night's rest. We were living for a short time, between houses, at your nana and poppy's. Poppy drove mom to the hospital and actually got tears in his eyes from the assignment. I met your mother at St. Agnes, the same hospital where I was born 38 years before that. Although your mom was having contractions, she was never in much pain. So little pain, in fact, that when the point of no return came for the Epidural (something your mom needed desperately with Bailey), she had some indecision. 'Course that didn't last long once the doc said your mom *would* be hurting. So they administered the drug and that was that. A popular TV show "Mad About You" came on the room's TV at 8:30 p.m., right about when your mom started to push. You were delivered before the first commercial. Unlike Bailey, who had some complications and hence some post delivery precautionary procedures, you were handed right up to your mom who held you right away.

The umbilical cord

Oh, I'm getting ahead of myself. Like your sister, I was given the privilege of cutting your umbilical cord. This time, I knew a little more what to expect, so I took the job with enthusiasm and applied a little more force to the first snip. What a surreal experience!



Ground ball instructions

We declined to find out whether you were a boy or a girl until birth, and how exciting that was. Your head was already out and I still wasn't sure—although your face sure looked like a boy. The doctor said “it's the little boy-kind.” After your mom held you, the nurse took you over to a big french fry lamp and cleaned you up and put some stuff in your eyes. You were crying like a baby (oddly enough), and I was trying to calm you with some initial instructions on how to field a ground ball. Seemed like the thing to do with my little red head.

The nose, the hair

OK, now let's talk about features. This was definitely not a little boy who looked like her sister. He was of fair complexion with hair that seemed auburn, almost red! And although I was fully prepared to see giant satellite dish ears, it was really your nose that “stuck out” the most. At least that's what I thought. I'm sure others were thinking the same thing. Still, you were a gorgeous little kid and the funniest thing happened over the next year. Your head seemed to grow around your nose so that a year later, it was a nice little round shape. The hair did turn out to be a reddish color which a constant source of conversation. I didn't think it was going to last—I even bet your mother and your Aunt Libby that it would change. I'm writing this when you're 2½ and it's still red. (‘Course your mother gave me until age 10, but I kind of like it the way it is!)



The announcement

Bailey's birth announcement was very literary and I was proud of it, but it didn't include a picture as part of it. When Jeff was born, a colleague of mine at work was also having a son. We got together and asked a starving photographer to do a little photo shoot for announcements. I came up with a He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother concept which, while not overly creative, turned out better than I ever hoped. The picture of Bailey and you was just incredible, so much that we framed the original for our living room.

What do you live on, Jeff?

I've never seen anyone who ate so little and pooped so much. Your sister ate very well, but had a tough time going to the bathroom. You, you lived on air but had poop in your diaper every time we checked. We couldn't figure out where it was coming from! It got to the point that we thought you might be malnourished. After all, you were just a little guy. You could tear through the sugar, though. And you'd eat ice cream until you got sick.

Early riser

Your mother and I expected you to be up at night for the first few nights. Not the first few years. But you kept up your night vigils. Even after your second birthday, you would wake up regularly around five o'clock in the morning! Now mind you that's not too bad in the summer when it gets light out at 5:30, but in the winter when it's still dark at 7, it was excruciating. Because your crying is what woke us up every morning and let me tell you little Jeffrey, you had one abrasive little screech. Now, well into your third year, you've stretched that out to a six o'clock "sleep in" but you demand your milk and it's quite the little routine you've got going. Cry. Get taken downstairs for milk. Drink milk resting on top of me. Turn over and go back to sleep. The good life.



