

# REAL *update*

REAL people taking REAL action to protect our environment

Rideau Environmental Action League

SEPTEMBER 2011

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***RAIN Shows Residents How to Protect Rideau River***



We launched REAL's Rain program with a Make Your Own Dog Waste Digester workshop on Sat. Aug. 13.

Titled "Prevent Poo-lution", the workshop attracted only seven people, but its announcement created a wave of email requests, and a request from the Town of Smiths Falls for 250 copies of the How-to Steps. Copies of the steps are available for pick up at the REAL Deal Reuse Store.

Dog waste is only one of a number of pollutants that get carried into the Rideau River by way of rainstorms and snowmelt. Other pollutants include litter, fertilizers, cigarette butts, car wash residue, car fluids, and other car-related products such as brake pad dust and tire dust. The water washes the pollutants into street drains where it is either

carried via storm drains directly into the River or via Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs) into the wastewater treatment plant. Generally newer areas south of the River have storm drains while older areas north of the river have CSOs.

The Town is now building an enormous holding tank at the wastewater treatment plant to hold the overflow from CSOs and allow it to be treated before being released to the River. The first recommendation of the Town's Pollution Prevention Plan was to build the holding tank; the second was to conduct a source point program which addresses the points at which the pollution occurs – with residents.

Through RAIN, REAL is asking residents to start to pay attention to their own properties and to what they may be allowing to go into the drains and into the River.

To increase awareness, REAL partnered with

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***ecoENERGY - Home Energy Retrofit Program is Back!***

ecoENERGY, the federal government's home energy retrofit grant program, is back again. Homeowners can access up to \$5,000 in grants to make energy efficiency upgrades in their home, from new furnaces to insulation, air sealing, woodstoves, toilets, windows, doors, solar hot water, instantaneous water heaters, heat pumps, etc.



This program only goes to March 31, 2012, so people need to act now. You must register and have the first home audit before beginning work and the second audit must occur before the end of the program. As well, this time around, you must keep receipts. Previous clients who had not accessed the full \$5,000 are welcome to return and do additional upgrades. Go to ecoENERGY Retrofit for Homes to register and see the grant table. To book an audit, call REAL at 613-283-9500.





the Smiths Falls Club for Youth on Aug. 23 to paint Yellow Fish near the street grates on Merrick Street. The Trout Unlimited Canada Yellow Fish Road program has been going for 20 years. The youth, accompanied by our Canada World Youth team of Amy Blaney and Fredy Reyes, whom REAL shares with SFDCY, also put Yellow Fish door hangers on the front doors of Merrick St. residents reminding them what not to allow to go into the drains.

The Yellow Fish project meshes well with REAL's RAIN program, which is designed to encourage homeowners to better manage storm water by Keeping it Clean, Slowing it Down, and Soaking it Up.

To focus on the Soak it Up message, REAL will hold a workshop on planting and transplanting trees on Sept. 24 from 10:30 a.m. to 12 noon at the REAL site. Chris Canning, a local Landscape Architect, will lead the workshop, explain the benefits of trees in the urban environment, discuss the importance of native trees and show how to successfully plant or transplant a young tree. To register for the free workshop, contact Susan Brandum at 613-283-9500 or [sbrandum@cogeco.ca](mailto:sbrandum@cogeco.ca).



Amy Blaney (far left) and Fredy Reyes (far right), two Canada World Youth participants volunteering with both REAL and the SFDCY, help two youth from the club, Mikey Gennrich and Travis Hall, paint Yellow Fish on Merrick Street.

REAL is also planning a workshop on How to Build a Rainwater Garden as part of the RAIN program.

For more information contact REAL at 613-283-9500 or go to [www.REALaction.ca](http://www.REALaction.ca) and [www.slowrain.ca/](http://www.slowrain.ca/)

### ***"Come Out and Help Tile the REAL Deal Wall"***

***SATURDAY, September 24, 2011 at 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm***

Bring your friends, your team, your whole family.

Everyone gets to put a piece on the wall!

Bring A Favorite Rock, Metal Piece, Alley/Marble, Memento

Broken ceramic tiles, small rocks and marbles will be available.

All pieces must be small enough to be attached to the wall.

Each piece must be ¼" to 1" thick.

All pieces screened for size and durability.

Call Valerie Hudson for information, 283-9404

[gladfroproductions@gmail.com](mailto:gladfroproductions@gmail.com)

Donations of unwanted ceramic tiles appreciated.



