

# **HISTORY OF THE GRAND NEST**

**Honorable Order of the Blue Goose, International**

**2014– 2015**



**109<sup>th</sup> GRAND NEST CONVENTION**  
**Renaissance Baltimore Harborplace**  
**Hotel**

**Baltimore, Maryland**

**July 19 – 22, 2015**

**MLGG Bill Olson**

Prepared by:  
Linda Meik  
Grand Supervisor of the Flock

Internet Address --- <http://www.BlueGoose.org>

E-mail Address: [terry@BlueGoose.org](mailto:terry@BlueGoose.org)

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## 2014-2015 GRAND NEST OFFICERS



**Most Loyal Grand Gander  
William G. Olson**



**Grand Supervisor  
Randy Wilson**



**Grand Keeper  
Kim Bilbrey**



**Wielder  
Linda Meik**



**Grand Custodian**



**Grand**

**Terry Maloney**



**Grand Guardian  
Mark Robertson**



**Grand Nest Historian  
Jerry Hale**



**Judge Advocate  
Robert Ross**

# GRAND NEST HISTORY



## Blue Goose Holds Grand Nest Convention in Baltimore, MD



266 Ganders, spouses and guests, including fifteen children from across the US and Canada journeyed to Baltimore, MD to attend the 109<sup>th</sup> Blue Goose Grand Nest Convention from July 19-22, 2015. The convention was held at the Renaissance Baltimore Harborplace Hotel in the heart of Baltimore's inner harbor within easy walking distance of its many shops, restaurants, and attractions.

### Sunday July 19, 2015

The Grand Nest Officers met on Saturday, but for most Ganders and their families, things kicked off on Sunday night.

The Convention's Welcome Party was held just a short walk from the hotel at the World Trade Center. We had a huge private room on the 27<sup>th</sup> floor that was ringed by full height glass, so we enjoyed a spectacular 360° panoramic view of the harbor and city. The room was huge, and easily accommodated our large crowd.



There were a dozen food stations with carved meats, shrimp, crab cakes, soup, a potato bar and desserts.

There was musical "entertainment" in the form of karaoke, and we were treated to some good, some bad, and some downright ugly tunes. Pins were traded and it was a great time catching up with old friends to start the convention.



### Monday July 20, 2015



After a full breakfast, we walked over to the Baltimore Ballroom as the 109<sup>th</sup> Grand Nest Meeting was ready to get underway. MLGG Bill Olson welcomed the group, gavelled the meeting to order, and introduced the Grand Nest officers with a twist – he matched them with a historical name from some of the personalities of the War of 1812. MLGG Olson next introduced the PMLGGs, Grand Nest spouses, and the National Capital Pond officers.





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The flags were presented with a fife and drum entrance by the Fort McHenry Honor Guard. The national anthems of Canada and the United States were led by Grand Custodian Mark Robertson and National Capital Pond MLG Pat Bergin respectively.



Bergin welcomed the convention and referenced Baltimore's rich culture of history, food and sports. He told us that Baltimore history includes the nation's first post office, first dental school, and first sports organization (the Maryland Jockey Club in 1743).

MLGG Olson thanked the Convention Sponsors who supported the convention and invited us to visit the Sponsor Expo outside of the meeting room. Olson acknowledged the convention committee – and thanked Gene Newman, Michelle Fitzwater, Jim Kern, George Burgee, Jim Lanham, Wendy Fletcher, Barbara Markuski, Erikson Flynn, Donna Digman and Jesse Turpin.

In last year's acceptance speech, Olson remarked that 2014 marked the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of women joining the Honorable Order, and asked "*where would Blue Goose be without them?*" He returned to that theme again, as he introduced PMLG Pat Snyder and introduced a new award, the National Capital Pond's "Woman of the Year" whose inaugural winner was Michelle Fitzwater.

We saw a short film about The War of 1812's Battle of Baltimore, in which the unsuccessful British assault on Fort McHenry became the inspiration behind a Francis Scott Key poem, which in turn became the *Star Spangled Banner* and was adopted as the national anthem in 1931.

Our next speaker was Scott Sheads, a Park Ranger and historian at Fort McHenry who proved that a historian can be very funny. He was a terrific speaker, as he described the 25 hour bombardment of Fort McHenry by 40 British ships. The bombardment was so loud; it could be heard over 100 miles away in Philadelphia.

The Star Spangled Banner tells the story of how the US flag was seen "still waving" on the morning after that ferocious battle. Within three months, the song "went viral" as its lyrics were printed in newspapers across the nation.



Convention Co-chair Gene Newman made some housekeeping announcements before we recessed for a break and moved into the Memorial Service.



The Convention's Memorial Service was conducted by Frank Marx, Andrea Clark, and Laurie Welford of the Penn Pond. The name of each Pond was called and the members of that Pond stood in unison. If a Pond lost a member during the year, the name was called and a candle was lit.

PMLGG Chuck Cramer (2000-2001) was eulogized by GSOE Randy Wilson. Other eulogies honored Eastern DMLGG and Bay State Pond MLG Lisa Mullen (by DMLGG Dan Rich) and Southern DMLGG and Kentucky Pond Wielder Don Greeno (by Grand Custodian Linda Meik).

The Transylvania Pond (many of whose members suspiciously looked like NYC Pond members) conducted the Model Initiation Ceremony. In an effort to increase its membership, the Transylvania Pond took a controversial new approach - they tried to grow the Pond by reanimation. Their Initiation team dug deep into the annals of horror movies and assumed the roles of various movie characters and reimagined many movies gags, clichés, and plot lines into the Ritual. Some of the participants we saw included Dr. Frankenstein, his assistant Inga, the Frankenstein monster, Quasimodo, and the Bride of Frankenstein. Imagine the shock on the faces of the 14 new initiates as they paraded into the room and were confronted by that group!



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The Model Initiation team of Dean Merry, Liz Peterson, Randy Roonan, Mike Nardulli, Rich Mastrocinque, Glen Verhaaren, and Dan Aizley did a great job and thoroughly entertained the convention.

The All Industry Luncheon featured a fascinating address (The Changing Insurance Landscape) by Patty Harmon, Editor in Chief of Claims magazine. She spoke of some of the more memorable stories she has covered, including fire at the St. Louis Arch museum, Ground Zero in New York, Hurricane Katrina, the Opry Mills Mall flood in Nashville, and New York/New Jersey flood damage from Super Storm Sandy.



She spoke to us directly, and stated that *“people don’t realize how important it is to do the things you do. You work in a noble and honorable profession”*

She spoke of the shift in the industry to include more and more women, and quipped that *“there never used to be a line for the lady’s room at insurance functions, but not anymore”*.

She ended on a very serious note, as she spoke of the impending talent gap in our industry that will see 25% of the workforce retire in the next three years. This will have serious ramifications on training, hiring challenges, internships, job fairs, social media, work/life balance, knowledge transfer, mentoring, and specialized claim handling through technology and market changes.

After the luncheon, the sponsor raffle winners were announced, and the regional meetings were held from 3:00 to 5:00.



The evening’s Family Night Dinner Cruise was held aboard the Spirit of Baltimore. The cruise afforded us some great sightseeing as we cruised around and out of the Inner Harbor and Patapsco River past the local sights and landmarks including **Ft. McHenry**, the **Francis Scott Key Bridge**, and the **Maryland Science Center** and **Planetarium**.

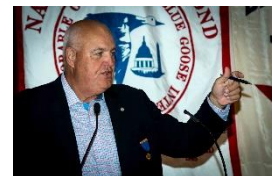


## Tuesday July 21, 2015



MLGG Bill Olson called Tuesday’s meeting to order, and introduced Grand Wielder Terry Maloney for the roll call of delegates. As Terry called the names of the delegates, MLGG Olson presented each Pond’s delegation with their state’s or province’s flag.

Terry asked the first-timers to stand and be recognized, and asked them to take back to their Ponds a message about the value received with a convention registration. Terry called the Ponds in alphabetical order, as the delegates from Alberta to Wisconsin checked in.



There was a special “welcome back” greeting for PMLGG Guy Charron who was unable to attend last year’s Salt Lake City Convention, but received a hearty welcome in Baltimore.



MLGG Bill Olson reported on his year in office. He said that overall, Blue Goose had done a lot of good things over the last five years –“we lost a few Ponds, but we gained a few Puddles”. He is optimistic that Blue Goose will now have an increased marketing allowance from the \$5 dues increase, to promote our positive growth.

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He spoke of the beauty of Edmonton and Banff, and how he has never missed a Canadian convention since his first in Edmonton in 1993.

Bill recognized some of the strong female leaders Blue Goose has had, such as Grand Nest officers Joanne Clark, Lorena Kohlruss, Kim Bilbrey, and Linda Meik, as well as Lisa Mullen of the Bay State Pond, Lisa Kane of the Westchester Pond, and Kimberly Latka, Wendy Hubbard, and Paula Pelletier of the Hartford Pond.

Bill attended or visited the Eastern Regional Mid-Year in Newark, the Kentucky Pond Golf tournament, the PLRB Meet and Greet in Providence, a Penn Pond and NoVa Puddle meetings, the Dayton Halloween Rush Party, and events in St. Louis, Texas, and Cincinnati.

In closing, Bill thanked Jerry Hale for appointing him as a DMLGG, and also thanked his Deputies, Judge Advocate Robert Ross, and Grand Wielder Terry Maloney for their support and friendship.

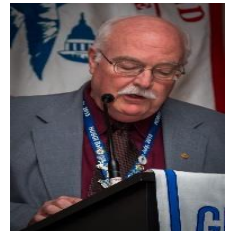
Grand Wielder Maloney started his report by saying that Bill Olson was too modest. Terry reminded everyone that Bill had a long and distinguished Grand Nest body of work before the 2015 convention. He ran the very successful 2000 Convention children's program for 60 children, and along with MLGG Joe Coccia helped run the 2010 Philadelphia convention after the passing of Bill Wasekanes.

Terry's report started with the pronouncement that *"this was a wonderful Year for Blue Goose, especially in the South"*. We added 174 new members, and every region had an increase in membership—a feat unmatched since 1987.

The ten largest Ponds were announced, with Michigan (310) in the top spot, followed by Quebec (264), Ontario (243), Hartford (217), St. Louis (167), National Capital (159), Edmonton (155), Alberta (136), Nova Scotia (133), and Wisconsin (128).

