

BLUE GOOSE ALLIANCE
Minutes of Annual Meeting
Hampton Inn
Covington, Louisiana

March 10, 11, & 12

During the ice-breaker held on the evening of March 9, President Reffalt presented “Certificates of Appreciation” to V.P. John Martin, and board members: Les Beaty, Ed Crozier, Phil Morgan, Don Redfearn, and Evelyn Redfearn. Les spoke for the group expressing appreciation for all of Bill’s exceptional work

President Bill Reffalt called the annual meeting of the Blue Goose Alliance to order March 10, 2005 at 8:00 a.m.

A quorum was present.

Present:

*Bill Reffalt-Pres.	Bill Grabill
*John Martin-V.P.	Charlene Hardy
*Les Beaty-V.P. Comm.	Clay Hardy
*Evelyn Redfearn-Sec.	Christine Enright-Reffalt
*Gail Fishman-Treas.	Karen Morgan
Sharon Beaty	*Phil Morgan
Barbara Danner	*John Oberheu
Charles Danner	*Don Redfearn
*John Doebel	Anne White
Peggy Doebel	*Joe White
One guest attended.	

*Officers and board members.

The president welcomed the group and reviewed the agenda.

Reading of the Minutes of the 2004 Annual Meeting was dispensed with, as they were published and approved earlier.

Treasurer’s Report: Gail reported a balance of \$7,751.03 in the general fund, with an additional balance of \$1,010 in the Danny Redfearn Memorial Fund.

Gail brought up the Officers and Directors Insurance. She thinks that the present coverage might be obtained for a lesser premium.

Don moved that Gail compare costs and coverages from various companies. Motion seconded. Motion was carried by voice vote. Gail will make the comparisons and advise the BOD.

Old Business:

Bill R. presented an Annual Report on the activities of the Alliance, including congressional contacts, participation in important refuge issues, outreach programs and the publicity derived from some of those activities.

Bill reported that the amended bylaws dated February 15, 2005 are now functional and he thanked Les for his work on them. Copies of the signed bylaws were distributed to each attendee. Evelyn will file the new bylaws with the IRS.

Evelyn reported that the Advance Ruling Period for the Alliance ends September 30, 2005. Within 90 days after that a Form 8734 must be filed with the IRS in order for the BGA to continue to be treated as a publicly supported organization. Gail and Evelyn will file the form with the IRS.

Bill summarized the position taken by the Alliance on individual refuge problems, particularly those problems that could affect the entire system.

Les distributed his Communications Report. It included numbers of bulletins issued; numbers of members on each list serve; visitation to different sites; as well as percentage changes in traffic.

Les also announced that by August of this year he would prefer to have communications duties and responsibilities delegated to other members. Bill R. has been researching the possibility of contracting some of those duties out. Bill R. will report his findings to the BOD.

New Business:

Bill R. identified some refuge issues in which the Alliance may want to become involved in the coming year: F&WS outsource contracting-Little Pend Orielle NWR/grazing-Desert NWR/water-Farallon/ham radio operators-Yukon Flats/land exchange-NWRS appropriations. There were questions and discussion on how the Alliance could affect appropriations. Les made a motion to form a committee to study the appropriations question; the motion was postponed until the Board meeting.

Discussion of Outreach Strategy centered on which organizations support Alliance goals and which ones might be willing to support Alliance goals given the proper incentive. One suggestion was to try to reach the ultimate goal through increments rather than make the full transition in one step. Another idea was to promote a "Department of Land Resources" which would include the Forest Service, Park Service, BLM and a *National Wildlife Refuge Service*.

Congressional strategy and priority targets will focus on members of committees and subcommittees that are most involved with refuge affairs. As Bill makes contact with

members of Congress, he will be developing a package to present to them. The package will be made available to all affiliates.

The present Advisory Board consists of Nathaniel Reed, Bob Putz, and Bob Valentine. Bill will contact each one to reaffirm and reactivate their participation. . Other affiliates have been charged with contacting possible nominees to serve on the Advisory Board.

Discussion was held concerning how the Alliance could rebut the negative propaganda used by opponents of a stand alone *Refuge System*. Younger refuge employees should be made aware of the fallacy of such propaganda.

Phil Morgan summarized the recommendations of the ad hoc committee for a Danny Redfearn Memorial Fund. The proposal is to enhance and actively manage the Blue Goose Alliance website. A funding target of \$10,000 was estimated for the design and maintenance of a high quality, user friendly, engaging website for BGA. All present supported the recommendation which will be followed up by President Reffalt in consultation with other WG members.

During the recess we were treated to a tour of the Big Branch Marsh NWR.

Business meeting resumed with John Martin's report and discussion of the Visions/New Horizons document. Questions included: purpose of the document; primary audience; secondary audience; contents; issues to be addressed; Bill R. said "The document should (1) define the problem (2) come up with the solutions to the problem and (3) elaborate that in the final document. It is that simple" Further discussion led to Bill G. and another volunteer agreeing to review some early documents such as *Fulfilling the Promises* and report back to the board by May 15, 2005. As needed and available, additional affiliates will join the team working on this document.

All affiliates are requested to recruit new members who will contribute to our goals.

It was determined that there are members listed on the Working Group site who are not active. John Martin moved that the affiliate membership be contacted by email and requested to complete and return a form which: (1) affirms their desire to retain affiliate membership and (2) indicates their intent to actively contribute to BGA goals by helping with one or more of the indicated activities. Members who do not respond to this request should be dropped from the Affiliated Working Group role. Motion seconded. Motion carried by voice vote.

Activities list--Financial support and fund raising skills—marketing and publicity skills—writing skills—audiovisual skills—political contacts—influence with NGOs—computer and web site skills—volunteer time (attend events, distribute literature, etc.)—public speaking skills—other publicity skills (print, TV, radio—member recruitment—research on relevant issues—other.

Meeting recessed.

During recess a Board of Directors Meeting was held. The BOD meeting adjourned at 8:45pm and reverted to a general meeting.

There are numerous Alliance documents that need to be updated. Bill R. will determine which ones and attempt to get someone who was involved in the original document to help update it. John O. volunteered to update the *Rationale Statement*.

There was general discussion on contracting some of the basic BGA services. Bill R. will continue to research programs available and at what cost

Bill R. will seek foundation grants for BGA programs.

Fund raising was discussed. A fund raising list is desirable but at this time unavailable.

After a recess elections were held. The nominating committee presented the following slate:

Officers:

Vice President-Burkett Neeley

Secretary-Joe White

Vice Pres. Communications-Les Beaty

Treasurer: Gail Fishman

Directors:

Ed Crozier

Phil Morgan

Charles Danner

Don Redfearn

John Doebel

Evelyn Redfearn

Bill Grabill

Nominations from the floor were opened and Les nominated John Dobel for the Vice President. John D. withdrew his name Phil moved to accept the slate recommended by the nominating committee by acclamation. Motion seconded. Motion carried by voice vote.

Phil Morgan accepted the responsibility of selecting the site for the next annual meeting. John D. and Evelyn volunteered to be the nominating committee.

Don moved to adjourn. The motion was adopted.
Meeting adjourned 11:00 a.m. March 12

Respectfully submitted,

Evelyn Redfearn, Secretary

Approved _____