

REAL *update*

REAL people taking REAL action to protect our environment

Rideau Environmental Action League (REAL)

SEPTEMBER 2016

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Great Crop of Tomatoes in REAL Garden This Year

By David Hoffman

No doubt about it. Tomatoes were the crop of choice with nearly everyone this year. And what a great year to make that decision. We have tomatoes of every sort: hundreds of cherry tomatoes, heritage tomatoes (Black Krim), Pink Ladies, and plenty of plums too.

I'm an old regular at the site and no one year has been like the next. My specialty is early crops: mesclun (traditionally a mix of chervil, arugula, and leafy lettuces), parsley, radishes, and multiplier onions. Without exception these have been successful, thanks to the rich, composted soil. For several years I have had poor luck with my tomatoes and some other summer-developing veggies, which are much more affected by heat and drought or excessive rain, particularly in above-ground beds. But this year I planted only two well-spaced tomato plants and both flourished beautifully in the super-soil enhanced plot. Liberal applications of straw mulch and the well-filled water barrels (thanks to summer co-ops) also must have helped. Even so I still couldn't get fruit on my chili pepper plant to save my soul.

King and queen of the pepper producers were the Halls, Steve and Sarah, newcomers to the community garden and ambitious developers of two plots this year. Their efforts paid off as well in a good crop of tomatoes, swiss chard, brussel sprouts, cabbage and kale.

Another newbie was Helen Smith, an experienced gardener who got the planting bug again and produced a wide variety of crops over her two plots. Green and yellow beans—a crop that many included in their selections—were a particular success for her, joining two varieties of kale and a rich range of tomatoes in her heavy yielding gardens.

Another gardening couple, Carole and Charley Baumhour, took full advantage of their first time plot to grow a mass of tomato plants and contribute the largest and most beautiful plant in the garden—a single giant sunflower that dominated the gardening space this year.



Some magnificent sunflowers on the Baumhour's plot.

(continued p. 3)



Back to the Dumpster

by Valerie Hudson

In 2001, a generous donation made it possible to commission Smiths Falls artist [Val Hudson](#) to create a work of art to liven up the drab REAL Deal exterior. The six art panels were created at her home and then mounted at the REAL Deal courtesy of Kilmarnock Enterprises and Chris Saumure.

The repairs have started! Three of the panels from “Beyond the Blue Box” are in the shop: Mother Earth, The Marsh and The Garden. Thank you to Dave Pringle for taking them down and bringing them to me.

The original purpose of the project was to create work relevant to the 3 R’s and REAL’s goals. Part of the process was to develop a concept and figure out how to do it.

- What could I do that would represent “reuse”?
- Could I use recycled materials to create an image?
- How would these materials last in an exterior setting?

The larger goals were to encourage creation using recycled and unwanted materials, and to increase awareness of the REAL DEAL Store. With imagination and hard work, Bruce McLeod and I finished the pieces, and they fulfilled their purpose. But after five years it is time to re-visit this project.

A number of factors led to their demise, the largest being location. The cement wall and the flat roof without an eaves trough held the moisture contributing to the dampness and the beginning of rot. The strapping to hold pieces off the wall were horizontal which trapped water and humidity. The dampness of the wall also prevented painting directly on the wall.

Hollow doors were used for The Marsh and The Garden, and after five years on the wall, both barely survived. The hollow doors were sponge and splinters. Mother Earth’s wooden frame and backing were also rotted. These supporting structures have been tossed in the brush pile in the bush to further rot and settle back to the earth.

One of the big challenges in each creation was how to attach all the pieces. Bruce noted that all the attachments for the pieces worked and survived. Each piece has been removed and is being re-painted and preserved. Metal, plastic and well-preserved wood



The “junk art” pieces that have been removed for repair.

withstood the elements and the damp cement wall.

So the hunt was on for a strong support material for the three pieces. First stop was a trip to the REAL Deal store, where we found, with Don’s help, three new support structures. The restoration will be much easier than the process that led to the first panels. Developing the concept, making decisions, deciding on themes and layout, then the search for materials, was time consuming; and that has already been done. They are ready for a new, fresh look. Of course they will not be exactly the same, since the backgrounds are different and my thinking on them has definitely progressed. It will take time to complete but it is exciting and I’m looking forward to the end result.

When the three panels are completed sometime at the end of August, the other three panels will be removed to check their structure and to give them a new coat of paint and restoration where required.

I will keep you posted on the progress of the ‘Restoration Project’.

Many Ways to Support our October 15 Dinner

Make sure you set aside Sat. Oct. 15th for REAL's annual Local Foods Harvest Dinner. (See poster on back.) Please consider putting together a table of friends, family or coworkers to support this event. Even three more tables of eight will make a big difference to our fundraising total.

