

REAL DEAL - Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Why don't you have a permanent sign?

A. We have a permanent sign that will be installed at the roadside. In the meantime, we have two large yellow wooden REAL DEAL signs which we leave by the entrance the days the store is open. We don't leave the signs out at other times to avoid misleading the public that we are open.

Q. Why are you only open three days?

A. It is our goal to be open at least five days a week. However, until we grow, our resources only allow us to be open three days. We employ one part-time store manager and depend on volunteers for the rest of the services.

Q. Why can't we negotiate prices?

A. From our past experience with the store at 72 Lombard, negotiating prices takes too much staff time. We feel our prices are reasonable, and they are reviewed regularly, and reduced if the item is not selling. So you can still get some great deals! We have also started a one-day-a-month "Make a Deal at the REAL Deal Day".

Q. Why aren't you taking electronics?

A. Unfortunately, we do not have the storage space for, or the capacity to assess electronics to see if they are in good working order for resale. And if they are not working, we do not have the

means to dispose of them safely, responsibly and at minimal cost. If you can, hold on to them until another electronic waste (e-waste) depot is organized, or take them to Computer Recyclers in Nepean or Twenty-Two Electronics Recycling in Carleton Place. You will have to pay for their disposal, but you can be confident they will be disposed of properly, and will not be leaching dangerous metals into the environment.

In response to recent Ontario legislation, REAL is discussing with area municipalities how we could develop an electronics collection facility and transfer point, or establish a reprocessing facility locally.

Q. Why do you weigh everything?

A. We weigh items being donated and purchased from the store so we know how much waste we have diverted, even if it is temporarily, from municipal landfills. *(continued inside)*

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Q. Why do you ask customers where they are from?

A. We want to know which municipality our donors and customers come from so we can report back to those municipalities how much waste has been diverted from their landfills and to know the breadth of the community we are serving.

Q. What happened to the Free Store?

A. We found that operating the Free Store was costing us too much in space and staff/volunteer resources, without generating income. However, we have discovered there are plainly lots of items that do not sell, but are not ready for the garbage, so we offer them at a self-serve Free Table. The table is located just outside the customer entrance, weather permitting. When the snow flies we will find a spot inside. Rest assured, we are weighing that stuff, too!

Rideau Lakes and Bullfrog Power

Bullfrog Power, a leading Canadian provider of 100 per cent green electricity, announced that Ontario municipalities successfully met the 5,000-Tonne Challenge set out in 2007 by the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) and Bullfrog Power. Green power purchases made by the Town of Caledon, the Township of Rideau Lakes, The Regional Municipality of York, the Town of Aurora, the City of Mississauga and AMO (for its offices and annual conference) reduced the collective CO₂ footprint of these organizations by more than 5,000 tonnes annually.

Source: Bull Frog Power, July 2, 2008

Native Garden Doing Well

The native garden established in front of the REAL Deal building on July 4th by a group of volunteers is doing well. Jocelyn and Alec Rait, Angela Northfield and her daughters Alexandra and Daniella, and Barb Hicks planted a wide variety of native species transplanted from gardens: spirea, bleeding heart, Solomon's seal, dogwood, high bush cranberry, violets, milkweed, black eyed Susans, day lilies, gooseneck loosestrife, anemone Canadensis and ferns. Thanks to the volunteers, as well as Tom and Pat Foulkes, Barb Ellis and Diane Bennett for their plant donations.

The existing soil was rototilled by Larry Manson, and Barb and Greg Hicks added some soil and compost before planting. The result is two gardens are on either side of the gravel platform where the picnic table sits. On the left are the sun-loving plants, and on the right are the shade loving and shade tolerant plants. Although a few plants did not survive their transplants, most of them have continued to do well, and other than the first week or so, have not required watering. The weeding is simple too, with the loose soil.

The group hopes to mark the plants this fall. As well, a map has been made of the garden that can be developed into an interpretive display on the plants featured, as well as the benefits of native gardening. The Canadian site Evergreen is a good source of information on native gardening, and has an extensive native plant database: www.evergreen.ca/nativeplants/.

Thanks to REAL Deal Supporters

A quick thank you to the following for their contributions to the REAL Deal:

- The Town of Smiths Falls for the wooden service ramp now in use at the customer entrance, and many other miscellaneous items resulting from their cleanup of the yard
- Maire Hogan for the draperies now being used to hide our mezzanine storage section
- Weatherstrong for scrap wood and pallets used to create shelving
- DJ's Pizza for a glass display counter
- Chris Grant for transporting the rain barrels
- Bob Hawkins for transportation and other assistance
- Jeff Young for his technical expertise
- Kirk Everett and Chris Oliver for continued handyman work
- Debra Samler, Una Pugh, Brenda King and Joyce Smith for being the first wave of in-store volunteers
- Cathryn Davidson for keeping the lawn under control
- Dan Davidson for the incredible number of hours he has contributed this summer on handyman projects, as well as organizing within the store, computer troubleshooting and receiving. He deserves a medal!

