

Magazine

## SPEAKING OF: EDUCATION & TRAINING

With Terry Maloney, Grand Wielder, Blue Goose

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The Honorable Order of the Blue Goose, International stresses ideals that are at the very core of the insurance industry. *Claims'* Christina Bramlet spoke with Terry Maloney, grand wielder of this unique organization, which offers a wealth of educational endeavors to encourage the growth of its members.

### Help us all get acquainted with Blue Goose.

We are a fraternal organization composed of field claim reps, auditors, underwriters, general adjusters, agents, brokers, investigators, regulators, attorneys, engineers, and other professionals serving the insurance industry.

### How is your organization structured?

Our organization is arranged such that there are local groups, called "ponds," spread out all over the U.S. and Canada. Every pond has its own unique blend of members and activities. The full spectrum of the field is represented in our "ganders." I truly consider this to be one of our strengths. In a relaxed atmosphere, the ponds provide ganders a place to tap into the pulse of the industry.

Fundraising is one component, as ponds generate money for a host of charities. Blue Goose holds an array of educational seminars and get-togethers, some open to multiple ponds. They feature speakers from various walks of life, including insurance commissioners and notable industry leaders.

### What is the significance of the moniker?

At the turn of the century, organizations such as the Lions, Eagles, and fraternities gained popularity. Since these men were meeting under the Horicon Flyway for geese, the Blue Goose was an obvious choice to parody these popular groups. To this day, the initiation ceremony started in 1906 is still recreated by our group!

### Why should claim professionals join your group?

A claim professional should have an interest in joining because our organization is exclusively for individuals related to the insurance sector. The overarching goal of Blue Goose is to develop character, fellowship, and charity — all while putting the competitive strife of the industry aside.

### What are the criteria for membership?

Most members of the insurance community are eligible. A professional must be over 21 years old and must have (at minimum) six months of experience serving in a line directly related to the insurance business. We encourage professors, members of



▲ Terry Maloney says Blue Goose is a fraternal group for those in insurance.

## Scared?

Her anxiety is almost uncontrollable...



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trade associations, certain bureaus, service organizations, preventative and protective associations, and underwriting pools to apply, just to name a few.

### **What are your duties and role as Grand Wielder?**

I would say that the term executive director has been used to describe my actual role. I have been privileged to serve in this position since 1987. I say "privileged" because the cardinal principles of fellowship and charity are the ideals on which America was built. So seeing these concepts alive and well in our ponds is an inspiration to me and a blessing to my family. Our members represent all that is good in our countries. I feel that my role allows me the opportunity and in fact the responsibility to get this message out to our insurance industry members who are truly looking for more out of their career than personal success.

### **What events and educational opportunities can members expect?**

Many of our ponds speak about an array of interesting, practical topics. Some local groups offer certified continuing education (CE) programs. Blue Goose makes a point to promote IIA, IIC, and CPCU programs. Annual awards are given for academic excellence to individuals earning the highest grades in competitive IIA examinations.

In addition to more formal learning opportunities, we stress the value of being a part of the organization. When we are elected to office in Blue Goose, we gain experience in new areas. Poise and confidence are cultivated in the administration of activities and in the management of others. Each summer, a different pond hosts our annual convention, which represents another avenue for growth and camaraderie. The choice of locale varies, and ponds vie for the privilege to play host.

These are not all the benefits of membership. I would encourage interested professionals to visit a pond or become a guest of one of our ganders to learn more about opportunities.

