

# REAL *update*

REAL people taking REAL action to protect our environment

*25 Years of Environmental Action*

**Rideau Environmental Action League (REAL)**

**SEPT 2014**

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## *Massive Community Effort Preserves Vintage Features of 140 Elmsley St.*



When the Town of Smiths Falls voted to demolish the brick home at 140 Elmsley St., adjacent to the site of the old arena, REAL was given the opportunity to remove most of the historic features of the house.

Susan Brandum, Executive Director of the REAL Deal, took on the logistical challenge of doing the work in the time allotted before demolition. Sue has overseen several other smaller tearouts in the past year to test the viability

of this type of project, and hopes to do more. Removing architectural features from a building is a way of ensuring that useful renovation materials are preserved, and get into the hands of buyers to be reused or repurposed, instead of winding up in landfill sites.

A massive community effort resulted in most of the historic features of the vintage house being preserved. Sue estimated that volunteers invested the equivalent of 56 days of labour over two weeks, coordinating the project, carefully removing and moving doors, baseboards, trim, windows, stair bannister and fireplace.

“We had an astonishing number of skilled people come to our aid, from carpenters, to a mason, a plumber and people who had experience renovating historic houses,” said Sue. “And while some gave us two or three hours of their valuable time, others put in two full days – all because they appreciated the craftsmanship of the builders of the house.”

On top of the individual efforts, Chris Saumure of the Saumure Group was extremely supportive, giving REAL the full two weeks it needed to do the work; the Saumures’ construction supervisor, Dale Gifford, provided every assistance requested; Amanda Todd, of Dan Peters Auctions, provided critical moving help and her truck, and is donating an auction and advertising. As well, Len Leitch brought a team to remove 18 of the stone window sills (weighing 350 to 500 lbs. each). Diane Pearen of Ontario Works and Lena O’Connor of OnTrac pulled out all stops to get volunteers trained in Health and Safety. “And that doesn’t count all the people who were busy making connections for us, and the great support we got from complete strangers commenting through Facebook – that was heartwarming,” said Brandum.

REAL extends its particular thanks to volunteers Alfred von Mirbach, Alan Leonard, Phil Meany, Bernie Laframboise, John Malony, Tom Patterson, Shawn Pankow, Amanda Todd, Randy Boyer, Arthur Janes, Braeden Spanton, Paul Hicks,

*(Cont’d page 2)*



### *140 Elmsley Street (Cont'd)*

Chance Lockett, Bill Hamilton, Paul Berthiaume, Doug Teknos-Levy, Dave Hann, Nathan Matthews, Dave Pringle, Jon Fisk and Shawn Merriman.

Through this project, REAL made an important contribution to community building in Smiths Falls, garnering many accolades and goodwill from the community. New business and community connections have been made, and REAL itself has gained valuable experience about what needs to be done to conduct such work.

An auction of all the materials removed from 140 Elmsley St. took place at the REAL Deal Reuse Store on August 27. (See story page 6.)



### *Take Advantage of Area Waste Reduction Opportunities*

**Season End for Many Programs.** Just a reminder that with fall comes the last of some composting programs, household hazardous waste collection, swap days, and large item disposal days. Be sure to check with your municipality so you don't miss any waste reduction opportunities. Note that the Carleton Place hazardous waste facility available to residents of Carleton Place, Mississippi Mills, Beckwith, Drummond North Elmsley, Montague, Smiths Falls and Perth closed earlier this year, on August 30. The last Saturday for the Smiths Falls Drummond North Elmsley composting site is November 22.



**E-Waste.** But REAL accepts electronics for recycling all year long! Our OES Electronics Waste Depot sees a lot of activity. An amazing number of TVs get dropped off, which fill up that large bin by the customer door very quickly. The program also accepts computers and peripherals, stereo components, cameras, photocopiers, typewriters, telephones and so on. REAL earns about \$300 per bin, so keep those expired electronics coming! Note we cannot resell any working electronics unless the donor signs a waiver allowing us to do so, and we never resell computers - those are the rules! Please ask at the cash if you need help unloading. If you leave electronics outside of store hours, give our guys a break and don't put them in front of the swing open door of the bin, or at the store customer door.



**Supporting Non-Profits.** REAL will also be happy to take various other waste items off your hands to support non-profit activities in our area. Used print and toner cartridges earn money through the Think Recycle program. Our last batch of materials was passed on to Champions for Kids, a program of the Upper Canada District School Board. We still accept milk bags for local groups to crochet into sleeping mats and tote bags. Used household batteries (no car batteries please) are collected to keep hazardous metals out of our environment, and earn us a little cash. Staff will also accept scrap metal and scrap wire to benefit REAL.