Amy Rensby of Magnolia Catering will be cooking up a delicious buffet of local foods. And local band "The British Invasion" will be providing the tunes for our cocktail hour and after dinner. New this year will be appetizer tasting stations where you can nibble tasty treats and meet the person who produced them. And don't forget that local beers and Ontario wines will be featured at the cash bar. Donna McKenna is pulling together a super selection of items and services for you to bid on in our silent auction. So come help us celebrate local food producers and support the environmental work of REAL.

Here are some ways you can contribute:

- Purchase a ticket. Buy before Sept. 18 and get a \$5 discount. Tickets are \$60 and entitle you to a \$20 charitable receipt.
- Get together a group to come. More fun for you, and we'd be happy to reserve a table for you.
- Donate something to the silent auction. Crafts, baking, services, objects – the sky's the limit.



- Spread the word to your contacts, or put up a poster where you hang out.
- Be a sponsor. Contribute \$50, \$100, \$150 or \$250 to the cause, or suggest someone we haven't approached.
- Volunteer your time. There will be lots to do in the days leading up to the dinner: food prep, dish washing, table set up etc. – we'd love your help.

This event is REAL's big fundraiser for the year, and it takes a lot of people to make it a success - please be one of them!

Great Crop of Tomatoes (continued from cover)

The prize for the richest variety of crops goes to Donna McKenna who planted and tended the "Stone Soup Sharing Plot," the plot devoted to providing food for anyone in the Smiths Falls community, just for the taking. Rich in herbs as well as a variety of staple crops, this was indeed the garden best suited to producing a tasty dish or two from her successful output.

Despite efforts of the garden committee to ensure that everyone renting a plot made full use of it, some neglect was evident once again. But the general bounty of the gardens, and the neat appearance of the whole garden area thanks to excellent grass cutting and trimming made the enterprise a success. All of us, I am sure, are grateful for the opportunity REAL has provided those without gardens at home to enjoy the pleasures of tilling the soil.



Not everything at our garden is edible! Thanks to Donna McKenna for maintaining the decorative planter at the entrance to the garden, and to Helen Smith for the flowers in the plot directly in front of the building.

REAL Deal News

The REAL Deal team managed to keep goods moving in and out this summer in spite of the incredible heat and no air conditioning. Thanks goodness for cement walls and big fans! Management only had to close the yard one day. A big thank you to all our people who worked outdoors accepting large donations and keeping things organized in such muggy weather. Mike Tryon, Ben Saunders, and Matthew Ruttan are the new faces out back. Don Harvey, Tim Dupras, Ed Crawford and Chris Jackson are the regulars.



Mike



Ben



Matthew



Aldous

The “old stand bys” in smalls are Una Pugh, Brenda King, Donna McKenna, and Barb Hicks. On cash and other office duties we have Judy Mundy and Heather Warren.

Our second summer student, Aldous Rice-Leach, started with us July 21. He was quickly put to work on cash and wherever he was needed. Both Aldous and Gabrielle Gauthier were hired thanks to a Canada Summer Jobs Grant, and both are returning to full time studies in the fall. Gabrielle will be back at University of Ottawa, and Aldous is starting his first year at Carleton University. Another student, Kelsey Thomson, who volunteered with us last summer, was also hired to assist in the store. She spent most of her time keeping smalls under control, but also assisted

on cash. Dagney Leonard, a summer volunteer, is also returning to school. It was great to have some young enthusiastic help in the store this summer.

Next time you are in the store, check out the hardware area. Doors and some other reno materials have been moved to the coverall, giving us some much needed space. Tim Dupras built a new bank of shelves along the window side, which will help get more of the odd-shaped items off of the floor.

REAL Deal Executive Director, Sue Brandum, is still on the hunt for a Renovations Manager. The position has been advertised in the EMC, and she will be interviewing applicants shortly. Together, this new hire and Manager Shelley Wills will keep all aspects of the REAL Deal store running smoothly.

A retro sale this summer generated some new interest in the store. Customers commented that it was fun to see the items collected from the 50's, 60's and 70's. A turquoise lamp shade was the first item to sell, and then some arborite tables, several suitcases, a dresser and blanket box all found new homes. Retro items are marked with a coloured dot and will be 25% off until after Labour Day.

We are still trying to move some of our seasonal items. First to sell off that table were a slalom water ski, a table top water fountain and a camp stove. And there is lots more! We are so inundated with vanity tops we are offering them free. They are all measured up and ready to go to a good home!

The rain barrels have been selling well for \$55, tax included, and there are just a handful left, so don't delay if you need one in your yard.

