

History Report

What Are Some Blue Goose Pond Traditions?

July 2023



Prepared by Daniel S. Rich, PMLGG

Grand Nest Historian

www.bluegoose.org

Hello Ganders,

Hope this finds you and your families well.

Looking at the calendar I see we are more than halfway through the time period between Grapevine and Whistler. Sue and I are looking forward to seeing you this summer.

I'd like your help in putting together a look at one of our Honorable Order's most valued possessions- our traditions. Would you mind sending me a note describing a tradition from your Pond. Maybe it's an event, like an Insurance Commissioner's Luncheon or a March Madness Bracket Challenge or a Scotch Nosing?

Or maybe it's a charity event like a Month of Giving or an Easter Basket build or a Monte Carlo Night?

Whatever it is, I'd like to compile them, so again, I need your help to do this. You can make your note as long or short as you like. Adding photos is a bonus!

Please send them to DSR231@GMAIL.COM

Tote Fair,

Dan Rich, Grand Nest Historian (March 2023)

Additional requests were made through Facebook posts on April 27 and June 1

What follows are the responses from our Ponds, documenting so many of our treasured traditions and combining them with personal reflections on these experiences.

BRITISH COLUMBIA POND - Chelsea Fitzpatrick

Since its inception in February 2016, the Month of Caring has brought together adjusters, underwriters, brokers, restoration crews, and other dedicated insurance professionals to make a positive impact in their communities.

During this special month, the BC Pond joins forces to support various initiatives such as stocking shelves at food banks, providing meals and clothing to those in need, and engaging in meaningful conversations with members of marginalized groups. This remarkable initiative was inspired by the compassion and empathy of our Blue Goose BC Pond, who possess genuinely kind hearts and eagerly embrace opportunities to assist others.

The MOC started small in 2016, and quickly grew to be a successful initiative over the next two years. In 2019, we started tracking the impact our ganders made each February. Over the last 5 years, our Month of Caring participants volunteered 628 hours, raised \$7,768 in donations, and collected over 9,300 pads & tampons, 200 blankets, and countless essential items that were donated to local marginalized youth and adults.

Next year, we encourage other Blue Goose Ponds to expand on our initiative. In February we can choose the community as our Valentine, and together we can make a difference.

GIVE YOUR LOVE, GIVE YOUR TIME.



EDMONTON POND - Leslie McDougall

I had my first introduction to the Blue Goose when I attended Convention in Long Beach, CA in 1989 I believe it was, and when I entered the insurance world, I later joined the Edmonton Pond.

I would have to say my most favorite traditions are the Christmas Luncheons. I “traditionally” invite my Mom, Joan Best and Step-Father, Francis Gary Best, who held numerous positions with the Blue Goose through his 60 years in the insurance industry. His last luncheon was 2017 before his passing in April 2018.

I still invite my Mom and we have a great time. We bring unwrapped kids toys for donation and with 50/50 draw it’s always a feeling of giving where it matters most. This past luncheon I was the lucky winner of the 50/50 and it made me feel like a true winner when I donated my portion to the charity we were giving to. The luncheon is such an amazing event that gives so much back to our community.



EDMONTON POND - Cori Bohme

Our Pond has many traditions that are tied to supporting our favorite charities. Here are a few of them:

Christmas Luncheon – Our Charity for the last few years has been E4C. They are a group of local churches that share compassion and concern for those living in poverty. E4C is dedicated to helping Edmonton's inner city poor.

Golf Tournament – Various Charities – Last year – Saving Grace Animal Society

Insurance Institute of Northern Alberta Annual Awards Luncheon- Ron Thompson Award. The Awards Luncheon honours the hard work and dedication of the Insurance Institute's newest graduates of the Fellows and Chartered Insurance Professional programs and others. It is an opportunity for the insurance community to come together and commemorate the professionalism of the industry and its people. An award is named after Gander Ron Thompson

Boyle Street Community Services Charity Drive Thru. Boyle Street is a supportive service organization that works to transition people out of, and ultimately end, chronic homelessness.



Ron Thompson Award for Excellence

Chantelle Konynenbelt
Wawanesa Mutual Insurance Co.

