

**ALW EARTHLINK  
DECEMBER 2008**

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**December Birthdays**

**It’s holiday time – but these Angels have EXTRA celebrating to do! We wish them all a very happy December birthday!**

**Pat – December 1**

**Tracy – December 2**

**Debra – December 8**

**Christina – December 16**

**Lisa – December 18**

**Jim Hanna (Honorary ALW Angel) – December 20**

**Rochelle – December 24**

**Marcella – December 30**

**Sonia – December 31**

**Special Note: Jim Hanna, one of the founders of Kevin Richardson’s Just Within Reach Foundation, and a mentor/educator/supporter/friend to ALW, celebrates A BIG ONE this year – and we want to make sure he knows we all wish him the BEST BIRTHDAY ever! There is a quote that says: *“You can’t do anything about the length of your life, but you can do something about its width and depth.”* (Shira Tehrani) The passion with which Jim works, plays, laughs and loves is an inspiration and example to all of us. He is never too busy to answer an environmental question, he is always there to give sound advice, he is constantly offering others words of encouragement, and he is willing to offer knowledgeable and hands-on assistance. Jim has truly reached WIDE and touched DEEPLY, and he has made a huge difference on the Earth and in the lives of those who have been blessed to know him. Happy Birthday, Jim! May you find much joy in life -- today and always!**

**Another Special Note: Many of us celebrate holidays during the month of December. We wish each of you memory-making occasions surrounded by family and friends. May the peace, spirit and love of this season remain in your hearts all through the year! Enjoy!**

**Holiday “Delivery”**

As you all read this newsletter, we'll be on our way to Kentucky to make our annual holiday 'delivery' to Estill Springs Elementary School, to financially needy families in other parts of Estill County, and to the residents at "All God's Children" home. Because of your generosity and your giving, we'll have lots of gifts to unload! We have new toys, new clothing, handmade quilts, baby items, and much, much more! We were worried that we weren't going to be able to fit everything into the van – what a good problem to have! Pray for our safe and successful trip – and thanks again to every single one of you who played 'Santa' this year by making a donation to this very worthwhile cause!

### Fundraiser Updates

We are working on three new FUN-draisers to be announced in 2009! Be watching for the official announcements! All money from these events/programs/items will go directly to support Camp H.O.P.E. 2009 and to help improve/remodel/update the Nature Center at the Cathedral Domain, where Camp H.O.P.E. is held.

### Camp H.O.P.E. Request

We know that not all of you are in a financial position where you can sponsor or adopt a Camp H.O.P.E. student, but we know that many of you have said you would like to make a smaller donation to our cause. We've come up with an idea for those of you who fit into this category!

Last summer, we were able to present each Camp H.O.P.E. student with his/her own, personalized Build-A-Bear that was dressed in an outfit that reflected that camper's hobbies, interests or favorite activities. The kids loved the bears, and took home a 'forever friend' that we hope will always remind them of their camp experience with us. Although the Build-A-Bear animals were cute and were a huge hit, they were just a 'gift,' and were not really a part of our environmental education program.

This year, we want to continue the tradition of presenting each child with a stuffed animal, but we will be making this year's animals much more realistic and much more relevant to the topics we are presenting during our week at camp. For example, we will be learning and exploring the Kentucky woods and doing a local pond/water study on two different days at camp. The animals we would like the children to 'find,' 'study,' and 'report on' during those days will be squirrels, owls, bats, otters, beavers, opossums, raccoons, skunks, etc. On another day, we will be discussing the effects of global warming on polar bears, caribou, and other wildlife. For that study, we would like to present some of our campers with stuffed likenesses of these animals.

Our goal is to present 15 different, realistic looking stuffed animals that will TEACH as well as become a camp souvenir.

That's where you can help! We need 15 animal 'adopters' to make a donation of \$15-\$25 each so that we can purchase the realistic animals for our campers! We

have found a website, called This Place is a Zoo ([www.thisplaceisazoo.com](http://www.thisplaceisazoo.com)) that has EVERY animal we would like to bring to camp with us! Check out the site, and then let us know if YOU will help us present one of these animals (as well as an awesome, environmental lesson!) to our 2009 campers.

Another thought -- if you have someone on your holiday shopping list that is hard to buy for -- 'adopting' an animal in their name would be a wonderful way to give TWO gifts -- one to the person in your life, and one to a very deserving Camp H.O.P.E. child! We can even send the person a special card telling them how they are helping Camp H.O.P.E.!

