

APRIL 2006

Operation Clean Sweep

Don't miss this springtime tradition! "Operation Clean Sweep" marks the fifth year that REAL has coordinated Pitch-In Smiths Falls. Community groups and individuals will be picking up litter in parks and other visible locations between April 24 and May 6. Or residents can meet at Pitch-In Headquarters at the Smiths Falls Legion or at Lower Reach Park on Saturday, May 6 at 9:00 to finish the cleanup.



REAL is asking participants to pre-register so that they can coordinate locations. Call Brenda at 283-4416 or Isobel at 284-0066 to find where you would be most useful. Garbage bags will be supplied, but volunteers should wear work gloves. Give them a call even if you aren't physically able to pick up litter - there are other jobs that need to be done to keep things running smoothly.

All participants are invited back to the Legion for a free lunch and slide show of the morning's activities from 11:30 - 1 p.m on May 6.

Pitch-In Smiths Falls is supported locally by Tim Horton's, Scotiabank, Giant Tiger and Canadian Tire. Last year 650 people participated in Smiths Falls, collecting 186 bags of garbage and recyclables, as well as many larger items such as tires and bicycles making the community sparkle. See some photos at www.REALaction.ca.

Terrific Progress at REAL DEAL Store

The first two months of operation have been extremely busy, often chaotic and full of challenges. But under the direction of Sue Brandum, Executive Director and Halina Shannan, Store Manager, it is making terrific progress.

The store has been set up with a good assortment of solidly built plywood display units from the old high school. A section has been closed off at the rear of the store for an intake area, and The Free Store has its own distinct area under the stage.

Sales have been good. The quantity and selection of materials varies and items are moving in and out quickly. Customers seem very happy with the store; we have a solid clientele and it is definitely building. Word is getting around that the REAL DEAL is open and *continued inside*

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ready for business.

The Free Store continues to serve a good section of the population and would appear to be a key part of our place in the community.

The two downstairs offices have been set up and are functioning well with donated equipment and furniture. The manager's office has a view of, and easy access to, the store and the Environment Centre. The upstairs is furnished for future office spaces, as well as a good supply of tables and chairs and a kitchenette for meetings and workshops.

The storage room next to the manager's office has been set up with file cabinets containing printed environmental information and financial records. We also have place to store signs, poster boards, banners and so on that have been scattered between REAL members homes.

There have been a series of glitches with the computers and the internet access that are on their way to being resolved with the determined assistance of Sue Calver. Steve Kotze has set up the Simply Accounting program and along with an associate, Jan Forsythe, is supporting the production of monthly financial reports. The bar code system is on its way to being operational, the equipment is in the office and should be functioning towards the end of May.

A work crew of eight people from Ontario Works has been assigned to us for two days a week, and has been invaluable in getting everything set up and functioning. Regular volunteers Sherwood Webb and Josh VanAlstine do a great job keeping on top of the necessary pickups and deliveries.

A permanent sign with changeable message area will be installed soon. Next steps will be to solidify operations and procedures, and continue to market our services. Why not volunteer and be part of the action? The REAL DEAL staff can be reached at 283-7999.

Liz Brown Joins the Team

Our latest addition to the REAL DEAL team is Liz Brown. Her mission is to develop and implement a marketing and outreach plan for the store. She will be establishing contacts with contractors, retailers, real estate agents, landlords and other groups who may be in a position to donate materials to The REAL DEAL.

Liz has many years experience in sales and marketing, and most recently was the Executive Director of the Lanark County Reading Network. She coordinated the development of the Highland Trail at the Purdon Conservation Area, and continues to volunteer for the Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority by co-authoring a survey and report on the Purdon orchids.

An avid conservationist, Liz lives on a property near Innisville which is home to red tailed hawks, five species of woodpeckers and a colony of Southern Fly squirrels.

Well Aware Continues This Summer

Green Communities of Canada has awarded LLGreen a contract for delivery of Well Aware in Lanark, Leeds and Grenville and in Renfrew counties.

