

REAL *update*

REAL people taking REAL action to protect our environment

25 Years of Environmental Action

Rideau Environmental Action League (REAL)

APRIL 2015

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REAL Deal Upgrades

The inside of the REAL Deal is looking particularly ship-shape these days, following some alterations made possible by an Ontario Trillium Foundation capital grant.

Over the course of three weeks, Malloch Construction completed the renovations needed. Two solar thermal panels were installed in the southwest corner of the building, which will make the temperature more comfortable at the back of the store and create some energy savings. The next week, the pilasters (concrete vertical supports) on the south side of the building were insulated and painted. And the third week, the pilasters on the north side, as well as a small area of exposed concrete from the former oil heating system, were done.

Our thanks to Malloch for managing to do the work on our off days, so the store hours were not interrupted, and for making some shelving alterations so that everything still fit. Special thanks to Arthur Janes, Chance Lockett and Don Harvey for coming in on their off days to move the shelving and contents away from the walls so the work could proceed and then moving it back into place. Thanks, too, to Sue Brandum for securing the funding and Shawn Merriman for making the construction arrangements.

Painting the pilaster enclosures white has made the long walls look more continuous and neater, and moving the shelving gave us a chance to clean up a little. We also managed to deal with some things that had been cluttering the shelves waiting for a decision. The cash area was improved, the silent auction area is more spacious, and the small office area will be converted to more effective storage.

We are coming into our busy season, so we are in a good position to accept more donations of quality used household and renovations materials. If you have materials to contribute, we would appreciate it if you could bring them sooner rather than later, before we get deluged with garage sale remainders.



Thanks to Rideau Home Hardware for working with us to incorporate the solar thermal panels at the REAL Deal.



The Canadian Blue Dot Movement to Amend the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

by Linda Kulkarni

In the fall of 2014 the David Suzuki Foundation in partnership with Ecojustice launched the Blue Dot Movement with a cross-Canada tour in which David Suzuki spoke to the challenges in sustaining a healthy environment. The aim of the Blue Dot Movement is to mobilize support across the country to have the Canadian Constitution amended to include the right of every person to a healthy environment. To date over 65,000 people have joined their local Blue Dot movement and 26 municipal governments, both urban and rural, have passed declarations respecting people's right to live in a healthy environment. The next step will be to have the provinces follow suit and pass environmental bills of rights. Once seven of ten provinces representing more than 50% of the population have recognized the right to a healthy environment, attention will turn to the ultimate goal of amending the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

In a series of white papers, David Boyd, a leading environmental lawyer, has identified Canada as a serious laggard internationally in regards to protecting the environment. In 2010 Canada was ranked 24th out of the 25 wealthiest nations in the Organization for Economic Coordination and Development (OECD) in environmental performance. In 2013 the Conference Board of Canada ranked Canada 15th out of 17 large, wealthy industrialized nations on environmental performance, with Sweden, Finland and Norway top of the rankings. It is worth noting that some of the Scandinavian countries also outperform Canada in terms of economic competition, innovation and return on investment. Whereas, at one time Canada was seen as a leader internationally when it came to addressing environmental issues, we now have the dubious distinction of countless "Fossil of the Day" and "Colossal Fossil" awards for blocking progress at international climate change negotiations, and in 2010 earned the "Dodo Award" for obstructing biodiversity

negotiations. This international profile is in direct contradiction to the values that the majority of Canadians hold. In public opinion polls at least 90% of Canadians express concerns about the impacts of environmental degradation on their health and are concerned or seriously concerned about climate change, loss of biodiversity and pollution. More than 95% of Canadians agree that access to clean water is a basic human right and endorse the right to live in a healthy environment. David Boyd's white papers describing in detail the processes involved in a change to the Constitution can be found at <http://www.davidsuzuki.org/issues/health/projects/right-to-a-healthy-environment/>



