

REAL *update*

For members and friends of the Rideau Environmental Action League

FEBRUARY 2007

Free Workshops on Renewable Energy & Electricity Conservation

- "Save money on your hydro bills
- 'Learn about solar and wind power
- 'Get free energy conservation supplies

You don't have to sit in the dark or wear a ski jacket around the house to save money on your hydro bills. Join us for one of eight free workshops on solar power, wind power and Net Metering or electricity conservation and Smart Metering .

You can't open a newspaper these days without reading about climate change, wars over dwindling oil supplies, or rising gas and oil prices. Fortunately, there are many things you can do to reduce energy use, cut your household energy bills and take action on climate change. REAL has teamed up with the Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition to host a series of eight informal and informative workshops to show you how.

Four Workshops on Solar Power, Wind Power and Net Metering: These workshops will cover the basics of solar and wind power and explain how to tie your household system into the electricity grid to offset hydro costs. The workshops will feature presentations by Andy Kerr-Wilson who has been living off-grid and assisting with solar power installations for over ten years, and Hydro One which is rolling out a new Net Metering program across Ontario.

The following topics will also be covered: how to estimate your power needs; how photovoltaic

(PV) solar systems work; the advantages and limitations of PV systems; how to install and maintain a PV system; how to tie your solar or wind system into the electricity grid, and; tips for reducing your household electricity load.

Four Workshops on Household Energy Conservation and Smart Meters: These workshops will cover the basics of household electricity conservation and feature presentations by Hydro One on Smart Meters and Time-Of-Use pricing, and Jeff Kohl on household electricity conservation.

The workshops will also cover the following topics: how to save money on hot water, appliances, lighting, and heating and cooling your home; how to read your hydro bill and meter, and; how Smart Meters and Time-Of-Use pricing can help you track and reduce your household electricity costs.

continued inside...

Inside this Issue

Youth and Consumerism Project	2
Smiths Falls Discusses Global Warming	3
What Does DEAL DEAL Mean to You?	4
REAL DEAL Happenings	4
Take it Back / Recyclopedia	4
Carbon Neutrality and Carbon Offsetting	5
Energy Help for Low Income Homes	6
Plastics Depot to Close March 3	6
In REAL Life	7
Membership Renewal Time	8
Online Donations	8

Free Energy Conservation Supplies: Everyone who attends a workshop will receive a free compact fluorescent light bulb and one other free item (low flow faucet or shower head, or hot water pipe wrap). Door prizes of hot water blankets and timers will be given away at every workshop.

These workshops are supported by the Community Conservation Initiatives Program of the Ontario Ministry of Energy and Hydro One. For more information and directions visit the website, call Jeff at 613-267-8426, or drop by or call the REAL DEAL store at 613-283-9500.

Workshop Schedule

All are from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Solar Power, Wind Power & Net Metering

"February 8, Perth Lions Club Hall, Halton St. at the Perth Fairgrounds

"February 13, Smiths Falls REAL DEAL Store, 72 Lombard St. across from The Beer Store

"February 20, Almonte Old Town Hall, 14 Bridge St. at Mill St.

"March 6, Middleville Community Centre, 20 km west of Almonte on Wolfgrove Road, CR16

Household Energy Conservation and Smart Meters

"February 14, Lanark Village Civitan Hall, go N. on 511, turn right on Pine Grove Road

"February 15, Perth Indoor Pool, 80 Wilson St. W at Christie Lake Road

"March 7, Smiths Falls REAL DEAL store, 72 Lombard St., across from The Beer Store

"March 8, Carleton Place Town Hall, 175 Bridge St., next to the river

Youth and Consumerism Project

REAL is pleased that the Youth Environment Network has awarded it and our Katimavik partner with funding for a small project, which will address the role of youth and consumerism in climate change.

Under this project, our Katimavik participants, led by Carolyn Giroux-Bernard, will work with youth from the Smiths Falls Youth Club and the SFDCI Environment Club to make presentations at schools. They will provide summaries and copies of a new booklet available to Canadian youth called *Consume This - Buying That Matters* produced by the Canadian Centre for Pollution Prevention. Copies will be made available in all public locations too. The youth leaders will also promote shopping for previously used goods available from The REAL DEAL and other such stores as one answer to the problem.

