



"Bringing back Bluebirds for Future Generations"

Bluebird News



Volume 26 Issue 1

Winter 2016

"BBRP and the Expo: A Look Back" by Mary Bailey

Sometimes very good things happen by accident, and BBRP and the Expo seem to fall into that category. In 1978 a gentleman named Dick Peterson came to the Conservation Committee of the Minneapolis Chapter of the National Audubon Society for help. Dick had been featured in a Minneapolis Tribune article showcasing his amazing work in trying to bring back bluebirds to Minnesota and beyond with his carefully researched nestbox. He was swamped with requests for plans and could not keep up with them. Doreen Scriven and Mary Ellen Vetter were members of that committee, and they visited Dick's box locations and were very impressed with his work and success. They formed a committee of about eleven people, and BBRP was launched. Carrol Henderson from the DNR Nongame Wildlife Program was also enthusiastic about BBRP, and the young group benefited greatly from his help with funding for travel to interview successful bluebirders and for publishing their first book.

Jan and Dave Ahlgren joined the effort by helping make "free" Peterson boxes available to those who promised to send in reports. Few did. Besides designing the "Dick Peterson" style of nestbox, we are most grateful to Dick for his contribution in insisting that we "look in the box," thus, launching the concept of monitoring that is so vital to our efforts today.

In the early 1980's, BBRP became financially independent of the Audubon Chapter and the DNR Nongame Wildlife Program when they started charging a membership fee -- \$3 to start! Over 1,200 members hailed from all over the nation, and BBRP encouraged other states to launch their own state programs and shared samples of BBRP's best practices. Our membership dropped as a result, but the benefit has spread nationwide with the prolif-

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eration of state bluebird organizations.

A natural outcome of this vibrant and enthusiastic momentum would be the inception of an annual gathering of bluebirders; thus, the first "conference" was held. About thirty people gathered for a half day and included state park naturalists, and they met at the Minneapolis Plymouth Congregational Church where the Audubon Chapter regularly met. Soon they held full-day conferences around the state to reach as many as possible, and attendance grew to over 300 people.

The name changed to Expo, but much of the flavor is the same today. Speakers cover a variety of topics in the natural realm and also deal in the specifics of bluebirding such as best practices and dealing with predators and Mother Nature. Sales and fundraisers such as the silent auction items and raffles and informational tables provide a break during the intermissions and lunch time. A very important side benefit of the Expo is getting to visit with fellow bluebirders that you have never met or haven't seen since the last Expo.

It is vital that we look back like this and see the foundations of today's success. Those mentioned above stepped out and did what was best for that little blue bird that we all cherish, and we all now benefit in ways they probably never envisioned. For their efforts we extend our sincere thanks to all who have given

BBRP such a fine start and heartfelt support through the years.

(Author's note: I have been privileged to have met nearly all of those mentioned in this article. In their quiet ways they were an inspiration to me, giving me fond memories and an example to emulate. I will be forever grateful.)

"Would you like to enjoy a great day with us?" by JENean Mortenson Expo Co/Chair

Would you like to come and enjoy a great day with us, then come to our Expo on April 16th at Byron Middle School. You will learn so much from all our speakers and go home with a wealth of knowledge. We have Keith Radel on "Increasing Fledging Rates and Keeping Bluebirds Safe"; Brittany Nancy Larsen who is with the Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis on Red-headed Woodpeckers; a representative from the International Owl Institute will have a program on owls and bring along a variety of owls. These birds have been injured and rehabilitated; those that can't be released are used in their programs. Al Batt will be entertaining us with his humor and wonderful stories. Jake Langeslag will speak on his unique way to rid property of invasive species like buckthorn and yellow mustard and other nasty weeds. His herd of 50+ goats has been at River Bend Nature Center in Faribault doing a good job on this. Jake also leases them out to people who want to rid their property of these problems. Ray Simon will give an interesting program on bats and bat houses.

The luncheon will be a Pulled Pork Buffet consisting of Pork Carnitas on buns, Baked Beans, Coleslaw or Garden Salad and Baked Bar and Coffee for \$10.50. Pre-registration fee for the Expo is \$10.00 before April 1st. After that and at the door the cost will be \$12.00.

