

ALW EARTHLINK
July 2008

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Special belated June birthday and early July birthday greetings to Cindy and Andy Sigmon - two very special “Honorary ALW Angels.” Andy is the Facility Director and Cindy is the Administrator at the Cathedral Domain in Kentucky. This wonderful couple was instrumental in helping us get Camp H.O.P.E. off the ground and rolling! They have been two of our biggest ALW supporters over the past several years. They have provided us with guidance, brains, brawn, creative ideas, equipment, space, and all the ‘stuff’ we’ve needed to make dreams come true. Andy has even pulled us out of the mud!!!! Above and beyond their talents and gifts to ALW, they are mentors, listeners and true, true friends. We wish them both all the blessings life can hold! Happy Belated Birthday, Cindy! Happy Birthday, Andy!

Camp H.O.P.E. 2008

We will be e-mailing you this newsletter a day early, because on July 1 we will be in Kentucky! We’ll be there, making our annual ‘pre-camp’ trip to pull things out of storage and then sort, organize and package them for this year’s camp. We’ll also take time to participate in Lexington’s annual 4th of July celebration and we will meet with some of the people who will be helping us present workshops and outdoor learning experiences for our Camp H.O.P.E. kids.

Since our last newsletter, we have received more wonderful donations for our campers. We have CDs from Jive Records, CDs from Big Machine Records, signed

books from authors, and beautiful, handmade keepsake boxes from a small, local company in Kentucky. In the coming months' newsletters, we will be 'featuring' some of the special people who have donated items for our campers, so be watching! We encourage you to support the businesses that help Camp H.O.P.E. They are very important to the success of our camp!

Thank You!

Thanks to the following people who adopted children for our 2008 session of Camp H.O.P.E. -- Alison Anchor (Canada), Betty Anchor (Canada), Margaret Clark and Family (Illinois), Debbie Collett (Texas), Ann Estep (California), Rochelle Friedman (Massachusetts), Richard Gates (Illinois), Meg Hunsicker (New Jersey), Terry Kuyawa and Family (Illinois), Lynne Maas and Family (Wisconsin), Kizzy Nicholas and Family (Pennsylvania), Terri Orr (Florida), Robert Rauschenbach (New York), The Rubin Family (Illinois), the St. Peter Faith Sharing Group (Illinois), and Becky Sopek (Connecticut).

Thanks to the following people who supplied duffel bags for our 2008 campers – Antony (Florida), Mary Costigan (Massachusetts), Pat Cumming (Canada), Lisa Lombardo (Rhode Island), Terri Orr (Florida), Malessa Pearce (Utah), Mike Romo (California), and Becky Sopek (Connecticut).

We also want to thank a very special group of ladies – the “Homespun Treasures Quilting Group” at St. Peter Church in Geneva, Illinois. These talented women have made personalized quilts for each of our 2008 campers! The quilts are beautiful, creative, warm and colorful. They will look so welcoming on the campers' bunks when they arrive for their week away from home!

And a HUGE thank you to the following ALW members who have volunteered their time to assist us as counselors/leaders at Camp H.O.P.E. this year – Alison Anchor (Canada), Betty Anchor (Canada), Jerry Marcec (Illinois), Ruth Marcec (Illinois), Jennifer Sloma (Illinois), Steve “Stretch” Sloma (Illinois), and Becky Sopek (Connecticut). YAY, TEAM! ☺

Mountaintop Removal Mining

As you know, ALW strongly opposes the practice of Mountaintop Removal Mining. Our friends at Appalachian Voices explain “Mountaintop removal coal mining involves blasting off the tops of mountains and dumping the rubble into valleys below. Since the 1990s, when we helped found the West Virginia-based group Coal River Mountain Watch, Appalachian Voices has been working with coalfield residents to end mountaintop removal. We are currently working to build a national network of supporters who will support the efforts of coalfield residents to end mountaintop removal, through our touring Appalachian Treasures presentations and through www.iLoveMountains.org, a national online organizing campaign.” The good volunteers at Appalachian Voices have ‘gifted’ ALW with its “Appalachian Treasures” DVD, which we will be showing to our Camp H.O.P.E. students. We'll also be doing a very creative workshop to bring home just what a

mountain looks like when MTR happens. If you are interested in helping Appalachian Voices spread the word about MTR, check out their very educational website www.appalachianvoices.org. Remember – when we work together, we can truly make changes happen!

