

REAL *update*

for members and friends of the Rideau Environmental Action League

Celebrating 20 Years of Environmental Achievement

JULY 2009

Kudos to REAL and REAL Members

The REAL Action team has recently received several awards that we want to brag about.

Earth Day Canada Hometown Heroes. REAL is pleased to have made the list of ten finalists for the 6th annual Canada's 2009 Environmental Hometown Heroes Award. The Hometown Heroes Program recognizes environmental leaders who have fostered meaningful, long-term community awareness and action. REAL was selected for its establishment of the REAL Deal Store to reduce the environmental impact of Smiths Falls and neighbouring municipalities through waste diversion. Another local finalist

was Donna Dillman of Lanark, who drew attention for a moratorium on and public inquiry into the exploration and mining of uranium near Sharbot Lake with a 68 day hunger strike. The Hometown Hero winner

was Liz Benneian for her work with the Oakvillegreen Conservation Association. Liz, recognized at the 6th Annual Earth Day Canada Gala, received a cash-prize of \$10 000, \$5 000 to keep and \$5 000 to donate to the environmental cause of her choice. All ten finalists are featured on the Earth Day website, earthday.ca/hometown/winners.php.



Well Aware Program and Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). A group of Ontario municipalities won the national 2009 Sustainable Community Award - Water with their support for the Well Aware program. Well Aware is delivered by 21 community based, non-profit members of Green Communities Canada, including REAL, in partnership with municipal governments and others. Well Aware was developed by the community organizations in response to demands from their citizens for more information about wells and private water supplies. It is the first large-scale program in Canada that educates rural residential well owners about well maintenance and how to keep our common groundwater healthy and safe. The Award was conferred 6 June at the FCM annual conference in Whistler, B.C.

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Volunteer Service Award. Peter Au was presented with a 20 Year Award for his work with REAL by the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration. Peter was given a certificate and pin at a ceremony in Kingston on June 29. Nine thousand volunteers from across the province received awards for anywhere from 5 to 50 years of service. Peter has been an active volunteer far longer than 20 years, and has had major involvements with many organizations, including the Rideau Roundtable, the Chinese Community Association and Trinity United Church. Congratulations, Peter - we don't know how you do it!

Citizen of the Year. We would also like to congratulate Doug Kilpatrick for earning the 2008 Smiths Falls Citizen of the Year Award for his many involvements, including Lest We Forget, Meals on Wheels, and the Lower Beverly Lake Association. Doug has been a very supportive REAL member over the years, and joins a number of other REAL people who have also had the Citizen of the Year distinction: Peter Au, Elva Corless, and Tom Foulkes.

Yard Sale Continues all Summer!

The June 27 Yard Sale at the REAL Deal was pronounced a success. While we didn't clear out as much as we had hoped, sales inside the store were excellent for a Saturday. This suggests more people who hadn't known about the store before came in for a look and ended up making purchases. And despite many wet days before and after that day, it didn't rain at all during the sale!

So far this spring, with your help, the REAL Deal Reuse Store has diverted close to 3,000 kg. (or 6,000 lbs.) of good, useable materials from local landfills. We have had an enormous influx of items this spring, and organized the sale to move some items out to clear space so we can take in more.

That day, volunteers sold coffee, lemonade and flowers, and customers were encouraged to take

their mug, glass or vase home. Thanks to all the volunteers and work placements for their special efforts that day, and Tammy for pulling it all together.

The great deals will continue for the remainder of the summer with discounted items being displayed in REAL's backyard (the gated area behind the store), weather permitting. This is a great chance to find items for the cottage or for students going off to university or college, as we have an abundance of dishware, small appliances, lighting and furniture.

Looking for a mattress? We currently have a supply of good quality double and queen-sized mattresses from a hotel. Doubles are \$20 for the mattress or boxspring (\$40 for the set), and queen-sized \$25 for the mattress or boxspring (\$50 for the set).

Watch for a "Christmas in July" sale Saturday, July 25, when we will feature Christmas decorations, dishware, baking tins, music, refreshments - but absolutely NO SNOW!

**Announcing our
"Only Five Months Left Until Christmas"**

**Christmas Sale
Saturday, July 25, 2009
10 - 4
at the REAL Deal**

**We have a good assortment of
decorations,
dishware, baking
tins, etc.**

**Christmas
refreshments
Christmas music
Christmas spirit
but no snow!**



Staff News

REAL welcomes some new faces to the REAL team!

Tammy MacKenzie will be working in the office Thursdays and Fridays using her many skills to assist with the Environment Centre and REAL Deal setup and promotion, and other REAL clerical tasks. Tammy has volunteered in the store previously, organizing incoming goods. More recently she played a major role in getting the June 27 yard sale organized. Her work term will be for six months.