The participants in REAL's first cedar rail fence building workshop in early May didn't let the rain dampen their enthusiasm.

REAL will hold its third workshop on Sat., Sept 17 from 10 - 4.

Instructor Scott Dobson will focus on the snake fence. Pre-registration is first come, first served. The cost is \$30. Please bring your own lunch, wear workboots or shoes and come prepared for the weather. Contact Susan Brandum at 613-283-9500 or [sbrandum@cogeco.ca](mailto:sbrandum@cogeco.ca)

**Community Gardening Growing Along**



Our community garden continues to attract interest. You may have noticed the new oval yellow sign at the entrance to the garden, which begins to explain what those beautiful raised cedar beds are about. Each of the eight plots was planted, maintained and harvested by a different person or group. Tomatoes and peppers seemed to be the most popular choices, although a wide variety of produce was planted, including lettuce, bean, carrots, eggplants, tomatoes and herbs. A bean pole "teepee" was constructed just for fun, and a large, square, recycled truck container was planted with four varieties of potatoes.

In contrast to last summer when the gardeners barely had to water at all, this year has been so hot and dry that deep watering was a real necessity. Two additional blue barrels were purchased from the Brockville Climate Action

Group to hold water at the site. A very long three-sectioned hose leading from a tap at the far side of the building is used for filling the four barrels or watering the beds directly. The rain in late August was very welcome!

Early in the season gardeners discovered something - probably rabbits - had been eating the peas, beans and beet tops. Some gardeners resorted to protective mesh over those. Later, some dog hair donated by Doggie Styles Grooming Salon of Smiths Falls sprinkled on the ground in the garden area seemed to deter the foragers.

Another important lesson learned for first time gardeners was that the garden does produce continuously, and needs to be harvested along the way before the produce deteriorates. The lettuce, radishes, beans, peppers, herbs and tomatoes, for example, are ready before you think!

On July 27 a "Cooking from the Garden" session took place at

the Community Health Centre to inspire the gardeners, organized by dietetic intern, Megan Burns, and Mona Wynn, Community Health Promoter. The 16 participants prepared and sampled spaghetti sauce, cucumber salsa, dill pickles and chocolate zucchini muffins made with local ingredients. The participants will now be better prepared to make use of what they harvest from their own plots.

The gardeners are expected to clear their beds by October 30, and the eight plots will be up for grabs for the 2012 season. Participants make a small rental payment and sign a simple agreement to show they are serious. If you are at all interested, please consider getting in touch with us now. If there is sufficient interest and the Steering Committee can find the means, it will consider adding additional plots. Please contact Mona Wynn at the Community Health Centre, [monaw@mdchc.on.ca](mailto:monaw@mdchc.on.ca) or phone (613) 283-1952 ext. 136.

**Library Youth Experience Gardening**

A cooperative effort between the Smiths Falls Public Library and REAL gave a group of young people aged nine to eleven the opportunity to experience volunteering and gardening at the REAL Community Garden through four weekly visits. The young people were accompanied by Rebecca, a student working with the library, and led by Betty Davis, from REAL. The "Summer Flower Petals" as the founding members decided to call themselves, talked and learned about gardening, and volunteered to water the REAL garden when they were there. The young people enjoyed finding the bright red cherry tomatoes and eating them on the spot.

A visit to the REAL Deal one afternoon was a hit, especially when one very observant young reader spotted at the cash register a sign advising "one free toy per child". REAL would like to thank the group for so willingly participating in the care of our garden this summer. Thank you Rory, Zoe, Macey, Devyn, Belle and Evan.



### Treasure Hunting at the REAL Deal

The REAL Deal is THE place to find some exceptional bargains and hard to find items. We asked some REAL members and friends what were some of their favorite REAL Deal finds. Here's what they said:



