

JULY 2006

2006 Environmental Awards Presented

At its Annual General Meeting June 21, REAL presented its Environmental Awards to some very worthy recipients.

Wills Transfer. The winner of the Business Award was Wills Transfer for the company's substantial efforts to reduce energy use, and therefore costs, greenhouse gas emissions, smog and particulate matter, by their trucks.



Wills has implemented a strategy to address driving speed and idling. By July 1, 2006 it will have 26 trucks equipped with auxiliary power

units that reduce idling while maintaining key functions, such as refrigeration, with the engine shut off. This will lead to an annual reduction of Green House Gas emissions by 4.5 tonnes per vehicle.

In addition, Wills has governed all trucks to 103 KM per hour. The trucks have automatic transmissions that ensure that the motors operate at the most efficient manner. Even though their older, experienced drivers think that they can do better with a manual transmission, it is proven that due to driver fatigue and inattention, even the best driver can not get the fuel efficiency out of a truck that an automatic transmission can. Wills also specifies larger 24" tires, instead of the standard 22" tire; has a regular maintenance program that includes tire pressure tests; and has roof fairings on all their highway trucks to reduce wind drag all designed to increase fuel efficiency.

Monica Taylor. The winner of the Environmental Award to an outstanding individual was Monica Taylor.

Last year, Monica was a grade 8 student at Duncan J. Schouler Public School. She set out to do a World Conservation Award project to feature a conservation issue of importance to Canada and the world, but that would be recognizable in her community. She took a lead role in planning and conducting an "anti-idling" campaign at her school that encouraged drivers to not idle their vehicles.

During her campaign, she made presentations to each Grade 1 - 6 class in the school; gave stickers to the students and colouring pages to the primary students; produced pamphlets for the students to take home to their parents and spread the word; placed posters around the school; installed two very large banners, one in the front window of the school for drivers to see; and posted a permanent sign near the school's front entrance that drivers could easily see.

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REAL thanks Monica Taylor for taking the initiative to organize this very valuable campaign, for reducing idling at her school and for showing us that everyone can make a difference.



Susan Brandum. Sue Brandum was presented with the Environmental Award for a REAL member for her vision and leadership in establishing "The REAL DEAL Store and Environment Centre".

Sue was the REAL member who saw the promise of expanding REAL's Reuse Centre into a larger enterprise that would reduce waste, provide job and volunteer opportunities, and eventually provide sustaining funding for REAL's other projects. Her knowledge, experience and networking with other organizations allowed her to put all the pieces together to make the REAL DEAL happen. Sue wrote the successful funding proposals : Trillium Foundation, the Lanark County Enhancement Found, CEDTAP, Valley Heartland Eastern Ontario Development Fund. Those who have played the funding game, know that funding applications require hours of work, with no guarantee of a return, yet she took this difficult task on willingly. Thankfully Sue is now receiving some part-time hours for her role as Executive Director of The REAL DEAL, but this amount is far exceeded by her volunteer hours and commitment to the REAL DEAL. This has been in addition to her many volunteer hours spent on other REAL activities, including EnerGuide, Well Aware, last years Anti-Idling campaign, and participation on the REAL Board.

Guy Saumure and Sons. REAL presented Chris Saumure and Guy Saumure and Sons Ltd. with a Certificate of Appreciation for their ongoing and substantial support for REAL, for The REAL DEAL Store and Environment Centre and for the community at large.

It is through the Saumures generosity that REAL is using the space at 72 Lombard Street for the REAL DEAL. We are pleased to have the support of the space, but also the support of our concept, as in their line of work they too have realized the unnecessary waste of potentially reusable construction materials and furniture, and make regular contributions of good renovation waste to the store.

Coincidentally, Saumure's purchase of the former SFDCI led to another profitable partnership, where REAL made arrangements to



sell the large quantity of office furniture had that been left behind . A very successful March sale netted over \$3,000 towards the operations of the REAL DEAL and diverted about three quarters of that furniture from landfill.

