

# REAL update

*REAL people taking REAL action to protect our environment*

Rideau Environmental Action League (REAL)

DECEMBER 2018

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## **Don't houses need to breathe? Can a house be too airtight?**

by Alan Leonard, REA

Houses don't need to breathe, we do. A house would be perfectly happy with no incoming or outgoing air flow but we need to have a supply of fresh air and to exhaust moisture and indoor pollutants to have a healthy living space. Indoor air quality is often worse than what we breathe outdoors in a polluted city and we now spend most of our time indoors. There are many sources of indoor pollution in our houses and workspaces from the materials they are built with, how we furnish them and our many activities that can contribute to unhealthy air. Reducing the source of indoor pollutants by choosing materials that don't off gas nasty chemicals and monitoring humidity and maintaining it at a healthy level is important. At the same time we need to have an assured level of ventilation that isn't just dependent on naturally occurring ventilation.



Even a fairly drafty house can have periods when there is inadequate air flow in and out of the house. Advice from an energy auditor about how much ventilation is needed and how to operate it will be based on building science and the results of your house's air tightness testing.

Air filtration can help to minimize pollutants and particulates but is not a replacement for good ventilation that provides fresh outside air! Additional oxygen needs to be brought in and carbon dioxide needs to be exhausted from the house along with pollutants and moisture.

Most existing houses use bath and range hood fans for mechanical ventilation and these can be acceptable methods to reduce humidity and indoor pollution. This is dependent on how air tight the house is and whether the fans are actually exhausting enough air and are properly vented to the outside. During an energy audit the advisor will try to determine if fans are vented to the outside and if air flow is actually happening. They will also test whether fans are de-pressurizing the house enough to potentially cause combustion appliances to backdraft, spilling smoke and carbon monoxide into the house. This is crucial information for your health and safety and can only be measured with the proper testing equipment.

*(continued inside)*



## Home Ventilation (continued)

Air leakage is a huge energy waste and can affect the durability of the building and the health of the occupants. Most older and many newer houses are far from being so airtight that they won't benefit from draft proofing. *You can't have a house that is too airtight, only one that is under ventilated!*

There is a ventilation solution that provides excellent air quality as well as energy savings. A heat recovery ventilator (HRV) is a balanced whole house ventilation system that supplies fresh air while exhausting polluted indoor air while it recovers much of the heat of the outgoing air with a heat exchanger. Unlike exhaust fans that just remove indoor air with no heat recovery an HRV can recover 75% + of the heat of the outgoing air and provide fresh air for excellent indoor air quality. HRV's can be retrofitted in all houses and most new houses require them.

Depending on how drafty your house is the energy advisor will make recommendations about air sealing

and what kind of ventilation you need and how to properly operate it to assure your health and reduce energy costs. This may mean installing an HRV but often means using exhaust fans more effectively so that you have good indoor air quality with the least energy cost.

Achieving the best indoor air quality and saving energy by draft proofing while minimizing the energy cost of ventilation is difficult without considering the many factors involved and getting unbiased, professional advice that is based on actual testing of the house. Draft proofing and ventilation advice is just one aspect of an energy audit and is valuable information for your health.

*To arrange for a home energy audit, contact Alan Leonard, REAL's Registered Energy Advisor (REA) at [alanleonard9@gmail.com](mailto:alanleonard9@gmail.com) or phone (613) 863-3099. More information is available [on our website under the energy tab.](#)*

## SFDCI - Dene Community Student Exchange

One of the three 2018 REAL Action Grants awarded earlier this year went to the Smiths Falls – Dene community Student Exchange led by SFDCI teacher Emma Hart. Here are some excerpts from a student's summary presentation.



