

The Maryland Bluebird Society's

BLUEBIRD CHATTER

FALL 2019



President's Perch

By: Kathy Kremnitzer

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the Board of Directors of the Maryland Bluebird Society for giving me another opportunity to lead this amazing group of bluebird conservationists as your President. My heartfelt admiration and appreciation go to Stan Fisher for his leadership over the last 4 years, and to Beth Fisher for her thorough and accurate accounting of our meeting minutes. Never fear because both are staying close by. Stan will now serve MBS as Immediate Past President and Beth has been nominated to rejoin our board of directors.

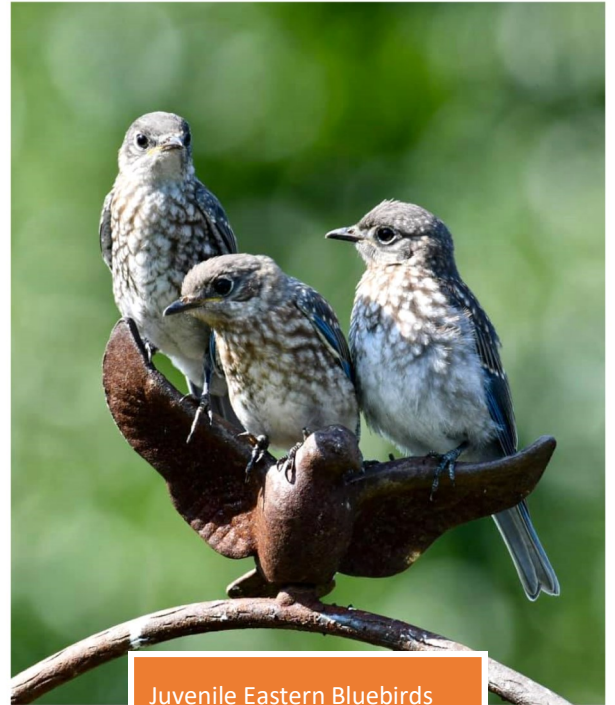
Vice President Jodi Hewitt and Treasurer Bonnie Bell have both agreed to serve another term in their respective positions and they are joined by Jenny Hendershot, County Coordinator for Washington County, who will take over the role as Secretary. In addition, we also have some new faces ready to join our board. Heather Zindash, Karen Unruh, Dana Grayson, Lisa Fair and Lynne Detar-Assal have all been nominated to the board and, upon approval by the membership at our September annual membership meeting, will become active, voting directors. Heather has already introduced herself to our members in the spring edition of our newsletter, Bluebird Chatter. Be sure to read about our other director-elects in this issue and join me in welcoming them.

We have a few other changes to report for MBS. Dana Grayson has graciously agreed to take over as editor of our newsletter. Dana will tell you more about herself and her talents in her introduction in this issue. Additionally, Dana is also serving as co-county coordinator for Frederick County. Debbie Reece, former newsletter editor, was a bright light extended to MBS when she responded to my cries for help with the newsletter over the past year. Debbie will now be serving as the MBS County Coordinator for Charles County and will wear that hat equally well!

MBS has a lot to be excited about and the future looks bright. I hope you will consider becoming more involved with us as we strive to continue our conservation efforts for bluebirds and other native, cavity-nesting birds.

May all your blues be birds,

Kathy



Juvenile Eastern Bluebirds
Photo by: Lisa Fulton

"The bluebird carries the sky on his back."

- Henry David Thoreau



The following people have been nominated to join the Board of Directors of the Maryland Bluebird Society. Their nominations will be voted on at our annual picnic and membership meeting held on September 14th.

Lynne Detar-Assal, Lisa Fair, Beth Fisher, Dana Grayson, Karen Unruh, and Heather Zindash

Read below to learn a bit more about the Board Members-elect who we haven't yet introduced in previous editions of the newsletter!

Lynne Detar-Assal - I am originally from Western PA, born and raised in Pittsburgh and Erie. I graduated from the University of Pittsburgh and worked in the field of Medical Imaging and Trauma for many years. I have one son in college and my husband is also a nature lover. We own 14 acres of forested land in Potomac, MD and it is definitely a haven made for bluebirds.

