

REAL *update*

REAL people taking REAL action to protect our environment

Rideau Environmental Action League (REAL)

APRIL 2011

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REAL Deals with Flooding



Our biggest news since last issue was the flood! The morning of March 11th, we found a two inch pond in the centre of the store. We weren't totally surprised, as we had been on flood watch since the heavy rains the week before and had experienced similar flooding in January 2010. Thanks to Eric Sirvante, Howard and Angela Northfield and Tracey Thomson, who rushed over to help, as well as Ian, Deb, Don, Ed, Sue and Barb who had an abrupt change of plans for the day.

The building is in a very low wet spot, so there was some water coming up through cracks in the cement floor, but most of the water was coming in along the south wall, where rain, snowmelt and roof drainage pool along the side of the building. The offices were not affected. Fortunately, very few items were permanently damaged.

The REAL Deal now owns its own pump and hose in case of future floods. We will be evaluating whether there is a solution or we'll have to chalk it up to unusual weather conditions - dare we say climate change?!

Community Gardeners Wanted



Want to grow some of your own local food? The REAL Community Garden is looking for new participants who would like a garden plot on the site of the REAL Deal.

The REAL community garden operated the summer of 2010 on the site of the REAL Deal with

four straw bale plots. Our goal is to build eight permanent raised plots on the same site in time for the May 14-16 weekend. A garden like this would appeal to families or groups who would like to grow their own food for the first time, or even those who are more experienced, but do not have an appropriate site for a garden. In particular, we have found that young people are receptive to working in the garden and

trying new vegetables. Resource people are available to provide gardening guidance to people who need it.

Space is limited, so those interested should get in touch as soon as possible. Please contact Mona Wynn, Community Health Promoter, monaw@mdchc.on.ca (613) 283-1952 ext. 136 for more information.



Hardware and Renovations? Think of the REAL Deal

When planning for REAL's reuse store began, we had a number of priorities in terms of the goods accepted. The first stage was to expand our capacity, so we could take more and larger items than could be accommodated at our Reuse Centre, including furniture, lawn furniture, garden and sports equipment. A second stage was to move into the area of used building materials. Studies have shown that as much as one third of the 20 million tonnes of solid waste in municipal waste streams is generated by construction, renovation and demolition activities. (Source: Public Works and Government Services Canada). We knew then in 2005, from the emergence of used stores such as Habitat for Humanity's ReStore and informal exchange sites at various landfills, that much of that material can be reused. And people are willing to pay for it. A customer survey at the ReStore determined price as the number one reason for shopping there.

The REAL Deal has been successful in diverting that type of material from landfill. In 2010 the combined revenue from the combination of the Hardware, Home Renovation, Electric and Lighting categories amounted to 23% of the dollar value of REAL Deal sales. But we know we can do better. And we also know that accepting and reselling this type of material is what makes the REAL Deal unique amongst other area thrift and reuse stores.

Please keep the REAL Deal in mind when you are doing renovations, downsizing or cleaning out your garage or workshop. What was once useful for you may still be useful for someone else. If you are having a contractor do renovation work for you, talk to them about donating good reusable materials to the REAL Deal. Encourage them to remove materials such as kitchen cabinets, countertops and vanities carefully so they are in usable condition for donation. And if you are about to embark on anything from small fix-it projects to larger home or cottage renovations, shop the REAL Deal first! You may be able to find just what you need, in the quantity you need, for a great price.

A good portion of these materials, such as sinks, exterior doors, bricks, windows and so on are in the area directly behind the store, beyond the three large garage doors. Once the snow melts this area will be more accessible. Please ask for assistance if you can't find what you need. We also maintain a wish book so we can keep a record of what customers are looking for, should the item come into the store.