*Students traveled to Fond-du-lac Saskatchewan on Sunday the 16<sup>th</sup> of September to the 21<sup>st</sup> of September. Three teachers from Smiths Falls District Collegiate Institute travelled on the trip with 12 students. REAL's funds paid for the hosting fee of one student that was not able to pay for the full trip .*

*The trip showed me the things that we take for granted in our everyday life aren't a necessity and that we always need to be thankful for what we have, and to be thankful for the land and animals that gave their lives for us" - Rachel Gallipeau*



*"It was a great experience. We got to meet a lot of amazing people and got to see some amazing views" - Maddie Vandusen*

## Thanks in Order for Several Local Organizations

**Wills Transfer.** Our thanks to the folks at Wills Transfer for quickly taking care of a little maintenance problem we were having. The trailer we purchased in 2011 for storage was “sinking” into the pavement behind the REAL Deal. The water table is very high there and that’s a lot of weight concentrated on a small footprint. Wills agreed to help and had it jacked up and supported in about 15 minutes.

**Source Energy Mechanical.** About forty appliances had accumulated that needed their coolant safely removed before disposal. Most of these appliances (air conditioners, humidifiers, and a couple of mini fridges and water coolers) had been dumped on us without our permission. Source Energy Mechanical agreed to come on site to remove the coolant and tag them so they could be sent to scrap metal. This is a time-consuming process that requires a licensed professionals and specialized equipment, so we are very grateful that Wes and Matt Moore arranged to do this for us and gave us a reduced rate.

**Healey's Glass.** Healey's Glass continues to provide us with a continuous supply of household windows. The windows sell very well at the store and our customers appreciate the opportunity to get a good deal on these quality materials. REAL truly appreciates this partnership and that Healey's takes the time to deliver them to us.

**Town of Smiths Falls.** Regular readers will know that the Town donates the use of 85 William St. to us, and provides us with an annual municipal grant. But we (and others) were really really happy to have the entranceway repaved late this summer. The potholes were getting truly treacherous! And thanks to Town Engineer Vanessa Bernicky for dealing with the dozen or so large paint pails that were illegally left on our property recently. The REAL Deal does not and cannot accept hazardous waste of any kind. Please consult with us if you are unsure what we accept.

**Advanced Alarms.** Thanks to Wayne Moodie at Advanced Alarms for his consultation with us on our security issues. We have been increasingly frustrated with thefts, vandalism and “drops” of items we do not accept in off hours, and we appreciate the benefit of his experience.

## REAL Action Grants 2019

REAL Action Grants of up to \$500 are being offered to selected community groups to start or continue a project that will benefit the local environment. (See poster on the back of this newsletter.) This is the fourth set of action grants offered by REAL.

Online applications will be accepted up until March 18, 2019 from community groups in the counties of Lanark, Leeds and Grenville and the Town of Smiths Falls. Winners will be announced March 29, 2019. Projects should be completed by August 31, 2019.

[See our website under the Greenspace tab](#) for more details and examples of past, successful applications.



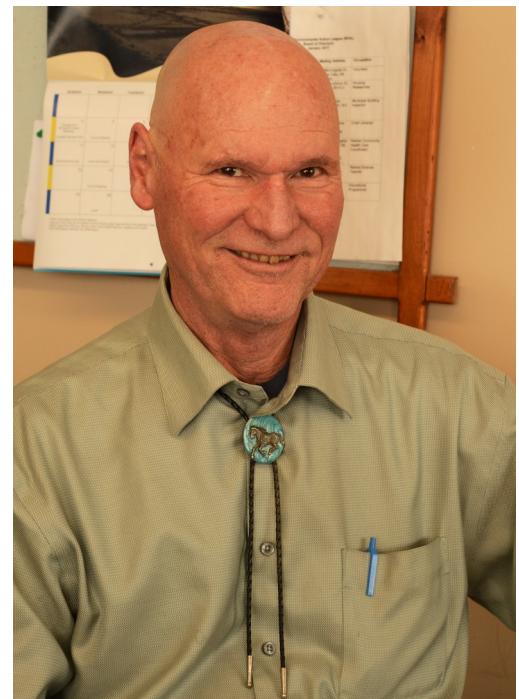
Laurie Bedford and her family by the stone placed in honour of her father, Ian Fraser. Ian was a WW2 veteran, Legion member and an active member of the Evergreen Avenue Committee. Seven new stones placed along Evergreen Avenue were dedicated at a September 22 ceremony at Victoria Park. More pictures are [on our website](#).

