

HISTORY OF THE GRAND NEST

Honorable Order of the Blue Goose, International

2011– 2012



106th GRAND NEST CONVENTION
Hyatt Regency Hotel
Calgary, Alberta
July 26-28, 2012

MLGG Lorena Kohlruss

Prepared by:
Linda S. Meik
Most Loyal Grand Gander

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GRAND NEST HISTORY

GRAND NEST OFFICERS

2011-2012

Most Loyal Grand Gander

Lorena Kohlruess



Grand Supervisor

Guy Charron



Grand Custodian

John Paris



Grand Guardian

Bill Olson



Grand Keeper

Randall Wilson



Grand Wielder:

Terrence M. Maloney



Judge Advocate:

Robert Tayloe Ross



Grand Nest Historian:

Jerry Hale



GRAND NEST HISTORY



175 Ganders, spouses, guests and children from across the US and Canada journeyed to Calgary, Alberta to attend the 106th Blue Goose Grand Nest Convention from July 26-28, 2012. The convention was held at the Hyatt

Regency in Calgary in a great location – within easy walking distance of the many restaurants, shopping venues, and tourist attractions such as Stephen Street, Chinatown, and the Calgary Tower.

Thursday July 26, 2012

The Convention kicked off with a Western themed “Summer Stampede” Welcome Party in the hotel’s Imperial Ballroom. The Western theme was in evidence by the many cowboy hats bandanas, string ties and western shirts on display.



The food was western themed- with some terrific bison chili, ribs, cornbread, beans, chicken and all the fixings. Entertainment was provided by a troupe of actors dressed as cowboys. They engaged in an “OK Corral” style shoot-out that cranked up the decibel level of the evening quite high.



Friday July 27, 2012

After an excellent “Stampede Breakfast”, we moved into the Imperial Ballroom for the Opening Ceremonies. The Grand Nest Officers marched in, Most Loyal Grand Gander Lorena Kohlruss called the meeting to order, the flags were presented by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and the national anthems of the United States and Canada were sung by Jane Freeman.

The invocation was conducted by PMLG Dennis Bymak who asked us to hold hands with our neighbors during the prayer.

After the head table and attending PMLGs were introduced, Lorena and Judge Advocate Robert Ross made a special presentation to Terry Maloney in

recognition of his 25th year of service (1987-2012) as Grand Wielder.



Convention Chair

Gail Fisher read remarks prepared by Calgary's Deputy Mayor that commented on Blue Goose history and our themes of character, charity, fellowship, family and fun.



The next speaker was "Cowboy Poet" Doris Daley. She explained that this unique genre of poetry grew out of campfire songs that were transformed

into rhymed and metered verse. She entertained the crowd with several poems including "Old Age", "Salute to the Pancakes", "My Million Star Resort", and an original poem about Blue Goose. She conducted a White Hat Ceremony, honoring the Grand Nest Officers with the unofficial symbol of Calgary, and presented each of them with a white cowboy hat.

Manager of the Milwaukee Hyatt in 2006, when our convention was held there. He welcomed us "back" and spoke very warmly of Blue Goose.

Next up was Jim Molyneux, a spokesperson for Kids Cancer Care. They provide two summer camps in Alberta for entire families and also offer parental counseling, research, clinical support, and scholarship programs. A check for \$850, representing the proceeds of the Conventions Golf Outing, was presented to Mr. Molyneux.

Prior to the Memorial Service, a moment of silence was held to remember the victims of the Aurora Colorado shootings. The service started with "The Flight of the Geese" – an inspirational video about the ways in which a flock of geese works together for the common good of all.

The Virginia Pond's Barbara Curtis, Mark Jakobowski, and Mary Kay Marchetti conducted a beautiful and dignified service. The program included the Lord's Prayer, music, and photos or images of each Pond. As each Pond was called, its members stood in unison as their Memorial Report was read. If a Ganders had taken their Last Long Flight over the past year, and a candle was lit in their memory. Some of the music featured was *Amazing Grace* by Elvis Presley, and *Peace in the Valley* by Anne Murray.

Grand Wielder Terry Maloney gave a moving eulogy for his predecessor Jack Gravenstine, who joined Blue Goose in 1945 and served as Grand Wielder from 1962-88. Terry noted that in the long history of Blue Goose, the organization has had 112 Most Loyal Grand Ganders, but only 7 Grand Wielders. The service ended with a bagpiper accompanying the assembly in a rendition of *Amazing Grace*.

The Edmonton Pond conducted a very creative Model Initiation ceremony in the form of a curling match between the *Hoseheads* and the *Cowpatties*. The



Terry Maloney introduced Herb Rackliff of the Calgary Hyatt Regency to welcome us. Herb is an old friend of Blue Goose because he was the General

initiation room was transformed into a curling sheet as both teams engaged in good-natured banter while throwing a few stones throughout the ceremony as eight new ganders were initiated. The Blue Goose Ritual was supplemented to include many curling references.



The Initiation Team members were Andrew Happer (MLG role), Jim Gardiner, Tony Thibaudeau, Michael Sherban, Michael Downs, Gary Best, Rebecca Moss, Sarah Hirst, Mark Robertson (Admonition), and Neil Miller (Charge).

The All Industry Luncheon featured a presentation by Terry W. Krause, Ph.d of the Alberta Severe Weather Management Society. His topic was "Weather modification as a management tool for a changing climate". His fascinating remarks included an overview of how hail forms, and the use of cloud seeding as a means of hail suppression around the world and specifically in greater Calgary.