We sincerely appreciate everyone's support. If we have forgotten anyone, let us know and we'll name them next issue.

We are also pleased that a number of items from our wish list in last issue have appeared: kitchen scales, a bathroom mirror and towel racks. We would still very much like to obtain some carts, similar to an AV or serving cart, that has a few shelves and can be wheeled about. It will help staff and volunteers when moving small items around the store.

Time is Right to Volunteer!

The REAL Deal works because we have volunteers! Now that summer is over, we hope some others will come forward to help keep the store operating smoothly. Even a few hours here and there is welcome.

Receivers. Our most urgent need is for volunteer receivers. This involves working at the back of the store, quickly assessing the potential donations, saying "NO" if necessary, and unloading the materials. So it does require that the person be physically fit, and not mind some outdoor work.

Truck Drivers. We have sporadic need for drivers with their own vehicles to do occasional pickups and deliveries, and make the occasional dump run or scrap metal run.

In Store Volunteers. A number of new and returning volunteers are being trained now to volunteer in the store: sorting, pricing, doing displays, assisting customers and handling the cash. But we can always use more.

Handy People. If you like building things and fixing things we could use you on the Property and Maintenance team.

Others. We need people to distribute fliers and posters, clean the store, test appliances, clean or repair items etc. Or maybe you have an idea for repurposing items? Let us know if you have a skill you would like to put to use.

We are embarking on a full fledged Volunteer Program, and will require that everyone complete a volunteer application form. Some positions may require a Criminal Reference check, and if a person is new to REAL, two personal references will be necessary. We are also on the lookout for a Volunteer Coordinator - yet another place for a volunteer to be part of the REAL team!



*Prelude to Christmas
11th Annual Concert by the
Central Band of the Canadian Forces
Wednesday, November 26, 2008 at 7 p.m.
SFDCI Cafetorium*

*Tickets \$10, \$25 for families
Call 284-0824 for tickets and outlets*

Fundraising and Special Events

We would still welcome additional volunteers to plan our annual band concert and solicit support from local businesses. This is REAL's one big fundraiser for the REAL, so a lot is depending on our efforts.

We are considering another an auction evening for the fall of 2009, or an alternative fundraising event, and could use your talents.

2009 will also be REAL's 20th anniversary year. This is quite the accomplishment and we want to celebrate with a special event or series of events. Please contact Peter Au to be part of it, (613) 284-8338.

Reuse Store Makes a REAL Difference *by Heather Davidson*

For July and August I was REAL's 2008 Summer Student. It's been a family affair, with my mom cutting the grass and my dad working as Mr. Fix-it. Since I'm better at breaking than fixing, I stuck to working in the REAL Deal Store and in the office. My job here continued what's been an interesting year so far, environmentally speaking. I studied at the University of British Columbia, which prides itself on sustainability, and then traveled to Africa, where saving the environment is unfortunately just another worry for people who have more than enough to worry about. I feel really lucky, living in Canada, where recycling is so easy- we have a lot of options. And a reuse store is a great idea to put the 3 R's into practice. REAL is helping to make a difference, and I'm glad that I got to be a part of it.

Heather was hired for eight weeks under a Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) grant. CSJ creates summer job opportunities for students, benefiting small organizations and students looking to gain work experience. Heather is now at Concordia University in Montreal to continue her studies. Her parents Cathryn and Dan are long-time REAL volunteers.

**The Evergreen Avenue Committee
presents
The SFDCI Reunion Band

with guests
the Rideau Voyageurs Singers

Sunday, November 9 at 2 p.m.
Trinity United Church
Admission by Donation**

Claudia Mosher Joins Board

REAL is pleased to welcome Claudia Mosher to the REAL Board, Claudia is a professional engineer by training and is full service broker with Edward Jones . Originally from Hamilton and Montreal, she and her husband have chosen a Rideau River home in Smiths Falls as their retirement destination . Claudia has a long standing environmental interest, and would especially like to see the beach at Hydro Park revitalized.

Claudia feels Smiths Falls has a lot to offer, but lacks self confidence, and is volunteering to make a difference. Her involvements include being the Rotary Club Secretary, and establishing a new working women's networking group for the Chamber of Commerce. WINGS, the Women's Initiative for Networking, Growth and Strategies, are having their inaugural meeting Thurs., Sept. 25 at 1 p.m. Angel's.