Sponsored by:
The Honourable Order of the Blue Goose





2018 Gala



2019 Christmas Luncheon



2021 E4C



2022 E4C



2022 Saving Grace Animal Shelter

HARTFORD POND - Wendy Hubbard

One of my favorite traditions is when the Hartford Pond ganders take a road/rail trip down to New York City just before the holidays to support the NYC Pond's Holiday Party. There have been years where the group traveling down is as large as a dozen ganders making the trip, and in 2022 we just had three of us on the adventure. There is something really special about carving out the time to spend a full day with Blue Goose friends to support another pond and their charitable giving. Pulling oneself out of work and personal commitments for a full day just a week or two before the holidays seems nearly impossible, but it is always an unforgettable day.

There is usually time to jump off the train at Grand Central and take in the magnificence of NYC all lit up and decorated. Of course, there are always a few shenanigans and cocktails involved during the train travels, at a pre-meet location, and then at the holiday party. The fellowship and charity flows freely at the NYC Holiday Party and is a true display of what's important.



2011



2014



2018



2022

HARTFORD POND - Dan Rich

For over twenty years, the All Industry Night has been a highlight of the Hartford Pond's year.

In 2003 we organized and sponsored the first All Industry Night as a gathering for eight Connecticut insurance organizations. In the early years the night was primarily a social and networking affair, but in 2007 we took it in a new direction for the sole benefit of charity. Our first charity partner was ASCONN for Autism services and support.

We embraced a new charity in 2015 and have since held this event solely for the benefit of the Arthur C. Luf Children's Burn Camp. The camp hosts over 150 campers in a safe, natural outdoor environment for kids ages 8 to 18 who have survived life-altering burn injuries. Campers attend from all over the world at no cost to their families.

Local in rural Connecticut, the camp encourages camaraderie coupled with physical and social activities designed to help campers overcome anxieties, develop and enhance their physical skills, and allow them to move beyond their scarring and burn injuries.

The All Industry is our Pond's biggest fundraiser and we donate all net proceeds to the camp from registration, sponsorship, a teacup raffle, and a 50/50 drawing.

Over the years, the All Industry has raised over \$50,000 for the burn camp.



HARTFORD POND - Dan Rich

In 1996, Hartford Pond MLG Kim Gleason decided to give a special award named *The Super Goose*, to the Gander that went above and beyond the call during the year that had just ended.

That award initiated a Pond tradition that is still going strong all these years later. The recipient is now selected annually by that year's MLG in recognition for a Gander's outstanding service to the Pond in the many moving parts and behind the scenes tasks in booking the year's events, arranging charity donations, and posting the Pond's activities on several social media platforms.



The award is announced at our Annual Meeting in May, alongside our Charity Awards, Scholarship Awards, and Officer installations.

The Super Goose Award includes a plaque and an aqua stuffed goose that has been passed down from winner to winner every year since 1989..

Here is a list of all the Super Goose winners. No award was given in 2020 because of Covid.

Our Super Goose Winners

2023	Megan Le
2022	Megan Le
2021	Ed Callo
2020	N/A (Covid)
2019	Allyson Kataja
2018	Cristine Kern
2017	John Mastroianni
2016	Dan Rich
2015	Kevin Brady
2014	Dan Rich
2013	Greg Buonocore
2012	Jerry Hale
2011	Ed Callo
2010 (tie)	Debbie Blair Dan Rich

2009	Ed Phinney
2008	Ed Phinney
2007 (tie)	Ed Phinney Kim Albert
2006	Dan Rich
2005	Kevin Brady
2004	Lori Kovanda
2003	Dan Rich
2002 (tie)	Ken Wheeler Cathy Finlayson
2001	Dan Rich
2000 (tie)	Lisa Mullen Bob Partridge
1999	Christine Ouellette
1998	Gordon Crowther
1997	Ed Callo
1996	Dan Rich

MANITOBA POND -Dustin Bales

My favourite memories from a Manitoba Pond event are from two separate events.

First off, our 100th anniversary celebration in 2015. One of the things that made the event special was it was attended by two Grand Nest Officers, MLGG Randy Wilson and GCOG Mark Robertson. The event started with a hospitality night Friday evening. The pond arranged to have many items from the pond archive on display for our members and guests to enjoy. Saturday started with a memorial service including all those ganders who took their last long flight since our 75th anniversary celebration. After the memorial service, the ganders and guests ventured from the hotel over to the newly opened Canadian Museum for Human Rights where we toured the multiple exhibits, we stopped at one and Mark Robertson pointed out a picture that made up part of one exhibit and let all in attendance know that his brother was part of the exhibit! The evening ended with a gala dinner with Live entertainment from the Bella Tones, a great band made up of insurance industry professionals.