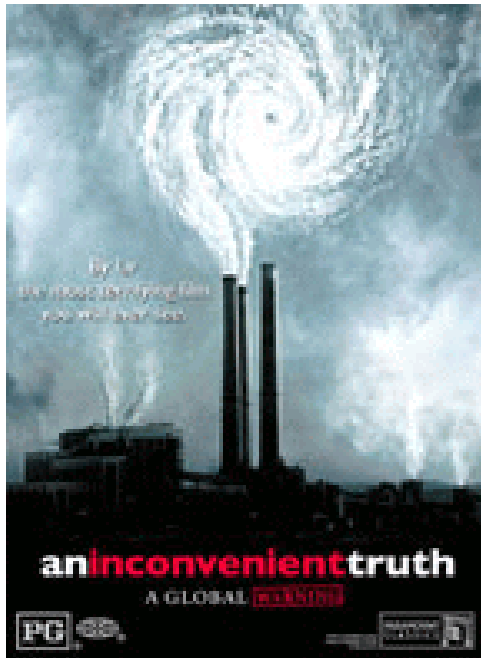
The teams will provide the students with postcards with checklists, asking them to make a commitment to take at least one action to reduce their contribution to climate change. The students will be given extra postcards that they can fill in and drop off whenever they take an action.

The project will also sponsor the showing of *An Inconvenient Truth* at the youth event on Friday, February 23 at 7 p.m. at Westminster Presbyterian Church. The project will run until about mid-March.



Smiths Falls Discusses Global Warming

Humanity's relationship to the environment is a key issue at every level of our daily life. It touches on economics and politics, health and spirituality, public ethics and private morality. Environmental concerns, especially global warming, will occupy more and more of our agenda as Canadians and as global citizens in the months ahead.



During the coming weeks, a series of events have been planned to galvanize our thoughts and our actions. The inspired film, "An Inconvenient Truth" narrated by former U.S. Vice President Al Gore, discusses global warming. The film deals with the rapidly rising carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere and its potential impact in the years to come. What does this mean to us? Rising sea-levels? Drought? Diseases? What can we do?

On January 16, community leaders were invited to a screening and discussion of the video over lunch at the Rideau Canal Museum. The event was attended by Mayor Staples and Town Councillors, and representatives from area schools, labour, community, churches, youth groups, and business. The group shared reactions to the film, and actions that they are currently taking and would like to take to reduce their own emissions. Twelve people agreed to participate on a Steering Committee to guide community actions on global warming. Many in

attendance had already viewed "An Inconvenient Truth" at the screening last July at the Port Elmsley Drive-in sponsored by ecoPerth, Film Night International and REAL.

REAL, in collaboration with local churches, youth organizations and other citizen groups, will provide the people of Smiths Falls and District with the opportunity to view and discuss the DVD as well. You are encouraged to become familiar with this issue and its reality. As opportunities emerge to take action to protect our environment and, hence, our future as a community, you can be ready to get involved and make a difference.

An Inconvenient Truth Events

"Saturday, **February 17**, 7:00 p.m. at Bethel Pentecostal Church. Showing. Free-will offering.

"Tuesday, **February 20**, 7:30 - 9:00 p.m., Rob Roy's Pub. Discussion. Call 283-4444 to register.

"Wednesday, **February 21**, 7:30 - 9:00 p.m., Rideau Canal Museum. Showing. Admission \$5. Call 284-0505 to register.

"Friday, **February 23**, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m., Westminster Presbyterian Church, Youth Event. Showing and discussion of film.

"Wednesday, **February 28**, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. Panel discussion on "An Inconvenient Truth" at the SFDCL. Panelists from REAL, Town Council, ecoPerth and Trinity United Church.

For more information on this series, please contact Peter Au at (613) 284-8338 or aaapeterau@cogeco.ca.

What does the REAL DEAL mean to you?

Here are a few customer responses to that question:

- " Since you have been open, my children have really taken to reading. (Referring to the free kids books we have.)
- " I love this place, it's the best.
- " This is the most useful service that you are providing, I can't imagine what we would do without it.
- " This is a great place to shop, you have such a variety, and the place looks lovely.
- " Thank heavens you're here, we have so much junk to get rid of.
- " Your selection is amazing. And the prices are great. (A customer referring to our extensive Christmas decorations and that all of hers had been destroyed in a house fire.)
- " I love the idea. This is really diverting good stuff from landfill, and saving energy, and helping people who need it. This is wonderful. It's real.

