

REAL Update



For members and friends of the Rideau Environmental Action League **September 2004**

141 Enjoy Voyageur Canoe Tours



Participants receiving instructions on safe operation of the Voyageur canoe

The 2004 Voyageur Interpretative Tours held July 17 and 18 during the Smiths Falls Chocolate and Railway Festival attracted 141 people. Passengers boarded at the Victoria finger docks where they received their paddling instructions. Tours passed through the Detached Lock on the way to the Swale, a protected wetland in the Rideau Waterway, during the 75 minute trip.

The 51 feedback forms received from passengers immediately following their tour were overwhelmingly positive on the overall experience, education value, and specifically the heritage, cultural and ecological aspects presented. All said they would recommend the tour to friends.

Passengers enjoyed the paddling experience, passing through the lock, seeing the swale, the enthusiastic guides and the camaraderie, enhanced by the “Voyageur salute!”

The program received donations from seven sponsors: Doug Kilpatrick, Kilmarnock Enterprises, Healey’s Transportation, Parks Canada, Rideau Valley Conservation Authority, Smiths Falls Focus Community, and Wills Transfer Ltd. Five patrons reserved a tour for their group: The Chinese Canadian Heritage Cultural Association, Kerr Lighting, REAL, Scotia Bank, and the Town of Smiths Falls. Net proceeds were just over \$800.

Peter Au of REAL coordinated the event, Pam Horsley of the Rideau Roundtable provided the interpretation, and Alex McInnis of the Rideau Outdoor Centre provided the paddling instructions and expertise on the Voyageur
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canoes. The interpretation script was compiled by Pam Horsley with expert advice from Simon Lunn, Paul Hamilton of the Rideau Roundtable, Ken Watson of the Friends of the Rideau, and Todd Carley. (Todd is a former director and summer student with REAL.) The Rideau Canal, Smiths Falls Parks and Recreation and the Canadian Recreational Canoe Association provided facilities. Volunteers from the Rideau Outdoor Centre and REAL contributed greatly to the smooth running of the trips. Thanks to everyone for making the 2004 Voyageur Canoe Tours a success.

The Rideau Roundtable, in association with the Rideau Outdoor Centre and the Rideau Environmental Action League, also ran a series of 75 minute Interpretive Voyageur Canoe Tours in Merrickville on Saturday, August 21. Voyageur canoes departed downtown Merrickville and headed towards the Bird Sanctuary.

Tim Armstrong, the program director of Canadian Recreational Canoeing Association (CCRA), did an awesome job as captain, Voyageur, and interpreter. The participants were all very enthusiastic about the experience, and many would like to see these tours continued.

Suzuki Foundation & REAL/LLGreen Partner to Promote Nature Challenge

REAL/LL Green are pleased to announce a new partnership with the David Suzuki Foundation. Through its membership in the Green Communities Association (GCA), REAL/LL Green will promote the David Suzuki Foundation's Nature Challenge and its materials. In turn, the David Suzuki Foundation will support and promote



GCA programs, and offer Dr. Suzuki's services as a speaker at special GCA member events.

The Vancouver-based David Suzuki Foundation launched the Nature Challenge in 2002, inviting Canadians to commit to the 10 most effective actions that would conserve nature by signing up online at www.davidsuzuki.org. To date, more than 124,000 individuals have signed up for the Nature Challenge.

Once our website REALaction.ca is completely renovated, you will be able to sign up for the challenge by clicking on the Nature Challenge icon on the home page.

The One Tonne Challenge

Here are a couple of fun web-based tools to help Canadians choose actions to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, and do their bit to reduce human induced climate change.

The Pembina Institute offers the One Less Tonne Tool. It allows users to calculate for each of the 20 actions chosen the emission reductions as well as the money that will be saved through reduced electricity or fuel costs. Go to www.onelesstonne.ca and start clicking!

The One Tonne Challenge was launched recently by the Government of Canada. It calls on each Canadian to reduce his or her annual emissions of greenhouse gases by one tonne, or about 20%. The One Tonne Challenge is part of Canada's Climate Change Plan, the national blueprint for reducing emissions in line with the Kyoto Protocol. Head to www.climatechange.gc.ca/onetonne/English.