Our autumn and Halloween stuff has been selling well already. The Christmas collection will be coming out of storage soon. We will be replenishing it frequently, so don't forget to check it out every time you are in the store, as it is always changing. We have had a small cabinet's worth of Christmas décor out most of the summer.

Don't forget that the silent auction items are photographed and posted on the [REAL Deal Facebook page](#) early in the month. Sorry, bids must still be in person.

Common Local Plant Quiz by Libby Toop

It is surprising how little thought some of us give to the plants we commonly see in our neighbourhoods. Take this little quiz to see what you know.



- A. Chicory
- B. Queen Anne's Lace
- C. Cinqfoil
- D. Bird's Foot Trefoil
- E. Plantain
- F. Yarrow

1. Can you name all these plants?
2. Which, if any, of these plants are edible?
3. Which, if any, of these plants can be medicinal?
4. Which, if any, of these plants are poisonous?
5. Which plant has a highly poisonous look-alike?
6. Which of these plants can be found in almost any grassy area, even a lawn?

1.

Answers. 1. See the upside down box for the plant names 2. Plantain and Chicory are edible. 3. Plantain and Yarrow are considered medicinal 4. None of these are poisonous, but that doesn't mean you should eat them all! 5. Queen's Anne's Lace looks similar to Poison Hemlock. 6. Bird's Foot Trefoil and Plantain can be found in your lawn.

Thanks to the REAL Deal Donors!

REAL frequently encourages people to shop at the REAL Deal, but the supply part of the equation is really important, too. All the great donations we receive are a crucial part of the store's success. That great stuff is exactly what our REAL Deal customers are looking for.

Sometimes there are other stores or organizations that accept these materials, and we are glad that people choose REAL. In some cases we are the "one stop" option. We are particularly glad that residents realize there is life left in these materials and make the effort to deliver them to us.

Donors can help by [checking our list of what we accept](#). Is it something we can sell or recycle or get to another organization that needs it? Please check our website or ask if you are unsure. Donated items should be usable, clean, in good repair, and have all their pieces, and not be so outdated that they are not useful.

We cannot say this enough: please make your donations during store hours. Leaving the item outside is a bad idea all round. It may be something we do not accept. It may get damaged by the weather. It may be appropriated by someone coming by and we do not make any money from it. (Staff can attest to the steady stream of traffic looking for freebies on non-store days.) We lose the opportunity to record its weight against the donors municipality. And if it is ruined, it is garbage that we have to pay for just like anyone else.

We promise to do our best to get your donation(s) into someone else's hands, and get a fair price for it. That income keeps the store operating and makes many of REAL's other projects possible. So a big thank you to our donors who make the REAL Deal a reality – we truly appreciate your support.

Some Recycling Questions Answered

These True/Not True recycling statements are from a quiz by the Recycle Coach.

It's ok to put regular light bulbs in the recycling bin

Not true. Incandescent light bulbs go in the garbage.

It's ok to put small metal items like nails or screws in the recycling bin. Not true. These items are too small for the sorting equipment to pick out, so they become garbage.

It's ok to recycle food containers without rinsing them

True. Rinsing is not necessary as long as the container is relatively free of any food residue.

It's ok to leave paper labels on bottles and cans. True.

Modern recycling equipment can deal with the labels.

It's ok to recycle broken glass bottles. Not true. Broken glass should go in the garbage.

It's ok to leave lids attached to glass jars and bottles when I recycle them.

Not true. If the container and the lid are not the same material, they should be recycled separately.

It's ok to leave caps on plastic containers when I recycle them. True. (see above.)

It's OK to leave plastic film or foil lids on plastic containers (e.g. yogurt peel-off lids). Not true. Remove plastic film or foil lids and place them in the garbage.

It's OK to leave plastic wrappers on flyers, catalogs and magazines. Not true. You must remove plastic wrappers before paper materials can be recycled with the paper.

It's ok to leave staples in paper and cardboard when recycling. True. Modern recycling equipment can handle staples.

It's ok to recycle broken drinking glasses. Not true. Glassware has different characteristics than glass bottles and cannot be recycled. Put them in the garbage.

If I am not sure if something can be recycled, I should put it in my recycling bin. Not true. Contamination by anything that doesn't belong in the recycling bin is a problem. These materials have to be sorted out and sent to landfill by the recycling facility. This extra step causes some recycling programs to become uneconomical.

If you would like to take the full quiz yourself see recyclecoach.com. If in doubt, check with your municipality's waste coordinator.

Recruiting New Board Members

REAL is now in its 27th year as a healthy, well-respected regional charitable organization.