Terry challenged us all with spreading the news about what we do for charity. There is new interest in Blue Goose in many pockets across the U. S., and we need to keep up our visibility and spread the message. We are a flexible organization that offers charitable and educational programs for our Ponds – so *"do whatever works for your Pond"*.

Grand Nest Historian Jerry Hale commented on the Order's *"hard working officers"* who have promoted growth across North America. He praised the success of the *"Rush for Goslings" initiative that "is getting us younger; this is our future"*. Jerry thanked the Ponds for supporting Blue Goose history, asked for submissions of historical items, and invited the convention to visit the archives.



Judge Advocate Robert Ross opened his report by thanking MLGG Bill Olson for his leadership, before reflecting back on his fourteen years of service on the Grand Nest. His first convention was in Baltimore in 2000, he became the acting Judge Advocate at the St. Louis convention in 2001, and has served as our J.A. ever since.

Over the years, Blue Goose has faced many challenges in technology, membership, and social change. He praised Terry Maloney for leading us to successfully meet these challenges over the last twenty-five years.

We continually update Grand Nest protocol, the Constitution and By-Laws, membership criteria, our liability insurance program, and the way we communicate through e-mailing the Grand Nest Bulletin.

Ross spoke of our current regional structure, and noted that it is disruptive to our convention schedule. A re-alignment initiative to move from five regions to four regions will be voted on in St. Louis next year, and it is *"imperative"* that constitutional measures to re-align be adopted.



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The role of the Grand Keeper will be redefined so as not to be aligned with any region, and that position will become similar to the GN Historian and Judge Advocate's role- a "permanent" officer that does not move up through the chairs. Ross urged us all to support the change.

He acknowledged the successful membership year for the Order, and said it resulted from our PLRB Marketing and Publicity, and our Rush For Goslings campaign.

He spoke of Blue Goose charity, and how we support thousands of worthy causes to the tune of \$300,000 this year alone and \$50M since 1906.

He was honored and humbled to serve as our Grand Nest Judge Advocate, and after fourteen years, he turns his post over to Robert Cockerham of the St. Louis Pond.



Grand Keeper Kim Bilbrey spoke of her June visit to Grand Keeper Maloney's home in Wisconsin, and their tours of Milwaukee, Miller and Harley Davidson. She also viewed the very impressive Grand Nest archives in Terry's house.

Just as impressive, was last year's \$4,300 budget surplus, as stated in her Audit Report.

The Grand Nest Committee reports on Charity, and Communication / Marketing followed. Grand Guardian Linda Meik described our charity work as an incredible success story. *"Look at what we've done in donations, scholarships, and gifts in kind"*. Based on information submitted by the Ponds, in 2014-15, Blue Goose donated over \$309,000 to charities, logged in 2,174 volunteer hours, and awarded \$6,400 in scholarships. That works out to \$79 per member!

Bill Olson's Communication and Marketing Report was next, and he reported that we are doing a much better job of communicating with each other now, than when he first chaired this committee in 2011. He cited the improved Grand Nest website with its *"great content"* and urged the Ponds to send their photos and articles to Terry Maloney.

The new budget will contribute \$2.50 per member for marketing in such areas as the PLRB Meet and Greet, printing, and advertisements in Claim Magazine. He asked every Pond to be diligent in creating and maintaining a website that at a minimum contains contact names, meeting dates, and lists Pond activities and functions.

Grand Supervisor Randy Wilson spoke about Blue Goose's recent success in attracting and retaining members, and how for the second consecutive year we have increased our number of active members.

The Rush for Goslings campaign will continue in 2015 as we hope to get new people active right away. The Ponds will receive a supply of twenty Blue Goose window clings to use in their Rush Campaign. Dustin Bales of the Manitoba Pond is the Rush Chairman, and his team will consist of a Regional Rush Chair from each region.



The subject of Pond websites and on-line payments was covered in a special presentation by Hartford Pond Webmaster Kevin Brady. He brought up the Hartford Pond's new website on the screen and walked the convention through some of its features including meeting payments and golf tournament registrations.

Michelle Fitzwater of the National Capital Pond's Convention Committee received a "Happy Birthday" serenade, and then offered some housekeeping remarks about the evening's scheduled Hospitality Suite (*Please keep the noise down*) and the afternoon's golf outing.

The morning's program continued with the presentation of the Grand Nest Awards. The **Membership Cup** for the greatest % of increased membership was won by the **Florida Pond**. The **Fellowship Cup** for the lowest % drops & resignations was won by the **Quebec Pond**. The **No Drop Out Cup**, awarded for no dropped members, was won



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by the **Florida Pond**. The **Peace Garden Award Cup**, awarded to the Pond with the most first time convention attendees, was won by the **Virginia Pond**. The **Link of the Year**, awarded to a Pond with an Outstanding Website, was won by the **Hartford Pond**. The **Gordon Crowther Charity Award**, for the Pond with outstanding charitable activities, was won by the **Dayton Pond**, and the



**Regional Challenge Cup**, awarded to the region with excellence in five combined membership criteria, was won by the **Southern Region**.



The Regional Awards were next.



The **West Region** Awards for the Highest % increase and Most new & reinstated members were both won by the **Utah Pond**.



The **Central Region** Awards for the Highest % increase was won by the **Dayton Pond** and the award for the Most new & reinstated members was won by the **Michigan Pond**.



The **Southern Region** Awards for the Highest % increase was won by the **Florida Pond**, and the award for the Most new & reinstated members was won by the **Texas Pond**.



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The **Eastern Region** Awards for the highest % increase was won by the **Penn Pond**, and the award for Most new & reinstated members was won by the **National Capital Pond**.



The **Canadian Region** Awards for the Highest % increase and the award for the Most new & reinstated members were both won by the **British Columbia Pond**.

After the awards, the golfers took off for the Rocky Point Golf Course, while others took advantage of two optional activities – a Seadog Boat Tour or a tour of Washington D.C. Our convention enjoyed a free evening to explore the local sights.

## Wednesday July 22, 2015



After breakfast, Patty Semke introduced a video made by the St. Louis Pond to highlight some of the cultural and entertainment sights and attractions that will serve as a backdrop to next year's St. Louis Convention.

She thanked Baltimore for a great convention and said Bill Olson has been a valuable advisor to the St. Louis Convention Committee.

Next year's convention will coincide with the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of the St. Louis Pond.

The Convention will be held at the Marriott Renaissance from July 20 to 24. The convention hotel will be the Hilton St. Louis at the Ballpark, where the room rate will be \$140.

The hotel is in the heart of downtown St. Louis next to Ballpark Village, Busch Stadium, and the St. Louis Arch. Some of the city's attractions we can look forward to include the City Museum, Science Center, Forest Park, Saint Louis Zoo, the MUNY (Municipal Theater), Six Flags St. Louis, Anheuser-Busch Brewery, the Magic House (children's discovery & educational center), musical venues, botanical gardens, and architectural tours.

Terry Maloney made an announcement about Canadian Relief, reminded everyone that Grand Nest dues are payable in September, and roll called the delegates. A formal motion was made to hold next year's Convention in St. Louis, and it was accepted by acclamation.



Outgoing Judge Advocate Robert Ross received a Distinguished Service Award from Terry Maloney in recognition of his fourteen years of service and leadership as a Grand Nest Officer.

Nominating speeches and the installation of the 2015-2016 slate of Grand Nest officers ensued. The new officers are Randy Wilson of the St. Louis Pond as Most Loyal Grand Gander, Linda Meik of the Texas Pond as Grand Supervisor, Mark Robertson of the Edmonton Pond as Grand Custodian, Kim Bilbrey of the Dayton Pond as Grand Guardian, and Dan Rich of the Hartford Pond as Grand Keeper.



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The Grand Nest's newest officer, Dan Rich, shared his thoughts with the convention. He spoke about how fortunate he's been to have been mentored by two Hartford Pond MLGGs, Jerry Hale and Gordon Crowther. He recalled his family's first convention, in 1996 in Omaha, and how he was welcomed by hundreds of people he had never met before. He spoke of the many positive signs of growth and renewal across our Order and "promise(d) to do everything I can to see Blue Goose grow and thrive, so that future generations of Ganders can experience what my young family and I did in 1996".

Most Loyal Grand Gander Randy Wilson's stepped to the podium and made a special presentation, as he gave an autographed Cal Ripken baseball to Bill Olson.



In his Address of Acceptance, Randy spoke of the goals our Blue Goose founding fathers set when they created this organization 109 years ago, how they valued *"giving back to the community in charity...good fellowship and the development of character and friendships throughout the US and Canada"*.



The Grand Nest is dedicated to staying *"true to these virtues"* as we continue to *"grow our Order, increase our Charity, foster new relationships and communicate more effectively"*.

Randy's goals for his term as MLGG include:

- 1.) Continued support of building stronger Ponds and Puddles throughout our Order,
- 2) Achieve a third consecutive year of growth in active membership,
- 3.) Promote better branding of our Order through the byline, **"Character, Charity and Fellowship since 1906,"** in the window clings and as the signature for Blue Goose emails,
- 4.) Reach out to the insurance industry with a public relations effort to communicate to them that we are unique in the industry... a focus on giving back!
- 5.) Visit as many Ponds and Puddles as I can throughout our Order,

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6.) Continue to provide materials to each of you to help you succeed in your Pond or Puddle ...some plans include distribution of Rush for Goslings materials, Communication and Charity Guides, and some new materials like the Blue Goose training power point slides and an updated Pond Operations Guide.

Randy concluded by thanking his wife and daughters (*Thank God for the women in our lives!*), and the St. Louis Pond and Convention Committee. He is dedicating “my year in office to my dear friend, PMLGG Chuck Cramer (whose) leadership was an inspiration to me in accepting to serve the Grand Nest”.



PMLGG Joe Coccia reported on Bill Olson's year in office and Terry Maloney presented

Bill with his PMLGG pin and plaque.



The Members Luncheon was held at nearby Phillips Seafood where we enjoyed a great buffet lunch with coconut shrimp, crab cakes, baked fish, pasta, veggies, fries, salad, and chicken. We had the back dining room, and there were well over 150 people there.

That evening, the Convention culminated with a cocktail reception and Grand Banquet and Ball. We enjoyed great food, great music and great fellowship.