The calculator asks you various questions about your driving habits, home and appliances and calculates the number of tonnes of GHG you produce each year. (The average is 5 tonnes). You can then choose various actions and it will give you the number of tonnes by which your emissions would be reduced. Oodles of extra tips are supplied.

Both tools are an interesting way to getting people interested in making positive lifestyle changes.

Green Communities Association at AGM

Jane Scott and David Poch, Board Directors of the Green Communities Association (GCA), were guests at REAL's AGM held June 22 at the Heritage House Museum. Jane is Director of the City of Ottawa's Water Protection Program, and David is an environmental lawyer living in the Perth area. They gave members a brief Power Point Presentation on the history and role of the GCA.

The GCA is an umbrella organization established in 1995. It has grown since then and is now a national organization with 40 Green Communities across Canada, of which REAL/LLGreen and ecoPerth are two. The organization recently approved a strategic plan that calls for 50 - 100% growth over the next five years, and focuses on water issues, energy conservation (mainly home energy) and green transportation such as the Walking School Bus.

Membership in the GCA provides three main benefits: 1) a collective insurance package, 2) various assistance to local organizations so they are better able to deliver local programs and 3) an avenue to develop larger and sometimes national programs. For example, the Pesticide Free Naturally Program was a program initiated by local Green Communities (GCs), including LL Green, developed by the GCA with ecoSuperior and delivered by member GCs in Ontario. Then it was picked up in other provinces, including Quebec, which led to the province of Quebec banning cosmetic pesticides. LL Green developed a local program a few years ago which has now become the successful province-wide Well Aware program through the GCA, delivered by five other members. Groups in other provinces are now actively looking at adopting Well Aware. In a reverse, LLGreen/REAL have adopted the Phones for Phunds and the Backyard Burning projects from other Green

Communities. The GCA invites input from its members, offers a free weekly electronic newsletter, and has a website www.gca.ca.



The Art of Being Green

by Susan Brandum

Do you want to know about green energy, solar, wind, water power, what you can do in your own house? Then you'll definitely want to go to next year's Art of Being Green Festival.

This year's, held Aug. 17 and 18 in Lanark Village, was the first and was absolutely great with lots of solar, wind and green energy companies and services. A staggering five thousand people attended this energy festival.

LL Green had a booth for the two days and was constantly busy. As well, I did two presentations on wells and septic systems that were a hit.

Kudos to the North Lanark Community Economic Development office for organizing this great event. <http://www.lanark-highlands.com/energy/esplash.asp?PageID=Energy%20Festival>

Cell Phone Reminder

Cell phones and their accessories are still being accepted at the Smiths Falls Reuse Centre. Used phones generate funds for REAL through Phones for Phunds.

Welcome Ken Graham

We welcome Ken Graham, Smiths Falls Town Councillor, to the position of liaison between the Town of Smiths Falls and REAL. Ken is an investigator with the Ministry of the Environment during the day, and was previously with the Smiths Falls Police Force. Since 1994 he has served in almost every capacity with the Town Council. This year's responsibilities include sitting on the RVCA Board, the Leeds-Grenville-Lanark Health Unit, and the Rideau Regional Centre Task Force and on the Community Services and Corporate Services Committees of Lanark County Services. We appreciate his participation in our Board meetings and his valuable insight into the workings of the Town.

Lanark County Vision Strong on Environmental Stewardship



Words can be more powerful than weapons. And the words in the new “Lanark County... Vision 2025 - Pathway to the Future” document are powerful. If we can match reality with this vision, we truly will have the most environmentally sound region anywhere in the world. The Vision is a result of consultation with the community. It contains seven building blocks, one of which is to “Protect and Enhance the Natural Environment”. It was agreed that protecting the natural assets of the County are key to protecting the way of life in Lanark County and securing its economic future. The inclusion of these concerns is very welcome, and reflects well on the efforts of local environmental groups.

