

REAL *update*

REAL people taking REAL action to protect our environment

25 Years of Environmental Action

Rideau Environmental Action League (REAL)

APRIL 2014

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Making Sense of Increased Tanker Rail Traffic

In all the concerns over the conversion of eastbound pipelines – Energy East and Line 9 – it can easily be forgotten that huge amounts of crude oil are currently being shipped east through Perth, Smiths Falls, Merrickville and Kemptville – by rail. No government, industry, or individual business has ever said that shipping crude oil by rail would end if the pipelines go into operation. In other words, the often-expressed argument that “I would prefer the oil be shipped by pipeline than by train,” is based on a misunderstanding.



People throughout the region have noted the huge increase in the number of black, tanker cars in long trains travelling through our towns. So far, REAL has been unable to get a good estimate of the number of trains or cars carrying crude oil. However, the rail line that runs through our region is a main CP line going from west to east, and travels through Toronto where concern has been expressed about safety of crude oil shipments.

Citizens can help us get a sense of the numbers. On the lower right side of a tanker car is a red plate with a four-digit number. The number is a means of identifying (Cont'd page 2)

Pipeline Presentation Well-Received

Eighty people concerned about TransCanada's proposed Energy East pipeline attended REAL's information session at the Station Theatre April 2. REAL and the speakers were very pleased with the turnout, that people came from far and wide, and with their participation in the question period that followed.



The evening started with a half hour of videos on the tar sands, previous oil spills and the proposed pipeline. For a few of us on the REAL Board, seeing the YouTube videos had made the issue very real, so we felt showing them on the big screen would make an impact on the audience. Then four speakers, introduced by moderator Alfred Von Mirbach, shared their knowledge and experiences on the pipeline with the crowd.

Andrea Harden, an energy campaigner with the Council of Canadians, debunked some of the economic assertions about the pipeline, and talked about how accelerated development of the tar sands would negate any progress Canada has made on greenhouse gas emissions.

Ben Powless, from Ecology Ottawa, discussed the impact of previous spills, the potential for future spills, as well as pipeline safety. (Cont'd page 2)



Making Sense of Increased Tanker Rail Traffic (Cont'd)

the content of a rail car. It can be looked up on the Canutec website at <http://www.wapps.tc.gc.ca/saf-sec-sur/3/erg-gmu/erg/ergmenu.aspx>. If the number is 1267, it signifies Petroleum Crude Oil. Citizens can do some trainspotting and report numbers of trains and cars with such a number, and the date, time and area spotted, to REAL at info@REALaction.ca.

There's another concern with the trains. Apparently, once the tar sands bitumen is shipped east, the plan is that the diluents – the chemicals added to it to make it flow – will be removed, and returned to Alberta for reuse. However, the diluents are to be shipped back by train – back right through our region. The diluents themselves are hydrocarbons and likely to be hazardous and toxic.

The Canutec website and the Emergency Response Guidebook are worth becoming familiar with – especially given that it will be our local First Responders who will be expected to react in the first hours to a spill, fire or explosion. Generally, rail lines and yards are governed federally, and our local municipalities have no say over what can be shipped through them. As well, they are not informed in advance or at the time of shipping, or even at the time of an accident or derailment. A new system, coming in after the Lac-Mégantic tragedy, will only provide municipalities with historic information of rail car content.



Pipeline Presentation Well-Received (Cont'd)

Angela Northfield, a hydro-geologist who works with REAL, explained through a series of diagrams and maps how the groundwater in the Mississippi and Rideau watersheds is highly vulnerable to contamination.

Dr. Darko Matovick, a mechanical engineering professor at Queen's University, described his experience as an intervenor at the National Energy Board (NEB) hearings on a similar conversion of Enbridge's Line 9. The process is far from perfect, and in particular, restricting the process to specific issues meant some important broader issues were not considered at all.