We will be offering the silent auction and raffle; everyone looks forward to this each year. We get wonderful items donated by you people and we appreciate all your efforts in this. So far we have a beautiful bird bath with bluebirds that Linda Buhr lined up that was donated by Farmer Seed and my husband Carl has made a Stained Glass Panel called Blue Bird and Iris, Sheila Smisek is making a quilt with a bluebird theme. It is always fun to see what is brought in each year from jams and jellies to maple syrup to art work. We have a good variety and a lot of talented people. The money generated goes toward all the education that is put on throughout the year, and your generous donations are very much appreciated. On the registration form there is a place for you to check off and describe what you are donating. This way I can have the bidding tickets made out with your name when you bring your items to the Expo.

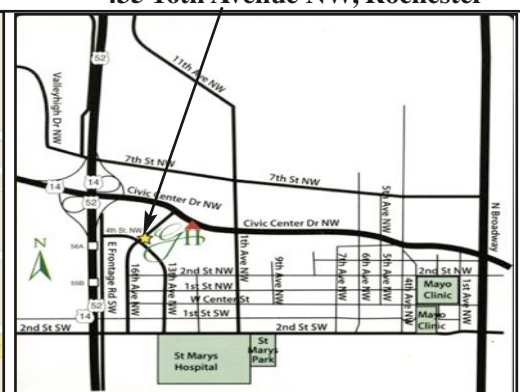
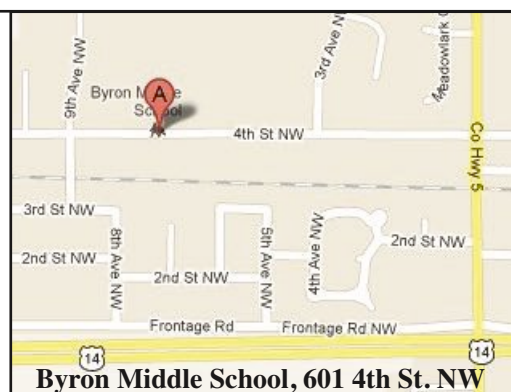
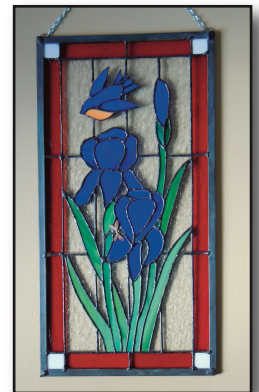
My husband and I had our gardens on tour for a fund raiser and I have loads of milkweeds in our gardens. Everyone commented about this and asked for seeds in the fall. I have collected them and will be handing them out at the Expo for anyone interested. The more milkweed seed that is planted the better chance the beautiful monarchs have to survive.

Each year you all bring in such a lovely variety of cookies, this is appreciated so much. Our Cookie Ladies will be all ready to put them out for our coffee breaks.

There will be twelve rooms reserved at the Guest House Inn located at 435 16th Avenue N.W. in Rochester, 507-288-9000 or toll free 877-374-9090, with two queen beds, refrigerator and microwave for \$76.90 plus tax until March 15th. When you call in mention you are with the Blue Bird Recovery Program to get the special rates.

Each year new friendships are made and friends reunited. It is truly a fun day. We are all dedicated to help our "Little Gems of Blue" and the environment. Join us on April 16th. Be entertained, see friends and leave feeling so good, ready to welcome our bluebirds.

See you on the 16th.



GuestHouse Inn Rochester
435 16th Avenue NW, Rochester

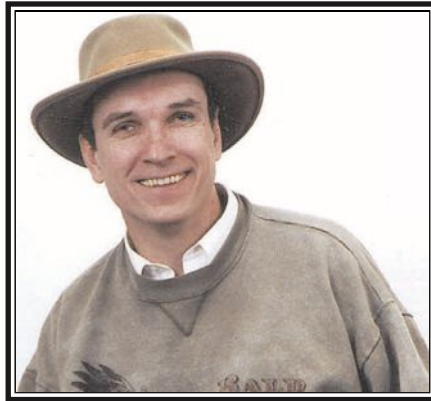


2016 ANNUAL BLUEBIRD EXPO



International Owl Institute

*Program on owls, bringing a variety
of owls along*



Al Batt

Southern MN Comedian

*Al does thoughtful, clean and humorous
talks that will allow those in the audience to
laugh and learn*