The National Capital Pond hosted an outstanding convention and we were all impressed by the history of the area and the many attractions of Baltimore's Inner Harbor. We are very grateful to the Convention Committee for their efforts to plan and produce such a successful and thoroughly enjoyable event.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan Rich, GKGGE

*Photos courtesy of Neil Miller, Bill Olson*



# GRAND NEST HISTORY



## **Most Loyal Grand Gander Report 109<sup>th</sup> Grand Nest Convention William G. Olson, MLGG 2014-2015**

Dear Fellow Ganders,

I have been looking forward to this moment for a while now. PMLGG and Life Member. I had hoped to lead and inspire the order to build on the accomplishments we have made over the last five years in improving and growing the order. We have done a lot of good and lost some ponds too. We have much work to do to market our organization to others in the industry and to communicate better between ourselves, Pond to Pond and Region to Region. We are a very special organization, like no other in the insurance industry.

This past year I was able to travel to ponds in every region of the United States. I did not make it into Canada this year. Unfortunately, I could not attend the 100th Anniversary of the Manitoba Pond in April. In 1993 I attended my first convention serving as MLG of the National Capital Pond. The convention was in Edmonton and it was the first time I was ever in Canada. The first person I got to know there was PMLG Neil Miller of the Edmonton pond and 22 years later he is here today. I learned about the beauty of Canada driving from Edmonton to Banff and about Canadian hospitality and fellowship. I have not missed a convention in Canada since. Edmonton, Montréal, Halifax, Niagara Falls, Calgary and Québec City. I have really come to love all my fellow ganders from Canada I have met over the years. Had it not been for the Blue Goose I never would have the opportunity to visit and learn about so many great cities in North America.

My year in office actually started in April 2014 with our GN midyear meeting in Newark New Jersey. We had a GN meeting at the same time as the Eastern region midyear meeting. We were there to check out the Newark airport Marriott Hotel and the Royal Caribbean cruise ship. We had a great tour of the ship and tour of the 9/11 Memorial in NYC. The New York City pond hosted the dinner that night at the Killarney Rose in Manhattan. Kentucky beat Wisconsin in the NCAA basketball finals. A good time was had by all. We all found that the facilities were great and planned on moving forward with the cruise convention. At GN Officers meeting, I proposed constitutional amendment to raise the annual dues by five dollars. 50% of that amount would be to establish a new communications and marketing budget. At the GN convention in Salt Lake City it was voted in favor by the delegates present. The new dues amount is now \$27.00

In May 2014 I spent the weekend with Don and Kerry Greeno at their home in Louisville KY and played in the Kentucky Pond Golf Outing on my birthday May 12. I got to meet a lot of the Kentucky ganders. I got VeriClaim involved to sponsor the foursome and that led to the \$2500 sponsorship to the Utah Pond Convention. VeriClaim did the same sponsorship this year. Also in May we received the proposal from ALWAYS Travel and Royal Caribbean for the price of the cabins for the cruise plus expenses for alcohol. We found that the cost of the cruise was going to be twice as much as a traditional hotel based convention. The convention committee discussed it and had a conference call with the travel agent and RC rep to see if they would make a better deal. They did not. At the May Annual Meeting of the National Capital Pond we discussed it and the Pond agreed that we would change to the convention in the Baltimore Inner Harbor area or the Maryland Eastern Shore Cambridge, MD at the Hyatt Hotel. I contacted Denise at PEC and started the hotel search process. Having done it in Baltimore in 2000 we knew basically what we would do and where we wanted to hold it. In June we toured all of the available hotels the inner harbor area and other entertainment venues. In July 2014 at the 108th GN in Salt Lake City the National

## GRAND NEST HISTORY

Capital Pond performed the model initiation with the Blazing Saddles Theme with me in the MLG role. We successfully voted for the dues increase at the Grand Nest general session and I was sworn in as MLGG. I declared that this would be Year of the Women in our Order. 26 years ago at the 1989 convention in Long Beach California, the delegates voted to allow women to become members on 09/09/89. Can you imagine what the discussions and debates were like over that subject? Can you imagine what our order would be today if we had not? I am grateful for all of the women in our order and would like all of them here to stand up and be recognized at this time. The women in our order have been the backbone of the ponds and their contributions are greatly appreciated. I would like to recognize PMLGG JoAnne Clark, PMLGG Lorena Kohlruss, GGON Linda Meik and Grand Keeper Kim Bilbrey for their contributions to the Grand Nest, there regions and their ponds. I would also like to recognize some of those exceptional women leaders of the Order. Michelle Fitzwater PMLG/ WGQ, National Capital Pond, Mary Kay Marchetti WGQ, Virginia Pond, Lisa Mullen PMLG/ DMLGG, Bay State Pond, Lisa Kane PMLG/ WGQ, Westchester Pond, Kim Latka' PMLG, Hartford Pond, Wendy Hubbard PMLG Hartford Pond, Paula Pelletier PMLG, Hartford Pond, Liz Peterson- Wilcoxon MLG, New York City Pond, and Andrea Clark MLG Penn Pond.

In August 2014, the NCP at our board meeting and convention committee meetings, we decided on having the convention at the Renaissance Harborplace hotel. Good choice. We also planned our rush for gosling's membership party to have a bowling tournament at Dave and Buster's sports Café. In September the NCP emerged with the Mariners of the Bay organization and had the annual crab feast at Nick's fish house in Baltimore. We also had our star-spangled celebration weekend here at the Renaissance hotel. In October I traveled to the NOVA puddle, Penn Pond for their Oktoberfest rush party and the Dayton Pond Halloween rush party. I initiated everyone that was at Kim's house that night into the Blue Goose. In November I traveled to Providence RI for the PLRB conference and Blue Goose social sponsored by the Eastern region and Ocean State Puddle. Over 200 people attended. December was a busy month for Christmas parties where I attended three at the Michigan Pond NC Pond and VA Pond.

In January 2015 the national capital pond initiated 24 new members. In February I flew to the Cincinnati pond charity Monte Carlo night party. It was a fantastic event that raised a lot of money and people had a great time. Lots of door prizes and silent auction items. A blizzard snowstorm blew in the next day so I was stranded for two days in Dayton at Kim's house. That is a good place to be snowed in. In March I traveled to Philadelphia for the Eastern region midyear meeting where delegates from all the Eastern region ponds attended. Sadly, we had a memorial service for our dear friend DMLGG Lisa Mullen. Dan Rich prepared the Memorial service video showed it to us then and it was in the Memorial service at this convention.

In April I traveled to St. Louis for the GN midyear meeting at the Hilton at the Ballpark. We found that it was a fantastic venue and we will have another successful convention next year. The GN meeting was productive and we seriously discussed regional realignment of the organization for the good of the order. The realignment proposal was prepared by Linda Meik and Randy Wilson. I got to play golf with my good friend Randy Wilson in the golf outing on Sunday of the Masters. Congratulations to our new MLGG Randy Wilson. After that meeting I flew to Texas with Linda Meik and spent three days there. I attended her Texas pond meeting, address a group about membership and the convention. We initiated 8 new members. I got to read the Charge. The next day I also got to play golf with my VeriClaim associate Ronnie Adcock at Brookhaven CC and shot my lowest round ever, a 76. On April 27th and 28th the riots occurred in Baltimore after the arrest and death of Freddie Gray while in custody of the Baltimore City Police Department. All hell broke loose that day. You all saw it on CNN. Gene Newman and I talk to each other the next day and said we are screwed now. Registration had started in February and were only halfway to our goal for attendees and sponsorships. We feared that no one would want to come to Baltimore if it was unsafe. In May the convention committee and Cheryl McShane at PEC kicked into high gear finalizing venues menus contracts and actively marketing the convention. In June I was going to go on the amateur golf tour and in the course of two weeks was invited to play in 4 golf outings at the Bay State Pond, Penn Pond, VA Pond and National Capital Pond outings. Sadly because of work and other commitments I could only play in one. July has been all about final preparations for this convention and the overwhelming response we received.

## GRAND NEST HISTORY

Thank you to PMLGG Jerry Hale for appointing me as a Deputy Most Loyal Grand Gander in 2000 and being my friend all these years. Jerry is an inspiration to me. Thank you to the DMLGG's for the Eastern Region PMLG Lisa Mullen, PMLG Michelle Fitzwater, PMLG Gene Newman, PMLG Dan Rich and PMLG Mike Nardulli. Many thanks to GWGQ Terry Maloney and Judge Advocate Robert Ross for all they do for the Order.

Thank you to all of the women in my life. Thank you all for your love and friendship and putting up with me on the dance floor for all these years. I am fortunate to be surrounded by wonderful women in my life. First of all, my high school sweetheart and wife of 34 years Liz Olson, and my four daughters Christina, Emily, Samantha and Katy. My big sister Christina Lanier and most of all my mother Kay Joy Olson, who attended four Grand Nest Conventions with me, two in Canada and two in the United States. How many conventions can you take your Mom too?

Sincerely,  
William G. Olson  
Most Loyal Grand Gander  
Tote Fair



# GRAND NEST HISTORY



## **Newly Elected Most Loyal Grand Gander Acceptance Speech**

### **109<sup>th</sup> Grand Nest Convention**

#### **Randy Wilson, MLGG 2015-2016**

Baltimore 2015

Grand Nest Officers, honored PMLGGs, my fellow Ganders and guests, I am truly honored to be elected and installed as your Most Loyal Grand Gander for this coming year.

I would like to begin my acceptance by making a special presentation. When Libby and I first arrived to Baltimore this year we spent that first morning on a visit to Camden Yards and the Sports Legends museum and then the boyhood home of Babe Ruth. It was a fantastic time and such a thrill for any baseball fan. However, the visit to the Sports Legends reminded me that the Baltimore Orioles were previously the St. Louis Browns. So you see Bill, we in St. Louis gave you the Orioles.

But, you have given me something as well ... you gave me friendship and showed me by your example the honor in being a member of the Blue Goose International. We have had a clear mission at the Grand Nest, to communicate better, to grow our Order with quality new members, to advance our precepts, to give more to charity, to honor the many contributions of the women in our Order, and to be respectful of each other in the true tradition of 'tote fair.'

As such, I wanted to give you this memento of my personal appreciation of your mentorship. I know that we can count on you to continue to support our mission and I can guarantee you that we will continue what you've started this past year. I have for you a baseball autographed by Cal Ripken, Jr. It was obvious from the story you told yesterday that he is one of your favorite Orioles. Thank you, my friend.

109 years ago, the founders of our Order believed in the concept of 'giving back' ... giving back to their community in charity, giving back to each other in good fellowship and the development of friendships throughout the US and Canada and giving back to themselves in the further development of their character. They knew then as we do today ... that as long as we hold true to these virtues, our Order will continue. We honor the memory of all those who came before us and cherish the many friendships we have today throughout the United States and Canada. We are truly stronger together.

