

REAL update

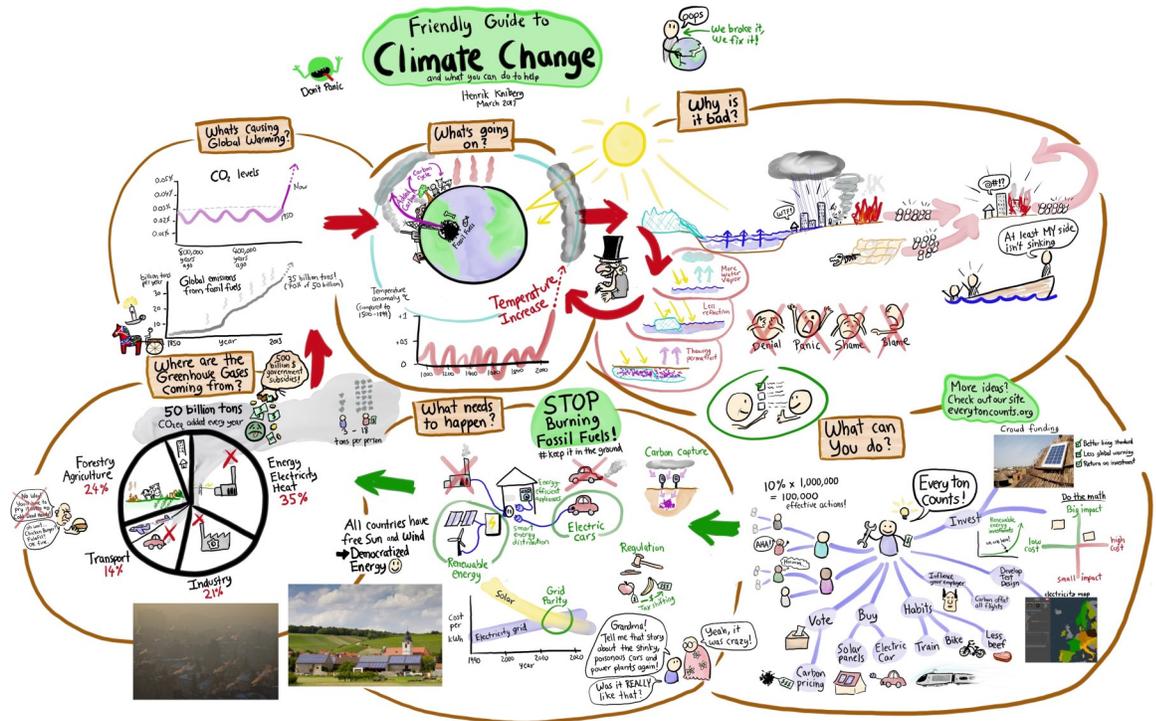
REAL people taking REAL action to protect our environment

Rideau Environmental Action League (REAL)

JULY 2018

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Climate Change Discussion at AGM

We had a larger than usual turnout to our AGM at the Smiths Falls Community Health Centre on June 27th. In addition to our board and members, five guests were in attendance, and from them we gained one individual as well as one associate member, the Alinka Group from Westport. After a terrific potluck dinner, attendees viewed the video “Friendly Guide to Climate Change” by Henrik Kniberg. It is quite concise and done in an entertaining cartoon drawing style. [Watch the video here](#) and be inspired to take action on climate change.

Radon Meter Available to Borrow

A December Update story described the health issue of radon gas leakage in homes. The only way to know if there is radon in your home is to test your basement. Thanks to the efforts of Keely Maddock, REAL has now acquired an Air ‘N’ Things Continuous Corentium Radon Meter for lending. Three people have already asked to borrow the device. Due to the meter’s expense, we will be asking for postdated cheque of \$300 as a deposit, which will be returned when the meter is returned. Katie Hoffman will be managing the lending of the meter. She can be reached at (613) 983-3360 or kt Hoffman@cogeco.ca. Watch for a story on Keely’s experience using the meter in our September issue.



Spring Presentations

The two spring presentations REAL hosted at the Station Theatre were not incredibly well-attended, but in both cases the audience was really enthusiastic and engaged.

First up was Max Finkelstein on Friday, May 11. Max described and showed photos from the Four Winds Voyageur Canoe Brigades he



organized for last summer in honour of Canada's sesquicentennial. Max himself paddled with South Wind Brigade, which travelled from Kingston to Ottawa, passing through Smiths Falls on June 27. Several people in the audience also paddled in the brigade.

On World Environment Day, June 5, Diana Beresford-Kroeger joined us for a screening of her acclaimed documentary



"Call of the Forest: The Forgotten Wisdom of Trees". It was clear that many in the audience had been following her work, and we were pleased that people came from afar – well, Prescott and Barrie, to meet her. We have heard many positive comments about the film and Diana's comments since. It has really made people think and generated interesting discussions with others.

