

Hello there

If you think this newsletter is a bit of a rant, it is probably true. But it is also about options. The choices we make can be for the betterment or worsening of society & our world. YREA asks you to give this some thought. Please take a few minutes to read the content below.



## YREA Autumn 2017 News & Views

### Cheap goods at whose cost?

In the spring of 2012, while Canada was in the midst of negotiating 20 business agreements with China, YREA wrote an editorial that needs to be reiterated as Canada renegotiates NAFTA. An economist at the time referred to the deals saying 'In the end you will save some cash when you go shopping.' Big deal. As Canadians amass mountains of cheap goods (most of which we do not need) we wonder how many stop to consider the conditions of the [working poor](#) around the world who produce all this stuff. [Learn more...](#)



The late Charles Bowden, author of *Murder City: Ciudad Juarez and the Global Economy's New Killing Fields* attributed the poverty, destitution and hopelessness that gave rise to drug trafficking, murder and mayhem in Ciudad Juarez to NAFTA. Companies set up factories across the border from El Paso Texas to take advantage of cheap Mexican labour.

Workers in Mexico's [border factories](#) do not earn a wage that can support their families. A wage, it is said, is now 40% lower than manufacturing salaries in China. Unconscionable practices whereby social considerations are not part of business operations are leading to the demise of the middle classes as the chasm between rich and poor widens worldwide.

Workers in Mexico's [border factories](#) do not earn a wage that can support their families. A wage, it is said, is now 40% lower than manufacturing salaries in China. Unconscionable practices whereby social considerations are not part of business operations are leading to the demise of the middle classes as the chasm between rich and poor widens worldwide.

As consumers, we can seek out [fair trade products](#). Where that choice is unavailable, it is prudent that our government ensures our imports are made under equitable working standards. Of course, this will cost us more, but we can choose to buy better quality, buy less, buy used, get it fixed instead of throwing it away. **AND ON THAT NOTE...**

### Fix it / Borrow it

[Repair cafes](#) and [tool libraries](#) are cropping up in answer to our need to buy less and throw away less. You can [visit a repair cafe](#) or [borrow a tool](#) instead of buying.

A major leader on this front is the EU Parliament that wants to promote a longer product lifespan, by among other things - tackling programmed obsolescence and reinstating repairability of all goods put on the market. The UK website [BuyMeOnce](#) lists products that will last a lifetime.

REPAIRS TO  
VACUUM CLEANERS -  
CENTRAL, DOMESTIC & COMMERCIAL



POWER TOOLS, SEWING MACHINES,  
ELECTRIC LAWNMOWERS &  
SMALL APPLIANCES

An easy way to defer obsolescence BEFORE YOU BUY is to troll the internet for repair parts via a product's model number. If parts are available from a few sources, you know you will be able to fix it should the need arise. If not, CHOOSE ANOTHER BRAND.

Home Hardware has been known to rewire a lamp, fix a snow shovel and tackle a patio umbrella among its other repair services. Give them a try.

## Textile recycling

It has been said that the second most polluting industry in the world after oil production is fashion. But we can reduce the footprint of fashion by recycling. Ever wonder [what to do](#) with paint stained pants, torn slipcovers or socks with holes? Even these items can be diverted from landfills. If you live in [Aurora](#) or [Markham](#), there are a number of drop off locations for your convenience. Markham diverted more than 1.4 million kg of textiles from landfills in less than a year and [Textile Waste Diversion](#) has a 50 million lb. landfill diversion goal. In other municipalities, you can leave textiles at a drop box or the Salvation Army for sorting and sending on. Even some condos have textile diversion bins, so check it out.

Although there has been criticism regarding the shipment of secondhand clothes to Africa, it does provide income for market sellers of this clothing and the [entrepreneurship](#) it has inspired among Africans is heartening. So don't discard, divert!



---

## Leave the leaves

Resist the urge to hack back the garden in the fall. Instead, sprinkle a mixture of cooked, ground eggshells & coffee grounds to your garden beds. As these decompose, they will release nitrogen, potassium, phosphorus and calcium into the soil to support plant growth. If you have large leaves, run a lawnmower over them to shred before adding a good ft. to your beds. Some will compost on the spot but will also provide [shelter for overwintering](#) beneficial insects. Birds will value the seeds in flower heads and shrubs if you wait until spring to cut back. By doing the wee creatures we depend on a good turn, your winter garden landscape will also be more attractive.



---

## Attention donors & volunteers

We will be sending out an invitation soon for our annual appreciation event to be held on the afternoon of Saturday, October 14th. There will be an opportunity for guests to enjoy a walk in the beautiful Jefferson Forest either before or after. So stay tuned!

We seek funding support to establish a biochar social enterprise. YREA's way of addressing climate change & animal health & welfare.

Don't hesitate - [DONATE](#).

Visit our Website to find out more about us. Follow us on Facebook.