The Ontario Energy Board (OEB) public consultation process is our best opportunity for citizen comments to be heard on the Energy East proposal. The OEB will summarize Ontario's position for submission to the NEB, and a similar process will be underway in the province of Quebec. Once the National Energy Board begins their deliberations, only people who have applied for and been granted intervenor status can present. Intervenors are often people who are directly impacted (e.g. the pipeline crosses their property) or who are recognized experts in a related discipline. Other Canadians will not be part of the process.

REAL's intention with this presentation to inform residents of the risks and realities with this pipeline, so that they are inspired to take action themselves. Writing a letter, attending one of the OEB meetings, and talking it up with others are all possibilities. The OEB Public Discussions offered in Stittsville April 7 and in Cornwall April 8 were well-attended. To learn more about Energy East, check the resources on REAL's website, including links to other campaigns, videos, maps and writings. We encourage you to check the local concerns listed there, and email addresses provided, if you would like to provide input to the OEB by April 30.

Thanks to Diane Pearen, Lorraine Allen and Joyce Smith for their help that evening; and to the organizing committee, Margot Allen, Sue Brandum, Donna McKenna and Barb Hicks. Special thanks to Roger Sands for his audio visual expertise that evening, and the Station Theatre for the use of their wonderful facility.

The evening was actually delayed by three weeks, as organizers were forced to postpone the March 12 session due to bad winter driving weather.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Receipt of membership renewal payments started out strong but has tapered off. Please pay your \$15 individual and \$20 family membership fees soon! You should have received a letter and Annual Report by Canada Post mid-February. Cheques can be mailed to Barb Hicks, RR 4, 16 Morningside Drive, Smiths Falls K7A

4S5. Alternatively, you could drop it at the store, or use the mailbox outside the front door. Donations are also appreciated, for which you will receive a charitable receipt. New memberships are also welcome. [See the website](#) or use the form on last page of the newsletter, or in the REAL brochure.

Board Member Needed

REAL is entering its 25th year as a healthy, well-respected regional charitable organization. We are looking for an energetic, experienced person to join our Board of Directors. If you are connected to the community, familiar with current and emerging environmental issues, and motivated to do something about them, consider joining a group of like-minded people to make a REAL Difference.



Our board currently has six directors who meet monthly on the second Monday of the month. A [Board Member Position Description](#) is available on our website under REAL

Volunteers. Interested candidates should send a letter describing their interest in REAL to info@REALaction.ca. For more information, please contact Donna 283-2254 or Barb 283-9966.

E-Waste Update

Keep those used electronics coming! The REAL Deal sent off its third bin of electronic waste for recycling mid-March. The collection earns REAL about \$300 per bin from the Ontario Electronics Stewardship Program. Please note that we accept e-waste during store hours only: Thursday to Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Consult [our website](#) for more details.



The following e-waste items are accepted:

- Audio and video players and recorders (e.g. MP3, cassette, digital)
- Cameras (web, digital, analog)
- Cellular phones and pagers
- Computer peripherals (keyboards, mice, modems, hard drives, optical drives - CD, Blu-ray, DVD, HD-DVD)
- Desktop computers
- Desktop printers, copiers and multi-function devices
- Equalizers/(pre) amplifiers
- Floor printers, photocopiers and multi-function devices
- Monitors
- PDAs
- Personal hand-held computers
- Portable computers
- Radios
- Receivers
- Scanners, electric typewriters
- Speakers
- Televisions
- Telephones and answering machines
- Turntables
- Video players/projectors, digital frames
- Video recorders



Seasonal Waste Events

Many of the area's Household Hazardous Waste depots are seasonal, so plan ahead to make sure you get any hazardous materials you have collected to the depot for proper disposal. Check your municipality's website for hours and restrictions.