After the luncheon, the regional meetings were held between 2:00 and 4:00, followed by several Grand Nest Special Committee Meetings.

The evening's Family Night Dinner was held at the Calgary Zoo, as our members jumped on the C Train and disembarked after three stops. We enjoyed a fabulous dinner that was punctuated by much singing among the Pond tables. After dinner and the musical entertainment, we strolled through the Transalta Rain Forest and African Savannah Pavillions where we saw

apes, crocodiles, a hippo, some impressive bats, a giraffe, and many more exotic animals.



After returning from the zoo, many ganders found their way to the Hospitality Suites hosted by the Quebec, Utah, and National Capital Ponds.

Saturday July 28, 2012

After breakfast, Grand Guardian of the Nest Bill Olson remarked that there was so much singing at the zoo the previous night, that he thought it would be appropriate for everyone to sing one song together, and he led us through a rendition of "*Happy Trails*".

Next, the Quebec Pond presented a preview of the 2013 Convention, to be held on July 9-12, 2013 at the Chateau Frontenac (a Fairmont Hotel) in historic Quebec City, Quebec. The room rate will be \$239 per night with a registration fee of \$350 or \$200 for children.

Terry Maloney called the delegate roll call and recognized a formal motion that next year's Convention will be held in Quebec City. The motion was seconded, and accepted by acclamation.

MLGG Lorena Kohlruss called Saturday's meeting to order and introduced Grand Wielder Terry Maloney for the roll call of delegates. Terry asked the first-timers to stand and be recognized, then he called the

Ponds in alphabetical order, as the delegates from Alabama to Wisconsin checked in.

MLGG Kohlruss introduced the Deputy Most Loyal Grand Ganders from all our regions, and then she reported on her year in office.

Lorena recounted her many Pond visitations, including the December 2011 National Capital Luncheon, a March 2012 visit to the British Columbia Pond for a meeting and initiations, an April 2012 visit to the Southern Region for the PLRB Meet and Greet in Orlando, FL, and the April 2012 Mid-Year in Quebec City.

MLGG Kohlruss recapped the major steps taken to stimulate membership growth and revitalize the Order. She recognized Bill Olson for chairing the Membership Committee and thanked Dan Rich for his work in starting the Blue Goose Group on Linked In.

She singled out the revitalization of the Southern Region as one of her proudest accomplishments, stating that several Ponds had grown significantly, especially the Tennessee Pond that showed 138% growth.

She thanked the Committee on Regional Realignment for their time as they studied the complex problem. No realignment is imminent, but instead we are considering that future conventions be planned as “Regional” conventions. The Southern Region’s 2017 convention site has not yet been decided.

Lorena thanked PMLG Jerry Hale for looking at the possibility of international fundraising for future conventions.

On a personal note, Lorena spoke about Blue Goose and what it means to her –what does it have to offer, especially to a young mother like herself? She found her answer in the Cardinal Precepts of Character, Charity, and Fellowship, and concluded that Blue Goose reflects the “best” that people have to offer. She grew emotional as she explained how the Order has helped her grow personally and professionally. She thanked her Convention Committee (Gail Fisher,

Mike Peck, Steve MacInnis, Lynne Fawcett, and Dennis Bymak). She thanked her husband Gary Kohlruss and her fellow Grand Nest officers.

PMLGGs Joanne Clark and John Bishop reported on Lorena’s year in office. Joanne commented that the past year had seen a first – as a MLGG with a young baby had led our Order. Lorena’s key accomplishments were listed- her efforts at strengthening the Southern region, her dedication to the evolving concept of Regional Convention hosts, her overseeing major initiatives in marketing and social networking, the publicity she garnered for our Order in her cover story in *InsuranceWest* magazine, and the way she stepped in to help the Southern Region host the 2012 convention, and to a larger degree, her support of organizational flexibility as we move forward.

Grand Wielder Maloney gave an overview of how Blue Goose fared over the last year, describing it as “*a stable year with spectacular growth in some Ponds*”. He also cited the major renovations to the Grand Nest website as one of the year’s big stories, and he asked the Ponds to submit website content to the Grand Nest.

Grand Nest Historian Jerry Hale said that he was “honored and humbled” to have completed his first year in that position. He recognized his GNH predecessors –Gordon Crowther, Barry Snyder, and John Zeldam, who all in one way or another helped to prepare him for his role.



Jerry reported that four Ponds have completed writing their history, and characterized that as a poor overall response. He said that the Annual History of the Grand Nest Convention captures the history of each convention, but he made a strong case that the history of each Pond’s activities and special events should be memorialized as well. We should record the histories

surrounding the resurgence in the TN, Penn, and TX Ponds. It's important that we memorialize charitable endeavors, such as the Penn Pond's event that raised \$5,000 for the Make A Wish Foundation, and the Hartford Pond's volunteers that helped the USO welcome back deployed troops.

He asked our Ponds to send him their newsletters. The GN History archives are now at his home in Connecticut, and he brought "*just a sampling of our rich history*" in two suitcases for display in the hotel's McTavish Room. He promised to bring more to Quebec City next year.

Judge Advocate Robert Ross's report opened by citing the strong leadership provided by MLGG Lorena Kohlruss at a time when the Order was "*at a cross-roads for the five regions*". She stepped up to provide clarity and guidance as she worked closely with the GN Officers to navigate through the key issues – regional realignment, Pond communications, Pond websites, marketing and publicity, future conventions, charitable pursuits, and fundraising.