Ever since I can remember, my family has always been around nature whether we were camping every summer, RVing with my grandparents or gardening in the backyard. I always wondered about "those birdhouses" I saw stuck everywhere and if I too should inquire. One box said "MD Bluebird Society" and so upon calling the Chapter 8 years ago, I had a man named Ed Escalante come out to my place to check it out. I said to Ed, "I don't think I have any bluebirds here." Ed looked around my forest and squinted. He replied with the wisdom like Mr. Miyagi (from The Karate Kid movie) and said, "Oh....they're here." So I put up some boxes late that spring and he was correct many times over! The rest has been a delight to watch nature at her finest.

Looking ahead, I hope to see more young people learn about Bluebirds but also about how we can all become proactive in helping them prosper. I look forward to learning more so I can share and increase awareness with outreach to people like us who wish to see the Bluebirds' continued success.

Lisa Fair - Lisa Fair grew up in a small agricultural town just outside of Gettysburg, PA. She was raised by her grandparents who were both avid birdwatchers and shared their fondness of birds with Lisa. After graduating from high school, Lisa moved to the DC Metro area to attend George Washington University. After completing her sophomore year, Lisa had the opportunity to live in Italy. She worked for the US Government in Sicily for two and a half years and traveled extensively throughout Europe. During that time Lisa continued her studies part-time through a program of the University of Maryland. When she returned to the US, she completed her degree at UMD. She worked in her field of study, statistics, at a non-profit for 10 years. Throughout her life she had volunteered with various animal shelters and rescue groups and decided to switch careers. She became a licensed veterinary technician and then pursued certification as a small animal rehabilitation specialist. Lisa worked as a therapist for almost 20 years before taking a step back to part-time so she could pursue other interest including becoming a Master Gardener and joining the Maryland Bluebird Society. Lisa is excited about the opportunity to assist the Maryland Bluebird Society's continuing mission of conservation and education and celebrating these beautiful creatures.

Dana Grayson - I was fortunate to grow up among the scenic vistas, farmland, and historically significant landmarks of Frederick County, Maryland. Raised with an appreciation for nature and a love of animals, from the time I was a child I remember being thrilled by the wildlife surrounding us, whether it was squirrels playing under the pine trees in our yard, or a herd of deer passing through the field that bordered our backyard.

My deeper interest in birds in particular began during my "dinosaur phase" as a kid. I was captivated by birds' evolutionary connection to the dinosaurs that roamed the earth millions of years ago. It wasn't until years later, as an adult and now working from home, that I was once again able to pay attention to the wildlife right in my own backyard, just as I did when I was a child. I began reading books on bird identification and learning more about the birds that called my yard home. I built and hung an Eastern Screech Owl box followed by a bluebird nest box, the latter of which was quickly inhabited the next spring. I also began learning more about native plants so that I could plant to make my property more attractive to birds and other pollinators.

With several years of bluebird landlording now under my belt, I am honored to have been nominated to join the Board of Directors of the Maryland Bluebird Society and hope to help the other directors and officers steer MBS into a bright future ahead.





Maryland Bluebird Society's 2019 Membership Meeting & Picnic

Saturday, September 14, 2019
(RAIN OR SHINE)

2:00pm to 6:00pm

Black Hills Regional Park
Shelter C

20930 Lake Ridge Drive
Boys, MD 20841

ALL ARE WELCOME!

Membership Meeting at 2:00pm.
Picnic & Silent Auction to follow.

Hamburgers, hot dogs and drinks
provided. Please bring a side dish
or dessert to share.

RSVP (appreciated but not required)
to Kathy at 301-676-9371 or
griffin459@myactv.net

Silent Auction

Donations for auction are
welcomed and appreciated.

Photograph by Jenny Hendershot

UPCOMING MBS EVENTS

September 14

MBS Membership Meeting and Picnic
2:00pm | Black Hill Regional Park

October 5

Harvest Festival
9am-3pm | Agriculture History Farm Park

October 6

MBS Board Meeting
1-4pm | Mount Airy Branch Library

October 19

Bluebird Garden Fall Spruce Up
9am-12pm | Agriculture History Farm Park

More details available at <http://mdbluebirdsociety.org/>



Birding and Wildlife Adventures Down Under – Part 2

By: Douglas Smith



Wedge-tailed eagle

Note to our readers: This article is Part 2 in a two part series. Read Part 1 in our Spring 2019 Edition. By now the readers should figure out that to get around Australia and see as many cities and sites as we did, you have to fly. Driving oneself would almost triple the trip duration not to mention the wear and tear on the mind, body and spirit.

