



# National Capital Pond

## **Custodian of the Goslings Report – May 21, 2020 Submitted by R. Batterton – COG 2019-20**

### **MEMBERSHIP**

It has been my pleasure and honor to serve as COG for 2019-20. But hey, we are not finished yet! Thank you to my fellow Ganders for the orientation, experience, advice, ideas, participation, sponsor recruitment, member outreach, financial planning and execution, reporting, and other kind assistance you all offered to me and the "Membership Committee" this past year. Special thanks to the entire NCP leadership group, including our current officers and several PMLGs, our fellow Ganders from the SOMD Puddle, and the many Ganders-at-large who helped with the November Rush Party and January Initiation Ceremony. Your assistance was instrumental in the successes of those events.

### **RUSH PARTY – NOVEMBER 2019**

The 2019 Wonderfly Arena NCP Rush / Aloha Bill Olson Party was very well attended. By all accounts, including the booze, games, fun, food and fellowship factor, a good time was had by all! Saying goodbye to Bill was bittersweet. We all miss him, but we celebrate his success in his new life adventure. We met several of our recent membership applicants, and other folks applied for membership at the event that night. It was due to the outstanding efforts of all who helped, and our kind sponsors, that the event did not require any subsidy from the NCP. In fact, we actually made a few hundred bucks!

### **INITIATION CEREMONY – January 2020**

The Committee continued to seek out new membership prospects up to the day of the Initiation Ceremony. Once again, the event was very well attended! Thanks to all who helped, and to our fellow Ganders from the SOMP who made the trip north to join with us in celebrating our newest members. Including all NCP paid applicants, 24 goslings could have been initiated that night. 15 RSVP'd., 14 attended, each was initiated, and all welcomed to the flock of the NCP! Thanks to Andrea D. for the planning, the folks at Kelsey's for the great chow, and to our NCP Ganders and PMLGs for their roles in the ritual ceremony's great success. It was very well staged, it was moving, and it respectful of the great traditions from which the ritual originates. All received a New Member Welcome Packet and their NCP membership pins.

### **JOINT SOMP / NCP INITIATION – APRIL 2020 – CANCELLED**

I also had the pleasure of participating in the SOMP January initiation ceremony. I want to congratulate their entire leadership group, committee members, and returning Ganders for the amazing job they have done in recruiting new Puddle members. Although 18 or more Goslings could have been initiated that night, due to incredibly poor weather conditions (undriveable pea soup fog), only 4 of the many who registered were actually able to attend. Nonetheless, the SOMP put on a wonderful ceremony, with much respect and solemnity, and lots of energy and enthusiasm too.

That night I approached the SOMP leadership about the possibility of a 2<sup>nd</sup> initiation for April. They agreed in principle, so I quickly proposed to the NCP that we participate. I felt that doing so would give us the opportunity to get the remaining 20+ NCP and SOMP paid applicants onto the membership rolls before the end of the FY. A date and Crofton venue were selected, and the planning began. Regrettably, we all know what happened soon thereafter. We were compelled to cancel the event.

### **JOINT “VIRTUAL” INITIATION – JUNE 2020 - DATE TO BE ANNOUNCED**

During our most recent Zoom meeting with the leadership of the NCP and SOMP, we continued to discuss our concerns about the inability to bring this rather large group of Goslings into the Nest. Virtual Guest of Honor PMLGG Bill Olson offered a bold idea, one that resonated immediately with most. Bill suggested that we put together a list of eligible, paid up, initiates from both groups, contact them directly as a group (or personally...TBD) with Bill's cover letter “WELCOME NEW MEMBERS”, and attach to it all of the important HOBGI, NCP, and SOMP materials pertinent to new membership. This would include, but not be limited to, Who We Are, The Charge, Regions, Grand Nest Info, Conventions, Pond Government/ Meetings/ Officers, History of HOBGI, NCP and SOMP, List of Committees, fully updated Member List, et al. We would then offer all newly “initiated” Ganders the opportunity to receive their pins at upcoming NCP or SOMP meetings, but also to take part in the NCP's next full “real” initiation ceremony in the months to come.

Due to my recent schedule challenges, I have not yet been able to “meet” with Victoria about this, but hopefully we can arrange for that in the next day or two. Assuming that the SOMP is onboard with this idea, my goal would be to get these emails and attachments ready for distribution in the first week of June. Distribution would be subject to the finalization of the Member List after the June 1<sup>st</sup> deadline for payment of past-due NCP dues. Once that list has been revised, we can then add our new initiates to that revised version and distribute them as part of the New Member Welcome email attachments.

### **WHAT AM I LEAVING UNDONE?**

Well, a lot actually. I know that new member recruitment is the most important aspect of any organization like this, but member retention is a very close second. The ability to recruit is dependent upon what members tell their friends and colleagues about us. Their feelings about their experiences in the organization are not something we should leave to chance, or be indifferent to. I believe our focus should to be divided evenly between member recruitment and retention. A good start on that is the idea our incoming COG Kin Dunworth put forth several months ago. It is a win/win suggestion for both prospective and current members. That a benefit of membership is paying less for meetings and special events than non-members. I hope that the NCP leadership will work toward implementation of this idea, and other initiatives like it.

Going forward, I hope we will try to measure the level of satisfaction our members have, and also invite input from all members as to how the organization can be even more amazing. To move in this direction, I would propose the development of three short “surveys” that I believe can be helpful. All responses would be totally confidential. The first would be a “NCP Assessment Survey”. This would ask members various questions to gauge their comfort level, areas of interest, committee preferences, how they rate our programs, events and activities, what would they like to more/less of, and others. The second would be a “New Member Survey”. New members are in a unique position to provide insights and ideas for our Pond. The survey would let them know within a month or two of joining that we are sincerely interested in their experience. Perhaps they will be moved to participate more, or be more inclined to ask a co-worker about joining as well. It would ask if they feel welcomed, have they attended a meeting or event, has the NCP met their early expectations, what committee they might want to volunteer for, or any volunteer or charity ideas they may have. The third survey would be “Membership Termination Survey”. Here we would thank the former member for their time to complete the survey, and ask if they would consider re-joining in the future. Questions might include why are you leaving the Pond, are you moving away or taken a new job, did you feel welcome in the NCP, did you feel comfortable sharing ideas and concerns (if not, why not?), feelings about costs of membership, what changes might they suggest for the NCP, or what might we have done differently. Any feedback we get from a lost member willing to complete the survey will, I think, be of great use.

**Reported by: Rich Batterton – NCP COG 2019-20**

