

REAL *update*

REAL people taking REAL action to protect our environment

Celebrating 25 years of Environmental Achievement

Rideau Environmental Action League (REAL)

FEB 2014

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25th Anniversary Celebrations to Take Place all Year

It is hard to believe that REAL will be reaching its quarter century mark this October 31, 2014. Halloween 1989 was the day a group of eco-minded people gathered in Peter and Daisy Au's living room to form a group dedicated to "thinking globally, acting locally" on environmental issues. We are very pleased we have come this far, so we will be celebrating our 25th anniversary all year long.



We have a list of ideas which we will narrow down in the next month or so. Some possibilities that have piqued our interest are screening environmental films, providing some seed money to youth for small scale environmental projects, funding some home energy improvements for deserving families, using the "25" theme for sales and promotions at the REAL Deal, and doing some more tree planting on the "Plant A Tree, Create a Park" site. Tell us what you think! There will be lots of opportunities for you to get involved, so don't be shy. E-mail your thoughts to info@REALaction.ca.

Lights Out For Incandescents



Some Canadians are stockpiling incandescent light bulbs because new federal rules, effective January 1, 2014, prevent 75-watt and 100-watt bulbs from being made or imported into Canada. Existing stocks may still be sold in stores. At the end of this year, 40 and 60-watt incandescent bulbs will also be banned. Specialty incandescent bulbs – such as decorative lamps, appliance bulbs, those used in three-way fixtures, chandeliers and rough service/utility bulbs will be allowed indefinitely.

The ban was originally conceived in 2007, planned for 2012, but advanced to 2014, which gave bulb-makers more time to improve the other options. Alternatives for consumers include 72-watt halogen-incandescent bulbs, compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs) and light-emitting diode (LED) bulbs.



The halogen-incandescent bulbs behave like incandescents but use 28-per-cent less electricity to generate the same amount of light, and their regulation is being considered as well. CFLs and LEDs use much less energy and last longer than incandescents. A 100 watt CFL bulb costs about \$5 and lasts seven years, an LED costs \$30 and lasts 22 years, and an

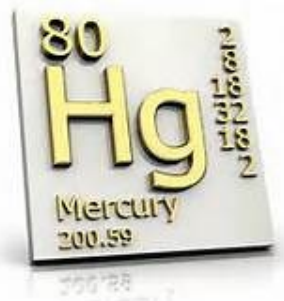


Lights Out For Incandescents (Cont'd)

incandescent bulb costs about \$1 but lasts just one year. CFL prices have fallen sharply in recent years and will likely be the most popular option. (See our [February 2013 Update](#) for more.)

Incandescent bulbs are being banned to make Canada more energy efficient. CFLs use about one-quarter of the energy that incandescent bulbs do and have a very long lifespan. It is estimated the ban will reduce greenhouse-gas emissions by more than six million tonnes annually. Approximately 10% of a household's energy budget is from lighting, so the household energy savings of the switchover will be significant. Lower household energy use means that consumers will save more than \$750-million by 2025.

But here's the problem. CFLs contain a small amount of mercury, and the recycling options for used bulbs are not in place. The five milligrams of mercury contained in one CFL is less than in a watch battery, and a medical thermometer contains about 100 times more mercury than a CFL. Health Canada recommends that items containing mercury be treated as hazardous waste. Mercury is a neurotoxin, and chronic exposure can damage the nervous system. While no mercury vapour is released during the normal use of a CFL, consumers are warned to be cautious while cleaning up after breakages of the bulbs. (Ask for a copy of REAL's flier on CFLs for cleanup tips if you're not sure.) If a CFL goes to landfill, the mercury may leach into the water or soil, and if incinerated, the mercury spread would be even greater.



However, it is estimated that net input of mercury into the environment from using CFLs will be less, as the biggest source of mercury emissions in Canada is electric power generation. By decreasing the amount of electricity needed to power the bulbs, using CFL's will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the mercury levels from power production. Further, the mercury in lightbulbs should be recoverable.