Upon returning to Darwin from Bamurru Plains and the outback, we rested a bit and it was off to our next adventure.

Day 14 – We flew from Darwin, one of the Northern most cities in the Northern Territory* to Alice Springs in the center of Australia. After a brief layover we flew to Ayers Rock, which is a sacred and spiritual place to its owners, the Aboriginal people who call it Uluru. 2018 was the last year visitors were allowed to climb the 1141 feet to the top, about 72' taller than the Eiffel Tower.

Day 15 – We had a late afternoon tour of Uluru, with its barren, isolated, red sandy clay and temps over a 100 degrees. With this inhospitable climate (to most humans) it does give way to some unusual wild life like snakes, all sorts of lizards, and only the hardiest of birds. We saw a Crimson Chat, a Walawuru, a Wedge-tailed

Eagle riding the thermals, and the unusual Spinifex Pigeon.

Day 17 – I left early for an unforgettable, day-long dive on the Great Barrier Reef. My wife spent the day in a spa where she was pampered and served lunch.

Diving on the reef was another “bucket list” item for me. I experienced sea life found nowhere else on Earth but here. I couldn't begin to tell you, much less remember, the color, sizes, types and species of marine life I saw. I even had an encounter with a 5-foot-long Black Tip Reef Shark. As I came up over the reef, we saw each other from a distance of only a few yards. We each turned and swam in different directions, retreating gracefully. Thankfully, my dive partner was experienced and she gave me an assuring “thumbs up” which I guessed meant keep calm and keep swimming!

Day 18 – Our guided tour to Cape Tribulation and Daintree was quite memorable since we didn't realize that Australia has areas of tropical rain forests. The Daintree River cruise exposed us to a tropical habitat of birds, tree snakes, unique plants and the occasional estuarine crocodile as we wound through the rainforest down to the Coral Sea coast.

Day 19 – We were driven to Smithfield Terminal and boarded our open-air railway car on the Kuranda Scenic Railway. Winding its way from Cairns up the mountain over 1,000 feet, the train traveled across Barron Gorge National Park for a 23-mile ride to Kuranda. This railway was built entirely by hand beginning in 1886 and includes 15 tunnels, 55 bridges and 98 curves, a human marvel not seen in many countries of the world. The ride up the mountain took about two hours.



Scenic Railway ride up to the town of Kuranda
(picture by Melissa Delaware)

After a nice lunch, we wandered around the town, found nature trails offering breath-taking views of the village, unusual vegetation and forests filled with native wildlife. We also experienced sitting around an aborigine tribal circle with native people telling stories of life on the mountain. From there we took the Sky Rail, a ski lift type gondola, down the mountain, gliding above the beautiful rainforest canopy back to Smithfield Terminal and returned to Port Douglas.



Story continued on page 5

* Australia is comprised of six (6) states, New South Wales (NSW), Queensland (Qld), South Australia (SA), Tasmania (Tas), Victoria (Vic) and Western Australia (WA). There are also two territories, the Northern Territory (NT) and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). A Large-scale map will help you see the vastness of this country.

Birding and Wildlife Adventures Down Under – Part 2 (continued from page 4)

By: Douglas Smith

Day 21 - A short flight took us from Cairns to Brisbane, still in Queensland, arriving in time to unpack and tour the city on our own. Brisbane has approx. 2.5 million people and is the capital of Queensland. That evening we had dinner with a friend whom we met on a trip two years prior when we sailed down the coast of Croatia to Greece.

Day 24 - Back in the air, we flew from Brisbane to Melbourne, a city along the southeast coast as well as being the capital of the Australian state of Victoria. We took a short walk around the town and made our way to a location where we boarded a converted street car (they call them tramcars). The entire car had been turned into a very posh restaurant, the first travelling tramcar restaurant in the world. We dined as the tramcar made its way around the streets and neighborhoods of Melbourne. A thoroughly wonderful evening!

