

REAL *update*

REAL people taking REAL action to protect our environment

Rideau Environmental Action League (REAL)

DECEMBER 2016

Inside this issue:

REAL Highlights Local Food at Dinner	2
Shopping Locally Christmas Ideas	3
Nurse and Cash Reunited	3
REAL Deal News	4
Board Regroups	4
Microwave Oven Disposal	5
Energy Myths Debunked (continued)	6
Energy Upgrades - Prioritize Your Investment	6
In REAL Life	7
Our Dinner Sponsors	8



The repairs on the "Beyond the Blue Box" recycled art panels are now complete. The panels were remounted in early November courtesy of Kilmarnock Enterprises. It's great to have them back, as they certainly liven up the dull exterior of our concrete building. Thanks for Val Hudson for revisiting the project, originally commissioned in 2001 thanks to a generous donation.

Energy Efficiency Myth Busters by Jason Takerer

Jason serves on REAL's Board of Directors and works for the NRCAN Office of Energy Efficiency as a Technical Advisor.

The following list of prevalent and enduring energy efficiency upgrade myths will help avoid common pitfalls and ensure your energy retrofit focuses on the biggest payoffs for your investment dollar. It is advised that you seek professional advice from a qualified person before undertaking substantial energy upgrades.

1. Myth: Air sealing your house is not advised because a house needs to "breathe".

Fact: Air sealing is usually a very cost-effective and simple measure that can result in lower energy bills and increased comfort. The prospect of over sealing an older house with high air leakage is unlikely for the layperson. If a house is tightened to the point that indoor air quality is compromised, install a balanced heat recovery ventilation system (e.g. a ventilation appliance called a heat recovery ventilator).

2. Myth: Old baseboard heaters are inefficient.

Fact: All electric heaters convert electricity to heat at 100% efficiency. Replacing old baseboards or thermostats with newer ones won't save you any energy (unless you turn them down or use setback thermostats).

(continued p. 6)



REAL Highlights Local Food at October 15 Dinner

Our October 15 Local Foods Dinner was enjoyed by about 100 guests, and we surpassed our fundraising goal. More importantly, we had the chance to promote local food in our community.

New this year were four appetizer-tasting-stations that gave guests the opportunity to talk to local producers about their product. Loon Kombucha, Kricklewood Farm and the Garlic Pantry were there, and Sarah MacKenzie from the Two Rivers Food Hub assembled a selection of locally produced cheeses for people to sample.

Guests enjoyed a wonderful buffet prepared by Amy Rensby of Magnolia Catering, which included wild boar meatballs, seasonal greens, bacon roasted Brussel sprouts, and apple cranberry galette, to mention just a few. Some people were intrigued to taste the lime and lemon lavender cupcakes produced with a portion of cricket powder—they were delicious!

This year, those with special food needs went up to the buffet first, so we could accommodate vegetarians and the gluten and lactose intolerant folks. As in other years, guests were given the opportunity to purchase a takeout container of food to enjoy at home as well, and the leftover cheese were auctioned off.

Local band The British Invasion entertained us with classic British rock tunes, and a selection of local beers and Ontario wines were served at the cash bar. Wayne Cavanagh was our talented guest MC.

Thanks to Donna McKenna for pulling together a great selection of interesting items for the silent auction, and to everyone who kept the bids coming.

Special thanks to the Smiths Falls Family Chiropractic Centre who came as a group of twenty to the dinner. If you are an employer, consider bringing your gang next year as an alternative to a Christmas gathering. They can be so hard to coordinate at that busy time of year.

A major chunk of our fundraising total came from the twenty three local organizations and individuals who sponsored the dinner. It was a hard year for many local businesses, so we were gratified that so many have continued their support. A full list is on the back cover.

The many REAL people who contributed to the dinner were listed in [our program](#). This dinner is a big project for a small organization, and we would welcome any and all additional help next year. We have set a tentative date of Saturday, October 21, and will provide more details as they become available.