## REAL Welcomes New Store Manager

Dan Cunningham is the new face of the REAL Deal Store! Dan has been busy since November 7 learning everything he can about our operation from Shelley Wills, who will be retiring at the end of November.

Dan's customer service experience running a family owned cash and carry furniture store, as well being a past Rona sales associate, makes his a good fit for the Store Manager position. He is a firm believer in reducing waste, providing green jobs for residents, reusing and repurposing merchandise, and offering great prices for people looking for a bargain. He is a life-long garage sale enthusiast, and says his favourite TV show is Canadian Pickers. He has previously worked at Hershey's and as the Health and Safety Manager at Stanley Tools, so feels a strong connection to the people and the area.

In his free time Dan is a naturalist who enjoys year-round outdoor activities like hiking, camping, cross country skiing, snow shoeing, boating and fishing. He is a huge sports fan, who enjoys playing and watching all sports.



Says Dan, "I look forward to working with our staff and volunteers to make the REAL Deal a great experience for our donors and shoppers, as well as helping customers with their redo and reno projects."

Dan will be responsible for the smooth operation of the whole REAL Deal Reuse Store operation, both in the main building and outside, where more of the renovation and yard materials are displayed. Reach him or leave a message on the store phone (613) 283-7999 or email him at dcunningham@REALaction.ca.

## Bring Us Your Non Functioning Pens

TerraCycle® and Staples Canada are providing a second life for writing instruments. To save you a trip to the Staples store in Carleton Place or Brockville, we have started a collection bin for them at the REAL Deal, near the customer entrance.

We will make sure they get to Staples. The pens are taken apart and recycled into new products.



## 'Tis the Season for Charitable Giving

by Barb Hicks

A few things led me to believe charitable giving would be this year's seasonal newsletter story! First, Giving Tuesday is November 27<sup>th</sup>. Charities, companies and individuals will be on social media encouraging people to give to and volunteer for their favourite causes. Second, the Christmas season is upon us. Over 40% of Canadians' charitable giving happens during the last six weeks of the year. Whether it is the warm feelings of the season, or the approach of the end of the tax year, the surge in giving is significant. And third, Canada Helps, with the assistance of Imagine Canada, has just released its annual Giving Report that examines trends in Canada's charitable sector. Here are some of the findings and how they relate to REAL:

- Giving is declining across all age groups. 24.6% of all Canadians donated to charity in 2006. By 2015, that number had eroded to just 20.4%.
- Canada's charitable sector now accounts for 10% of the full-time Canadian work force. REAL has not been able to create full-time jobs, but is delighted to have created several part-time jobs through the REAL Deal.
- Canada Helps data shows that the greatest proportion of donations are going to social services, health, public benefit, religion and education. Only 4.35% of total donated dollars go to environmental charities. REAL has been well aware of this unfortunate reality.
- The majority of government funding is directed at health and education. Together, charities in these two categories receive 87% of all government dollars that went to charities. While one in four (25%) charities are in the Social Services and Environment categories, they receive only 9.5% of government funding.
- While 68% of charity revenue in general comes from government funding, that proportion really only holds for large charities. Small charities with 10 or fewer employees receive only 27% of their revenue from government funding, and must rely on donations from individuals and corporations. Apart from municipal funding, which is very significant for REAL, we have not pursued government



funding in recent years.