The second is our (almost) annual trek to the great state of North Dakota to the Hands Across the Border event that we have had the good fortune of being invited to for the past 49 years. I personally have had the good fortune of attending this event since I joined Blue Goose in 2009. The event starts with a hospitality night where we trade stories of our trips down, and about how industry trends in our respective markets. There is also many stories of the days of old. Just ask one of the old timers to recall the time they became Fargo celebrities, because “the US and Canada water polo teams” were practicing at the local Holiday Inn.

Saturday begins with the Peace Garden Pond AGM, and normally includes the induction and initiation of unsuspecting goslings. Saturday concludes with a gala banquet attended by the delegation from the Manitoba Pond as well as many Peace Garden ganders and guests. Our visit down wouldn't be complete without meeting a few Peace Garden ganders for breakfast Sunday morning before we all make our way north again. A good time is always had by all. The delegation from Manitoba has dwindled since the events inception, when we used to send multiple busloads of ganders and spouses, but the same good time they had at the first HAB event. Although the Travelling Trophy seldom travels now, nor does what has been dubbed “the '69 goose”, when these items make an appearance, great stories always ensue.

Hands Across the Border - 2015



Hands Across the Border - 2016



Hands Across the Border - 2018



MICHIGAN POND - Richard Chenard

The Michigan Pond was granted its charter in October of 1906.


Our three Puddles and the Pond continue to be active.

We have a few traditions including annual golf outings for each Puddle.

The Detroit Puddle honors Ganders who have taken their final flight by posting their name, date initiated, and date of the final flight.

There are currently two banners that are displayed at their Annual Holiday Party. The Michigan Pond holds a Memorial Service at the annual meeting for dear departed Ganders.

The Detroit Puddle annually honors a Gander with the Jim Gleason Award in Recognition of Exemplary Dedication to Character, Charity, and Fellowship.



The Blue Goose – Detroit Puddle Annual Holiday Party

Thursday, December 5, 2019
at the Dearborn Inn, a Marriott Hotel
20301 Oakwood Boulevard, Dearborn, MI 48124
11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. After Glow Party to follow

— Proceeds to benefit Detroit Good Fellows —

The Old Newsboys' Goodfellow Fund of Detroit is a 100-year-old charity founded in 1914 by James J. Brady. The organization's sole mission is to ensure that children ages 4-13 receive clothing, toys, books and games at Christmas.

NATIONAL CAPITAL POND - Barbara Markuski

Our Pond has a traditional approach to our monthly events:

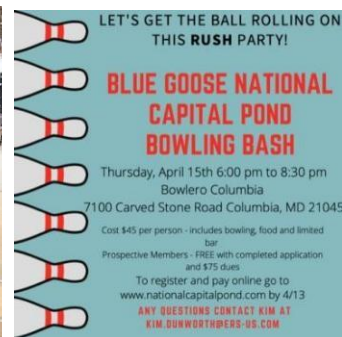
- September kicks off with our annual business meeting when we talk about the year ahead
- Usually in October we donate our time to either Second Chance or The Maryland Food Bank
- Each November we hold a Rush Party to promote membership
- Each December we host an annual Holiday Event (Reindeer Games) to benefit charity along with a Toy Drive for Children's Hospital and St. Vincents
- January is our initiation month
- February is open for another donation of time – whichever we did not do in October we usually do in February
- Each March or April we host a Casino Night or March Madness Bracket Challenge both to benefit charities
- May is our final closed business meeting and installation of officers
- June is our annual Golf Outing



Oct Food Bank



Oct Second Chance



Nov Rush Party



Dec Toy Drive



March Madness



April Casino Night

TEXAS POND - Linda Meik

The Texas Pond's History of Assembling Easter Baskets for Charity

In 2014-2015 the Texas Pond decided to narrow our focus from multiple charities to just five: The Family Place, Scottish Rite Hospital for Children, Community Partners of Dallas, North Texas Food Bank, and the Texas Pond Scholarship Fund.

The Pond then focused on how best we could lend our help with a specific event for each of the charities.

We approached each of the five charities to inquire about their various programs, the focus of these programs and what contribution best served their needs whether it be time, talents, or money. After reviewing all the information and needs for each charity the Pond set forth an event calendar beginning in 2015-2016 to launch our plan to help.