Honorary Members. REAL also presented Honorary Memberships to Barb Hicks and Susan Brandum for their dedication, support and supreme effort provided to an on behalf of the Rideau Environmental Action League through the years. Other REAL Honorary Members include Peter Au, Elva Corless, Isobel Conlin and Rita Burtch.

Halina Shannan, Manager of The REAL DEAL Store, presented Brenda King and Barb Hicks with the first REALEE awards for their energetic volunteer contributions to the store.

REAL has been presenting environmental awards to deserving individual and groups within our community since 1992.

Art of Being Green - July 15 and 16

Want to know about cars that get super high mileage? Houses that don't need extra energy? Solar energy? Then the Art of Being Green Festival is your one-stop shop. Come out to Lanark Village the weekend of **July 15 and 16**. Workshops include Biodiesel Basics and Beyond with William Kemp; The Energy Efficient House: Myths and Realities with Ross Elliott; Advanced Technology Vehicles with John Neufeld; Cloth Diapering and You with Trish Williams; LEED and Net Zero Energy Housing with Woytek Kujawski of CMHC; Youth and Sustainable Development with Hillary Barter; How Green Improvements can Add Value to Your Home with Bridget O Flaherty of Royal Lepage Gale Real Estate; Wells and Septics with Susan Brandum and a cooking session featuring local, organic food from Lanark County.

Native Garden Experiment

You may have noticed a garden near the front entrance to The REAL DEAL that is not quite what you are used to. We are trying to establish a native plant garden, mostly wildflowers, both to look nice and to demonstrate the benefits of native plants.

As native plants are adapted to local conditions, they are less susceptible to pests and diseases and require less water. So they are low maintenance. They also propagate themselves freely, so save the cost of having to buy new plants every year. In addition, these plants are familiar favourites to the local wildlife, particularly birds, butterflies and insects.

The garden was planted by Angela Northfield and Barb Hicks, and is a collection of hardy, tried and true perennials from their own gardens, including yarrow, primrose, and echinacea, lupins, bitterroot, ditch lilies and black-eyed susan; a few purchases of aster, gallardia, bee balm, bellflower and mallow, and other plants that grow wild on our own properties, roadside

or fields. Some of these are Queen Anne's lace, daisies, Canada anemone, fleabane, and columbine. Once you start looking for wildflowers, you will see that there is really an amazing variety out there.

In the strip along the walkway we are establishing violets and wild strawberry. The forget-me-not seeds plants don't seem to have come up.

So far it is looking very colourful. We have allowed lots of space for each plant as they will fill in nicely by next year. Be patient. It is being watered and weeded while it is established, but will require minimal maintenance. A diagram will eventually be available to identify the plants.

The label native may not be entirely accurate for a few of the plants there. For example, there is a native echinacea or purple coneflower, but what we have planted may be a cultivated form. The confusion arises because many plants are known by their common name. The way to differentiate is by a complete, Latin botanical name. A similar situation exists for the evening primrose and bellflower (*campanula*) that we have planted.



Native plant gardening is a learning experience for us. If you have specific knowledge about native plants, or have anything you would like to contribute, particularly any low growing plants, such as forget-me-nots, please get in touch. We would also like to get some wild bergamot.

Drop by The REAL DEAL and see how many of the plants you recognize. While you are there, pick up our recently revised Guide to Buying Native Plants in Lanark, Leeds and Grenville Counties, which will tell you what to look for

when purchasing native plants, and who are the local suppliers. Two excellent online plant databases are available through the Evergreen Foundation's site, www.evergreen.ca, and the Canadian Wildlife Federation site, www.wildaboutgardening.org. You may also like to visit the Fletcher Wildlife Garden adjacent to the Arboretum in Ottawa for ideas.

In REAL Life

Pitch-In Smiths Falls. Another successful community litter cleanup took place April 24 to May 6. Throughout the two weeks, 648 residents volunteered, including 17 community groups. Together they collected 178 bags of garbage and 13 bags of recyclables. The Pitch-In Blitz Saturday, May 6 was pretty much rained out, but those who came enjoyed the lunch and slides at the Legion afterwards. Thanks to everyone who contributed!