Audubon Society

Brittany Nancy Larsen

Red-headed Woodpeckers

SATURDAY, APRIL 16

BYRON MIDDLE SCHOOL



Registration: 8:00 am - 9:00 am

Program: 9:00 am - 4:30 pm



OTHER SPEAKERS:

Jake Langeslag - "Rid property of invasive species"

Keith Radel - "Increasing Fledging Rates and Keeping Bluebirds Safe"

Ray Simon - "Program on bats and bat houses"

SALES – DEMONSTRATIONS – VIDEOS

EXHIBITS – SILENT AUCTION

WANT TO ATTRACT BLUEBIRDS?

THIS IS THE PLACE TO LEARN HOW!



Photos by Doris Glander

Volunteers needed to assist with the annual Expo on April 16, 2016



The Expo committee is looking for **helping hands** for set-up and preparing the Byron Middle School, Bryon, MN, for the Expo. On Friday, April 15, 2016 help is needed for lifting and moving tables, equipment and displays at the school. Approximate starting time is 3:30 p.m. (definite time to be announced) until finished (approximately 3 hrs.)

Assistance is also needed following the Expo on April 16, to take down each area and return the site to its original layout. More helping hands make for an easier job for all.

The day of the Expo, would you like to get involved?

Extra Help is needed in these areas:

- * *Set out treats for coffee break (supplied by Expo attendees)*
- * *Work in the BBRP Merchandise area*

We would like to hear from you. Please contact:

Fern Vesledahl at fvesledahl@outlook.com or 507-649-1322

Marilyn Suter at zsuit1@frontier.com or 651-460-4236



Byron Middle School 601 4th St. NW Byron, MN 55920

Editor's Corner, by Virginia Windschitl

Since I am taking over as editor of the newsletter, I thought I should introduce myself. I live southwest of Farmington MN in the house I was born in during the March snowstorm. My father lived in this house from 1910, when he was going on five years of age, until 1994. That is when I moved back to the house I grew up in, along with my husband Wayne. The farm land has been sold, but we have 4.7 acres with all the farmstead buildings.

There are quite a few trees on our property so my attempts at raising bluebirds were thwarted by wrens and my lack of knowledge. After attending several Expos I have learned a lot. I now have 5 bluebird houses along my

neighbor's fence lines and have had moderate success in the last few years. His property is mostly pasture and hay-fields and there are a few scattered trees.

I also enjoy gardening and try to stay as organic as possible. We have lots of milkweed on our land and see lots of monarchs and other types of butterflies. I have peonies and irises that were planted by my mother and I enjoy experimenting with new varieties of flowers, shrubs, and vegetables.

I graduated from Concordia College, Moorhead MN with a major in biology and a minor in library science. I have worked for a library supply company, a newspaper, and currently am working at Three Links in Northfield.

Welcome New Members

Stan and Beth Fisher, Boyds MD
Donny and Cherryl Kjos, Rushford MN

Expo Registration

2016 Bluebird Expo Registration

I am (we are) coming. Please print name tags as:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email/Phone: _____

I would like a table for display _____ (Non-profit organizations only)

I can bring a dozen store bought or homemade cookies _____

Do you have an item to donate for the silent auction? Yes _____ No _____

If Yes, please provide description _____

Number of registrations _____ @ \$10.00 each before 4/1 \$ _____

After 4/1 @ \$12.00 each \$ _____

Number of lunch reservations _____ @ \$10.50 each \$ _____

Cash donations are welcome to purchase items for the silent auction \$ _____

Donations are tax deductible

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Questions: Call: JENean Mortenson 507-332-7003 • jeanieandcarl@hotmail.com

or Carrol Johnson 507-649-0126 • mnbluebirder@hotmail.com

Please detach and send to:

Bluebird Recovery Program, c/o JENean Mortenson, 2343 - 166th St. E., Faribault, MN 55021.

Pre-registration Deadline is April 1, 2016

BLUEBIRD RECOVERY PROGRAM MEMBERSHIP ENROLLMENT & RENEWAL

Enrollment in the Bluebird Recovery Program includes: initial Information Packet containing a full color Trail Guide, Top Ten Tips including colored Nest Guide, Record Keeping booklet, Pole Assembly instruction sheet, yearly Report Form & quarterly Newsletter. There are also annual informational meetings and a yearly Bluebird Expo. Consultation and advice are available by phone, e-mail, correspondence or in the field.

