

Light Exchange a Hit, Despite Recall

The Christmas Light Exchange at The REAL DEAL was a super success, even though customers had to walk away without any new lights.



Hours before the event was to occur on Sat. Nov. 25, REAL was informed that Hydro One was recalling the Greenlite 36 bulb LED light strings they had provided for the exchange.

With little information to go on, organizers decided to proceed with the event, to receive the old lights and to give people a receipt for their old lights.

More than 200 patient families waited in line to turn in 905 strings of old lights, greatly surpassing expectations.

REAL collected names and addresses and is sending these on to Hydro One. Hydro One will send each of the donors a \$10 Canadian Tire Gift Card since they were unable to provide the LED lights. This will take a little time yet, so REAL is asking all donors to continue to be as patient as they were at the exchange event, said organizer Barb Hicks.

For anyone who picked up a box of LED lights before the recall was announced, you are asked

to call Hydro One at 1-800-851-0064. They will send you a postage paid envelope in which to return the LED lights. Once they have received the LED lights, they will send you a gift card.

Seasonal LED lights, or SLEDs, use up to 97% less energy than incandescent lights, are sturdy, lasting up to 100,000 hours, or 20 years, and barely warm up, eliminating fire concerns.

Say you leave your Christmas lights on for five hours a day every day in December. Using four strings of incandescent bulbs with a total of 100 bulbs would cost approximately \$5.00, at \$0.055/kWh. By contrast, a similar length of four LED strings, but with a total of 280 LED bulbs, would cost only about \$0.15.

continued inside

Inside this Issue

Member Meeting Nov. 13	2
REAL DEAL Prepared for Winter	3
Now at the REAL DEAL	3
Volume of Goods Handled	4
Reducing Your Hydro Bill	4
More Shopping Carts?!?!?	5
Volunteers needed for Recyclopeda	5
REAL Welcomes Katimavik Youth	6
Christmas Concert Well-Received	6
DeIcing for the Homeowner	7
Give Old Appliances the Cold Shoulder	7
In REAL Life	7
Energy Q & A	8

This exchange was a great success, said organizer Susan Brandum. Taking this many old lights out of use means we've saved a lot of electricity. If the average house uses 1,000 kWh per month on average and that's high -- then this little action conserved enough electricity to power 16 homes for one month and cut CO2 emissions by 4.5 tons. Imagine what we could conserve if everyone took bigger steps like switching to compact fluorescent lightbulbs and replacing old appliances with Energy Star ones.

The success goes even further. REAL, with the help of partner Katimavik, will be taking the van-load of old light strings to a company that uses a new system for separating the plastic covering from the copper wire. Both the plastic and the wire will be recycled and reused. This is a great environmental improvement over the old system of burning the wires in an incinerator in order to pull the copper out of the ashes. Unfortunately, although the bulbs are glass, they cannot be recycled.

People coming into the store were invited to have cookies and hot chocolate and take home the Christmas mug for free.

Thanks everyone for making a REAL difference to our environment.

Member Meeting November 13

REAL has recently taken important steps to update its governing bylaw and towards becoming a charity. A special members meeting on Nov. 13 addressed these issues.

Members voted to modify REAL's bylaw which was originally written in 1990. The major change was to alter the number of directors to seven, and the quorum to four, so that we will have a fully functioning board. Other housekeeping changes were made for clarity and to bring the bylaw closer in line to what is required by a charity. Stipulations regarding quorum for members meetings, a conflict of interest clause and a dissolution clause were added.

Because REAL is a corporation, the directors are responsible to the members. For this reason, all REAL members were invited to review the changes made. The bylaw now states that bylaw changes passed by a majority of the Directors must also be sanctioned by a two-thirds vote of members.

Next, the group tackled the issue of charitable status. When the Rideau Environmental Action League was created in 1989, the Board applied to Revenue Canada for charitable status but were turned down because it was felt we might be involved in political and lobbying activities. So a separate charity was formed, the Rideau Environment Trust (RET), for tree planting, summer camps, and environmental workshops. It is the RET that issues charitable tax receipts. This has been a constant juggling act ensuring that monies for which receipts were issued is used only for activities specified by the Trust.

But today environmental groups are viewed more favourably by the Charities branch of Revenue Canada, and a list of pre-approved objects for environmental organizations exists. The Board reviewed this list and felt that REAL's activities fell within that range. Following a motion at the special members meeting, the Board was given direction to apply to the Public Guardian and Trustee and the Charities Directorate to amend the Letters Patent originally filed with the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations in 1990. Another motion gave the Board direction to make a submission to the Charities Directorate of the Canada Revenue Agency for charitable status for REAL.

