

# REAL *update*

REAL people taking REAL action to protect our environment

Rideau Environmental Action League (REAL)

DEC 2012

Inside this issue:

- Reducing Christmas Wrapping Waste Wrapping* 2
- Evergreen Stone Placed for Elva Corless* 3
- Mississippi Source Protection Committee* 3
- New Program Helps Cut Electricity Use* 4
- REAL Deal Store News* 5
- REAL Volunteers Behind the Scenes* 6
- Canada World Youth Depart* 6
- In REAL Life* 7
- "Prelude to Christmas"* 8

## REAL Facelift

When you drive by the REAL Deal you should see a new 5' x10' sign on the front of the building. In preparation for sign placement, the metal panels were given a fresh coat of green paint, and the vestibule by the front door opened up. The sign is intended to make the connection between our name and acronym clear, and emphasize that the REAL Deal is part of a larger



organization, the Rideau Environmental Action League. A generous donation from some prefer-to-remain-anonymous donors made these upgrades possible. The remainder of their donation will be used to replace the kiosk at the end of Evergreen with new interpretive panels. But you'll have to wait until spring to see those!



REAL is pleased to announce that we have been accepted by the organization, 1% for the Planet (1%FTP). Since 2002, 1% for the Planet has successfully inspired members of the global business community to contribute 1% of their sales to environmental groups around the world. By participating, these 1500 businesses recognize that the economy and the environment are linked. "1%FTP is a powerful way for business to help drive positive environmental change, gain recognition for their responsibility, and promote further action on the part of consumers and other companies." Member companies donate directly

to approved non-profits (such as REAL), and may choose to divide their 1% among many organizations on the list. At the end of the fiscal year, member businesses must prove that they have contributed 1% of their revenues in order to maintain their membership and continue to use the 1% logo. Over 2800 non-profits across the world have been approved to receive donations from 1%FTP members. To qualify the non-profits must prove they have clear objectives and a track record of successful environmental initiatives. Interest in 1%FTP took off in 2005 when the 50th member, musician Jack Johnson, displayed the 1% logo on his "In Between Dreams" CD jacket. Total giving through the program has now surpassed \$100 million. Read more about the program at [onepercentfortheplanet.org](http://onepercentfortheplanet.org).



### *Reducing Christmas Wrapping Waste*

Reduce the waste created by traditional Christmas gift wrapping with some of these old and new ideas. You will wonder why you ever used and threw away so much Christmas wrapping paper, ribbons and bows. Start by setting aside anything that looks like it might be useful, like the foil or fabric from flowers or plants, the trims off fancy gift boxes, stickers you get in the charitable donation requests, and the like.

**The container.** Think beyond the box to cereal boxes, Christmas cookie tins, jars, wicker or fruit baskets. Use a clear plastic container and bury the gift with shredded coloured paper. If you've ordered a gift by mail, just keep the gift in that box, skip the wrap and embellish it with ribbon, trims, and stickers.

**Packing.** Reuse tissue paper or Styrofoam peanuts, or try real peanuts (in the shell) or popped popcorn. You can even use shredded white paper or put some too-small-to-be-usable coloured wrap through the shredder.

**Gift Bags.** Purchased paper gift bags can be used multiple times, but aren't recyclable. Handled shopping bags, brown or coloured are possibilities. Sew a fabric bag from colourful or Christmas fabric, or wrap gifts in old clothing.

**Wrap.** Brown packages look classy with a coloured bow, and the paper is recyclable, as are comics or newspaper. (Try black ribbon on the newspaper!) Old topo maps, road maps, or the ones you get with your National Geographic are interesting, as are children's artwork and wallpaper. Kids will enjoy decorating plain white or parchment paper with potato or cork prints, rubber stamps, markers or stickers. Need large paper sheets? Use the paper that is folded around your EMC fliers, newsprint roll ends, or cut open another paper bag.

**Make the wrap part of the gift.** You can wrap a gift in scarves, baby blankets, towels, tea towels, throws, t-shirts and so on. Tie with whatever you have on hand or pin carefully.

**Tying.** Tie your package with ribbon, string, twine, raffia or yarn. The cords from sweatshirts are good for tying or sewing into the neck of gift bags. Or be truly creative and try skipping ropes, bungee cords, or shoe laces.