Environment Canada has not put regulations in place to limit the amount of mercury contained in each CFL, or to require manufacturers and distributors to collect and recover the mercury contained in the bulbs. But they are working on it. Currently, there isn't even one Canadian facility to extract mercury from waste. This could become an issue if the U.S. changes its regulations concerning the transport and importing of mercury.

Your disposal options. In the meantime, programs to collect spent CFL bulbs are patchwork. In Canada, the provinces regulate household hazardous waste disposal, but municipalities most often carry it out. In some jurisdictions mercury containing products are collected separately, and some include the collection as part of their general household hazardous waste program. And in some areas, retailers are the only option.



RONA and IKEA stores accept used CFLs from consumers for recycling. Home Depot stores did until earlier this year, when they ended their CFL recycling program, stating "third-party agencies are better equipped to manage these kinds of programs." Some Canadian Tire stores, including the Smiths Falls store, accept both CFLs and conventional fluorescent bulbs for recycling. Most hazardous waste programs will accept CFLs as well. Businesses should visit www.takebackthelight.ca for their disposal options.

Note that incandescent bulbs are not recyclable and not hazardous, and can be placed with your regular garbage.

Thanks to Our Corporate Members for their Continued Support

Andress' Your Independent Grocer

Civitan Club

Cogeco Cable Inc.

Denny K's Car Care

The Garden Market

Healey Transportation Ltd.

Dr. David Hicks

Kilmarnock Enterprises

Renewable Energy of Plum Hollow

Rideau Home Hardware Building Centre



Rideau Valley Conservation Authority

Rotary Club of Smiths Falls

Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 95

Royal LePage Pauline Aunger Real Estate

Scotiabank, Smiths Falls

Smiths Falls Lions Club

Tim Hortons of Smiths Falls

Top Drawer Temporary Services

Town of Smiths Falls

Municipal Committee Reaches Out

The municipal team is making the rounds of area municipal councils to make presentations on community partnerships and request their support of REAL. Each presentation is tailored to that municipality, describing what REAL is doing for their residents in terms of waste diversion, e-waste, Take It Back and Kill-A-Watt meters; how REAL can help the municipalities with energy demand management plans and the Well Aware program; and what those municipalities can do for REAL in terms of promotion and funding.

Starting in November, Shawn Merriman and Susan Brandum attended council meetings in Perth, Montague, Beckwith, Rideau Lakes and Elizabethtown Kitley. A more condensed presentation was made to Smiths Falls Town Council, who requested five minute presentations from any community organization seeking funding, in preparation for their budget deliberations. The townships of Drummond/North Elmsley and Montague have already included REAL in their budgets for \$1,000 and \$500 respectively, and will be receiving their updates later in the year. Still to be booked are Merrickville-Wolford and Westport.

REAL has been invited to provide input to Smiths Falls' Comprehensive Review of the Official Plan, which for the first time will be combined with an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan, similar to the combined plan that Lanark County completed two years ago. All Smiths Falls residents are welcome to provide their ideas on green initiatives they would like to see as well. The first of two public meetings will take place February 18th at 3 p.m. in Council Chambers.



Shawn Merriman and Sue Brandum at Perth Town Council Nov. 12, 2012. Photo by Desmond Devoy, Smiths Falls Record News

Flash from the Past

In honour of our 25th anniversary, here is something from our first newsletter, The REAL News, in February 1990.

REAL NEWS TAKES SHAPE

by Charles Long

Welcome to REAL News, where the environment gets personal. Unlike the network news, where the problems are big and as dramatic as the Amazon and the solutions just as remote, REAL News comes closer to home.

Chances are that you and I will never spill a PCB or coat a thousand miles of coast with crude oil. We can watch helplessly and wring our hands over those big environmental disasters. But, as ordinary people in an ordinary town, we have few opportunities to change the course of an oil tanker, or to persuade international investors to put our future ahead of their profits. The best we can do is to clean up our little corner of the world and hope that others will try as hard as we do.