We will be contracting Ross Elliott in Lanark and Janet McNeil in Renfrew to deliver the Guided Self-Assessments (GSAs), and Kat Elliott in Lanark and The Eganville Action Centre (Maggie Fairfield) in Renfrew to do the Community Forums and Community Outreach. All four will be attending a 4-day training session, after which Ross and Janet will go through the Water Guide certification process.

We plan to do one Community Forum in each of Westport and Eganville, 100 GSAs in Lanark Leeds and Grenville and 50 GSAs in Renfrew, and to distribute at least 2,000 Well Aware booklets and kits throughout the region between May and September.

Don't Burn It!

Just a reminder for those of you in the spring cleaning mood, that backyard burning is never a good idea.



Whether garbage is burned in woodstoves, burn barrels, outdoor furnaces or open pits, it releases toxic pollutants into the air. Burning plastics is particularly bad, but even burning regular paper and newspaper, which contain chlorine, produces dioxins. Research shows that the burning by rural residents of ALL types of garbage is the fourth largest source of dioxins and furans in Ontario.

The health risks do not come so much from breathing the air containing the pollutants as they do from eating food. Poisons released into the air by garbage burning eventually fall back to earth and contaminate plants, soil and water. Animals consume them and they make their way up the food chain.

REAL has taken this message to the public, fire departments, the health unit, farmers and municipalities. Clearly there is more public education to be done, as some local municipalities are encouraging their residents to burn their garbage. If you are thinking of burning your garbage - don't. Explore other options for your waste. And if you see a neighbour burning their garbage, consider dropping a flier on the issue in their mailbox. Just drop by the REAL DEAL for a supply.

SFDCI Sale a Huge Success!

REAL's used office furniture sale at the former SFDCI March 24 and 25 was a huge success and surpassed our expectations!

We had a big rush of customers when the doors opened at 10 a.m. on Friday. From there on,

business was steady. By the end of the two days, about three quarters of the desks, tables, chairs and shelving had sold and REAL had taken in over \$3,000.

We particularly want to thank Chris Saumure of Guy Saumure and Sons, owners of the old school, for providing us this opportunity to raise money for REAL's projects and ensure that much of the used but useable furniture did not go to waste. Our new REAL DEAL Store and Environment Store has been the recipient of much of the office furniture and shelving as well.

REAL is grateful for the enthusiastic participation of so many members and friends who made this sale possible. First, thanks to those who helped with the fabulous publicity: Record News and EMC, Wayne Cavanaugh of Jack FM, Diane Pearen, Jeff Fairbairn, and Alison McMaster.

Our thanks to the ladies who greeted the customers and managed the sales: Brenda King, Isobel Conlin, Elva Corless, Amanda Ford, Jeannie Walton, Una Pugh, and Carolyn Fraser.

Our sales people were kept busy covering the large gym and shop room: Tom Foulkes, Steve Dulmage, Charles McLenaghan, Fred Houghton, Ken Graham, Stephen Haggart, Larry Manson, Dan Davidson, Rita Edwards and especially Dick Donaldson who came back for another punishing shift the second day.

We especially appreciate the help of our volunteer drivers and movers who hefted the heavy stuff: Walter Edwards, Paul Cormier, Steve Chamberland, Sherwood Webb, Josh VanAlstine, John Parsons, Wayne McCooshen, Herb Thompson, Larry Manson and the other staff who stepped in when needed.

The sale committee of Susan Brandum, Dawn Quinn and Barb Hicks would like to extend a special thank-you to Bill Roberts, of Guy Saumure and Sons, who spent so much time with us planning the sale, gathering all the sale items

into the two rooms, helping to move stuff and being so helpful.

Reuse Centre now The Free Store

The Reuse Centre has entered the next stage of its existence as the REAL Free Store. The Free Store operates on the same principles as the 15 year old centre: it is a place for the free exchange of small used but useable household items. Anyone is free to drop off acceptable items or to take away anything they can use. And as before, clothing, hazardous items and infant equipment are no-nos.