Thanks to Tom Foulkes for his annual financial contribution to REAL, part of which was used to cover the costs of the event, as well as to the Station Theatre for their discounted rate. REAL is hoping to arrange a couple of more public presentations in the fall, so watch for further details. We will also try to make arrangements for tickets or registration, so that we know how many people to expect..

Katie Hoffman Joins REAL Board

Katie Hoffman officially joined the REAL Board at our AGM. In May she won the Charles Gilhuly award from the Town of Smiths Falls for working tirelessly to improve the quality of leisure time for residents, so is one gem of a volunteer.

Katie and her husband David moved to Smiths Falls in 2003 from Ottawa when David retired. Her very first volunteering in this community was done at Lombardy



Public School, but since then she has moved on to many other organizations. She is currently the Chair of the Friends of the Library, quilts with the Heart to Heart quilt group in Perth, is on the steering committee of the Smiths Falls Youth Campus, and bakes for the after school program run by Big Brothers/Big Sisters. The Smiths Falls Station Theatre and DJ Schoular Breakfast program also benefit from her talents.

Before retirement Katie ran a travel agency in Toronto, owned the eight-room inn Auberge Sauvignon in Mont Tremblant and was secretary to a federal cabinet minister on Parliament Hill. She once took a 27 ft cruiser from Kingston to the Bahamas with three kids 2, 5, and 7. She has three children, three stepdaughters, eleven grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Katie sincerely believes in the Three R's and says "It is the only way to save the environment from deterioration. We are quickly running out of space and now it is important to learn the three R's of the environment and put them into practice." Katie is already happily enlisting sponsors for REAL's Local Foods Harvest dinner.

Compost Demo Site Progressing

We have made some headway on our demonstration compost site, but have a ways to go!

The structure got moved into place May 25 thanks to North Country Sheds. After some consultation we decided that in the interests of good air flow we would not add any siding to it. The half roof will help keep the compost from drying out, and the open slats of the three walls will keep air flowing. The side facing away from William St. is, of course, open to allow access to the composters.



North Country Sheds returned on May 25 to move the compost shelter into place next to the Community Garden.

Landscape fabric was laid down inside the structure, as well as a layer of wood shavings, which were donated the previous fall. There are four different composters set up inside the shelter. Cardboard was laid down under the cedar crib composter at the left. Each has a layer of twigs, greens, shredded paper (REAL documents!) and leaves to get started. We have started adding kitchen waste, and are getting contributions from board members as well as community gardeners. We are not accepting materials from the general public. However, if you are a REAL member with kitchen waste to spare, get in touch and we can work something out.

We will likely be adding a wire enclosure composter, and some enclosures to stockpile leaves and greens for layering. We have had another style of

composter donated to the store we may use also. Our plans for finishing the exterior of the shed are evolving, but we are looking at lattice, a door, signage, climbing vegetation and some other nature friendly additions such as bee houses and butterfly houses. We are also considering a vermicomposting unit to be kept indoors. Worm composters have “advanced” and now there are models with trays that mean the separating of worms from soil happens without intervention.

REAL is hoping to find a volunteer who would like to keep an eye on our outdoor composters on a weekly basis to make sure things are progressing as they should. If you might be interested, please contact Donna to discuss: andisondj@gmail.com or 283-2254. A composting workshop is still a possibility but no date has been set.



A few of the composters set up at our Compost Demonstration Site.

Have a Composter You're Not Using?

Many visitors to the store have been interested in buying the composters we had set aside for this project. If you have a composter you have given up on and are wondering what to do with it, REAL would gladly take it, either to sell or as an example of another type of composter.

REAL Deal Celebrates 10 Years at 85 William St.

The REAL Deal store is celebrating an important milestone in its development: 10 years at its 85 William St. W. location. A mini celebration took place Saturday, June 30th. Donors and customers were offered a 20% discount on purchases, a celebration cookie and a chance to enter a draw for a rain barrel and two \$20 REAL Deal gift certificates.

REAL is grateful for the many forms of support we have had along the way from the Town of Smiths Falls, neighbouring municipalities, funders, supporters, businesses, service clubs, members, donors, customers, staff and especially our volunteers. We set out to reduce the amount of waste going to landfills in our community, and are now diverting 43 tonnes of mostly usable materials, as well as almost 40 tonnes of electronic waste annually.

In the early 90s REAL received funding to hire several summer students each year. In the summer of 1992, two students started our very first Reuse Centre on Old Mill Road. This was a free service, where residents could drop off household items "no larger than a laundry basket" and take anything they could use.

For most of its existence, the Centre was located at 91 Beckwith St. N. (at the end of Johnston St) in two small rooms, and operated Saturday mornings with usually one volunteer.



