

ALW EARTHLINK  
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Happy New Year!

Celebrate, celebrate – it's now the year 2008!

“Every exit is an entry somewhere else.” The words in this anonymous quote are good ones to reflect on as we end 2007 and begin a brand new year. We wish each of you blessings, joy, happiness and peace all during 2008. This year we hope we'll have opportunities to reconnect with those of you we already know, and we hope to have personal encounters with those of you we have not yet had the pleasure of meeting! Thanks for being part of ALW!

January Birthdays

Here are the special ALW Angels who are celebrating their birthdays in January!

Maddie – January 10

Amanda – January 14

Maureen – January 25

Mary – January 31

We inadvertently left off a December birthday – so – we're wishing BELATED greetings to Marcella! We hope your day was great, Marcella!

Christmas in Kentucky

Besides the holiday toy delivery we made to the local elementary school, the ALW elves -- Linda, Wen, Jerry and Ruth – (complete with holiday hats and sleigh bells!) delivered TWO carloads of gifts and edible goodies to two, individual, 'adopted' families in need in Estill County, Kentucky. One of the families has four adolescents, and the other family includes six young children! Thanks to your generous participation in our ALW fundraisers, we were able to provide these families with brand new clothing, lots of toys, games, books and more! We wish you could have seen the looks of delight and awe on the kids' faces as they helped us unload the cars full of wrapped gifts. Both sets of parents cried and told us they never expected such an overwhelming outpouring of love and giving from people who don't even know them. We were able to give each of the 10 children a new winter coat, new gloves, a new hat, new pajamas, and two complete outfits for school! We also presented one of the families with a home theater system (a holiday drive by the local fire department had just given them their own TV) and a

collection of just-released DVD's. We're sure this will be one of the most memorable holidays these families ever have – all because of YOU, our real-life ANGELS!

### Time for CHANGE!

“Together, we can make great things happen.” You've read this quote from Kevin Richardson, our Honorary Chairperson, at least a million times, right? Well, now it's time to make Kevin's words a reality! You all received a special envelope in the mail, along with a challenge to “Do a LITTLE, Help a LOT.” We asked you to save your pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters. Now it's time to total up what you saved in your envelope, and to send that amount of money to ALW! You can send the coins you saved, or you can send us a check in the amount of what you saved. If you wish, you can send us your total via Paypal. We'll announce the total ALW collects in the February newsletter. We're counting on y'all, and we're dreaming big (we're good at dreaming!) and hoping that every single ALW Angel participates in this campaign! Remember – no amount is too small, and every gift is much appreciated! Every single penny will be used for Camp H.O.P.E. 2008. Thanks in advance for helping such a great cause! Just to get you motivated – thanks to Rick and Brit (Linda's son and his girlfriend) for \$15, thanks to Judi for \$20, and thanks to Dan and Linz (Wen's son and his girlfriend) for \$40! We're off to a great start!

### Camp H.O.P.E. 2008

The dates are set, the camp deposit is paid, and things are ready to roll for our 3<sup>rd</sup> annual summer environmental camp for underprivileged Appalachian children. We'll be having lots more updates as the weeks roll by, so stay tuned!

We do need generous people to sponsor each of the 14 children we will be bringing to Camp this year (\$300 per child) and to 'adopt' each child (\$125 per child). If you are interested in either a sponsorship or an 'adoption', please contact us ASAP!

We realize that some people cannot afford to provide a full sponsorship or 'adoption,' but would like to help one or more of the children in a smaller way. We need to purchase 14 duffel bags (\$15 per bag) and we need 14 twin-size fleece throws to be constructed and donated – please let us know if one of those items falls more within your budget!  
THANKS!

### ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

#### After the Holidays.....

RETHINK before buying gift wrap and ribbon at end-of-year holiday sales. Instead, think about how you can reduce wrapping or use recycled materials, such as the Sunday comics or children's artwork, next year. Or make fabric bags that can be reused from year to year. You can also buy reusable fabric gift bags from online sources such as [www.reusablebags.com](http://www.reusablebags.com). Or wrap presents in cloth bags that can be reused for groceries. RECYCLE this year's holiday cards and wrapping paper. Turn cards into gift tags for packages for next year. Cut them into rectangles, circles or squares and write on the back; you can use scalloped-edge or other decorative-edge scissors if you have them. OR – tear the decorative fronts off the cards you received and send them to St. Jude's

Children's Hospital. The hospital uses the cards for various projects year-round. The address is: ST. JUDE CARD RECYCLING, PO BOX 60100, BOULDER CITY, NV, 89006.

If there's a kid around the house, he or she will welcome bits and scraps of wrap, cardboard tubes, even sturdy gift boxes for school projects and crafts. Tuck it all into a box or bin with some scissors and glue, and think how blissfully occupied they'll be during winter's shut-in days.

RECONSIDER your holiday light display for next year. Reduce the number of lights you use to save energy, or switch to LEDs. Or both. New York's Rockefeller Center Christmas tree switched to LED lights in 2007 to use 63% less energy, saving enough electricity in a day to power a single-family home for a month. Less power used means less coal burned and fewer greenhouse gases in the atmosphere! (From the Chicago Tribune)

### The Dirty Side of Domestic Fuel

Most Americans want the country to be free of its dependence on foreign fuel. But what many might not know is that using homegrown oil and natural gas may come at a high cost.

There are close to 1 million oil and gas wells across 33 states in the USA. New ones are being drilled at a rapid rate – more than 40,000 last year alone. Extracting oil and gas is known to release toxic chemicals, including mercury, benzene and arsenic, and harmful chemicals are routinely injected underground to boost output. However, such wells are exempt from the parts of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act and Clean Air Act that would control these substances. “Loopholes were written because of the industry's influence in Washington,” says Amy Mall of the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), who co-authored a new report on the subject. “These decisions ignored the best available science.” Well operators also are not required to file an annual toxic-release inventory, a list of chemicals emitted.

People living near wells have reported alarming health problems. Steve and Elizabeth Mobaldi, whose home was within a mile of about 20 wells in Colorado, suffered ailments ranging from painful blistering and nosebleeds to headaches and tumors. “It amazes me that the companies are allowed to not follow the same laws as other industries,” says Steve.

NRDC is calling for the government to tighten its regulation of gas drilling and for the industry to adopt pollution-reducing practices.

Is extracting domestic oil and natural gas important enough that companies should be granted exemptions from pollution laws? Go to [www.Parade.com](http://www.Parade.com) and voice your opinion. (From Parade Magazine, December 2007)

### Waterkeeper Alliance

From a recent letter written by Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., Chairman of the Board, Waterkeeper Alliance:

“In November, America observed the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Clean Water Act. When Congress passed the Act in 1972, it promised the American public that the sewage stench, oil spills and burning rivers of the 1960's would be a distant memory. The goals of the

law are broad and ambitious: fishable and swimmable waterways and zero discharge of pollution into our rivers, lakes and coastal waters by 1985.

Although we missed the deadline, the goals and laws remain in effect, but progress has come to a standstill. Each year, we witness a greater number of beach closings, fish kills, fishing advisories and other warnings about the destruction of our nation's waters.... Today, our waterways are still polluted and the protection we largely take for granted has been eroded and abandoned:

Power plants operate with antiquated technology, pouring toxic mercury into the air and water. Inadequate sewer systems and aged wastewater treatment plants send raw sewage flowing into our rivers when it rains. Regulators ignore the law, disregard public health and allow factory farms to use our waterways for waste disposal. Since our inception in 1999, Waterkeeper Alliance has fought corporate greed and government inaction, bringing together 162 local Waterkeeper programs that work on the front lines of protecting our waterways." If you are interested in learning more about the Waterkeeper Alliance, or if you would like to help protect our waterways, please check out [www.waterkeeper.org](http://www.waterkeeper.org).