We, your Grand Nest officers, have been working hard to accomplish the mission that we have set out for ourselves ... to grow our Order, increase our Charity, foster new relationships and communicate more effectively. And, it is easier as a result of the encouragement and participation of all of you ... we succeed together and need your help to accomplish our objectives. I hope that when the awards were announced yesterday that each of you took notice and committed yourselves to bringing home an award for your Pond or Puddle next year in St. Louis. We have challenges for sure, but we are going to face them together and turn them into opportunities.

My goals for this term as your MLGG are

- 1.) Continue to support the building of stronger Ponds and Puddles throughout our Order,
- 2) Achieve a third consecutive year of growth in active membership,
- 3.) Promote better branding of our Order through the byline, "Character, Charity and Fellowship since 1906," the window clings that we gave away yesterday have this phrase below the Blue Goose logo, use the logo and byline when you communicate and promote your local activities and functions, let's be proud our unique identity as an Honorable Order, one excellent way to use it is as the signature for Blue Goose emails,
- 4.) Reach out to the insurance industry with a public relations effort to communicate to them that we are unique in



## GRAND NEST HISTORY

the industry...that we offer something that is most needed in the world of affairs ... a focus on giving back!

5.) Visit as many Ponds and Puddles as I can throughout our Order,

6.) Continue to provide materials to each of you to help you succeed in your Pond or Puddle ... after all, it is there that Blue Goose happens ... some plans include distribution of items that we showed you here in Baltimore ... Rush for Goslings, Communication and Charity Guides, as well as some new materials like the Blue Goose training power point slides and the updating that we have been planning for the Pond Operations Guide.

I would like to thank my lovely wife, Libby and my beautiful daughters, Alicia and Abby who are both here today, for their love and support. Thank God for the women in our lives!

And, I would like to thank all of the members of the St. Louis Pond for the faith they entrusted in me to be their Grand Nest officer for the 2016 convention in St. Louis next summer. I would especially like to thank Patty Semke, Ron Farber, Jane and Bill Herman, Marsha and Mike Ring and Jim and Carole Myers from St. Louis for their dedication in supporting our convention efforts.

And, I would like to thank all of you here today, most of whom I count as friends, but certainly as my brothers and sisters in the Blue Goose.

You should be proud of the international board of officers that you have elected and charged with leading our Order into the future. They are all hardworking and dedicated professionals who are committed to the success of our Order.

I am dedicating my year in office to my dear friend, PMLGG Chuck Cramer. Chuck's leadership was an inspiration to me in accepting to serve the Grand Nest.

I am looking forward to a great year and to your help in making it a successful one. I am confident that we will further our mission of giving back and having fun.

May God bless the United States and Canada and may God bless the Blue Goose International!  
Thank you so much and tote fair!

Randall Wilson Most Loyal Grand Gander  
Honorable Order of the Blue Goose International  
Character, Charity and Fellowship since 1906

# GRAND NEST HISTORY

## **GKGGGE – Address of Acceptance 108<sup>th</sup> Grand Nest Convention Dan Rich, GKGGGE 2015-2016**



Grand Nest Officers, Past Most Loyal Grand Ganders, DMLGGs, Ganders and Friends,

Thank you very much for the honor of joining the leadership team for this wonderful organization.

I need to start these remarks with an acknowledgement of someone that has supported my participation here for so many years, and has been a part of so many Blue Goose memories. Thank you Sue, for all of your help and advice and proof reading.

I'd like to share two Blue Goose stories with you.

I joined the Hartford Pond in 1991 and was initiated at a meeting at the Ramada Inn in Meriden, CT. A guy I didn't know all that well at the time, came up to me, tapped me on the shoulder, and warned me about the initiations. He said "whatever you do, don't laugh, because some of these old guys take this stuff very seriously".

That guy was Jerry Hale, who over the years has become one of my dearest friends.

I've had the privilege of being mentored by not one, but by two, MLGGs from the Hartford Pond. Not only did I learn a lot about Blue Goose from Jerry Hale, but I also had the privilege of learning from the Patriarch of the Hartford Pond, Gordon Crowther.

Every year, there are fewer and fewer of us here who remember Gordon. He was more than the person our Charity Award is named after.

He was an inspirational figure, a regal and dignified gentleman, who always had a twinkle in his eye, and was a real fun loving person who loved Blue Goose.

Whatever success the Hartford Pond has had over the years is greatly due to his vision and his leadership. I am honored to follow the examples set by Jerry Hale and Gordon Crowther.

My second story takes place five years later, at the Red Lion Hotel in Omaha Nebraska. It was the summer of 1996 and my family and I were there for our first convention. I really had no idea what to expect.

In the hotel lobby, a guy I had never seen in my life came up to me, shook my hand, and welcomed us as if we were long lost buddies. His name was Sam Luke and he was from the Hawaii Pond.

Even though we were in a strange city in a new setting, among hundreds of people we had never met, he instantly made us feel that we were welcome and we belonged.

The next day, I remember walking into the meeting room for my very first Opening Ceremonies. Seeing all those colorful banners on the wall from all Canada and the United States, and recalling Sam's friendship - that's when Blue Goose finally hit me, that's when I finally understood what Blue Goose is all about.

What Blue Goose is all about.....

Think of the words "Character" "Charity" and "Fellowship".

Reflect if you will, on their meanings, think of the value systems they represent. Consider how wonderful our world would be if the meanings of these words were our roadmaps and checkpoints through life.

# GRAND NEST HISTORY

I looked up the definition of the word “Fellowship” and found this:

*“Fellowship is a friendly association, especially with people who share one's interest.”*

What a wonderful word “Fellowship” is! How well does it describe us and what we do and who we are?

Think of our conventions, how for a few days, we all laugh and enjoy each other's company. We really are a family.

We share our belief in doing good things for our neighbors, we cherish our special friendships, and we share our love for each other.

We have to challenge ourselves to keep those themes alive and broaden the number of people who can spread their message.

There are so many encouraging signs out there. Look at Charlotte, look at Florida, look at Rhode Island, look at Northern Virginia, look at Mid Missouri, look at Indianapolis.

It can be done. More accurately, it **is** being done.

We have to be creative and persistent and open to change.

I am honored and humbled to be your new Grand Nest officer.

I promise to do everything I can to see Blue Goose grow and thrive, so that future generations of Ganders can experience what my young family and I did in 1996.

Who knows, maybe we'll see the day when a new Hawaii Pond will welcome us to one of our future conventions.

How awesome would that be?

# GRAND NEST HISTORY



## **GKGGE – Biography** **Dan Rich, GKGGE 2015-2016**

I was born and raised in the Bronx, New York and graduated from the State University of New York at Albany with a history degree.

I started my insurance career with the General Adjustment Bureau's Worcester, MA office in May 1977 as a multi-line adjuster. I transferred to Fitchburg, MA a few years later, and in 1987 moved to Connecticut to manage GAB's Hartford and New Haven offices. After a 30-year career as a property adjuster and manager with GAB, I changed careers in 2008 to become a Training Manager at the Traveler's Insurance Company's Claim University in Windsor, CT. I work closely with our claim rep trainees and teach estimating, coverage, and systems. I assisted the field during Hurricane Ike in 2008, the Alabama and Tennessee tornadoes, and Hurricane Irene in 2011, and Superstorm Sandy in 2012.

I joined the Hartford Pond in 1991 and served a full term as their MLG in 1996-97, and a partial term in 2000 when the MLG position became vacant. I've served on several Grand Nest Membership Committees, and have been a DMLGG from the Eastern Region since 2000. I was honored to have been a part of PMLGG-GNH Barry Snyder's team to write the "History of the Grand Nest's Second Fifty Years" document.

I was the Hartford Pond's Co-Chairperson for their 2005 Grand Nest Convention Committee, served on the Penn Pond's 2010 convention Committee, and have been the editor of *Hartford Ponderings* since 1995.

My first Grand Nest Convention was 1996 in Omaha, Nebraska, and I've attended a total of seventeen conventions over the following years. I've had the pleasure of attending Blue Goose meetings and charitable events in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Montreal. I very much look forward to traveling across North America to experience Blue Goose fellowship during my term as a Grand Nest Officer.

I've had the privilege of being mentored by not one, but by two, MLGGs from the Hartford Pond. I learned a lot about Blue Goose from Jerry Hale and Gordon Crowther, and I am honored to follow their examples.

I'm also a member of the New England Claim Executives Association, served as their President in 2006-07, and have been their Communications Chairperson for eight years.

Sue and I were married in 1978, and we reside in Simsbury, CT. We have two grown sons, Matt and Andy, and a lovely daughter-in-law Laura.

I am honored and humbled to be your new Grand Nest officer.



# GRAND NEST HISTORY

## **Report of the Judge Advocate Year ending June 30, 2014**



Most Loyal Grand Gander, Grand Nest Officers and Ganders:

I am pleased to give this report to you as the Judge Advocate here in Baltimore, Maryland at the 109<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Honorable Order of the Blue Goose International. This year I was privileged to serve under the leadership and administration of my close friend and long-time colleague, MLGG Bill Olson.

The 2000 Baltimore Convention was my first convention, and I was asked to attend that convention primarily to meet the Grand Nest Officers, in what turned out to be an interview for the position of Judge Advocate. It was a wonderful and memorable convention, with Bill Olson in charge of the Children's Program, which was a grand hit with all the children, and as I recall, many parents!

The following year, I traveled to St. Louis for the convention. The Judge Advocate at that time could not attend, so MLGG Cramer asked that I be the "acting" Judge Advocate for the convention. Marvin Wilson was sworn in as the MLGG for the Southern Region, and appointed me as the Judge Advocate for the 2002-2003 term. Since that time, I have been fortunate enough to serve under the administrations of MLGGs John Bishop, Dick Philippsen, Jerry Hale, Tim Seider, Keith Strohecker, Jack Fitch, JoAnn Clark, Bill Wasekanes, Joe Coccia, Lorena Kohlruss, Guy Charron, John Paris, and Bill Olson. Throughout that time, the Grand Nest Officers faced challenging issues regarding membership, technology and social change. It was a time of transition. Terry Maloney, our Grand Wielder, has served as the constant, steady rudder keeping the ship balanced and on course.