Jeanna Willows will be with us more briefly! As a summer student, Jeanna will be working in the store Wednesdays through Saturdays until late August. Then she will return to Ryerson University to continue her studies in Aerospace Engineering.

Although **Wayne Tetreault**'s Job Creation Partnership (JCP) term is up, he has agreed to work part time for us to handle the Well Aware and ecoENERGY calls. Please leave a message at 283-9500 if you need to reach him, and he will return your call within two business days.

Ryan Williamson, our most recent Katimavik participant, left Smiths Falls in mid June. We look forward to some new Katimavik faces in the store in September.

REAL hopes to introduce to you our new Volunteer Coordinator in place by the end of the summer.

You must be the change you wish to see in the world.

Mahatma Gandhi



Celebration Dinner Set for October 17th

Mark you calendars now for REAL's 20th Anniversary Celebration Dinner on Saturday, October 17th at Lombardy Hall.

A committee has been meeting since October 2008 to brainstorm ways to mark this significant year for REAL. The launch held March 24 got the message out to area media and municipal representatives. A celebration in the park July 18 will be an opportunity for the general public to take part (see boxed notice in this newsletter). The fall dinner will be a chance for people who have been involved with REAL over the years to celebrate and reminisce.

The October 17 event is a roast beef dinner catered by the Roosterant, which will feature locally grown and produced foods. Wine will be included in the meal price, and a cash bar will be available. Program details are being worked out, but look for a slide show and a chance for people to share memories of REAL's history.

The invitation list will include REAL members, directors, staff, volunteers and supporters, past and present. Tickets are available now for \$25 per person. Please contact Beth Graham at 283-0824 or btgraham@cogeco.ca, or any member of the committee, to get yours. We could use some more help for tasks like decorating, setup, taking tickets and so on, so please don't be shy - we'd love to hear from you. Call Peter, the Committee Chair, at 284-8338 or peter00au@gmail.com.

20th Anniversary Celebration

at the Canal, Railway and Chocolate
Festival in Centennial Park

July 18, 2009 from 12:20 to 12:40

Come enjoy some entertainment by the
Rideau Voyageur Singers
and have a birthday cupcake on us!

REAL turns 20 years old
on October 31, 2009.
Come help us celebrate. We
will be raffling tickets for
one of Sunday's Voyageur
Canoe tours as well. Look
for us near the Water
Tower.



For more information, please contact Barb at
283-9966 or dhicks11@cogeco.ca.

AGM - President's Remarks by Barb Hicks

One of the nice things about the AGM, held this year June 17 at the REAL Deal, is a chance for REAL members to meet a little more informally. It's nice to take some time to visit when we don't have urgent tasks to accomplish or planning to do through meetings. And people are truly what any organization is about. REAL is fortunate to have a great mix of paid staff and volunteers who make it all happen.

But after the socializing and desserts, we did look after the formal tasks required as part of an annual general meeting - and that's the other nice thing. We get to look back on the past year

and realize we really did accomplish a lot. The REAL Deal Store and Environment Centre was established at its new location, and we continued with all the other projects REAL has become known for: Well Aware, ecoENERGY, Pitch-In, Evergreen Avenue, climate change initiatives and all the rest.

But we are always looking ahead, too. Here are a few things members should be seeing in the coming year:

- celebration of our 20th anniversary through the festival event July 18 and our local food dinner October 17
- increased public participation in the ecoENERGY program, and the hiring of a second licensed energy advisor
- participation in an Urban Run-Off Control program along with other Green Communities
- continued development of the Environment Centre, particularly the outdoor features
- further development of REAL Deal Store
- physical improvements to the REAL Deal, for example plumbing and window replacement
- changes to the way we communicate with members and the public
- a Volunteer Coordinator and a more solidified volunteer program.
- new Board members, to be announced shortly, who will help keep this all moving along.

We do have several challenges ahead. One is keeping the money coming in. Fundraising through running events, writing applications, or approaching service clubs and municipalities takes time. And with only so many people, that leaves less time to work on our environmental projects. Our work is highly concentrated in the hands of a few people, and we need to diversify so that we are more sustainable as a group. So if you are interested in making a REAL difference, I encourage you to get involved. Please get in touch so we can explore the possibilities.