**Trims.** Embellish with anything reused or natural: small branches, shell, pinecones, or flowers, or a paper snowflake. Or consider a small gift like measuring spoons, a candy cane, a lollipop, or a hair scrunchie.

**Tags.** Write directly on the package, or use labels or stickers. Cut up old greeting cards with pinking shears in rectangles, the recipient's initial, or Christmassy shapes like mittens and bells. Cards can also be cut to fit the top side of a small package by way of decoration.

### **Other Thoughts.**

- Martha Stewart suggests opening up a potato chip bag so you can wrap a gift in the silvery foil inside.
- Look for online directions to create fused plastic gift bags using layers of plastic bags and an iron.
- Consider not wrapping the gift up at all, especially if you are going to present it immediately.
- Give gifts that don't require packaging! Purchased or homemade gift certificates are easily wrapped in an envelope, and making a charitable donation or giving from a charitable gift catalogue are possibilities.
- If you are using traditional Christmas wrap, check with your municipality what they will take in their recycling programs. And don't be tempted to burn coloured paper in your fireplace.
- The REAL Deal is well-supplied with cookie tins and wicker, and has some trims, bows and gift bags, too.

For more ideas, see <http://simplemom.net/eco-friendly-and-green-gift-wrapping-ideas-for-this-holiday-season/> or check Martha Stewart site for inspiration. That site also has some ideas for reusing traditional paper gift wrap.



### *Evergreen Stone Placed for Elva Corless*



Elva Corless, a founding and honorary member of REAL, visited Smiths Falls recently from her new home in Angus, Ontario. She is pictured here by the granite stone placed in her honour on REAL's Evergreen Avenue at Victoria Park. The inscription "Grandmother of Recycling" refers to her work establishing the recycling depots in Smiths Falls prior to the arrival of the blue box system, and her commitment to waste reduction. REAL also purchased a stone to mark the organization's 20th anniversary in the fall of 2009. Both stones are on the canal side of the path, close to the wading pool and picnic shelter.

The Evergreen Avenue committee installed five stones over the summer on the memorial walkway, and maintained the native vegetation. Stones have been placed to commemorate war veterans, peace keepers or any special person or occasion. Donations are also

accepted for perpetual care. For details, contact Dick Donaldson, 283-3274 or [donaldso@cogeco.ca](mailto:donaldso@cogeco.ca). A list of existing stones is on our website at [www.realaction.ca/evergreenavenue.htm](http://www.realaction.ca/evergreenavenue.htm). Updated interpretive panels will replace the existing kiosk in the spring of 2013.



### *Reflections on the Mississippi Rideau Source Protection Committee by Patricia Larkin*

It was the summer of 2007 when I saw a notice for applications to participate in the Mississippi Rideau Source Protection Committee (SPC). This seemed like a perfect fit for me: experience working in a multi-stakeholder setting – check; experience or interest in water resources – check; relevant education - check; local agency support of my application – hmmm, who would I call? REAL immediately came to mind. Not only had I been working as a Water Guide with the Well Aware Program, but I respected REAL's longstanding role in Smiths Falls and surrounding area as an effective advocate for environmental protection.

Five years of meetings, workshops, and home study have passed and the final submission, the Mississippi Rideau Source Protection Plan, has been sent to the Ministry of Environment for review and approval. At our last meeting, Chairperson Janet Stavinga asked what we had taken away from our efforts and experience. I mentioned two things. The first is that I learned (again) that 'you can't always get what you want', or 'Rome wasn't built in a day' and 'Pick your battles'. There were a few disappointments, and hopefully some of these issues can be revisited in the years ahead, particularly: intake protection zone scoring; the muted ability for the SPC to address rural water issues; and the MOE rules that required historical records instead of climate change projections to be used in the threat assessment for adequate water supplies.

Secondly, it became clear early on that I was part of an impressive group! The longevity in our individual membership, compared to many provincial committees, is evidence of our commitment. As it happened, your SPC was both the 'darling' or 'in the doghouse' as our questions challenged the MOE while the process unfolded. But I think we were always respected. I also recognized the tremendous effort of Janet and the Source Protection staff.