During that period, the Grand Nest focused intensely on the betterment and future of the Blue Goose. The Constitution & By-laws were continually updated including the Charge, the Opening Ceremony and Call to Order, clarification of methods of communications, reimbursement of expenses, dual membership, dues, and eligibility for membership, among other things. In fact, the updated version of the Constitution & By-laws was completed and circulated in our centennial year, 2006.

As with any large, long-standing organization with chapters covering a wide geographic area, the Blue Goose has experienced fluctuations in membership in various Regions over time. The Grand Nest Officers, with great admiration and respect for the past, diligently looked for new and innovative ways to decrease costs and to expand the goals of the Blue Goose. For example, the Grand Nest was able to reduce costs by utilizing technology to deliver the Bulletin and other communications to the membership. When the cost of liability insurance was too high to purchase for many ponds, the Grand Nest implemented a blanket liability insurance program for Blue Goose functions. When the Southern Region was unable to secure a pond to step up in 2007 for the 2012 convention, the Grand Nest turned to the Alberta Pond to step forward and put on a successful convention in Calgary. The situation arose again last year, when the Western Region was unable to secure a pond or officer for a convention in 2019. Once again, the Grand Nest turned to other regions to step in. Kimberly Bilbrey and the Dayton Pond stepped up to put on the convention.

Although Lorena Kohlruss of the Calgary Pond and Kimberly Bilbrey, and their respective ponds, stepped up to assist the Blue Goose, the Grand Nest has learned that having ponds in regions put on conventions out of turn is unworkable and disruptive to the rotation of regional conventions as mandated by the Constitution & By-laws.

## GRAND NEST HISTORY

While the Grand Nest has been actively discussing potential realignment of Regions on multiple occasions, it is imperative that affirmative and prompt discussions be had to formulate constitutional amendments to realign the regions effective immediately at the July 2016 Convention in St. Louis. One workable solution is to amend the Constitution & By-laws to reduce the Regions from five to four. The amendment would also provide for the appointment of a redefined Grand Keeper or Treasurer, who could be reappointed for continuity on an annual basis, but not represent a particular Region. The Grand Nest Officer appointments would therefore be expanded to include the Judge Advocate, Grand Keeper and Grand Nest Historian. As the Judge Advocate, I urge each of you to consider seriously the realignment of the Regions, and appointment of a newly defined Grand Keeper.

The Grand Nest continues to be focused on the expansion and growth of the Order. For example, the Grand Nest has supported either a booth or a reception at Property Loss and Liability Conferences each year since 2008. The Grand Nest has expanded the reach of DMLGGs in the Regions, and the Grand Nest has spearheaded marketing and favorable publicity for the Blue Goose in Canada and the United States. Recently, the “Rush for Goslings” effort has taken flight and proved very successful. In fact, due to the efforts of leaders throughout the Blue Goose, the trend has changed from a decrease in membership to an annual increase in membership.

Over the past 15 years, the Grand Nest has strongly supported and encouraged charitable works throughout the United States and Canada, resulting in important funding of thousands of worthy causes and acts of benevolence that have touched the lives of many in need. There have been rough estimates that the Blue Goose in present dollars has raised \$50,000,000 or more since 1906. This year alone, the Blue Goose raised over \$300,000 for charity. The charitable works of the Blue Goose continue to thrive and drive the Blue Goose into the future.

It has been my distinct honor to serve as the Judge Advocate with the dedicated men and women who have served as Grand Nest Officers, Pond Executives and Fellow Ganders in the pursuit of our guiding principles of Charity, Character and Fellowship. As many of you know, I am stepping aside so that others can have the opportunity and privilege to serve as the Judge Advocate. You are fortunate to have Bob Cockerham, a prominent insurance defense attorney and dedicated member of the St. Louis Pond, agree to serve as the Judge Advocate in Randy Wilson’s administration.

Please be sure to pay close attention to the Grand Nest’s proposed amendments of the Constitution & By-laws this coming year, as the future of the Blue Goose depends on your informed judgment to enact appropriate constitutional amendments realigning the Regions. As always, you can rest assured that you have dedicated and capable Grand Nest Officers who will work tirelessly together for the successful future of the Blue Goose.

Thank you for the privilege of serving as the Judge Advocate of the Honorable Order of the Blue Goose International.

Respectfully submitted,  
Robert Tayloe Ross  
Judge Advocate, PMLG

# GRAND NEST HISTORY



## **NEW JUDGE ADVOCATE** **Robert W. Cockerham** **Biography**

Bob offers extensive experience in civil trial litigation and appellate advocacy. He has tried more than 150 civil cases and has handled more than 100 appeals in various State and Federal Courts, many of which have been multi-million dollar suits and precedent-setting cases. He has also been listed in the "Top Verdicts in Missouri." He has been a proud and contributing member of the Missouri Pond for many years.

He is the Founder of Cockerham & Associates, LLC. and has expertise in the full range of personal injury, property damage, insurance coverage, products liability, arson/fraud and subrogation litigation, including serious bodily injury, death, fire destruction, large water losses, major building collapses, complex insurance coverage issues, fidelity losses and numerous other property and casualty matters. He is well versed in handling fraud claims of all kinds and litigating, through trial, cases involving misrepresentation in the application; misrepresentation, concealment and fraud in the claim; and numerous other legal, equitable, and subrogation cases.

He has also set precedence for Reverse Bad Faith cases against insureds. In addition to obtaining Reverse Bad Faith judgments exceeding \$1,000,000, he has secured judicial opinions upholding such judgments. He has also obtained judgments and settlements totaling in excess of \$100,000,000 in subrogation and other plaintiff cases. Especially well known for his appellate expertise, Bob received the "David J. Dixon Appellate Advocacy Award" from the Missouri Bar Foundation in recognition of his outstanding achievement in appellate practice.

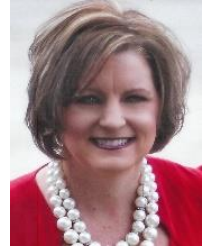
Prior to his private practice, he served as Staff Attorney for the Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District. Bob frequently lectures on various legal topics, including insurance litigation, subrogation techniques, as well as trial and appellate issues. In addition, he has authored numerous publications, articles, and a Treatise on Insurance Law. He has lectured and served as a contributing author for the Property Loss Research Bureau Claims Conferences, the National Association of Subrogation Professionals, the National Society of Insurance Investigators, the International Association of Arson Investigators, the National Business Institute, Inc., and the Annual Symposium on Property Insurance Law and Claims Adjustment.

Bob is the recipient of the National Society of Professional Insurance Investigators' President's Award and the National Society of Professional Insurance Investigators' Outstanding Achievement Award. He is also a Fellow of the Litigation Counsel of America, a Life Member of the Multi-Million Dollar Advocates Forum, and for many years has been honored as a Super Lawyer, Missouri & Kansas.

Bob and his loving and beautiful wife Stacy are the proud parents of seven wonderful and brilliant children, and a precious granddaughter. The family is active and committed to their church and various charitable organizations. Bob was elected unanimously by leaders throughout the world to serve as the Chairman of the Board of DeMolay International 2009-2010. He currently serves as the Chairman of the RiteCare Childhood Language Program for the Scottish Rite of the Southern Jurisdiction, U.S.A. He is honored to serve as your Judge Advocate of the Honorable Order of Blue Goose International.

# GRAND NEST HISTORY

## Grand Keeper Report Audit Report 2015



I had the pleasure of traveling to Milwaukee from Dayton on June 4<sup>th</sup>, accompanied by my husband to spend a few wonderful days with Terry and Lynn for the annual audit.

We arrived on a beautiful evening and headed straight to their lake house. We were greeted with wonderful food, festive drinks, and a gorgeous view overlooking their lake. We couldn't have asked for more gracious, giving, and accommodating hosts. In fact, we were ready to stay and move in 😊

Terry gave us a very informative city tour and we got to experience a few local restaurants that were delightful. It was a great exposure to what Milwaukee has to offer and also see what Terry and Lynn's life was like...

We had to make a detour and hit the Miller beer plant and also the Harley Davidson museum (as we are new bikers) as well as go to a local Harley dealer. Lots of fun, laughs, and of course the history and the AUDIT.

Terry and I went to the Blue Goose office and gave me a history lesson in Blue Goose and seen several artifacts in the archives and really learned a lot about the heritage. He also gave me a few items to take back to the pond. We also did an inventory of Pins that are in stock. Next, on agenda was the AUDIT.

The main duty of being the Grand Keeper is to conduct the Annual Audit and to work on the budget. We also work in conjunction with the accountant to oversee the books. Terry had done a good job of keeping me informed with where the operating statement was at monthly. We went through each line item and had a discussion of what was spent and what proceeds came in.

The audit results for the fiscal year ending on June 30, 2015, are as follows:

The year-end budget is at a surplus of \$4341 and the \$8394 under budget.

We will be able to contribute more to the bottom line of profit once this year the dues increase goes into effect for Grand Nest.

Terry Maloney, GWGQ, has done a great job of controlling costs and keeping all books balanced for many years.

I was very blessed and honored to make the trip and feel it is an ABSOLUTE must for all incoming Grand Nest Officers to have this experience. All the learning that had taken place you cannot get at a meeting or convention.

Thank you again for the opportunity to serve and also this trip will be in the memory bank forever.

Best Regards,

Kim Bilbrey - GKGGE



# GRAND NEST HISTORY

## Grand Historian Report Jerry Hale 2014-2015



Grand Nest Historian Jerry Hale commented on the Order's "*hard working officers*" who have promoted growth across North America. He praised the success of the "*Rush for Goslings*" initiative that "*is getting us younger; this is our future*". Jerry thanked the Ponds for supporting Blue Goose history, asked for submissions of historical items, and invited the convention to visit the archives.

Historical items on display in the Archive Room in Baltimore



# GRAND NEST HISTORY

## **Charity Report 2015** **Linda Meik, GCON, Charity Liaison**



This year the Charity report is broken into two parts: one provides an overview of our Ponds and Regions' efforts with charity contributions; the second part provides one with guidance on evaluating charities.

In December 2014, the National Underwriter magazine published an article on charity within the insurance industry called "Charity Works." The cover stated "Elevating the conversation about the insurance industry's power to change lives through its philanthropy is essential – and it begins here." It went on to say that "It is the spirit of 'coming together' that defines the insurance industry. The effort of the Insurance Industry Charitable Foundation is focused on highlighting the work that this industry's members do, and acknowledge its work as a united industry.