REAL DEAL Happenings



By now you will have noticed the eye-catching yellow and blue sign that is in front of the store. An additional section for changeable messages will be added shortly. This attractive logo, designed by Heather McLenaghan, will be incorporated in a variety of promotional materials.

Unfortunately, sales for December and January were slow. Although we had a large volume of Christmas items that sold, they were all lower priced items. But this lull has allowed some time to develop better strategies for the store in terms of function, efficiency and layout. We will be trying out a different layout for the store, emphasizing furniture and higher priced items.

Price tags on larger items will now show two price points. The first price will be dated, and the second, lower sale price dated 6-8 weeks later. This seems to work well.

In the gift store section we have designed a gift card explaining that the item has been bought from The REAL Deal and proceeds from their sale will go towards local environmental projects. Two volunteers, Bonita Lucas and Sue Oppenauer, have produced some attractive signage for that section of the store. The packaging and signage stress the virtues of giving second hand items, and make it seem the thing to do.

A new addition to the gift section is a variety of themed gift baskets made by Brenda King from items in the store. The baskets contain such items as books, mugs, and candles.

Our two Katimavik participants Caroline (Charlie) and Jeremy started at the store November 30, 2006. They are a great asset and a real pleasure to work with. Jeremy returned home to B.C. at the end of fall, and has been replaced by Johann. Charlie has been hard at work on the YEN project. We wish the Katimavik students all the best as they head off to Newfoundland at the end of February. A new group will begin their placement in Smiths Falls in March.

iWasteNot has developed the inventory/online store system which will be going live within a couple of weeks. Rather than altering the basic household system, they have created an amalgam of the household and industrial waste exchanges, opening the door for us to develop an industrial

waste exchange. This is an exciting development as it marks the first time in North America to have a physical reuse store integrated with the web. This will allow us to market to such communities, for example, as Kingston and Ottawa to inform cottagers of the goods available here.

Plans are being made to approach area municipal councils during their budget planning sessions over the next two months with a presentation, with the goal of obtaining some sustaining funding. The Ministry of Energy and the OPA projects should generate \$1,500 revenue for the REAL DEAL over the next eight months.

We are continuing to emphasize the environmental basis to our work. Developing a change in attitudes to encourage recycling/buying second hand as a great thing to do not only to save money, but to reduce our impact on the environment.

The store was closed between Christmas & New Year s, except for a work/movie day with Katimavik. Saturday hours for the remainder of the winter will be 10 am to 2 pm, while Tuesday to Friday hours remain 9 am to 4 pm.

<i>Goods Handled by REAL Deal (kgs)</i>	
December	In: 4357
	Out: 4912
	Christmas Lights In/Out: 545
January	In: 1357
	Out: 3127

Take it Back / Recyclopedia

Volunteers are still needed to assist with the research for the regional Take-it Back Recyclopedia. Joe Greer and Katimavik participants have made good progress on businesses in Smiths Falls that take back waste

- used oil, batteries, hangers, gardening supplies etc., or provide reusable products, but need volunteers to approach retailers and organizations in other communities. If you are in Pakenham, Almonte, Carleton Place, Maberly, Merrickville, Perth, Portland, Brockville, Athens, Kemptville or anywhere in between in Lanark, Leeds and Grenville, and can spare some time, please help us put this together. Data will be entered in the Recyclopedia feature of www.Rideau.Reuses.com, so that it can be easily modified, searchable, and accessible without printing costs. Joe can be reached at 613-283-9500 or by e-mail at joe@realdealstore.ca.

Carbon Neutrality & Carbon Offsetting

Here s an interesting trend developing. Carbon neutrality has become a business with carbon offsetting. Many movies, bands, banks, hotels and travel companies are making carbon neutrality part of their identity. They calculate their greenhouse gas emissions and aim to balance that with an activity, usually planting trees, to combat global warming. With carbon offsetting, the consumer pays a third party to remove the carbon equal to what he or she emits. Carbon removal can occur with tree planting, burning methane released from manure or landfills, investing in renewable energy technology and various other controversial projects. The consumer may be easing their conscience by participating, but whether the carbon removal actually happens is difficult to determine. One could instead donate to REAL to support our various projects to address climate change, including the series of electricity workshops, the low-income electricity retrofit program, the screenings of An Inconvenient Truth , the Well Aware program, and others.