Contact us at [alastingworld@sbcglobal.net](mailto:alastingworld@sbcglobal.net) for more information and/or if you have questions! THANKS in advance for your help!

### Someone You Should Know

If you haven't finished your holiday shopping and are looking for a very unique, personalized gift, we invite you to check out one of our Camp H.O.P.E. sponsors! Go to <http://thekeepsakechest.com> to find a beautiful assortment of memory keepsake boxes for all ages, for boys, girls, men or women! You can select a box with a classic design, or you can have your box personalized with your own photo, a drawing, text, etc. The boxes are BEAUTIFUL and are priced VERY reasonably! ALL of our 2008 campers and ALL of our camp counselors were given one of these boxes this past summer, and everyone was very, very touched and pleased with his/her unique gift. We thank Mr. Patrick Hutchens and his staff for the unselfish generosity to Camp H.O.P.E. 2008, and we encourage you to buy one of these boxes for yourself or someone special in your lives! If you do purchase a box, make sure you let Patrick and his staff know that you heard about them through A LASTING WORLD! Patrick has already agreed to support Camp H.O.P.E. again in 2009, and we'd like him to know that we are spreading the word to our Angels, too! Thanks!



### Environmental News

#### Outdoor Holiday Decorations

If you decorate the outside of your home for the holidays, consider LED lighting. It is 'greener' than traditional holiday lighting because it is more brilliant, longer lasting and energy saving. You can find LED lights everywhere with many shapes, styles and colors. (Melissa Erickson)

#### What's the Greenest Christmas Tree?

As consumers have grown more environmentally conscious, a perennial debate has emerged around the holidays: artificial or real Christmas trees? Consider the pros and cons before you make your own decision.

#### Advantages/Disadvantages of Real Christmas Trees:

Real Christmas trees are biodegradable and can be recycled. And because they are grown on Christmas tree farms, putting one in your house doesn't mean depleting

forests of evergreen trees, according to the National Christmas Tree Association. However, unless they are grown on organic farms, they are sprayed with pesticides, and fuel is used for transporting them. And if real trees are not recycled, they end up in landfills.

The cost of real trees varies. Different types of trees and their sizes also determine price. According to the National Christmas Tree Association, the mid-range price of a real tree in 2007 was about \$42.

Real Christmas trees are discarded every year and don't require storage. They can be recycled, and you don't have to worry about bringing harmful substances, like lead, into the home.

Over the years, however, the cost of real Christmas trees outweighs that of one artificial tree that lasts 10-15 years. The carbon footprint created by growing and transporting multiple real trees over the years is substantial.

If you purchase a real Christmas tree, recycle it. The National Christmas Tree Association provides an online tool to locate nearby recycle centers at [www.christmastree.org](http://www.christmastree.org).

To reduce fuel consumption, go to a local grower and cut down your own tree. Try purchasing a live tree. The roots are covered in a burlap sack or placed in a pot. The tree can be planted in your yard, or you can donate it to a school or a park.

#### **Advantages/Disadvantages of Artificial Christmas Trees:**

Artificial Christmas trees are made from PVC, also known as vinyl, which is a nonrenewable plastic made from petroleum. These trees are not recyclable and end up in landfills when they are discarded. On the other hand, they last 10-15 years. According to the National Christmas Tree Association, the mid-range cost of an artificial Christmas tree in 2007 was about \$72. But prices vary widely. Trees at big hardware stores such as Builders Square and Home Depot range from \$18 for a 3-foot prelit tinsel Christmas tree to \$600 for a 10-foot prelit Frasier fir.

#### **Advantages/Disadvantages of Artificial Christmas Trees:**

Because artificial trees can last for more than a decade, consumers save money over time with an artificial Christmas tree. Resources used in growing real Christmas trees over the lifespan of one artificial tree can be quite large. And, if not recycled, real Christmas trees end up in landfills, too.