Don't forget the other little odds and ends necessary for these projects. We have a variety of door knobs, hooks, handles, washers, screws, drapery hooks, belts, filters, floor registers, wallpaper and tools. We have electrical supplies like phone cords, outlet and switch plate covers and bulbs. In the plumbing line there are toilet seats, taps, assorted washers. And we hate to say, a few items we can't identify but we are sure would come in handy! We willingly accept all these items by donation as well. These are probably about as scrupulously organized as your own hardware collection - be prepared to hunt a bit.

Please consult the list below for what we can and can't accept. If you are still unsure, please call ahead to 283-7999 and speak to Don or Ian. The REAL Deal reserves the right to turn an item away if we are overstocked or feel it would not sell. REAL has to pay for garbage disposal just like everyone else.

Construction / Renovation Items Accepted

Construction Tools, Architectural Items, Cabinets & Countertops, Doors, Lighting, Fans (working), Flooring, Hardware Insulation (new), Lumber (clean and dry), Masonry, Sinks, Bathtubs, Toilets (under 6 L only, not cracked), Wall Coverings, Roofing Materials & Gutters, Wallboard & Paneling, Floor, Ceiling & Return vents, Vinyl Siding & Accessories, Windows & Screens

Construction / Renovation Items NOT Accepted

Hazardous Waste, Toilets over 6 L, Large appliances (stoves, driers, fridges etc.), Halogen floor lamps, Broken or unframed glass, Broken mirrors, Paints

Energy News

Unfriending Coal



It's crazy but true. Greenpeace USA is using the Facebook's online dominance to encourage users to "Unfriend Coal". Due to the ever increasing numbers of Facebook users, Facebook is planning to build a 307,000 square foot custom data centre in Oregon. Problem is, the centre will require a staggering amount of energy, and the electricity they would be using is generated by coal, the dirtiest form of electricity production. Greenpeace wants Facebook users to like the challenge put to Facebook: to commit to using 100% renewable energy by 2021. The campaign ends on Earth Day, April 22. If you're a Facebook user, take the "Unfriend Coal Quiz" for more details. http://www.facebook.com/unfriendcoal?sk=app_168474023205425.

Bull Frog and Dare

The renewable energy retailer Bullfrog Power is embarking on a pilot project with Kraft Canada. The uniquely Canadian product, Dad's oatmeal cookies, will be baked using zero-emission electricity and "green natural gas". Usually we see food retailers trying to convince us that their product is healthier, but Kraft will be convincing customers of their own healthier production practices.



When customers choose Bullfrog Power, Bullfrog's generators inject 100% green electricity or 100% green natural gas onto the respective energy system to match the amount of electricity or gas the home or business uses. This enables the customer to reduce their environmental impact and support renewable energy generation in Canada.

For this particular project, Kraft will be purchasing landfill gas from a Quebec firm that extracts methane gas from a large landfill outside Montreal. The cookie packages will show the Bullfrog Power logo, and will hit the stores in April.

See the full Toronto Star story at: <http://www.thestar.com/business/article/931280--kraft-to-bake-canada-s-greenest-cookies?bn=1>.

Offshore Wind Energy Moratorium

Ontario announced it will not be proceeding with proposed offshore wind projects while further scientific research is conducted. No Renewable Energy Approvals for offshore have been issued and applications for offshore wind projects in the Feed-In-Tariff program will no longer be accepted. This has put the brakes on 700 offshore wind turbines proposed by SouthPoint Wind on lakes Erie and St. Clair.

Offshore wind projects in freshwater lakes are in the early stages of development and there are no projects operating in North America. Ontario will be watching the recent Lake Vanern, Sweden pilot project and a proposed project in Ohio to determine possible environmental impacts before approving any similar projects. There are concerns that turbine construction near the intake pipes of water treatment plants could stir up sediment and perhaps toxins. And the province claims more study is needed on noise impact, ice loading and lakebed impact.

The move is surprising because the province put a moratorium on offshore wind projects in the Great Lakes in 2006, but then lifted the moratorium in early 2008 saying they had collected enough information. See <http://www.renewableenergyworld.com/rea/news/article/2011/02/ontario-closes-the-door-to-offshore-wind-farms-again-for-some-further-discussion>.