**Cardboard Bins.** Please note that the large bins at the back of the REAL Deal parking lot are for cardboard only, and are intended for use by Smiths Falls businesses who do not have access to municipal recycling collection. Please do not leave garbage of any kind there, as it just becomes someone else's problem. The cardboard recycling service predates REAL's arrival at the 85 William St. site, and we would like it to continue.





## *REAL Comments on Smiths Falls Draft Official Plan*

The Town of Smiths Falls requested REAL comment on its draft Official Plan which lays out the directions the Town wants to pursue in the next five years. Shawn Merriman, Peter Au and Susan Brandum met with Town Planner Niki McKernan recently to provide those comments.

REAL is very impressed with the plan, and with the integration of the mandated Sustainability Plan, and other environmental considerations, throughout.

While the plan lays out many laudable sustainability goals, REAL noted it does not contain a means of setting targets or of measuring achievements - "If you don't measure, you can't manage" - so REAL's primary recommendation was for inclusion of a measurement system.

In addition, REAL made recommendations on:

- including REAL's site in the Linkages Plan, which would extend walkability considerations to REAL and its developing Environment Centre
- incorporating passive solar in new construction
- encouraging use of solar thermal and photovoltaic energy in the town
- reducing Green House Gas emissions
- a stronger tree policy that maintains existing trees, and develops a larger canopy
- inclusion of actions the Town can take to mitigate storm water effects
- protection of groundwater from salt incursion in particular
- the exploration of the use of Local Improvement Charges



Through RAIN, it's storm water mitigation program, REAL influenced the beautiful new Drummond North Elmsley Public Docks at Rideau Ferry. REAL specifically did a volunteer planting of native bushes on the bridge embankments and solicited and helped lay a donation of \$1800 worth of permeable pavers at the site. The two major components of the project that keep storm water from flushing directly into Big Rideau Lake are the catchment system under the deck and the river rock swale that slows and partially treats the water from the bridge.

**DRINKING WATER  
SOURCE PROTECTION**

## Mississippi-Rideau Source Protection Region

The Ministry of the Environment has approved the locally developed Mississippi-Rideau Source Protection Plan required under Ontario's Clean Water Act. The Plan sets out policies to keep contaminants out of rivers and underground aquifers that supply municipal drinking water systems. The Clean Water Act is one of the province's responses to the Walkerton tragedy and is part of Ontario's strategy to safeguard drinking water from source to tap.

**About Source Protection.** Keeping contaminants out of drinking water sources, rather than just depending on water treatment plants to remove them, is an idea that is catching on across North America. First, science is used to map the most vulnerable areas around municipal drinking water sources; next, a Source Protection Plan is developed to prevent or lower the risk of contaminants being released in these vulnerable areas.

**About the Local Plan.** The Plan protects the drinking water of over 730,000 residents of eastern Ontario. The Plan's policies apply mainly in the small vulnerable areas close to a municipal well or river that supplies municipal drinking water. The policies range from those that encourage positive actions by households to mandatory policies, such as those that prohibit future undesirable land uses like landfills or industrial effluent discharges near drinking water sources. In between are the establishment of Risk Management Plans.

**Communities.** While the Plan includes some non-mandatory measures to help protect drinking water region wide, the main purpose of the Clean Water Act is the protection of shared municipal drinking water sources. In the Mississippi-Rideau region, the communities with municipal water services are the City of Ottawa (including Carp, Munster and Richmond) and seven smaller centres (Almonte, Carleton Place, Kemptville, Merrickville, Perth, Smiths Falls and Westport). The plan does not involve new rules for people on private wells.

For more information see [www.mrsourcewater.ca](http://www.mrsourcewater.ca)

### ***Two Area Youth Organizations Awarded REAL Action Grants***

A school gardening group and an area youth group have already benefited from a \$250 REAL Action Grant.

The Drummond School Green Team, "ecoNinjas", had planted a pumpkin patch to teach students about gardening. They were seeking funding to purchase two rain barrels to collect rainwater from a nearby shed for watering the plants. REAL agreed to fund the barrels and some additional gardening tools for this volunteer effort.



In Almonte, the TYPS youth centre is operating a Parks and Garden program. One aspect of the program involves taking youth on guided visits to some of the many local green spaces, so that they can experience what their community has to offer and learn about conservation principles close-up. REAL is pleased to contribute to the support already provided by Trillium, Lanark County, Mississippi and others.

The ten "REAL Action Grants" of up to \$250 for schools, community groups and neighbourhood associations in the region is one way that REAL is celebrating its 25th anniversary. REAL wants to support community groups who have great ideas to benefit the environment but may need a little financial support to make them a reality. REAL agreed to accept a number of early applications to the program, although the final application deadline is September 19. All projects are to be completed by the end of June 2015. Successful applicants will be announced on Saturday, October 18th at REAL's Local Foods Harvest Dinner.