Besides being nonrecyclable, most artificial trees are manufactured in China and exceed U.S. Consumer Safety Commission's recommendations for lead levels. As artificial trees age, they can release lead dust, according to the Children's Health Environmental Coalition. Exposure to lead is known to cause long-term behavioral and brain damage, especially in children. (Gatehouse News Service)

#### **NWF Takes Action Educating Kids About Global Warming**

As part of its ongoing efforts to help educate youngsters about climate change, the National Wildlife Foundation created Climate Classroom, which includes extensive, age-appropriate classroom curricula, visuals and teacher guidelines for fourth grade through high school students. The program's website also features a section for

parents, with tips for talking with children about global warming and ideas for family activities, including how to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at home. To learn more, visit [www.climateclassroom.org](http://www.climateclassroom.org). (NWF)

### **Cats Can Be Eco, Too**

We want only the best for our cats (and our households). Caring for them with green products is good for the planet, pets, and people. Here, certified feline specialist Drew Weigner shares some easy tips:

1. **Clay-free kitty litter.** Clay is strip-mined (bad for the planet) and emits dust (bad for lungs). Eco-friendly litters typically are made of paper, corn, wood or other biodegradable, hypo-allergenic materials.
2. **Biodegradable litter bags.** If you put biodegradable kitty litter in a plastic bag, it won't decompose as it should. Use bags made of compostable materials, such as the BioBag, which is made from corn.
3. **Fume-free flea control.** Flea bombs contain chemicals that, when trapped in your home, you breathe in. Use an oral product containing non-pesticide growth regulators (such as Program Flavor Tabs, with lufenuron). After the fleas bite Fluffy, any eggs they lay cannot hatch.
4. **Birth control.** Neutering decreases the incidence of some diseases. It also decreases the number of stray cats (and fights) and increases the number of wild birds. (USA Weekend)

### **Coal Industry Ponders Future Under Obama**

Bill Raney considers coal golden. After all, the black rock fuels half of the nation's electrical generation.

But the West Virginia Coal Association's president and others in the industry say they have received mixed messages about president-elect Barack Obama's support for coal-fired power.

Obama and vice president-elect Joe Biden both have said they support finding cleaner ways to burn coal. But during the campaign, Obama told a newspaper that electricity rates could soar under his energy plan, while Biden told a voter in Ohio that 'we're not supporting clean coal' though he has said the U.S. should develop clean coal technology and export it to China.

"It's the frustration of uncertainty, based probably on the lack of understanding of how important a component of America's energy structure coal is," Raney said.

Others say they see little reason to worry.

Obama comes from Illinois, ranked ninth among coal-producing states, and supported its bid for the FutureGen experimental coal-fired power plant that would store emissions of carbon dioxide underground. After the plant was awarded to Mattoon, Illinois, the Bush administration walked away, citing costs that had ballooned to \$1.8 billion.

What's more, some key Democrats are from coal states. Sen. Dick Durbin is the Senate's #2 Democrat. Ed Rendell, former chairman of the Democratic National

Committee, is governor of Pennsylvania, a big coal producer and home to steel mills that rely on the fossil fuel.

“All of these people who are some of the strongest supporters of coal in the U.S. Congress and in the governor’s office...have supported and worked hard for President-elect Obama,” said Cecil Roberts, president of United Mine Workers, which endorsed Obama last spring. “And I don’t think he’s going to let those folks down.”

Luke Popovich, a spokesman for the National Mining Association, a trade group that includes many of the nation’s biggest mining equipment makers, said he believes Obama will be pragmatic about the need to keep coal in the nation’s energy mix.

“He presumably would be sensitive to the impacts of energy policies on the economy given the perilous state of the economy,” Popovich said. “And he’s certainly shown an exceptional ability to listen to and to hear what voters want, and what we think voters said they wanted was practical solutions.”

An Obama advisor said the president-elect remains committed to developing clean coal technology.

Obama has said he wants to create five coal-fired demonstration plants that would capture carbon emissions and store them underground.

The president plays a pivotal role in shaping the nation’s energy policy, naming top officials at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. And on Capitol Hill, Democrats have padded their majorities in both chambers.

“So when the music stops, who will be chairing the various committees with jurisdictions over coal? That will also be critical,” Popovich said.

Some of that jockeying on Capitol Hill already is under way.

Democrats steered the House toward more aggressively tackling global warming and other environmental problems, choosing California liberal Henry Waxman to head the House’s Energy and Commerce panel.

Waxman replaces Michigan Rep. John Dingell, a longtime supporter of Detroit automakers and other big industries, including electric utilities. Waxman this year signed onto legislation that would ban any new coal-fired power plants built without technology to capture carbon dioxide.

John Thompson, an Illinois environmentalist with the Boston-based Clean Air Task Force, credited Obama with making clean-coal technology ‘clearly’ a priority. But he said the U.S. also should make use of carbon-capture technology already available.