But now the Free Store can be accessed anytime the REAL DEAL Store is open, Tuesday through Saturday. The Free Store occupies an area under the stage within the REAL DEAL. Already traffic to the Free Store increased, thanks to publicity about the opening, spillover from people visiting the REAL DEAL Store, and better visibility and accessibility of our location. Visitors to the REAL DEAL Store or the Free Store check out at the same counter, paying or weighing out as appropriate.

An expanded team of volunteers will staff the Free Store 9:30 to 2:00 p.m. on Saturdays, and Wednesday afternoons whenever possible. REAL DEAL Store staff will be on hand for assistance at other times. The volunteers are appreciating the spacious new digs, heat, washroom access and coffee. So stop in and say hello!



Mother s and Father s Day

A number of special events are in the works for the Free Store, including a children s table for Mother s Day. Children can shop in a kids-only area for a surprise for mom. If you have any small items a mom might appreciate such as note cards, jewellery, ornaments, gifts for or gift bags for wrapping, drop them off at the REAL DEAL, Tuesday to Friday 9 to 5 or Saturday 9 - 2. The secret shop will be available every day in May leading up to May 14th. Similar arrangements will be in place leading up to Father s Day on June 18.

REAL s Board of Directors 2006

Peter Au (President),
aaapeterau@cogeco.ca 284-8338;
Elva Corless (Past President),
elcor@superaje.com 283-0309;
Barb Hicks (Vice-President),
dhicks11@cogeco.ca 283-9966;
Karen Schecter (Secretary),
karen@falls.igs.net 283-4604;
Carolyn Fraser (Treasurer),
fraser@superaje.com 283-6858;
Tom Foulkes,
tpfoulkes@ripnet.com 283-2706;
Bunny Haughton,
haughms@falls.igs.net 283-1843;
Larry Manson,
cala@ripnet.com 283-7743.

Also attending Board meetings but not voting:
Susan Brandum (Executive Director, REAL DEAL) sbrandum@cogeco.ca 267-2257;
Ken Graham (Advisor from Town of Smiths Falls) kgraham20@cogeco.ca 283-4370.

Please feel free to contact any of the above with your questions, concerns and suggestions for REAL.

Think I ll Go Eat Worms

Not! The red wriggler worms in the vermicomposter at the REAL DEAL are happily munching on the coffee grounds discarded by our volunteers and staff, and the odd banana peel or apple fed to them by Halina.



A vermicomposting kit was purchased from The Worm Factory in Westport (see www.thewormfactory.ca) to demonstrate the viability of indoor composting to visitors, and of course, to make use of some of the compostable garbage produced there. The composter looks like a recycling bin, but is lidded and vented, and full of bedding and worms. Each feeding of compostable materials is dug into the bedding, and each successive feeding is made in a orderly pattern around the bin.

After three months the hungry worms will turn kitchen waste into several litres of worm castings, a 100% organic fertilizer abundant in soluble minerals and richly balanced in nitrogen, phosphate, potash and other essential trace elements. The worms are also extremely prolific, and eventually there will be more worms available to start another bin. Halina may want some help with their harvesting!

Come take a look next time you are at The REAL DEAL. Just remember that the worms are shy, and will burrow away from light.

Neck Pillows

Here s an interesting made-in-Canada, recycled product - neck pillows. They are shaped to help support the natural curve of your neck while sleeping sitting up during travel. Community Earth Works, a project of the Action Centre in

Eganville, collects fabric remnants from commercial sewing manufacturers and makes them into new products, which they sell to support their organization. Products include pillows, dust hands, cell phone and eyeglass carry bags, and many varieties of purses and tote bags. See www.communityearthworks.com for pricing. The neck pillows are available for sale at The REAL DEAL for \$12 .

We are investigating making more hard-to-find recycled and eco-friendly products available at the REAL DEAL.



Nominations for REAL Awards Sought

Do you know of an area individual or group who has set a good environmental example for the rest of us? REAL is now accepting nominations for it s 2006 Environmental Awards. Nominees should have achieved success in educating others on environmental issues, have participated in a successful environmental project or have demonstrated commitment to environmentally friendly practices.