Products from the following producers were included in our Local Foods Dinner

Ashton Naturals, Beckwith
Back Forty Artisan Cheese, Frontenac
Bearbrook Farm, Navan
Bluegrass Farm, Jasper
Bushgarden Cheese, Rideau Lakes

Carleton Mushrooms, Osgoode
C'est Tout Bakery, Smiths Falls
Foster Family Farm, North Gower
Garlic Pantry, Carleton Place
Ironwood Organics, Gananoque

Kricklewood Farm, Frankville
Lavender from Prince Edward County
Little Brown Barn, Toledo
Loon Kombucha, Perth
Ludwig Fine Chocolate, Maberly

Lyons Turkey, Spencerville
Milkhouse Farm and Dairy, Montague
Miller's Bay Farm, Lombardy
Mrs. McGarrigles, Merrickville
Patchwork Gardens, Battersea

Perth Pie Co., Perth
Quinn's Meats, Yarker
Reid's Dairy, Kingston
Rideau Candyland, Smith Falls
Rideau Pines Farm, North Gower

Rosecamp Farm, Perth
St. Albert Cheese Co-op
Stirling Creamery, Stirling
Upper Canada Cranberries, Greely

Shopping Locally Christmas Ideas

Let's all make an effort to do more of our shopping locally this Christmas season. Our local businesses need our support. Whether you're shopping for food and drink, clothing or gifts, see what you can find locally before venturing into the city.

- **Entertainment experience.** A great alternative for someone who doesn't need more stuff. Possibilities include tickets to a community theatre production, a sporting event, or a Film Night International pass from the Smith Falls Public Library.
- **Gift certificate for personal care.** Manicures, spa treatments, tattoos (!) and the like might be just the thing for someone who would like a treat and wouldn't spend the money themselves.
- **Food.** There are lots of local food delicacies that would be nice done up in a gift basket, or presented as a hostess gift: maple syrup, sunflower oil from Kricklewood Farm, Mrs. McGarrigle's mustard, you get the idea.
- **Restaurant gift certificates.** A voucher for their favourite local restaurant, or even gift certificate for fast food, or a loaded up Tim's or Subway card.
- **Local handicrafts.** Craft fairs, year round gift stores and Heritage House Museum gift shops are a good place to find gifts that support local artisans.



If you're just looking to cut down on the amount of "things" purchased consider these options:

- **Charitable gift catalogues.** Several big charities have catalogues from which you can choose to fund needs of developing communities, from chickens, to bed nets, to trees to wells, in every price bracket. Check World Vision, Plan International and Canadian Feed the Children websites.
- **Any charitable gift.** You can give a gift in someone's name to any charitable cause (but you will be named on the charitable receipt.) Some local ideas might be LAWS, Lanark County Interval House, Big Brothers Big Sisters, or REAL. If you are short of time, check out CanadaHelps.org.
- **Take in a Christmas event.** Do something together to enjoy the Christmas season as a gift, like taking a tour to see the Christmas Lights (don't forget to check out the displays at the campground by the canal), taking in a carol service, doing a craft workshop together.

Nurse and Cash Reunited



You may have seen this photo in our store or posted on our Facebook page. We had a good reason! A photo frame was donated to the store in late May or early June. Smalls volunteer Brenda King proceeded to remove the nurse's graduation photo before pricing the frame. Behind the photo she discovered two \$100 US bills! All we knew was the photo was given by someone named Bonnie to David and taken by a Brockville photographic studio.

Our postings did not identify the woman until Iris Rawlings, wife of former Renovations Manager, Steve Rawlings, happened into the store in September. Iris, also a nurse, recognized Bonnie Lloyd (Horan) from the Carleton Place Hospital. REAL Deal staff were happy that Bonnie could then be contacted and reunited with the money stashed behind the frame in the early 70s.

REAL Deal News

Winter preparations are underway at the REAL Deal. It is a big challenge to keep everything in the yard as protected as possible and placed so that snow removal can take place.