To receive a copy of this document, contact Susan Truelove at the County of Lanark, (613) 267-4200 ext.107 or stuelove@county.lanark.on.ca, or contact REAL.

Friends of the Tay is Conservation Award Winner!

The Friends of the Tay Watershed has won the Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation's Annual Conservation Award for 2003. The annual awards recognize outstanding voluntary achievement in the protection of the Rideau Valley environment.

The Friends of the Tay Watershed was singled out for their contributions to the development, promotion and implementation of the Tay River Watershed Management Plan. In making the nomination, REAL noted all that the Friends has accomplished in just three years. The group has developed pride and a sense of community in the Tay Watershed, and residents look to them for information. It has shown leadership in working with all levels of government on issues of mutual concern and provides a fine example of what a community-based, volunteer organization can accomplish.

An Honourable Mention this year went to Laurie Gadzala and Douglas Frosst of Manotick for the protection of the last 100 metres of remaining natural shoreline on Long Island. The certificates were presented at an RVCA meeting held in Crow Lake Village in Central Frontenac Township June 23.

The Rideau Environmental Action League was the recipient of the Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation Conservation Award in 2001 for 10 years of environmental community leadership.

New Reuse Centre Hours

Wednesdays, 1:30 - 4 p.m.

Saturdays, 9:30 - 12 noon

Bring in or take away gently used household items, and reduce waste!

Lake Monitoring Workshop in Perth

The Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA) invites amateur scientists and lake stewards to a Lake Monitoring Workshop on Saturday Sept. 18, 2004 from 10:30 to 2:30 in the Perth Public Library.

The workshop will focus on macroinvertebrates, or, the bugs that inhabit lakes. These spineless creatures can tell us a lot about the health of the lake. Participants at the workshop will learn how to collect, identify and record their bug findings.

Accompanying RVCA staff will be representatives from Wildlife Habitat Canada (WHC), who have developed a "Knowledge Centre" database as part of their Citizen Science program to help citizens record and share their monitoring findings.

After meeting at the Perth Library, participants will walk to Stewart Park to "dig for bugs" in the river. A light lunch will be served back at the library where participants will learn to identify the creatures and enter the findings into the computer.

Those interested in participating should contact the LandOwner Resource Centre at 1-800-387-5304 (info@lrc.online.com), or Lynn Preston of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority, 1-800-267-3504 Ext 117 (lynn.preston@rideauvalley.on.ca).

Project Feeder Watch

This fall, Project Feeder Watch (PFW) will be entering its 29th year in Ontario. The project uses changes in feeder bird visitation rates to track actual population change in winter birds. For example, a drop in feeder visitation rates by black-capped chickadees in Ontario in 2002-2003 may have been due to West Nile Virus.

PFW participants count the kinds and numbers of birds coming to their feeders every 1-2 weeks

from November to April. For more information on Project FeederWatch, or to sign up for the project, visit www.bsc-eoc.org/national/pfw.html, or call toll-free 1-888-448-2473. Project Feeder Watch is a joint education/conservation project of Bird Studies Canada, the Canadian Nature Federation, the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society.



The Ecologist Bio-Quiz

How much do you know about the world at your doorstep? Find out by taking *The Ecologist Bio-Quiz*. Here are a few of the questions asked:

1. What species is the nearest tree to your front door?
2. Where is the nearest source of electrical power to your home?
3. What was on the site before your home was built there?
4. What is the origin of your town/village/borough's name?
5. What is the source of your tap water at home? And what's in it?
6. Where does your household waste end up?
7. Where is your nearest nuclear power station? When did it last have an accident?
8. When you flush the loo, where does the effluent end up?
9. If money became worthless, how many days at home could you survive?

'If we could think locally, we would take far better care of things than we do now. The right local questions and answers will be the right global ones.' Wendell Berry, American farmer and essayist.

The full quiz can be found at www.theecologist.org/article.html?article=460.

Recycle Ink Cartridges at Reuse Centre

Here's an easy way to recycle your used printer cartridges. Just bring them to the collection box at the Smiths Falls Reuse Centre. The Canadian Diabetes Association and Ko-Rec-Type® Canada have joined together to promote the recycling of ink jet cartridges through the Diabetes Recycle Ink program. Not only does this conserve resources and redirect waste from landfill, it generates funds for the Diabetes Association.

