

**ALW EARTHLINK
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February Birthdays

Happy February birthdays to the following ALW Angels!

Susan – February 3

Caitlin – February 5

Tracy – February 8

Gia – February 13

Valentine’s Day – February 14

Rea – February 17

Sophie – February 19

Kasy – February 20

Jennifer – February 21

Lisa – February 24

Jessica – February 28

Valentine’s Day comes on February 14, so here’s a thought about love:

“Time is too slow for those who wait, too swift for those who fear, too long for those who grieve, too short for those who rejoice, but for those who love, time is eternity.” ~Henry Van Dyke

One Step Closer

We received word from the IRS that our application to become an official 501©(3) non-for-profit organization is being reviewed and we should receive notification in 60-90 days. Please keep your fingers crossed that we are awarded non-for-profit status. And thanks sooooo much to attorney Adam Hebbard and his associates for their help in this long, tedious process!

Camp H.O.P.E. 2009

Where We Are in the Planning

In mid-January we left the bitter cold of Illinois and

traveled to Kentucky where we had productive planning meetings for Camp H.O.P.E. We are still anxiously awaiting the names of the 15 students who will be sharing this year's 'adventures' with us. Many of the wonderful individuals who have agreed to 'adopt' a camper have already sent us their donations, and we are busy shopping for the basic needs for each child (duffel bags, towels, linens, toiletries, etc.). Once we have the students' names and once the campers return a form telling us a little more about themselves, we will start shopping for more personal items/gifts for each child.

We are changing up the itinerary for this, our 4th annual Camp. We have some exciting new workshops, outdoor learning experiences and guest speakers to introduce! We're 'pumped!'

What We Need for the Campers

If any of you can help with the following, we would appreciate hearing from you!

1. We still need nine, realistic-looking, stuffed animals to be donated (all the animals are in the range of \$20-\$35). The animals will be used to teach habitats, ecosystems and more – and they will also be 'bunk-mates' for all of our Campers! If you'd like to donate one of these furry friends, let us know!
2. We would like to purchase 15 copies of the book I Heard The Willow Weep by Toni Albert. The book introduces young readers to some of today's most pressing environmental problems, and encourages them to become actively engaged in taking care of their home planet. The illustrations are beautiful and the writing style is poetic, fascinating and factual. The books would make a great supplemental learning resource for many of the topics we will be presenting during camp. Each book is \$9.95. If you can make a donation for one or more of these books, we would be most grateful!

Special Thanks.....to WowWee Alive Co. for donating two of their products for our campers. They are sending us two animated stuffed animals for our ecosystem/rainforest studies. This is a MOST GENEROUS donation, and we are thrilled! We know two lucky campers will be equally thrilled! Check out their website at www.wowweealive.com.

Special Thanks.....to the Save Your World Organization for donating special wristbands and organic gift packages for each of our campers. Check out their website at www.saveyourworld.com.

FUNdraiser Updates

“Go Light Your World!”

“Go Light Your World!” is the theme for our annual ‘Remembrance’ Luminary Ceremony, which will take place in Kentucky in late May. Remember someone (living or deceased), who has made a difference in your world by having a candle lit in his/her honor. For a donation of \$5 per candle, your family, friends, colleagues, pets, etc. will be remembered in a special way in a beautifully reflective ceremony filled with music and memories. Watch for the e-mail that will be sent out soon that will detail this annual ALW fundraiser and will have all the information on how to send your donations. ALL the money from this fundraiser will go to help us bring underprivileged Appalachian children to Camp H.O.P.E.

Another FUNdraiser TBA Soon!

We are awaiting approval on a proposal, and we hope to be able to announce another FUNdraiser very soon. If it’s approved, we know that you – and your KIDS – will love it! ☺

And Another!

We have been in contact with Rev. Alan Sutherland at St. John’s Church in Versailles, Kentucky, and we just might be offering you a DELICIOUS fall fundraiser that will benefit ALW and The Cathedral Domain (the place where we hold Camp H.O.P.E.) and that will have you shouting “Buon appetito!” Stay tuned! ☺

Someone You Should Know

We mentioned that we are ‘wishing’ for 15 copies of the book I Heard the Willow Weep by author Toni Albert. Toni has written over 38 books, many of them environmental/nature books for children. She has an AWESOME website that is a great place for kids to explore! Check it out at www.ticklecreekbooks.com. Toni has GENEROUSLY donated 15 (signed!) copies of her book about the rainforest for our campers. We are most appreciative, and we encourage you to support her by purchasing some of her books for yourself and/or for children you know and love!