- **Lanark County.** Residents can use the depot on Patterson Crescent in Carleton Place. Participating municipalities are: Beckwith, Carleton Place, Drummond-North Elmsley, Mississippi Mills, Montague, Perth and Smiths Falls. The depot is open Saturdays 8 - noon, from June 1st until September 13th, 2014.
- **Lanark Highlands and Tay Valley Township.** The depot at the Lanark Highlands Middleville Waste Site will be open Saturday, May 17th until the Thanksgiving Weekend.
- **Rideau Lakes and Westport.** Household hazardous waste is accepted at the Portland Transfer Station, 4427 Old Kingston Road, four Saturdays in 2014: April 26, June 21, August 23 and October 18 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- **North Grenville.** Specific materials are accepted year-round at the Oxford Mills Transfer Station at 699 Crozier Road, Oxford Mills, Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays.
- **Leeds and Grenville Municipalities,** including Gananoque and Prescott, but not Brockville. Dates not confirmed, but tentatively two days: Saturday, August 16 in Landsdowne and Frankville, and Saturday, September 27th at the South Grenville Patrol Garage in morning, North Grenville Patrol Garage in afternoon.
- Some items, including paints and stains, are accepted at local retailers year round through the **Orange Drop program.** See www.makethedrop.ca for materials and locations.

Also seasonal is the **Smiths Falls Community Compost Site**, open Saturdays 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. from May 3 to November 22. The site on Highway 43 (east of Hillcrest Cemetery) accepts leaves, grass clippings and brush from Smiths Falls and Drummond-North Elmsley residents only.



Smiths Falls has two weekend **Swap Events** planned: June 13-15 and August 15-17. Place reusable items at the curb on Friday for others to peruse and take. If they haven't been taken by Sunday, bring them back in. (And make plans to get them to the REAL Deal!)

New Smiths Falls Budget Grants REAL \$9,000



There is significant support of REAL around the Smiths Falls Town Council table, as demonstrated by their allocation of \$9,000 to REAL in the 2014 budget year. Seventeen organizations and programs requested a total of \$172,800 from the Town. Council determined they needed to cap their support at \$80,000, and in the end agreed to allocations totaling \$84,800. The Councillors agreed to contribute \$60 from their own remuneration to make up the shortfall. Other major allocations were \$20,000 for The HUB, and \$12,000 for the Railway Museum of Eastern Ontario.

REAL has benefitted from the Town of Smiths Falls financial support of \$13,500 per year since 2006. The \$9,000 is a reduction, but understandable given the current economic climate. REAL has adjusted for this in its own budget passed March 19th. In addition, the use of the Town's former public works building at 85 William St. has been crucial to the operation of the REAL Deal store. We appreciate the support of the Town of Smiths Falls, as well as contributions from Montague and Drummond-North Elmsley Township.

Using Your Solar and Wind Powered Clothesline to Fight Climate Change



Spring is here (almost), so time to put that clothesline to use. Clothes dryers account for 6-10 % of residential energy use, and emit an average of 840 kg. of carbon dioxide annually, besides costing you money.

There are some added benefits as well. It's a chance to get some fresh air and mild physical activity, and is a good chore for the kids. It makes your clothes smell nice, and reduces wear and tear on your clothes, so they last longer. And on a hot day, hanging your clothes instead of using a dryer will reduce the heat buildup in your home, decreasing your energy use for fans and air conditioners.

Hanging your laundry to dry is an excellent way to reduce your energy use and reduce greenhouse gas emissions that lead to climate change. If everyone in Ontario used clotheslines, the savings would be equivalent to taking 250,000 cars off the road.

For more clothesline tips, pick up a copy of the handout "Letting it all Hang Out" in REAL's info rack at the REAL Deal. For more Eco Friendly Laundry Tips see this story in E-magazine. <http://www.emagazine.com/magazine/eco-laundry-tips1/>

13th Annual Community Pitch-In

Pitch-In Smiths Falls is just around the corner, April 19 – May 4. This will be the 25th year REAL has taken part in a spring litter cleanup, and the 13th year we have organized a community-wide effort, inviting other families, groups, business and schools to join in. It's great to see the community pull together, and it makes a visible difference in in our parks and roadsides. It also leads to some interesting conversations about whose responsibility keeping a community looking good is, and how there are people out there who litter freely and just don't seem to care.



