



Last year we adopted two sled dogs because we live in the wintery cold of Missouri, not far from where the feel good film of the year, *Winter's Bone*, was shot. While not fending off meth zombies, Bella and Bloo did their best to put food on the table. First it was a possum, which they left outside our back door and caused Leia to ask, "Do they eat people?"

Later they busted out of the fence prison escape style and took turns tossing a raccoon around our neighbor's backyard. Kelly, doing her best impression of the Grinch, wouldn't let me leave the raccoon there peacefully resting in the neighbor's yard...with a Santa hat on his head.



Leia did her best to establish her Dad's reputation as a raging alcoholic at the start of the school year. Leia, Kelly and I walked Leia to school on a warm September day. We also had Bella and Bloo with us. We were running late so Leia got on Dad's shoulders and we raced the rest of the way, with the dogs taking the lead. Unfortunately, Kelly had Leia's backpack. So I dropped Leia off to school and told her Mom would be by in just a few minutes to deliver the backpack. Leia went into school and told her teachers that her Mom was coming with her backpack and that Dad couldn't come in with her because he had "two wolfskies". The teachers thought Leia said her Dad had "two whiskeys". Laughter proceeded

throughout the school and Dad hasn't stopped receiving invites to the local AA meeting ever since.

Ethan continues to hone his ninja like skills in taekwondo. When not performing deadly strikes on his sister or anyone else three feet shorter than he is, Ethan could be found deep in solitude as he put together his Gordon Gekko like plan to make tons of ca\$h at our garage sale. EC, as his homies know him, was busy pushing sales of breakfast burritos, coffee, and lemonade at the crack of dawn. This was a recession belt tightening EC, as the previous garage sale included all those items plus doughnuts, Starbucks coffee, coffee flavoring, candy, and anything else you'd find in a strange mix of Willy Wonka's factory and Duncan Donuts.



Kelly is the 21st century stay-at-home mom – she's rarely at home. When she's not transporting kids like their personal limo driver, she's volunteering at the school, attending various mom's clubs events, working out at the Y, helping friends, feeding the poor and saving orphans. Oh, and that's in between taking care of all of us. Amazing. In her down time, Kelly enjoys long walks on the beach (near the poison pond behind our backyard) and slicing up pictures for her scrapbooks, Edward Scissorhands style.