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**Easter is Coming 3-11-05**  
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Okay, this is not what I was planning to write about for this email.

I was originally going to write about my trip to New York City last month for the International Toy Fair. I was going to tell you about seeing 1500 different toy makers in the space of three days and how our team of buyers collected over 60 pounds of catalogs of great new toys. I was going to tell you about how the Toy House still offers more toys than any other store in the country and more than three times as many toys as any other store in Jackson County.

I even had a “killer email” from a customer who drove over an hour just to come to our store because of how fantastic they think we are that I was going to reprint for you.

That was my original plan, but...

As I sit here watching the snow fall and reading the forecasts for continued cold and snow, I figured I better say something else. Here’s what I have to say:

**EASTER IS ONLY TWO WEEKS AWAY!!!**

Yes, the Easter Bunny is coloring eggs as we speak.

I mentioned this to my staff earlier in the week and they were in such disbelief that we had to go to the big calendar in the office and count the days (only 16 if you are reading this email on the day I sent it).

Yet, somehow it just doesn’t feel like “Easter Season”. No one is getting excited about spring.

Sure, many of us are lamenting the long, cold winter. But with the official first day of spring only 10 days away and Easter less than a week later, many of us are also stuck in a rut and figuratively spinning our wheels on the ice. We’re not very excited or enthused about the upcoming Spring, the flowers blooming, the trees budding (the allergy season starting).

Earlier today I received an email newsletter (I subscribe to a number of them to try to stay current in the business world) that talked about how forecasters were predicting far less than normal retail sales this Easter. The story mentioned that just as many people were planning to celebrate Easter as did last year, but that they would be spending less money, mainly because of how early the holiday would fall on the calendar. The writer cited a lack of enthusiasm for Spring Spending when Spring hasn’t really sprung.

Now, I could react to that in two different ways.

The first, as a retailer, would be to worry and fret about our potential business (or lack thereof), and try to figure out ways to entice you to spend more.

The second reaction would be, as a Christian, to praise people for putting more focus back into the true meaning Easter, and less on the commercialism of the holiday.

But, as most people who know me would attest, if there is a third, less obvious option, I’m going to take it!

It seems to me, from the articles I'm reading, the reaction of people to current weather, and the "doom and gloom" of the retail forecasters, that the real issue is our inability to keep the weather and the calendar from controlling our moods.

It's time to break out of the doldrums, folks! We've got to change our ways of thinking! We can't just sit here and wish things were better, wish Spring was here, wish that we had more time to plan for Easter. We can't just wait it out. We need to be more proactive.

Let's do something about!

I have some suggestions for how to get enthusiastic about the upcoming Spring. But first, let's start with some basic assumptions...

1. The snow will eventually melt and the weather will turn warmer.
2. Without the contrast of winter, the spring would not be as truly glorious as it is.
3. There are still plenty of things to do right here, right now.

So here, in no particular order, are some ways to live in the moment while getting excited about Spring.

- Take your golf clubs out to the Golf Dome and shake the rust off your swing.
- Get a membership to the YMCA or buy some new exercise equipment from Pedal & Tour and start getting into shape before the "outdoor" season begins.
- Get a flower book and start planning your summer garden.
- Take the kids to the library and pick out some "summer reading" for spring break
- Go online to [www.littletikes.com](http://www.littletikes.com) and [www.step2.com](http://www.step2.com) and get your kids to help you plan out your backyard play areas
- Draw, paint, paste, create pictures of flowers and sunshine with your kids
- Make plans to attend the free kids movies at Jackson 10 (starts March 19)
- Bring the kids to the Toy House for free Friday at Four Club entertainment
- Visit the Learning Center at [www.telescope.com](http://www.telescope.com) to find out how telescopes work (and then come to our Star Gaze on Friday, March 18 at dusk.)
- Start a family conversation that begins with the phrase, "This spring I plan to..."

Pretty soon, we'll all be thinking spring, and before you can blink an eye, it will be here in all of its shining glory.

Hey, with all of the new products that have been rolling in, especially some great new outdoor toys, we're already thinking spring here at the Toy House. Our "re-birth" happens with the arrival of every great new product. And believe me, they are rolling in fast.

Happy Shopping *and* Happy Spring!

-Phil Wrzesinski