!RAIN!

Eight members of Green Communities Canada (GCC), including REAL, are about to launch a new direction of programming. Called !RAIN!, the program is to begin to address the issue of rain and snowmelt run-off in urban municipalities. The Environmental Protection Agency in the US has identified urban run-off as the single worst source of pollution to our surface waters. Many older municipalities face the challenge of having to send partially treated wastewater directly into their rivers in times of heavy rains or snowmelt. Some large cities are bringing in stormwater fees and incentives to address this. Others such as Smiths Falls are, as a first step, building huge holding tanks. The second

recommended step is to address urban run-off at the source where it starts in the first place. Actions include using rain barrels, creating natural swales and rainwater gardens, picking up litter and dog waste, and managing car wash effluent. REAL will be delivering workshops and information in Smiths Falls about how residents can reduce the impact of stormwater from their own properties. As well, we will be building a demonstration rainwater garden at the Smiths Falls District Library. This will be an exciting hands-on project that we'll be inviting volunteers to help with and learn from.

REAL DEAL Volunteers

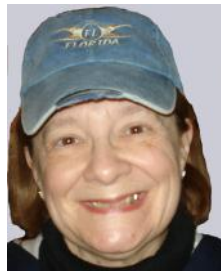
We've been pleased to gain a number of new "Smalls Vols" - volunteers in our "Smalls" area. Sara Thompson, Sandra Merrikin and Shelley Reynolds are all donating time to sorting and pricing, and generally keeping the displays. Shelley Reynolds has been with us since January, but has been camera shy and so missed mention in our February issue. With a full compliment of volunteers we took the opportunity to have a meeting January 27 to get their ideas on what the store could be doing better.

One result was that we established volunteers to look after particular product areas of the store, or other aspects of the store, such as the wishbook, online postings or signage. We also now have commitments to specific time slots so the store hours are generally covered. And two volunteers, Nancy Simpson and Brenda King, are involved in the repurposing workshops.

But there are other tasks to be done in the store, too! We would still appreciate the assistance of some handy people who could do

minor repairs, and a Property Manager to oversee some of the repairs and improvements we need to make to our REAL Deal space. If you know of a student needing community service hours, we can accommodate them on Saturdays or even in the summer to assist in receiving, doing some cleaning or whatever else comes up.

Please contact Lynn Preston, our Volunteer Coordinator. Click on "Rideau Volunteers" from our website to see volunteer job descriptions.



Plastic Milk Bags for Haiti

By Norma Ross



Save your clean three litre milk bags to REDUCE the plastic in our landfill sites. RECYCLE them into sleeping mats for Haiti or REUSABLE shopping bags. That's right, get your calcium and help the environment at the same time.

Each bag can be cut into a 20 foot strip that can be crocheted into a mat or bag. It takes about 200 bags for a 36 by 48 mat, 50 bags for a small utility bag and 100 bags for a shopping bag that can be used at the food bank. The resulting finished plastic items are mildew proof, do not attract bugs, are easy to clean and dry quickly.

Two workshops to demonstrate how to make the mats have been held and attended by 50 area women. There will be a Show and Weigh day on April 19th at Modern Thymes on Russell St, Smiths Falls at 9:30 am. The finished items will be weighed so that we can calculate the impact this has had on areas landfills over the past six months.

Instructions for cutting and crocheting the mats are available at www.recyclemilkbags.pbworks.com. Instructions for the small tote bag are on the Canadian

Living website's craft section http://www.canadianliving.com/crafts/crochet/plastic_bag_craft_two_crocheted_tote_bags.php.

Ask your checkout person to not add any extra stickers to the bag when purchasing your milk as the stickers can't be removed easily.

A drop box has been set up at the Real Deal Store, 85 William St. W. Smiths Falls for your clean milk bag donations. If you are interested in making the mats or bags yourself, you can pick bags up at Modern Thymes on Russell St.

For more information about local efforts, please contact Norma Ross at (613) 283-1404.