As one example, The Family Place had a strong need for fulfilling Easter Baskets for their target families. We asked the Texas Pond Blue Goose members to bring items that the Family Place had outlined to one of our pre-Easter meetings. Once we sorted the items, we assembled the Easter Baskets and our Charity Committee Chair delivered them. This first year we estimated the value of the baskets to be approximately \$1,000

The Family Place is an organization that helps families impacted and hurt by domestic violence. We are one of the small charitable groups that assemble Easter Baskets for them, and we were truly honored to be a partner with such a great organization as indicated by their history of achievements.

They are an award winning organization - In 2000, the Texas Homeless Network named them the Most Outstanding Domestic Violence Agency in the state of Texas, in 2004, the Center for Nonprofit Management presented them with its Mission Achievement Award, and In 2012, the Center for Nonprofit Management honored them with their Nonprofit of the Year Award.

Over the years, with increasing momentum and enthusiasm, the Texas Pond Easter Basket project grew bigger and bigger.

Year	# of Baskets	Estimated Value
2016-2017	27	\$675
2017-2018	52	\$1040
2018-2019	53	\$1140
2019-2020	67	\$1495
2020-2021	N/A COVID	N/A COVID
2021--2022	50	\$1000
2022-2023	87	\$1735

In the Blue Goose year of 2020-2021 all in-person or interactive activities came to a halt throughout the world due to the pandemic. So, during this off year the Texas Pond did not host our Easter Basket activity. Also, during this year, volunteer services really changed with The Family Place, and

this event in turn changed directions, so when we were able to get back to meeting in-person, we switched in our 2021/2022 year to making baskets for a similar family-based organization, Community Partners of Dallas.

Community Partners of Dallas was established in 1989 by a committee group of Dallas County individuals to ensure that the community could support Child Protective Services. Community Partners of Dallas' programs have been replicated across the state, and Rainbow Rooms are currently underway in more than 155 cities in Texas.

A Rainbow Room is an emergency resource center that provides critically needed items for children such as clothing, shoes, beds, car seats, formula, diapers, cleaning supplies, hygiene items and birthday presents. Rainbow Room has served more than 142,000 children since it opened in 1993. 74% of the children served by the Rainbow Rooms come from families whose annual income is below \$14,000. Their Annual Drives include Easter Baskets; Back-To-School; Winter Coat; & Holiday Toy Drive.



VIRGINIA POND - Mary Kay Marchetti

One of the Virginia Pond's best loved traditions is the USO collection we hold in conjunction with our annual Christmas Social.

The USO's hospitality center at Richmond International Airport hosts an influx of thousands of troops and family members traveling over the holiday season. The Virginia Pond encourages Christmas Social attendees to bring in kind donations to the Christmas Social. The Pond also solicits door prize donations that are raffled off with all proceeds going to the USO. Many guests make financial contributions, in addition to or in lieu of purchased goods, which are delivered with other donations. Here are a few photos from our 2022 Christmas Social.



The delivery is generally made by lifetime member Woody Harrison. Woody enjoys the opportunity as the USO is always so appreciative of our contributions. These photos were taken during Woody's delivery in 2021.



WESTCHESTER POND - Lisa Kane

Supporting Hawthorne, NY's Rosary Hill Nursing Home is one of our most beloved traditions. We've visited them annually with the exception of the Covid years.

We host a holiday party for their terminal ill residents and their families. Our Pond members either donate food items they've purchased or prepared themselves.

I usually make a large tray of homemade assorted cookies, and truffles. Someone else may bring pizza or fruit and cheese platters. We stage the party in the Solarium, set everything up on tables, and help bring in the residents from their rooms.

During our two to three hours with the residents and their families we serve them food and visit with everyone. Our Pond works with the director of Rosary Hill and pays to bring in musical and vocal entertainment for the residents.

When done, we help the residents back to their rooms and make a donation to Rosary Hill.

On the lighter side, a fun tradition is our Haha! drawing. Ever hear of it? At our Pond meetings, we ask our members to wear their Blue Goose pins, and we bring a box to our meetings with the members' names in it.

If a member doesn't wear their pin, we fine them \$1 and put the money into the box. After all of the fines are collected, we have someone pull a name from the box. If that person is in attendance, they win whatever money has been accumulated from that meeting and past meetings. If the person's name that is pulled is not at the meeting, we yell Haha! as there is no winner.