We are looking for an energetic, experienced person to join our Board of Directors. If you are connected to the community, familiar with current and emerging environmental issues, and motivated to do something about them, consider joining a group of like-minded people to make a REAL Difference.

Our board currently meets monthly on the second Monday of the month at the REAL Deal Store in Smiths Falls. A [Board Member Position Description](#) is available on our website under the "Join" tab.

Interested candidates should send a resume and a cover letter describing their interest in REAL by October 15, 2016 to info@REALaction.ca. For more information, please contact [Donna](#) 283-2254 or [Jason](#) 730-8363.

Winterizing your Rain Barrel

Don't forget to give your rain barrel a little attention before everything freezes for the winter. You want to avoid leaks that could make it unusable next year.

1. If your barrel is connected to your gutter downspout, disconnect it.
2. Drain your rain barrel and hoses. Make an effort to use the water in some way so it is not wasted (watering, washing etc.)
3. Remove the hoses and leave the tap open. Store hose indoors.
4. Clean out any solid stuff that has accumulated in the barrel or on the screen, maybe even rinse it.
5. Store the barrel upside down to avoid water accumulation. If you have room, stash it in your garage or basement.
6. Replace the rain spout diverter to direct winter water away from your foundation (or your neighbour's).

In REAL Life



Out in the Community. REAL participated in several community events this summer. On Sat. Aug. 6, REAL had a display at the Tay Watershed Discovery Day in the Crystal Palace in Perth. That same day we were at the Rideau Roundtable's Paddlefest at Lower Reach Park. Some REAL people were part of a voyageur canoe team that won one of its two races. We also had a display on the RAIN program at the event. And then on August 20, REAL supplied some volunteers for the 200 km for 200 years bike ride that began and ended Rideau Ferry. REAL was one of four charities who will receive \$752.50 as a result. Thanks to Shawn Merriman for organizing the event and including REAL.



Peter Au, an organizer of Paddlefest, stopped by REAL's Rain display dressed in his voyageur costume.

Wanted. A good condition, used, apartment sized refrigerator for the REAL Deal staff kitchen. We have outgrown the mini fridge we have there. Call Shelley at the store if you can help, (613) 283-7999.

Large Appliances. Please note, the above request excepted, the REAL Deal does not accept (and never has) large "white" appliances such as dishwashers, stoves and fridges. Ask us about other options. If the appliance does not work, check with you municipality to see if they will accept it for a fee or as scrap metal.

Thanks once again to Dan Andress for agreeing to the "**Customer Ask**" that took place **Andress' Your Independent Grocer August 28—Sept. 3**. Customers were asked at the cash to donate \$2 to their local environmental organization, REAL. This was the sixth year that Dan Andress made this fundraiser possible for us.

- Global Footprint Network announced in early August that humanity had officially depleted all of its natural resources for the year just 221 days in. Earth Overshoot Day has been happening earlier every year. [Read more.](#)
- The RVCA opened [a new conservation area](#) in Elizabethtown-Kitley Township in June. The new Motts Mills Conservation Area sustains a crucial piece of wetland habitat and is home to the recently decommissioned Motts Mills Dam.
- [National Geographic video](#) shows dramatic photographic evidence that the glaciers in Glacier National Park, Montana are melting. Of the 150 glaciers present in the mid 1800s, only 25 remain. The park is expected to be glacier-free by 2030.

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We're on the Web
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 Thursdays
through Saturdays 10—4,
Sundays 12—4 until
Christmas.

Well Aware, Energy Audits,
RAIN or other programs

Phone: 613-283-9500

Send contributions to Decem-
ber issue by November 1, 2016
to dhicks11@cogeco.ca
or call Barb at (613) 283-9966

REAL people taking REAL action to protect our environment

Celebrate our
local food producers!



Saturday, October 15th, 2016

Gallipeau Centre – 361 Queen St., Smiths Falls

Enjoy a delicious buffet meal featuring foods produced close to
home in Lanark, Leeds and Grenville, as well as musical
entertainment and a silent auction.

Buffet by **Amy Rensby** of
Magnolia Catering

Music by
THE BRITISH INVASION

- ❖ **5:30 pm** - Two Rivers tours available
- ❖ **Cocktail hour - 6:00 to 7:00 pm**
- ❖ **Dinner - 7:00 pm**
- ❖ **Cash bar featuring local beers and Ontario wines**

- Tickets – 60\$** (cash or cheque)
Buy before Sept. 18th for a \$5 discount!
- Available at:**
- ❖ Modern Thymes - 11 Russell St. E.
 - ❖ The REAL Deal - 85 William St. W.
 - ❖ Barb Hicks – (613) 283-9966

Presented by the Rideau Environmental Action League
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.

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

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