Seizure one

No parent should ever go through this. It made Bailey's little burn incident small by comparison. You were sick, not extremely sick, but with a fever and congestion. It was on a Sunday morning. Your mother had just given you some Motrin and we were trying to fight the fever. You seemed especially lethargic, so your mom was rocking you in your room in the rocking chair. Mom called me in to show me that you had started some sort of involuntary shaking. I knew immediately something was very wrong. Your eyes widened then rested in a rhythmic fashion and then you went into a full seizure of shaking and eyes rolling back in your head. We called the doctor's emergency line where a nurse told us to wrap him in a blanket and take him to the hospital. We did so, and the seizure held up momentarily, but on the way to the hospital, you started losing it again in your car seat. Your mother had me going through red lights as you seemed to be totally out of touch with the world. Finally, within a mile from the hospital, mom took you out of your car seat and held your very limp little body. You were starting to turn blue, and we knew it was trouble. I dropped mom and you at the front of the ER, then quickly parked the car. Upon my return, you had already been hooked up to oxygen and four different ER personnel were working furiously to stop your seizure. To see your tiny little body hooked up to IV, oxygen and the center of attention for all this ER activity was just terrible. We didn't know what to think. But the worse was yet to come, because over the course of the next 24 hours, you would be subjected to every test you could think of, including CT scan, chest X-ray, electrodes, even a spinal tap for things like meningitis and leukemia. It was the longest day I've ever spent, and all your mother and I could do is sit in a chair by your bedside and wait as one by one the doctors would come in and pronounce each test to be negative. They admitted you that night because some of the tests weren't complete or needed to be re-done, and that was probably the longest *night* I've ever spent. You didn't know what an IV was, or that you were supposed to keep your arm still. Some neighbors came by for support, which was very thoughtful, and we were on the phone with both sets of your grandparents frequently. After the day from hell, the outcome was at least as positive as we could have hoped. Febrile seizures, as it turns out, are surprisingly common—happening to 3-4 % of kids. They couldn't get any more specific with a diagnosis. We hoped it would never happen again.



Seizure two

But it did. And just maybe a month later. You were sick. We were doing our little milk routine downstairs when your eyes suddenly rolled up in your head, you gasped, and began jerking uncontrollably. I called for mom who knew immediately what was wrong. Having been through it before made it a little less scary, but not much. This time, by instructions, we called the paramedics. By the time they arrived, you were in a sound sleep. As a precautionary measure, we took you to the hospital anyway and had you looked over. It was far shorter this time, and ended the way most of these seizures are supposed to—by a deep sleep. You scared us to death again, Jeffrey Hayek, and we were preparing for frequent episodes.

The Barney love affair

What can I say about this stupid dinosaur. You loved him maybe even more than Bailey did, which meant another Barney film festival to look forward to every time the TV went on. But, as with your sister, it kept you very quiet, which is something we really needed from time to time. So even your mother and I came to appreciate the power of the gentle T-Rex.

First steps

They say boys aren't quite as quick to these milestones as boys are. And while Bailey was walking and talking before her first birthday, you were right there, taking your first steps just a few days before you turned one. The steps were small but sure, and you were quite happy with yourself. We were pretty proud as well.



How things work

Of course already having a frame of reference for when things happen in an developing toddler's life, we were of course speculating on your development vs. your sister's. Bailey walked and talked faster, but although she was quicker in these kinds of things, your motor skills seemed to be as advanced or more advanced than Bailey's. Y'know like turning things on or putting a giant bolt on a giant screw. It was interesting to watch your adeptness in this area. Hopefully, you'll be a little handier than your father.

The beach

Like your sister, you loved every aspect of the beach. We fixed up a little baby pool for you under our beach umbrella and filled it with several buckets of ocean water. You splashed and splashed and splashed. You also liked the beach for naps, too.

Winnie at Disney

I knew Winnie was a hero of yours, but you had been afraid of Santa Claus just a few months before, and it was a long line to get Winnie's autograph. I really thought it would be wasted time for you, although your sister was excited about it. Imagine my surprise then, when we got to the front of the line and you welcomed the pooh bear with open arms—even went to give him a hug and then hung around him like you were school buddies! Shortly after your second birthday, and you had graduated to Disney character appreciation instead of horror.



Dinosaurs

You loved dinosaurs beginning at age 2. Which is cool because I loved dinosaurs too. Even before you could really talk that well, you could recognize and say T-Rex, Stegosaurus, Triceratops, and Brontosaurus (although you said “Bromposaurus”). So we had fun with some dinosaur figures mom brought home as a gift—you know fights with growling and nasty neck attacks. Good, clean violence.

“No bugs”

You woke up at the crack of dawn, you probably didn’t even need naps except that mom needed some peace and quiet. Then came bedtime, and you still weren’t ready to retire. Oh, we’d put you in there, and you really weren’t a climber like your sister. So instead, you’d torment us from *inside* the crib. You’d repeat simple questions five, ten, fifty times until we’d answer you. You’d request books, lights turned on and off, drinks, you name it. One particularly trying exercise was the “no bugs” call. You were deathly afraid of even the tiniest creature at this age, so you’d call out for reassurance that there were “no bugs” in your room. And you just kept repeating it, even when *we* did answer you. You really had us going with that one.