- For Canada Helps, almost half (47%) of all giving occurs in the last two months of the calendar year. This serves certain charities well, but is not helpful for charities without marketing resources or who have harder to explain causes. REAL falls into both of those categories.
- Monthly donations on Canada Helps are growing, but only account for 16% of the total dollars raised. Consistent cash flow can be very important to a charity's planning and programs. Fortunately, REAL has not suffered from not receiving monthly contributions from its donors, and does have a solid base of individuals and businesses who donate year after year.
- Online giving is growing very rapidly, both in number of donors, and the size of the donations made.

REAL will need to work harder at online donations, as we are frequently reminded that younger people are far less likely to have chequing accounts.

- Crowdfunding is a growing trend, which reduces donations to established charities, and is not without its issues. Think carefully about how to best direct your dollars. You may prefer to give to an organization with a proven track record, a plan, and the ability to provide charitable receipts.

The full Canada Helps document "[The Giving Report 2018](#)" is an interesting read if you work for a charitable organization or are a frequent donor.

If you are inclined to make a charitable donation this holiday season, please consider giving to a local charity, maybe one that is not so much in the public eye at Christmas time, and maybe even to your local environmental organization, the Rideau Environmental Action League! Local organizations provide important services to you and your neighbours, and are an integral part of our community. Cheques can be mailed to our box address or dropped off at the store. If you prefer to donate by credit card, you can do so via [CanadaHelps.org](#) or [PayPal](#) (just click on "Donate" on our homepage.) Donations will be receipted promptly.

Our sincerest thanks to the sponsors  
who supported our local foods dinner,  
and with it,  
environmental action in our community.

### Platinum Sponsors

Lawrence E. Allen, CPA CA  
Andress' Your Independent Grocer

### Gold Sponsors

Dr. Ambrose Au  
Peter and Daisy Au  
Greg Fournier  
Beth Graham  
Healey's Glass Ltd.  
Patrick Hogan  
Smiths Falls Optometrists  
Smiths Falls Civitan Club

### Silver Sponsors

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Dr. Goldie Dixit  
Katie and David Hoffman  
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Don Ross  
Smiths Falls Kia  
Smiths Falls Lions  
G. Tackaberry & Sons Construction  
Wills Transfer Ltd.

### Bronze Sponsors

Denny K's Car Care  
Denoco  
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Century 21 Explore Realty  
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### Why I Support REAL

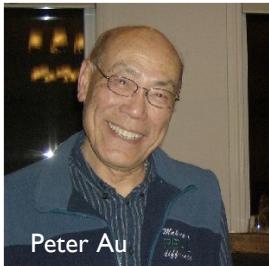
By Tom Foulkes

The local harvest dinner held on October 20<sup>th</sup> was a smashing success. The legion hall was beautifully decorated, the meal by Joanne Edwards and her team was terrific and Shannon Miller was an excellent speaker as she took us through a journey of local foods and their importance to our society.

A highlight of the night, especially for me, was a surprise presentation of a Certificate of Appreciation to me for our support of REAL's activities over many years. It was suggested that I should have responded, but I was speechless. Here is my response:

It is said the greatest joy in life is giving. It is the highest order of calling and can be much more satisfying than earning money, assuming one has the capacity to do so. REAL is a worthy cause in my mind. I have supported REAL as a director, worker, planner, organizer, and financially. Why? I have been an environmentalist for over 50 years in terms of my career, community activities, land-use planning and so on. Therefore it was logical that myself and my late wife Pat would hook up with REAL. The leadership and passion shown by the original members and their supporters (initially mostly Trinity United Church members) has lead to many initiatives - blue boxes, Pitch In, Well Aware, the first strategic plan for Smiths Falls and the REAL Deal store.

It has also been a two way street as the moral and spiritual support my family and I have received from REAL has been outstanding. It is a privilege to help REAL and see the wise usage of these contributions for the betterment of our community (Lanark, Leeds and Grenville and beyond).