Fundraiser Updates

We'll be announcing some awesome fundraiser ideas after camp! We hope you will want to participate!

Environmental News

Universal Studios Goes 'Green' With New Ride

Universal Studios gave its new Simpsons Ride an energy-saving design – a particularly good idea given Homer Simpson's propensity for wreaking havoc at Springfield's nuclear power plant. The attraction, which takes visitors on a rattletrap trip hosted by Krusty the Clown, reportedly uses 662 fewer kilowatts per day than its predecessor (a Back to the Future ride) by swapping incandescents for LEDs and using a custom computer system to power down motors when idle. Springfield hasn't seen an eco-phenomenon like this since Lisa Simpson lobbied against water pollution with her slide show, "An Irritating Truth." (by David Ferriis, Sierra Club Magazine)

EcoEndure

Check out EcoEndure, a company that makes environmentally responsible alternatives for everyday products. Their website can be found at www.ecoendure.com.

A Silver Lining In Gas Prices

It's hard to hyper-parent at \$4.25 a gallon. We live in the era of the hurried, harried child – so many classes, so many youth sports, etc. But maybe, just maybe, this summer will be different. Families are canceling trips to Disney in favor of 'stay-cations.' SUVs are sitting idle. Long ignored bikes are getting dusted off and pumped full of air.

"It's very hard for me to call an economic crisis a blessing in disguise," says Alvin Rosenfeld, author of "The Over-Scheduled Child: Avoiding the Hyper-Parenting Trap," "but if families get to spend more time together rediscovering what it means to be a family, that would be terrific." Go canoeing. Take a walk. Shoot some hoops. Fish. Play backyard games. Cook out at home. You know, summer stuff – OUTSIDE!!!! "The most important times in their lives, if you talk to kids, are when nothing is really happening," Rosenfeld says. "Kids have gotten used to the sense that, to be loved, they have to perform for us. Just be together with no goal in mind." The lazy days of summer: kid-tested, expert-approved. (Heidi Stevens)

The Green Outdoors

Garden furniture made from sustainably harvested wood is more widely available at major retailers this year, according to a tally from the National Wildlife Federation in Reston, Virginia. Once, most of the teak and other rot-resistant wood

used in outdoor furniture came from lumbering that destroyed tropical forests. But now organizations have developed ways to certify that logging is done in ways that let forests survive, and more of that wood is making it into stores at competitive prices, the federation says after its second annual survey. Crate and Barrel and Pier 1 Imports scored highest of 22 retailers that voluntarily participated in the survey and most of the 13 retailers that were included in a similar tally in 2007 improved their scores. The Federation suggests consumers seek out products with a Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) logo, which means the wood is traceable to a sustainably managed forest. For complete results of the survey, go to www.nwf/gardenfurniture. Look at www.focus.org to find stores near you that manufacture or carry FSC-certified products. (Beth Botts)

Pointers to Help You Avoid “Greenwashing”

Organic cotton sheets, sustainable flooring, recycled glass countertops. The words hint at something lovely and healthy, but what do they mean exactly? Much like the word “organic” was used loosely years ago, the word “green” and all its synonyms are appearing everywhere in commercials, advertisements, and marketing lingo. Its misuse has become so widespread, it has earned its own term – “greenwashing” – and the Federal Trade Commission has sped up plans to regulate the marketer’s tactics. The FTC’s final report (known as the “Green Guides”) may take more than a year to be finalized. In the meantime, here are some guidelines to get you over the hump.