What is Needed:

- ◆ coloured outer milk bags (that hold the three clear one litre bags)
- ◆ any brand but not biodegradable bags
- ◆ must be clean
- ◆ without stickers if possible
- ◆ unripped, as they are cut in a continuous strip
- ◆ laid flat so they are easy to handle and count

REAL Deal Spring Promotions

Watch for a number of items coming out of storage when spring finally arrives! For the sports enthusiasts there will be balls, racquets and roller blades, and when our backyard becomes more accessible, there will be a variety of garden supplies such as pots, tools and hoses. If you are starting to think home and cottage improvements, keep us in mind, not just for supplies for your projects, but for

usable items you no longer need, or odds and ends left over from your own projects. Tools, small bits of drywall, lumber and leftover small hardware may be just what someone else needs to get the job done. Please note we are not permitted to accept paints and stains. Locally they can be taken to Rona on Lombard St. in Smiths Falls. For other depots in the area, see www.makethedrop.ca

Got too much stuff?
Looking for neat stuff?

Rideau Reuses

**a free online waste diversion service
for the Rideau Region**

- ✓ post items you'd like to give away (or sell for under \$99)
- ✓ post items you'd like to find
- ✓ announce your garage sale



Log on and start swapping at:
www.Rideau.Reuses.com

Corporate Membership

REAL sincerely appreciates the support of its corporate members. If your business or organization would like to become a member of REAL, please contact Carolyn Fraser at (613) 283-6858 or fraser@superaje.com.

Andress' Independent Grocer
Canadian Tire, Smiths Falls
Civitan Club
Cogeco Cable Inc.
Denny K's Care Care
Township of Elizabethtown-
Kitley
The Garden Market
Healey Transportation Ltd.
Dr. David Hicks

Evelyn Lee
Man Ling Restaurant
The Performance Group of
Companies
RANA International Inc.
Renewable Energy of
Plum Hollow
Rideau Home Hardware
Building Centre
Rideau Valley Conservation
Authority

Rotary Club of Smiths Falls
Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 95
Royal LePage Pauline Auger
Real Estate
Scotiabank Smiths Falls
Smiths Falls Lions Club
Sun Life Insurance
Tim Hortons of Smiths Falls
Top Drawer Temporary Services
Town of Smiths Falls

Membership Reminder

Thanks to everyone who renewed their REAL membership so promptly. We sincerely appreciate the donations that were enclosed. If you haven't sent in your membership fee, please do it

now! Cheques should be sent to Carolyn Fraser, 30 Abbott St. S, Smiths Falls K7A 4S2, or check your status with her at: fraser@superaje.com or (613) 283-6858.

Individual memberships are \$15, or \$20 for a family, and are good for the calendar year. We welcome new memberships. If you are a school or a non-profit organization, you may choose a "Partner in the Future" membership for \$15. See the form on the back page of our printed version, or print one from our website.

Help Wanted

FUNDRAISING

It takes money to keep a non-profit organization ticking, and REAL is no exception. A number of fundraisers are planned for the coming year. We would appreciate your support and participation, and even your volunteer time if you are able! If you represent a business, please consider the golf tournament or band concert in your promotional budget. Donations of door prizes are welcome as well. Contact the person responsible for the particular fundraiser if you can help.

- **Environment Week Donate-a-Twoonie** at Andress Independent Grocer, June 1 - 11.
Contact: Barb Hicks, 283-9966, dhicks11@cogeco.ca.
- **Bottle Drive**, a to be confirmed weekend in August at The Beer Store, Smiths Falls.
Contact: Cathryn or Dan Davidson, 283-9819, cnddavidson@cogeco.ca.
- **Golf Tournament**, Saturday, July 23, Lombard Glen.
Contact: Larry Manson, 283-2743, cala@ripnet.com
- **Local Food Event**, format to be determined, September or October.
Contact: your name could be here!
- **Central Band Concert**, Wed. Dec. 7, SFDCI.
Contact: Betty Davis, 283-6001, bdavis@netrover.com

*In REAL Life***AGM**

REAL's AGM is set for Wednesday, June 22 in the evening at the REAL Deal. Members will receive an invitation by mail or e-mail closer to the time. All welcome. Check our website in late May for details.