Day 26 – Today was filled with Penguins, Koalas and Wildlife with our first stop at Phillip Island, Moonlit Sanctuary Wildlife Conservation Park. This park gave us an opportunity to see, up close and personal, wildlife almost impossible to observe in the wild:



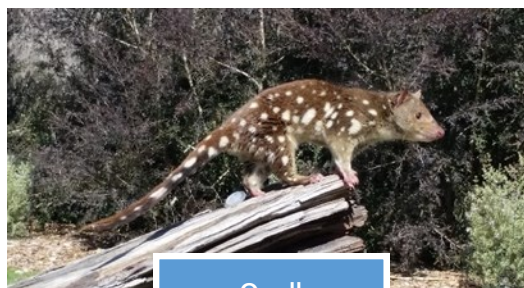
Tawny Frogmouth

A Tawny Frogmouth who is a nocturnal and carnivorous bird (not an owl) who's camouflage can make it easily mistaken for a tree branch.

Dingo – cross between a wolf and dog, Dingo's have amazing sight and smell, can turn their heads 180 degrees, and have rotating wrists allowing them to catch prey and climb trees.

Southern Hairy Nosed Wombat is a large herbivore living in a complex array of underground tunnels to escape day time heat.

Little Joey's are like their kangaroo cousins, smaller but friendlier. Quoll are cat sized, spotted, nocturnal, marsupials and carnivores; nearly extinct but are coming back through good conservation efforts.



Quoll

We wrapped up the evening on Phillip Island with an unusual beach spectacle. Every evening just at sunset, hundreds of "fairy penguins" return from the ocean where they have been feeding and come back to their underground burrows to sleep. The continual parade of waddling little penguins was quite impressive and entertaining, especially when one of the little guys strayed from the dirt path and toppled over in the nearby grassy area! Picking his/herself up it hopped back on the trail to home and waddled off to catch up with the others.



Penguin Parade

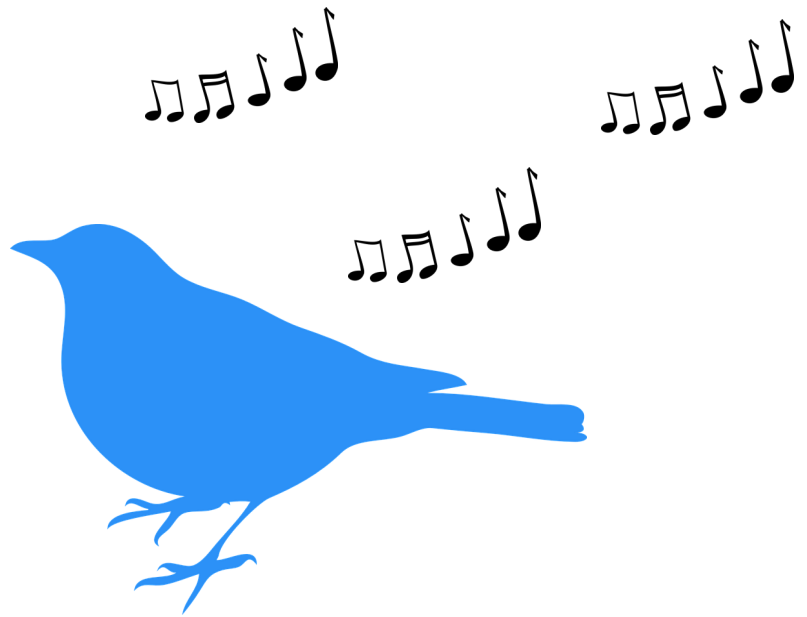
Day 28 – We checked our bags through to Los Angeles at the Melbourne airport. A short flight to Sydney, where our journey had begun and a

brief layover, before we boarded our plane for the 18-hour flight to LA. We landed in LA about seven a.m. where we had an early check in at the Airport Hilton so we could rest and refresh. Later that afternoon, we had a late lunch with a cousin and his wife, went back to the hotel and prepared for our 6 hour "red eye" flight to Dulles.

Day 29 – We landed at Dulles around five a.m., ending one of the most wonderful, rewarding travel experiences we've ever had.

I hope you enjoyed my ramblings and strongly recommend "Googling" any and all of the places, sites, and animals we experienced. I'm still learning about the places we visited on our trip and have only scratched the surface in exploring all of the amazing animals we encountered as well as those we didn't.

NABS Updates!