Robert said this was a stable year for the Order, and there were no referrals made to the Jurisprudence Committee. He will continue to examine the Order's legal issues as they appear. He emphasized that charity is the key to open a lot of doors –leading to marketing, future growth, fund-raising opportunities, and expanding our reach into the insurance industry.

Grand Keeper Randy Wilson thanked Terry Maloney and his family for the hospitality extended to him during his audit. Randy reported that the



finances are in good shape, and that last year we had a \$2,544 surplus based on income of approximately \$81K and expenses of \$77K. His full report will be published in the next Grand Nest Bulletin.

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 **Tennessee Pond**. The **Fellowship Cup** for the lowest % drops & resignations was won by the **Alberta Pond**. The **No Drop Out Cup**, awarded for no dropped members, was won by the **Ontario Pond**. The **Peace Garden Award Cup**, awarded to the Pond with the most first time convention attendees, was won by the **Regina Pond**. The **Link of the Year**, awarded to the Pond with an Outstanding Communication Strategy, was awarded to two Ponds, **Dayton** and **Ohio**, for their outstanding shared website.

The **Gordon Crowther Charity Award**, awarded to a Pond with outstanding charitable activities, was won by the **Penn Pond**, a Pond with just 28 members that was able to donate \$12,000 to charity including \$5,000 donations to the Wounded Warriors and Make A Wish.

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

The Regional Charity Awards concluded the morning's program. The **West Region** Charity Awards for the Highest % increase and Most new & reinstated members were both won by the **Utah Pond**. The **Central Region** Charity Awards for the Highest % increase and Most new & reinstated members were both won by the **Dayton Pond**. The **Southern Region** Charity Award for the Highest % increase was won by the Tennessee Pond and the award for the Most new & reinstated members was won by the **Virginia Pond**. The **Eastern Region** Charity Awards for the highest % increase was won by the **Penn Pond**, and the award for the Most new & reinstated members was won by the **National Capital Pond**. The **Canadian Region** Charity Awards for the Highest % increase the Most new & reinstated members were both won by the **Quebec Pond**.

The ten largest Ponds were announced, with Michigan (313) leading the pack ahead of Quebec, Ontario, St.

Louis, Hartford, Edmonton, National Capital, Nova Scotia, New York City, and Wisconsin.

Nominating speeches for the 2012-13 slate of Grand



Nest officers ensued, highlighted by PMLGG Marc Thurber's humorous nomination of Guy Charron as MLGG.



Goose veteran of 17 years, she thanked the Texas Pond and the Southern Region for their support. She singled out Bill Henry who supported professional networking during the downsizing crisis that started years ago. Bill called Terry Maloney and that interaction, plus the work of only one dozen dedicated individuals started the revitalization of the Texas Pond.

Linda spoke of the ups and downs in Texas Pond history; how it had 132 members in 1907, disbanded in 1914 as a result of World War I, reformed in 1921 and grew to 190 members, disbanded in 1992, and was reborn in 1995. At its height, the state of Texas had four Ponds (South Texas, Alamo, West Texas, and Texas (Dallas) Pond) and three Puddles (Austin, El Paso, and Corpus Christi).

Today there is one Pond in Dallas, with a Puddle in Houston, and interest in another Puddle in San Antonio.

Linda's first convention was in Seattle in 1999, and she recalled the kindness of Joe Coccia and Rich Mancuso for making her feel so welcome.

She spoke of Blue Goose's strengths –the wonderful people in our group, the memories of our fun times, and the rewarding self-fulfillment of our charity work. She suggested that communicating our dedication to charity should be a cornerstone of our strategy. We should be innovative, mentor our young, participate in events throughout our respective regions, and make our conventions "a place for families to come to".

She shared "what Blue Goose means to me" in a rather unique manner:

B - est of the best
L - ove of fellowship
U - nity
E -verywhere, all corners

G - anders
O - nward to growth
O - ver the top in charity



PMLGG John Bishop installed Charron of the Quebec Pond as Most Loyal Grand Gander, John Paris of the Utah Pond as Grand Supervisor, Bill Olson of the National Capital Pond as Grand Custodian, Randy Wilson of the St. Louis Pond as Grand Guardian, and Linda Meik of the Texas Pond as Grand Keeper.



Linda Meik, the Grand Nest's newest officer accepted her installation "with pleasure, pride, and humility"; then shared her thoughts with the convention. A Blue

S – ail to the future with technology
E – ducate others

Most Loyal Grand Gander Guy Charron’s Address of Acceptance followed. He thanked the Quebec Pond and his wife Johanne for their years of support, and presented Johanne with a bouquet of flowers. Guy has been a Blue Goose member since 1976 and was a convention co-chair for 1998’s Montreal Convention. At the conventions, his experience of “*meeting so many wonderful people*” reinforced his desire to be a long-term part of this group.

Guy is committed to moving the Order forward. He is glad to see our numbers increasing and he is encouraged at the influx of a new generation of young members because they “*are the future of Blue Goose*”

MLGG Joanne Clark presented a PMLGG plaque and pin to Lorena Kohlruss.



Our Ganders had a luncheon at Bookers BBQ Grill. The buffet meal featured potato salad, corn bread, corn on the cob, brisket, and jambalaya. There was live entertainment that added to a very nice lunch experience.