If you care, and are young enough and/or have the physical energy to help out, please contact Bonita Lucas to be matched to a site that could use some TLC. Each year there are a few places that could stand a cleanup and don't get done. So here are some "hard to adopt" sites you could consider.

- The lot between the LCBO and Lombard St.
- The park near the lift bridge.
- William St. between Cornelia and Abbot St.
- Rideau Avenue
- Almost any roadside leading out of town.
- Along Cornelia, especially between arena and Cornelia Court

If you notice another spot that could use some work, please let us know. No guarantees, but if we have extra volunteers, we will try to get someone on it.

As in recent years, we have set a time for a group cleanup of Ferrara and Fergusson Drives, Saturday, April 26 from 9:00 until 11:30 a.m. Bonita can be reached at 283-1174, or at the store 283-7999 or by e-mail bjlucas@live.ca. For more information, see the poster at the back of this newsletter or consult the website <http://www.realaction.ca/pitchin.htm>.



REAL Deal In the Community

The REAL Deal has established many links within the community. We receive generous donations of materials from other organizations, and are happy to assist other non-profit organizations where we can. Requests are on a case by case basis, and depend on what we have available and are happy to part with.



Here are some contributions made in the last year or so



- ◆ Excess suitcases and medical items to the organization Not Just Tourists.



- ◆ A large quantity of mugs and assorted other kitchen items to the Ottawa Mission.

- ◆ Pet care items, such as litter boxes, toys, food dishes and cages to Mel's Animal Rescue, as well as to the Lanark Animal Welfare Society (LAWS).



- ◆ Several boxes of wine glasses were lent to the Susan Shirley Maternity Home for a cupcake tree at a fundraising gala.

- ◆ A set of plates and bowls were donated to the Smiths Falls Welcoming Community for their community potluck dinners.



- ◆ Both the Smiths Falls Community Theatre and the Perth Theatre Company have borrowed set items for their productions.

- ◆ Blankets were contributed to Broadview Retirement Lodge.



- ◆ Our children's books are free, as we get far more than we can sell. They have made their way into establishing a new library at an Ottawa school, to children at Movies under the Stars, to various classrooms, and to other organizations' rummage sales.

- ◆ Some discounted building materials went to Christie Lake Kids Camp for their new Hydro Ottawa Sustainable Youth Leadership Centre.



We love to hear about store items making their way into the hands of non-profit organizations like our own, who need to keep a lid on their expenses. If you have a story to impart, please let us know, here or on our Facebook page.

Second Hand Art Bazaar a Success

Second hand art was being sold at a rapid pace during the REAL Deal's recent Second Chance Art Bazaar. This was our annual opportunity to showcase the many pieces of art that accumulate at the REAL Deal, but just don't have the wall space to display effectively. While many of the pieces were framed wall art, there were some interesting decorative mirrors, wall hangings, and small tabletop pieces as well, at very reasonable prices.



The sale was originally scheduled for March 13 – 15, with the art being displayed in the front office. With the arrival of a major donation of art, the display spilled over into the store, and the sale was extended to March 20 – 22. By then the stock was moving so well, the Store Manager tacked on another week, March 27 – 29. This was the fourth year for this art sale, and judging by its popularity, will be repeated next year.

In REAL Life

Here are some upcoming events in which REAL may be participating. If you attend an event, please drop by the REAL display and say hello.



Pitch-In Smiths Falls, April 19 – May 4. Group cleanup Saturday, April 26, 9:00 –11:30, at corner of Ferrara and Fergusson Drives. Pre-register with Bonita 283-1174, the store 283-7999, or bjlucas@live.ca. See website and last page of this newsletter for more details.



Sustainable North Grenville (SNG) Annual Sustainability Fair, Sunday April 27 from 10 a.m. to 4 pm. at the North Grenville Municipal Centre. In SNG's words, "It's not easy being green, but it sure is fun!" See sustainablenorthgrenville.ca for more.