Bird lovers, please be sure to mark your calendars for the North American Bluebird Society (NABS) 2020 Conference in Kearney, Nebraska, to be held from March 11 thru 15, 2020. The conference is being hosted by Bluebirds Across Nebraska (BAN) and coincides with the annual northern migration of the Sandhill Crane. For more information, [click here](#).

In other NABS news, some board members traveled to Ithaca, NY in early June to meet with the staff of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's NestWatch program. Attendees were given tour of the lab and had the opportunity to learn more about some of the other programs available in addition to NestWatch. NABS has agreed to advocate the use of the NestWatch program to their members and affiliates in an effort to discover the effect the bluebird conservation effort is having on the populations of all 3 species of bluebirds. The more nesting data that is submitted by nestbox monitors, the better we can determine the level of our success.

Data reporting varies from organization to organization. Some larger bluebird affiliate organizations have their own in-house data collection systems. Many smaller organizations, such as MBS, do not have a formal system for collecting data. Our system has been to request basic nesting data information from our members via email request and then to feature any reported data in a fall or winter issue of our newsletter. While MBS does encourage monitors to input their nesting data into the NestWatch database, we can't be certain who actually does this.

I hope, if you are not currently a NestWatch user, that you will consider [visiting their website](#) to explore the features of the program. Nesting data that is not submitted to them cannot be reflected in the results for Maryland and, thus, we will not have an accurate picture of how Maryland bluebirds are faring.

Follow The Flock



2020 NABS CONFERENCE

HOSTED BY BLUEBIRDS ACROSS NEBRASKA

MARCH 11-15

HOLIDAY INN, KEARNEY, NEBRASKA

SANDHILL CRANE BLIND TRIPS

PRAIRIE CULTURE FIELD TRIP

BIRDING FIELD TRIP

WORKSHOPS

NATIONALLY KNOWN SPEAKERS
& ENTERTAINERS

RAFFLE, LIVE
& SILENT AUCTIONS



MBS Honors Rosie the Riveter Legacy with Nestbox Donation and Memorial Garden Dedication

By: Dana Grayson



On June 9, I was honored to represent MBS at the dedication of a Rosie the Riveter Memorial Rose Garden in West Virginia, located at Girl Scout Camp White Rock in Capon Bridge.

This event was organized by iWitnessed --> iRemember is a 501(c)(3) corporation that was developed as a Girl Scout Gold Award project by founder and corporation president, Madeleine LeBeau. iWitnessed --> iRemember wants teenagers today to have a chance to meet the teenagers who fought and won World War II. Dedicated to honoring and carrying forward the ideals and experiences of America's Greatest Generation, iWitnessed --> iRemember hosts events, ceremonies, and provides a wealth of materials for organizations across the United States who are interested in being inspired by the legacy of these American heroes. iWitnessed --> iRemember is partnering with the Spirit of '45 on the Rosie the Riveter Rose Garden Initiative. This program hopes to have at least one rose garden dedicated to the Rosies of World War II in each state by 2020, the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II. This event marked the installation and dedication of the first such rose garden in West Virginia.

For the event, MBS donated a nestbox setup that camp staff and Girl Scouts will dutifully monitor each nesting season. You may be asking, "Why a bluebird

nestbox in honor of Rosie the Riveter? What's the connection?"

The Eastern Bluebird is really a perfect symbol to represent with Rosie the Riveter. For one, Eastern Bluebirds are red, white, and blue in color, so a very patriotic bird in appearance, and of course there's nothing more patriotic than what the Rosies accomplished! But if you look further into the meaning of bluebirds in our history and culture, the connection becomes even more fitting. Bluebirds have long been a symbol of hope. In the song "The Bluebird of Happiness," which was very popular during the 1940's, the lyrics speak of the hope and optimism to be found, even during dark times, when hearing the beautiful song that bluebirds sing. They're a symbol of spring, as well, another thing to look to when the days are dark and cold, helping us remember there are better times ahead.

The people here at home during World War II hoped the war would end. They hoped for peace. They hoped their loved ones would come home safely. But, on its own, hope is a wish. What's extra special is when hope inspires **action**. And during the war, Rosies themselves became a symbol of hope through their actions. By going out and taking on the work they did, they showed the country and the world how to carry on when times were very tough and scary, and to be brave and contribute. They gave everyone a reason to hope and truly believe that those better times lay ahead. That hope spread and inspired millions of people.