The dance

This is just a little notation about this little dance you would do when you were happy about something (good treat, trip to the pool, impending bath, etc). You would march along holding your arms out with elbows bent and move your body back and forth in a little “happy dance,” sometimes singing what you were about to do. It was too cute.



Slugger

Is it just boys that hit. Once you knew how to use your fists, you couldn't stop hitting people, especially your family members. Mom had bruises constantly, your sister was very understanding when she could have clubbed you pretty good. And I couldn't believe your little assaults on my thigh. Is it a phase? Are we raising a bully? Right now, at age 2 ½, you're a pretty small bully! Only time will tell, I suppose.

Fourth Halloween

The first three years you were just being pulled along for the ride, but on the Halloween of 1999, you really got into it. You were the tin man to go with your sister's Dorothy. . .costumes lovingly custom made by your Grammie, and man, you couldn't get to the next house quick enough. Armed with the flashlight your nana and poppy gave you for your birthday, you really liked the idea of candy give-aways, and it was so much fun to see you get so much enjoyment out of the holiday for the first time.

The millennium

It's not something that you will remember, but your mother and I at least wanted to give you a shot at staying up until midnight. We were over your grandparents in Sykesville. Bear in mind that you were a very scheduled sleeper and that you were usually ready for bed by 8:30 without much provocation. YOU ALMOST MADE IT! We kept going in the TV and checking to see if you were awake, and you always were! In fact, you stayed awake until 11:45 and then we just couldn't wake you. Still it was a special night that I wanted to tell you about.



Ditching the diapers

Parents stress about potty training, but I don't know why. You knew how to use the toilet a year ago, but you decided it was just more convenient to go in your pants until you were 3½. Oh, sure we tried to bribe you with big boy beds and big boy pants, and threaten you with the fact that you couldn't go to school unless you were using the potty, but all that doesn't matter really, until you're ready. And for you, it was the March before you turned 4. And except for a messy habit of hopping right up and running around after a poop, you really just picked the whole thing very quickly. We still put pull-ups on at night, but it was really a cold-turkey type thing. 'Course you learned quickly you could use it against us as a bedtime stalling tactic, but we were willing to deal with that.

Call me up and thank me right now

I only wish you could see what your sister used to dress you up in from her "dress up" hamper. I might also add you were damn proud to wear it, too. One of your favorite numbers was a seafoam tutu, high-heeled Snow White Shoes and straw garden hat. You looked marvelous. I could have filmed all this, but you wouldn't have appreciated it. So call me right now and say, "Thanks, Dad!"

Bunk beds

Admittedly, we were a bit late in getting you the big boy bed you deserved. Funds were a little tight, my boy, but in the summer before you turned four, the bunk beds arrived and your baby room transformed immediately into a kids room. We had just spent a week on the Outer Banks with your extended family and you all slept in a room with two bunks, so you had some experience. Unfortunately, the bed arrived with some apparent imperfections, so we gave you the option of sleeping in your sister's room. Then you and your sister were carrying on, so we put you (kicking and screaming) into your new bunk beds with their new sheets—and you threw up. Oh well.



Election Day, 2000

And what an election it was, because it was a virtually a tie. They were still hand-counting votes a week later and parties were suing one another to further their own causes. It was ugly. But you, my man, were part of an election yourself the day before, in preschool. I was lucky enough to be picking you up that day because your mother was in Ohio on Longaberger business. So I stood outside the door of your preschool, and you came running out with this huge smile on your face and you shouted “I voted for McDonald’s, and McDonald’s won!!!!” Good thing Burger King didn’t want a recount.

Bumping into Chicago

On a return trip from your grandparents in California after a Thanksgiving visit, 2000, your mother and I were trying desperately to volunteer to be “bumped” from a crowded flight, gather the vouchers, and use it for future airfare. Although the flight from Orange County wasn’t full, we were able to get bumped from our flight from Chicago to Baltimore. Overhearing all this commotion, you became quite bothered by all the talk, and expressed your concern about “bumping into Chicago.”

Organized ball

Four year-old T-ball is quite an experience. In the spring of 2001, you were on your first team, the Yellow Team (catchy name, huh). The goals of each coach were to keep you out in the field long enough for the other team to bat, and to retrieve the balls when they did. You guys were usually more interested in building dirt piles, killing ants, and pulling the hats of your teammates over their eyes. Anyway, it was a joy to see you pick up your little left leg and hit the ball off the tee and you were rewarded with a trophy at the end of the season, which you promptly packed in your bag for the trip to your grandparents in California.