This process could take the better part of a year to complete. A very detailed application needs to be put together first detailing REAL's activities to prove that they meet the criteria specified. If charitable status is granted for the Rideau Environmental Action League, donations received can be used on any of REAL's projects, including the REAL DEAL.

The REAL Board is grateful for the assistance of Linda Tranter, a lawyer with the Lanark, Leeds and Grenville Legal Clinic, who is guiding them through this complex process.

If you would like to see the new bylaw, or learn more about this process, please contact any board member.

REAL Deal Prepared for Winter

September was exceptionally busy for The REAL DEAL with donations coming from fall clean-ups. The cool, wet fall has slowed this pace, but new goods continue to come in regularly, and the quality is good.

Staff are continuing to track customers and volumes of goods changing hands. Over October 8985 kg. came into the store and the Free Store, and 5963 kg went out. Smiths Falls residents made up about 60% of the 1162 customers that month. Most of the rest of the customers are coming from across Lanark County. A whopping 693 hours of volunteer time went into the store.

There appears to be a correlation of visitors to the store and the weather. Warmer weather days seem to bring more visitors and more sales. Sales for October were \$2001.

We are constantly seeking new ways to attract visitors to the store. For example, of the 200 families participating in the Seasonal LED light exchange November 25, about one quarter hadn't been to the store before.

A story was placed in local media calling for more volunteers had a positive response. We could particularly use people willing to come in a regular basis and commit to a particular day. People who know hardware and renovation materials, people who can move larger items, and with some handy-person skills would be most welcome.

The work bee organized for the afternoon November 11 went a long way towards getting the store ready for winter. The large garage was reorganized to make large items more accessible. Boxes stashed in the two small sheds during busy periods were finally sorted for the store and Free Store. Items in the yard waiting to be discarded were sorted into piles for recycling or landfill. Select items were moved onto an elevated area within the store so they would be accessible in winter without venturing outside. Christmas decorating was done, and we now believe we have the largest display of Christmas decorations in town. We hope to move these items quickly so we won't have to store them until next year. Thanks to all the REAL volunteers, Ontario Works guys, Canada World Youth participants and high school students who accomplished so much that day.

A Christmas get together is being planned as a thank you to volunteers, and chance for volunteers, advisors and the board to mingle.



Now at the REAL DEAL

We currently have a good selection of:

- "skis, boots and poles
- "skates
- "Christmas decorations, especially tree stands
- "desks

Priced to move:

- "a very good, large shower stall
- "a church organ

We always have lots of:

- "mugs and glassware (do you need more for holiday entertaining?)
- "candle and votive holders, bud vases
- "books

We have a demand for:
 "couches and upholstered chairs
 "shelving, including small bookcases

If you are downsizing or decluttering, please consider donating the items to the REAL Deal.

***Volume of Goods Handled
 by The REAL DEAL
 February - October 2006***

Month	Donations In (kg)	Goods Out (kg) Sales and Free Store
Feb/March	1825	3113
April	2011	5991
May	3825	6618
June	6483	6981
July	8680	6238
August	14761	9916
September	10983	13536
October	8985	5963
TOTAL	57,553	58,356

For comparison, 2005 totals at our Reuse Centre on Johnston St. were 5085 kg. goods in and 4006 kg. out. The REAL DEAL has made a REAL difference in the amount of waste we have been able to divert.

***Interested in reducing hydro bills
 maybe generating your own power?***

This winter, REAL will present a series of workshops on new actions you can take to conserve electricity in the home, and on how you can generate your own electricity from your home.



REAL has been awarded a Community Conservation Initiative from the Ontario Ministry of Energy, one of 24 projects across the province. REAL will deliver the project in partnership with the Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition and the project will be managed by Jeff Kohl.

The government's initiative is welcome as it comes at a time when more of our citizens are seeking information and help with understanding how to conserve, and how to do their own solar hot water heating, photovoltaic and wind power, how to sell decentralized power, and how to take advantage of other initiatives such as smart meters and smart thermostats

REAL's project also includes installing some energy conservation devices in 20 social housing units in Lanark County. This is a pilot and will test the resources we require to install such things as hot water tank blankets, water conservation devices, lighting retrofits and some caulking and weatherstripping in a large number of units.

Watch the newspapers for announcements of the workshops.

More Shopping Carts?!?!?

Our latest diver cleanup held September 24, 2006 yielded another dumpster full of junk from the Rideau River.

Despite the rain we have eleven divers and twelve volunteers on shore turn out. Many of the local divers have been doing this every year. Thanks to the guys who came out from Kanata Diving Supply to join the effort. Several high school students had the opportunity to earn some community service hours.