That evening, the Convention culminated with a cocktail reception in the Grand Foyer and a Grand Nest Banquet and Ball in the Imperial Ballroom.

The dress theme was Southern Hospitality, and we saw many Southern Belles with long gowns and



parasols, and several resplendent Southern Gentlemen sporting morning coats. The food and band were terrific and many Ganders were seen dancing into the wee hours of the morning.

The Alberta Pond hosted an outstanding convention, with a very nice full breakfast every morning, including the morning after the Banquet. We are very grateful to the Calgary Convention Committee; Chair Gail Fisher, Co-Chair Dennis Byrmak, and Committee Chairpersons Steve MacInnis, Lynne Fawcett, Gerard LeClerc, Garry Kohlruss, Annie Graziano, Mike Peck, Cheryl McShane, and Denise Waldhuetter for their efforts to plan and produce such a successful and thoroughly enjoyable event.

Respectfully Submitted – Dan Rich

GRAND NEST HISTORY

Most Loyal Grand Ganders Report 106th Grand Nest Convention

Lorena Kohlruss, MLGG 2011-2012



Grand Nest Officers—Past and Present—Delegates, Ganders and Guests:

This has been a full and eventful year.

In December 2011, I attended along with my husband Garry, and daughter Aria, to the National Capital Pond for their great Charity Luncheon. It was great event and it was an honor to be able to speak about our organization to the attendees. Again, I would like thank the National Capital Pond for the invite. In 2008 I believe, PMLGG Jack Fitch bestowed upon Bill the title of Grand Chauffer. Well, he truly was not only a “Grand Chauffer” touring Garry, Aria and me around Washington but, he welcomed us into his home in the blue goose tradition. Thank you again Bill for your, friendship and the hospitality of your family.

In March I had an opportunity to visit the BC Pond and it was an honor to participate in their initiation of 10 new members.

In April, although we did not have a booth at the PLRB Conference, I attended the “Southern Region Splash” in Florida. It was encouraging to see several of our members from the Southern Region present and taking the opportunity to promote our Order in the Southern region. I was able to speak with several individuals who were enthusiastic about joining our Order and assisting starting up puddles. I have no doubt that as a result of the efforts of our members at that Splash, we will see the growth of several new puddles throughout the south, over the next few years.

From Orlando, we flew straight to our Midyear Grand Nest meeting in Quebec City, where our convention will be held next year. The hotel is spectacular, the City is beautiful with history, and I look forward to visiting next year with a lighter schedule and some warmer weather...of course the hospitality of our Quebec Pond was “special”.

Major steps have been taken for the continuation and growth of the Order. My focus during the term as MLGG has been on the re-vitalization of the Order. I am pleased to say that with the help of our members, grand nest officers, PMLGGS, and DMLGGS we have already noticed a growth in the Order. The marketing and communications committee, led by Bill Olson and DMLGG Dan Rich, and their committee members, have been addressing the issue of Pond websites. As a result, several Ponds now have new websites AND, if you have not already done so, you must check out Grand Nests new website! We encourage the Ponds with existing websites to keep your site updated.

DMLGG Dan Rich has done a terrific job with keeping on top of potential new members who have become interested through our group in LINKED IN and attracted through the PLRBs. This has been very time consuming and a lot of work for Dan, and encourage all of you who are contacted by Dan or any other member of our organization regarding a potential member, please follow up with that person.

Over the past few years, we have been working hard to re-vitalize the Southern Region. Efforts through our DMLGGs and members in the South, in particular Linda Meik, we have witnessed an increase in membership and re-vitalization of several Ponds. To just give you one example, there was an astounding 138% increase in membership with the Tennessee Pond. This type of growth did not happen without the commitment and hard work of our DMLGGs and members of the Southern Region and they should be acknowledged for their efforts.

We set up a special committee to address the issue of regional re-alignment and Future conventions. This committee consisted of Wendy Hubbard, PMLGG Jack Fitch, PMLGG Larry Lewer, PMLGG George Harwood, DMLGG Martin Moran, and Ray Wicker chaired by PMLGG JoAnn Clarke. I want to personally thank the committee for their in-depth consideration of the issues. One of the main reasons for this special committee, was due to the decrease in membership in some regions and the financial reality of some regions/ Ponds in those regions being able to host a Convention, in particular at this time, the Southern Region. Regional re-alignment was considered but was not the appropriate solution at this time. Instead we have reached out to the regions to consider the concept of a "Regional Convention". I am pleased to say, that with that concept in mind, the Southern Region will now be able to host a "Convention" – a "Regional Convention". The Ponds have made a commitment to work together to raise money to financially support the convention. The location for the Convention as not yet been decided, as we continue to explore the options that financially to our membership would maximize attendance and not require significant dollars to host a convention in that City. We have a strong officer for the region and strong past, present and future DMLGG's in the region who have all made an commitment to work hard not only with assisting with the Convention but with their duties to continue assisting with the re-vitalization of the South. If this proves successful, this may be the way our future conventions may be held.

Gerry Hale has been doing background work looking at ideas of how we can raise money on an international level for funding of future conventions. If anyone is interested in assisting or has any ideas, let Jerry know.

