

# Meet your GMCG Board of Directors!

(updated January 2024)

## Chair: Peter Zack



Serving on the board since 2009, Peter Zack lives with his wife Margaret and their two cats, Machu and Picchu, in an off-the-grid home in Porter, ME. They have three marvelous daughters who have presented them with five amazing grandchildren. (Don't all grandparents use adjectives like that?) And one more is on the way! Peter, an educator for 50 years, retired from *Sacopee Energy & Climate Activities*, a program offering experiential energy and climate change activities for school children. For many years Peter has been a board member of the Francis Small Heritage Trust in Maine where, inspired by GMCG, he has begun coordinating school-based water literacy programs.

## Vice Chair: Karen Vitek



Karen stepped into the role of vice chair in February 2021. Karen and her husband Victor live in their retirement home in Tamworth, NH. Karen retired after 40 years of teaching. Her last 29 years of teaching were in the Hudson Valley of New York where Victor worked as a process engineer for IBM. Her first teaching assignments were in New Hampshire. During her career she was a classroom teacher, special educator, technology integrator and computer science teacher. Karen spent many summers working at Camp Calumet on Lake Ossipee including working in and heading up the Nature Department. Students in her classroom had the opportunity to work with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Classroom FeederWatch and Nest Watch programs, raise butterflies and moths, create a garden, and use a weather station. Karen enjoys gardening and animals of all kinds. Karen and Victor love the outdoors and exploring new places whether by foot, bike, or boat. They both volunteer for the Get Wet!, VBAP and RIVERS programs at GMCG. Karen is pleased to be working to make sure the Ossipee Watershed remains clean and beautiful for all to enjoy.

## Treasurer – Noreen Downs



Serving on the board as the Madison representative since December 2020, Noreen also served as GMCG board secretary 2004 – 2007 and board chair 2009-2013. Noreen and husband Dave have resided in Madison NH since 2000, and became active with GMCG starting in 2001 with the effort to protect the Trout Pond property now known as Freedom's Town Forest (2,000+ acres). Noreen and Dave have been active water quality monitors over the years, with Dave participating in winter testing for 7 years and providing IT support for the office computers and network. Both are retired from IT careers, utilize their experience to assist GMCG with technical assistance, and are proud to call the Freedom Town Forest their backyard. They participate in town efforts related to water and land conservation, monitoring the metrics of the town installed PV solar system, and support a small group of folks who record and broadcast town public meetings on the Madison cable TV station. Noreen and Dave have enjoyed scuba diving for many years, traveling to many tropical destinations around the world while serving as volunteers with marine biologists in underwater study and photography. Their long-time enjoyment of canoe camping and observing wildlife in wilderness locations across North America provided them a heartfelt love for preserving the natural beauty and resources of our region

## Secretary - Nancy Walser



Nancy Walser is an avid gardener, hiker and writer who has lived part-time in Sandwich since 2001. During the pandemic, she retired from her job as a book editor for the Harvard Graduate School of Education and became a full-time resident of Sandwich, where she lives with her husband, Robert Buder, and an ever-growing population of chipmunks.

When her two children were growing up, Nancy served eight years as an elected school board member in Cambridge, Mass. Most recently, she served eight years as a member and president of her condo association in Cambridge. She is the author of *The Essential School Board Book* (Harvard Education Press, 2009) and she continues to write about educational issues nationally.

Nancy enjoys working on her old farmhouse in East Sandwich and is looking forward to learning more about how to preserve the environment in ways that allow both humans and nature to coexist and flourish as we face the challenges of a warming climate.

## Alice Custard



Serving on the board since 2010, Alice has worked in some capacity in a camp and conference center setting since the summers of her college years. (Plymouth State College). After graduating from college, she was fortunate to be on staff at Stone Environmental School in Ocean Park, Maine for two years. A Freedom resident for the past twenty years, Alice serves on the Freedom Conservation Commission, has been a dedicated staff member at Calumet and gives of her time to GMCG in several different capacities. Alice is a great organizer of volunteers and events, and you will find her at the check-in desk of many a GMCG event.

## Knute Ogren



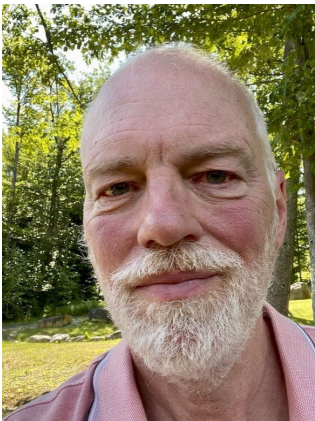
Knute lives in Effingham Falls and has been on the Board since 2021. He works with the Personnel Committee, and the Governance Committee in the particular area of Nominations. He has served on a variety of boards over the years and presently works at Calumet, a camp and retreat center in Freedom as the Director of Development.

