

Rideau Environmental Action League

Year in Review 2005



MAJOR PROJECTS

The REAL DEAL Store and Environment Centre

- completed Feasibility Study and Business plan for an expanded Reuse Centre
- established Steering Committee and Advisory Committee
- secured funding from five sources for start-up and first year
- secured major space contribution from Guy Saumure and Sons
- received a substantial donation of used office equipment and furniture from The Link
- hired an interim Executive Director part-time to oversee development
- named this Expanded Reuse Centre The REAL DEAL Store and Environment Centre

Pitch-In Smiths Falls

- coordinated efforts of over 20 community groups and 600 individuals to clean up Smiths Falls
- organized a lunch and photo presentation for participants immediately after Saturday event

Shoreline Cleanup

- organized a diver cleanup of the Rideau between Beckwith St. Bridge and Chamber's Street as part of the Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup, with 25 participants

Kill a Watt Meters

- arranged the donation of three Kill a Watt meters from Renewable Energy of Plum Hollow, and made them available to borrow by the public through Smiths Falls Public Library

Idle Free Campaign

- approached 380 motorists at lock crossings during summer weekends to educate them on the benefits of being idle free
- secured substantial community donations to make this possible
- secured funding from the Helen McCrae Peacock Foundation for next phase of program

Evergreen Avenue Committee

- maintained park in summer by mulching and watering
- replaced paver lights replaced with lexon lenses to combat vandalism
- held October BBQ to recognize volunteers

Communications Committee

- produced and distributed five Updates, REAL's newsletter
- maintained and added content to website www.REALaction.ca
- maintained e-mail list to use for coming events, volunteer opportunities and news releases
- produced eco-friendly hemp bags to promote and raise funds for REAL

Waste Reduction Committee

Reuse Centre, Smiths Falls

- operated every Saturday morning, and since the fall, on Wednesday afternoons, by volunteers
- diverted over 5,086 kg. of waste and received 1,220 visitors
- held two successful "Free Yard Sales"
- reopened as a free store at the REAL DEAL at 72 Lombard Street in December

Other Waste Initiatives

- launched Rideau.Reuses.com, an online waste exchange service.
- continued to collect used cell phones and print cartridges
- made presentations on our waste reduction initiatives to nine municipalities neighbouring Smiths Falls
- continued to work towards a regional Take it Back Program in partnership with the Township of Elizabethtown-Kitley

Watershed Issues Committee

Backyard Burning

- continued to receive inquiries about this issue
- wrote article for the Merrickville Phoenix

Public Education Committee

- gave Well Aware presentation on wells and septic at Otty Lake AGM and Art of Being Green Festival
- presented on home energy to Katimavik and the North Lanark Community Health Centre
- represented at The Art of Being Green (Lanark Village), the Smiths Falls Chocolate and Railway Festival and Along the Banks in Merrickville
- presented naturalization workshop at Rideau Canal Museum, discussed waste management with Drummond-North Elmsley Women's Institute, spoke to kindergarten class on waste

Funding and Finance Committee

- 8th annual Central Band of the Canadian Forces concert very well attended and raised \$4600
- assisted Rotary Club with mushroom compost fundraiser, raising \$1000 for REAL
- applied for Green Streets Canada tree inventory funding, unsuccessful though placed 4th out of 14
- registered Rideau Environment Trust on Canada Helps, a website that accepts credit card donations
- successfully lobbied for sustainable funding from the Town of Smiths Falls of \$1.50 per resident per year, for a total of \$13,500/yr over 5 years, from the federal Gas Tax Rebate to municipalities
- applied to and received funding from Trillium, the Lanark County Enhancement Fund and the Valley Heartland Eastern Ontario Development Fund, HRSDC, Helen McCrae Peacock Foundation and CEDTAP

Executive Committee

- hosted public review of, and conducted the annual revisit of our five-year Business Plan
- established Budget
- began tracking volunteer hours by Board members and other volunteers
- revised charitable income tax receipts to conform to new CRA guidelines
- began monthly Calendar of Tasks review
- organized Annual General Meeting in June and presented Environmental Awards
- conducted search for new Board members; invitation accepted by two people

Memberships, Conferences and Networking

Memberships

- members of Rideau Roundtable (RR), Friends of the Tay Watershed (FoTW) and Green Communities Canada (GCC)
- REAL board members also Chair the RR, Chair the Managers Committee of GCC, and serve on Board of Friends of the Tay Watershed (FoTW)
- represented on Steering Committee of the RVCA's Rural Clean Water Program

Attended Conferences and Workshops

- participated in Green Communities Canada Annual Conference, Vancouver
- learned new communications strategies via two online IMPACS workshops

Letters of Concern and Endorsement

- endorsed the mission of the Ontario Low Income Energy Network
- supported Federal government legislation banning fishing lures containing more than 1% lead
- sent letter to Audi suggesting Canadian market is ready for Smart Cars
- endorsed Green Communities revised Code of Conduct

Networking

- presented North Elmsley student with award for her science fair project
- participated in Friends of the Library Trivia Challenge fundraiser in February, placing first
- presented to Lanark Waste Task Group re: 5N site and waste diversion activities
- began receiving by-law change notifications from Town of Smiths Falls
- held initial discussions with Town of Smiths Falls re: promoting summer water conservation
- laid Remembrance Day wreath at Cenotaph
- monitored progress on Smiths Falls Central Parkland Best Use Study
- endorsed and encouraged five other local organizations to endorse the Green Communities Canada proposal for a low income energy retrofit program, which led to \$2 billion in federal energy funding
- investigated REAL involvement in Adopt a River program in schools

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