Once again the group concentrated on the stretch of the waterway behind the Chambers Street Plaza. A substantial amount of junk was retrieved this year, not as much as last, which we hope means we are getting to the bottom of it. Bob Curzon, a diver, commented that it was a great improvement over the past five years they have been working there. There are still shopping carts and other items too deeply buried to get out easily. Dan Davidson, the dive organizer, reports there are still lots of metal pipes closer to the bridge, but there was too much current to retrieve them.



Some of the finds: 20 shopping carts and various other cart parts, 5 bikes and bike parts, a skateboard, 2 GT racers (sleds), 3 tires, 2 large chunks of carpet and some smaller mats, three large (e.g. car) batteries, a large wooden wheel with no spokes, a fire extinguisher, 2 knives, lots of metal piping and miscellaneous metal chunks, a small grind stone, many many bottles, a CD, and someone's health card.

Thanks once again to Glenview Iron and Metal for supplying the dumpster and hauling away the junk.

Parks Canada has suggested another site near Old Sly's where there are lots of tires in particular, so we will likely tackle there next. Plan to join us next year for REAL's contribution to the Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup.

Volunteers Needed for Regional Take-It-Back Recyclopedia

REAL is compiling a Take-It-Back Recyclopedia to provide lists of all the retailers in Lanark, Leeds and Grenville counties that take back waste used oil, batteries, hangers, plastic bags, used insulin needles, gardening supplies, electronics, etc.

It will also provide lists of retailers, businesses and organizations that provide free and low-cost reusable products such as pallets, plastic tarps, buckets, clothing, household goods, furniture, renovation materials, etc., and those that repair or rejuvenate such products.

We are looking for 1) suggestions of retailers, businesses or organizations that you know about that should be listed in this Recyclopedia and 2) volunteers to help collect the information.

We are seeking volunteers who know their own particular communities and would like to gather information from the retailers and organizations there. So, if you're in Pakenham, Almonte, Carleton Place, Maberly, Merrickville, Perth,

Portland, Brockville, Athens, Kemptville or anywhere else in the three counties, please help us put this together.

If you would like to see an example of such a program, see Ottawa Take It Back online and visit www.Rideau.Reuses.com, where the online Recyclopedia will be entered. To see what each municipality is currently doing to divert waste, see Municipal Waste Options at www.REALaction.ca.

Please contact Joe Greer at 613-283-9500 or by e-mail at joe@realdealstore.ca if you have a suggestion or would like to volunteer.

REAL Welcomes Katimavik Youth

REAL is pleased to have some new full-time volunteers at The REAL DEAL. A group of Katimavik students is doing their 3-month rotation in Smiths Falls, and two of them will be working with us.

Jeremy Scott is 18 years old and comes from Courtenay, BC. He enrolled in the Katimavik program in order to further explore Canada. He is interested in traveling and hockey. Says Jeremy, I want the planet to survive as a beautiful place.

Caroline Giroux-Bernard is 19 years old and comes from Montreal, Quebec. She is excited to be working with people and honing her English.

Charlie, as she is called, feels if everyone could help just a little it could make a big difference ... I hope I can help to make this difference by learning more and applying it.

For four days a week, they will be helping in the store, with customers, with donations and sales, with marketing and with promoting our environmental solutions to customers. One day a week they will be helping with the Idle-Free, Tire Pressure and Recyclopedia projects. We are also discussing a particular environmental project that they can do in the community, with other youth.

Christmas Concert Well Received

The Prelude to Christmas concert by the Central Band of the Canadian Forces on November 29 at SFDCI was enjoyed by over 400 concert-goers. We expect to raise close to \$6,000 for REAL's environmental projects, thanks to the generous support of the audience, patrons, sponsors and advertisers.

New this year was an advertising card handout which featured business-card-sized ads from 20 local businesses and organizations, contact information for REAL's current initiatives, and a 2007 calendar. The cards will be made available at The REAL DEAL and other distribution points as well.



The audience was treated to a wide selection of seasonal and other music, and the

audio visual presentation *Godzilla Eats Las Vegas*. The band also performed a *Salute to the Canadian Forces* which recognized army, navy and air force personnel in the audience, and

The Hero: A Tribute to the Fallen, a moving audiovisual tribute to Canadian Forces personnel who have lost their lives in Afghanistan. Senators hockey tickets, a comfort basket from JACK-FM, a Hershey's gift baskets, and some eco-friendly items: dust mitts, hemp bags and LED lights were awarded as door prizes.

The concert reached standing room only, so we want to encourage everyone to buy their tickets in advance next year to avoid disappointment. Next year, the 10th year for this collaboration of The Central Band and REAL, the concert will coincide with the 175th anniversary of the Rideau Canal, and possibly the designation of the Rideau Canal as a World Heritage Site, and will be promoted as a celebration of these events.