Summer Eco-Friendly Checklist

- ✓ 1. **Go easy on the air conditioning.** In the home, office or car, ask yourself do you really need it that cool, and take steps to reduce cooling needs.
- ✓ 2. **Use your car less.** Walk or bike where you are going. Carpool. Try to combine trips. Plan several errands in the same area, park centrally and walk to each location.
- ✓ 3. **Stop idling your vehicle:** it uses gas, costs money, pollutes our air and contributes to smog. When waiting for a pickup or stopped at the locks, all it takes is the turn of a key.
- ✓ 4. **Be conscious of the water used outdoors** for your lawn or garden, washing your car, furniture etc. Make every drop count. If you are on a well, book a Well Aware visit.
- ✓ 5. **Eat local.** Now is the time of year when we have lots of homegrown options. Take advantage of it and freeze or preserve some for winter.
- ✓ 6. **Listen for smog advisory warnings.** Don't compound the problem with driving, BBQing, lawn mowing, and air conditioning, and avoid strenuous outdoor activity.
- ✓ 7. **Book your home ecoENERGY audit** so you'll be ready to make energy efficiency upgrades before winter hits.
- ✓ 8. **Take advantage of hazardous waste depots** available in your municipality. Most Leeds and Grenville municipalities have just one each summer, and Smiths Falls and Lanark residents have access until late September only.
- ✓ 9. **Try more native plants,** shrubs and trees to attract wildlife, eliminate pesticide and fertilizer costs, cut down on water required, and eliminate annual bedding plant purchases. Why not plant your whole yard and avoid the lawn and need for a lawnmower?

- ✓ 10. **Use a clothesline.** It uses less energy and creates less heat inside your house.
- ✓ 11. **Compost.** And reevaluate to see if you are composting everything you can.
- ✓ 12. **Take all your good environmental habits with you when you travel.**

How well do you know your Well?

If you're on a well and you haven't had a Well Aware visit, this summer could be your last chance. Have a professional Well Aware guide come to your home for on-the-spot help with your particular well and septic situation. These visits are free, confidential, non-regulatory and generally take about two hours.

This service is open to any well-owner in Lanark, Leeds and Grenville.* Please call Wayne in the Environment Centre at (613) 283-9500 for more information or to book an appointment. Visits can be made until the snow flies.

* Well Aware visits are available to residents of the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands through Hearthmakers in Kingston.

Green Thumbs at the REAL Deal

Tammy McKenzie is building some demonstration raised beds with recycled materials in a plot in front of the REAL Deal, where some vegetables and flowers will be planted. Our thanks to Garden Market for the donation of many of the plants you see there.

The native garden immediately in front of the REAL Deal is thriving. Volunteers Jocelyn and Alec Rait, Angela Northfield and Barb Hicks have re-identified the plants. Thanks to Home Hardware for providing the paint stirrer sticks for the plant labels. A map and explanation of the benefits of native plants will be posted as well, so that visitors can become familiar with the possibilities of gardening with native plants.

Your Garden Needs a Rain Barrel

It's early July and it seems like it's been raining for weeks, but the rain will stop, so this is a good time to be capturing and storing rainwater for your garden. There are so many good reasons to use rain barrels for gardening water:

- Rain water is soft water and air temperature and is preferred by plants.
- If you're on town water, rain barrels reduce your water bills. Homeowners can use up to 50% of their water just watering lawns and gardens in the summer. There's no reason for gardening water to be treated - at a cost - to drinking water standards.
- If you're on well water, collecting rain water reduces your electricity costs to pump water, and saves precious groundwater. As a whole, Ontario is now taking more water from its groundwater than is being replenished!
- Collecting rain water stops some of the rush of water that drains across the land at the time of the storm. The water is used in dry times, when the land needs it and can absorb it.
- In urban areas the runoff from rooftops, driveways and roadways during a rain are a problem. The runoff carries street trash, animal feces, oil, car fluids and other bad stuff into our waterways. Using rain barrels slows the release of some rain water and mitigates this problem.
- Besides watering your lawn and garden, rain barrel water can be used to clean your patio furniture, windows and walkways; wash your hair or your pet; and fill ponds, pools and hot tubs.
- Once you get hooked on using rain water, you'll only want more. And now's the time to save it, not when things have turned dry.

Rain barrels are available for sale at the REAL Deal. The 45 gallon Arbor Environmental Shop model sells for \$89 plus tax. The barrels are double screened, childproof, have an overflow at the top and a tap at the bottom. Grey barrels are in stock, and we will be receiving some in terra cotta shortly. We also have a limited quantity of

barrels retrofitted by the Brockville Climate Action Group (BCAG) available for \$55.



Wetlands and You - Soapbox *by Libby Toop*

Do you know where the provincially significant wetlands are in your neighbourhood? Do you know what we can and cannot do with them? Did you know that you can get tax relief for provincially significant wetlands which are on your property?

On their website the Ministry of Natural Resources tells us that we are all partners in looking after provincial resources. They tell us how to call their TIPS Line if we see a "resource crime". Call 1-877-TIPS-MNR. The website doesn't give answers to the first two questions above.

If you want answers, the best place to start is the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority. They have maps of significant wetlands, they have information on how to look after them. But if you want to apply for tax relief, you'll still have to go to the MNR. Good luck. This can be a tedious process.

Libby and Ron Toop recently discovered that part of their Kitley property was designated a Class 2 Provincially Significant Wetland and were surprised to learn they could apply for a tax exemption for the following year.