The Board looks forward to working with Claudia and having a new perspective.

CDs, DVDs and the Environment

by Ron Toop

Collecting dust in various plastic storage boxes in the corners of my little home office are many no-longer-used, now mostly obsolete, CDs, DVDs, cassettes, and old 3 1/2", even 5 1/4" floppy disks, as well as their plastic protective cases. These plastic recording and data storage devices date back to our first Radio Shack computer bought about 1986 or even to our first even older CD player. At times, I have been tempted to toss the whole lot into the garbage, for I have never found a way to recycle them. So far, however, I have resisted that temptation, wisely, I am told.

CDs and DVDs have a petroleum derived plastic base that could over time leach dangerous chemicals from a landfill into the groundwater,

creating various health hazards. A corn-based biodegradable substitute for this plastic is available but just too expensive at this time for manufacturers. Moreover, the complex combination of various mined minerals such as aluminum, gold, silver, and nickel that comprises the actual storage layer is extremely difficult, and consequently, very expensive to separate and recycle. In short, it is highly unlikely that a more environmentally friendly replacement for CDs and DVDs will hit the market soon.

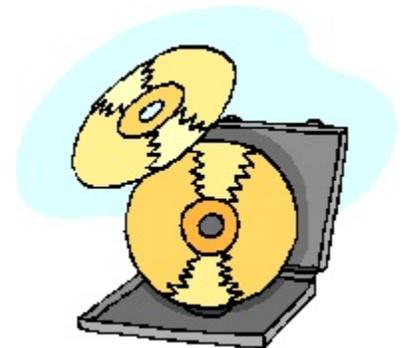
The jewel cases CDs and DVDs are packaged in are made out of Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC), an inexpensive petrochemical-based plastic that is notoriously difficult to recycle and has been linked to elevated cancer rates among workers and neighbors where it's manufactured. Furthermore, when PVC is thrown in with regular recyclables it can contaminate entire batches, ruin equipment and cause human health problems.

What is one to do?

Where possible, choose DVDs rather than CDs for music and choose paper or cardboard protectors instead of jewel cases.

Consider downloading digital music via legal online services to your own computer, digital players or to DVDs, which have much greater storage capacity and versatility than CDs. Choose rewritable DVDs too so that you can reuse them. But don't throw the old CDs or DVDs into the trash yet. A few companies do recycle them and perhaps somewhere down the line their recycling will be more economical and widespread.

(Based on an EarthTalk column from the from the editors of E/The Environmental Magazine)



Emerald Ash Borer in Ottawa

The presence of the emerald ash borer (EAB) has been confirmed in Eastern Ottawa. The City of Ottawa and the Canada Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) are asking for the public's help in watching for this small emerald-coloured beetle and signs of infestation such as thinning crowns, cracking bark, and D-shaped holes.

If you suspect you have this insect report it to the CFIA at 1-866-463-6017 or at www.inspection.gc.ca.

This invasive beetle does not spread quickly on its own. In fact, it is most commonly spread when people move materials which are infested with EAB such as firewood. With firewood: buy it locally, burn it on site, don't bring it back home! Stop the spread of destructive pests - including EAB - by not moving firewood or other types of wood, including trees, nursery stock, pruned branches, logs and forest products with bark attached, from regulated and/or infested areas.

Homeowners should examine their frequently to detect any signs or symptoms of possible invasive species.



For woodlot owners there is no urgent need to cut healthy ash trees as EAB only causes damage to the wood a few centimeters under the bark. Landowners may consider a staged removal of ash trees to provide more growing space for other tree species. Before cutting trees, consult a forest practitioner for a proper forest prescription.

Source: Rideau Valley Conservation Authority

The Power Grid and Rechargeable Cars

Which draws more juice from the electric grid, a big-screen plasma television or recharging a plug-in hybrid car? The answer — a plasma television.

Plasma TVs, industry officials say, consume about four times the electricity as recharging a plug-in hybrid. Yet utilities have managed to cope with the increased loads as thousands of new televisions came on line.

So as long as the changeover from internal combustion engines to electric vehicles is somewhat gradual, they should be able to handle it in the same way.

Auto makers, such as General Motors Corp. and Toyota Motor Corp., are planning to bring rechargeable vehicles to the market as early as 2010. But speakers at the Plug-In 2008 conference say it will take much longer for them to arrive in mass numbers, due in part to a current lack of large-battery manufacturing capacity.

