

## The Year of the Duck

In 1972, Bill Flynn took over as Chapter President and Bob Vermillion was membership committee chairman. Bob was determined to have a banner year and started off by promising to lose one pound for each new member applicant. By January, Bob had lost 50 pounds! But, the major campaign strategy from Bob Vermillion that year was to use a *duck* as an incentive to add new members! The duck, a real live one, would be passed to the possession of another member only if the current possessor had obtained a signed application for a new member. The duck was big and noisy in a big nasty cage. Bob presented it to President Flynn at a chapter meeting and they made it an honorary member of the Chapter. The duck was then made an honorary, and very vocal, member of the Membership Committee. Over the next few months, Chapter members, to try to avoid becoming the caretaker of said duck, quickly submitted twenty-four applications! Ultimately, 63 new members were signed up. Society year 1972-73 was deemed the "Year of the Duck"!

Chapter member Louis Nettleship, in February of 1973, wrote a letter to his daughter Karen (something he enjoyed doing throughout his life) and described this highly unusual membership promotion campaign: *"The membership chairman of our local ASHRAE chapter is on a big kick to increase membership and has started a new "pass the duck" campaign. The crazy guy got a big white live duck and gave it to Bill Flynn, the President and told him when he got a new member signed up, he could give the duck to any member he wanted to, and that member would have to get a new member before he could pass it on to someone else, etc. Six or seven people have had it so far, and I understand Marion Cohenour was going to give it to me last week until he found out I was home sick, so he gave it to someone else. I told him it's a good thing I didn't get it because the one thing I love to eat is duck, and if anyone gives it to me, it'll wind up in my oven before the sun goes down. Their answer to that is that there is a \$50 price on the duck if you lose it. I don't know who has it now but think it's a lousy way to treat a poor old duck."*



Membership Chairman Bob Vermillion, C.D. (Bud) Miller, Marion Cohenour, and Famous Duck, 1972.



Bob Vermillion presents newest member of the Membership Committee to Pres. Bill Flynn.

Dusty Stoabs, PE, LEED AP  
 ASHRAE Central Oklahoma Chapter Historian