Susan Brandum, developer of the REAL Deal, and George Ward, the store's first manager spring 2008.



Mayor Dennis Staples, Peter Au, Brenda King and Town Councillor Bill Widenmaier checking out some of the items at the Reuse Centre in the early 90s.



A "Before" view of the Clarke Building at 85 William St.W.

REAL realized there were bigger household items that were also going to waste, and that REAL could get involved and earn some income to support its other environmental projects. A feasibility study and business plan were completed in 2005, and the REAL Deal store was born. It operated at 72 Lombard Street from February 2006 to spring 2007, then the hunt was on for a new location!

The Town of Smiths Falls offered the use the Clarke Building, 85 William St. W. as it was going to consolidate its Public Works operations on Air Care Drive. The large property adjacent to the swale showed promise for outdoor eco features as well.

Renovations began on the space in February 2008, funded by various grants and over \$12,000 of REAL's own investment. The biggest changes were the dry-wall, addition of a customer door, and repairs to an overhead beam. But over the first few years a kitchen, laundry tub and outside taps were added, safety of the loft was improved, and all of the windows replaced.

The store began accepting donations May 2008 and opened for sales in June 2008. At the time the store operated with one paid staff member, assisted by volunteers, with the whole operation overseen by Susan Brandum, the store's Executive Director.



Renovation stage, early 2008. Kitchen location in centre of photo.

As we amassed more goods, especially more large items, we added a trailer in 2011 for storage. In 2015, we added the coverall, which quickly filled also.

Other additions included fencing (2014), improvements to the front of the building (2012), the mural (2010) and recycled art panels (2011). A reorganization of the store layout in 2012 is basically what you see today. The oil tank room was converted into a furniture gallery about the same time.

We began accepting ewaste in late 2013. Our solar thermal wall was added 2015.



The coverall located behind the building was put up in August 2015, although the ends were enclosed later.

Our REAL Deal Reuse Store will continue to thrive if we have the support we have come to rely on.

We couldn't exist without our terrific donors who take the time to pack up their usable items and bring them to us. More customers are discovering the store thanks to social media. Four area municipalities are providing support to ensure the service continues.

The store runs with a mixture of paid, volunteer and work placement staff. Volunteers who see the value in used materials are a crucial part of our operation!



An "After" photo of the REAL Deal with Community Garden in foreground.

A Happy REAL Deal Shopper

I have been a supporter and shopper at the REAL DEAL since its inception. The myriad of programs and goods keep growing and expanding. I use the store when I need objects and materials that are hard to come in today's retail market. As a designer, I appreciate the variety, opportunity and price of unique pieces. Whether they be vintage hardware, non-standard sized doors, or unique furniture which I use to re purpose and integrate into a new concept in design. I recommend REAL DEAL to others and advocate its Principle of the 3 R's.

Here are a few of the treasures I have found at the REAL Deal over the years:

- An oversized door that was hard to come by
- A unique chair for a stage set
- A vintage curtain runner to recreate into tracks to hang art
- A vintage beveled mirror which I used to design a make up counter
- An original funky oil painting to brighten up a busy space

Janice Ling, Artmakers Studio, Perth



Recycled glass blocks from REAL Deal used in a bedroom wall.

Vintage beveled mirror and an art shelf made from bifold door, both discovered at the REAL Deal



New Faces at the Store This Summer

Summer is generally a busy season at the REAL Deal, and luckily we have some new people to help.

We are pleased to welcome new volunteers Mark Beasley, David Thorley, Rick Collins, Iaira Sarmiento and Sam Saikaley. Jaron Kearns, Mike Brown, Mike Young and Denver Bradshaw have all completed their placements with us. Mike Tryon, Chris Kuhl and Ed Crawford continue to assist in the yard. Our Renovations Manager Don Mathewson resigned effective the end of May so Tim Dupras, Don Harvey and new hire Matt Benoit are keeping things under control in the yard. Shelley Wills is managing the REAL Deal operation, and has the assistance of cashiers Judy Mundy, Heather Warren and Tiffany Carroll. Old faithfuls Brenda King, Una Pugh, Donna McKenna and Barb Hicks continue in smalls sorting and pricing. Barb and Donna are also the link between the REAL Deal Store and the Board.

REAL was disappointed to not receive Canada Summer Jobs funding to hire a student. This is the second year in a row we were unsuccessful, and only three Smiths Falls organizations received grants through the program this year.

Enbridge Home Energy Conservation Incentives Still Available

Despite the change in Ontario government the [Enbridge incentive program](#) is still in place. To access up to \$5,000 in incentives, homeowners must have a pre and post home energy audit, which is where REAL comes in. Registered Energy Advisor Alan Leonard is available to do the necessary energy assessments and help you access the program. Note that homes heated with oil, propane, wood, electricity or Enbridge natural gas are eligible. Reach Alan at alanleonard9@gmail.com or (613) 864-3099.

