

**Bella Vista Bluebird Society
Volunteers Meeting
October 12, 2019**

The volunteers meeting was held from noon until 2:45 pm at the Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall in Bella Vista. Members participated in a pot luck luncheon with BVBBS providing plates, napkins and silverware.

I. Forty four (44) members and their guests were in attendance: Charles & Marilyn Beveridge, Laura Claggett, John & Mary Ann Craig, Bill Davis, Carmen Greenup & Ken Stevens, Randy & Norma Hamm, Gayle & Bob Hilgart, Denise & Jim Klinger, Jodi Lombardo, Ling Ma, Cynthia Marshall, Bonnie Martineck, Ray & Ruth Matkowski, Patrice Murphy, Susan & Andy Pilkerton, Rick & Sue Predl, Harrison Ramey & John Watson, Shari Reed, Mark & Ruth Richardson, Buzz Schoenhard, Troy Shaffer, Ed & Claudia Shelton, Steve & Susan Skaggs, Lorna Sterrett, Jacqui Stockman, Leon Wehmeyer, Susan & Brian Woodruff and Kathy Zumbro. Guest speakers were Butch Tetzlaff and Jennifer Mortensen.

II. President Laura Claggett opened the meeting with a welcome to those in attendance. She thanked everyone for bringing the delicious dishes to share.

III. Service Awards were presented:

2 years: Tim Garton, Gayle & Bob Hilgart, Earl Lehman, Cynthia Marshall, George Pickell, Steve Skaggs; 5 years: Carmen Greenup, Ling Ma, Bonnie Martineck, Ray Matkowski, Buzz Schoenhard; 10 years: Jodi Lombardo; 15 years: Charles & Marilyn Beveridge.

IV. New Bluebird Trails:

New trails have been established with 4 boxes at the Artist Retreat Center (Hall/Melton monitor/trail boss), 10 boxes at Blowing Springs (Stockman/Melton monitor/trail boss) and 16 boxes at Edinburgh Car Trail (Skaggs/Ramey monitor/trail boss).

V. New Volunteers:

New Monitors: John Craig (Berksdale), Cheryl Hall (ARC, Scotsdale) and Denise Klinger (Plaza, Kingswood).

Public Relations Board and Monitor: Jacqui Stockman (Blowing Springs).

Research: Butch Tetzlaff from The Bluebird Shed.

VI. New Happenings:

Several new happenings include The Bluebirder newsletter launched, hats and shirts with the BVBBS logo are now available at The Bluebird Shed, BVBBS Facebook page launched, participated in a Bentonville First Friday, held a children's Library event, hosted an event at Java Dudes Coffee, placed metal logos on all new bluebird boxes, trail bosses established 50 new neighborhood bluebird boxes and 81% of our boxes are mapped. Go to [Trail Maps](#) for the link to the mapped box locations.

VII. Update on Bike Trails Project:

The Bella Vista Bike Trails system had planned to install 100 boxes on their trail system. To accomplish this, they paid for the cost of supplies and requested a metal logo. 100 boxes were made by Tim Garton, Harrison Ramey, Mark Richardson and Jim Sours and new metal logos were installed on the front of the boxes. A training video was made by Ray Matkowski and Mike Abb. 75 boxes were given away at Fire Flies event held at Blowing Springs. As a result, BVBBS now has metal logos that are placed on new boxes and we have a training video on box installation.

VIII. Bluebird Beasts: Laura recognized six volunteers that went above and beyond their volunteer duties and named them Bluebird Beasts:

Jerry Butler (monitor & trail boss) came up with the idea of 3-D printing blue plastic numbers/letters for the boxes (along with Jerry Argetsinger they printed all the numbers), he organized and led a cub scout program using our kits, along with Steve Skaggs renumbered BVCC trails and made a customized box map for his monitors.

Harrison Ramey (box builder, monitor & trail boss) assisted with the bike trails project by purchasing the lumber and supplies, delivering to the other box builders, built boxes, drilled 3” holes for the metal logos on the 100 boxes and then transported the 75 boxes to Blowing Springs for the giveaway. He also created the Edinburgh Trail with 16 boxes and participated in Blowing Springs and Java Dudes events.

Troy Shaffer (trail boss) created 4 modified boxes to stop the house sparrows at the Plaza trail. He tested the boxes and documented their usage and will continue to do so in 2020.

Steve Skaggs (trail boss) created wire predator guards for slot boxes, wrote an article about the guards for the spring newsletter, tested different predator solutions at BVCC, installed guards at different BVCC trails, assisted with renumbering of boxes at BVCC and numbered other boxes for trail bosses.

Jacqui Stockman (Public Relations board member and monitor) launched Facebook page, created The Bluebirder quarterly newsletter, sourced vendors for the logo hats and t-shirts and organized and participated in the Blowing Springs box giveaway, Bentonville First Friday and Java Dudes meet and greet.

Butch Tetzlaff (research) has input all the BVBBS monitoring information in his database, captured GPS locations for BVBBS nest boxes, created Google Map with BVBBS box locations, planned research project with the UA in Fayetteville, and sells bluebird nest boxes and merchandise at The Bluebird Shed.

IX. Former Volunteers:

Berkdale: Carolyn Dickon, Judy Lathem, Glenna Pickens and Rosalee Rainbolt; BVCC: Craig and Carlyn Ferguson; Highlands: Katy Van Note; Lock Lomand Park: Jerry Argetsinger; and St. Bernard Catholic Church: Charlie Murray.

X. BVBBS Statistics:

Laura covered the number of bluebirds fledged at the trails. This information can be obtained on our the website at [BVBBS Statistics](#). In 2019, 2,484 bluebirds fledged from monitor boxes, monitor home boxes and by Bella Vista neighbors. This is an increase of 197 birds from 2018. We now monitor and maintain 581 nest boxes in Bella Vista. From 1980 through 2019, 48,165 bluebirds have fledged on our trails.

XI. Presentation on Migratory Habits of the Eastern Bluebird:

Butch Tetzlaff and Jennifer Mortensen from the Biology Department at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville are working together to study the migratory habits of the Eastern Bluebirds using the BVBBS’s monitoring data from our nesting boxes.

They are focusing on the Eastern Bluebird as they are partial migrants, suggesting they have greater individual and population level flexibility in their migration strategy than other species, they have an unusual dispersal pattern as some leave and others stay put over the winter, they nest in boxes and they are charismatic.

Specific objectives to this project are to assess migratory strategy, study winter roosting behavior of the adults, evaluate the fitness consequences of migratory and roosting strategies and to determine what factors influence box occupancy and productivity.

To accomplish this task, Jennifer and Butch will monitor approximately 150 of our nesting boxes in both the nesting season and in the winter. They plan to catch bluebirds in nets and band their legs to track their patterns. They will also use stable isotopes to learn where birds spend their winter and do some thermal monitoring of the boxes. Factors that may influence box occupancy and productivity include age of the boxes, type, baffle type, direction opening is facing, thermal properties, box legacy and landscape variables such as proximity to roads and water, openness, vegetation height around box and land-use type. We look forward to working with Butch and Jennifer on this project.

XII. In closing, Laura reiterated our mission: Dedicated to increasing and protecting the Eastern Bluebird population of Bella Vista, AR. She said she would like to see more nest invasions (NI) marked on people’s monitor report, because a nest invasion is something we might be able to fix. If you don’t have eggs in the nest for 12 to 14 days, and chicks in the nest for 17 to 21 days, then the nest has probably been invaded. She thanked everyone and closed the meeting.