Wanted. The REAL DEAL is still on the lookout for a **mini bar fridge** for drinks and lunches. Sorry, we do not have space for a full sized fridge.

As a result of last issue's wanted list, we received several plaque mounted **environmental posters**. Thanks to Sommer Robertson, Communications Coordinator for the Source Water Protection program of Rideau Valley Conservation Authority for thinking of us.

Paulette, a regular visitor to The REAL DEAL has provided us a **large quantity of datura, or angel flower, and morning glory plants**. They have been planted along the fence at the end of the parking lot, and will provide an attractive screen against the (occasional) chaos behind in the yard.

Did you know that there is a per pickup charge to your municipality to collect materials from your blue box? So, please, **only put your blue box out when it is full**, so we can get the most bang for our bucks.

If you were unable to make it to the AGM and BBQ on Wednesday, June 21 and would like to see a **copy of the Annual Report**, please call contact Karen at 283-4604 or karen@falls.igs.net, who can provide you with a print or electronic copy.

We recycle. Remember that we accept **used cell phones and printer ink cartridges** at the REAL DEAL for recycling. The phones earn money for REAL, and the print cartridges earn money for the Canadian Diabetes Association.

Rain barrels from Arbour Environmental Shoppe are available at the REAL DEAL. The 45 gallon deluxe model is double screened (to discourage mosquito breeding), childproof, and has an overflow at the top and a tap at the bottom. You can even connect them. At \$79 this is a great value, as a similar virgin plastic barrel from another major retailer costs \$90.



Kill-a-watt Meters.

These handy devices are still available to rent from the Smiths Falls Public Library. Now would be a good time to see how much energy your unit air conditioners or dehumidifiers are guzzling.

In Memory of Noreen and Ken Morgan

We were saddened to learn of the passing of long time members and supporters of REAL, Noreen and Ken Morgan. Noreen was an organizer and contributor to REAL's three Art Auctions, and Ken was active on the Fundraising Committee, particularly as an organizer of our benefit concerts by the Central Band of the Canadian Forces. Their contributions to the community will be greatly missed.

Reused Materials for a Renewed Environment

It's hard to believe that it's been four months since the opening of the REAL DEAL Store and Environment Centre that incredibly stormy day in late February.

The store is finally taking on its own sense of identity. There is a diverse group of people working, volunteering, shopping and sometimes just hanging out there. Pulling this group together has been a challenging task for Halina, the Store Manager. She also reports there more physical work than she expected involved in managing all the items that go through the REAL DEAL.

Business has been good.

- " Virtually every item used in the building, from office furniture and supplies to equipment has been donated. Even at second hand prices this is well worth over \$5000 in-kind.
- " Over 20,000 kgs. of goods have gone out from the store since February.
- " May turn over in the Free Store of close to 2,000 kg. means we are now moving through the Free Store in one month what the Reuse Centre used to do in one year.
- " By the end of May we had more than 1300 visitors to the store, 70% of whom are from Smiths Falls, and 21% from Perth.
- " Donations are coming in on a regular basis and we are well supplied. Keeping up with the sorting and storage of items is the current problem.
- " Sales in June were just over \$2000 and are increasing slowly. We need to bring in about \$5000 a month on a regular basis.

Feedback received from customers is excellent they think the store is a brilliant and needed community project. They are very supportive of

the environmental aims of this endeavour and positive word of mouth is increasing visitors to the store.

It would be impossible to run the store without our many volunteers. The guys from Ontario Works do a great job for us, and receive on the job training and attend employment skills workshops. As time goes on there is a better sense that the group is working as a team, and are developing a sense of accomplishment with the work they are doing here.

The efforts of the volunteers inherited from the original Free Store have been amazing as well. These volunteers come in on Wednesdays and Saturdays, helping to keep the store in order, and are usually kept very busy unpacking endless numbers of boxes.

A new volunteer, Cathey Delahunt has been referred to us from KEYS. She assists in the office, store and even participates in pickups and deliveries. Josh Van Alstine continues to help in the store most afternoons. Wayne McCoshen is now handling the pickups and deliveries of materials for the store.

