

# Tom Beck steps down after 17 years

by Jacquie Gilson, Executive Director

Sadly, our longest standing board member Tom Beck has resigned his position from the board of directors. The publication of *Paradise Preserved* seemed to be a milestone for Tom. Upon hearing this Maureen Heffring quipped, "If we had known that, we would never have agreed to the book's publication!"

"I believe that thanks to a solid board and staff, the Foundation is poised for even greater success," Tom stated in his resignation letter. "I would like to spend more time out on the land, especially with my daughter Nancy (Anderson) and grandson Brady," Tom explained.



Tom Beck displays two Gerald Tailfeather paintings donated by Ann and Sandy Cross

One of the motivators for the Area, Tom has been involved since the beginning. He was responsible for bringing the Nature

Conservancy of Canada on line and he crafted our guiding principles, which continue to guide everything we do.



Board Member, Mentor, and Friend – Tom Beck

Tom was always a conscientious board member who could be counted on to provide comments on the information packages provided. He could also be counted on to provide a level headed, calm perspective on issues at board meetings. His favourite topic was wildlife and elk management in particular. Despite the sensitivity of the elk issue he always guided us through the political quagmire as confidently as a seasoned ship captain steers through shallow seas. The consummate negotiator, Tom made sure we said the right things, in the right way, at the right time.

I am particularly indebted to Tom, as he was part of the team that hired me over 10 years ago. I still recall being asked in my second interview how I would get the job done with two small children and all the various constraints of the position. I quickly and confidently

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# News from the ASCCA

## Volunteer in Profile – Victoria “Vicky” Rudiak

**V**icky is our youngest active volunteer and is one special 13-year old! As Anne and Ray Rudiak's granddaughter, she's been coming out to the Area since she was five. Her earliest memory of the land was when she went on the Volunteer Christmas Walk with her Nana and had difficulty climbing up the hill!



Vicky Rudiak

Vicky's been volunteering with us for 3 years as one of our Workday Volunteers. Her favourite workday memory is putting up the tipi when her job was holding the tipi up from the inside!! She enjoys volunteering at the Cross because “the people are so nice” and she likes being at an area where “there aren't so many buildings”.

Vicky is a grade 8 student at École Bishop Pinkham Junior High School. Her favourite class is French Language Arts. She works parttime at Glamorgan Bakery (where they make the best cheese buns!) and where her mom also works.

Dancing is Vicky's favourite thing to do. She dances weekly with the Tryzub School of Ukranian Dance and also takes ballet classes on Monday nights. She's been Ukranian dancing for five years and she especially likes the competition aspect of dance; she's competed as both an individual and as part of a group. She looks forward to performing at the Barvinok Ukranian Dance Festival in Airdrie in March.

Vicky is an incredibly smart, confident and outgoing individual! She's wanted to be a firefighter “ever since she was a kid”. She received her inspiration to be a firefighter from her favourite Stampeder Football Player, Stu Laird. Knowing Vicky, she will succeed in whatever she puts her mind to!

A big thank you goes out to Vicky for sharing her time, talents and cheery smile with us. ❁

## Happy Birthday Wishes for March & April

Best wishes for a Happy Birthday are extended to –

### March

Ted Cole – March 1  
Milan Gillespie – March 1  
Paul Bertram – March 3  
Gary Foster – March 4  
John Weinmayr – March 5  
Robin West – March 5  
Sharon Burrill – March 6  
Ollie Hux – March 14  
Marysue Gifford – March 16  
Jacquie Gilson - Mar 22  
Joanne Dickie – March 24  
Margaret Varnam – March 26  
Russel Varnam – March 27



### April

Janice Lorenzana - April 3  
George Dutton – April 13  
Ing-Britt Renborg – April 15  
Gordon Hunter – April 16  
John Nichol – April 17  
Nic DeGama-Blanchet – April 18  
Karen Whitley – April 21  
Nancy Anderson – April 23  
Catherine Southwood – April 27



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replied, “Don't worry, if you hire me I will get the job done!” Tom believed in me then and has been supportive ever since. I could always count on him for non-judgmental, supportive advice.

After 17 years of support, Tom's absence will leave a huge gap at the Conservation Area. I personally will miss Tom as a board member and mentor but am consoled knowing that I have gained a friend. It also comforts me to know that the Area still has a great friend and staunch supporter in Tom Beck.

Thank you Tom, for everything. We look forward to seeing you out on the trails with binoculars in hand!