Environmental News

Rest Easy on an Environmentally Friendly Mattress

We spend 30% of our lives sleeping, so it makes sense to buy a mattress that won’t make you sick. Most mattresses are treated with toxic chemicals, such as PSDE (polybrominated diphenyl ether) flame retardants, which may cause health problems, particularly in small children, and are banned in some states and much of Europe. Tips from Laura Wallace of Savvy Best Organic Mattresses and Pillows (www.savvyrest.com): a) Know that ‘natural’ and ‘organic’ don’t mean much. Applied to mattresses, the terms are not government-regulated. One option: all-

natural latex (which comes from a rubber tree) with an organic cotton and wool casing. b) Stay away from chemicals. A thick layer of certified organic wool batting, which is naturally flame resistant, can provide the same cushion of safety as a chemical flame retardant. c) Look for a reliable seal of approval. Some names to trust: Co-op America and Oeko-Tex. d) Avoid mattresses filled with cotton fiber. It holds in moisture and attracts dust mites. (USA Weekend Magazine)

Outdoor Exercise and Fit Kids = Better Grades!

As childhood obesity rates soar and kids spend more time sitting in front of their computers than playing outdoors, diabetes and other weight-related illnesses are on the rise. But physical health is not the only thing at stake. According to a study by the California Department of Education, kids' fitness levels also may affect their performance in school. The study found that increased amounts of outdoor physical fitness translated into higher academic achievement at each of the three grade levels measured. The benefits were most evident in math scores. And girls, particularly those at higher outdoor fitness levels, demonstrated greater achievement than boys. Another study, published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, also found that increased outdoor physical activity had a positive effect on academic performance. Previous research has led doctors to surmise that outdoor exercise may encourage new brain-cell growth. A workout for your body also is a workout for your mind. Get kids outdoors and help them get in shape, and they may bring home higher test scores and better grades. (By Michael O'Shea)

Eco-friendly Day Care Center Opening in Chicago

If it feels, at times, as though the world is conspiring to fill your child's life with phthalates and lead and high-fructose corn syrup, you may welcome the news that an eco-friendly day care center is breaking ground in the West Loop. Slated to open in April, the Little Green Tree House will feature non-toxic paints, Energy Star appliances, PVC- and phthalate-free toys, and an all-organic, locally sourced meal plan. "We're teaching an eco-friendly lifestyle," says Elizabeth Geldhof, director of business operations for Children's Academies of America, the national child care center operator behind Little Green Tree House. "We're not going to sit down and have 'green class.' It's just going to be part of everyday life." The center will serve children from 6 weeks to 5 years old, with a preschool curriculum introduced at age 4. "It's going to be very creative in how we tie the eco-friendly curriculum into arts and crafts and themes," she says. "We'll do indoor gardens and go to the park and explore the parkland, so it's not just going directly to the swings. It will be really fun and interesting and diverse." Geldhof said the center fills a need as more parents become eco-conscious. "There are a lot of studies just now coming out about toxins and the effects on children – long-term diseases, allergies," she says. "We're keeping the toxins out of the way." The center, at 118 S. Ashland Avenue, will be open year-round, from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuition ranges from \$359-\$425 per week, depending on the child's age (infants are the most expensive). The center is designed to serve 156 children and a pre-enrollment site is available at www.littlegreentreehouse.com. (By Heidi Stevens) Hopefully, this will start a nationwide trend!

Did You Know.....

Our planet has lost nearly half of its forested area in the past 8,000 years, with the majority of loss occurring in the past century. Take a stand against those who deplete rainforests. Buy wood only from sustainable sources and avoid buying products made from tropical hardwoods.

Cardboard should always be recycled. Don't forget that a lot of food packaging, such as cereal and cracker boxes, is made of recyclable cardboard!

When doing laundry, choosing a cold rinse cycle instead of warm or hot will save energy with every load.

The average family does five loads (or more) of laundry a week, which uses more than 16,000 gallons of water a year. Only run full loads to help reduce water and energy waste.

Many computer printers now have an ink or toner saving mode. Use this 'draft' setting whenever possible – you'll save resources and money, too.

Freshen carpets naturally. Vacuum, then liberally sprinkle cornstarch or baking soda; leave on one hour and then vacuum up.

Don't reach for the vacuum with every spill. Use a broom and dustpan whenever possible.

Don't give up on the idea of growing your own vegetables due to lack of space. Dwarf varieties can be grown in containers and will thrive in most climate zones. Even a small patio provides enough space to grow fresh food during warmer months.

(From 365 Little Ways to Save Our Planet)

And Finally.....

***“A journey of a thousand miles
begins with just
one step.”***

(Unknown Author)

“We're fools whether we dance or not, so we might as well dance!

(Japanese Proverb)

“Life is about the journey, not the destination; so work like you don't need the money,

*love like your heart has never been broken,
and dance like no one is watching!”*
(Unknown Author)

See you in March!

**Linda and Wen
Founders
A Lasting World Inc.**