## Dana Simpson



Dana was elected to the board as the Ossipee representative in November 2020. Having an interest in the environment since childhood, Dana earned two degrees in Wildlife Management which led to employment with private, state and federal organizations stretching from Alaska to Maryland. After meeting his wife Carol and wanting to settle down to raise a family, Dana went back to school to earn a Civil Engineering degree at Northeastern University that launched him into a 30+-year career as an environmental consultant remediating hazardous waste sites. In 1987 Dana and Carol built their home in Ossipee on 31 acres and became full time residents of New Hampshire in 2013. Since retiring in 2016, Dana has been an active volunteer for the Lakes Region Conservation Trust and joined GMCG in 2020 to broaden his involvement in protecting the environment. Dana enjoys hiking, sailing, kayaking, snowshoeing, X country skiing, gardening, woodworking, carpentry, and just listening to the wind in the trees.

## John Hedden

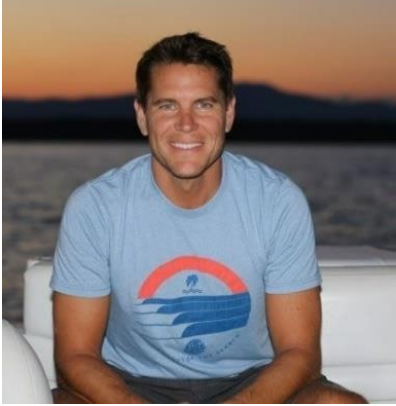


John was born and raised in Washington DC and serves as the Managing Partner of BroadBranch Advisors, a strategy firm that supports numerous industries/organizations in both the profit and nonprofit sectors. John also sits on the board of Willow Oak Therapy in Rockville, Maryland, and is currently Board Vice President. Willow Oak provides low-cost mental health services. As the treasurer of the Board of CapitalBop, a Washington, DC music conservation organization focused on the heritage of jazz and other forms of music, John pursues a lifelong passion for music.

John earned a BA in economics at Middlebury College in Vermont, where he still lectures on leadership issues. He also holds an MBA from the University of Chicago.

John deeply appreciates the beauty and diverse ecology in the White Mountains. Since 2020, he has walked, hiked, and climbed over 4000 miles on the roads and trails in the Mt. Washington Valley. Stephanie and John have three adult children who visit New Hampshire frequently and adore the surroundings.

## Todd Dickinson



Todd is a resident of Freedom, where he lives with his partner Jamie and their cat Frankie. Todd earned his undergraduate degrees in chemistry and theology from St. Olaf College, and a PhD in Analytical Chemistry from Tufts University. He is currently the CEO of two biotech companies, based in Boston and the California Bay Area, and serves on a number of professional and volunteer Boards. He grew up in western MA, and spent his summers as a camper, then a staff member, at Camp Calumet on Lake Ossipee. It was there that he developed a love for the lake and the surrounding region. His additional experiences in scouting, as well as yearly summer family camping trips, left him with a deep passion for nature and the outdoors. When he's not working, Todd has a number of interests that keep him busy, including nature photography, hiking, mountain biking, boating, golf, playing the piano, and woodworking. Todd feels a strong commitment to ensuring the health of our environment, both local and global, and is delighted to be joining the GMCG Board.

## Bob Pustell



Bob attended the U of Mass in the late 60's (while in the Air Force ROTC program) and graduated with a degree in Business Administration and a Commission as a Lieutenant in the US Air Force. That led to pilot training. He flew in two wars for our country, the Viet Nam War and the Yom Kippur War in the Middle East. After eight years in the USAF, he left the service and spent the next 30 years flying airliners for American Airlines. While at American he was a Union Activist for most of those 30 years and had many positions in my pilots union at the local and the national level. He is now happily retired and flies antique "little planes" from Windsock Village in Ossipee, NH.

He is currently blissfully married to Pat. He has five grown kids and 9 grandchildren. Among his civic involvements he is active in local political affairs, serves as a Supervisor of the Checklist in Ossipee, and he tests water and serves on the development committee for GMCG.



## Peaco Todd



Peaco Todd is an award-winning cartoonist and poet, as well as a journalist, author, and illustrator. For many years she served as an assistant professor of humanities, management, and liberal studies for Lesley University and the Union Institute and University. Her current projects include her poetry practice and a graphic memoir about growing up with a severely depressed mother entitled Already Broken, which recently was a finalist for the North Street 2023 book award.

A trip to South Africa and Zimbabwe brought her love for animals, especially elephants, to a new height; upon her return she founded Earth Comix, a 501(c)3 organization with the mission of using comics and cartoons to raise awareness about the iconic animals that are facing extinction due to poaching and climate change. A recent Earth Comix project was a collaboration with Canines for Africa to produce a comic book entitled "Shikar's Incredible Adventure," the story of one of the C4A dogs trained to attack poachers in South Africa's Kruger National Park.

Her publications can be accessed on her two websites: [www.peacotoons.com](http://www.peacotoons.com) and [www.earthcomix.org](http://www.earthcomix.org).

If you have an interest in learning more about serving on a GMCG committee or the board, please contact executive director Matt Howe at 603-539-1859 or [director@gmcg.org](mailto:director@gmcg.org).