Swimming

I don't know what it is about swimming, but neither you nor your sister would have anything to do with it...and then all of a sudden you became totally immersed (literally!). In your case, Mr. Jeff, you wouldn't even put your lips near the water much less put your head under. Then one day...it was a Sunday just before your swimming lessons were to start the following Monday...we went up to the pool for an hour—just an hour. In that hour, you made up your mind to try and that was all you needed. By the end of the hour, you had put your head all the way in, and in less than a week you were swimming around the shallow end like you owned the place.

Monsters everywhere I guess

You went through a phase in your 6th year when you were afraid of everything. You would not go upstairs alone. You would not go downstairs alone. You would barely leave our sides.



Our first Raven game

Although you hadn't expressed a lot of interest in professional football, we took the occasion of the 2004 Ravens preseason to give you a taste of NFL football. The plan was to take each of you and Bailey to one of the two preseason games. If you didn't like it, or wanted to come home, it wouldn't be a big deal. When I took you on August 12, 2004, the odds were not stacked against a long stadium stay. It was *pouring*, and the forecast didn't call for much improvement. We ate subs in the car and parked a little bit late. Surprisingly, you kept a great pace (in your effort to not be late...you hated being late for things!) all the way across Camden Yards to Ravens stadium. Although you were a quiet guy, you were pretty wide-eyed about the enormity of it all, especially when you got inside. Again you surprised me by hoofing it up the stairs to the upper deck without so much as a whimper. But the BIG surprise came when you actually requested to stay and see the whole game. Lord knows I gave you chances by asking every 10 minutes if you wanted to leave. It was a good trip because, with the field—and the game—laid out in front of us I could teach you the game much better than on the TV. It also didn't hurt that the Ravens won 24-0. It rained hard in the third quarter, but you weren't phased. We moved under the upper deck for the fourth quarter and you fell asleep on the ride home. The ironic thing was that even I, the non-leaver of games, would have left that game a little early since it was only scrubs playing and the game was in hand. It was you, who I thought would have us home by halftime, who was the reason we stayed for the whole game!

The fairly odd parents

I'm sure you're no different than I was at your age. I remember sitting and watching Looney Tunes, and the Flintstones, and Scooby Doo until my eyes bled. Still, it pained me to no end to see you laying in front of the television watching shows like Rocket Power, Spongebob Squarepants, Jimmy Neutron, RugRats, and my "favorite," The Fairly Odd Parents about this kid who has little fish godparents who grant his every wish and it usually gets him in trouble. I gotta tell you, it was like fingernails on a chalkboard watching you be totally entranced with that stuff. Now, if Looney Tunes were on—that's a whole different story. Those were *quality* cartoons.



Pinewood Derby, parts one and two

When you were seven, we made our first Pinewood Derby car together for the Cub Scouts. Of course this is something my dad did with my brothers, and what millions of dads do with their kids as a rite of passage. The only thing is, seven year olds can't do a lot of what is required to make those cars as sleek and as fast as they are. For many dads, it becomes a little ego builder of their own as they race against other dads. I was determined not to get caught up in that so I made sure you were at least involved in everything. We went out to a friend's wood shop to get your car cut. I had you sand the car. And I also let you paint your own car—which pretty much guaranteed you wouldn't win any presentation awards—but I thought it was more important to have a car you helped to make yourself. Our first year, we finished middle of the road, and we learned some things about graphite and weight placement. Still, I felt like I let you down a little when the car didn't win.

The following year, we kept the car simple, but we did the things I believed made a difference. Specifically, where the weight is placed in the car (near the back) and how the axles were aligned (PERFECTLY), and how they were graphited (endlessly!). We made a Ray Lewis Ravens car, which was a simple purple wedge with some neat stickers and a lot of shine. It won race after race, and came in second in the whole pack. You were very excited and I was more excited for you. We were eligible for the super derby at the local mall a month later. The super derby was the meeting of all the winners in the region. The Ray Lewis mobile did well, but finished somewhere in the middle of the pack, but it was still a great showing.

Disney, 2004

When we surprised you and your brother and sister with a trip to Disneyworld in October of 2004, you were the one who bounced off the walls the most. Not normally the one who is most animated, you kept saying “really dad? Really? Really? And your grin went from one ear to the other. That was pretty neat.