- a brand new package of IKEA flooring that was big enough for and an ideal surface for the floor of a new closet I built - Claudia
- a Kiersted print for my sister for only \$35, brand new skates for \$3, hard to find TV trays, 6 for \$8 - Leslie.
- My Dad is an avid Western novel reader and is always after me to look for second hand books for him. He prefers the real old ones that had an original price of less than \$1.00. We jokingly call them the "Moldy Oldies"! I went into the REAL Deal one day and discovered a huge selection of these older Westerns for him. I think I got about 50, and was charged 10 cents each! What a bargain and my Dad was thrilled! - Janet
- My favorite REAL Deal purchase is hard to pin down. The purple bowling ball which is now a wonderful green gazing ball in my garden, covered in green glass and grouted looks fantastic, but maybe the desk which I picked up for a good price and then spent a week reconditioning is a very useful piece of furniture, or maybe it is the electric cheese and vegetable grater which gets used for making pizza, nachos and just about any type of slaw - cabbage or broccoli - we love it so well in fact I got a second one. The REAL deal is just the place to shop for me. Can't sing the praises enough. - Nancy
- I bought a set of long handle trimmers for trees from the REAL DEAL. I am now able to groom some of my trees without a chainsaw, or climbing up perilously and using a saw. The bargain I got was incredible and it is a well used tool at my house - Scott
- My favourite REAL Deal purchase has to be my 1970s Mickey Mouse record player. Not only does it work perfectly *but* it has built in speakers which fill my three bedroom apartment beautifully with the nostalgic sounds of my parents LP collection. \$3.00 was a wonderful price to pay for a student to make her university home a little homier. Thanks REAL Deal for this super funky and rare deal! - Marla

So come on in and take a look at all the "previously loved" items in the store - you never know what treasures you will find!



#### Goodbye from Marla

Hi, my name is Marla McKenna. I'm currently studying photography at Concordia

University in Montreal. This summer I was really fortunate to be back at home working for REAL and the REAL Deal Store.

During my first few weeks with REAL, I was helping to develop the Rideau Reuses Take it Back! Directory. It's an online index designed to redirect unnecessary waste from the landfill, a project which I very much enjoyed working on.

These last weeks were spent working in the REAL Deal Reuse Store under the direction of Tracy Thomson. I will miss this job very much. As volunteer, Brenda King, says there's nothing quite like the feeling of surprise while opening a new box of donations. I have learned so much this summer; more than I ever imagined, all thanks to the amazing people that work for and support this organization. Working with volunteers is an enriching and eclectic experience, and I truly couldn't have asked for better co-workers. Not many students get the opportunity to work where you really feel that you are making a difference. I am reminded of this when looking around at the wonderful store, the beautiful

community gardens, and all the other astonishing projects by REAL. I'll continue to support REAL and the REAL Deal Store. Even though I'm teased for spending my pay cheques in the store, I truly can't resist the zany and unique items for sale.

My grateful thanks for this experience to everyone at REAL: the customers, the volunteers, the employees - truly it has been an enlightening and exciting summer. My commitment to making our world less wasteful and more environmentally friendly has been strengthened. And this year while I study in my REAL Deal furnished apartment, my eclectic purchases will continue to remind me that I'll always have the ability to Make a REAL Difference!

### ***Canada World Youth Program and REAL***

REAL was pleased to be one of the work placements for Fredy Reyes and Amy Blaney, participants of the Canada World Youth program. The theme of this particular Canada-Honduras exchange is food security and the environment. Ten pairs of Honduran/Canadian youth were billeted in Perth and area; Amy and Fredy were billeted in Smiths Falls. The pair worked Monday and Tuesdays with the Smiths Falls and District Club for Youth (SFDCY), and Wednesdays and Fridays with REAL. The youth will spend three months in Smith Falls before traveling to Gracias, Honduras for three months.



Hi! I am Fredy Reyes and I'm from the west coast of Honduras where I am studying international languages at the National Autonomous University of Honduras.

The themes of this session motivated me to be part of the program, especially the environment issues. Amy and I have learned so many things about gardening, group work, and what a great influence volunteers can have on communities. That is very important because we make up the communities around the world, and it is the communities that have to promote sustainable development while remembering to respect the environment. The impressions left in the communities where we live and work will be positive.

Sometimes I feel lucky because the language is not as much of a problem for me. I think my English is understandable and I am proud that I learned on my own.

The REAL Deal workplace has really motivated me. Many people think it's just a store, but REAL has many other projects that have motivated me to support environmental causes.

My counterpart, Amy, and I did an urban water project that involved both of our workplaces, and I am happy that we have set up this relationship between the two organizations to do great things in the future. We leave knowing that we helped and involved the community in our projects.



Hello! My name is Amy Blaney and I have just graduated from high school in Toronto. In September 2012 I will be attending the University of British Columbia. But before then I wanted to gain some life experience, some knowledge about world issues, and be immersed in a different culture. I am learning new things every day and cannot wait to learn Spanish and see the country of Honduras!

Both work placements have been great learning experiences. I have learnt a lot by working in REAL's community gardens. By working in the Reuse Store I have realized the true value of so many things that we waste and throw away and how wasteful our society has become.