### *Farewell by Braeden Spanton*



For the past six weeks this summer, I was lucky enough to be given the opportunity to work for REAL at the REAL Deal Store in their summer student position. But I am now returning to school and must say goodbye to REAL and all the wonderful people I met here. I worked at the REAL Deal

store the three days of the week the store was open. My duties included just about everything there is to do in the store from working cash up front to unloading donations in the back. I always loved

seeing what we would get in, opening up boxes and seeing things you wouldn't expect to see. You never quite know what you'll find in store and it was always interesting to see what we'd get in. I didn't just enjoy The REAL Deal for what we got in from donations, though, but for what I learned there, especially on Wednesdays when the store wasn't open. That's the day I'd be in the store working on projects for REAL, and it was these days I got to learn more about all the good work REAL is doing with things like the Rideau Ferry Dock projects and rainwater gardens. I'm definitely going to be taking a lot of new ideas with me from the store and a new perspective on environmental stewardship; with that in mind I want to thank everyone from REAL who made this summer amazing and made me feel so welcome at the store.

### *Shawn Merriman New REAL President*

As is tradition in the REAL world, all board members step down at our June AGM, and another slate of board members are elected. This year was no exception as REAL members and guests gathered for a potluck dinner at the Community Health Centre. We also took time to review our accomplishments in the past year, and consider plans for the coming year, through brief presentations by Shawn Merriman and Barb Hicks.



At the board meeting following the AGM, some board roles were reassigned.

Shawn Merriman has agreed to take on the President's position. Shawn joined the REAL board a year ago, and has been Vice-President since January. He was initially attracted to REAL because he feels it is "a unique and valuable resource to the community at large in Eastern Ontario," and feels that everyone, including individuals, corporations, and all levels of government, can be doing more to protect and enhance the environment. Shawn is well-connected in the community, and has already been active in the municipal committee, paving the way for the baseline water sampling project, and the recruitment committee, to name a few projects.

Stepping up to the position of Vice-President is Karen Schecter, one of REAL's original members. Karen has held the Secretary-Treasurer position since 2011, and the Secretary position since 2006. Barb Hicks is stepping down as President, a position she held from 2007 to 2013. She will take on the Secretary-Treasurer role. Returning board members include Peter Au, a past president and founding member of REAL, and Donna McKenna. REAL is fortunate to have enlisted Pam Craig, an Art and Geography teacher from SFDCI to join the group. Pam's enthusiasm, organizational abilities and experiences with the school's environment club and young people will be a great asset to REAL.

REAL still hopes to recruit one more board member to bring our total to seven and would welcome inquiries from anyone able to make the commitment. The candidate should be connected to the community, familiar with current and emerging environmental issues, and motivated to do something about them.

For more information on the board opening, consult REAL's website, [www.REALaction.ca](http://www.REALaction.ca), or contact Shawn Merriman at 812-0469.



### *Auction Spreads the Word About the REAL Deal*

A good crowd of buyers came to the REAL Deal on Wednesday, August 27th to an auction of materials removed from the house at 140 Elmsley Street. Amanda Todd and Dan Peters, of Dan Peters Auctions, who also contributed services for the tearout, volunteered to run the auction. It was felt an auction would be the best way to get a good price for the vintage items, rather than selling them from the floor of the REAL Deal during regular store hours.



On the block were features including a vintage fireplace, the glass front door and transom; a stairwell bannister, spindles and newel post; solid wood doors; windows and frames; baseboards and an electrical box and breakers. REAL also took the opportunity to include some other renovation items that it had collected from donations and other tearouts.

While the publicity surrounding the tearout and auction was wonderful, and the weather cooperative, the prices the goods sold for were not as great as we had hoped. Fortunately, most of the remaining doors sold the next days for about \$45 each, along with some other items at appropriate prices.

On the other hand, the REAL Deal store was open prior to and during the auction, and experienced brisk sales, much of which was from people who had never been to the store. Sue also received another couple of calls about tear-outs, which is very heartening.



We couldn't have done it without all the wonderful volunteers who helped set up all the items, run the canteen, and help the customers with their purchases. Special thanks to Arthur Janes, Chance Lockett, Nathan Matthew, Braeden Spanton, Nancy Berthiaume, Bill Hamilton, Bonita Lucas, Heather Warren, Donna McKenna, Della Berthiaume, Pat Gourlay and Devon McEwan for their help that day.

Thanks to the Saumures, the REAL Deal is still expecting to receive the cast iron radiators from the house which will be made available for sale.