First Oriole game...April 4, 2005

Opening Day, 2005, you and I went to see the Orioles at Camden Yards. You had taken much more interest in baseball since you played fall ball 2004 and were signed up again for spring ball 2005. We were playing catch much more and you were beginning to understand the concept of moving the glove toward the ball! You also had good eye for hitting as you hit the ball almost every time. Although we had been to the Keys games several times, the major leagues is of course a different story (in price as well!). We sat with Robin's friend Karen and some other folks she knew. Karen, who is your godmother, bought you a Sammy Sosa jersey and a plastic bat that you could terrorize your brother with.

We had a great day. You paid attention for the most part, although you were quite intent on finishing your entire bag of peanuts. The Orioles beat Oakland in their first game with a big home run from Luis Matos. The weather was perfect. It was a neat father-son day, and I'm sure not your first baseball game. But I thought you might like to know when it was...

Marissa Ryder: The future Mrs. Hayek

So you would have us believe. You made that announcement unexpectedly one afternoon in April, 2005 after an outing with the young Ms. Ryder. I don't know. In second grade I saw girls as an unnecessary evil that I had to deal with. Hats off to you for get along with them so well at such a young age!



Baseball, Spring 2005

Having endured four years of “organized” baseball and not seeing much interest or skills from you or anyone on your team or in any of your leagues, spring of 2005 was, to me, a turning point. As a member of the rookie league pirates, you took a real interest in baseball. You improved tremendously in catching. You *never* struck out the entire season. And you developed into one of the better kids on the team. It was really neat to see you emerge from the pack. ‘Course we have a long way to go before you’re starting double plays, but we’ll work on it, right!

Public bathrooms

I distinctly remember being deathly afraid of having to poop in public bathrooms. I was very modest and I just didn’t enjoy the foreign, public surroundings of restaurant and grocery store bathrooms. You, my friend didn’t inherit the bathroom-phobe gene. You don’t miss one. Whether we’re at Costco, Weis, Movies, Macaroni Grill, McDonald’s—it doesn’t matter, I’m in there making sure you’re laying paper down. Some of them are less than desirable, too. I don’t get it, but your brother Evan seems to have the same affinity for public bathroom pooping.

The snuggler

Even at 9 years old, you liked to lodge yourself up against one of your parents as you’re about to fall asleep on the sofa. But even that’s not enough. It is your custom to physically take one of our arms hostage by pulling it in to your body and holding onto it.



Sleep climbing

On a related topic, let me recall another “custom” around our house in the years 2005-2006. Since you were still not comfortable with being upstairs by yourself, you often fell asleep on the sofas downstairs until it was time for your mother and I to go to sleep. Then we’d take you upstairs when we went. Keep in mind, however, that you had been sleeping for a couple hours by the time we went up, so we had to bring you back into some state of consciousness because at 82 pounds the carrying days were over. So we’d say “Jeff, Jeff, time to go upstairs” and we’d have to physically grab you under the armpits to a standing position and then guide you in a Frankenstein-esque type walk up the stairs. That was usually do-able under any conditions, but if you were *really* asleep, the next steps were the toughest. You slept on the top bunk of the bunkbeds while your brother slept below. You needed to climb that bunkbed ladder and sometimes you just wouldn’t do it. You’d stand at the bottom in a funk for sometimes minutes before I could physically put your arms on the ladder and get you to climb.

Back of the head washing

The complexities of taking a shower were challenging to teach. I don’t think you especially liked having water pouring directly on your head, so you would thoroughly wash the back of your head, then tell me you were done. I’d come in to check on you and you’d be standing there with the front half of your head not only unwashed, but not even *wet!* “I’m done Dad,” you’d say. “You really washed your hair well?” I’d ask, and you’d say “Yep.” That’s when I usually did it for you and you protested the whole time.



Braces

Fortunately, orthodontics have come a long way from the time I had them to the time you had them. I didn't tell you, but my memories of braces were almost all bad. They hurt going on, they hurt when they tightened them, things got stuck in them, and I didn't even like the way they looked much. But you seemed excited about them, so who was I to rain on your parade. Your excitement waned as the brace day approached and by the time it was time, you were in a full fledged fear mode. You just had top braces and you complained a little but nowhere near as much as I did. The wax helped to.