Take a look at this article in the Christian Science Monitor for an overview: www.csmonitor.com/2007/0110/p13s02-sten.html. Or to see what two carbon offsetting companies are selling see: www.offsetters.ca/ or www.cooldrivepass.com/home.cfm.

REAL Help Coming for Electrically Heated, Low-income Homes

REAL s LL Green project is very pleased and honoured to announce that it is one of seven non-profit environmental organizations in Ontario that will deliver a pilot project designed to reduce electricity use and costs for our low-income citizens.

We have been working for a few years to see such a program come to fruition and are thrilled to be part of this pilot.

The Ontario Power Authority and Green Communities Canada, of which REAL/LL Green is a member, announced the program at the end of January.

The Energy Efficiency Assistance Program for Houses (EEAPH) will serve households in owner-occupied and private rental housing in which residents pay their energy bills. Social housing is NOT a part of this program as it is covered under a different program.

The \$2.4 million pilot program will target 1,400 private, single, semi-detached and row houses in 16 communities across the province.

LL Green will target 45 homes in the Town of Smiths Falls and counties of Lanark and northern Leeds and Grenville.

Qualifying households will receive a comprehensive service that will include:

- "identification of energy savings potential in the home,
- "installation of basic measures (such as installation of compact fluorescent lamps, low flow shower heads, insulation on water pipes and hot water tanks),
- "in-home conservation ideas,
- "an evaluation of extended cost-effective upgrade measures to be included in the house retrofit budget (draft-proofing, insulation, refrigerator replacement).

Depending on the results of the evaluation, LL Green will then engage contractors to do draft-proofing, insulation, and/or refrigerator replacement in the home. The complete service will be provided free of charge (including energy-efficient retrofit and upgrade measures) to homeowners and tenants who are eligible on the basis of income and other criteria. The program has been designed so that participants are not burdened with having to shoulder the responsibility of arranging for and managing retrofit work.

All of the eligible houses have electricity as their prime heating source because that is where the greatest energy savings can be achieved and, at the same time, put much needed income back into the pockets of those who need it most, said Peter Love, Vice President of OPA. Love noted that low-income families, including those on fixed incomes, single parents and the disabled have little spare income to invest in energy efficiency measures and this program will empower them to add their efforts to Ontario s growing culture of conservation.

"People dependent on social assistance and living on limited incomes often have difficulty paying their energy bills, said Clifford Maynes, Executive Director, Green Communities Canada.

Many are living in older homes that waste a lot of energy. With cost-effective investments these homes can be made efficient and energy bills lowered, but the occupants can seldom afford the cost of upgrades. This program will provide a comprehensive audit and retrofit service that will cost qualifying participants absolutely nothing.

Green Communities Canada is a national association of non-profit organizations that deliver innovative, practical environmental solutions to Canadian households and communities. GCC has been engaged in community-based, residential energy efficiency programs since the early 1990s and is the country s leading EnerGuide for Houses service provider.

REAL's LL Green was one of the first organizations in the country to deliver the EnerGuide for Houses.

LL Green has been working with the Lanark Housing Coalition and others to build this program locally. It is worth noting that our organization is the only small-town and rural based group delivering the program.

More information, including application forms, will be available by the end of February/early March by contacting The REAL DEAL Store and Environment Centre at 613-283-9500.

Plastics Depot to Close March 3

The plastics depot operated twice monthly for Perth and Drummond/North Elmsley residents is closing. Insufficient markets, contamination and increased processing costs are the reasons Goulbourn-Stittsville Sanitation Ltd. can no longer accept the plastics. Plastics that residents have been taking to the depot will now be included in regular garbage pickup and go to landfill. The depot at the County Works yard on Wilson Street existed to accept plastics that were not accepted in the blue boxes. The last depot day will be March 3.

In REAL Life

The REAL Action Team will be participating in the **9th Annual Trivia Challenge** on Sunday February 11 at the Smiths Falls Legion. This is fourth year we have entered a team in this Friends of the Smiths Falls and District Public Library fundraiser.

Final counts for the **Seasonal Light Exchange** held November 25 at the REAL DEAL: 250 participants and 900 strings of Christmas lights recycled. As the LED lights to be distributed were recalled the night before the event, Hydro One mailed each of the participants a \$10 Canadian Tire gift card the week of January 15.