At SFDCY we helped the youth to understand the importance of growing their own food and how fun it can be! Fredy and I also connected REAL and the Youth Club on a project to teach the youth about some urban water issues. Now I am more aware of these issues myself and how they impact my life now and in the future.

My time in Smith Falls has been fun and rewarding. Because this community is so much smaller than Toronto, I feel much more involved and I feel like my actions can truly make a difference. I also really like how many people in the town know and care about each other and try to help everyone out. There are many farmers, gardeners and others in the community who are passionate about preserving the planet, which is very refreshing and different from Toronto.

It's been extremely interesting to be surrounded by a new culture and the Spanish language. I love that the Honduran culture is colourful, energetic and full of pride. Although this program may be challenging at times this exchange is really about facing my limits and pushing forward to become the best person I can be in order to create a better world.

### ***REAL Deal Store News***

The REAL Deal has been experiencing an upturn in sales in August. Contributing factors are the letup to the stifling heat of July and the reopening of the Abbot Street Bridge after seven months of construction. However, some great specials on lighting, back to school supplies, and selected furniture and housewares were the REAL reason.

Staff opened the store at 8:30 on summer Saturdays, hoping to catch some of the early morning garage sale traffic. Regular Saturday hours of 10 - 4 p.m. will resume September 3. But the "dot special" will be ongoing. Red dotted items are 50% off the price shown, and green dotted items 30% off.

Some other changes: Videos are now 50 cents and cassette music tapes 10 cents. Children's movies and books are now located next to the toy department. Books in our book nook are now sorted by category, which will make it easier to find what you are looking for. And the store has received more than 1000 books recently, some of which are very unique and collectible, and priced above our regular book price. We now have bright yellow shopping baskets for customer use, thanks to a donation from the Giant Tiger store in Smiths Falls.

A storage shed donated by Barry Brady of Smiths Falls will make staff and volunteers jobs easier. Thanks to Dan Davidson for practically single-handedly loading and transporting it to the store. Located just outside the customer entrance, it will store the many boxes of free items that are displayed on tables outside during store hours. Until now, these items had to be moved in and out of the store daily.

The second chance art sale held August 4th through 6th was a great success, yielding almost \$400 in sales. The event featured a collection of framed art and other decorative pieces that the store had amassed in storage because there wasn't an appropriate place to display it. Marla did a great job transforming our outer office/meeting room/work space into a gallery for the three days. As with many of these promotions, customers new to the REAL Deal were attracted to the sale, and took the opportunity to shop and see what we have available.



Cat lovers should watch the September silent auction for some special books. Tentatively October will feature books, videos and other items from the two world wars and the Vietnam War.

### ***REAL Deal Store REALLY Needs You !***

The REAL Deal Reuse Store has benefitted from the addition of new volunteers Josh Whiteman and Dale Steele this summer. We will soon miss the assistance of Marla McKenna, who returns to school in September, and Canada World Youth participants Amy and Fredy, who will be leaving for Honduras in late September. Store regular Nancy Berthiaume continues to be a whirlwind of volunteer activity at the store but will be spending the winter in a warmer climate, and will be taking her father, Paul, another valuable (and handy!) volunteer with her.



So we have an urgent need for new volunteers this fall! If you have any time at all, even three hours every couple of weeks, we would love to hear from you. So many people have found volunteering at the REAL Deal really enjoyable. Whether you enjoy being outside and doing physical things, interacting with customers, or discovering all the neat stuff that comes in by donation, we can find a place for you. Drop in and speak to Tracy, our Store Manager, or call 283-7999 and leave a message. More details on REAL Deal or other REAL volunteer positions are available through our website, [www.REALaction.ca](http://www.REALaction.ca).

*In REAL Life*



The Central Band of the Canadian Forces will be returning to Smiths Falls for the annual "Prelude to Christmas" concert on Wed. Dec. 7th. Please reserve the date and tell your friends.



Summer can be relaxing but it's a lot of work for whoever is looking after the lawncare! Our thanks to Cathryn and Dan Davidson for keeping our grass cut and trimmed this season.



A date has been set for the third heritage cedar rail fence workshop. The initial session on May 14 was so successful that an additional two sessions were planned, June 25 and this Sep 17, to accommodate everyone. The fences made by the workshop participants are the enclosure around REAL's community garden.



Unfortunately, our July 23rd Golf Tournament at Lombard Glen did not come to pass as there was insufficient registration. We'll be trying again for Sat. May 26, when there will be less competition from other tournaments and other summer entertainment.