When the founders of the Rideau Environmental Action League chose the word 'action', they turned a corner of sorts. It's easy to be concerned, much harder to act. Wringing hands in a committee is no more helpful, and no more satisfying, than wringing hands at home alone in front of the network news. Actions – even very small actions – do more to solve our environmental problems than all the dramatic coverage and official expressions of concern.

If there is some constructive action to be taken, then we can all get involved. We might not be able to plug the hole in the ozone layer all by ourselves, but we can turn the Christmas tree into mulch, say 'no thanks' when the clerk starts to put our purchase into a plastic bag, recycle paper and bottles, and take the hundred little steps that can really help. We can tackle local issues like

the guck in Lower Reach Basin and the sewage treatment plan. We can act. We can.

The hundred little steps won't make the network news, but they will make REAL News. We'll publish tips on ways to reduce, reuse and recycle. We'll cover local issues that affect the environment. We'll report on REAL activities and on other local groups with environmental interests. We'll hand out

bouquets and brickbats to the good guys and bad guys in the flight to clean up this little corner of the world. And, we'll open these pages to anybody with something to say.

Membership in REAL will get you your copy of REAL News, but do remember the three R's and pass your copy along to others. When it gets too dog-eared to read, the last recipient can put in the blue box.

B8 THE RECORD NEWS, Smiths Falls, Ont., October 24, 1990

NEWS



Cleanup crew

A group of hardworking volunteers ran a highly successful recycling depot at County Fair Mall Sept. 30. Front from left are Brenda King, Daisy Au, Ann Kilpatrick, Elva Corless, Ray Farrell, and Megan Lakey. Back: Doug Kilpatrick, Gamel Mayhew, Glenda Jougla, Michael Herbert, Barb Hicks and Peter Au. — Staff photo by Chris Must.

Volunteers Needed for Short and Longer Term Positions

REAL is recruiting energetic people who want to help protect our local environment:

- Membership Coordinator. A computer-literate person is needed to maintain our database and look after the membership renewal process.
- Property Manager. A handy-person is needed to oversee aspects of building and property maintenance.
- REAL Deal. We are in desperate need of volunteers for all aspects of the store (see story p. 6).
- Board Member. If you are well-connected to the community and are familiar with current and emerging environmental issues, we have an opening on our Board of Directors.

Need a Shorter Time Commitment? We need help with these events:

- EnergyEast Pipeline information session March 12 (see back page). In advance and on that evening.
- Pitch In Smiths Falls, April 19 – May 4. In advance or volunteer to clean up a particular site or roadside.

Note: Both Pitch In and the Saturdays at the REAL Deal Store would be appropriate volunteer positions for a student looking to earn their community service hours.



To learn more about volunteering with REAL, please contact our newly enlisted Volunteer Coordinator, Leann Merriman at 205-0818 or e-mail her at leannmerriman@yahoo.ca. Click on the “REAL Volunteers” icon on our website to see job descriptions.

Remembering REAL People

REAL members were saddened that one board member and a recently retired board member both passed away within eight days of each other in early January.

Larry Manson passed away in Perth Hospital January 4th, just following his 70th birthday, as a result of a rare form of bladder cancer. Larry had been REAL's president since August 2013, and was REAL's Vice-President since 2006. But he and his first wife, Catharine, were members from REAL's early days in 1989. Larry was very community-minded. His involvements included being Trustee and Chair of the Lanark County Board of Education, the Ontario Liberal Party, the Board of Skills and Initiatives, and he was responsible for the community Christmas dinner held every year in Smiths Falls. He also served in the music ministry at St. Anne's parish in Merrickville. Larry was recently retired. Together he and his second wife Carol have five children and ten grandchildren. We thank the family for suggesting that in memoriam donations be made to the work of REAL.