“If we don’t change the way coal is used, it’s gonna kill us,” he said. “We are running out of time.”

Yet uncertainty lingers, often tied to Obama’s statement to the San Francisco Chronicle’s editorial board in January that his proposed cap-and-trade system to control greenhouse gases – which would set an overall emissions limit, then require polluters to buy allowances at public auction – would be ‘as aggressive if not more aggressive than anybody else’s out there.’ (by Jim Suhr, Associated Press)

**NOTE: ALW opposes the practice of Mountaintop Removal Mining, and does not believe there is such a thing as ‘clean coal.’ ALW supports the use of alternative energy: solar power, wind power, etc.**

### **Obama’s Plans for Environmental Legislation May Have Big Impact**

After eight years of disappointment, frustration and legal wrangling with the Bush Administration, environmental groups think Barack Obama could be the nation’s greenest president.

On issues as varied as climate change, toxic chemicals and the Great Lakes, Obama promotes an ambitious agenda that would advance green initiatives and reverse polluter-friendly rules and executive orders from President Bush and his aides.

Obama often embraced green issues on the campaign trail and has continued to do so since becoming president-elect.

Some of his promises could be muted by the troubled economy. But for months Obama’s transition team has been quietly studying new environmental policies that could be adopted quickly, as well as Clinton-era initiatives that could be revived. Obama has also pledged to listen more closely to scientific advisors and environmental experts, whose advice the Bush administration frequently ignored or overruled.

“I think we are in store for something new,” said William Reilly, who led the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under President George H.W. Bush. “His pledge to follow science will be reassuring to a lot of people, including those who fear the regulators are going to run amok.”

Obama said his plans to revive the economy include incentives for new jobs tied to cleaner sources of energy and more fuel-efficient automobiles, which also could benefit the environment.

“Now is the time to confront this challenge once and for all,” Obama said. “Delay is no longer an option. Denial is no longer an acceptable response. The stakes are too high; the consequences too serious.”

Here is a summary of Obama’s environmental promises:

1. **Climate change:** Cap greenhouse gas emissions and set a target of reducing them by 80% by 2050. Let polluters trade the right to emit within the limit.
2. **Air pollution:** Toughen smog and soot standards. Reverse Bush rules that would let power companies upgrade aging coal-fired power plants without installing pollution controls. Limit toxic mercury emissions from power plants.
3. **Scientific research:** Double federal funding for clean-energy projects.
4. **Renewable energy:** Require that 25% of the nation’s electricity come from wind, solar and other carbon-free sources by 2025.
5. **Efficiency and conservation:** Require new buildings to be ‘carbon-neutral’ by 2030. Create incentives for utilities to improve energy efficiency.
6. **Great Lakes:** Provide more money to clean up pollution and restore fisheries.
7. **Factory farms:** Toughen air and water pollution limits and increase monitoring of large animal farms.
8. **Environmental justice:** Strengthen an executive order

requiring the EPA to address how pollution affects low-income and minority communities.

(Michael Hawthorne, Chicago Tribune)

### Alternatives to Common Household Cleaners

Even the most environmentally-friendly home falls short if it is cleaned with many of the most commonly used household products on the market today. That's because many products contain chemicals that can be downright toxic for users, and harmful to the environment when they eventually make their way out through drains into the ground or waterways. Ridding your home of these potential pollutants or at least minimizing their use is key, green experts say.

The Children's Health Environmental Coalition ([www.checnet.org](http://www.checnet.org)), a non-profit organization that tracks environmental toxins harmful to children, has recipes for mixing safe ingredients to create effective alternative cleaners for the home.

When in doubt about an ingredient in a household product purchased at the store, online sources can help. The Pesticide Action Network at [www.pesticideinfo.org](http://www.pesticideinfo.org), lets users look up products by name or by chemical, while Consumers Union's [www.eco-labels.org](http://www.eco-labels.org) can be used to check out labels for many products advertised as Earth-friendly.

And Finally.....

*“Seek the wisdom of the ages,  
but look at the world through the eyes of a child.”*  
(Ron Wild)

*“Your worth consists in what you are,  
not in what you have.”*  
(Thomas Edison)

*“God bless us, everyone!”*  
(Charles Dickens)

*Happy Holidays  
to  
all our ALW Angels and their families!*  
(Linda and Wen)

**See you in January -- 2009!!!!**

**Love,**

**Linda and Wen**