P.S. *A special bouquet of flowers to Tom's wife Shirley for sharing him with us all these years.* ❁

## Encouraging Action for the Environment

# Take the David Suzuki Nature Challenge!

By Natalie Young, Volunteer



If you're looking for simple ways to help reduce your impact on the environment, look to the David Suzuki Foundation. The Foundation has produced an online Nature Challenge, encouraging you to make an environmental difference.

Launched last November, the Nature Challenge encourages Canadians to take individual actions in four categories determined by the Foundation to be the most effective ways for individuals to conserve nature: household activities, food consumption, transportation, and getting involved. Some of the top ten impact-reducing actions include: supporting car-free alternatives; buying locally grown and produced food; reducing home energy use by 10%; and learning and sharing ideas with family and friends. Consider this startling statistic from the Nature Challenge website – *One busload of passengers takes 40 vehicles off the road during rush hour. It also saves 70,000 litres of fuel and reduces 9 tonnes of air pollutants a year.* So your individual action could be as simple as taking the bus to work more often this year. Let's all get involved as Cross

Conservation volunteers and take the challenge! Go to [www.davidsuzuki.org/WOL/Challenge](http://www.davidsuzuki.org/WOL/Challenge). Once you sign up, you'll receive monthly e-mail tips on specific things you can do to conserve nature.

Locally speaking, the City of Calgary has some great initiatives and information on how our everyday activities impact the environment. The Environmental Management department website on the City of Calgary web portal ([www.calgary.ca](http://www.calgary.ca)) offers a series of *Climate Change and You Infosheets* that give you specific tips on how you can reduce your energy consumption – and save money while doing it!



Check out [www.calgary.ca](http://www.calgary.ca) for valuable tips on saving money by reducing energy consumption.



## Poems from our Volunteers –

# Up from the Egg: The Confessions of a Nuthatch Avider

Ogden Nash (submitted by Olga Droppo)

Bird watchers top my Honors list.  
I aimed to be one but I missed.  
Since I'm both myopic and astigmatic,  
My aim turned out to be erratic,  
And I, bespectacled and binocular,  
Exposed myself to comment jocular.  
We don't need too much birdlore, do we,  
To tell a flamingo from a towhee;  
Yet I cannot, and never will,  
Unless the silly bird stands still,  
And there's no enlightenment in a tour  
Of ornithological literature.

Is yon strange creature a common chickadee,  
Or a migrant alouette from Picardy?  
You rush to consult your Nature Guide  
And inspect the gallery inside,  
But a bird in the open never looks  
Like its picture in the birdie books -  
Or if it did, it has changed its plumage,  
And plunges you back into ignorant gloomage.  
That is why I sit here growing old by inches,  
Watching the clock instead of finches,  
But I sometimes visualize in my gin  
The Audubon that I audibin.



# Nature is Alive in Winter

By Sue Hayduk, Education Manager



January and February is time for the Winter Walkabout school program at the Cross Conservation Area. We hide Jell-O mice, learn a lot about snow crystals, play parachute games and find out how snow helps animals survive in winter. One of the highlights of the day is looking for animal tracks and signs with an education volunteer.



Winter at the Cross

We recently made some fun changes to this program which include the children becoming Cross Conservation Officers (formerly Deputy Rangers) who investigate winter; and our class letter,

once from our Head Ranger, is now an invitation from Ann and Sandy Cross to help explore winter.

At the end of the day, children are asked to write to Ann and Sandy about their winter discoveries. Here is what they had to say:

“Dear Ann and Sandy, how are you doing? I hope you had a great Christmas and a great New Year. I have been wonderful. We went to the Cross Conservation Area on Monday the 20th. I saw skat and teeth marks on the trees. We did look for all kinds of snowflakes and there were all kinds of snow flakes. We played with the parachute which was fun because the weasels get the mice then we switched. The leaves fall off of the trees because they don't eat food in the winter. Flowers go because there's not much water in the winter. Trees sometimes die and bushes always die. Plants don't die because they have seeds, and they come out. Animals survive because of fur and some hibernate,” – *From Brett.*

“Dear Ann and Sandy, we went to the Cross Conservation Area, on January 20th. I saw trees and signs that animals have been there. First we went on a hike and after we played games. I also saw holes for little animals like a mouse or a vole mouse. Did you know the mouse does everything in the same room? He sleeps and goes to the bathroom there. A vole mouse has separate rooms to do everything in,” – *Your friend Christina.*