Carolyn Fraser passed away in Kingston January 12th at age 75, following a battle with lymphoma. She served as REAL's treasurer until recently, a job that requires a lot of time, dedication and consistency. Carolyn also chaired our membership committee in recent years, and willingly helped with REAL fundraisers, and frequently accepted food detail. But she was active elsewhere in the community. She was a leader of Girl Guides for many years, volunteered at Lombardy Public School, and was a super-active member and volunteer at her church, Westminster Presbyterian. Carolyn was interested in everyone she met, and we will miss her good humour and stories. She leaves behind her husband of 49 years, Ian. She was mother to the late Heather Fraser and to Laurie Bedford, grandmother to four and great grandmother to one.



REAL was very fortunate to have the commitment of these two very special people in our organization. Their strong influence will be felt for years to come, and we will miss their friendship and dedication.

REAL Deal Store News

Winter. The REAL Deal is truly feeling winter this year. The heavy snows and cold weather have made things very treacherous in the backyard, so we have had to close it for now. Customers cannot go out to look at the doors, windows etc., and staff must access the garbage, scrap metal and e-waste bins very cautiously. We just can't take the chance that someone will slip and hurt themselves out there. Hopefully there will soon be a thaw so we can dig out and make it more accessible.



The store portion of our building is heated with propane, but we were lucky not to experience any shortages like so many other area residents. We have, however, reduced the setting on our 7-day programmable thermostat by a couple of degrees when the store is not open to reduce our usage and keep our utility bills under control. The two offices at the front have baseboard electric heat, also controlled by programmable thermostat. Last fall we had a timer installed on our hot water heater for energy savings.

When it is so bitterly cold out, there is not much point displaying the free items, because no one feels like stopping to browse outside! We have a few boxes of items we can't sell inside the front entrance in the meantime.

Winter is traditionally a slow time of year for donations, so the shelves are looking a little less plentiful, and our smalls volunteers aren't getting the joy of opening those boxes of treasures. If you have some stuff accumulating you were intended to donate, now would be a good time.



With the winter weather comes illness and sometimes injuries. Several volunteers have been off so we are a little short-handed, and were fortunate this happened during our slow period. However, when business picks up we will be sure to need some extra help, so please do contact Tracy if you are interested in helping at the store in any capacity: cash, smalls, receiving, providing hardware and renovation advice, promotion, cleaning, helping customers, you name it. Whatever your interest, we could use you.



The monthly silent auctions continue to be a hit. Tracy puts a great selection of fifteen items out at the beginning of the month. Customers can record a bid just higher than the last bid, and then at 1:30 p.m. on the last Saturday of the month, the highest bidder is contacted to let them know they can purchase the item for that amount. It can be very competitive, and there is a noticeable air of excitement in the store as customers gather that last hour hopeful to be the top bidder. Auctions typically bring in \$400-\$600. The display generally includes items that are a little more unusual, and worth a bit more than the typical items we have for sale - nice furniture, art, antiques, collectibles and memorabilia - and are selected to attract a broad range of consumers. Some months photos are available on our REAL Deal Facebook page for the benefit of customers who aren't close by. However, all bids must be made in person.

Electronics. Word is getting around that we accept electronics for recycling, and by the time you read this, two dumpsters worth of e-waste will have been sent off for processing. We are also getting electronics that are in good working order, and, with the permission of the donor, can offer them for sale at the store. VCRs, televisions and stereos are the bulk of that. We cannot sell laptop computers or CPU's, however, as not being able to erase their memory is a security issue. Once winter eases up and the bin is more accessible, we will be doing more promotion of our electronics depot. This will be small revenue generator for REAL, and is an important community service now that 2012 Electronics Recycling has closed.

Don't forget that we also accept batteries, ink cartridges, scrap metal, scrap wire, and plastic outer milk bags at the store.