REAL was represented at the recent Lanark County Plowing Match held on the farm of Reeve Bill Dobson in Montague Township. A display on Saturday August 20th featuring Well Aware, the REAL Deal, ecoENERGY and the Take it Back Recyclopedia was staffed by Susan Brandum, Jennie Versteeg, Jocelyn Rait, Barb Hicks, Nancy Berthiaume and Bill Hamilton.



Come see us at Smiths Falls Volunteer Fair on Wed. Sept 7 at the Smiths Falls Community Centre, 2 - 4 p.m. and 5 - 7 p.m. Many local organizations will be on hand to describe the wide range of volunteer opportunities available in our area.



Just a reminder that the Household Hazardous Waste Depot in Carleton Place will be closing for the season on Sat. Sept. 17. The depot is open Saturdays from 8 a.m. until 12 noon to residents of Beckwith, Carleton Place, Mississippi Mills, Montague, Perth and Smiths Falls. Rideau Lakes and Westport residents: your last depot of the season is Sat. Oct. 15.



Learn about planting and transplanting trees with Chris Canning, Landscape Architect, on Sept. 24 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon at the REAL site. To register for the free workshop, contact Susan Brandum at 613-283-9500 or [sbrandum@cogeco.ca](mailto:sbrandum@cogeco.ca).



Please take your unwanted electronics to 2012 Electronics Recycling, 42 James St. (or to Staples). They will be accepted free of charge. Their facility is open Mon. - Fri 9 - 6, and Saturdays 9 - 4. Other appliances are now accepted for a small fee: \$5 for small appliances, and \$10 for large appliances (washers, stoves etc.), including refrigerators with refrigerant. TV towers are accepted free of charge. An AS IS store will be opening there Saturdays beginning Sept. 10. For more information, consult their website [www.tter.ca](http://www.tter.ca) or phone (613) 284-2424. Staples is another local option for electronics recycling.

<http://www>

- See the interesting variations in the provincial energy mix (hydro, coal, nuclear etc.) [http://wwf.ca/earthhour/clean\\_energy/energy\\_mix.cfm](http://wwf.ca/earthhour/clean_energy/energy_mix.cfm)
- Short film on the Midway Project documenting how baby albatrosses are dying from being fed discarded plastic. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-M9t2fm\\_K0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-M9t2fm_K0)
- Which fruits and vegetables contain the most pesticides? [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/06/13/dirty-dozen\\_n\\_875718.html#s290785&title=Apples](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/06/13/dirty-dozen_n_875718.html#s290785&title=Apples)



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**We're on the Web**  
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**REAL Deal Store &  
Environment Centre**

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Smiths Falls ON  
K7A 5A5  
613-283-7999

Store open Thurs, Fri, Sat  
10am—4pm

Well Aware, Home Energy  
Audits or other programs  
Phone: 613-283-9500



**Local Foods**  
**Harvest Dinner**  
A DINNER WITH  
A DIFFERENCE!  
Saturday  
**October 29**  
at  
Smiths Falls Curling & Squash Club  
Old Sly's Road

**Tentative Date. More details to follow. Members will be notified or watch our website at [www.REALaction.ca](http://www.REALaction.ca)**



Susan Brandum took this picture on a recent tour of one of the many solar farms in this area. She noted the low profile of the panels and how focused the companies are on minimizing attention so that unwanted trespassers don't go into the solar electrical plants.

**Bottle Drive comes up with Empties**



Thank you everyone who took the time to drop your empties at The Beer Store for REAL during our second bottle drive. We raised \$500. This was slightly less than last year, but still a very impressive take!

Our sincere appreciation to the volunteers who took a shift (or two or three) on Friday and Saturday August 5th and 6th: Alec and Jocelyn Rait, Betty Davis, Bonita Lucas, Susan Brandum, Barb Hicks, Dan Davidson, Joyce Smith, Lauralee Merkley and Nancy Berthiaume. And an even bigger thank you to Cathryn and Dan Davidson for pulling the event together.

**Make a  
REAL  
Difference**

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

Or bring to  
The REAL Deal

**Make a Donation**

I would like to make a donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_

A charitable receipt for income tax purposes will be issued. To donate by credit card, go to [www.Canadahelps.org](http://www.Canadahelps.org).

**Volunteer**

I want to help

**Become a Member**

I would like to become a member

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

**Contact Information**

Name .....

Street/RR Address .....

.....

Town, Province .....

Postal Code .....

Home Phone .....

Work Phone .....

Best time to reach me .....

Email address .....