

Richard Leigh Henn III (Richie) and Scott Brant (Scotty)

Here under the tree lies Richard Leigh Henn III (Richie) and Scott Brant (Scotty). When my grandpa took us to their graves as adults, he said we'd find it by looking for the tree our brother Adam would hit his head on. That would be the tree to your right if it's still there at the time you are reading this. Grandpa took care of these graves throughout the rest of his life. He made us promise to continue caring for them after he was gone. The placing of this medallion is part of us keeping that promise.

Over the years we've wondered what they'd have grown to be. Would we all still be close; would our children play? The night the boys died the whole family changed forever. It was a cold night when the call came into the North Tonawanda emergency dispatch. There was a working fire on Thompson Street. By the time the emergency crews arrived the fire was already raging. They tried desperately to save the boys, but they couldn't find them in the heat and flames. The family will always be thankful and appreciative of the efforts made by emergency crews that night.

Scotty was born June 21st, 1981 He was almost 9 years old at the time of his death. He was a kind kid who was nice to everyone he met. He had a catchy smile that always seemed to be lighting up his face. I wish sometimes I could still see it and hear that silly laugh. Scotty is so missed by his extended family. We like to believe he'd have kept that happy spirit and grown into an exceptional man.

Richie was Born April 11th 1985 He was just under a month shy of his fourth birthday. He was the cutest little guy who was always playing. He was so sweet it was hard not to adore him the moment he'd smile at someone. I like to think he'd have been so adventurous when he'd have grown up.

The boys never got to grow up, to experience so many of the moments we all take for granted. They never got a chance to drive or climb a mountain. We all live for them and hope anyone who reads this will do the same. Go on an adventure and think of them. I always believed Richie would have loved the outdoors. Volunteer with kids and picture Scotty's smile on the face of the children whose lives you are changing. Live for them, experience for them, but not only for them, but every child who never got to grow up and really live.

Young neighbor haunted by fire deaths

By LOU MICHEL/Staff Writer

A handful of lollipops. They were the going-away presents intended for two neighborhood boys by an 11-year-old North Tonawanda girl who was moving.

The boys died Monday night when a fire raced through their home at 147 Thompson St. And the lollipops, in the first light of Tuesday morning, slipped to the back of young Crystal Vallier's mind as she stood outside her home and stared across the street to the fire-ravaged remains of the house.

A stranger to tragedy, Crystal awoke early after a restless night.

"I went to bed at 4 in the morning and kept waking up. I thought it wasn't real, what happened. I thought it was just a dream."

But sadly, the dream, with all the trappings of a nightmare, was real. Half-brothers Richard Henn, 3, and Scott Brant, 7, had perished. Piles of clothing spilling from the entrance to the cottage-like house, holes where windows once were, and a charred roof, burnt through in spots, attested to the fire's ferocity.

A police officer stood silently outside the front of the house early today, guarding it until investigators arrived. A second police officer was stationed at the rear of the house.

"Richie and Scotty were upstairs cleaning their bedroom when I came over Monday night about 6 o'clock with going away presents, lollipops with gum in the middle. My family's moving Friday to Wilson and I brought over lollipops for all the kids, Richie, Scotty, Joy, and the twins, Adam and Amy. They're 10 months old," Crystal said.

"But Richie, he was my favorite. I loved him.



RICHARD HENN



SCOTT BRANT

He was so smart for a little boy. He knew his colors and he was good with math. My sister and I taught him," Crystal said. "We visited him all the time.

"After Richie's mom, Barbie Henn, put the lollipops on the table for Richie and Scotty, I told Barbie I was going to buy Richie a second going away present, a T-shirt, before we move Friday. I make lots of money helping clean my aunt's house and I was going to use that money to buy him a shirt."

After dropping off the lollipops, Crystal headed to Lowry Middle School, where she is a student, to go for an evening swim with a friend.

"I got home from swimming about 8:30 and the fire was just about out. People were standing

By Lou Michel, Staff Writer

Crystal Vallier, 11, got really scared when I heard Richie had died. He was my favorite little boy.

"I remembered that a couple of days ago, Scotty got in trouble for taking a cigarette lighter and holding it up to a spray can and making a fire. He had been grounded to his room until Sunday for playing with the lighter," Crystal said.

Barbara Henn, when contacted in Buffalo where the family is staying with relatives, confirmed Scotty had been punished for playing with a lighter and aerosol can. "He had just gotten off punishment Sunday night. But he didn't take the babysitter's cigarette lighter last night. The reason it wasn't found in the house was I took the lighter when my husband and I went out shopping," Mrs. Henn explained.

Again outside the house, Crystal said, "Maybe I'll buy shirts for Adam and Amy. And maybe I'll buy two T-shirts for Richie and Scotty and have their names put on them. Then, I'll hang the shirts up in my room. That's how I'll remember Richie and Scotty."

Of the lollipops, Crystal said, "I wonder if Barbie was able to give Richie and Scotty my going away presents? The whole time I was there the boys were upstairs cleaning their room."

In leaving to go shopping with her husband, Dick, Mrs. Henn had left instructions with her relatives who were babysitting that the boys were to be given their going away presents from Crystal when they had completed the task of cleaning their room.

But before that happened, Mrs. Henn said today, the killer fire ignited.