We in Blue Goose, collectively have one great story to tell and an incredible spirit of coming together to make a difference in lives. We need to remember that one of the most important things about charity, isn't necessarily about numbers, but about people. It is about each Blue Goose member's involvement and that they recognize the need and do something about that.

At the end of Blue Goose year 2013-2014 the Honorable Organization of Blue Goose International reported donations of \$203,926.36. Today, I am pleased and extremely proud to report that The Honorable Order of Blue Goose International for 2014-2015 has reported \$309,710.61 for charity. These dollars also comprise the scholarships awarded and any donations in-kind to non 501c3 organizations. We have 11 Ponds that did not submit a report. This year we are reporting a \$130,000+ increase over last year.

In this past Blue Goose year, there appears to be a better tracking of volunteer hours. Hours reported = 2,174.

In the charity dollar total a total of \$6,400 was allocated for scholarships.

I included all amounts listed on the submitted charity form, even if they were from entities not listed as 501C3 entities, it should be noted here that these really should not be classified as charity contributions going forward. Only donations listed as charity should be to 501c3 entities, all other contributions should be noted as "Gifts In Kind" or community involvement, contributions to conventions are not charity contributions. Receipt of sponsorships for golf or events should not be listed as charity unless all funds collected were given to the charity endeavors.

In 2012 -2013 from what had been reported our donation per Blue Goose member to charity was \$45.00, in 2013-2014 charitable cash donation equates to \$53.09 per Blue Goose member, and this year it is \$79.39 per member (active, life & dual).

What is interesting to note is that a good bulk of the funds were raised via golf tournaments, but there were several other awesome events that the Ponds have incorporated to raise dollars and to touch lives. Some of these concepts are: wine tastings, lobster feasts, Shuckin & Jivin, Monte Carlo Night, All Industry celebrations, partnerships with other insurance organizations, walk-a-thons, garage/yard sales, charity invitational. Hosting holiday luncheons, making Easter baskets, back-to-school packs, etc. I encourage each of you to visit with each other about what makes their charity events dynamic.

Congratulations to everyone for a job well done.

# GRAND NEST HISTORY

I am reaching out to our marketing committee, to ask them to work on getting an article published in a magazine about the Honorable Order of Blue Goose International's outstanding work/contributions to charity. Then I ask each of you to take this message back to each member in your Pond and/or Puddles and let them know what we have done collectively. Let's share this great work of the organization.

Below is a grid of the Ponds within a Region that reported charity activity either at mid-year or year-end. What is so striking about this information is all the various charities that Blue Goose Organization has touched.

**Canadian Region      Year End Membership = 1359    Charity Dollars average per member = \$75.71**

Pond	Charity	Dollars	Donation Items	Time
Edmonton	E4C School Lunch Program, Zebra Child Protection Services, Wings of Providence "The Home Next Door", Scholarship	\$40,550	250 toys = approx. value \$3,000	
Manitoba	Special Olympics, Insurance Institute, Christmas Cheer Board, Dream Factory Foundation	\$11,166		
Alberta	Animal Rescue Foundation, Brown Bagging Lunches for Calgary Kids, Women In Need Society, Calgary Food Bank	\$3,283.07		
Nova Scotia	Special Olympics, Insurance Institute of Nova Scotia	\$2,000		
British Columbia	Insurance Institute of BC, Special Olympics, Salvation Army	\$400	Toys for Salvation Army Toy Drive	
Ontario	No Report			
Quebec	Assoc. des auxiliaires Benevoles Hospital, Foundation des Auberges du Coeur, Scout 181 Saint Theophile, Cenacle Ste-Famile, La Maison Marguerite, Centre des Jeunes de St-Sulpce, Centre Le Beau Voyage, Maison L'intermede, Reguge des Jeux de Montreal, Foundation Ekuss, Popote St-Gilbert, Popote L'Entre-Gens, Cuisine Collective Grand-Plateau, Societe Canadienne Sclerose en Plaques, Foundation maison de l'enfance, Corporation L'Espoir, Centre de Repit Philou, Plein Air a Plein Coeur, Le Domaine Familial INc., L'Aviron, Fondation Le Grand Chemin, Villa Ignatia, La Maison de Lauberiviere, Societe pour les enfants handicaps du Quebec, Fondation de l'Autisme de Quebec, La petite Ferme de l'Auberge, Melanie St-Amour, Caartes cadeaux Marche Metro, Reseau d'entraide St-Leonard	\$30,200		
Regina	Saskatchewan Abilities Council, Scholarship	\$11,061		40 volunteer hrs.
Saskatchewan	Food Bank, Sask Cancer Agency, Saskatoon Interval House (Women's Shelter)	\$4,225	374 lbs food	
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$102,885.07</b>		<b>40</b>

# GRAND NEST HISTORY

**Eastern Region**

**Year End Membership = 744 Charity Dollars average per member = \$70.84**

Pond	Charity	Dollars	Donation Items	Time
Bay State	No report			
Garden State	Donation to Nat. Capital for convention = \$1,000	\$1,000		
Penn	Big Brothers Big Sisters, Autism Speaks, Philadoptionables	\$4,000		
New York	Marine Corps League, Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund, Make-A-Wish, Eastern Region pre PLRB sponsor, World Trade Center Memorial, JDRF	\$9,525		
Westchester	Rosary Hill Hospice, Wounded Warriors, Cardinal McCloskeys Community Service, Adaptive Sport Foundation	\$2,450	Food = approx. \$1,000	Providing a holiday party – volunteer hours = 8
Hartford	New Reach Shelter, Immaculate Conception Shelter, Prudence Crandall Center, Toys For Tots, Dorcus International Institute, “A Day for Dez”, Arthur C. Luf Children’s Burn Camp, CT State Firefighter’s Assoc., Doreen Nylund Fund, Bennett Cancer Center, Donate Life Connecticut, Treasured Time, Holiday for Heroes, Operation Military Kids, Women’s Center of Rhode Island, Ronald McDonald House of Providence, Scholarships	\$21,500	Socks & pillows, Winter Coats, toys, food collection, winter hats & gloves, towels, children’s socks, toiletries, household goods, personal care items = approx. value \$3,600	Volunteer service at the Holiday For Heroes Christmas Party = 48 volunteer hours
National Capital	Children’s National Medical Center, DC Firefighters Burn Foundation, Friends of Fort McHenry, Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, Disabled American Veterans, National Fallen Firefighters Foundation, HOBGI-Hartford Pond- 14 <sup>th</sup> Annual Charity Industry-Wide Celebration, The Friends of Quite Waters Park-Garrett’s Light, Salvation Army, Sunshine Kids, For the Kids, JDRF, Call for Coats, Providence center, Parole Rotary of Annapolis, Operation Second Chance, River Road Unitarian Universalist, Hospice of the Chesapeake, Multiple Sclerosis, Habitat for Humanity, Our Little Angels, Children’s National Medical Center, Autism Society of NO VA, DAV, MADD, The Angel Fund, St. Jude, American Legion & Samaritan Counseling, Children’s National Medical Center	\$14,229.15	Clothing, toys = approx. \$1500	1035 volunteer hours
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$52,704.15</b>		<b>1081</b>

# GRAND NEST HISTORY

Central Region

Year End Membership = 1016 Charity Dollars average per member = \$108.92

Pond	Charity	Dollars	Donation Items	Time
Dakota	No report			
Ohio	No report			
Dayton	Adopt a Park, ALS Ice Bucket Challenge, Clothes that Work, Alzheimer's Walk, Adopt Families, Relay for Life, Adopt a Park, Fish Food Pantry, Big Brothers& Sisters, Love for Liam, St. Aloysius Orphanage, member donation	\$63,678.93	Clothing, gift cards, toys = approx. value + \$18,250	549 volunteer hours
Greater Chicago	No report			
Mid-Missouri	No report			
St.Louis	Missouri Baptist Children's Home, Circle of Concern, Megan Meier Foundation, Women's Lawyer Assoc.	\$3,016	Garage Sale – Household clothing items, household goods = approx. value \$1,166	
Peace Garden	DARE of Clay County, Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Fargo-Moorhead	\$1,200		
Wisconsin	No report			
Heart of America	Camp Quality, Pro Vets Foundation, Bailey's Foundation for Kids, Independence Blvd Christian Church	\$6,500		Serving Holiday dinner to homeless & less fortunate
Michigan	Crossroads Homeless Youth Shelter, Capital Humane Society, VFW Home, WKAR Radio, Old Newsboys Goodfellow's Fund, Lyman Foundation, Race for the Cure, Kid's Food Basket, Special Olympics Area 11, Go the Distance Ministries, West Michigan's Therapy Dog's, God's Kitchen, Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of America, MANA Food Pantry, Otesgo County Food Pantry – Backpack program, Operation Feed a Family Alpena, Sunrise Mission, Spruce Food Pantry, Michigan State Police – Shop with a Cop, Toys for Tots, Red Cross, 2 scholarships	\$36,269.23	Coat Drive, toys collection	220 volunteer hours
Total		\$110,664.16		749



# GRAND NEST HISTORY

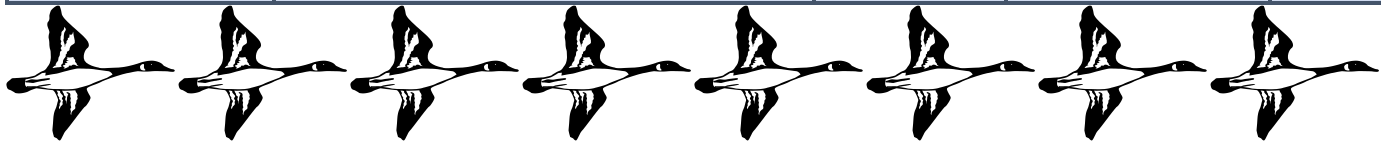
**Southern Region Year End Membership = 546 Charity Dollars average per member = \$72.36**