The REAL DEAL has become a focal point for other activities as well. The Smiths Falls and District Club for Youth cleaned up outside the store during Pitch In week, the store served as a pickup point for the Computers for Kids program, Katimavik participants did a variety of tasks to mark Earth Day, and another Katimavik crew will be running a tire pressure clinic July 8. The volunteers are planning various non-work related events such as BBQs and music sessions.

The focus in coming months will be improved marketing, especially to buyers and to donors of renovation materials. So far information has been sent to contractors and cottage associations, and hundreds of fliers and posters have been distributed. A logo and sign for the REAL DEAL is being developed. Our tag line will be: Reused materials for a renewed environment.

Please stop by the store if you haven't already. New items come and go every day, so you never know what you'll find, and the floor plan changes regularly! The REAL DEAL staff can be reached at 283-7999.

With thanks to Halina for information from her monthly reports and AGM address.

The Tree is Here!

At long last, REAL's 15th Anniversary Tree, a red oak, has been planted on Evergreen Avenue. It is located near the entrance way to the lower level, the second tree near the cluster of shrubs on the side of Lombard St. REAL was created on Halloween night, 1989, so it is with great relief that the tree is finally off the Board's agenda and into the ground!



Summer Events Coordinator Hired

REAL has our Summer Events Coordinator hired. Keely Maddock has just graduated from St. John's Catholic High School in Perth, and will be taking on the task of planning, coordinating, promoting and delivering various summer events based on REAL's environmental programs. In addition to the coordinator duties, she will be responding to phone and in-person requests for information and assisting in the REAL DEAL Store occasionally. Keely jumped into REAL's activities immediately, by helping out at the AGM and BBQ the day after she was hired, despite having a chemistry exam the next day!

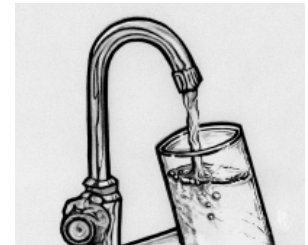
Keely will be working from an office at The REAL DEAL Tuesday through Saturday until the end of the summer when she will be moving to Waterloo to attend Wilfred Laurier University.

Well Aware Visits are Back!

Do you have questions about your well, your water supply, your septic system? LL Green is once again providing information and a confidential visit program to help you learn how these vital rural systems work, and how you can avoid problems. Well Aware visits are only available until the fall, so call now to arrange one. It's free and we stress, it's confidential. Call The REAL DEAL Environment Centre at 283-9500 with any questions and to book a visit.

Recipients of the visit in the past have said that they finally understood their well and septic system; that no one had ever provided them with such information before; and that they welcomed getting information from a third party, not a business or regulator who had a vested interest.

Well Aware, a project of Green Communities Canada, encourages Ontario's residential well owners to protect their wells and our common groundwater supplies.



This project has received funding support from the Ontario Ministry of the Environment. Well Aware is endorsed by the Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors - Ontario Branch, Conservation Ontario, and the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. The Association of Professional Geoscientists of Ontario provides technical support.

Well Aware home visits, conducted by trained and certified Water Guides, help rural well owners identify priorities for action to protect their drinking water source. For more information visit www.wellaware.ca.

EnerGuide for Houses

by Susan Brandum

On May 13, the federal government cancelled both the EnerGuide for Houses Retrofit

Incentive and the EnerGuide for Low Income Households programs, effectively crippling the basic EnerGuide for Houses program. The outcry from the provinces, territories, business, utilities, environmental organizations and the new industry that had grown up to provide the services including REAL/LL Green was phenomenal.



This has caused the government to backtrack and rethink its decision. Combined with the opposition to its position on the Kyoto Protocol, the government is now examining what it will do to address climate change, polluted air and energy waste in Canada and promises an announcement in mid-September.

Vigilance is the order of the day. Media reports suggest this government doesn't understand the decades of serious development that have gone into building programs like the EnerGuide for Houses what the Deputy Mayor of London, England called the best science-based residential efficiency program (in) & the world.