Many of our members and Ponds across Canada and United States are asked the following questions. What is Blue Goose? What does Blue Goose have to offer? Why join Blue Goose - how will it benefit me? I personally was asked the question - why would an insurance lawyer and young mother want to "lead" such an organization? On a professional level, Blue goose offers a unique opportunity for social interaction, including charity work, all done within the context of the insurance industry. These guiding principles of character, charity and fellowship, may just be what our countries need more than ever before. Blue Goose stands for the BEST PEOPLE HAVE TO OFFER. It offers a strong Foundation for every member to grow on both a personal and professional level. If you make the EFFORT as an individual to inculcate the principles of character, charity and fellowship into your everyday lives and as a member of Blue Goose, you will each be able to answer those questions - What is Blue Goose? What does Blue Goose have to offer? Why join Blue Goose - how will it benefit me?

I would now like to recognize and thank the members of my Convention Committee for their dedication and hard work over the past years. Gail Fisher our convention Chair, our Permanent Weilder. There are no words that would do justice; she has been my ears, my eyes and confidant.... thank you so much just for being you and being there any time that I needed you. Mike Peck, we have shared struggles and frustrations together but no matter what was put before you, you always found time to ensure matters were always taken care of. I know that this has taken away many hours from you spending time with your wife and two young sons and I really do understand the sacrifice you have made – thank you!!...And I can't forget, PMLG Steve McInnis, the person responsible for my involvement – over the years has just been that one person, when I look at him, he just knows, and out comes the arms and that smile and those words "it will be fine". Thank you!! And Lynne

Fawcett – stepping in whenever asked, and never saying no! PMLG Dennis Bymak, for your friendship giving my husband that break he needs – “golfing”. There is so much more I could say about these individuals and many others that I have not mentioned who have played role in supporting this convention and me in my position of MLGG and I thank you for that. Please give them a hand for all of their dedication and hard work. Last but most importantly, I also must thank my husband, Garry, for his support over the years, in particular since the birth of our little Aria, he has gone beyond what most spouses and fathers would do. Garry also assumed the role of Convention Chair for the Golf tournament which was met with great success and fun had by all attendees. Thank You!!

With that said; any accomplishments that occurred during my tenure as Most Loyal Grand Gander only occurred because of the efforts and support of my fellow Grand Nest Officers. I want to thank each of you for your support and sincere dedication. I must thank our Judge Advocate, Robert Ross, who has not only become a very good friend over the years, but as a lawyer, understood me. He has been there for me at every instance. Yesterday was the perfect example – and my Terry, all I can say is you’re the “man” - your guidance and dedication to the “Queen Bee” has been most appreciated and not forgotten. And Lynne, hopefully our incoming MLGG won’t insist on talking to Terry even while on the boat at the lake.

As I leave the role of MLGG, I intend to continue assisting in the revitalization of this Order. However, we must all be proactive to ensure the continued growth of our Order. As we look to the future we want to foster leadership and communications and always be true to our guiding principles of charity, character and fellowship and the blue goose will fly.

Thank you for allowing me to serve this Honorable Order.

Respectfully submitted,
Lorena Kohlruss MLGG
2011-2012

GRAND NEST HISTORY

106th Grand Nest Convention Guy Charron, MLGG 2012-2013



I would like to start my acceptance speech with a few words in French.

Aujourd'hui, c'est avec honneur et fierté que j'accepte la position du Très Grand Féal Jar. J'aimerais remercier tout L'Étang du Québec pour leur support et toutes leurs contributions durant les années envers L'Oie Bleu. Je crois sincèrement durant ces années, nous avons fait une équipe exceptionnelle.

Today, it is with honor and pride that I accept the position of Most Loyal Grand Gander. I would like to thank the Québec Pond for all their support during the years and their contributions and time that they have given to this fraternity. I believe over the years, we have made a great team, become unforgettable friends and I would like to thank them personally. (Please stand – Jacques / Marc / Diane / Sylvie).

I want to also thank my wife Johanne for her encouragement, loyalty and patience over the years. She has been a great support system for me and my daughter Karolyn. We are so lucky to have been blessed with such a great wife and mother.

For people who do not know me, I will make this brief. My career in the Insurance Industry started in 1964 at an Insurance Broker, Fairfield & Ellis from Boston who had offices in Montreal and Toronto. The experience I obtained led me to a position in an Insurance Company, Commercial Union, and then I moved on to Allstate Canada for the next 23 years. I finally retired last October from a Mutual Insurance Company where they specialized in insuring Churches and Congregations. I miss the Industry and I am thinking about doing contractual work in the future.

I have been a member of the Blue Goose since 1976 but did not participate in many functions at that time. I really got seriously involved in 1997 when my good friend, Marc Thurber, contacted me and convinced me that I would be a great asset to the Québec Pond. Well we all know how Marc can be persuasive. In 1998 Montreal was hosting the convention and I worked as co-chairman with Jacques Cueilier. This was a great experience that I will never forget. I met so many Blue Goose people that year and knew that this was a fraternity of so many good men and women and that I wanted to become more involved.

I have missed a few conventions since 1997 because of work related but have appreciated and enjoyed all the new friendships I have made. I have also learned so much about the Blue Goose during that time and I am sure this has made me a better person today.

In 2007, I was again approached by Marc and Jacques to become an Officer of the Grand Nest. As I said before, they can be very persuasive.

I became an Officer of the Grand Nest and today, I am most honored and especially humble to be your Most Loyal Grand Gander for 2012-2013. I am following in the footsteps of a great lady and a good friend, Lorena and that will be quite a challenge. Thank you for your guidance, advice and support during the past year. I will not only be following in Lorena's footsteps but all the other Most Loyal Grand Ganders who have brought so much to this organization.