Outside you will see that some major work has taken place to improve the drainage. The property is a real challenge being so low and flat, and we needed to reduce the accumulation of water in and around the dome, and to avoid the lake that forms in the parking lot in the spring and after a rain. The work was a joint effort of the Town of Smiths Falls and Bobby Sample, who also looks after our snowplowing.

The recycled art panels on the REAL Deal exterior have now been repaired by Val Hudson, and were re-mounted courtesy of Kilmarnock Enterprises in early November.

Inside the store, our vast collection of Christmas goods is being put out and is selling well. We really have a lot of seasonal donations stashed upstairs, so we are continually replenishing the trees, decorations, candleware, tins, lights and all other things "Christmas". We also end up accepting a fair bit of incoming Christmas materials this season as well. Please note, if you are donating a tree, get it to us before Christmas so we will have a chance to get it into someone else's hands.

We have amassed a larger than usual amount of hockey equipment this year. Currently the skates, pads, socks, bags and so on are at the end of the hardware area, opposite the sport section. Again, we have more upstairs, so keep checking if you don't find what you are looking for.

The REAL Deal Reuse Store is mostly volunteer powered, so a big round of applause goes to these people: outside we have Don Harvey, Tim Dupras, Ed Crawford, Mathew Ruttan and Michael Tryon. Chris Jackson has just finished his placement with us. Inside we have Kelsey Thompson, Judy Mundy, Tiffany Carroll, and Heather Warren. In back in the smalls we have Brenda King, Donna McKenna, Barb Hicks and Una Pugh. Shelley Wills is our Store Manager and Sue Brandum the store's executive director. We hope to introduce a new Renovations Materials Manager next issue.

Our silent auction close and Make a Deal days will be altered for December, and the store will be closed during the holidays. Please check our hours to avoid disappointment. **And please, do not leave donations outside the store while we are closed.**

Note that we will be closed Sundays in the winter months.

**REAL Board Re-Groups**

The REAL Board has re-grouped, and so have some changes in positions effective September 12. Barb Hicks has taken over as acting President from Shawn Merriman, and Jason Takerer is stepping into the Vice-President's position. Donna McKenna is our new Secretary, and Karen Schechter is reassuming the Treasurer position. Still around the Board table are Peter Au, member at large, Lorraine Allen as our Town of Smiths Falls Council Liaison, and Sue Brandum as the REAL Deal Executive Director and Environmental Projects Manager. Our recruitment efforts are paying off, and we hope to announce two new board members soon.



Microwave Oven Disposal

The REAL Deal will now accept non-functioning microwave ovens at the store for recycling. The local company accepting our scrap metal, Falls Iron and Metal, has agreed to the change, provided the glass trays are removed. In the past the used ovens were a challenge because they were not considered electronic waste or scrap metal, and we had to advise customers to take them elsewhere.

In general, you cannot leave your microwave curbside for disposal. If your municipality operates a landfill or waste transfer site you can usually take it there, where it will be put in scrap metal. (But remove the glass plate first - it can be included with regular garbage.) But you can also take it directly to waste handlers yourself.

None of the municipal websites specifically mention microwave ovens. Here are the results of a quick phone poll:

Smiths Falls – does not pick up, and suggests taking it to Glenview Iron and Metal.

Perth – will not pick up, take to the landfill site, where there will be a small charge. Microwaves end up at GIM.

Rideau Lakes – take it to the Portland Transfer Station where it is accepted no charge, and is included with the scrap metal which goes to Glenview Iron and Metal.

Montague – will not pick up, they suggest GIM.

DNE – will not pick up, can take to GIM or Code Road landfill.

Note the area municipal landfills / waste transfer stations are not open every day – call your municipality or check their websites for hours.

Glenview Iron and Metal, located on Hwy 43 just west of Smiths Falls, will accept your microwave over free of charge, and you can take them anytime – there is a dropoff area on the right as you enter their facility

At Falls Iron and Metal, 54 Uphill St, Smiths Falls, you can drop off a microwave oven any time, but if you come in during business hours you will earn a small amount for it.

