



CUB REPORTER



By Abigail Hadden

Abigail Hadden is a grade 8 student who lives in Calgary. She enjoys walks with her dog, Poppy. Some of her favourite activities are reading and exploring forests. She hopes that as time goes by and she has her own family, there will still be forests to enjoy and hidden waterfalls to find.

Snow Angels

Snow angels. We know them as the patterns we make when we fall into the snow. But snow angels in the wilderness are quite different. They are little signs from animals that let us know they were there. Birds like magpies, when they land in the fresh snow, brush their wings, and take off leaving beautiful snow angels. On walks through wetlands in my community, or in Bowmont Park, and when I go hiking with my family, I often see tracks that remind me of how important safe places for wildlife are. Whether it is mice, bobcats, deer, bears, or rabbits. It's good to know that these animals are around.

Geese and ducks probably make snow angels too, but I haven't seen them. What I have seen is how important healthy rivers are. They provide drinking water for us and provide homes for all kinds of wildlife including fish, bugs and waterfowl. In the winter, the rivers might be the only open water and a walk along the river can reveal hundreds of geese and ducks. While these water-loving birds are relaxing by the river, you can hear them chatting with each other. As the day goes on, the birds will get hungry and they start to get really loud as they discuss what, how and when they are going to get their food. Eventually, they decide it is time to go and, right before your eyes, a huge flock of geese or ducks lift off over your head into the sky. Later, when the sun is setting, all the birds come back to the river in large groups they make themselves comfy in their temporary homes for the

night. Even though it will be dark, the conversations of the ducks and geese can be heard throughout the night.

Natural areas and wildlife need angels, like us, to care. Decision makers help

area. In that case, decision makers that represent citizens are the ones we rely on to make informed choices that consider the environment and not only the economy.

I also spent some time with Councillor Spencer, from Calgary's Ward 12, to learn about the process for developing places like Ricardo Ranch. We talked about how important archaeology and environmental impacts are when planning new developments, as well as the economy. I know now that it takes many years for decisions about new communities to be finalized. I wanted to let him



Snow angels - rabbit tracks in the evening light let us know that they have visited.

protect natural environments and habitats. Advocates, like Nathan Schmidt, who speak up for conservation are angels in their own way. I was fortunate to go on a hike with Nathan to Ricardo Ranch where he was helping people learn about the plan to develop that important wetland



While I was exploring Ricardo Ranch with Nathan, I noticed the ducks enjoying the rapids along the Bow River.

know that it is important to me that the environment and climate change are being considered along with our economy and historical resources. I think it is an important responsibility for everyone to let our elected representatives know the issues we care about.

There are amazing people like Nathan making a difference everywhere. Whether we are young or old, we can also make a difference by taking care and learning about wildlife and ways to protect their habitat. Even the magpies join in with their beautiful snow angels. 