I also must mention these important people who have guided, supported and kept me focused. : Terry Maloney, Robert Ross, Gerry Hale, Joe Coccia, John Parish, Bill Olson. I thank all of you.

As I stand here today as your Most Loyal Grand Gander, I am enthusiastic and willing to put in as much effort as possible to continue with what the Blue Goose represents, which is character, charity and fellowship. These goals remain important as we move forward.

Our membership is slowly starting to increase mostly due to the younger generation becoming new members and we must encourage them because they are the future of the Blue Goose. I also would like to stress the fact that this younger generation are using the Web more and more. The Grand Nest have redone their Web Site for that purpose. I would like to help and encourage any Ponds who do not have a Web site, to do so as the Web is a great communication tool.

During my term, I intend to visit various Ponds in Canada and the US to continue to promote what the Blue Goose organization represents. I am looking forward to meeting as many members as possible and helping in any way I can.

With the help of my fellow Grand Nest Offices and let's not forget our DMLGG's, I am sure we will meet with many challenges but I, as your Most Loyal Grand Gander will do my best to represent you.

As I said in the beginning, it is with honor and pride that I accept today the position as Most Loyal Grand Gander. Thank you everyone for your acceptance, respect and friendship.

Guy Charron / MLGG

GRAND NEST HISTORY

**GKGGGE -Address of Acceptance
106th Grand Nest Convention
Linda Meik, GKGGGE 2012-2013**



Grand Nest Officers, current and past, fellow ganders and guests, it is with great pleasure, pride and humility that I accept the nomination for the Grand Keeper of the Golden Goose Egg. Over these past seventeen years it has been great honor to serve the Texas Pond, the Southern Region as a DMLGG, and to support the Grand Nest in their work for the Order.

I know it is hard to believe that this very young, youthful body has been around this organization for seventeen years. As I reflect back on these days, I can't help but think of my good friend Bill Henry, whom many of you know. It was one hot summer late afternoon and he and I along with some other insurance folks were gathering at one of our favorite watering holes discussing the plight of the insurance industry, when Bill said we need to come together and network, be supportive of each other if we are to survive this "so-called insurance downsizing crisis."

Well Bill left that meeting and began searching for an organization that embodied this endeavor, when he stumbled upon Blue Goose and gave Terry Maloney a call. He mentioned it to some of the group, only to find out that some had been members of other Ponds during their careers.....and so began the work to pull folks together and revive the Texas Pond. For those of you that know, this is a refresher of the Texas Pond history...and for those that don't know...well come along and let me take down this wonderful memory lane.

Texas Pond was first chartered in 1907, with 132 Ganders and then disbanded due to World War 1 in 1914, reformed in 1921, with 190 Ganders, disbanded 70 years later in 1992, revived in 1995. At one point in time there were 4 Ponds in Texas: South Texas (Houston); Alamo Pond (San Antonio); West Texas (Lubbock); and Texas Pond (Dallas). Also, there were three Puddles: one in Austin, one in El Paso and one in Corpus Christi. Today we have just one Pond based in Dallas/Fort Worth, with Puddles in Houston and we are working on San Antonio.

Now, as the story would have itthis last time the Texas Pond received its Charter back was at the Westchester Convention in New York. At this convention, the formal night was to be a Black & White affair...my friend and your friend Bill Henry contacted the so-called powers that be and asked about this "Black & White" affair...and asked the question..."So it's anything black & white – correct?" and he was told yes....so Bill Henry arrived at the formal dinner dressed as a black & white cow.

To commemorate this grand event, I have black & white cow pins for anyone that wants them,whereby you will note that the great state of Texas is on the cow's rear-end! No pun intended.

Now as for me, this is the thirteenth convention, I have attended.....and I will echo the words that are so often said..."You do not know Blue Goose until you have been to a convention." Back to my friend Bill Henry...he kept after me and said Linda, ya really have to go represent us and see what a convention is about...well it was exactly 5 days before the Seattle Convention was to take place and I called Rex Clark to ask if there was any available space and could I still get a hotel room. Rex made it happen...and off I went to Seattle.

Now what was special about this convention was not only did I really begin to see the workings of the Order, but what I remember most of the convention, is sitting in the lobby looking like a deer in the headlights...trying to

grasp what was going on...and there lo and behold were a couple white knights (or should I say Ganders) with their wives who took me under their wings: Joe Coccia and Rich Mancusio. They gave me all sorts of wisdom...a million laughs...and made me feel like I had always belonged in the group. Thanks guys!

The rest is history...onto St. Louis, Baltimore, North Carolina, Los Angeles, Nova Scotia, Virginia, Wisconsin, Niagara Falls, Reno, Philadelphia, and Michigan.

Now, I took you down this memory lane as it shows perseverance of the Order to keep reviving itself, it shows great fellowship and enjoyment of life, and oh, the memories that build our history.

The cornerstones of our Order are building character, supporting charity and promoting/fostering fellowship. For these cornerstones to be strong, we need to develop our membership...spread the word (communication), mentor the young to appreciate the cornerstones and history of our order, allow them to be innovative and creative in building character, supporting charity and promoting fellowship.