Funds raised from the project are still being tallied.



## In REAL Life



REAL was out promoting what we do at some local summer events. REAL helped the Friends of the Tay staff displays from both organizations at the Stewart Park Music Festival in Perth July 18-20, and had a display at the Tay Watershed Discovery Day at the Crystal Palace in Perth August 16. As well, a number of REAL folk attended the grand opening of the Rideau Ferry Docks on Friday, June 27.



REAL's annual bottle drive at the Smiths Falls Beer Store on August 8th and 9th, raised \$440.65 from the community. Thanks to the helpful staff at The Beer Store, everyone who contributed their empties to REAL that weekend, and to our super volunteers: Barb Hicks, Jocelyn and Alec Rait, Karen Schecter, Joyce Smith, Bill Hamilton, Nancy Berthiaume, Cathryn Davidson, Margot Allen, Colleen Muldoon, Mike Reynolds and Tom Foulkes. Karen Schecter coordinated the effort.

## Independent



This year's "Customer Ask" at Andress' YIG brought in \$500 for REAL's projects. It was scheduled a little later in the season this year, July 25th – August 2, to avoid similar fundraising ventures. Thanks to Dan Andress for making the fundraiser possible, by directing cashiers to ask customers if they wanted to donate to their local environmental organization. We appreciate everyone's contributions! Thanks to Donna McKenna for pulling it together.



Save the evening of Saturday, October 18th to attend REAL's major fundraiser for the year at the Curling Club. We will be following last year's successful format of a local foods buffet dinner, catered by Joanne Edwards, and an interactive murder mystery by the Smiths Falls Community Theatre. Tickets are now available at the REAL Deal, Modern Thymes, or by contacting anyone on the board or committee. See poster at the end of this newsletter or our website for details.



CanadaHelps, the online charitable donations website, has recently changed its look, giving member charities more options to add photos, videos, quotes and campaigns to their profile. One advantage of CanadaHelps to small charities is that they can accept donations via credit card. For donors, it is a one stop place to search for charities and causes they might like to support. See our updated profile. Or go to [www.CanadaHelps.org](http://www.CanadaHelps.org) and search for us under our full name.

<http://www>

- The BrightSource solar energy plant in California is baffled by the alarming number of birds that ignite in midair over the plant. Smaller plants have not experienced this problem, and it is unclear if it is the technology or location that is at fault. <http://news.msn.com/in-depth/emerging-solar-plants-scorch-birds-in-mid-air>.
- A vending machine in Istanbul releases food and water for stray dogs in exchange for recycled plastic bottles. [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/07/23/puggedon-vending-machine\\_n\\_5606494.html?ncid=fbklnkushpmg00000044&ir=Green](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/07/23/puggedon-vending-machine_n_5606494.html?ncid=fbklnkushpmg00000044&ir=Green)
- Eating locally produced foods may be a way of reducing foodborne illness, claims a microbiologist. Factors include contaminated fertilizers, pesticide use, irrigation with unsafe water, overuse of antibiotics in animals and poor hygiene by farm workers. <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/health-and-fitness/health-advisor/does-eating-locally-help-prevent-foodborne-illness/article20136072/>

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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 Decem-  
ber issue by Nov. 10, 2014 to  
dhicks11@cogeco.ca  
or call Barb at (613) 283-9966

**REAL people taking REAL action to protect our environment**

Local Foods  
**Harvest  
Dinner**



and  
**Murder Mystery  
Evening**

A dinner showcasing the  
great variety of foods  
produced locally!

with performers from the Smiths Falls

**Saturday**

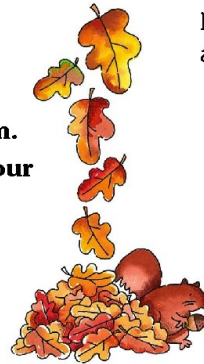
**October 18, 2014**

at the Smiths Falls Curling and Squash Club  
13 Old Sly's Rd, Smiths Falls

Community Theatre

A buffet dinner catered by Joanne  
Edwards of the Cove, featuring foods  
produced close to home in Lanark  
and Leeds.

**Doors Open at 5:30 p.m.**  
**Mystery and cocktail hour**  
**with hors d'oeuvres**  
**6:00 -7:00 p.m.**  
**Dinner at 7:00 p.m.**  
**Cash Bar.**



**Tickets \$50 per person**  
**Advance sales only**  
**by cash or cheque**

available in Smiths Falls at  
REAL Deal, 85 William St. W.,  
Modern Thymes, 11 Russell St. E.  
or call Leann (613) 205-0818

Presented by the Rideau Environmental Action League

Celebrating 25 Years of Environmental Action

[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 .....