

ALW EARTHLINK
JUNE 2007

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June Birthdays

Happy Birthday to the following ALW Angels!

Jennifer – June 8

Diane – June 12

Malessa – June 14

Tracy – June 16

April – June 17

Ruth – June 22 (Wen’s ‘baby’ is turning 21!!!!)

Jane – June 25

And also – we apologize to ALW Angel ANN, who celebrated her birthday in May and whom we unintentionally left off the May Birthdays list. Sorry, Ann – hope your celebration was a good one!!!!

To all our DAD Angels – Happy Father’s Day on June 17! Thanks for the example you set in raising your kids to be good people and great caretakers of the Earth!

A Note from Two Special Friends

As you know, ALW awarded 100% of the donations we received for our “Remembrance” luminary candle ceremony (held in May) to the Cathedral Domain, where we hold our summer environmental camp for needy Appalachian children. Here is a note from Andy and Cindy, who run all the camps at the Domain and who show us tremendous support and love:

“Thank you all so much for the donation. It was so nice of you to think of us. The \$1,674 will be a nice start on refurbishing the Nature Center up here. We want to make it more inviting to the many, many children who come to our camps, and we want to give all these children a little bit more of Kentucky nature! Thanks again for your kind donation, and God bless you!”

Camp H.O.P.E. Update

Things are moving right along in our planning for Camp H.O.P.E. (Helping Our Planet Earth). Besides securing environmental speakers, workshop facilitators, etc. – we have also been blessed to receive many donations from individuals, businesses and others. We now have a wealth of supplemental materials on bats (books, folders, stickers,

informational brochures, bat houses) to be used during our bat workshop after our tour of the bat cave!

We have received a complimentary “Tickle Toes” stuffed animal for each camper’s bed. Former Vice President Al Gore sent us a signed copy of his book An Inconvenient Truth (adult version) and is planning to send us 15 copies of the new children’s version of the same title!

We have a very dedicated support staff of 6 (two guys, 4 gals) who will be with us for the entire week of camp, and who will help us supervise the campers, oversee activities and facilitate the environmental workshops.

Please keep your fingers crossed that we can secure a sizable donation that will allow us to take the kids horseback riding during our off-site field trip to the Kentucky Horse Park. We have the bus and admission fees covered, but we’d like to be able to give the kids even more of an ‘adventure’ there! ☺

“Mountains of Love” Holiday Giving Project

Besides bringing a group of Appalachian children to an environmental camp free-of-charge, we have also started the tradition of delivering new holiday toys and clothing to needy Kentucky children, infant through age 12. We have been collecting things since January for our 2007 drive, and our storage unit/basements are FULL of wonderful items! We have brand new electric keyboards, play kitchens, train sets, fairy princess dress-up clothes, hard cover books, hats, scarves, mittens, sweaters, hoodies, holiday dresses, school supplies and more! We even have a small, artificial Christmas tree for one needy family! We’d like to set a new record this year and deliver the biggest amount of gifts ever! So -- whenever you see children’s clothing items or toys on ‘clearance’ or at a reduced price, think ALW and KENTUCKY KIDS! You can send your items to us any time between now and September 15, 2007. At that point, we’ll have to start sorting, boxing, etc. for the trip to deliver all the items!

We have submitted this project twice to the annual “Make a Difference Day” contest sponsored by USA Weekend magazine. Thanks to ALL of you, ALW received Honorable Mention in the magazine two years in a row, and this past year we were awarded a very special certificate for the work ALL OF US put into this project. Let’s keep up our giving spirit and do it again this year! Thanks to all of you who have already made a contribution, and thanks in advance to all of you who will help with this very worthwhile activity/giving project.

Environmental News

Nick Carter Speaks for the Dolphins!

Backstreet Boys Nick Carter has been appointed as a U.N. special ambassador of the Year of the Dolphin. The Year of the Dolphin campaign is aimed at raising awareness of dolphins in the wild, the threats they face to their survival and actions that could help their wild conservation.

To help with Nick's environmental campaign, ALW is going to be offering you a chance to bid on a special Nick Carter/Dolphin Basket! We'll send out a special e-mail about it in the next few weeks! Save your money so you can bid on what we promise will be a VERY special package!

Bamboo Flooring

Are you looking to install different flooring in your home? Want eco-flooring? As an alternative to hardwoods, bamboo is actually a grass that can be harvested without killing the plant. Some species reach maturity in as little as three years and are so hardy they can be cultivated largely without pesticides or fertilizers. There are some transportation and fair trade issues that detract from bamboo's environmental friendliness, but the good offsets the bad. Look for products made with nontoxic adhesives and preservatives. For more information and products, visit www.buildinggreen.com. (NOTE: We toured a green school here in Illinois where all the classroom floors were bamboo. It was beautiful and the teachers said it was resistant to most 'abuse' by students!)

The Basics of Alternative Fuels

1. Ethanol. This domestically produced, alcohol-based fuel typically is made by fermenting corn. More than 6 million cars today can run on E85, which is a blend of 85% ethanol and 15% gasoline. But ethanol, which is cheaper than gas, packs less punch, so you will lose 20% to 30% fuel economy.
 2. Biodiesel. Virtually any diesel car can run on this fuel produced from natural, renewable resources such as soybeans or recycled vegetable oil. It's safe, biodegradable and reduces air pollutants, when compared with petroleum diesel. Researchers now are working on ways to make alternative fuels out of coal, bio-plastic, algae/pond gunk and even pig manure.
 3. Natural gas. The stuff that you use to heat your home is one of the cleanest alternative fuels available. Less expensive than gasoline, natural gas is most commonly found in city government-owned cars. This option is beginning to break into the retail market with vehicles such as the Honda Civic GX.
 4. Electricity. The pluses are zero tailpipe emissions, low cost per mile and public charging outlets. The catch? Battery packs used to power electric vehicles are expensive, and electric cars have a range of up to 200 miles before they need to be recharged.
 5. Hydrogen. This long-term hope would be a clean, low-emission fuel extracted from methane used to power fuel cells that emit only heat and water as a byproduct. It's not yet commercially available, but research and development are underway.
- (By Laura Daly, USA Weekend Magazine)

Bats Are Our Friends!