Currently less than 5% of the 30 million cartridges used in Canada each year are recycled. Cartridges donated to the program are refilled or



remanufactured by Ko-Rec-Type®. Cartridges are thoroughly cleaned, reassembled, refilled and inspected. Every component of the cartridge will either be reused or recycled.

Individuals may also choose to put their ink jet cartridge in a pre-addressed, postage paid envelope and drop it in the mail. Envelopes are available by calling 1-800-268-9955. Corporations may arrange for their cartridges to be picked up from their places of business.

Eligible cartridges include laser toner cartridges, printer toner cartridges and ink jet cartridges. A complete list and other details are available at www.diabetes.ca/section/services/recycleink.asp.

A few businesses in the region offer to refill, and therefore to reuse, your printer cartridges. Check with the local computer store in your area. One business that strictly does cartridge refills is Tim Rombough, 2040 C Rogers Road, in Perth. Call 267-4553.

The Reuse Centre is located at the east end of Johnston Street, and is open Saturdays 9:30 to 12:00 and Wednesdays 1:30 to 4:00.

Free Environmental Teaching Materials

The Canadian Environmental Literacy Project (CELP) is developing Canadian-focussed materials, available free of charge to educators. The materials are designed to assist in teaching environmental studies to introductory classes at the university, college, and senior high-school levels. Materials can be downloaded from the CELP website www.celp.ca.

Creating Healthy Communities Conference in Perth

The Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition is holding its annual conference in Perth from September 23-25, 2004. "Inspiring Change: Creating Healthy Communities From the Ground Up" promises to be an exciting and invigorating event where speakers and participants from across Ontario will share their knowledge, successes and challenges in creating healthier communities. The 3-day event will present 16 workshops and 2 keynote addresses that speak to the key issues affecting communities today.

For more information, see their website at <http://www.healthycommunities.on.ca>. To request a registration package, please send an email to info@healthycommunities.on.ca, or call 1-800-766-3418.

Used Computers Still Needed

Some former volunteers with Skills And Initiatives and still willing to refurbish old computer systems and get them out to low-income individuals. But all components must work, and they will accept Pentium 1's and up only. They cannot take older systems, burned-out monitors and the like because it costs them money to dispose of them if they are unusable.

So if you are retiring an old system in favour of a newer, faster model, please give Dave Pringle a call at 283-8169, so a dropoff time can be arranged.

Mark September 25 for Hazardous Waste

Saturday, September 25 may be your last chance to properly dispose of your hazardous waste before next spring.

Lanark Residents: The depot on Patterson Cres off of McNeeley Avenue in Carleton Place will be closing for the season. It is available to residents of Lanark County and the Town of Smiths Falls, and is open Saturdays from 8 a.m. until noon until September 25.

Leeds and Grenville Residents: September 25th is the second of two Household Hazardous Waste Days. Locations are the South Grenville Patrol Garage, County Road #21, east of Spencerville from 8:30 a.m to 11:30 .a.m. and the North Grenville Patrol Garage on County Road 44, south of Kemptville from 1:00 p.m until 4:00 p.m. A Hazardous Waste Day was held at the Frankville/Toledo Patrol Garage and the South Leeds Patrol Garage on Saturday August 28. Residents of Leeds and Grenville and the Town of Prescott (but not the Town of Gananoque or City of Brockville) are eligible.



Doug Kilpatrick with some hazardous waste collected from his neighbours for the Carleton Place Depot

September Shoreline Cleanups

A diver cleanup of the Rideau River is planned for Sunday, September 19 from 1 p.m. until approximately 4 p.m. Both divers and land-based volunteers are required. Dan Davidson reports that there are still about a dozen shopping carts and various pieces of scrap metal in the area tackled last September, between the Comfort Inn and Beckwith Street Bridge. If you can help out, please contact Dan at 283-9819 or cdaavidson9@cogeco.ca.