Another building upgrade program, Green ON, just introduced last year, was cancelled shortly after the election by the new premier.

In REAL Life

Evergreen Avenue



Evergreen Dedication. The Evergreen Avenue dedication ceremony originally planned for June has been moved to Saturday, September 22, 11:00 a.m to noon, still at Victoria Park. There were concerns that the stone installations and landscaping would not be completed in time with all the construction work being done at the park. Seven new stones will be dedicated and three more WW I soldiers' names added to the Cenotaph. Contact [Peter Au](#) , (613) 284-8338 for further details.



Andress Customer Ask. This year's fundraiser ran from Sunday, May 27th to Saturday, June 2nd at Andress Your Independent Grocer. Cashiers asked customers if they wanted to have a \$2 contribution to REAL added to their bill. Contributors could then sign their name to slip of paper that was displayed in the store. Thanks to Dan Andress and staff for making this happen. Over \$450 was raised.



Local Foods Dinner. Our fabulous fall feast will be served up by Chef Joanne Edwards at the Smiths Falls Legion on Saturday, October 20th. Tickets will be available at the start of September at Modern Thymes or the REAL Deal, or by contacting a committee member . Once again, we are offering an early bird rate of \$55. After September 21st tickets will be \$60. So start enlisting a table of friends now! This is REAL's big fundraiser for the year. Silent auction contributions are always welcome. Contact [Donna McKenna](#) at (613) 283-2254 to arrange for pickup.



Municipal Support Established. The REAL Board is pleased that the Town of Smiths Falls as well as three neighbouring municipalities are contributing to REAL for 2018. The Town, Montague, Drummond North/Elmsley and Rideau Lakes are all supportive of REAL's environmental activities. Three of the municipalities required a detailed application order to be considered, and we also made a brief presentation to Montague Council in April to support our request. If you reside in one of these municipalities, please consider thanking a councillor and letting them know you support REAL,



Three Garden Tales. Two women arrived at the REAL Deal late one Saturday afternoon with about 70 plants – perennials and houseplants left over from a garage sale, and donated them to us. We managed to sell all but a few for \$2 each ... One of last years community gardeners had planted rhubarb in his plot, but did not return this year. We needed to clear the plot so potted the plants and sold them at the store for 5, 3 and 2 dollars, raising close to \$100. Thanks Nate!... Dan Andress from the local YIG donated a large quantity of flower seed packets which are still available in the store for 50 cents each. Every little bit helps!



Car Washing . Washing your car in your driveway is not an eco-friendly activity. In fact, some Canadian municipalities have banned it. Besides using more water than is necessary, the wash water coming off the car contains oil, grease, heavy metals such as lead, chemicals, dirt ,and potentially phosphates. If you're in the country, that water is not getting treated and can enter the groundwater or run directly into surface waters. In an urban area, the wash water could be entering a storm drain and not be completely treated before being released into a water body. The solution is to use a commercial car wash that uses less water and energy, and that directs runoff to a municipal sewer system to be treated before being discharged into lakes or rivers.

Box 1061
Smiths Falls ON
K7A 5A5
613-283-9500
info@REALaction.ca

We're on the Web
www.REALaction.ca

**REAL Deal Store &
Environment Centre**

85 William St. W.,
Smiths Falls ON
613-283-7999

Store open Thursdays
through Saturdays 10 –4
Open Sundays
Noon—4 until fall

For Home Energy Audits,
contact Alan Leonard:
alanleonard9@gmail.com
or (613) 864-3099

Facebook Groups:
REAL Deal Store
REAL
Community Garden

Send contributions to the
September issue by August 15 to
dhicks11@cogeco.ca
or call Barb at (613) 283-9966

REAL people taking REAL action to protect our environment

Waste Materials Accepted at the REAL Deal

These can be reused, recycled, or used to raise funds.

Electronics. Televisions, stereo components, computers and peripherals, cellphones, VCRs, DVD players etc. earn funds through the Ontario Electronic Stewardship (OES).



Electrical Cords and Wire. Whether leftover from projects, discarded appliances or Christmas lights, we get a little cash for them.



Plastic Milk Bags. Are crocheted into mats and bags for developing countries.

Scrap Metal. Unusable metal items are collected and sold for scrap. We will accept cookware, mailboxes, tools, etc.



Batteries. We accept single use batteries (no car or truck batteries) for proper disposal.



Ink and Toner Cartridges. These are given to Lanark County United Way for a fundraiser.



Mercury Thermostats. If you replace your home's mercury containing thermostat, bring it for collection so the mercury can be recovered via TRP.



Materials are accepted

during store hours ONLY,

Thurs - Sat, 10 a.m - 4 p.m.

and seasonally Sundays noon - 4

See www.REALaction.ca

or call (613) 283-7999

**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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