1. **Do your homework.** The ‘do your homework’ mandate can seem cliché at times, but it is truer than ever in this instance. “A quick search on the Internet can usually turn up a few reputable editorial sources and most likely some readers comments and ratings,” says Graham Hill. Hill’s website, www.TreeHugger.com, features its own “Green Guides” section, which breaks down the top environmental attributes and concerns among major product categories such as lighting, electronics and gardening. More homework guidelines: Confirm given claims through a secondary source, and try to conduct at least part of your research over the phone or in person. “Ask sales reps about the various options they offer and then drill down with specific questions,” Hill says.
2. **Energy at least.** Ask about a product’s greenness according to its energy consumption. “Most green problems come back to energy use,” Hill says. How to evaluate a product’s energy story? Hill says to question the distance a product must be shipped, and whether it is made with the least energy-intensive materials, contains the least number of chemicals and is made with the least amount of materials.
3. **Get the story.** “Look for companies that have an authentic story to tell, something of substance,” says Sara Snow. Snow, host of the Discovery Networks’ “Get Fresh With Sara Snow,” and a lifelong follower of the green lifestyle, specifically seeks out products that are made by family-run businesses, community cooperatives and other groups that share her personal values.

4. **Look for labels.** Some day, home goods will have the equivalent of the food industry's "USDA Organic" label – a single stamp or designation that clearly verifies a product's claim. For now, you must rely on the industry's mixed (but trusted) designations, such as Energy Star, GREENGUARD, Sustainable Furniture Council (SFC), Fair Trade-Certified, WaterSense, Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), etc.
5. **Transparent equals true.** If a product's ingredients or story are confusing, vague or missing all together, its claims may not be legitimate. In its recent study of 1,018 green products, environmental marketing firm TerraChoice found the "sin of vagueness" to be rampant. Rather than settling with slippery marketing words such as "eco-friendly" or "green," stick with the facts, such as ingredients, manufacturing processes and company history. (Shaila Wunderlich)

What's the planet-friendliest way to wash windows?

Here's how to clean windows with no fierce solvents and minimal cash:

1. **For indoor windows, use club soda in a spray bottle.** The sodium citrate softens the water and increases its cleaning effectiveness.
2. **Newsprint has a reputation as a window cleaner, but it's better to leave it in the recycling bin and use two clean, lint-free rags, one for wiping and one for drying.**
3. **For seriously dirty outdoor windows, use a squirt of liquid detergent in a bucket of warm water.** Using a squeegee will help you get the window to dry quickly, the key to avoiding streaks.
4. **For outdoor windows to really shine, follow up with a rinse of water and white vinegar, about ½ cup of vinegar to a gallon of water.** This is a good all-around cleaning solution for other parts of your house, too, such as floors and tubs. (Save the Planet Knowledge Cards)

Did You Know.....

80% of U.S. rivers originate in national forests

A shower uses less water than a bath – especially if you use a low-flow showerhead.

Should you use paper or plastic bags for groceries? The BEST choice, in terms of respect for the environment, is to take your own, reusable cloth sacks to the store with you!

White poplar, common buckhorn, and black locust trees are alien invaders of North American natural areas!

Gas mileage decreases rapidly at speeds above 60 mph. Each 5 mph you drive over 60 mph is like paying an additional \$.10 per gallon of gas!

At least 25% of all modern drugs originated in rainforests.

(All the above facts come from Save The Planet Knowledge Cards)

**The energy saved by recycling one aluminum can could run a television for 3 hours!
(Crayola Educational Pages)**

A Lasting World.....is just within reach! (from the Founders!)

And Finally.....

“It’s not easy being GREEN!”
(Kermit the Frog)

***“Camp H.O.P.E. is Heaven on Earth –
Kentucky Style!”***
(A past Camp H.O.P.E. participant)

***“Today we are shapers of
the world of tomorrow.”***
(Walt Disney –by way of Andy Sigmon!)

See you in August!

Linda and Wen