“I saw scraps on a tree and little holes and a damp spot where an animal laid. I think the Cross Conservation Area is a great place to have a field trip,” – *Your friend, Sarah.*

“The trees are not dead in the forest, for they are just sleeping,” – *Your friend, Kiana.*

“We saw 2 signs of life and they were skat from a deer and holes in the trees from wood peckers,” – *Your friend, Terrin.*



Making animal tracks in the snow with George Hopkins

“Today we were at the Cross Conservation Area and we had loads of fun there. In the morning we went for a walk to hide our Jell-O mice. I hid mine under a big rock. Our goal was who could keep their mice the warmest. Mine kept pretty warm but not as warm as Brett's his was still liquid,” – *Your friend, Cedric.*

Letters from Colonel Walker School Grade Two Classes January 20, 2003 visit. ❄️

'Thank yous' and special notes...

# Announcements

## Area Steward News

Please plan to attend one of our steward scheduling and refresher sessions on Saturday, March 22 (2 – 4:30 pm)

### Share Your Story

Do you have a story about your experiences at the Cross Conservation Area; or perhaps a special recipe that is always a hit with family and friends?

We welcome you to share them with the readers of *The Cross Current!* Submit your **article** or **recipe** to Janice by April 14 for the May/June Edition of *The Cross Current*.

or Monday, March 24 (6:30 - 9 pm). At the meeting, we'll officially launch the optional boundary drive-by patrols and have a refresher safety training session.

### We're looking for new friends

If you know of someone who might be interested in volunteering as a conservation educator, invite them to our New Volunteer Orientation session on Saturday, March 8 (1 – 4 pm).

### Calling Workday Volunteers

There will be a Workday Planning Meeting on Monday, March 3 (1 - 4 pm). Looking forward to seeing all of the regular workday people and some new faces who are interested in helping out.

## Steward Reports

By Vicky Rudiak, Volunteer

In January and February, many tracks of moose, elk, deer and coyotes abounded, but few animals were seen. Recent sightings by area stewards include coyote, 3 white-tailed deer and 4 mule deer. On February 5, Reg Rempel observed a large herd of elk, consisting mostly of young elk. A few males with small antlers, and a few female elk were also part of the herd. A group of 16 deer were also sighted on the same day. ❄️



Photo by Mike Sturk

### Volunteer Recipe of the Month

## Fresh from the Kitchen

By Gordon Hunter



Gordon's salad is always a hit at the Volunteer Recognition Party and is a particular favourite among staff.

### Gordon Hunter's Spinach and Strawberry Salad

Combine dressing ingredients, mix well and toss with enough spinach and strawberries for your crew.

1/3 cup (75 ml) white sugar	1/4 tsp (1 ml) paprika
1/2 cup (125 ml) oil	1/2 tsp (2 ml) worcestershire sauce
1/4 cup (60 ml) white vinegar	1-1/2 tsp (7 ml) minced onion
2 tbsp (30 ml) sesame seeds	
2 tbsp (30 ml) poppy seeds	

Reference: *The Best of the Best and More* from the *Best of Bridge Series*



*Spring/Summer 2003 at the Cross Conservation Area*

# Calendar of Events

**Volunteers, all Conservation Education programs are half-price for *active* ASCCA volunteers!  
To register for a Conservation Education program, please call 931-9001.**

<b>WHEN</b>	<b>WHAT</b>	<b>WHAT'S IT ABOUT?</b>	<b>WHO'D LIKE TO ATTEND?</b>
Mon., Mar. 3 1:00 - 4:00 pm	Meeting	Workday Planning Meeting	New and returning workday volunteers
Wed., Mar. 5 7:00 - 9:00 pm	Conservation Education	Starlight Starbright	Families and adults
Sat., Mar. 8 1:00 - 4:00 pm	Training	New Volunteer Orientation	Interested in Volunteering as a Conservation Educator
Wed., Mar. 12 6:30 - 8:30 pm	Conservation Education	Batman	Family and adults
Sat., Mar. 22 2:00 - 4:30 pm	Training	Scheduling, refresher and update	Returning Area Stewards
Mon., Mar. 24 6:30 - 9:00 pm	Training	Scheduling, refresher and update	Returning Area Stewards
Sat., April 5 1:00 - 4:00 pm	Conservation Education	Unravelling the Web of Life	Children, ages 6 to 10
Mon., June 9 6:30 - 9:00 pm	Conservation Education	Wildflower Identification	Adults only
Mon., July 14 6:30 - 9:00 pm	Conservation Education	Summer Flowers	Adults only