5th Annual **Merrickville Go Green EcoFair**, Saturday, May 10 from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Merrickville Community Centre, Merrickville. Contact Scott@merrickville-goes-green.com or see their website merrickville-goes-green.com.



Spring Living Home Show, Sat. May 3rd, 10 – 8 and Sun. May 4th, 10 – 4, Smiths Falls Community Memorial Community Centre, 71 Cornelia St., Smiths Falls. Contact Dawn 284-2664, Dave 284-5087 or Tony 284-9400 and see their website www.sfhomeshow.ca.

Doors Open Smiths Falls, Sunday, June 8th various locations. See doorsopenontario.on.ca/smithsfalls or call Amber acoville@smithsfalls.ca at 283-4124.



REAL was delighted to learn we were awarded a \$15,000 capital grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation. The Trillium grant will allow REAL to make energy efficiency improvements in its building, expand the fenced yard, and, in partnership with Rideau Lumber Home Hardware, install a demonstration solar wall which will provide solar heat to the building.



Green Communities Canada (GCC), of which REAL is a member, received an Excellence in Water Stewardship Award during Canada Water Week for outstanding achievement, innovative practice and leadership in the area of water stewardship. Canada's Premiers select one winner per province.



Wash those reusable bags. A 2011 University of Arizona study found that only 3% of people regularly wash their reusable bags, and found bacteria in 99% of the bags tested. Washing the bags reduced the bacteria by 99.9%. Even polyurethane bags can be washed five or six times before they start to fall apart.

<http://www>

- Five Man Electrical Band and friends sing an updated version of their song "Signs" in a Friends of the Earth Project. www.youtube.com/watch?v=BUDbN0ZnGGI
- National Geographic has short, fun quizzes to test your environmental knowledge at <http://environment.nationalgeographic.com/environment/green-guide/quizzes/>
- China's "staggering" move to urbanization disregards environmental concerns. <http://www.emagazine.com/daily-news/fast-tracking-cities-in-china>
- World's Largest Solar Plant Starts Producing Electricity. Story on the [Ivanpah Solar Electric Generating System in California](#) includes lots of great photos.

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info@REALaction.ca

We're on the Web
www.REALaction.ca

Environmental
Projects Manager
Sue Brandum
613-267-2257
sbrandum@cogeco.ca

**REAL Deal Store &
Environment Centre**

85 William St. W.,
Smiths Falls ON
613-283-7999

Store open Thurs, Fri, Sat
10am—4pm

Well Aware, Energy Audits,
RAIN or other programs

Phone: 613-283-9500

Send contributions to July issue
by June 15, 2014 to
dhicks11@cogeco.ca
or call Barb at (613) 283-9966

REAL people taking REAL action to protect our environment



PITCH IN SMITHS FALLS
April 19 - May 4, 2014

Join with your fellow residents
to spring clean Smiths Falls

- ▶ tell us where you will be working
- ▶ pick up supplies at REAL Deal starting April 3
- ▶ clean by yourself or with a group any time during the two weeks
- ▶ report back what you have collected



Special Group Effort Day
Sat. April 26, 9:00 - 11:30 a.m.
To clean up Ferrara and Fergusson
Wear gloves, bags provided

Feel good about helping your community

For more information
contact Bonita at bjlucas@live.ca
283-7999 (store hours) or 283-1174



RIDEAU
ENVIRONMENTAL
ACTION LEAGUE

www.REALaction.ca



**Make a
REAL
Difference**

Please return this form to:
REAL
Box 1061
Smiths Falls, ON
K7A 5A5

Or bring to
The REAL Deal

Make a Donation

I would like to make
a donation of

\$ _____

A charitable receipt for
income tax purposes will
be issued. To donate by
credit card, go to
www.Canadahelps.org.

Volunteer

I want to help

Become a Member

I would like to become a member

- Individual membership \$15
- Family membership \$20
- Student membership \$5
- Corporate membership \$50

Contact Information

Name

Street/RR Address

.....

Town, Province

Postal Code

Home Phone

Work Phone

Best time to reach me

Email address