We are very grateful to Major Gerry Heslip, CD, the Commanding Office and Director of Music and the members of the band for providing Smiths Falls with this world-class entertainment year after year, and helping REAL to achieve its goals.

DeIcing for the Homeowner

From the Editors of E/The Environmental Magazine

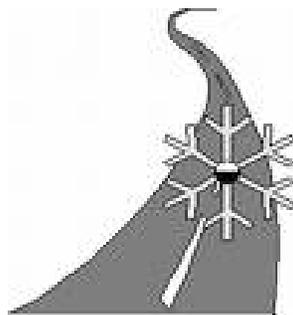
Dear EarthTalk: Are there environmentally friendlier ways to de-ice pavement besides using salt? *Heidi David, Concord, NH*

Although salt and various salt derivatives melt ice effectively and make both walkways and roads safer, they can be damaging to the environment. After salt is applied, it washes off paved surfaces into storm drains or onto adjacent ground, and can then be carried into nearby bodies of water. This salty runoff poisons fish and wilts vegetation. It also corrodes metals, damages concrete and poses health risks to people with high blood pressure.

Despite these facts, salt remains the cheapest and most effective way to keep pavement free of ice. According to materials consultant Henry Kirchner, individuals can effectively use salt with minimum impact: Do not use a chemical deicer to melt every bit of ice, says Kirchner.

Use only enough to break the ice/pavement bond, then remove the remaining slush by plowing or shoveling. All snow should be cleared away first, and the ice should be chipped off and moved away from water supplies and vegetation.

For small jobs, it may be feasible to use more potent, less environmentally toxic de-icers like magnesium chloride or calcium magnesium acetate instead of rock salt. These stronger, though more expensive,



compounds can be strategically applied before a storm to block ice from forming. Sand and cat litter can be used to provide temporary traction, but these materials may dog surface water and bury plants. Although many researchers are experimenting with even more benign de-icers, including by-products of corn and cheese processing, none of these compounds is currently available to consumers.

Give Old Appliances the Cold Shoulder

Act quickly to take advantage of this cool Hydro One program being offered in Eastern Ontario. A Hydro One contractor will remove your under-used second fridge, freezer or room air conditioner for you and dispose of it in an environmentally responsible manner at no charge, and give you a free energy efficiency value pack.

Old appliances drain power and up to \$200 a year from your wallet. If you're only using a fridge or freezer for leftovers or a few bottles of beer, perhaps it's time you give it the cold shoulder.

Have a copy of your Hydro One bill handy before calling 1-888-537-7797. Find out more on their website under Energy Efficiency Tips and Tools.



In REAL Life

Just in - pick up a wallet-sized copy of *Canada's Seafood Guide* at the REAL Deal to find out what types of fish are safe to eat and what types are sustainable.

Applications to the **Toyota Earth Day Scholarship Program** are due January 31, 2007. Fifteen entrance scholarships are to be awarded to graduating high school students across Canada.

Buy Nothing Christmas is a movement to de-commercialize Christmas and design a lifestyle that is richer in meaning, smaller in impact upon the earth, and greater in giving to people less-privileged. It is the initiative of Canadian Mennonites, who are inviting all Canadians to join in. See www.buynothingchristmas.org to read more.

Energy Q and A

Source: *Stanford University*

Q: Does leaving a light on use less energy than turning it off and on several times? Does it make a difference what type of light it is (incandescent, compact fluorescent)?

A: Leaving an incandescent light on actually uses more energy than turning it on and off as needed. When fluorescents were in their early stages of development and energy costs were low, there was some reason to avoid switching lights too often. However, for most compact fluorescent lights and today's higher electricity costs, it's cheapest to switch off lights even if you're leaving a room for only a couple minutes.

Q: Does leaving a computer on use less energy than turning it on and off?

A: Turning a computer off when you are not using it saves energy and is also better for the machine. Don't worry about wear on the computer from turning it on and off repeatedly. This was once a problem in the early days of personal computers, but now your computer undergoes more wear from running constantly than from being turned off when not in use. Turning computers off when they're not being used lowers the amount of dust buildup inside, which helps them last longer while saving you money.

Membership and Rates

REAL membership fees are: Individuals - \$15, Family - \$20, Students - \$5 and Corporate - \$50. Please join us! Contact Frank Roy at 264-8856 or froy@perth.igs.net.

Next Issue

Submissions for the February issue can be sent to dhicks11@cogeco.ca by January 15, 2007 or call Barb at 283-9966.

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The REAL DEAL Environment Centre

To Book Well Aware or EnerGuide Visits, or to find out more about our Idle-Free and Tire Pressure campaigns or Recyclopedia, Phone: (613) 283-9500