Four awards will be given: two for individuals (within REAL and from outside of REAL), and two for groups or companies (within REAL and from outside of REAL). Nominations should be submitted to Barb Hicks at 283-9966 (dhicks11@cogeco.ca) or Dawn Quinn at 284-4160 (dawncloset@hotmail.com) by May 26, 2006. Please be prepared to provide some details on the nominee s environmental activities.

The awards will be presented at REAL s Annual General Meeting to be held Wednesday evening, June 21 at The REAL DEAL, 72 Lombard Street, Smiths Falls.

Plans for the Environment Centre

Now that The REAL DEAL Store is up and running, we are making some plans for our Environment Centre. Through the Centre, we want to be able to respond to any question from our community's citizens about how to live a greener lifestyle.

We will be able to do this education with the help of displays, workshops, clinics, demonstrations, speakers, making printed information available and providing services.

In preparation for our Grand Opening on February 25, we set up a number of displays in the front room on pesticides, the Kill-a-Watt meter, idle free, energy, composting and Well Aware. We plan to rotate these with other topics, and to feature some in the store area as well. We were fortunate to receive a large publication display rack that is full of great information about making your lifestyle more sustainable. If you don't see something there you want, please ask, as we have a greater selection than can be displayed.

We already have a number of projects on the go that will generate some activities at The Environment Centre this spring and summer. These include well workshops, rain barrel clinics and energy conservation workshops. We have also heard lots of great ideas about what we could do there from members and volunteers, and from attendees at a brainstorming session Sat. April 8. A few of these are a plant exchange; discovering local, organic and GMO-free food, possibly through a Farmer's Market; the toxic burden of personal care products; and green practices for boaters.

One of our first projects will be a demonstration at the front entrance that will feature native plants and xeriscaping techniques. A tire pressure clinic will demonstrate the how's and why's of checking your tire pressure regularly to maximize fuel efficiency, tentatively May 13. Other mini workshops will be slotted into

Saturdays throughout the spring and summer.

The projects we take on at the Environment Centre will be dependent on the interests of our volunteers and the needs of the community. We would be pleased to hear your ideas and have your participation. Just contact Sue Brandum or Barb Hicks, or use our soon-to-be-installed suggestion box. A long term strategy for the Centre will be developed by the fall.

Spring Cleaning? Think REAL DEAL

If you are doing some spring cleaning, keep The REAL DEAL Store in mind. Besides accepting household goods and furniture, the store accepts reusable building supply and home improvement materials.

The REAL DEAL accepts: household goods, furniture, working appliances, construction tools, architectural items, cabinets and countertops, doors, electrical wiring components, lighting, fans, flooring, hardware, new insulation, clean and dry lumber, masonry, sinks, bathtubs, 6 L uncracked toilets, wall coverings, roofing materials and gutters, wallboard and panelling, vents, vinyl siding and accessories, windows and screens.

The REAL DEAL does not accept: hazardous waste (save it for the depot!), toilets greater than 6 L, large appliances, broken or unframed glass, broken mirrors, clothing, drapes, mattresses and paint.

For more details, give Halina a call at 283-7999. If it is a large item, we may be able to pick it up for you.

EnerGuide for Houses is Back!

The EnerGuide for Houses, the best method to get a handle on your home's energy use and waste, is back. LL Green was one of the very first handful of organizations to start the EGH in Canada, eight years ago. And, our Energy Advisor, Ross Elliott, one of the first assessors to be certified. For administrative reasons, we asked our colleague Green Community, Envirocentre, in Ottawa, to take over delivery in this area and to contract Ross. But, with our new facilities and with Ross's desire to work closer to home, we're bringing Ross and the EGH back.

You'll soon be able to book an EGH through us, to get access to government grants to help you reduce your energy use and to get "one of the best advisors in North America" to help you reduce your energy costs. In his time away from us, Ross has completed more than 1,000 EGHs. He's gone on to couple his 25 years of building experience with training in Indoor Air, Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning, R-2000 and Energy Star.