REAL's LL Green is working with Green Communities Canada to determine details of the **new ecoEnergy Retrofit program** (that replaces the EnerGuide for Houses program.) The new program will not be available until April, at which point we hope to have sufficient details about how it will work. For those who had an A label under the old EGH program, please make every effort to contact the original assessor and have a B label done before mid-March.

The **3rd Annual Alternative Energy Trade Fair** will be Saturday, Feb. 10 in the W.B. George Centre at Kemptville College. Six information sessions and key note speaker at 10:15. Free admission. Call Jack Henry at 613-342-8528.

Ken Graham, Smiths Falls Town Councillor, has been appointed to continue as the town's liaison person to REAL. Ken attends REAL Board meetings and provides welcome valuable input to the group. Another of Ken's hats is as Vice Chair of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA) for 2007. Ken is a recently-retired senior Investigator for the Ministry of the Environment.

A wonderful **gingerbread house** was displayed and sold by silent auction for \$100 at The REAL DEAL just before Christmas. The highest bidder was Mr. and Mrs. Tom Tyro of Ottawa. Thanks to Brenda King for her creation. Brenda also makes a house for the Smiths Falls Public Library to raffle each Christmas.

Be one of the REAL people wearing a **REAL vest!** These two toned fleece vests are worn by REAL DEAL staff to identify them in the store and by other REAL board members and volunteers. We still have men's sizes medium and large and one small vest available for \$25. Vest are embroidered with **Making a REAL Difference**. Call Barb at 283-9966 if you'd like one.

We have other stuff for sale, too! We now have a wide variety of **themed gift baskets** for \$5 or \$10, filled with gently used items. **Make**

a REAL Difference **hemp bags** (beige with green design) are \$18, or \$15 when you buy two or more. **Fleece dust mitts** are 2 for \$5, and **neck pillows** \$12, and a **patchwork throw** \$40. The fleece items are made by Community Earth Works in Eganville, who use fabric remnants from commercial sewing manufacturers. All of the above are available at The REAL Deal.

REAL will be participating in **Pitch-In Smiths Falls** again this year by coordinating the groups, businesses and citizens who volunteer to cleanup this community. Pitch-in Canada week is April 23 - 29, 2007. Please call Brenda at 283-4416 if you can help out.

Membership Renewal Time

If you are an individual or family member of REAL, you will be receiving a renewal request in the mail. Your membership is very important to us, because it shows support for our environmental efforts in our community. Please renew promptly, as to chase you down later takes volunteer hours that could be better used elsewhere. If we do not have your e-mail address and you are a regular user of e-mail, please let us know so you may receive your newsletter and more time sensitive announcements that way.

Online Donations

An easy way to make a donation to REAL by credit card is to use Canada Helps Online. Canada Helps issues the charitable receipt directly to you, and the funds are direct deposited to REAL's bank account. Just log on to CanadaHelps.org (or use the link on our website), click on **Make a Donation**, and search for **Rideau Environment Trust**, our charitable arm. You can donate to several organizations at once, filling your shopping cart. You are then e-mailed (or mailed) an itemized receipt for the full amount. Please note that membership fees do not qualify for a charitable receipt and cannot be paid in this way.

Membership Rates

REAL membership fees are: Individuals - \$15, Family - \$20, Students - \$5 and Corporate - \$50. Please join us! Contact Frank Roy at 264-8856 or froy@perth.igs.net.

Next Issue

Submissions for the February issue can be sent to dhicks11@cogeco.ca by March 15, 2007 or call Barb at 283-9966.

Contact Us

REAL

Phone: (613) 284-8338

E-mail: info@REALaction.ca

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

Web: www.REALaction.ca

LLGreen

Phone: (613) 267-2257

E-mail: sbrandum@cogeco.ca

The REAL DEAL Store

72 Lombard St., Smiths Falls ON K7A 4G5

Phone: (613) 283-7999

E-mail: storemanager@realdealstore.ca

Hours: Tuesday - Friday 9 a.m - 4 p.m.,
Saturday 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

The REAL DEAL Environment Centre

To Book Well Aware Visits, or to find out more about our Idle-Free and Tire Pressure campaigns or the Recyclopedia,
Phone: (613) 283-9500