Real baseball

After spending five years of "everybody wins" baseball, I can honestly say I was happy to see you begin this year's little league. Finally, you have three balls and two strikes. Finally kids pitch to kids. Finally, one team wins and one team loses. You earned a fairly regular spot at first base, which was cool because that's where you wanted to play. You would later be moved to second on a more regular basis, but I think that was because you were a pretty good grounder scooper and they needed good fielders out there. Anyway, you had a pretty good year, especially in the field. At bat, you needed some time to acclimate to kid pitch baseball. You didn't seem scared, but you didn't want to swing the bat either. It seemed like you were looking for walks, and believe me there were plenty of walks to be had in that league. It didn't seem like you took the bat off the shoulder for 3 games. Near the end of the year, you started swinging, and you started hitting. I was especially *psyched* about a base clearing double you had in a fairly close game. Then, at the end of the season, they tried you at pitching. I would have been a nervous wreck, but you strode right in there and pitched a very good inning—so good that the coaches said they might try you there the next season. That is cool. Anyway, it was a good year. Oh, and one funny thing. The first game of the season, after all the seasons of "everybody wins," you played to a tie—called because of darkness. How ironic is that?



A trip to the Maryland Science Center

I took a long lunch hour at work and met your class at the Maryland Science Center for a field trip. I was surprised that they just let you loose, so I focused my attention on you and two other kids. It was kinda crazy, but the 3-D bug movie was pretty cool.

Crazy nights

In the latter half of your ninth year, your irrational fears of being upstairs alone pretty much drove your family crazy. Here's the way the daily routine went. You and Evan would both climb into your bunkbeds where Evan would promptly fall asleep in about 10 minutes. You *wouldn't* fall asleep because you were afraid Evan would fall asleep first (which became a self-fulfilling prophecy). Then, you would freak out because you were in the room alone. We tried to figure out why you were afraid when there was nothing to be afraid of, but all you could tell us about were noises—normal house noises. As time went on, you even regressed to a point where your mother or I had to sit outside your room until you fell asleep or you would go into a frenzied, fear-based panic attack and wake up the rest of the house. It was clear you were legitimately scared, but it literally robbed your mother and I of any “down” time in the evenings.

Coming of age

In the 2006 season (you were 9, turned 10 in October), you really became a Ravens fan. This year, you watched all the games with me, begged to go to as many games as you could, and wore your Ravens apparel everywhere. It didn't hurt that the Ravens won their first four games. I'll never forget that when the Ravens finally lost to the Broncos, you actually seemed to have a tear in your eye and you really took it hard.



Aunt Libby

You were 10 when your Aunt Libby passed away. If you remember, we were still out in California for our Christmas holiday with grammy and papa. You, Evan, and I were about to start 18 holes of Mini-Golf at Boomers (papa was sitting it out) when I got a phone call on my cell from Nana in Maryland. You couldn't hear Nana's side of the conversation, but you were old enough to know something was very wrong.

As the day wore on, Aunt Libby's condition worsened in Maryland and we learned early that evening that she had passed away at age 46. We told Bailey. Then we told you out in grammy's living room. I'll never forget it because I don't know whether *you* knew how to react. I think because your mom and I were so visibly upset—that more than anything upset you and you too began to cry.

Aunt Libby died of a ruptured brain aneurysm. Because she was so young and left Uncle Brad and the three boys at the peak of their family life together, your mom and I wanted to make sure you knew we were there for you and that events like this are not likely to happen. We weren't really sure what you were thinking about death, but we wanted you to know that Aunt Libby went to heaven.

I'm not sure how much you'll remember about Aunt Libby, but she was a really great person who loved Uncle Brad and her three boys. No one should lose their mom at such a young age, but your cousins and their dad had such a great family life that their memories of their mom and the strength of their dad will help pull them through. Hopefully, we'll also be able to help a lot as they go through high school and after.



Pitching

Although he never really let you pitch the whole summer and fall of 06, Coach Pinteris did put you in for a little pitching at the end of the year. You weren't half bad, so when you started the spring baseball season of 07, Uncle Brad took a look at you as a pitcher, and you became one of the three or four reliable starters we had on the team. You pitched from the stretch, but threw a very accurate baseball. And the speed wasn't bad either. It was neat to see you improve. Your Tigers team finished a modest 8-11 that year, but you played a lot of bully teams from other parts of the state. It was a good season, and I think you could continue to pursue pitching. It's the hitting we need to work on!!!