The SPC is satisfied with the Mississippi Rideau Source Protection Plan and associated Explanatory Document. We hope that they serve their intended purpose to protect municipal water supply. The next round belongs to the implementers – your municipal councils and staff; the Conservation Authorities; and the businesses, farmers and private citizens around these two fantastic watersheds. Some interim measures are underway and the Plans should be approved by mid-2013. That is an awfully long time since the Walkerton Tragedy. However, we now have excellent knowledge and resources, and overall awareness has surely been raised. Thank you for having supported me to help with this work! Please visit <http://www.mrsourcewater.ca/act/index.html> to see all available documentation.

## ***New Program Helps Cut Electricity Use and Bills***

*“Tell them REAL sent you!”*

REAL will be promoting a new free program geared to helping people reduce electricity use and bills. The saveonenergy Home Assistance program is designed to help both homeowners and tenants improve their energy efficiency. See the sidebar for eligibility.



Once you apply for the program and are eligible, an auditor will visit your house and install various devices to help reduce electricity use. These may include lightbulbs, low-flow shower heads and faucet aerators.

You may also be eligible for a new, energy-efficient refrigerator or other appliance, such as a room air conditioner. If you are in an electrically heated home you may also be eligible for a programmable thermostat, weatherstripping around your doors and windows and additional insulation in your attic or basement.

All the services are free of charge to all approved applicants. This is because it costs less to improve efficiency in our homes than it does to build new power plants.

REAL is working with the Housing Coalition of Lanark County to get the word out and is promoting the program in Lanark County and the northern part of Leeds and Grenville.

To apply for the program, simply call GreenSaver at 1-855-591-0877 and tell them REAL sent you. REAL receives a small promotion fee for everyone who says “REAL sent me.” To make the application process easier, GreenSaver will walk you through the application process over the phone. But you can download the Home Assistance program participation application form at <http://www.hydroone.com/MyHome/SaveEnergy/HomeAssistance/Pages/Default.aspx>. Make sure to fill in REAL as the referral agency.

### ***Eligibility***

You may be eligible:

- If you own or are a tenant in a detached or semi-detached house, a townhouse, a mobile home or a unit in a duplex, triplex or other multi-residential building three stories or less
- And your annual household income before taxes, depending on the number of people living in the home, is: 1 person - \$31,452; 2 persons - \$39,155; 3 persons - \$48,137; 4 persons - \$58,444; 5 persons - \$66,288; 6 persons - \$74,760; and 7 or more persons - \$83,236.



**OR**, you have received one of the following for the past 12 months:

- National Child Benefit Supplement (NCBS)
- Allowance for the Survivor
- Guaranteed Income Supplement
- Allowance for Seniors
- Ontario Works
- Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)

**OR**, you have received a Utility Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP) grant within the past 12 months.

For more details see: <https://saveonenergy.ca/Consumer/Home-Assistance/Resident.aspx>

## *Real Deal Store News*

**Christmas Deals.** Make the REAL Deal your first stop when shopping for all things Christmas! Used is a great deal for you, and a great deal for the environment. We have a wonderful selection of gently used items we have been amassing ever since last Christmas. And if you're tired of some of your own Christmas paraphernalia, why not donate it to the REAL Deal? What's "blah" to you will "ahhh" to someone else. Watch for even more impressive deals December 13-22, when we have our "Boxing Day Sale" before Christmas! The store will be closed from December 23 to January 2 to give staff and volunteers a break, and will reopen Thursday, January 3. Please hang on to your donations until the store reopens, as we won't have staff to deal with it over the holiday.

**Major Renovations.** Customer comments have been very favourable following some extensive changes inside the store. The biggest change is the transformation of the "oil tank" room into a furniture gallery. The room has been wired to display lamps to full effect. Overhead are hooks to hang light fixtures, and above that, rows of art are displayed. The back aisle of the store has been designated for furniture only, and staff are resisting the temptation to put any other items on shelves or table tops, so customers can get a good look at the pieces. Various small storage changes will keep the store better organized. For example, a rack for mirrors and large sheets of glass will keep them safer. Sports has moved to the back of the store, and videos, DVDs, and CD's are now closer to the books.

