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mans pricked a hole in each end of the shell and blew out the contents. After decorating the eggs, they hung them in trees or bushes, wishing for fertility among the household; large crops, herds of farm animals and many children to be born.

Games using eggs were also common. These date back to primitive times, according to historians. The most popular egg game today is "egg rolling", which has been a tradition at the White House in Washington, DC since the time of our 4th President, James Madison. Another traditional game in France is for children to throw an egg up in the air and catch it repeatedly until one child is left with an unbroken egg. All of these games are left over from pagan spring festivals but have survived throughout time and are still traditions practiced around the world today.

The Easter bunny also originated from ancient times. The people of northern Europe named their goddess of spring, Eostre, which later changed to Easter. Eostre had a sacred companion which was no ordinary animal, a hare. He was magical and would bring gifts during the spring festivals, usually eggs. Hares are solitary, unlike rabbits in behavior, but similar to look at. People confused the two together. This is how the Easter hare became the Easter Bunny or rabbit of today.



(Sources: Easter by Aileen Fisher, Easter by Julian Fox)

Cougar Cry

**Student Newspaper of
Wilkes Community College
Wilkesboro, NC 28697**

Nonprofit Organization
U. S. Postage
PAID
Wilkesboro, NC 28697
Permit No. 11

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