Those of us who love bluebirds can find inspiration in the Rosies' story. We wish to turn hopes into reality through action. We wanted to have more bluebirds everywhere that would spread that hope and happiness to people. So, we turned that hope into action, researching what bluebirds needed, building safe housing, carefully monitoring their homes, protecting them as best we could from predators, and collecting data, and educating others, all in an effort to help bluebirds have successful nesting seasons to increase their numbers.

It is my hope that the nestbox at Camp White Rock, installed in a quiet, tree lined and open field behind the camp boathouse, will attract bluebirds and that carry that symbol of hope that reminds us of Rosie the Riveter. These living memorials keep the legacy of Rosie the Riveter alive so that we may always remember their service, sacrifice, and how they are a symbol of hope.

See photos from this event on the [iWitnessed --> iRemember Facebook Page](#)





MBS COUNTY COORDINATORS

The MBS County Coordinator program offers “boots on the ground” assistance to our members to help with issues such as where and how to set up a nestbox, what to do about house sparrows and other predators, how to figure out if your nesting has been abandoned, and more. Our coordinators are always willing to listen and to share their knowledge and experience with you.

If you do not see your county on this listing, it is because we do not currently have a volunteer in that county. If you are interested in representing your county as a coordinator, please contact us.

Allegany	Vacant		
Anne Arundel	Ann Johnson	annj@rocketmail.com	(443) 758-5324
Baltimore	Matt Storms	bigmattblue@gmail.com	(410) 686-2089 H (410) 952-4019 C
Calvert	Lori Sampson	anmthe@gmail.com	(301) 717-8795
Caroline	Vacant		
Carroll	Felicia Lovelett	c5nest@gmail.com	(301) 801-1969
	Jodi Hewitt	jshewitt24@gmail.com	(410) 302-7266
Cecil	Maryanne Dolan	maryanne.dolan@gmail.com	(443) 350-9197
Charles	Debbie Reece	dreece18@aol.com	(301) 751-4871
Dorchester	George Radcliffe	radclifg@gmail.com	(410) 228-7670
Frederick	Kathy Kremnitzer	griffin459@myactv.net	(301) 676-9371
	Dana Grayson	graysons2005@comcast.net	(240) 446-4895
Garrett	Vacant		
Harford	Pam Ford	jpford@comcast.net	(410) 569-2205
Howard	Felicia Lovelett	c5nest@gmail.com	(301) 801-1969
Kent	Karen Unruh	karenunruh007@gmail.com	(410) 404-0155
Montgomery	Ed Escalante	escalante@his.com	(301) 972-3241
	Don Truitt	dht0526@verizon.net	(301) 288-4648
Prince George's	Vacant		
Queen Anne's	Vacant		
Somerset	Janice Ward	jward43.jw@gmail.com	(443) 614-8318
St. Mary's	Barbara Whipkey	wbuofsmc@gmail.com	(301) 863-2473
Talbot	Vacant		
Washington	Jenny Hendershot	djbmhendershot@aol.com	(301) 491-8823
Wicomico	Janice Ward	jward43.jw@gmail.com	(443) 614-8318
Worcester	Janice Ward	jward43.jw@gmail.com	(443) 614-8318

THE MARYLAND BLUEBIRD SOCIETY, INC.
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Mail to: Maryland Bluebird Society
20809 Bell Bluff Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20879

Instructions: Print and complete this application and mail to the above address. Please remember to enclose your check payable to the Maryland Bluebird Society.

Memberships and donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Note: Membership is effective for the calendar year (s) in which the dues are paid, except that new member dues paid in the fourth calendar quarter cover the following year.

Date _____

Please check the appropriate boxes below:

New Application Renewal Application

Individual One year - \$10.00 Three years - \$25.00

Household One year - \$15.00 Three years - \$40.00

Lifetime: Individual - \$250.00 Household - \$300.00

Student – age 23 or under One year - \$7.00 Three years - \$20.00

Corporate/non-profit One year - \$30.00 Three years - \$85.00

Corporate sponsor (non-voting) One year - \$100.00

Make a tax deductible donation, amount \$ _____

Please print:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ County: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Telephone No.: home cell work _____

Comments: _____

How did you hear about MBS? _____

[Click here to Join/Renew your MBS Membership Online](#)