Pond	Charity	Dollars	Donation Items	Time
Alabama	No Report			
Florida	A Kid's Place, United Urban Outreach, Peak's Group Home, Achieve Development	\$11,942.36	Donations –in-kind: peanut butter, sippy cups,, bibs, pantry items, gift cards totaling \$5,371	130 Volunteer Hours
Kentucky	Kid's Center	\$380	108 lbs of food	
Louisiana	Funeral Assist for a BG member, Catholic Charities, widow of BG member, TN Williams of New Orleans, Kingsley House, Edgewood Vista, Second Harvesters, VA of New Orleans	\$4,649.99	Toiletries, personal items, canned food = approx. \$850	
North Carolina	No Report			
Oklahoma	No Report			
Tennessee	Salvation Army, Safe Haven, Jonah's Journey	\$2,000	Baby Items = approx. \$300	
Texas	North Texas Food Bank, Scottish Rite Hospital for Children, Scholarship Fund, Make-A-Wish	\$15,624	83 lbs of food, used clothing = approx. value \$2,000	40 Volunteer hours
Virginia	Wounded Warrior Project, EDMARC Hospice for Children, USO of Central VA & Hampton Rds, DARE Hospice, Comfort Zone Camp, ASK Childhood Cancer Foundation, , FREE, Crime Solvers, Midlothian Shrine Club, Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network, Kids Chance, The Rotary of Clubs of James River & Goochland, Virginian Home for Boys & Girls, American Red Cross, Hiddenwood Pres School, Eggleston Services, Alice Harrell (Alice's Army), Pagoda & Garden Foundation, Keavin Eadie Foundation, Pilmoor UMC Food Pantry, Tidewater Arts Outreach, Heroes, Inc.	\$26,910.88	Snack/drink items, bedding items, donations = approx. \$1,925	30 Volunteer hours
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$39,507.23</b>		<b>200</b>

# GRAND NEST HISTORY

Western Region Year End Membership = 236 Charity Dollars average per member = \$16.74

Pond	Charity	Dollars	Donation Items	Time
Seattle	Federal Way Food & Clothing Bank, , Ryther School for Handicapped, Mayors Day of Concern, WA Elks Therapy Program, Cocoon House (Teenage shelter)	\$1,500	Food items, clothing & household items	104 hours
Utah	Utah Assoc. of Indep. Agents Scholarship Fund, Utah Food Bank	\$700	\$200 in food items	
Colorado	Toys for Tots, The Gathering Place, Scholarship	\$1,750	New toys, food & clothing = approx. \$500	
Arizona	No report			
Total		<b>\$3,950</b>		<b>104</b>



## AWARD WINNERS

### **GORDON F. CROWTHER CHARITY AWARD:**

The criteria is based on all types of varied works of charity. The winner of this year's award is the **DAYTON POND.**

### **ST. JOE VALLEY POND MEMBERSHIP AWARD:**

This coveted award for the greatest percentage increase in membership went to the **FLORIDA POND.**

### **LINK OF THE YEAR**

Outstanding internet Pond web site winner is the **HARTFORD POND.**

### **KENTUCKY POND'S NO DROP-OUT AWARD:**

This is an extremely difficult award to achieve. This year's winner was the **FLORIDA POND.**

### **HEART OF AMERICA POND'S FELLOWSHIP AWARD:**

This year the pond with the least percentage drop in membership by reason of drop-outs and resignations was the **GREATER CHICAGO.**

### **PEACE GARDEN AWARD:**

This award is presented to the Pond having the most First Time attending conventioners. The winner this year is the **VIRGINIA POND.**

### **REGIONAL CHALLENGE AWARD:**

The best Region determined by using 5 membership award criteria is the **SOUTHERN REGION**

## REGIONAL CHALLENGE AWARDS

**East** NATIONAL CAPITAL 24 - Most New & Reinstated  
PENN 18% - Best % Increase

**West** UTAH\* 6 - Most New & Reinstated  
UTAH\* 7 % - Best % Increase

**Central** MICHIGAN 38 - Most New & Reinstated  
DAYTON 19 % - Best % Increase

**South** TEXAS 60 - Most New & Reinstated  
FLORIDA 139% - Best % Increase

**Canada** BRITISH COLUMBIA 29 – Most New & Reinstated  
BRITISH COLUMBIA 31% - Best % Increase

\* 2<sup>ND</sup> Year in a row

# GRAND NEST HISTORY

## CONVENTION MEMORIALS/EULOGIES

### HAIL FRIENDS AND FAREWELL....

The Convention's Memorial Service was conducted by Frank Marx, Andrea Clark, and Laurie Wolford of the Penn Pond. The name of each Pond was called and the members of that Pond stood in unison. If a Pond lost a member during the year, the name was called and a candle was lit.

PMLGG Chuck Cramer (2000-2001) was eulogized by GSOF Randy Wilson. Other eulogies honored Eastern DMLGG and Bay State Pond MLG Lisa Mullen (by DMLGG Dan Rich) and Southern DMLGG and Kentucky Pond Wielder Don Greeno (by Grand Custodian Linda Meik).



### **PMLGG Charles L. Cramer**

**1925 - 2015**

**Born in Philadelphia, Missouri**



At the age of 17, Chuck was selected for the US Naval Training program. He later served his country as an officer in the Navy during WWII.

Chuck began working for USF&G in 1947 and retired in 1987. A forty-year insurance career that culminated in his service as Manager of the St. Louis Branch.

He then worked as legal counsel with a St. Louis law firm for five years before complete retirement in 1992.

Chuck loved to play golf and was an avid golfer his entire life. He was a member of the Westborough Country Club where he hit a "Hole-In-One" in 1988.

To our wonderful first family from the Gateway to Fun in 2001, PMLGG Chuck and his beautiful first lady of Blue Goose, Dorothy ...you will always be in our hearts as representing the gold standard of character, charity and friendship. We salute and greet you in the silent hall of memory!

# GRAND NEST HISTORY

## **Donald Greeno – Kentucky Pond**

Donald Greeno arrived on this earth on February 27, 1935, in Frankfort, Indiana 80 years ago. He was one of four children, 2 brothers and one sister.



Don was a member of the Indiana National Guard. He became a medical malpractice insurance agent, working for Medical Protective Company.

Don joined Blue Goose in 1972 when he lived in Indiana, then, he transferred his membership to Kentucky in 1988. For 40 years, Don served the Blue Goose order and was a cornerstone of the Kentucky Pond. Don had many key highlights in his Blue Goose years: he attended 12 conventions, held many Pond Officer positions and at times held 2-3 simultaneously as he wanted the Kentucky Pond to survive, and he also served as a DMLGG for the Southern Region.

Don departed this earth on April 30, 2015.

## **Lisa Mullen- Bay State Pond and a Dual Member in the Hartford Pond**

The Hartford and Bay State Ponds, the Eastern Region, and all of Blue Goose lost one of our most beloved members when Lisa Mullen passed away on January 18, 2015.

She unselfishly served Blue Goose for over twenty years after joining the Garden State Pond in 1991. She joined the Hartford Pond the next year and soon became one of our key members; locally and across the Eastern Region.

She was our MLG in 1997-98, served on the Hartford Pond's 2005 and Penn Pond's 2010 Convention Committees, and served as Hartford's Charity and Scholarship Chair for years. She was to be a fundraising co-chair for our 2020 convention.

In 2012 Lisa took flight from Hartford to join the Bay State Pond, and she was their MLG at the time of her passing. She was also a DMLGG for the Eastern Region, as well as a dual member of the New York City and Westchester Ponds.

Lisa attended eleven of the Blue Goose annual conventions all over the US and Canada.



# GRAND NEST HISTORY

## PRE-CONVENTION MEETING

JULY 12, 2015

### BALTIMORE, RENAISSANCE HARBOR PLACE HOTEL

1. All current GN Officers plus PMLGG's Paris, Coccia, Kohlruss, R. Clark, J. Clark and Harwood were present.
2. MLGG Olson reported \$232,000 in revenue with \$225,000 in anticipated expenses plus \$23,000 in reserve. He used Host Pond fund to supplement some delegates to attend. St. Louis has \$235,000 in revenue and anticipates \$216,000 in expenses for July 20-23, 2016. South anticipates \$242,000 in revenue and expenses. Now at \$66,000 in revenue. July 11-13, 2019, Edmonton in Mid July 2018 anticipates \$253,000 in revenue and expenses Dayton Pond is early but has about \$20,000 in revenue.
3. GWGQ Maloney reported net increase in membership for the second straight year. Over 500 new members this year. Only 4 Ponds short on dues. Ontario has over \$2000 owed but needs to adjust member rolls
4. Discussion centered on a major Constitutional change going from 5 Regions to 4 Regions. The GKGGE position would be appointed by the incoming MLGG. Our JA will construct the amendment in proper form to be voted on in St. Louis. Other Issues: Garden State is down to only a golf outing. Westchester doesn't seem to have a way of recruiting members. Ohio Pond lost a key member and is in need of leadership. Dakota Pond will merge with Peace Garden. Chicago needs leadership and WGQ. Colorado has become invisible. Seattle is stagnant. Ontario has lost momentum along with Quebec. Alabama and Oklahoma have no potential. Areas of potential growth: Florida, Charlotte, Atlanta, Scottsdale, California, Lexington, Vermont, and Victoria BC.
5. Liaison reports from prior year are available along with the newest from Utah.
6. Awards will be published in the bulletin
7. PMLGG Bishop's amendment was not endorsed or proposed.
8. PMLGG Hale and Kohlrus will install new GN Officers.
9. GKGGE Bilbrey presented her audit report and this will be published in the bulletin.
10. GGOP Meik presented her charity report. Over \$300,000 donated this year. Report will be shared on the web. A new reporting form was developed to helpfully encourage more Pond responses.
11. JA Ross filed his last report. No activity this past year.
12. MLGG Olson asked to have the Marketing report displayed on the web. GKGGE Bilbrey and DMLGG Moran will be taking over the committee. Suggested web updates regularly. GGOP Meik will lead the membership group. The GN officers need to decide how to budget the \$7500 that will be allotted in next year's budget for marketing. We need to encourage use of twitter, linked in and sharing more photos, especially on our website
13. GWGQ Maloney announced that the Canadian relief amendment was automatically triggered as of March 31, 2015. Based on the Bank of Canada exchange rate on that day, the Canadian region will receive a 7% adjustment on dues paid to GN.
14. GSOF Wilson introduced a new vinyl sticker for your car as a marketing piece for recruiting members as part of the 2015-2016 Rush for Goslings