Enrollment contributions are **tax deductible**.

_____ New Member Renewal _____

Membership periods are:

_____ 2 years \$23.00

_____ 5 years \$55.00

Lifetime \$150.00 _____

_____ * Gift Membership * - indicate amount & period of gift _____



*Bringing back Bluebirds
for Future Generations!*

Member Name _____ E-mail _____

Address _____ County _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

* If giving a Gift Membership, please provide your name so that the recipient can be informed of your generosity. _____

Send to:

Bluebird Recovery Program, c/o Sheila Smisek
705 W. Welco Dr. • Montgomery, MN 56069

Centennial Year for Migratory Bird Treaty

This is the Centennial Year for the Migratory Bird Treaty 1916-2016

100 Years of Migratory Bird Conservation Conserving Today's Birds for Tomorrow.



Why celebrate the Migratory Bird Treaty? The year 2016 marks the centennial of the Convention between the United States and Great Britain (for Canada) for the Protection of Migratory Birds (also called the Migratory Bird Treaty), signed on Aug. 16, 1916. The Migratory Bird Treaty, and three others that followed, form the cornerstones of efforts to conserve birds that migrate across international borders.

Migratory birds:

- connect people with nature and add beauty, sound and color to our world. They provide countless opportunities for enjoyment by birders, hunters, and outdoor enthusiasts and have cultural and spiritual importance.
- contribute environmental benefits, including pollination, insect and rodent control, and seed dispersal.
- are good indicators of environmental health because they are so visible and relatively easy to study. Studying birds can give us a picture of what is going on in the world.
- play a key role in the U.S. economy, supporting recreational opportunities that create jobs and generate billions of dollars in revenue.

Information from the US Fish & Wildlife Service, <http://www.fws.gov/birds/MBTreaty100/timeline.php>

AMAZING LITTLE BIRD, by Marilyn Suter

One day while observing the birds at the feeders out of my living room window, I noticed a chickadee was sitting on a branch all by itself. It was all fluffed up like it was not feeling good. The group of chickadees it comes with was busy taking seeds and flying into the tree and back and forth and this little bird just sat there. I checked on it on and off for a while and happened to be looking at it when it finally flew to a feeder. I noticed it was using its wings almost like it needed to do that for balance. I discovered this chickadee only has one leg and foot. I debated should I try and catch it and, if so, how would I do that and then what am I going to do with it. So I decided to make life as easy as possible



for this little one. I feed dry meal worms in a feeder and it will sit on that feeder for a period of time eating instead of taking one and flying into the tree. I feed "no mess" seed in another feeder with a bottom tray. There again it sits and eats. I also feed "pick out peanuts" in a feeder with a bottom tray. It eats there as well. I saw that when it goes to take a drink of water if the water level is down in the birdbath it just flies off versus if the water level is up it is able to drink.

This amazing little bird has no problem flying. I do not know if the chickadee was born this way or was in some sort of accident with a hawk or who knows what, but it sure tickles my heart to see it doing so well.



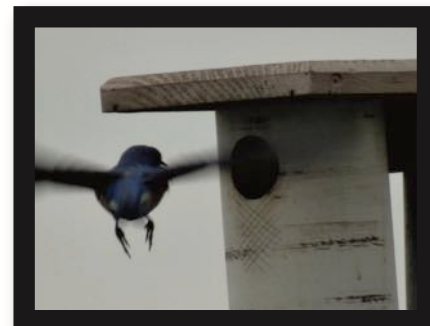
Need help or have suggestions? Call your County Coordinator!

If you are an active bluebirder, and would like to donate some of your time to help others help the bluebirds, the BBRP is looking for more county coordinators. If interested, contact Carrol Johnson, State Coordinator, at 507-664-9433 or mnbluebirder@hotmail.com for more information.