### Japan Halts Whale Killing

Humpback whales are safe – at least for now. Giving in to USA pressure and worldwide criticism, Japan's government announced that a whaling fleet now in the Southern Ocean for its annual hunt would not kill the threatened species as originally planned. The fleet will, however, kill about 900 minke whales, a smaller, more plentiful species, and 50 fin whales. Japan dispatched its whaling fleet last month to the southern Pacific.  
(Associated Press)

### Energy Bill Powers Up

President Bush has said that he will sign an energy bill approved by Congress that increases mileage requirements by 40%.

The auto industry will have until 2022 to reach the new mileage requirement of 35 miles per gallon. The current mileage requirement is 25 miles per gallon. Although the new requirement is the centerpiece of the legislation, it only is a small part of the energy bill, which requires energy-efficiency standards for appliances, lighting and commercial and government buildings.

There is much to be pleased about with the new bill and that fact is reflected in the broad support the legislation received. The House approved the measure, 314-100, with 95 Republicans voting in favor of it. The bill also requires an increase in the use of ethanol from 6 billion gallons a year to 36 billion gallons by 2030. All told, Democrats believe that the bill will decrease America's dependence on oil by 4 million barrels a day by 2030.

The positives of the energy bill outweigh the negatives by a wide margin. Conservation and energy efficiency has been sorely lacking from US energy policy for decades. The increase in the mileage requirement is the first in 32 years.

Still, there are problems with the bill. Congress has fallen in love with ethanol, but ethanol is unlikely to be a long-term solution to our energy needs. Aside from the practical issue of growing enough corn and grain on enough land to make enough ethanol fuel, there is the costly issue of transporting it.

It is difficult to transport ethanol through pipelines because it is water soluble. These drawbacks matter a great deal, but Washington continues to overlook them. Overall, however, the energy bill is a positive bipartisan step toward developing a much more comprehensive, forward-looking energy policy. (From the Kane County Chronicle Editorial Page)

### Plant a Tree to Fight Global Warming

The great debate about whether global warming is occurring is just about over. A recent poll by Time Magazine found 85% of its respondents in agreement that the phenomenon is real. Now we need to move on and focus on what to do about this enormous problem. Again, Time offered 51 suggestions ranging from low energy light bulbs to ending the social fad of building “McMansions,” especially on lots so small there is no room for trees.

Trees! Now here is something upon which we can all agree – a way to cool the Earth and clean our air. Best of all, planting trees is something we can all do to fight global warming. Here’s how.

1. Support programs to help replant trees on areas denuded by wildfires, insects and disease. One acre of young, thriving forest absorbs six tons of CO<sub>2</sub> and puts out 4 tons of oxygen each year. Learn more at [arborday.org/replanting](http://arborday.org/replanting).
2. Plant around your home. Shade and windbreaks will save you money and reduce air-polluting energy production.
3. Guard our street, avenue and city park trees. Large shade trees are being lost and often replaced with concrete, crushed rock or nothing at all. The loss of trees in Washington, DC, alone is said to add 540 tons of particulate pollution to the air each year. Adopt a block or a park and work with your city forester or tree board to make sure there is a net increase in trees – and that large-maturing species are planted where space allows and where they will not conflict with overhead wires.
4. Look to woody agriculture. Woody plants like hazelnuts can help revolutionize agriculture’s contribution to a cleaner, healthier environment.

To learn more about any of the above topics or to learn more about global warming, go to [www.arborday.org/globalwarming](http://www.arborday.org/globalwarming).

### And Finally.....

#### Peace and Harmony

Here are two that are so close  
They always stay in tune;  
How could we have the shining sun  
Without the silvery moon?

The only way that you’ll find Peace  
Is finding Harmony,  
And when you find the two of them  
They both will set you free.

Just sit there still with Harmony  
And close your eyes with Peace,  
And soon you'll feel an inner strength  
From a source that will not cease.

It's when there's Peace and Harmony  
That all of us can grow;  
Beyond those of our wildest dreams,  
Beyond yet what we know.

Side by side and on through time  
Go Peace and Harmony,  
And trust me when you find the one  
There will the other be.  
(John Wm. Sisson)

Wishing each of you Peace and Harmony all through 2008! Happy New Year!

See you in February!

Linda and Wen