As the Southern Region representative for the Keeper of the Golden Goose Egg...again the message must resonate loud and strong that this is a Regional endeavor for the convention, not just a single Pond within the Region. The goal is make the convention a place for families to come and enjoy the comradery of our industry. Who knows we may be developing our legacy thorough these young attendees. The fate of our order's continual existence lies within each of us. Each One – Reach One!

In closing let me leave you with what the various letters in Blue Goose represent to me:

B = Best of the Best – Yes, we are!

L = Love of fellow mankind.

U = Unity through great fellowship.

E = Everywhere – all corners of our great lands.

G = Ganders – head the call.

O= Onward to great growth in membership.

O= Over the top in charity endeavors.

S = Sailing into the future with new technology.

E = Educate others about our great organization.

I look forward to deepening my knowledge of the Order and working toward the good of this Order over the next 5 years.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Meik

Grand Keeper of the Golden Goose Egg

GRAND NEST HISTORY

Annual Convention and Meeting Report of the Judge Advocate Year Ending July 1, 2012



Most Loyal Grand Gander, Grand Nest Officers and Ganders:

During this one hundred and sixth year of the Honorable Order of the Blue Goose International, I am pleased to give you this report as the Judge Advocate.

It has been my great pleasure to serve again as the Judge Advocate for the Honorable Order of the Blue Goose, International, under the administration of Lorena Kohlruss, the Most Loyal Grand Gander, who has been a strong leader of our Honorable Order. MLGG Kohlruss has paid close attention to every Pond over her one year as Most Loyal Grand Gander. MLGG Kohlruss worked closely with Grand Nest Officers to address key issues facing our Order, such as potential realignment of Ponds, charity, website enhancement, communications as well as marketing of our Order, future conventions and funding issues. While doing so, she has fostered enthusiasm, growth and development of our Order.

While the Grand Nest has been very active over the year 2011 through 2012, addressing the immediate and future challenges of the Order, there have been no issues referred to the Committee on Jurisprudence or to the Constitution and By-Laws Committee.

As always, the Grand Nest continues to focus on the Order's charitable activities and ways to quantify our efforts. Charity goes hand in hand with our marketing efforts, which will translate into the expansion of the Blue Goose. The Grand Nest has also focused on future conventions throughout the regions and has assisted Ponds in negotiating contracts with hotels for future conventions.

As we endeavor to pursue our guiding principles of charity, character and fellowship, we must be mindful of the importance of increasing membership, expanding our reach within the insurance community and strengthening our leadership for the continued vitality of our Order.

It has been a great honor and a distinct pleasure for me to serve the past year as the Judge Advocate of the Honorable Order of the Blue Goose International.

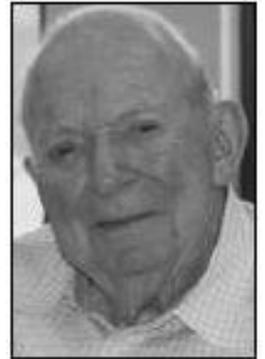
Fraternally,
Robert Tayloe Ross
Judge Advocate, PMLG

GRAND NEST HISTORY

HAIL FRIEND AND FAREWELL....

John "Jack" B. Gravenstein Past Grand Wilder of the Goose Quill 1915 – 2011

Jack B. Gravenstine was born on April 30, 1915 in Haddonfield, N.J. The family relocated to the Milwaukee area and Jack graduated from Washington High School in 1933. Jack spent his entire career in the insurance business, servicing insurance agencies throughout Wisconsin. This was done in person back then, and Jack traveled to all corners of the state to meet with his agents.



Jack joined the Honorable Order of the Blue Goose, International on November 22, 1945. Jack served the Blue Goose in many areas, but most importantly as the Grand Wilder of the Goose Quill from 1962-1988. At the time of his death on December 20, 2011, Jack was a member of the Wisconsin Home Nest as well as a dual member of the Florida Pond.

Jack will be very missed!



Past Grand Nest Officers and Spouses at Calgary



Pictured Left to Right: PMLGG Marc Thurber, PMLGG John Bishop, PMLGG Gerry Hale, Gary Kohlruss, PMLGG Joe Coccia, PMLGG JoAnn Clark, PMLGG Rex Clark, PMLGG Larry Lewer, Donna Harwood, PMLGG George Harwood, Courtney Coccia, PMLGG Lorena Kohlruss, Connie Lewer