More than 140 countries have amended their constitutions to require environmental protections, with 98 countries explicitly recognizing the right to a healthy environment. Canada's constitution is completely silent about the environment, resulting in lack of clarity regarding federal and provincial jurisdiction and facilitating attacks on current environmental laws. Currently five provinces and territories have some form of environmental rights legislations. The Province of Ontario has an Environmental Bill of Rights (EBR) that came into effect in 1993 and has remained essentially unchanged since that time. The Ontario EBR focuses on a narrow range of procedural rights, such as the right of access to information and the right to request investigations. However, Ecojustice, the Canadian Environmental Law Association, and the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario, have identified and documented significant shortcomings within the current EBR that limit environmental protection and do not include a clear and substantive right to a healthy environment. The Ontario Ministry of the Environment agreed years ago to review the EBR, but this review is yet to be done.



April 12-18, 2015 is National Volunteer Week, a time to recognize, celebrate and thank volunteers.

We salute the terrific volunteers who are the heart and soul of REAL, and who make all of the environmental actions we take in our community possible. We truly couldn't do it without you!

Thank you for.....



...the physical work that you do



...keeping the REAL Deal running



...planning and organizing



...communicating what we do



...staffing special events



... lending your expertise



...and sharing your time with us.



Spring and summer bring a plethora of area events organized by area organizations. Here are some that may be of interest to environmentally conscious residents, including some in which REAL will be participating:

2015

UPCOMING EVENTS

2015

April 18 – May 2,
Pitch In Smiths Falls, at various Smiths Falls locations. An annual community litter cleanup. Contact Cathryn, 283-9819, see our website, or the poster on the back page.

Sun. April 26 – 8, 10 – 2 p.m.
Annual North Grenville Sustainability Fair and Market, North Grenville Municipal Centre, Kemptville. Family Earth Day events including a display of five models of electric vehicles. Contact sngfair@magma.ca or see www.SustainableNorthGrenville.ca.

Sat. May 2 – Sun. May 3
Smiths Falls Home and Living Expo, Smiths Falls Memorial Community Centre. Showcasing regional businesses dedicated to improving your home and enhancing your lifestyle.

Sat. May 9, 10—3 p.m.
6th Annual Merrickville Goes Green, Merrickville Community Centre. Environmental activities and events.

Wed. May 13, 1 p.m. to 6 p.m.
6th Annual Volunteer Search, SFDCI cafetorium. A chance for people wanting to volunteer and organizations needing volunteers to connect. Contact Nancy, 613-800-1938.

Sat. June. 20
Smiths Falls Healthy Living Festival, downtown streets. Health and fitness oriented activities.
<http://www.healthysmithsfalls.ca/>

Sat. Aug. 15 and Sun. Aug. 16
Rideau Ferry Regatta, Rideau Ferry Yacht Club. Biennial event is Canada's largest antique vintage racing boat regatta.
<http://www.rideauferryregatta.ca>

Sue Brandum, the board and other volunteers have been busy “behind the scenes” on a number of projects, including:

- * Crunching the numbers to come up with a budget for the coming year.
- * Finding the funds to purchase a coverall so that the REAL Deal can accept and safely store more and larger renovation items.
- * Lining up new gardeners for the REAL Community Garden, and consulting with other Smiths Falls cooperative garden leaders.
- * Hammering out additional health and safety, financial and honorarium policies and procedures.
- * Coordinating the installation of the additional stones and an interpretive panel on Evergreen Avenue, and planning a subsequent celebration.
- * Arranging for the construction of the compost demonstration site.
- * Determining which area spring and summer events to concentrate our efforts on.



2015 Hazardous 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 confirmation and hours.

Lanark County

Residents of Beckwith, Carleton Place, Drummond-North Elmsley, Mississippi Mills, Montague, Perth and Smiths Falls can use the depot on Patterson Crescent in Carleton Place. The depot is open Saturdays 8 a.m. to noon from June 6 to Aug 29.