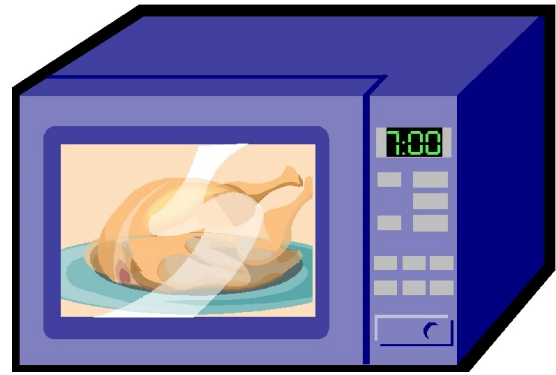
Improving the Lifespan of Your Oven

Microwave ovens are a big item to dispose of. So make sure you get maximum use out of yours.

- Buy quality so it lasts longer.
- Consider repair – it may be simpler than you think to make a non-working microwave serviceable again.
- If unserviceable, ask the repair person if they want it for parts.
- If you are just missing your glass turntable, check at the REAL Deal. We keep a variety on hand for less than a dollar.
- If the oven works and you don't want it, certainly consider donating it to REAL Deal or another charity. Compact ovens are more in demand – the large older ones do not sell.
- Look after your microwave oven so it does not wear out prematurely.

Here are some tips to maintaining your microwave:

- Make sure you turn off or cancel the program timer before opening the oven door. Sudden opening of oven door could blow the safety fuse.
- Power surges can damage components. Consider plugging your appliance into a surge protector.



- Keep it clean. Food spills and splatters absorb energy, leading to burn spots and even causing damage to components of the microwave.
- Choose microwave safe cookware. Don't use metal, foil, or ceramics with gold or silver accents.
- Be gentle with the door.
- Don't run it empty.

For more care tips, see <http://learn.compactappliance.com/microwave-maintenance-tips/>. To be alert to potential problems, check these tips: <http://homeguides.sfgate.com/microwave-failing-37935.html>.

Energy Efficiency Myths Busted

3. **Myth: Replacing old windows will result in significant energy savings.**

Fact: If you have well-sealed, double pane windows, upgrading to new windows may not be the best option to reduce heating and cooling bills. The air sealing component of a window is as important as the window panes and frame (thermal properties). Other upgrades, like air sealing, may give you a "bigger bang" for your upgrade investment.

4. **Myth: Basement insulation is not a good investment because heat rises and the basement may not be livable space.**

Fact: Heat moves in all directions, including downwards to the colder basement. Insulating an un-insulated basement can reduce your heating bill by 30-40%. Air sealing and insulating between the floor joists at the top of the wall (basement headers) is a cost-effective and easy upgrade for the handy person.

5. **Myth: air conditioning makes up a high proportion of the annual electricity bills.**

Fact: air conditioning costs in a modestly insulated home account for a small portion of total annual energy bills. Calculate your cooling costs and compare with heating costs before upgrading.

6. **Myth: woodstoves are energy inefficient and are a net contributor to greenhouse gas production.**

Fact: wood and pellet stove technology and performance has dramatically improved over the last 20 years. EPA rated stoves burn cleaner and result in less emissions. Many consider wood a carbon neutral, renewable energy source.

7. **Myth: setback thermostats are a waste of money and don't really save energy.**



Fact: Setting your thermostats back for heating overnight or when you're not home will save energy. It doesn't take more energy to heat your home back up and you can save as much as 10 percent on your annual energy bill.

Energy Upgrades

Prioritize Your Investment

Energy efficiency upgrades are relatively low risk, increase real estate value, increase comfort, protect the house structure and yield a great return on investment. They should be viewed as one of the few capital expenditures available to a householder that actually generates income! Energy upgrades should be viewed as sound financial investments with a great return. Don't forget to do your research and prioritize upgrades based on:

- the cost of that upgrade;
- the availability and capability of laypersons to help reduce the labour costs;
- how much that upgrade will improve comfort; and
- how much energy--and money--the upgrade will save you.

