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IMPORTANT NOTICE  
**ASCCA Change of Address**  
*Effective Oct. 17, 2017*  
 20-194001 160 Street W  
 Foothills AB T1S 4K9

Winter 2016/2017

ANN & SANDY  
**Cross Conservation Area News**

**A fresh start at the Ann & Sandy Cross Conservation Area**

In June, I had the pleasure of joining ASCCA's small but extraordinary staff, fresh out of U of C. I have been nothing short of blessed to have been put in this role. The volunteers and staff at ASCCA have been tremendous.

Since the summer, we have seen several events pass, from our Halloween Howl to our much-anticipated Stampede BBQ, as well as the Star Night and Hawk Talk educational events.

From my scope of things, I'm proud to say that a group of our volunteers has successfully wrapped up ASCCA's first CreekWatch water-testing program.

Personally, I would like to thank the volunteers I've gotten to know since starting here. You're a source of great and extraordinary inspiration and have a superb knowledge of nature and stewardship. I have enjoyed and look forward to

spending time with you, listening to what you have to say and hearing your stories. I'm excited for what next year has in store!

**Anna Aldridge\***  
 ASCCA Communications  
 and Volunteer Coordinator

\*Driven by cat-love, nature-love and a desire to explore our beautiful world and live life fully.

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**2017 Dates to Remember!**

Volunteer Recognition	January 28
Volunteer Recruitment	March
BioBlitz	June
Stampede BBQ	July
Elk Bugle & BBQ	September
Halloween Howl	October
Conservation Learning Events	Mar 18, April 8, May 14, Sept.



Area Stewards (Mal Blasetti, Bev Lane, Linda Blasetti, Ing-Britt Renborg, Ursula Weise, Chris Mills, Peggy Mills)





## What does conservation mean to you? An interview with Reg Rempel.

### Tell us a bit about yourself.

My name is Reg Rempel and I've been employed as a steward of this land since Labatt's introduced the first twist off cap on a reusable beer bottle in Canada. So that's 1984. 32 years.

### What does conservation mean to you?

Conservation to myself, in a nutshell, means to protect. Conservation must sustain. Conservation requires lifestyle. Conservation is to use without using up.

### What's your favorite thing about working here?

My favourite thing about working at the Ann & Sandy Cross Conservation Area is a package deal. The package consists of lifestyle, learning, being a witness of the gift and supporting it through caring and thoughtful management for biodiversity. The human aspect of it is that it is essential that we have natural areas set aside as living classrooms for future generations.

### One surprising fact about the ASCCA.

One of the surprising facts that I like is it's all about selfless generosity. And Mr. Cross, A. R Cross, (Sandy) asked only that the guiding principles would still be in effect 100 years or 1000 years from its conception.

### Something most people don't know about the ASCCA.

Something very interesting about the ASCCA is its perimeters tell it consists of 4800 acres. Its rolling hills and valleys make its land actually much greater. The headwaters of Pine Creek are born here, as well as the 19 356 days a year springs. They are just an absolute blessing beyond words.

*Thanks for sharing your words and wisdom, Reg.*

Conservation must sustain.

Conservation requires lifestyle.

Conservation is to use without using up.

## Volunteering Update

2016 is coming to a close, and what a year it's been! 2017 will be our exciting 30th anniversary, 30 years since the year when Sandy Cross donated the first portion of his land to become the Cross Conservation Area, 1987. At the end of January, we will hold our annual **Volunteer Recognition Party**, where we will acknowledge the fantastic work our volunteers have done for 2016, and come together to celebrate our passion for conservation, community and learning. I'll soon be in touch with volunteers for a save the date.

I would also like to remind you that a **Volunteer Recruitment Workshop** will be held in March. **Training** for new volunteers and refresher training for current volunteers will be held in April and May. You can also keep a heads up for the return of the **CreekWatch Program** in the spring. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, I would love to meet you in the new year. We are always looking to our volunteers for ideas and inspiration, so stay in touch!

Anna Aldridge, ASCCA Volunteer Coordinator

Call me at **403-931-1042** or email [info@crossconservation.org](mailto:info@crossconservation.org)



ASCCA Volunteers enjoying our annual Stampede BBQ

## A Letter from our C.E.O, Greg Shyba

We have accomplished a lot in the last year and it would not have been possible without the help of our volunteers. Many thanks to all of you! We would not be able to run our outdoor education programs and keep up with all of the maintenance and repairs without you.