Lanark Highlands and Tay Valley Township

The depot at the Lanark Highlands Middleville Waste Site will be open Saturday, May 17 until the Thanksgiving Weekend. Open Mondays, Wednesday and Saturdays.

Leeds and Grenville Municipalities

Including Gananoque and Prescott, but not Brockville. Two dates: Saturday, August 15 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Frankville/Toledo Patrol Garage and the South Leeds Patrol Garage, and Saturday, September 26th at the South Grenville Patrol Garage in the morning 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and the North Grenville Patrol Garage in the afternoon, 1 p.m. to 4:00 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.

Rideau Lakes and Westport

Just one household hazardous waste day is planned for this year at Portland Transfer Station, 4427 Old Kingston Road, Saturday July 18, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Residents can access the other Leeds and Grenville depots.

All municipalities: 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. .

Other Smiths Falls Seasonal Waste Events

Community Compost Site

The Smiths Falls Community Compost Site is open Saturdays 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. from May 2 to November 21. The site on Highway 43 (east of Hillcrest Cemetery) accepts leaves, grass clippings and brush from Smiths Falls and Drummond –North Elmsley residents only.

Leaf Collection

Smiths Falls will be doing Leaf and Yard Waste Collection the week of May 5 – 8.

Swap Events

Smiths Falls has two weekend Swap Events planned: June 12-14 and August 14-16. Place reusable items at the curb on Friday for others to take. If the treasures haven't been taken by Sunday, bring them back in. (And make plans to get them to the REAL Deal!)

Communication Changes

Over the next two months members will be noticing some changes on the communications front.

Website. Our website, REALaction.ca, is being converted to a new format, which will be launched by early May. The WordPress format is more up-to-date, will be easier to maintain, and will be more viewable in other screen formats, such as smartphones. Thanks to Chris Woods for managing the transformation. Our web address remains the same: www.REALaction.ca. We hope you like the new look!



MailChimp Emails. Members will be receiving an email asking them to subscribe to our MailChimp mailing list. MailChimp is a very popular free email service that will allow REAL to send professional looking email messages to its subscriber list. MailChimp manages the mailing list by allowing members and friends to subscribe and unsubscribe to the list on their own. You may have used MailChimp, or similar products such as Constant Contact or BlackBaud, with other non-profit and small businesses you deal with. Moving to this system will allow REAL to send to our entire mailing list in one step. Currently our messages have to be sent out in three groups one hour apart to avoid being flagged by our mail server.

Best of all, MailChimp will also allow REAL to satisfy the new Canadian anti-spam regulations, which require that each person on our list specifically agrees to receive email communication from us. So it is very important that you confirm that you want to be on our mailing list when you are prompted, otherwise we cannot “legally” send you our notices and newsletters and we will lose contact.



Newsletter. We will continue to produce the REAL Update newsletter in Publisher so we can provide a print version. But the version of the newsletter you receive via MailChimp will now provide more of the text and photos on your screen, and link to the PDF version, which resides on the website.

Problems? No upgrade comes without a few glitches. Please contact [Barb](#) with any issues you have with the website, MailChimp emails or newsletter.

“Grandmother of Recycling” Passes Away

REAL members were saddened to learn of the passing of long-time advocate for the local environment, Elva Corless. Elva passed away at her home in Angus, Ontario on March 28. Elva was one of REAL’s founding members, was President from 1997 to 2000, and was awarded the title Director Emeritus when she retired from the REAL Board in 2008.

Elva started the recycling movement here in Smiths Falls in the early seventies long before the blue boxes came to the area. She was the key organizer for REAL’s Reuse Centre, a precursor to today’s REAL DEAL. Elva also took on many active and leadership roles in Trinity United Church.

Elva shared her time and talent generously. Her enthusiastic and dedicated approach to environmental action was exemplary to those around her, and set the tone for other REAL members. She will be remembered with admiration.

A stone inscribed “Grandmother of Recycling” was placed on Evergreen Avenue in honour of Elva in 2012.