A recent report says the government is considering sending all of us a free CD with a self-audit on it. We know, from too many years of work, that only a small fraction of people will truly apply such a program. We also know a lot about what does work, the EGH works, the incentive program works not so much because of the money, but because of the social marketing action of homeowners making a commitment to take actions in order to get the incentive. Sales tax reductions on double and triple-glazed windows in Manitoba in the 1970s persuaded people to buy them instead of single-glazed, and contributed to building a very successful national window industry based in Winnipeg. The list goes on and the government really only needs to go back in its archives to see that. It doesn't have to start from Go, it can pick up and improve upon what we have already developed and know works.

Climate change and energy efficiency should not be political issues. Businesspeople gathered at a Davos meeting called climate change the issue facing mankind, the Pentagon has called climate change the security issue (not terrorism). We owe it to ourselves to get beyond political argument, and to simply get on with it, ideally with government, but without it if need be.

You can arrange to have an EnerGuide for Houses through LL Green. Simply call 283-9500.

Wed. July 26 Green Movie Night with An Inconvenient Truth

Join REAL, ecoPerth and Film Night International for a special screening of *An Inconvenient Truth* at the Post Elmsley Drive-in theatre on Wednesday, July 26. Show starts at sunset.

This documentary by long-time TV director and producer Davis Guggenheim stuns audiences with its shocking message: unless we act now, planet Earth could face a major environmental catastrophe that would instigate a tail-spin of destruction as early as 2015.

Guggenheim examines this situation by following former US Vice-President Al Gore's fervent crusade to



halt the deadly progress of global warming. Exposing the myths and misconceptions that surround this hot-button topic, Gore appeals to the world's citizens to make the necessary changes before it's too late. Don't miss your opportunity to see this documentary which should be required viewing for all. (Ontario rating G) Tip: Bring baby carriage mosquito nets to put over your car windows.

Tickets will be sold at the box office the night of the screening and will be \$7.00 per person. But if you load up your car, you can save bucks and emissions. In honour of the event, and courtesy of ecoPerth, there will be a maximum entrance fee of \$14 per carload. Door prizes too! For further information call 267-1224 or 267-2257.

Mould Workshop Stresses Good Ventilation

REAL was pleased to co-sponsor a workshop on June 15 featuring Jim White, an international expert on mould, indoor air quality and housing. White addressed a packed audience of housing experts from Lanark County, covering the sources of mould and pollutants in the home and solutions. Ongoing ventilation in a house is the main defense against pollutants. Having a leaky house is no assurance of having good air quality. Most houses, old and new, require mechanical ventilation to provide adequate amounts of fresh air. Watch for more tips from this informative workshop in the next issue of the REAL Update.

Announcements

Every Saturday this summer, watch for a different **environmental feature at The REAL DEAL**, starting with tire pressure July 8, 11 - 3.

Every Saturday until September 22, 8 a.m. until 12 noon, **Household Hazardous Waste Depot** for residents of Smiths Falls and Lanark County at Town of Carleton Place Waste Compost Facility, Patterson Cres. off of McNeeley Ave.

Smiths Falls Chocolate and Railway Festival, July 14 - 16. REAL is presenting **Children's Crafts** on Saturday, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. and coordinating placement of **recycling receptacles** at the event. Watch for the **Voyageur Canoe tours** being offered by the Rideau Roundtable.

Lanark Art of Being Green Festival in the Village of Lanark, Saturday and Sunday July 15 and 16. REAL will be presenting two sessions on Wells & Septics and EnerGuide for Houses.

July, 26 at sunset, **An Inconvenient Truth** at the Port Elmsley Drive-in. Cost is \$7 per person or \$14 a car. Sponsored by REAL, ecoPerth and Film Night International.

Membership and Rates

REAL membership 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 September issue can be sent to dhicks11@cogeco.ca by August 20, 2006 or call Barb at 283-9966.

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To Book Well-Aware or EnerGuide Visits

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