In addition, a land-based shoreline cleanup is planned for Saturday, September 18 from 9:00 until 11:30. Please contact Barb at 283-9966 or dhicks11@cogeco.ca for the exact location.

These cleanups coincide with the Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup organized by the Vancouver Aquarium. Data on debris collected will be forwarded to the Aquarium. To see national results, go to www.vanaqua.org/cleanup.

Well Aware Visits Still Available

Do you want to know about your well and septic system? How they work? How you can postpone paying \$10-\$12,000 for a new septic system? How you might be eligible for funding to upgrade your well? How you can help protect the groundwater in our region?

Some Well Aware visits are still available for this fall. We do not know if we are going to receive funding to continue this program, despite its enormous success. As far as we know, this is the first program to directly address the private well owner in Ontario. Everyone who has had a visit has been enthusiastic about how much they learn about their own water supply -- and that they now have enough knowledge to be empowered. And that's important because in Ontario, we as well owners, are completely responsible for the safety of our own wells and water supplies. Well Aware visits are provided by LL Green. Call 283-3482 or 1-877-366-6656.

Unique Garage Sale Organized

REAL helped some Smiths Falls high school students organize their first garage sale on August 28. The sale featured household goods for students moving away to attend school. The Rotary Club supported the event with the use of their shed on Russell Street. The students who organized the sale are pursuing the Duke of Edinburgh Award. The sale has given the group some seed money for its future projects.

Announcements

Saturday, September 18, 9:00 - 11:30, **Shoreline Cleanup along the Rideau in Smiths Falls.** Volunteers appreciated. Contact Barb at 283-9966 or dhicks11@cogeco.ca.

Sunday, September 19, 1 - 4 p.m., near Comfort Inn., **Diver Cleanup of the Rideau.** Divers and land volunteers required.. Contact Dan at 283-9819 or cdavidson9@cogeco.ca.

September 23-25 in Perth, **Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition Annual Conference.** Contact info@healthycommunities.on.ca, or call 1-800-766-3418.

Saturday, September 18, 10:30 - 2:30 at Perth Library. **Lake Monitoring Workshop** on the bugs that inhabit lakes. (See story on page 5.) Sponsored by RVCA . Pre-register with the Land Owner Resource Centre (1-800-387-5304).

Saturday, September 25, **Household Hazardous Waste Day** for Leeds & Grenville and Town of Prescott residents. South Grenville Patrol Garage 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. or North Grenville Patrol Garage 1 - 4 p.m. Call 342-3840 ext. 2307.

Saturday, September 25, 8 a.m. to 12 noon. Last day of season for **Hazardous Waste Depot** on Patterson Cres., Carleton Place. Open to Town of Smiths Falls and Lanark County residents only.

Saturday, September 25, 9:30 a.m., Charleston Lake Provincial Park. **Hike the Biosphere.** Meet at parking lot for refreshments and introduction, then hike the trail of your choice. Bring a lunch. Call 659-2059 or 282-2824.

Saturdays, 9 - 4. **Community Compost Site,** Hwy. 43 W. of Smiths Falls for Town and North Elmsley residents. Yard and brush waste only, please.

Wednesdays, 1:30 - 4:00 and Saturdays, 9:30 - 12 , **Reuse Centre,** end of Johnston St., Smiths Falls. Free exchange of household goods too good to throw away. Call Elva at 283-0309.

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 Rates

Annual rates are: Individuals - \$15, Family - \$20, Partners in Future (schools) - \$15, Students - \$5, Corporate - \$50.

Next Issue

The next issue of the REAL Update will be in November 2004. Submissions, particularly those of a local nature or tips for environmentally friendly living, are welcome.

Please send them to Barb at dhicks11@cogeco.ca by August 15 or call her at 283-9966.



Contact Us

REAL

Phone: (613) 284-8338

E-mail:

info@rideauenvironmentalactionleague.org

Mail: Box 1061, Smiths Falls, ON K7A 5A5

Web: www.REALaction.ca

LLGreen

Phone: 283-3482 or 1-877-366-6656

E-Mail: sbrandum@cogeco.ca