The ASCCA takes pride in being fiscally responsible and living within our means. However, like many other charitable organizations in Calgary, we are facing lean times. In particular, our school programs, although having received significant funding in the past, are not receiving the financial support we count on. Without an improvement in the economy and some significant donations, we will soon have to cut down in staff and program delivery. If you are in a position to make a charitable donation, please consider doing so. Let's hope things turn around soon.

One of the interesting projects we began to work on this past summer was the stream monitoring program. This initiative is an integral part of our desire to protect and restore Pine Creek. Both the north and south arms of Pine Creek originate on the ASCCA. Stream monitoring is just one of the tools we can use to determine how well we are protecting the conservation area.

For the last couple of years, we have been concentrating on protecting and restoring riparian areas by installing wildlife friendly fencing, re-establishing healthy beaver populations and installing and monitoring off-stream watering areas for use by cattle and wildlife. We have also planted well over 100,000 trees through the wonderful efforts of the Junior Forest Wardens and through our partnership with the Carbon Farmer. These trees will not only store carbon, but will also improve air quality and water quality and quantity on the ASCCA and downstream. This summer we received funding from the Province of Alberta's Watershed Restoration and Recovery Program



(WWRP) to restore the wetlands on the north arm of Pine Creek. Based on old video footage and oral history from Reg Rempel, the north arm of Pine Creek was once an extensive wetland. With the help of our volunteers and this grant, those old wetlands can be re-established and the area will once again teem with plants and wildlife

To get a more in-depth understanding of the steps we are taking to restore and protect the ASCCA, please take a look at our 25 Year Adaptive Management Plan which can be found on our website.

Please feel free to give me a call or send me an email if you have any questions or concerns or would like to be involved in our projects as a volunteer or donor.

Best wishes for a terrific holiday season and a happy and prosperous New Year!

**Greg Shyba**  
ASCCA C.E.O

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**When we hear the word conservation** we usually imagine other people involved in organizations trying to protect something that needs protecting. We rarely see it as a word that applies to us as individuals within our own communities. We rarely take ownership of this word. It is better left to those who know more than we do.

Conservation more than anything means realizing that the earth, and all its land, living creatures and plant-life, are NOT commodities that belong to humans, but rather vital components of a community to which we all belong. We cannot survive on this planet without a healthy land beneath our feet, and without the biodiversity of life that lives upon it.

Conservation is an internal mind-set as well as an external action. We must start recognizing that a healthy wilderness, abundant species, and respected resources are imperative to sustainable life on earth. Nothing else we do or dream about or create will matter if we do not have a planet on which to live. Conservation means you and I and every other person on this planet taking positive, responsible action to ensure that this planet continues to live, so that we can live upon it.

Conservation means life.

- **Jennifer Clark** (hiker and friend of the ASCCA)

## A Year in Review by Reg Rempel

2016 was a year of many interesting changes from the inside-out. New leadership for our highly valued volunteers created a new buzz around the hub (Belvedere House). Countless hours of fundraising and donations have allowed us to grow in spite of these tough economic times; hats off to our Board of Directors and CEO. This in turn has allowed an increase in our level of excellence pertaining to maintenance and necessary rebuilding that will take place in just a few short years. It reminds me of the wetland aquatic sharpshooter (the archer fish), which seldom misses its target or, in our case, its goals.

I found our seasons of Spring and Summer most fascinating this year. We had no rain in June, not a drop. Yet do you remember the greenery in spite of it? This disappointed our summer students, who were stuck in their classrooms writing exams when it was so nice out.

In July we got the moister and cooler weather, followed by a most amazing Fall of brilliant colors, which was packed with action on our open grasslands. The majestic bull Elk once again revved up all their reserves, going into battle for supremacy in a cloud of dust and a



“With nature, there is no Tomorrow”  
- Reg Rempel

clashing of antlers and angry grunts.

With nature, there is no tomorrow. The Special Project volunteers also got to bear witness as progeny was conceived by a Whitetail doe out in the open no more than 60 yards from view during a very active rutting season.

The Canker worm moth was also active once again this Fall, flying low and now high. The female is wingless; only the eggs will survive the Winter, then emerge next Spring as larvae defoliating the greenery. Perhaps this will temporarily increase our song birds!

Remember this time of year to keep you immunity up (eat garlic).

It has been said;

"A nickel will get you on the subway, but garlic will get you a seat".