GRAND NEST HISTORY

PRE- CONVENTION MINUTES

July 25, 2012

Hyatt Regency Hotel, Calgary, Alberta

1. All current officers as well as PMLGG's Coccia, J Clark, R Clark, Harwood and Lewer were in attendance.
2. GWGQ Maloney reported that there were no receivables, dues were collected within reason. Membership was stable this past year. Budget is fine.
3. The Western region noted San Diego disbanded and Los Angeles area is once again dormant. The Canadian region is trying to resolve a membership issue in the BC Pond. New Brunswick needs to communicate more. Ontario lost their WGQ and is in need of watching at this transition point. The Eastern region has serious concerns in regard to Garden State survival. Providence RI was site of PLRB regional meeting and BG hosted 100 at a party. The Central Region has NO OHIO delegates. Indiana is in a slow recovery hopefully. Heart of America and Wisconsin need to be more active. The South has seen Tennessee rebound well with a surge of members.
4. The awards for attendance were noted and will be published.
5. Confirmation was made for all GN nominees.
6. PMLGG Bishop will do the installation.
7. GKGGE Wilson presented the Audit Report which will be published in the Bulletin. He recommends that in the future all of the future convention reports include an attachment of the bank statements confirming money is on hand.
8. JA Ross said no other activity in Constitution and By Laws except for the tabled amendment for membership eligibility. JA Ross gave his report also. GGN Olson on Communications noted the new International Website and LinkedIn connection. Gander Dan Rich has opened a Facebook connection. B Olson wants to develop a special Charity section for the Website. His goal is for each Pond to have a website. He suggested the Budget needs to have funds used to market our Order. See GGN Olson's report attached. Also attached is report by DMLGG's Rich and Meik on Social Media. GSF Charron filed a charity report attached to these minutes. PMLGG, GNH Hale discussed National Funding thru sponsors etc. both locally and nationally. He will continue to lead us in achieving this opportunity. Discussion on voluntary assessments to Ponds for convention support was tabled until the Post Meeting. PMLGG Bishop stated the Bilingual report on having access to our key GN Manuals etc. is not completed. He has had difficulty in reaching PMLGG Thurber.
9. No Canadian relief for 2012.
10. JA Ross led discussion on trademarking our logo. MLGG Kohlruss made a motion to proceed. GCG Paris second. Unanimous.
11. JA Ross felt our mission statement clearly defines our position regarding any possible Anti Trust allegation.
12. Further discussion on GGN Olson's interest in proposing an amendment to expand eligibility was not acceptable to the other officers at this time.

13. GWGQ Maloney congratulated the Alberta Pond in offering a very attractive incentive for the local BG members to attend. The hope is that future conventions will consider their model.
14. The Quebec budget presented as \$180,000 in income currently. Room cost will be \$250. They are anticipating having 300 attendees and still break even. The Utah Pond has \$47,000, a 214 club to raise funds from special members, Ken Miller is their convention chair. Marriott is the hotel. Planner is contracted. They are developing a website. Alberta is set with a \$175,000 – 169 attendees estimated. \$4000 surplus no penalties. St Louis has hired PEC with Hilton at the Ballpark the hotel. \$65,000 revenue now. Hotel rate is \$140. The East has \$20,000 from Penn convention. Discussion of a cruise convention continues with the issue being no risk financially to pond vs number of people willing to attend. Survey of members is a possibility. The next Southern Region Convention parameters. MLGG Dunlop made a motion. GCG Paris second. Unanimously approve that Grand Nest is making the site selection that will encourage the most attendance and be the most cost effective for the conventions success. The 5 DMLGG's will be expected to be directly involved in the convention preparations. Grand Nest will financially support the regions convention. All Southern Ponds will be asked to contribute in this success. The elected Grand Nest officer will be expected to coordinate the success of these goals.
15. GGN Olson made a motion to close, GSF Charron second. Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Terry Maloney, GWGQ

GRAND NEST HISTORY

POST-CONVENTION MINUTES

July 2012

Hyatt Regency Hotel, Calgary, Alberta

1. MLGG Charron and the other current GN Officers plus PMLGG Dunlop, Coccia, J Clark, R Clark, Bishop, Thurber and Lewer were in attendance.
2. MLGG Charron confirmed appointments of JA Ross and GWGQ Maloney.
3. The GWGQ contract was executed.
4. The bank resolution will be sent to MLGG Charron for his signature.
5. GSF made a motion to approve GN Officers expenses for Calgary, GCG Olson second. Unanimous
6. GCG Olson motion to approve 2012 budget. Second by GGN Wilson. Unanimous
7. Mid-year GN officers meeting set for April 5-7, 2013 at Salt Lake City, Utah.
8. Audit set for Milwaukee, WI mid-June with GKGGE Meik and GWGQ Maloney.
9. GKGGE needs to send a photo and black ink signature to GWGQ Maloney.
10. Regional roll calls and committee reports need to be sent to GWGQ Maloney.
11. Grand Nest Officers duties set by MLGG Charron.
 - a. JA Ross – Constitution and By Laws and Jurisprudence
 - b. GNH Hale – International Funding
 - c. GCG Olson – Marketing
 - d. GKGGE Meik - Charity
12. DMLGG appointments confirmed to GWGQ. GCG Olson indicated same as last year.
13. Mileage rate 55.5 approved unanimously. GSF Paris proposed. MLGG Charron second.
14. GCG Olson will have verified boat convention cost ready in April 2013.
15. GNH Hale led discussion on what Ponds hosting convention should be expected to do with their surpluses based on how the funds were raised.
16. GCG Olson and GWGQ Maloney will look for ways to market the Quebec Convention including inviting children.
17. GCG Olson suggested that dues be increased by \$3.00 for Marketing and Advertising. GGN Wilson concerned on dues increase for that reason. Further discussion on increasing dues and for a higher amount
18. PMLGG Dunlop volunteered to chair Future Pond Conventions Committee.
19. GGN Wilson motion to adjourn. GSF Paris Second. Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted

Terry Maloney, GWGQ

GRAND NEST HISTORY

Grand Nest Officers 2012-2013



Pictured Left to Right: Bill Olson, Gerry Hale, Lynn Maloney, Terry Maloney, Libby Wilson, Randy Wilson, Zelma Paris, John Paris, Laurie Ross, Robert Ross, Linda Meik, Guy Charron, Johanne Charron

GRAND NEST HISTORY

Photo Gallery



WELCOME PARTY



FAMILY EVENING AT THE CALGARY ZOO



GRAND BALL – SOUTHERN STYLE