Utility officials say they already are coping with increased demand, especially during peak-use periods in the afternoon and early evening. But the rest of the day, most utilities have excess generating capacity that could be used to recharge cars.

Since most electric cars will likely be charged during off-peak electric use times, utilities should have no problem generating enough electricity. But since people with the means to buy electric cars likely will live in the same areas, utilities worry about stress on their distribution systems.

Utilities still have to be wary that high gasoline prices could push sales of rechargeable electric vehicles well into the millions by 2020, because that could stress the system. Other possible problems include electric vehicles getting larger and requiring far more electricity for recharging,

and demands from people that their vehicles be recharged quickly, drawing more electricity during peak times.

Also, companies are starting to develop recharging stations for sale to parking lot operators, office buildings and cities, which will draw more electricity. There's also talk of the cars storing electricity and sending it back to the power companies during peak times, but officials say that's a long way off.



Source : Tom Krishner, Associated Press

PLEASE do not leave items at the REAL DEAL after hours.

It looks unsightly, the goods might be ruined or stolen, and staff needs to ensure it is suitable.

The store is open to receive your donations Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays, 10 am. - 4 p.m ONLY!

In REAL Life

Volunteers from the **Climate Change Action Team** spoke to about **75 drivers about idling at the Abbot St. lock crossing** on Sunday, July 20, during the Smiths Falls Chocolate and Railway Festival. Many thanks to Fred Grodde, Kirk Everett, Chris Oliver, Greg Hicks and Peter Au, as well as to Heather Davidson for her advance preparations.

REAL is on the lookout for a **volunteer Treasurer to join the REAL Board**. The Treasurer will be assisted by a paid bookkeeper. Our directors meet once a month and average about another meeting a month on other committees or projects. If you are keen to volunteer in this way or know of someone who might be, contact Barb at 283-9966 or dhicks11@cogeco.ca.

Household Hazardous Waste Day in United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, S. Saturday, September 27, 2008: 8:30 - 11:30 a.m. at the South Grenville Patrol Garage, #2320 County Road 21, Spencerville AND 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm at the North Grenville Patrol Garage, #720 County Road 44, Kemptville.

This fall we will have some enthusiastic young people joining the gang at the REAL Deal. A **Katimavik** participant should be joining us in early October for five days a week. And we are planning for a pair from **Canada World Youth** (a Honduran and a Canadian) to assist in the store on Thursdays from mid November through January.

Julie Ingram's contract with REAL has been extended and she will be responding to Well Aware and ecoENERGY queries at least until the end of October. Julie has also spent many volunteer hours programming our new cash register, training staff and volunteers, and documenting procedures.

If you haven't **booked your ecoENERGY home energy assessment yet**, why haven't you?

Having the home visit with make you eligible for federal and provincial rebates on the cost of making energy efficiency upgrades to your home. Call Julie in the REAL Environment Centre at 283-9500 for details.

Buy local produce at the Smiths Falls

Farmer's Market 8 until 1 p.m. Saturdays until October 25. Produce and plants as well as wood crafts and metal work are available in the By the Falls parking lot on Main St. W. (next to the movie theatre).

Correction. The Smiths Falls Branch of the **Royal Canadian Legion** is Branch 95, not 85, as stated in the previous issue.

Helpful Websites

- Check the Eco Geek archive at www.greenlivingonline.com/EcoGeek/ for some interesting Q and A such as, is there such a thing as enviro-friendly dental floss? Lots to explore on this Canadian site.
- See the revamped Natural Resources Canada site on anti-idling at www.oeec.nrcan.gc.ca/idling/idling.cfm
- Summer may be over, but barbequing season isn't. Ever wonder how green is your grill? www.climatechangecentral.com/publications/enerclick/june-2008/how-green-your-grill.

REMINDER

If you have not paid your 2008 membership fees, please send them to Carolyn Fraser, 30 Abbott St. S., Smiths Falls ON K7A 4S2.

Membership Fees are \$15 for individuals and \$20 for families.

For more information please call Carolyn at (613) 283-6858 or e-mail her at fraser@superaje.com.

Next Issue

Submissions for the next issue can be sent to dhicks11@cogeco.ca by November 1, 2008 or call Barb at (613) 283-9966.

Contact Us

REAL

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LLGreen

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E-mail: sbrandum@cogeco.ca

REAL Deal Store & Environment Centre

85 William St. W., Smiths Falls

(across from Railway Museum)

Store open Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays
10a.m. - 4 p.m.

Phone: (613) 283-7999

For Well Aware Visits, ecoENERGY audits,
or other programs,

Phone: (613) 283-9500