For example: If an upgrade has the potential to reduce your total energy use by 20% and yearly energy costs are \$3000, then you could achieve a \$600 savings on the next heating season. If you spent \$3,000 on that upgrade then your pay-back would be less than 5 years for your investment. That's an annual return on your investment of 20% or more, not considering rising energy costs!

See this useful resource for planning and undertaking energy upgrades: Natural Resources Canada "[Keeping the Heat In](#)", available online. Ask at the REAL Deal if you need a print copy.

Energy Audits Available Through REAL

Need some help determining where your home is losing energy, and what would be the most effective way to reduce energy costs? REAL offers personal home energy audits by an experienced, licensed energy auditor, Alan Leonard. Full home energy audits, air leakage/blower door tests and infrared thermography are the services offered. For more information or to book a visit, click on the energy tab on our website, and select "[Home Energy Assessment.](#)" Or leave a message at (613) 283-9500 and Sue Brandum will get in touch with you.

In REAL Life

Healey's Glass. Our thanks to Healey's glass for their continued support. They regularly bring us used or slightly flawed doors and windows, which have become a big seller at the store. (Bruce and Louise Healey are also regular sponsors of our Local Food Dinner.)



CFL Disposal. Please note that there are no longer any local retailers accepting compact fluorescent lightbulbs or regular fluorescent lightbulbs for free disposal from residents. Hang on to them until your municipality's next Hazardous Waste Depot. We hope the situation changes, but in the meantime please do not bring them to the REAL Deal.



Evergreen Tribute. The Evergreen Avenue Committee is planning a large granite memorial stone at Victoria Park to commemorate those who lost their lives in the liberation of France in WW 1. Kinkaid and Loney has already made a generous contribution to kick things off. If all goes well, it will be ready for Environment Week in early June.



Print and Toner Cartridges. Just a reminder that we accept print and toner cartridges at the REAL Deal for recycling. We pass them on to United Way Lanark County, who receive a bit of money for them. Use the box under the table at the customer entrance. There are containers for batteries and mercury-containing thermostats there as well.



Still Wanted. A good condition, used, apartment sized refrigerator for the REAL Deal staff kitchen. We have outgrown the mini fridge we have there. Call Shelley at the store if you can help, (613) 283-7999.



Dish Rental. In you're planning a big event and want to avoid using disposables, keep the REAL Deal in mind. We have large quantities of plates, mugs, glassware and cutlery to rent at .18 per item. We just ask that you bring them back clean. We also have large quantities of bud vases and a coffee maker.



Winter Composting. Yes you can! Keep saving your food scraps in the winter. Best to make the pieces smaller, and collect it in smaller containers closer to the back door if you have difficulty accessing your compost heap. Make sure you have piles of leaves ready to layer on as you add material.



- Two stroke snowmobile engines are far more polluting than automobiles. A group of former McGill University students is developing an electric snowmobile it hopes to have on the market in 2018. [Read about it.](#)
- Read an assessment of the [potential spill impacts](#) of the proposed TransCanada Energy East pipeline on the Ottawa Gatineau region, commissioned by Ecology Ottawa and the Council of Canadians.
- Do you really need [single use plastic straws](#) ? Made from a non-renewable petroleum byproduct, they can easily become litter or floating marine debris, and endanger wild-life. There are alternatives, such as these [stainless steel straws](#).

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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
613-283-7999

Store open Thursdays
through Saturdays 10—4,
Sundays 12—4 until
Christmas.

**Well Aware, Energy Audits,
RAIN or other programs**

Phone: 613-283-9500

Send contributions to February
issue by January 15, 2017 to
dhicks11@cogeco.ca
or call Barb at (613) 283-9966

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to the sponsors of our
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