

# Coffee cups, masks and pop cans among items found during Smiths Falls shoreline cleanup

Rideau Environmental Action League members helped beautify the town

[Melissa Novacaska](#)

Smiths Falls Record News

Sunday, May 1, 2022

With its waterfront and green spaces, Smiths Falls is a picturesque town.

However, as with most towns, once the winter comes crawling to an end and snow melts, all the residue and garbage is revealed on the ground.

Over the last two weeks, the town's Rideau Environmental Action League (REAL), held a shoreline and pitch-in cleanup — with the final stretch on April 30 — in an attempt to reduce waste in the town.

REAL provided bags, gloves, grabbers and more for those who needed the equipment for cleanup.

In the final weekend, a few spots including the Bascule Bridge and the Old Slys area, as well a local boat launch, were given some love and care.



***Shannon Hicks, one of the event's co-ordinators, said some of the popular items found during cleanups include Tim Hortons cups, disposal masks, cans, bottles and food. — Melissa Novacaska/Metroland***

According to Shannon Hicks, one of the event's co-ordinators, with it being a "beautiful time of year" and with the town having "a lot of unique scenery," there's importance to keep it clean.

"It's just nice to preserve it and give that little extra help to make it look beautiful," Hicks said.

Hicks noted how clean the town already is at this point, based on everyone's help to "pitch in." She said she thinks having a clean space makes people feel better.

"(Cleaning up) aligns with REAL's values of preserving the environment," Hicks said.

Hicks said she hopes by the end of the cleanup, the team of volunteers who helped during the events are able to look back and say, "it looks much better."





***Ria Quik came from the Ottawa area to help pick up any trash seen. When she's in the water paddling away, she can be found collecting garbage as well. — Melissa Novacaska/Metroland***

What's been the most popular items picked up throughout the cleanup varied, but there are a few common items:

1. Coffee cups (Tim Hortons to be more exact)
2. Disposable masks (over the COVID-19 period)
3. Plastic water bottles/plastic bags
4. Pop/beer cans
5. Food containers/wrappers

Other items found throughout the day included cigarette butts, a wheel from a desk chair, socks and computer hardware.





***Left to right: John Jordan, an Ontario PC party candidate for Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston, and Peter McKenna, a Smiths Falls councillor, stopped by to help the community make the town beautiful again. — Melissa Novacaska/Metroland***

While this weekend's cleanup at the Bascule Bridge brought some familiar faces such as Coun. Peter McKenna, it also brought John Jordan, who is running for the Ontario PC party seat for Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston in the upcoming election.

Among other attendees were some youngsters, including high school student, Daniel Blair and the young but mighty Edison James Morris. This is Morris' second time attending the cleanup, alongside his grandmother Roberta.

While Morris picked up as much garbage to be found, he was there for a specific reason.

"We want to help the animals and those in the water (so they can) stay alive," Edison said. "The reason why animals have been dying is because of all this garbage they've been eating."





***Members and volunteers of the Rideau Environmental Action League (REAL) held a spring shoreline and pitch-in cleanup in Smiths Falls on April 30. Participants included Edison James Morris and his grandmother Roberta. — Melissa Novacaska/Metroland***

According to Roberta, it is the younger generation who “seem to have a clear sense” of protecting the environment, noting they’re the ones who will inherit it.

Morris said he plans to bring his little brother next year, adding it is helpful when young people can get involved, because they may have better sight to spot more garbage.

In the meantime, he has one request for those who litter.

“It would be really nice if you could throw your garbage into the garbage (cans) and make sure you don’t put garbage in recycling and recycling into the trash,” Morris said.

[Source](#)