AITKIN Steve Gilbertson Aitkin 218-927-1953 (N. AITKIN) Joan & Tom Nelson Hill City 612-414-0152	CROW WING Mary Kalinoski Baxter 218-829-7552 DAKOTA Marlys Shirley Farmington 952-469-3510 FILLMORE Mary Bailey Chatfield 507-867-9118 Carrol Johnson Northfield 507-664-9433 GOODHUE Steve Malecha Cannon Falls 507-581-4383 HENNEPIN John Hauser Bloomington 952-831-8132 Bob Hursh Edina 952-334-5084 Pete Meyer Mound 952-472-7449 HOUSTON Mike Jeresek Rushford 507-864-2573	HUBBARD Ron Jensen Park Rapids 218-732-4205 ISANTI Russ Krause Maple Grove 763-420-4428 ITASCA Noreene Vidal Wirt 218-659-2741 Rick Blake Grand Rapids 218-327-3303 (S. ITASCA) Joan & Tom Nelson Hill City 612-414-0152 KANABEC Steve Gilbertson Aitkin 218-927-1953 KANDIYOH Ronald A. Erpelding Willmar 320-235-0788 LAKE Beth Urban Ely 218-365-5047 LE SUEUR Bruce Smisek Montgomery 507-364-8966 Ben Bartusek New Prague 952-758-3398	LYON (S. Lyon) Paul Rasmussen Russell 507-823-4731 Rita & Dennis Engels Ghent 507-428-3554 MILLE LACS Darlene Bemis Milaca 320-938-3838 MORRISON Dave & Carol Fiedler Buffalo 763-682-4221 OLMSTED Mary Bailey Chatfield 507-867-9118 PENNINGTON Dave & Diane Peterson Thief River Falls 218-681-7614 Arlene Thune Thief River Falls 218-681-1740 POPE Bruce & Barb Mulvaney Glenwood 320-278-3763 RICE Carrol Johnson Northfield 507-664-9433	Fern & Ken Vesledahl Nerstrand 507-645-8610 SCOTT Marilyn Suter Farmington 651-4604236 Jan Wallin Zimmerman 763-856-2950 ST. LOUIS (N. ST. LOUIS) Beth Urban Ely 218-365-5047 Dick Forsline Bloomington 952-835-6769 STEARNS Bernard Meyer St. Cloud 320-252-4791 SWIFT Bill Hoberg Benson 320-843-3988 WABASHA Carol & Dale Nibbe Lake City 651-345-2410	WADENA Paul Sailer Wadena 218-631-4401 Ester Vasey Sebek 218-837-5259 WASECA Wally Swanson Waterville 507-362-8760 WASHINGTON Paul Diegnau Maplewood 651-766-4174 WINONA Mike Jeresek Rushford 507-864-2573 Bill Nepper Winona 507-454-3263 Brianna Frisch Lewiston 507-459-4829 WRIGHT Dorene Scriven Minneapolis 612-922-4586
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Photos by Doris Glander



**Bluebird Recovery Program
Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis**



**P.O. Box 984
Faribault, MN 55021**

"Raising our standards for future generations!"

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"Membership qualifies as a tax-deductible donation.
. Members contribute an annual tax-deductible donation of \$12.

Save This Date
Sat. April 16th, 2016
State Wide Bluebird Expo
Byron Middle School

Upcoming Events

April 16, 2016 – Saturday 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Bluebird Recovery Program EXPO

Byron Middle School, 601 4th St. NW, Byron, MN

Sept. 2, 3 & 4 - Fri., Sat., Sun.

BBRP Educational Booth

42nd Annual Rice County Steam & Gas Engines Show

Dundas Showgrounds, Hwy 3 (3 miles south of Northfield) Dundas, MN

September 15, 2016 - Trail Reports Due

Mark your calendar!

September 17, 2016 – Saturday – 12:00 noon

11th Annual Southeastern MN Bluebirders' Picnic

Chatfield United Methodist Church, 124 Winona St. SE, Chatfield, MN

September 24, 2016 – Saturday - 5:30 p.m.

14th Annual South Central Bluebirders' Potluck Picnic

River Bend Nature Center, 1000 Rustad Rd., Faribault, MN

Our Mission:

"To encourage, inspire, educate and assist individuals and organizations to become actively involved in the restoration and preservation efforts to sustain a healthy and expanding population of bluebirds and other native cavity nesters."

Visit our Web-site at
www.bbrp.org



Photo by Doris Glander

Thank you to everyone who wrote articles, provided photographs or helped with the mailing of this publication of the Bluebird News.