In REAL Life

Thanks to everyone who renewed their membership so promptly and for the many donations included. “First in” prize goes to Philippe Lagarde, who managed to stop by the REAL Deal with his membership fee while we were stuffing the envelopes to be mailed. Second and third in were Joyce Smith and Iris Doran. If you haven’t sent us your renewal yet, please don’t delay. REAL truly needs and sincerely appreciates all its member support.



The REAL Deal is pleased to welcome two new volunteers. Andrew Atkins is helping us sort through some computer and technology issues, and Judy Mundy has joined the REAL Deal staff, and will be doing cash Thursday and Friday mornings. Welcome to the team!



Community Garden Needs. The Community Garden would welcome the donation of good used: hand held garden tools, watering cans, tomato cages, hose spray nozzles or wands, or a small spade. And we may be dreaming, but a garden bench would be really nice, too! Contact Donna, 283-2254, if you can help, or just bring the items to the REAL Deal Store. At this writing, we also have one garden plot available, as a few of last year’s gardeners are not returning. Cost is \$20 for the season. Contact Barb, 283-9966.



There are now more than 300,000 rail cars passing through Smiths Falls per year carrying hazardous materials, including crude oil. As the Smiths Falls Fire Department is likely to be the first responder in case of spills, fires or explosions, three of its members are receiving specialized training to deal with potential train accidents or derailments. CP Rail has HAZMAT specialists to deal with derailments, but they would not be on site immediately.



Come have some creative fun at a repurposing craft workshop Saturday, April 25 at the REAL Deal, 9:30 – 12:30. Perth artist Carol Richardson will demonstrate how to make stained glass and broken dish mosaic windows. Each participant will make a mosaic flower pot to take home.

Crafters should preregister at the store or with Barb 283-9966, as space is limited. The cost is \$15 per person. Participants should dress in old comfortable clothing, and bring cotton garden gloves, an old bath towel and an old toothbrush. Those attending may also choose to bring their own materials to incorporate into their mosaic. Contact Carol with any questions about the projects: crmosaic@gmail.com.

REAL has offered several repurposing workshops in the past, and encourages anyone who does repurposing crafts, particularly those that incorporate materials from the REAL Deal, to provide photos to share. The store also has several binders of repurposing ideas for inspiration.

<http://www>

- The Town of Smiths Falls won a bronze [WALK Friendly Community designation](#) from Canada Walks, a division of Green Communities Canada.
- Fans, filters, windows, clotheslines....spring energy saving tips from [Conserve and Connect](#)
- Impressive 40 second time lapse video of the seasons of the year view of a natural scene. <https://www.facebook.com/video.php?v=10152317869762595>
- Ecojustice story [Microbeads Add up to Big Problem for Great Lakes](#) outlines what is being done to phase out these little bits of plastic from personal care products.

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We're on the Web
www.REALaction.ca

Environmental
Projects Manager
Sue Brandum
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**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, 2015 to
dhicks11@cogeco.ca
or call Barb at (613) 283-9966

PITCH IN

HELP CREATE A
GREENER, CLEANER

SMITHS FALLS

BAGS AVAILABLE AT
THE REAL DEAL REUSE STORE
283-7999
13 WILLIAM ST. W. SMITHS FALLS
STARTING THURS APRIL 9TH
WWW.REALACTION.CA

CLEAN UP ANY TIME BETWEEN
**APRIL 18 -
MAY 2
2015**

**PRIZES FOR THE
MOST UNUSUAL AND THE
MOST AMUSING FINDS!
SEND US A PHOTO OF YOU
WITH THE ITEM FOR A
CHANCE TO WIN!**



RIDEAU
ENVIRONMENTAL
ACTION LEAGUE

REAL WILL COORDINATE LOCATIONS. PLEASE CALL 283-9819

OR EMAIL CNDDAVIDSON@COGECO.CA FOR INFO

Tim Hortons

Walmart

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