Welcome back Ross! Welcome back EGH!

For more information call Susan Brandum at 267-2257

Mushroom Compost Will be Back

Watch for a mushroom compost sale during the Victoria Day Weekend in Smiths Falls. This is the third year REAL will be teaming up with the Rotary Club for this successful fundraiser. The compost, sold by the 30 L bag, makes a great soil conditioner.

Conserve Water with a Rain Barrel

Rain barrels are a great way to capture rain water from your roof for your garden or indoor plants. Your plants will love the soft rainwater, and you will save water and money. An order of 20 rain barrels from the Arbour Environmental Shoppe in Ottawa (www.arbour.on.ca) will be arriving soon. This 45 gallon deluxe model is double screened, childproof, and has an overflow at the top and a tap at the bottom. Cost is \$75. Call ahead to The REAL DEAL to reserve yours.



In REAL Life

Trivia Challenge. REAL entered an enthusiastic Trivia Challenge team in the February 19 Friends of the Library fundraiser, and placed about the middle of the pack. The REAL Action team will be back full strength next year.

Science Fair. Joel Smith and Cobey Haskins were presented with the REAL Award for the Best Environment Theme project at the Smiths Falls and District Science Fair March 23. Better Boiling Bonanza demonstrated an efficient water heater using a microwave and a water jug.

Technical Volunteer Needed. If you have some technical know-how, the REAL DEAL could use your help. We are experiencing phone line, printer, e-mail and other computer glitches that are interfering with progress. Give Halina a call at 283-7999 if you can lend a hand.

Wanted. The REAL DEAL is on the lookout for the following:

"A **mini bar fridge** for coffee creamers, drinks and lunches. Sorry, we do not have space for a full-sized fridge.

"Environmentally themed **posters** for the walls of the environment centre and upper room.

" **Garden tools or supplies.** Hand tools, seeds, pots, watering cans etc. may be used at the REAL DEAL or put in the store.

"A **wall clock** for our upstairs workshop space. Battery operated would be preferred.

The Ospreys are Back. A pair of ospreys have just returned to the nesting pole on the banks of the Rideau and can be viewed from back of The REAL DEAL.

Announcements

April 24 - May 6,

Pitch-In Smiths

Falls. Register

you or your group

to pick up litter at

a specified

location in

Operation Clean

Sweep. Call 284-0066 or 283-4416.

Saturday, May 6, **Pitch-In Blitz**, 9:00 - 11:30.

Meet at Legion on Main St., Smiths Falls or

Lower Reach Park near bandshell. Volunteers

invited to lunch and slide show at Legion, 11:30

- 1:00. Call 283-0309 or 283-4416.

Wednesday, June 21. **REAL AGM , BBQ and**

presentation of environmental awards at The

REAL DEAL, dinnertime . Details to be

confirmed. Call Carolyn at 283-6858.

Tuesday - Friday 9 - 5 and Saturdays 9 - 2,

REAL Free Store, formerly the Reuse Centre,

at 72 Lombard Street. Free exchange of small

household goods too good to throw away. Call

REAL DEAL 283-7999.

1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month, 9 - 12.

Plastics (#2 through #7) Recycling Depot

open to Drummond-North Elmsley and Perth residents, at Town Yard, Perth.

Membership Renewal and Rates

Thanks to all of you who have paid your

membership fees for 2006. If you haven't

already, please do so soon so we can continue

with other projects. Fees are : Individuals - \$15,

Family - \$20 , Students - \$5 and Corporate - \$50.

If you are not already a member, please join us!

Contact Frank Roy at 264-8856 or

froy@perth.igs.net.

Next Issue

Submissions for the June issue can be sent to

dhicks11@cogeco.ca by May 15, 2006 or call

Barb at 283-9966.

Contact Us

REAL

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The REAL DEAL Store and Environment Centre

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Hours: Tues. - Sat. 9 - 5, Sat. 9 - 2