**In REAL Life**

Peter Au

**On the Web**

**Our 30th Anniversary Approaches.** REAL is turning 30 in October 2019, and is looking for ideas on how best to mark the occasion. Likely this would be a series of events or actions throughout 2019, organized by any REAL member, not necessarily the board. A tentative date to brainstorm possibilities has been set for Thursday, January 10th, at the Community Health Centre Kilmarnock Room. If you are on our mailing list, you will receive a reminder, otherwise, check the website or contact [Peter Au](#) at (613) 284-8338 or peter00au@gmail.com. Feel free to email with your ideas, too!

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**Radon Meter Lending.** To get on the waiting list to borrow Air 'n Things Continuous Corentium Radon Meter from REAL, contact Katie Hoffman at [ktoffman@cogeco.ca](mailto:ktoffman@cogeco.ca) or (613) 983-3360. REAL requires a \$300 deposit which will be returned when you return the meter in two weeks. See our [radon webpage](#).

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**Peter Au Wins Joyce Brennan Award.** This award is given to a community member who has contributed significantly to arts and culture. It was presented to Peter by the Smiths Falls and District Arts and Culture Council at a November 3 dinner. Peter, a founding member of REAL, continues to be active in REAL (notably Evergreen Avenue) the Rideau Roundtable, Paddlefest, the Chinese Community Association, Local Immigration Partnership, Trinity United Church, and is a truly remarkable asset to our community.

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**Don Ross Passes.** We were saddened to learn that Don Ross, a long time supporter of REAL, passed away October 30. Don and his staff at Ross and Cooke provided accounting services to REAL for over a decade at a substantial community discount. He was a friendly and respectful man with cared deeply for his community. Our condolences to his wife Marg and family.

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**DNE Moves to Two Box Recycling.** Drummond North Elmsley implemented its new two box alternate week recycling system in November. Garbage collection continues to be every week, but paper and cardboard go out in a blue box, and containers like PET and cans are put out in the yellow box alternate weeks. Call the township at 267-6500 if you are a DNE resident and did not receive your yellow box.

- PFAS are used in products like raincoats, carpeting and cookware to make them fire resistant, stain resistant, water resistant and non-stick, but are linked to serious health issues such as cancer, infertility, and suppressed immune systems. Canada has banned their use, but exempts many products, writes [the National Post](#). [Earth Talk](#) suggests products to avoid to minimize your exposure – one being staying away from microwave popcorn!
- [EarthTalk](#) answers the question: “Does the Scott brand’s “tube-free” toilet paper really save much paper or is it just corporate greenwashing?” Each year in the US, 160 million pounds of cardboard tubes from the inside of toilet paper rolls ends up in landfills, but could easily be recycled with other household cardboard.
- Canada only recycles about 11% of its plastics. [Sign the Environmental Defence petition](#) asking Trudeau and Environment Minister Catherine McKenna to establish a federal plastics strategy that gets us to a plastic-free environment by 2025.

RIDEAU ENVIRONMENTAL  
ACTION LEAGUE

Box 1061  
Smiths Falls ON  
K7A 5A5  
[info@REALaction.ca](mailto:info@REALaction.ca)

We're on the Web  
[www.REALaction.ca](http://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  
Closed Sundays

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

Facebook Groups:  
**REAL Deal Store**  
**REAL**  
**Community Garden**

Send contributions to the  
February issue by January 15 to  
[dhicks11@cogeco.ca](mailto:dhicks11@cogeco.ca)  
or call Barb at (613) 283-9966

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



## **Make a REAL Difference**

Tell us how you would make an impact on the local environment  
by applying for a **2019 REAL Action Grant**.  
Grants up to \$500 to be awarded!

For application details or to see past winners please visit:  
<http://www.realaction.ca>

**Deadline: March 18th, 2019**



**RIDEAU  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
ACTION LEAGUE**

### **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

#### **Join our Email List**

Use the green signup button on the  
bottom of our homepage.

#### **Contact Information**

Name .....

Street/RR Address .....

.....

Town, Province .....

Postal Code .....

Home Phone .....

Work Phone .....

Best time to reach me .....

Email address .....