

Thank You, Richard Repp!

For more than twenty years, Richard has been “the Bluebird Guy” in Yakima County. Even his email address – Bbirder247 - indicates his enthusiasm for the birds and the trail. He took over management of the Vredenburgh Bluebird box trail from some of its pioneers. Richard has been a devoted caretaker of the trail which has fledged over 17,000 chicks.

Richard has always had the best interests of the Bluebirds at heart. In addition to monitoring the trail, keeping track of the data, taking care of box sponsors and recruiting and training volunteer monitors, he is always on the lookout for ways to improve the trail. He has added boxes and moved boxes around, made sure the boxes are in good working order by repairing and replacing parts when needed, and been vigilant in working to keep invading species (like House sparrows) at bay. He has worked on the trail during rain, snow and the heat of summer, seen fire and flood, battled snakes, chipmunks and weasels and has kept on going.

Richard has introduced monitoring the Bluebird trail to the campers at the annual Wenas Campout, held over Memorial Day weekend, making the trail and monitoring accessible for campers from all over the state. And of course, he has introduced many of us locals to monitoring as well. He taught us to monitor, explaining the hows and whys, patiently answering questions and helping us understand the birds and their nesting habits.

In addition to the Vredenburgh trail, Richard cares for boxes along North Wenas road and in Hardy Canyon, and he helped his granddaughter establish a trail on Cleman Mountain, which Joe and I now monitor and maintain.

Richard has recently stepped down as Bluebird Chair, but he is not going to stop being “the Bluebird Guy.” He will still be here helping with the trail and contributing to the success of bluebird families. We are thankful for his years of service, for his patience in teaching us the ropes, for his humor and for sharing his extensive knowledge about the trail and bluebirds.

It would not be possible to include everything Richard has done for bluebirds and bluebird enthusiasts in one short article. Twenty years of taking care of the trail is most impressive, and we just want to say thank you.

Karen Zook