



Rideau Environmental Action League

July 30, 2014

One of the Rideau Environmental Action League's (REAL's) members has been recognized by the national organization, Green Communities Canada (GCC). Sue Brandum, REAL's Environmental Projects Manager, received a Lifetime Achievement from the GCC this spring. GCC is an umbrella group of Canadian environmental organizations that makes a point of celebrating the valuable work being done by its member organizations and their people. Sue plays key roles in GCC itself, including been an instigator in developing the Well Aware and ecoENERGY programs, in addition to her paid and volunteer work with REAL. She has championed social enterprise and is the driving force behind the REAL Deal Reuse Store in Smiths Falls, serving as its Executive Director. Sue continues to be a well-respected voice for the environment in Eastern Ontario, and the award is truly well-deserved.

Resilience Awards were also given to several Green Communities, including REAL for 25 years of service. The local non-profit will be celebrating 25 years of environmental action this October. One of its anniversary projects is to award up to ten non-profit groups with \$250 towards a local environmental action project in their community.

Following REAL's June AGM, some board roles were reassigned. REAL's new President, Shawn Merriman, was attracted to REAL as "a unique and valuable resource to the community," and feels that everyone can be doing more to protect the environment. 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 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. Also at the table during monthly board meetings are Ken Graham, Smiths Falls Town Council Liaison to REAL.

REAL still hopes to recruit one more board member, and would welcome inquiries from anyone willing to make the commitment. The main requirements are that the candidate be connected to the community, familiar with current and emerging environmental issues, and motivated to do something about them.

For more information, please consult REAL's website, www.REALaction.ca, or contact Barb Hicks at 283-9966.

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