In REAL Life

Pitch In Approaches! Join other community members to clean up litter in this annual event, Saturday, April 19 through to Sunday, May 4, 2014. Contact Bonita at 613-283-1174 if you are an individual, school, business or other group, to claim your site. Bags will be supplied. After this long winter Smiths Falls will really need your help. Our collective efforts really do make a visible difference.



Trivia Challenge. The REAL Action Team competed in the 17th annual Trivia Challenge fundraiser for the Smiths Falls Friends of the Library on February 9th, and placed right in the middle of the pack. Thanks to Jay and Jackie Brennan, Sue Brandum, Kathy Graham, Jeff Hal-linan, Barb Hicks, Shawn Merriman, Sharon Skrepnek, Ron and Linda Stronski, and to Ken Graham for recruiting the team. Let us know if you want to play with us February 8, 2015.



Membership Renewals. REAL approaches members to renew their memberships in February. Individuals pay \$15, and families \$20 for the calendar year. New members are always welcome! Some folks also take this opportunity to include a donation towards the ongoing work of REAL. We are a registered charity and can provide you with a receipt for your income tax return. Watch for our 2013 Annual Report in that same mailing so you can see what your membership dollars do for REAL.



New Members. We welcome some new REAL members who joined in the latter half of 2013: Philippe Lagarde and Family, Linda Kulkarni, Greg Watters, and Peter & Ruth Nelson.



Mugs R Us. We are looking for another “outlet” for the many, many mugs we collect at the REAL Deal. At .25 cents each (or 12 for a dollar in our current promotion) we do manage to move quite a few in the REAL Deal Store. But sadly, we are still overloaded. If your group or office could use some, we would be pleased to give some to you no charge. We have five boxes of 2-3 dozen each ready to go, and a seemingly inexhaustible supply.



- A long but fascinating account of how McDonald's wants to be purchasing sustainable beef in 2016. Here is a corporation taking leadership on an issue which will have major environmental impacts across the world. www.greenbiz.com/blog/2014/01/07/inside-mcdonalds-quest-sustainable-beef
- The newest generation of smart thermostats are costly but can lead to more substantial energy savings. Some respond to the habits of the home-dwellers and set a heating/cooling schedule accordingly. www.emagazine.com/earth-talk/smart-thermostats.
- Sudden drops in winter temperatures can lead to “frost quakes” in the early hours: loud booming sounds caused when freezing groundwater causes the ground to crack. <http://cottagelife.com/83920/blogs/frost-quakes-shake-ontarians-out-of-bed?>
- Bullfrog Power and ZooShare Biogas Co-operative are partnering to turn the Metro Toronto Zoo's manure and food waste into electricity, heat, and fertilizer, saving 12,000 tonnes of GHG emissions. www.bullfrogpower.com/13releases/zooshare.cfm.
- 380,000 Belgians voicing their support for the climate through song www.singfortheclimate.com/EN/default.aspx.



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www.REALaction.ca

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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 April issue
by March 15, 2014 to
dhicks11@cogeco.ca
or call Barb at (613) 283-9966

REAL people taking REAL action to protect our environment

Why should we care about Energy East?

Are you concerned about: possible spills, water quality, tar sands expansion, the approval process, climate change, oil and gas shortages, exporting Canadian resources, profits of foreign-owned companies, green energy and Indigenous communities?

Find out about TransCanada's proposed pipeline.

Three guest speakers will share their insights:

- Andrea Harden, Council of Canadians
- Ian Angus, of Sustainable North Grenville
- Ben Powless, formerly of Ecology Ottawa.

Particular questions may be submitted in advance to
info@REALaction.ca.

Wednesday, March 12, 2014 The Station Theatre, Smiths Falls

Energy East pipeline route

TransCanada Corp's proposed pipeline route passes through rural Ottawa and will include two pumping stations.



Doors Open 6:30
Video Clips 6:30 - 7:00
Speakers at 7:00 p.m
followed by Q & A

Admission free, donations welcome.

Presented by REAL.
See www.REALaction.ca for more.

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