A Merry Christmas to all and a joyous new year.

**Reg Rempel**  
ASCCA Habitat Manager

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No really, what does the fox say?



Foxes have a diverse range of vocalization from barks, to high pitched howls, screams, cries, huffing, coughing to something called gekkering. Their sounds are usually mistaken for other animals from owls to humans in distress.

Photo courtesy of Mike Sturk

### CROSS' CRITTERS

#### Red Fox

**Habitat:** Open areas with brushy shelter, can adapt to cities.

**Description:** Slender and dog-like they can appear red to black in colour, but always have a bushy tail with a white tip.

**Size:** 90-113 cm long; shoulder height 38-41 cm

**Diet:** Small mammals & birds, fruits, invertebrates & eggs.

**Fun Facts:** They have whiskers on their wrists to help them walk stealthily while stalking prey.

Source: Patie & Fisher. 1999 Mammals of Alberta. Lone Pine Publishing

### WHY SANTA HAS REINDEER INSTEAD OF CATS



© Maria Jordan

## Education Highlights

This season is a good time to reflect and appreciate the wonderful learning experiences of the year. We engaged over 4300 students that landed on our doorstep as well as in their own schoolyards. These experiences would not be possible without our fabulous and dedicated Education Volunteers. You continue to be an inspiration. Although there were too many great experiences to mention, we will capture just a few of these shining moments.

A highlight was the weeklong Campus Calgary studies with students who were new immigrants to Canada from over ten different countries. The teacher and students were both inspired and inspiring. A chance to learn of different cultures, to experience something many have not before experienced, and to share our love of being in a natural area (and our Canadian culture) was a truly transformative learning experience for all those involved.

Working with the amazing youth from Quest School was an engaging, all hands on deck experience that was afforded to us by a grant from Evergreen. It was our fifth year working with this team and still counting! With tremendous support from Evergreen, Quest, HBC, and our own volunteers and staff, three multi-chamber bat boxes were successfully completed by collaboration within multiple teams. The learning will continue through the monitoring of these boxes and the fantastic creatures that inhabit them both here and at Quest School.

Our partnership with schools like Somerset continues to inspire and creates multi-year opportunities with students for one of a kind learning. Our year was filled with exploring the natural environment with youth and adults alike. We know the importance of these experiences and their ability to enrich one's learning. We look forward to a new year of eager, enthusiastic faces.



Students from Falconridge School (top) and Forest Lawn High School (bottom)

**Maureen Luchsinger**

*ASCCA Education Coordinator*

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### Get Social with ASCCA!

Join our online communities by following @ASCConservation on Twitter and Facebook.



## A Special Thanks to our Sponsors and Donors

We would like to thank Pembina Pipelines, The Government of Alberta Watershed Resiliency and Restoration Program, Alberta Culture and Tourism, The Calgary Foundation, MD of Foothills No. 31, Evergreen Centre for Green Cities, Community Natural Foods, The Carbon Farmer, TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, The Tao Foundation, Blake Cassels & Grayden LLP, Spruce Ridge Capital Inc., Alberta Conservation Association, Alberta Eco Trust, Conoco Philips, White Moose Ranch, the Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference, and the Saskatchewan Stock Growers for their support. The ASCCA would like to acknowledge the support of all of our individual donors as well.

*The Ann & Sandy Cross Conservation Area (ASCCA) is a 4800 acre day use natural area southwest of Calgary. It began as a land donation from A. R 'Sandy' Cross and his wife Ann. The ASCCA was founded with the hope that it would be remain a protected 'piece of paradise' and unique outdoor classroom.*

## 2016 ASCCA Wish List



\* Tax receipts available for most donated items and gifts in-kind

- Multi-year financial support for the education programs.
- Financial support to assist with bussing children from high needs areas to the ASCCA.
- A sponsor for our Community Conservation Learning Opportunities
- New (or lightly used) audiovisual equipment such as a smart TV and computers.
- Financial assistance to replace our work shop.
- Help us update our security system with the use of webcams to prevent poaching and the threat of fires on the ASCCA.
- Historical farm equipment we can place along the trails to engage our visitors and students with the agricultural history of the ASCCA.
- An all terrain wheel-chair so we can provide additional support to youth who otherwise could not access the trails at the ASCCA.
- An ATV trailer that can be used for rescue if necessary.
- Four-Wheel-Drive Truck for maintenance