So please come and take a look. The aisles are wider and the shelving units are making better use of vertical space, and we know you will be impressed with the difference. Our sincere appreciation to Nancy Berthiaume who had the vision, and her husband Bill Hamilton for his handyman skills. The entire transformation was complete within about 10 days, and the store remained open while the changes were made. Nancy and Bill, along with parents Paul and Della Berthiaume, have now headed south for the winter and a well-deserved rest!

**Upcycled Candles.** An industrious store customer, Bev Hitchins, has created a collection of unique candleware almost entirely with repurposed containers and candle wax from the REAL Deal. The REAL Deal receives a surprising number of burned down candles that can be reformed. And there are always interesting containers to be had, such as glasses, mugs, small bowls, and former candle holders. The candles are now for sale, and are displayed close to the cash. See some photos of their creation on the REAL Deal Store Facebook page. Maybe you'll be inspired to try some of your own!

**Personnel.** The change in seasons has brought on some volunteer staff changes. Eric Sirvent, who worked cash Thursday and Friday has moved on, as has Alyssa, who was doing her high school community service hours with us on Saturdays. Jamie Arbo, who was practicing her office administration skills with us Fridays, completed her placement November 9th. We thank them all for their commitment and



### **Holiday Season Dates**

#### **December Make a Deal:**

Friday, Dec. 21, 10 –4 p.m.

#### **December Silent Auction**

##### **Close:**

Friday, Dec.21 at 12:30 p.m.

#### **Customer Appreciation Day:**

Sat. Dec. 22, 10 a.m.—2 p.m.

Come and enjoy some free Christmas treats!

#### **Store Closing for 2012:**

Saturday, Dec. 22 at 4 p.m.

#### **Store Reopens in 2013:**

Thursday, Jan. 3 at 10 a.m.

Have yourself a safe and happy holiday season!

initiative! Now the cash is being staffed by Bonita Lucas, Heather Warren, and returning volunteer, Sara Thompson. We also welcome new volunteer Russell Tye, who has been helping with receiving and some handyman tasks. Store staff is rounded out with regulars Ed Crawford, Eddie Lockett and David Grant “out back” and Brenda King, Una Pugh and Barb Hicks in “smalls”. REALy recent volunteer arrivals are Randy Martin, Jason, and Linda Dalton. We could really use some more “smalls vols” to sort, price and display incoming donations. Please speak to Tracy, Store Manager, or Don Harvey, Store Assistant, or call the store if you could help for a few hours on a one-time or ongoing basis.

### ***Other REAL Volunteers Work Behind the Scenes***

Many people contribute behind the scenes to REAL’s progress. Our thanks to the following for their recent volunteer efforts:

- Dan Davidson for looking after the lawn this summer, and for his computer know-how
- Heather McLenaghan for her graphic design advice
- Simon Lunn for his photo contributions
- Jamie Arbo for her Friday office tasks
- Nancy Berthiaume for newsletter layout
- Ron and Libby Toop for newsletter proofreading
- Ken Graham for expediting our Environment Centre approval with the Town of Smiths Falls
- Carolyn Fraser for Friday cheque-signing duties and membership renewals
- Jocelyn Rait for the native garden maintenance
- And the REAL Board who work year-round to keep us on track: Peter Au, Barb Hicks, Scott Lumsden, Larry Manson, Donna McKenna and Karen Schecter.



### ***Canada World Youth Depart for Honduras***

*Kirah and Odilia both participated in the Canada World Youth program. Young people from across Canada were paired with Nicaraguan youth, and spent July to September in our area. Kirah and Odilia’s host family were Colleen and Mike Muldoon of Smiths Falls, and REAL was their work partner. The group left Perth for Honduras in late September.*



Working at the REAL Store was a great experience. It didn’t take long for us to start to feel like a part of the team. Although there may have been some moments of boredom, there were also many busy days. Odilia even got a taste of working cash. Even though it was stressful at times, it is a skill she will be able to take back to Honduras. It was amazing to see all the crazy things that go through the REAL Deal store and the sheer number of mugs and wicker objects that are accumulated. The best experiences that we have had were the ones I shared with people who work here. Each person who we have met displayed so much understanding, kindness, and patience, creating a very pleasant workplace. Thank you for sharing some of your time with us. We will never forget the little things, like Tracy always singing along with the radio with a cup of coffee in her hand, or Nancy always smiling and always so positive. As well as, Sue going back and forth on Google translator to make sure Odilia understood everything, Barb with her great sense of humor and crazy stories, Brenda, whose company can make any day a great one, and all the other volunteers. Thank you so much. We can’t wait to see how the store continues to evolve and we hope to come back at some point and see the progress that is being made.

