

Living on a Lake in the Country: The Story of our Lake Goose

By Gayle Rich-Boxman

The first time I ever “met” our resident lady Lake Goose, she was with two others, a male and female. I was taking photos of my new Fishhawk Lake lakefront listing several years ago and was on the shoreline when they came swimming up.



I went home and got some bread and fed them. I believe she was a widow, since several species of birds mate for life.



Soon after, the other two disappeared. She was alone. I saw her wandering down the paved road, way off the lake, her voice raised in desperate honks looking for them everywhere. It tore at my heart and to this day still brings tears.

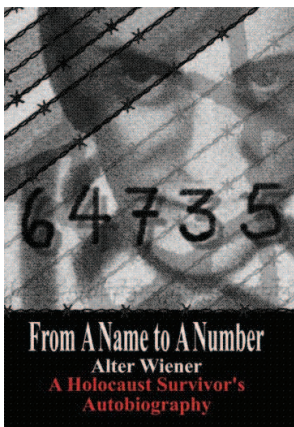
Holocaust Survivor Speaks *continued from front page*

able to locate her without any information about who she was.

Wiener recounts that he weighed just eighty pounds when he was liberated. Wiener says the Russian soldiers openly wept when they saw the people in the camps and gave the camp survivors three days to roam the local towns and exact revenge on the Germans they could find. Wiener says he was too weak and refused the offer of the Russians.

Wiener says that he still has visions of his time in the work camps, especially when he talks to audiences about his time there. He reminded his listeners throughout his presentation that “every Jew was a victim, but not every victim was a Jew,” during the holocaust, noting that many

other people were persecuted and murdered, including the disabled and handicapped, homosexuals, gypsies and others that were termed undesirables.



In the days immediately following his liberation, Wiener recounts that he was invited into the home of a German woman who fed him and tried to nurse him back to health. Several weeks later he returned to Poland and learned that 123 members of his immediate family—his brothers and stepmother, aunts, uncles, and cousins—had all been murdered by the Nazis; he and five cousins were the only ones who survived.

Wiener immigrated to the United States where he says he lived in New York and worked cleaning toilets. He

As the years have gone by, she has kept mostly to herself. The Canadian Geese will fly in for the winters and occasionally they have allowed her to tag along. But, mostly I see her alone, thriving, year after year.



I thought she might be an Emperor Goose, who seem to gravitate towards lakes and rivers, marshes and such in areas similar to Fishhawk Lake, in British Columbia, Washington, Oregon and parts of northern California, but mostly Alaska. But her beak is the wrong shape and color. From doing a bit of research, she seems to lean more towards the Pilgrim Goose breed, a rare domestic breed that originated in Iowa around 1935. Their status is listed as critical. Her face has more white, but like many of us humans, she started out a different shade most likely and it got whiter with age. After reading that they have a good temperament, with a calm and sweet nature, which she embodies, I think that fits our Lake Goose to a T!

Last summer I was showing lakefront property on Fishhawk Lake to prospective buyers who had a young son. We walked out onto the deck facing the lake. Who should greet us but our lady Lake Goose and two mallard ducks! She waddled determinedly right up onto the deck looking for handouts. I went to my truck

and got some tasty morsels, some liver treats for my Golden Retrievers. She ate gently right out of my hand, much to the delight of the buyers.

It seems that she has been here at least 15 years, from the history of one of my neighbors who readily feeds all of the geese and other birds throughout the seasons, from their lakefront home that’s listed with me. I had no idea that they live this long. I just read that Pilgrim geese live about 20-22 years.

I hadn’t seen her much this winter and I worry about her. This past weekend, though, she went gliding by my lakefront home and I grabbed my camera. The weather had warmed up enough to melt the ice that had formed in the last couple of weeks on Fishhawk Lake and she was out for a stroll...by herself. I caught a few shots of her in between my greenery.

Then, moments later, I saw a group of coots head her way. They exchanged hellos as she moved along her solitary path.

She looked quite content.



If you’re in the market for buying a cabin at Fishhawk Lake, I’m your gal! Call me at: (503)755-2905.

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