Local Options for Electronics Recycling

If you've been hoarding electronics for a recycling depot to appear... hoard no more! A couple of local options have appeared.

These companies will accept for recycling a wide variety of electronics including computers. Items covered by Ontario's Electronic Stewardship Program are accepted free of charge. For other items the customer pays by weight. Please consult their websites or call directly before taking in your used electronics.

Twenty Twelve Electronics Recycling

42 James St. (right hand end), Smiths Falls ON K7A 5K3

Weekdays 9 - 6, Saturdays 9 - 4

call Carleton Place location, 253-3058

Web: www.tter.ca

Apollo Computers

12 Beckwith St. S., Smiths Falls ON K7A 2A8
(613) 284-2446

Web: www.apollocomputers.ca

Does not accept CRT monitors.

For a full list of items accepted at no charge see www.ontarioelectronicstewardship.ca/materials/materials.html. Phase 1 items include desktop computers, portable computers, computer peripherals (keyboards, mice, drives, parts), printers, monitors and televisions. Many other electronics products will be included in Phase 2, but are not accepted free of charge just yet, so stay tuned.



In REAL Life

REAL welcomes new members! Annual fees are just \$15 for individuals and \$20 for families. Corporate memberships are \$50 and include a number of businesses, service clubs and organizations supportive of environmental change in our community. Forms are available at the REAL Deal or on our website. Contact Carolyn Fraser if you have questions about your membership: 283-6858 or fraser@superaje.com.

There is still some **mushroom compost** left! This is a cooperative fundraiser of the Rotary Club and REAL. The bags are \$5 or 5 or \$20. Drive into the gated area at the back of the store to load up.

Just a reminder that the **community compost site for residents of Smiths Falls and Drummond- North Elmsley** is open for the season. Hours are Saturdays 9 a.m. to 4 pm. until November 21. Only leaves, grass clippings and brush are accepted at the site on Hwy. 43, just east of Hillcrest Cemetery.

The **Household Hazardous Waste Depot** is now open Saturdays, 8 a.m. until noon, up to September 19 at 122 Patterson Crescent, Carleton Place. This is the place to take paint, car batteries, cleaners, propane cylinders, aerosol cans, antifreeze and flammable products. **Smiths Falls residents and most Lanark County residents may take advantage of this service.** The depot tends to be very busy its final days in September, so if you have items accumulating, take them now!

Leeds and Grenville residents should note their once a year **Hazardous Waste Depots** are scheduled for Saturday, **August 22** from 8:30 - 2:00 at the Frankville/Toledo Patrol Garage or South Leeds Patrol Garage, and Saturday, **September 26** in South Grenville Patrol Garage 8:30 - 11:30 and North Grenville Patrol Garage 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. See

<http://ucfg.ca/en/resources/HHWDaysPoster2009.pdf> for full details or call 342-3840 x 2413.

Drop by REAL's Environment Centre to **borrow a Kill a Watt Meter**. Use it to measure the electrical consumption of appliances that plug into a standard 120 VAC, three-prong electrical outlet, including the phantom loads of appliances that remain in standby mode. REAL also makes the devices available at the Almonte, Perth and Smiths Falls Public Libraries.

Check with whoever you purchased your plants from this spring if they will take back the **plastic pots, flats or multi-paks for reuse or recycling**. Styrofoam is generally not recyclable. REAL does not accept plastic plant pots at the store.

Congratulations to SFDCI for achieving EcoSchool silver status. A representative from Ontario EcoSchools visited the school on May 28 to learn about the many initiatives there, including half power day, recycling, raising awareness and incorporating environmental themes in lessons.



Junk Collected by SFDCI Students during Pitch-In

Helpful Websites

- Save energy when doing Google searches by using www.blackle.com. A monitor requires more energy to power to display a light screen than a dark screen. Savings are small but really add up because, face it, everyone googles!
- Eating local food really only costs about \$10 a month more if you give your whole menu an

overall, and it benefits us all.

<http://www.nowtoronto.com/news/story.cfm?content=169886>.

- See how the cost of running appliances will vary with the time of the week when time of use electricity pricing (one reason for the Smart Meters) comes into effect. See 10 Smart Meter Lane at <http://www.ieso.ca/house/summer/default.asp>.

Next Issue

Submissions for the next issue can be sent to dhicks11@cogeco.ca by August 15, 2009 or call Barb at (613) 283-9966.

Contact Us

REAL

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Environmental Projects Manager

Phone: (613) 267-2257

E-mail: sbrandum@cogeco.ca

REAL Deal Store & Environment Centre

85 William St. W., Smiths Falls
(across from Railway Museum)

Store open Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays

10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Phone: (613) 283-7999

For Well Aware Visits, ecoENERGY audits,
or other programs,

Phone: (613) 283-9500