More than 1,100 of the world's 4,629 known mammal species are bats. They live on every continent except Antarctica. 70% of bat species eat insects. Even bats weighing less than half an ounce may catch up to 1,000 mosquito-sized insects in a single hour!

Organic Baby Foods

Organic foods are defined as crops grown without the use of conventional pesticides and fertilizers and animals reared without the routine use of antibiotics and growth hormones. It once applied mainly to crops grown on small, family-run farms and sold at farmers' markets. But as organic food has grown in popularity, so has its market, with larger companies, including Gerber, coming onboard.

Organic baby food products have popped up online. Check out what they offer!

www.baby-cubes.com provides 100% certified organic frozen produce. They offer 21 fruits and vegetables.

www.happybabyfood.com provides frozen trays of classic foods, such as sweet potatoes, pears and peas, as well as black beans and quinoa. You can pop the food right out of the trays, allowing you to thaw only what you need.

www.nummynums.com offers a puree line of six frozen food flavors, including Roasted Sweet Potato, Mango and Vanilla, Strawberry and Banana Puree, Sweet Peas with Potato and Leek, Orzo Pasta with Sauce Bolognese, and Broccoli with White Cheddar and Quinoa Pilaf.

Offering your baby healthy foods from the beginning will set the stage for a lifetime of healthy eating!

A Few Good Ideas

A two-stroke, gasoline-powered lawnmower releases as many hydrocarbons into the atmosphere in 30 minutes as a car does in 90 minutes. Switch to an electric mower, which costs \$8 to \$10 a year to operate.

An LCD flat panel TV uses as little as a third of the electricity of conventional tube-based models, saving you on your power bill the equivalent of leaving a 50-watt bulb on all year.

Buying organic produce grown within 100 miles of your home will help reduce the amount of diesel fuel needed to ship food.

If you feel woozy after painting the bedroom with latex-based enamel, choose a product low in volatile organic compounds (VOCs) instead. New designer colors and improved quality make these safer paints equivalent to standard ones and they benefit your health as well as the planet's.

Manufacturers of low-flow toilets use advanced computer modeling to deliver more flush power with less water, trimming around \$90 from your annual water costs.

Like to linger in a hot shower? Stand under the pulse-jet guilt free with a solar hot water system. A solar water heater cuts around 12% off the average household's monthly electric bill.

Replacing old light bulbs with compact fluorescent ones can trim 5% from your monthly electricity bill. But this doesn't mean you have to live beneath the ugly glow of low-end fluorescent bulbs. Go for the premium fluorescents that cast a pure white or buttery golden light across your interior.

Local recycling practices vary, but there are some universal no-nos. Don't put plastic shopping bags, light bulbs, broken glass or food scraps in your bin.

Skip the pesticides and use nature's method of bug-eradication: other animals. Install birdhouses to shelter feathered friends who dine on pesky beetles and grubs. Install bat houses to rid your yard of mosquitoes and other insects.

Tote your own shopping bags! (This is a 're-run' suggestion, but we believe it's very important!) Some retailers reward customers for doing so (Whole Foods credits you 5 cents per bag used). In March, Ikea, to discourage plastic bag use, started charging shoppers (5 cents per bag), a common practice in other countries. Only 0.6% of the 380 billion plastic bags discarded in the United States are recycled; the rest will end up in landfills and in the wild.

(Courtesy of www.hgtv.com)

Water Conservation

Conserving water is ALWAYS a good idea! Here are some ways you can help save our precious resource!

Take shorter showers.

Install water-saving devices on faucets and shower heads.

When filling the tub, don't let water run down the drain while waiting for it to get hot.

Place 'toilet dams' or rock-filled containers in the tanks of older flush toilets.

Don't use the toilet to flush away facial tissues, paper and other similar solid and liquid wastes.

Repair leaks in faucets and toilets.

Turn off the water when brushing your teeth.

Rinse hand razors in a filled sink rather than under running water.

Don't let faucets run for washing or rinsing dishes.

Wash all the vegetables for a meal at the same time.

Run automatic dishwashers only with full loads.

Compost vegetable peelings instead of using the garbage disposal.

Keep a bottle of water in the refrigerator rather than letting water run in the sink to get a cool drink.

Water lawns only when necessary.

Let bluegrass lawns go dormant during hot, dry periods. If watering, do so only in the early morning to avoid evaporation losses and increased disease potential.

Water the lawn deeply and infrequently, not every day.

Collect and store water from roof gutters when possible to use for plant watering. Keep the stored water in closed containers to prevent mosquito-breeding sites from developing.

Take your car to a car wash instead of washing the vehicle at home. Many commercial installations recycle the water.

(John Church, University of Illinois Extension)

AND FINALLY.....

“I hope my achievements in life shall be these: That I will have fought for what was right and fair, that I will have risked for that which mattered, that I will have given help to those who were in need . . . That I will have left the Earth a better place for what I've done and who I've been.”

(C. Hoppe)

”The best remedy for those who are afraid, lonely or unhappy is to go outside, somewhere where they can be quiet, alone with the heavens, nature and God. Because only then does one feel that all is as it should be and that God wishes to see people happy, amidst the simple beauty of nature.”

(Ann Frank)

See you in July!

Linda and Wen