

**Bella Vista Bluebird Society**  
**Volunteers Meeting**  
**October 16, 2021**

The volunteers meeting was held from 1:30 to 2:30 PM at Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall, 1880 Forest Hills Blvd. Bella Vista. Due to the COVID pandemic, this was the first volunteer meeting since March 7, 2020.

I. Thirty-one (31) members were in attendance: Jerry Butler, Laura Claggett, Mary Ann Craig, Bill Davis, Kim Eveland, Tim Garton, Randy Hamm, Edward Hinde, Larry Hoogerhyde, Jim & Denise Klinger, Cynthia Marshall, Bonnie Martineck, George Pickell, Susan Pilkerton, Mark Richardson, Buzz Schoenhard, Pat Schrad, Deb Shoemaker, Steve Skaggs, Jim Sours, Lorna Sterrett, Jacqui Stockman, Butch Tetzlaff, Grace Turley, Dirk & Deb Webber, Leon Wehmeyer, B. J. Westhoff and Guest, and Marlene Zimmerman.

II. President Laura Claggett opened the meeting with a welcome to those in attendance and encouraged them to take any handouts and magazines about bluebirds on the front table.

She introduced the new volunteers. **Monitors:** Autumn Anderson (Edinburgh Road), Nancy Gilmore (Highlands), Tracy Girardi (Highlands), Tami Moore (Substitute), Michele & Quin Warsaw (Glasgow West), and Gayle Walker (Highlands). **Box Builders:** Ray Atkinson and Larry Hoogerhyde. **Trail Bosses:** Tim Garton (Dogwood) and Clay Merritt (Edinburgh Road). Steve Skaggs is a new Board Member plus Box Builder and Trail Box Coordinator. George Pickell is the new Monitor Coordinator.

III. Service Awards: Laura presented the following with a gift of appreciation: **2 Years:** Martin & Tamara Dimmitt (Loch Lomond Marina), Kim Eveland (Kingswood), Ed Hinde (Scotsdale), Julie Lanshe (Scotsdale), Clay & Carolyn Merritt (Highlands), Deb Shoemaker (Lake Avalon), and B.J. Westhoff (The Plaza). **5 Years:** Kathy Allen (Tanyard Creek), Jerry Butler (BVCC, Dogwood, Highlands), Bill Davis (Dogwood), Al Melton (Short Trails), Nancy Ortman (Dogwood), Shari Reed (Lake Bella Vista), Gracie Turley (Kingswood), and Kathy Zumbro (Dogwood to BVCC).

IV. BVBS 2021 Statistics: All statistics are located on the website at [BVBS Statistics](#). Monitor trails reported 1,433 bluebirds fledged in 2021 vs 1,845 in 2020 (-412). Monitor homes reported 45 vs 93 (-48). Bella Vista residents reported 676 in 2021 vs 716 in 2020 (-40). The total fledged reported was 2,154 vs 2,654 (-500). The Scotsdale trail reported an increase in bluebirds fledged, while the rest of the trails showed a decrease. In addition to the 1,433 bluebirds, 574 swallows, 167 chickadees, 15 wrens and 63 other birds were reported.

We now monitor & maintain 582 nest boxes in Bella Vista. From 1980 - 2021 we helped fledge 51,497 Eastern Bluebirds on our trails.

V. New Bluebird Research Project:

Butch Tetzlaff from The Bluebird Shed gave an update on the UA Research Project that was started in November, 2019. Jennifer Mortenson is the contact person for UA. They are monitoring 103 bluebird nest boxes and check each box twice a week. They banded 400 chicks in 2020 and 250 in 2021. Birds banded prior to June 17, got a green band and June 17 and after got a red band. Someone reported one of the banded birds located in Houston, but no one reported other area sightings in Bella Vista. A local resident brought Butch a video of a first batch fledgling feeding the second batch.

All reports show that the bluebird population has decreased this past year. Even though we have predators, Butch feels that the decrease is mainly due to the very cold winter weather we experienced this year. He stated that the bluebirds are partial migrants and will move south if the weather is detrimental. It may take 2 to 5 years for the population to recover. He suggested that members leave the old nest or put leaves or pine straw in the boxes for the winter months. Their study does show that the bluebirds are

using the nesting boxes during the winter months and sometimes bluebird families hang out together. The study is also showing that the bluebirds like hanging out in lower tree branches so they can fly down to the ground and catch insects. Sparrows like asphalt and houses, so don't put nesting boxes in those locations.

He thanked the BVBBS for participating in the study, which will continue in 2022.

#### VI. AmazonSmile:

Laura stated that the BVBBS is now eligible to receive donations from Amazon. For those interested in having a portion of their Amazon purchases go to BVBBS, go to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) to select the Bella Vista Bluebird Society as a benefactor.

#### VII. Grant:

Randy Hamm headed a committee that included Leon Wehmeyer, Butch Tetzlaff and Jennifer Mortenson to set the guidelines for a \$1,000 grant to be awarded to "non-professionals, undergraduate, and graduate students (M.S. or Ph.D.) conducting research on Eastern Bluebirds."

This is our first time in our 41 years that we have been able to offer a grant, and we hope to do it for many years in the future. Depending on the response from students, future grants and requirements will be made on an annual basis. Click on the link for [Request for Proposals](#). Applications are due 11-30-21 and the committee will make the selection.

#### VIII. Mission

Laura stated that our mission is dedicated to increasing and protecting the bluebird population in Bella Vista. Every monitor, trail boss and box builder working together helps us fulfill that mission.

Respectfully submitted – Buzz Schoenhard.