Respectfully Submitted,

Terry Maloney, GWGQ

# GRAND NEST HISTORY

## Post Convention Minutes

JULY 22, 2015

### BALTIMORE, RENAISSANCE HARBOR PLACE HOTEL

1. All the Current GN Officers were in attendance plus PMLGG's Harwood, Coccia, J. Clark, R. Clark, Kohlrus Olson and Paris
2. MLGG Wilson appointed GNH Hale and new JA Cockerham
3. MLGG Wilson executed the contract for GWGQ Maloney
4. Bank cards and resolutions signed by MLGG Wilson and GWGQ Maloney
5. GCOG Robertson made a motion seconded by GGN Bilbrey to accept expenses of GN Officers for Baltimore Convention. Unanimous
6. Discussion and motion to approve the 2015-2016 budget by GCOG Robinson, seconded by GGN Bilbrey. Unanimous
7. GSOF Meik set April 24-26, 2016 for the next Mid-Year meeting to be held at the Savannah, GA Hyatt.
8. Annual audit set for June 2016 with GKGGE Rich and GWGQ Maloney in Elm Grove, WI
9. GKGGE Rich provided photo and signature for use during his terms in office.
10. MLGG Wilson asked the GN Officers to send the roll call and minutes of the regional meetings to GWGQ Maloney.  
Committees and assignments to those were made by MLGG Wilson and will be published in the bulletin.
11. MLGG Wilson assigned the GN Officers their advisory assignments to the various committees also to be published in the bulletin.
12. MLGG Wilson asked the GN Officers to confirm their DMLGG appointments
13. Mileage rate is 57.5 cents per U.S. mile for 2015-2016
14. GWGQ Maloney asked for help obtaining certain PMLGG officers photos for the archives.
15. PMLGG Olson will be editing the "new gander welcome pack" for distribution
16. GCOG Robertson led discussion and concern that future hospitality functions only be held in common hotel meeting rooms and that all alcohol be served by the hotel. Future conventions will notify the hotels and the professional meeting planners of their decision.
17. MLGG Wilson suggested that Past JA Ross be given JA Emeritus status. GCOG Robertson made a motion, second by GGN Bilbrey. Unanimous.
18. GSOF Meik noted that the 4 regional format By Law changes need to be developed soon to make sure they are in compliance with our constitution, followed with a vote in St. Louis. In conjunction a new GKGGE job description and change to make this an appointed position also needs to be included. Some privileges would be offered to this position just like the JA and GNH.
19. GCOG Robertson noted that raffles in many areas are illegal and any questions should be brought to our JA for an opinion.
20. GSOF Meik made a motion to adjourn, seconded by GGN Bilbrey. Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted

Terry Maloney, GWGQ

# GRAND NEST HISTORY

## 2015 Grand Nest Officers



**Standing** – GCOG Mark Robertson, GKGGE Dan Rich, PJA Robert Ross, PMLGG Bill Olson, MLGG Randy Wilson, GNH Jerry Hale  
**Seated** – GGN Kim Billbrey, GSOF Linda Meik, GWGQ Terry Maloney

## 2015 Grand Nest Officers and Spouses



**Left to Right:** Linda Meik, Mark Robertson, Peggy Robertson, Kim Billbrey, Robert Ross, Susan Rich, Dan Rich, Elizabeth Olson, Bill Olson, Libby Wilson, Randy Wilson, Joanne Hale, Terry Maloney, Lynn Maloney, Gerry Hale



# GRAND NEST HISTORY

## 2015 Past Grand Nest Officers and Spouses at Baltimore



Standing – Bill Olson, Elizabeth Olson, Courtney Coccia, Joe Coccia, Lorena Kohlruss, Zelma Paris, John Paris, George Harwood, Donna Harwood, Joanne Hale, Gerry Hale  
Seated – Joann Clark, Rex Clark, Joanne Charron, Guy Charron



## GRAND NEST HISTORY

### History of the National Capital Pond

During the latter part of 1947, a number of Ganders, members of the Chesapeake Pond (Baltimore, Maryland), but domiciled in Washington, D.C., believed that due to the increase in fire insurance representatives in the National Capital, a local Pond should be established

Through the untiring efforts of Maurice May, Past Most Loyal Gander, and Bob Wiseman, Wielder of the Goose Quill, both of the Chesapeake Pond, and with the whole hearted endorsement of the Ganders of the Chesapeake Pond, a preliminary meeting was finally arranged at the Continental Hotel on April 9, 1948. Fifteen Ganders attended the meeting and with Maurice May appointed Chairman, organized the National Capital Pond and elected the following officers:

Robert L. Wiseman	Most Loyal Gander
Russell K. Davis, Jr.	Supervisor of the Flock
C. Norman Dorphley	Custodian of the Goslings
Gordon C. Piercy	Guardian of the Pond
Fred R. Bunting	Keeper of the Golden Goose Egg
Leslie H. Durloo	Wielder of the Goose Quill

The National Capital Pond Charter given under the hand and seal the Grand Nest Officers and dated May 17, 1948, at Milwaukee, Wisconsin listed the names of seventy-two Ganders as Charter Members of the National Capital Pond.

In 1951, as a very young Pond, we were privileged to have one of our own Ganders, PMLG Robert L. Wiseman, elected to the Grand Nest. Bob served in all the Offices of the Grand Nest and was the Most Loyal Grand Gander in 1956. Our Pond is very proud of Bob who was a Past Most Loyal Grand Gander (1956), Life Member (1956), and a Fifty Year Member (1992). Bob took his long last flight on August 18, 1994.

In 1953, our Pond published our first formal newsletter, named the “Honker” with PMLG James A. Wiley as the first editor. Over the years our newsletter has won several awards presented by the Grand Nest Pond Publications Committee, and continues to be a vital communications link with all our members. Over the last 25 years the Honker editors have been PMLG Ken Morris, PMLG Tom Cattell, PMLG Rene Carter and our current editor is Donna Digman.

Normally, the 49<sup>th</sup> Grand Nest Meeting would have been held in Washington, D.C., and the National Capital Pond would have been the host pond, with our own Robert L. Wiseman, the Most Loyal Grand Gander presiding. However, since 1956 was the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Blue Goose, it was right and proper that this important milestone should be commemorated on the banks of the Wisconsin Pond, the Home Nest. The National Capital Pond regretted not being the Host Pond, but cheerfully acknowledged its obligations to the Wisconsin Home Nest in assuming responsibility of the Grand Nest Meeting.

Since our inception, the National Capital Pond has been broad in charity. Over the years, we have supported various charities, and in 1972 we elected to make Children’s Hospital our primary recipient. Each year we hold a charity luncheon with a Washington Redskin as our guest speaker. Since 1972 we have donated over \$350,000 to Children’s Hospital. On September 16, 1993, the Pond voted to change the name of this event to The John Brenner Annual Charity Luncheon in honor of John Brenner, PMLG, who initiated our Pond’s first organized charities while serving as Most Loyal Gander in 1957. In 2011 the Washington DC Firefighters Burn Foundation was added as a second

## GRAND NEST HISTORY

recipient to share donations from the Annual Charity Luncheon. The Pond also gives \$500 donations to four charities as may be nominated by individual pond ganders and screened/approved by the Charity Committee.

In 1980, our Pond was again honored when PMLG David E. White was elected to the Grand Nest. Dave moved up through the chairs of the Grand Nest officers and was the Most Loyal Grand Gander in 1985. The 79<sup>th</sup> Grand Nest Convention was held at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington, D.C.

In August 1995, Barry L. Snyder was elected to the Grand Nest at the 89<sup>th</sup> Grand Nest Convention in Rye, New York. Barry proceeded his way through the Grand Nest Officer positions and in August 1999, in Seattle, Washington, became the Most Loyal Grand Gander. For the third time since the commencement of the Pond, National Capital Pond was privileged to host the 94<sup>th</sup> Grand Nest Convention in the year 2000. This event was held at the Hyatt Hotel in the Inner Harbor in Baltimore, Maryland.

August 6-10, 2000, the 94<sup>th</sup> Grand Nest Convention was held in that great American city growing and gleaming on the shores of the Chesapeake Bay, Baltimore, MD. A lively and diverse metropolis in the midst of a renaissance yet generally endowed with history and graciously blessed with charm. Our motto was “Baltimore Carousin’ in 2000”.

The National Capital Pond Ritual Team has conducted the Model Initiation in 1988 at the 82<sup>nd</sup> Grand Nest Convention hosted by the Ontario Pond in Toronto, Canada, in 2007 at the 101<sup>st</sup> Grand Nest Convention hosted by the Virginia Pond in Williamsburg, VA and in 2014 at the 108<sup>th</sup> Grand Nest Convention hosted by the Utah Pond in Salt Lake City.

PMLG William G. Olson is a current Grand Nest Officer and will be elected to the position of Most Loyal Grand Gander of HOBGI at the 2014 Grand Nest Convention. At the end of his tenure as MLGG in July 2015, the National Capital Pond will host the 109<sup>th</sup> Grand Nest Convention at the Renaissance Harborplace Hotel in Baltimore, MD. This will be the fourth Grand Nest Convention hosted by National Capital Pond over the last 60 years.

The National Capital Pond will continue to grow in strength and spirit. Our progress will be limited only by the ability of our members to carry out the object of the Order: Character, Charity and Fellowship.

*National Capital Pond Historian: James Dorsey*

## Photo Gallery



The National Capital Pond's Convention Planning Team: From left to right: Jim Kern , Patrick Bergin, Gene Newman, Michelle Fitzwater , Jim Dorsey, Donna Digman, George Burgee, Jimmy Lanham, Bill Olson and Allen Albrecht.



Another look at the Inner Harbor, Baltimore, MD.



## GRAND NEST HISTORY



Mr. America, MLGG Bill Olson, Linda Meik, GCN, and Dustin Bale, Mr. Canada



The three Blues Goose Blues Brothers: Gene Newman, Bob Partridge, Kevin Brady doing a little karaoke time.



Sailing around the Inner Harbor on the Spirit of Baltimore. A family evening of great enjoyment – a great dinner and wonderful sights along the harbor for all to enjoy.



# GRAND NEST HISTORY



MLGG, Bill Olson providing guidance to the Grand Nest Officers. Bill had given each Grand Nest Officer a historical name for the convention.

Below, Scott Sheads, Fort McHenry historian sharing some humor with MLGG, Bill Olson



Judge Advocate Robert Ross was honored with the historical title of General Robert Ross.



Mark Robertson was awarded the honor of being Admiral Alexander Cochrane

Always time for some great fellowship. Susan Miller, Edmonton; Carol Meyers, St. Louis; Jerry Hale, Hartford; Terry Maloney, Wisconsin Home Nest; and, Lynn Maloney, Wisconsin.



## GRAND NEST HISTORY



The Grand Ball culminates a grand convention. Everyone looking their finest.



As the convention comes to a close and Bill Olson now enters the ranks of the PMLGG