Thanks again, Kirah Corfe & Odilia Maria Pineda

*In REAL Life*



Sue Brandum attended the annual Lake Links conference in Perth October 20, and took along a display on climate change. The theme was “Climate Change: How to Build Resiliency in our Lakes”. A new MNR toolkit has been put together to help community organizations examine potential climate change effects and make adaptation plans, which REAL will be considering. Go to [www.mnr.gov.on.ca/](http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/) and follow various links starting with Climate Change.



Our sincere appreciation goes out to Lake 88 client, Howard Allan Chartered Accountants of Perth, who donated their “Community Cares” air-time to help REAL promote the December 5 “Prelude to Christmas” concert. The 36 60-second radio commercials aired between November 12 and 25th, an on-air value of \$1600.



Sue Brandum was Kassina Ryder’s guest on Lake 88’s on-air program In Focus November 7. They discussed REAL, the Rideau Mississippi Take it Back Recyclopedica, REAL's Environment Centre plans and the upcoming concert (see back page for details).

REAL held its 4th successful Cedar Rail Fence workshop on Sept. 30. Fifteen participants had hands-on instruction in heritage fence-building techniques with instructor Scott Dopson, and completed the fourth side of the fence around our community garden in the process.



Environment Minister Peter Kent announced that the Rideau Canal season will remain intact for 2013, but with reduced operating hours. The April announcement of drastic budget cuts, including a reduced season, caused a flurry of protest. A fundraising dinner at Jones Falls in September attracted many concerned about the Rideau Canal’s future. The Rideau Roundtable is planning to gather the interested parties together in 2013 to explore possibilities.



The REAL Deal received an interesting donation from Dairy Queen of a security camera system. We had decided not to use it when a request came from the Station Theatre. They needed a system that would allow actors backstage to watch what was happening onstage, so they would know when to go on. Dan Davidson installed the security system and it is apparently exactly what was needed.



- Reasoning that a better-informed public will be better able to consider the impacts of changes in our energy systems, Pollution Probe has created a Primer on Energy Systems in Canada. <http://www.pollutionprobe.org/energy/energyliteracy/docs/ExecutiveSummaryEnergyPrimer.pdf>

- A recipe for suet cupcakes for feeding our feathered friends this winter – looks like a fun activity for kids. <http://www.birdsandblooms.com/Birds/Winter/Cupcakes-for-the-Birds>

- Pop-up stores – an idea for revitalizing urban neighbourhoods. <http://www.thestar.com/news/gta/article/1267404--revitalizing-danforth-east-neighbourhood-one-pop-up-store-at-a-time> . Would this work in our community?

- Depave Paradise, is a pilot program of Green Communities Canada, where volunteers remove pavement to beautify and renew neglected urban spaces. Watch one community at work: <http://www.thespec.com/news/local/article/821578--dundas-school-de-paves-paradise>



Box 1061  
Smiths Falls ON  
K7A 5A5  
613-283-9500  
info@REALaction.ca

**We're on the Web**  
[www.REALaction.ca](http://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  
K7A 5A5  
613-283-7999

Store open Thurs, Fri, Sat  
10am—4pm

Well Aware, Energy Audits,  
RAIN or other programs  
Phone: 613-283-9500



# Prelude to Christmas

14th Annual Benefit Concert  
by the

**Central Band of the Canadian Forces**

Wednesday December 5th, 2012 at 7 pm

Smiths Falls District Collegiate Institute (SFDCI)  
Percy Street, Smiths Falls ( behind County Fair Mall )

**Tickets \$10.00**

*Enjoy seasonal and military favourites from  
a world-renowned concert band*

**Tickets available at:**

The Kiosk, County Fair Mall

Modern Thymes, 11 Russell St. E.

The REAL Deal Store, 85 William St. W.

& the Perth Legion, 26 Beckwith St. E., Perth.



Presented by the Rideau Environmental Action League (REAL)

For more information call 613-283-9819 [www.REALaction.ca](http://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](http://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 .....