When the cashier at Address Independent Grocer asks if you want to support your local environmental organization, say yes! REAL will be looking for two dollar contributions June 1 to 11, to coincide with Environment Week.



Thanks to the REAL Action Team for representing REAL at the Smiths Falls Public Library's Trivia Challenge: Larry Manson, Scott Lumsden, Ian MacLeish, Lorraine Allen, Dan Davidson.



REAL volunteers were invited to a potluck lunch at the REAL Deal in honour of National Sweater Day Feb. 17. Volunteers wore sweaters and turned down the thermostat to save energy and money and reduce greenhouse gases.



Don't be shy! Call us and be counted for this year's Pitch-In Smiths Falls cleanup, April 18 - May 1. Supplies will be available to registrants starting April 7. See back cover.



A second repurposing workshop was held March 30. Participants learned how to make a bookshelf from bifold doors. Let Lynn Preston know if you are interested in other workshops.



Twenty-two people toured the Smiths Falls Water Treatment plant with Ted Joynt, Water/Wastewater Operations Superintendent and Sarah Cooke, Water/Wastewater Compliance Coordinator. The March 22nd tour was organized in honour of Canada Water Week.



Celebrate Earth Day at the North Grenville Sustainability Fair, Sunday April 17, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m., North Grenville Municipal Centre, 285 County Rd. 44, Kemptonville. Free admission. Call Chris 258-7359 or Claire 258-5721 for more information.

Earth Day is Friday, April 22nd. See www.earthday.ca to see what's happening across the country.



The REAL Deal has recently instituted a policy of turning off our electric hot water heater when the store is not open. If you are going away for an extended period, why not shut off the breaker to your electric hot water heater - save some energy and some bucks.

<http://www>

- The Biosphere Institute of the Bow Valley created this Powerpoint presentation on how to have a greener business. Find some ideas for your workplace: http://www.biosphereinstitute.org/docs/Build_a_Greener_Business.pdf
- A great five minute video explaining how microFIT would work for a homeowner: <http://bcag.mybrockville.com/node/1655>. Thanks to the Brockville Climate Action Group for this reference.
- Less than 1% percent of Canadian giving goes to grassroots groups. www.small-change.org puts you in touch with Canadian projects looking to raise \$5,000 or less. You can contribute as little as \$5 and watch their fundraising progress.

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



Environmental
Projects Manager
Sue Brandum
613-267-2257
sbrandum@cogeco.ca

**REAL Deal Store &
Environment Centre**

85 William St. W.,
Smiths Falls ON
K7A 5A5
613-283-7999

Store open Thurs, Fri, Sat
10am—4pm

Well Aware, ecoENERGY
or other programs
Phone: 613-283-9500

APRIL 18 - MAY 1

Call us to be matched up to a site.
Contact: Brenda King 283-4416 bking16@sympatico.ca
OR Cathryn Davidson 283-9819 cnddavidson@cogeco.ca

*Pick up your supplies @ the REAL Deal
April 7 - 16.*

Clean up anytime during the two weeks.

Report back what you collected.

*Feel GOOD about
improving your community!*

BAGS PROVIDED 😊 WEAR GLOVES 😊
😊 BE SAFE!

**Make a
REAL
Difference**

Please return this form to:
REAL
Box 1061
Smiths Falls, ON
K7A 5A5

Or bring to
The REAL Deal

Volunteer

I want to help

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.

Become a Member

I would like to become a member

- Individual membership \$15
- Family membership \$20
- Student membership \$5
- Corporate membership \$50

Contact Information

Name

Street/RR Address

.....

Town, Province

Postal Code

Home Phone

Work Phone

Best time to reach me

Email address